

**USE OF INTERNET BY STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF M.L.S. UNIVERSITY****Hansa Hinger**Librarian, Department of Geology, M.L.S. University  
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hasan@library.iitd.ac.in**Abstract**

*The present study has been undertaken to assess the attitude of Internet users, taking in to account the use of Internet by P.G. students and research scholars of M.L.S. University library, India. The major objectives were to identify that (a) Internet is not a substitute for the library and (b) to find out the use of Internet resources by P.G. students and research scholars for their study and research work. For this purpose, a well structured questionnaire was distributed among P.G. students and research scholars of two faculties/colleges of M.L.S. University. These were Science and Commerce & Management Studies. Data was collected from 88/100 respondents. The paper verified that respondents were not fully satisfied with Internet facilities provided by M.L.S. University library. The findings of the study also revealed actual facts about respondents. On the basis of findings, some suggestions have been made about how the use of Internet among the students and research scholars can be increased. To utilize the resources of Internet to its maximum, it is necessary to make the users well-versed in the surfing and browsing of the net.*

**Keywords**

M.L.S. University library, E-Resources use, Internet Resources, Use of Library services, Use of Internet, User attitude for E-Resources

**Introduction**

Internet, the largest worldwide network of networks has emerged as the most powerful tool for an instant access to information. Only by touching finger, we can access whatever we want. Because of this quality, the Internet has become the biggest global digital information library which provides any kind of information within few minutes. In nut shell, it is accessible by anyone at any time, at any place in the world. The emergence of Internet has given rise to e-library, which is the transformation of information through the Internet. Recognizing the importance of the Internet as a powerful informatory and communication tool, many universities have moved quickly to take advantage of these electronic resources.

Internet has its impact in many areas including higher education, where it heralds the progress and implementation of latest strategies. In this era; students and research scholars can communicate with each other, as well as can access e-books, e-resources, bibliographic databases, and other academic resources over the Internet.

It has tremendously improved communication and interaction among students and research community and enabled them to access a wide range of latest information available at a single platform. It acts as a powerful supplement to the traditional way of information access. It facilitates electronic exchange of ideas and collaboration among the users all over the world.

The findings of such a study may be taken into consideration in the university plans for effective and efficient use of Internet by students and scholars and with that simultaneous improvement of electronic resources of its libraries.

The scope of the study is limited to the P.G. students and research scholars of two colleges (Science and Commerce) enrolled during 2008-2011 of M.L.S. University.

### **Mohanlal Sukhadia University: An Overview**

Mohanlal Sukhadia University (erstwhile Udaipur University) at Udaipur was established in the year 1962 by an act to cater the needs of higher education in Southern Rajasthan. This Agriculture University was turned into a multi faculty University in 1964 named as University of Udaipur. As a mark of respect in the memory of late Shree Mohanlal Sukhadia, the architect of modern Rajasthan, the university was renamed as M.L.S. University in 1982. The University has 33 departments under the four constituent colleges. The University has more than 205 affiliated colleges from districts of Udaipur, Baswara, Dungerpur, Sirohi, Rajsamand, Chittorgarh and Pratapgarh with an enrolment of 1.25 lakh students. M.L.S. University Central Library was constituted in 1962 and the extension Library of the University of Rajasthan working in the Udaipur was merged into it in 1966. Central Library is considered as a heart of the University. It is the nerve centre of academic activities for students, teachers and staff of the university. It is also a referral library of Udaipur District. The university Library offers a collection of over 1,10,557 books, 14,196 bound volumes of periodicals, 102 printed Journals and 6,077 e-journals. The library is well supported by CD-ROM, Internet, e-mail and reprography services.

The UGC-INFLIBNET initiated library automation in 315 Universities of India including M.L.S. University. Now the library has got almost all facilities of INFLIBNET. The library is now having more than 46 computer systems with Internet connectivity direct from V-SAT for library users and nearly 22 for technical and ministerial staff.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study aims to analyze the Internet use by the P. G. students and research scholars of Science and Commerce faculty (faculty also interpreted as college) in M. L. S. University. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out present position of Internet use in libraries.
2. Investigate how respondents attained Internet skills.
3. Determine the amount of the time spent on the Internet and the frequency of Internet use.
4. Reasons for using Internet.
5. Users' ability to catch the other information available on Internet.
6. Attitude of students towards the Internet.
7. To find out the impact of Internet on libraries and users.

8. To find out problems of users regarding Internet.
9. To suggest for the improvement of the observed scenario.

### **Methodology**

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, a well structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed among Post Graduates and research scholars of Science and Commerce faculties to collect the data for the study to be undertaken. Questionnaires were distributed to 100 students of Science and Commerce streams. A total number of 88 out of 100 respondents returned the filled questionnaires giving a response rate of 88 percent. The responses received from 88 users were analyzed using tables and charts.

### **Literature review**

Johnson included 405 students in his research on Internet use by students. He found that 77.8% college students are heavy online gamers. 17.8% considered negative perceptions of the Internet.[1]

Ceyhan revealed in his research that factors such as gender, level of psychological symptoms, connecting to the Internet most often at night, and using the Internet primarily to communicate with their relatives and friends and to have good time predicted significantly the level of futile Internet use of the students. [2]

According to Jones, college students form distinctive groups among the Internet users. In USA, students used the Internet for communication, recreation and file sharing. College students and faculty members finds the Internet convenient and useful for educational activities. [3]

Fallows believes that the Internet can be used for scholarly purposes, map or contact information, purchase of tickets for travel, communication through e-mails or chats, and entertainment such as games or audio and video files.[4]

Anderson finds in his research that one-tenth of the college students spend enough time on Internet. [5]

Bansode and Pujar conducted a study on the use of Internet by the research scholars of Shivaji University, Kolhapur. The study revealed that most of the users used Internet for research and communication purposes. The others concluded that more awareness about Internet resources and training in their use should be provided by library professionals. [6]

### **Internet in India**

The Internet is one of the most useful innovations of mankind. It is a powerful means of communication, dissemination and retrieval of information. It is a network of networks spread all over the world. It provides seamless virtual access to everything from day to day news to specific information on almost all subject fields. It is used by millions of users throughout the world for generating, getting and communicating information to each other. One can browse, navigate, cruise or surf the electronic information resources available on the Net. It has changed the concept of a physical library into a virtual library, i.e., library without

walls, shifting the library on to a desktop at the office or home. It is an easily available computer communication infrastructure of the world.

Before the appearance of Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited's (VSNL) Gateway Internet Access Service (GIAS), Internet had been in India for many years in the form of Educational & Research Network (ERNET) (since 1986) funded by United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In beginning, it was meant for only educational & research communities. It was a joint effort of Department of Electronics of the Government of India and the UNDP, which provided technical assistance to developing countries. Over 200 academic and R&D groups were using ERNET. More than 8000 scientists and technologists have access to ERNET facilities. On August 15<sup>th</sup> 1995, VSNL launched the GIAS. Subsequently 6 nodes were established in Mumbai, Delhi, Madras, Calcutta, Bangalore and Pune, while DOT (Deptt. of Telecommunication) took on the responsibility of operating nodes from the rest of the cities in India. 6<sup>th</sup> November 1998 was a landmark day in the history of Internet in India, as a revolutionary Internet Service Provider policy was introduced on that day. [7]

By the year 1999, some more companies entered in the world of service as Internet service providers. According to Act 2000, these companies were issued ISP License.

### Data Analysis and its Interpretation

The total number of P.G. Students of M.L.S. University in science and commerce faculties were 3285 and Research Scholars/M.Phil/Ph.D. of Science and Commerce streams were 346 (enrolled during 2008-11). Out of this; 1835 were P.G. Students in Science and 1450 were in Commerce, 219 Research Scholars were in Science and 127 were in Commerce.

It was noticed that out of 1835 P.G. Students of Science, 1261 were enrolled to library membership and 93 research scholars out of 219 were enrolled in library of Science College. In College of Commerce; 1220 P.G. Students out of 1450 and 60 Research Scholars out of 177 were library members.

All the respondents surveyed indicated that Internet is useful in search of required material. Almost all the users were found to have knowledge of Internet.

### Age wise distribution of respondents

**Table 1: Age wise distribution of respondents**

Age group	Science	Commerce	Total	%
Below 20	02	02	04	4.54
21-30	22	18	40	45.46
31-40	28	09	37	42.04
41-50	05	01	06	6.82
Above 50	01	-	01	1.14
	100	30	88	100

The above table indicates that 45.46% respondents were between 21-30 years, 42.04% respondents were between 31-40 years; 6.82% respondents were between 41-50 years and 4.54% respondents were below 20 years. Remaining 1.14% respondents were above 50 years.

### Purpose of using the Internet

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the level of utilization of the Internet for increasing knowledge and academic research at both the colleges. The results from the analysis of the responses show that respondents were using Internet for various purposes such as:

1. Keeping themselves updated with the current trends and technologies
2. Accessing of e-mails
3. Infotainment
4. Social networking
5. Searching research & study material
6. For General Awareness

**Table 2: Purpose of using the Internet**

Parameter	Rank
Keeping up to date	1
Accessing of e-mail	2
Searching research & study material	3
For general awareness	4
Infotainment	5
Social networking	6

This table shows that the purpose of keeping up-to-date was most preferred use of Internet among the students. It got 1<sup>st</sup> rank in analysis. Accessing of e-mail as on 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Use of Internet for searching research and study material stand at 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

For General Awareness on 4<sup>th</sup> place, Infotainment on 5<sup>th</sup> and Social Networking stood on last position.

Table 2 also revealed that P.G. students and research scholars use the Internet highest for keeping themselves up to date. It is also interesting to note that the P.G. Students and Research Scholars from science are using Internet extensively for e-mail and research material and intensively by research scholars and students from Commerce Section. The main reason behind it was the availability of the latest information about science and technology as compared to commerce.

### Frequency of using Internet

**Table 3: Frequency of using Internet**

S.No.	Frequency	No.	Percentage
1	Once in a month	24	27.27
2	Once in a fortnight	05	05.68
3	Once in a week	12	13.64

4	Twice in a week	21	23.86
5	Daily	22	25.00
6	No response	04	04.55
	Total	88	100

In this table, it is shown that 25% students use Internet frequently, 23.86% respondents use twice in a week, 13.64% users use it only once a week and 5.68% users were availing net facilities once in a fortnight.

It is observed in Table 3 that 27.27% respondents used Internet once in a month only and 4.55% respondents have not given any answer.

### Satisfaction on relevant information from Internet

As discussed above that students and research scholars used Internet to keep themselves up-to-date, accessing e-mail and face book etc., for infotainment, but researchers use Internet mainly for academic and research purpose. Thus these types of respondents were asked to state whether they were satisfied with the available information from Internet or not regarding the level.

**Table 4: Satisfaction on relevant information from Internet**

S.No	Extent of satisfaction	No.	Percentage
1	Very much	24	27.27
2	Much	26	29.55
3	Average	22	25.00
4	Less	10	11.36
5	Very less	04	4.55
6	No response	02	2.27
	Total	88	100

The level of satisfaction 27.27% to very much extent; 29.55% too much extent; 25% to average extent; 11.36% to less extent; 4.55% to very less extent and 2.27% respondents indicated no response.

### Medium of search

Students and Research Scholars search their matter through search engines successfully. So it is necessary to identify frequently used search engines. The respondents were asked to give their search preferences. The results are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Frequently used search engines**

S.No.	Search engine	Rank
1	Google	01
2	Yahoo	02
3	Bing	03

4	Rediff	04
5	AltaVista	05
6	MSN	06
7	All others	07

The Table depicts that Google search engine is no. 1 as a medium to search (covered 85% of the total users). The Yahoo, Bing and Rediff stand on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> position respectively. AltaVista and MSN are on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> rank. Remaining search engines are at least preference. Google is the most preferred in providing the information on net among all search engines.

### Problems faced in the use of Internet in libraries

Respondents were asked what problems they faced in the use of Internet. The problems provided in the questionnaire are the most common problems cited by the users. These are:

1. Very time consuming to access/browse the net resources and very slow speed of Internet.
2. Limited number of computers and related resources.
3. Untrained staff and no guidelines which may help the students in accessing the Internet.
4. Surprisingly, high proportion of respondents especially from Commerce reported that they have not enough resources related to their field.
5. Beside these problems, so many respondents reported that they have problem of frequent disconnection of Internet because of unavailability of electricity.

**Table 6: Problem faced in the use of Internet**

S.No.	Problems	Rank
1	Very time consuming to access and very slow speed	1
3.	Not enough computers available to access	2
4.	Not enough proper guidelines and trained staff available to help	3
2.	Very few resources in the related field	4
5.	Lack of uninterrupted power supply	5
6.	Any others (please specify)	--

The problem of time consuming to access to the Internet affects research scholars' work and hence considered to be one of the major problem. Interrupted power supply is another main problem in Internet access.

### Suggestions

Here are some suggestions to improve working conditions and the use of Internet among the P.G. Students and Research Scholars.

1. There must be enough computers connected with the network.
2. Speed should be increased in order to provide faster access.
3. University Library should organize enough training programs on the use of Internet.
4. Trained and IT skilled employees should be appointed so that users could get proper guidelines and help.

5. Electricity/back up should be available for 24 hours.
6. Printing facilities should be available in libraries at nominal cost.
7. Whole campus should be Wi-Fi.

### **Conclusion**

The present study shows that most of the users use Internet as their source of information, if it is available. Internet is an important serving tool but the availability of subject matter in commerce is less in comparison to science. The present study indicates that users related to higher studies are more satisfied with Internet facilities. However, to utilize the resources of Internet to its maximum, it is essential to make the students & research scholars well-versed in the browsing on the net. The results shows that 25% respondents use net facility daily, 27.27% once in a month; 23.86% twice in a week; 13.64% once in a week; 5.68% once in a fortnight; and remaining not responded.

The study has clearly demonstrated the present level which is relatively low; for utilization of the Internet by P.G. students as a source of material for academic research at M.L.S. University. This low level may be attributed by two factors: The low level of connectivity, and the high cost of cyber cafe facilities. In view of the huge academic resources available on the Internet and its usefulness for teaching and research; it would be necessary for libraries of M.L.S.U. to provide guaranteed access to the Internet as a way of enhancing their books & journal collections. Universities could do this through the provision of more access points at libraries, departments and faculty levels. This, if envisaged would create a more encouraging environment for the use of the Internet for academic research.

Users expect access to information from wherever should be free of charge and wish to get full text. Users perceive the web as an information goldmine and the answer to all their information problems. However, when they attempt to use electronic resources, they sometimes change their perspective. Quite often they realize that to explore electronic resources effectively and retrieve information, they require training which is not provided to them as yet. Unless they are trained to have a right perspectives and understanding of the electronic resources, users do not really get the benefits from the technology.

Unfortunately, the profession of librarianship is not being properly recognized in the development of educational/informational resources of the university and its facility up-gradation as well. However, University administration should realize the importance of library services. It should be provided with all the facilities in libraries. Library Professionals should take a step ahead in this direction for the recognition of library services in the campus. Librarian should play a role of bridge between teachers and students. At the same time, they shall be honest with their profession. In this way, they should be able to serve their best to the user community.

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