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Internet and Online Newspapers: A Case Study of Post-Graduate Students of University Of Kashmir

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Abstract: The advent of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has revolutionized the life of humans. The implications of this revolution are enormous and are manifest in almost all spheres of the life. Particularly the Internet has changed the ways people seek information to satisfy their information needs. To remain abreast with the latest happenings around the globe, newspapers are proven to be an effective source. With the emergence of new technologies newspaper publishers are fast moving onto the online platform to effectively reach the remote users and people are also quickly following the trend. In this scenario, the present study made an endeavor to investigate the use of internet and subsequently online newspapers among the PG students of University of Kashmir. The study underlines the growing importance of internet and the use of electronic medium among the students and also confirms the potential use of online newspapers mostly for educational and other information purposes.

Keywords: ICT, Internet, Online newspapers, University of Kashmir, Post- Graduate students.

I. Introduction

Change is the law of nature and most of these changes prove to be productive with the best fit in time, space or situation. Since, humans because of their inquisitive nature embrace the new ways with certain motives- technological changes and developments being the most influenced and internet, the most prominent development in the way of technology, has influenced every sphere with exceptions almost none. The process of change is particularly notable in the case of services characterized by high levels of intangibility and an increasing presence in the digital media, and newspaper publishing being one of the activities most affected by the development of the new medium with a rapid changing of the ways and the aims with which readers consult newspapers [1]. With the advent of internet, different types

of information are readily accessible online and reading online news is the third most popular internet activity [2]. The migration of news-paper to the web has evolved it into e-news, integrating video news with the traditional text and pictures besides, making their universal and real time access possible. Online news viewed on computers and mobile devices are rapidly replacing traditional newspapers and broadcasts as the major source of information [3]. Further, online media attract the audience for several reasons like interactivity, personalization of news and convergence [4].

Newspaper plays an important role in disseminating current information and events and keeps its readers up-to-date and the e-newspaper is a self-contained, reusable and refreshable version of a traditional newspaper that acquires and holds information electronically [5]. Although a beneficial source to remain up to date with the current happenings all over the world, but user acceptance is the most important determinant of continuance intentions when using any technology. Therefore, to accept a technology, one needs to get motivated. Motivation is an inner drive that moves and directs an individual behavior towards satisfying his or her needs and attainment of goals [6]. It suggests that an individual stimulated by a given situation engages in a behavior with the expected consequences. To cope up with the current changing trends in technology, one needs to stay abreast of up-to-minute changes globally. For that purpose one needs to get motivated to adapt such technological developments like online newspapers, so as to make their effective and efficient use in terms of both cost and time. Therefore, an attempt was made to study and investigate the attitude of postgraduate students towards online newspapers in terms of their use of internet and subsequently online newspapers.

II. Methodology and Data Collection

In order to evolve a comprehensive methodology, a thorough literature review was executed. The knowledge and experience gained was employed for the present study. The population of the study (students) was stratified under the three departments: Mass Communication (Mass Com), Computer Science (MCA) and Management Studies (MBA). Post Graduate students of the respective departments were selected for the investigation keeping in view their expected use of internet and as such e-dailies. The sample for the survey was selected using stratified random sampling. A questionnaire was employed to elicit the responses. Questionnaires were distributed among 60 students and a response rate of 66.67% was achieved (Table I).

Table I: Distribution of studied sample

Age	Mass Communication		Computer Science		Management Studies		Total ($\sum n = 40$)	
	M(5)	F(5)	M(7)	F(8)	M(8)	F(7)	M	F
20-25 yrs	5 (100)	5 (100)	6 (85.72)	8 (100)	8 (100)	7 (100)	20 (50)	20 (50)
Above 25 yrs	0	0	1 (14.28)	0	0	0		

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

III. Literature Review

The advent of ICT has changed the society at large. With the development of internet, communication Media have been substantially affected. In the internet users are even more pragmatic and active [7]. There are two dimensions of usage of the internet [8]. The internet can be used as a mediated interpersonal technology, which is for social bonding, relationship maintenance, problem solving and persuasion; the internet can also be used as a mass communication, which is for informational and leisure purposes. To understand the reason for such an active role of internet users various studies have been conducted. Driven by the emergence of online technologies as faster and easy ways of transacting, now a days we have commerce as e-commerce, business as e-business, banking as e-banking and still ahead government as e-government. Also, e-learning or e-education is fast catching up [9]. This e-education or online education and learning model use internet communication media such as e-mail, news-groups and chat-rooms to conduct virtual seminars, which may be even more effective than conventional instructions. Others seek to take full advantage of the emerging interactive multimedia capabilities of the internet, immersing learners in a compelling learning environment [10]. It further reports that news-sites and digital newspapers are among the most widely demanded and visited websites among internet users. Newspaper industry started delivering online newspapers in mid 1990's when many newspapers launched electronic editions on the web. Since then, newspapers have come in two distinct formats: Online and In-Print [11] and the rapid growth of internet has changed the media landscape. The number of newspapers available online is increasing and further stressed that reading of online newspapers is usually more functional and goal oriented as indicated by small number of pages read per visit [12]. Stressing it further, an online study revealed that

web is an emerging source of current news. In 2002, 48% of the web users stated that they use the internet often/occasionally to access daily news. In 2011, this increased to 61% [13]. Besides, Dimmick, Chen and Li (2004) conducted a study with a purpose to better understand the use of online news compared with the news use via traditional media. Data were collected in a telephone survey with 211 respondents in Columbus, Ohio (Franklin country) who were selected using Random Digit Dialing (RDD). Their results suggested that internet has a competitive displacement effect on traditional media with the largest displacement occurring for television and newspapers [14]. The reason for an increasing growth and competitive displacement can be deduced from the study conducted by Gillmor (2006) in which he suggests that web platforms offer interactivity between the users and the content; and in social-web, users participate in discussions and share their opinions with others and compares this new form of journalism with conversation or accustomed to interactive features of social-web applied it in the context of daily news as well [15]. A study was conducted by sampling a broad selection of American newspapers both print and online, and suggested that online newspapers provide content that simply reinforces print content and further revealed that mobilizing information (MI) in print and online newspapers is although same, but the effects may differ across readers [16]. Another qualitative study was undertaken, regarding online-news reading and browsing to understand and test users' engagement with online-news, on a sample of 30 educated participants recruited through e-mail listservs and fliers, posted around a university campus. It was ultimately concluded that organization and aesthetic appeal of the news websites are the interesting and attention capturing features [17]. Further, with continuous user interactions with the news website, usability and the presentation of information increase their experiences, and novelty or personal relevance of the articles also influence user engagements. Conducted a study to examine if the Internet is likely to replace the newspaper as the major source of news and information in India and confirmed internet as an opportunity where both the media can co-exist and mutually reinforce each other as news providers to the readers and revenue earners for the management [18]. studied the attitudes of MBA students at a large U.S university and concluded users' acceptance of virtual world technologies and user self-efficacy as the primary dependent measures and revealed that as self-efficacy increases, user acceptance of a technology decreases [19]. Online newspapers reflect almost all the web features because of which Opgenhaffen (2011) notes that online news represents a dynamic information rich environment characterized by multimedia, interactivity and hypertext [20].

IV. Data Analysis and Interpretation

A. Internet Access Duration

Majority (52.5%) of the students use internet for '2-5 hours per day' (Table II). This amount of internet access duration is seen in 80% students from Mass Communication Department. In the same category fall 46.67% and 40% students from the departments of Computer studies and Management studies. Almost one-third of the students (30%) spend '1-2 hours per day' on internet. Only 12.5% of the students spend more than 5 hours on the internet on a daily basis; which consist of 26.67% students from Management studies department.

Table II: Amount of time spent on internet by the students

Duration	Mass Communication (n=10)	Computer Studies (n=15)	Management Studies (n=15)	Grand total (40)
1-2 hrs/day	2 (20)	5 (33.34)	5 (33.34)	12 (30)
2-5 hrs/day	8 (80)	7 (46.67)	6 (40)	21 (52.5)
Above 5hrs/day	0	1 (6.67)	4 (26.67)	5 (12.5)
Others	0	2 (13.33)	0	2 (5)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

B. Internet: Purpose of Use

The study figures out that majority of the students (72.5%) use internet for the purpose of 'education' (Table III). In this front, there are 86.67% students from the department of management Studies, 70% students from the department of Mass Communication, and 60% students from the department of Computer Studies. This is followed by 47.5% students who use internet for recreational purposes. Furthermore, a small proportion of students (17.5%) access internet for keeping themselves abreast of the latest happenings. Meanwhile, a negligible number of students (2.5%) (exclusively from the department of Management Studies), use it for 'other purposes'.

Table III: Purpose of internet use

Use	Mass Communication (n=10)	Computer Studies (n=15)	Management Studies (n=15)	Grand total (40)
Recreation	5 (50)	10 (66.67)	4 (26.67)	19 (47.5)
Education	7 (70)	9 (60)	13 (86.67)	29 (72.5)

Staying abreast	1 (10)	4 (26.67)	2 (13.34)	7 (17.5)
Others	0	0	1 (6.67)	1 (2.5)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

C. Online Newspapers: Familiarity and Use

Majority (90%) of students show their familiarity with online newspapers among whom most of the students (87.5%) use them as well (Table IV). The familiar students include all the students (100%) from the department of Computer Studies; 90% students from the department of Mass Communication and 80% students from the department of Management Studies. When it comes to the use of online newspapers, there are 93.34% students from the department of Computer Studies, 90% students from Mass Communication and 80% students from the department of Management Studies who make use of the online newspapers.

Table IV: Familiarity and use of online newspapers among students

Options	Mass Communicatio n (n=10)	Computer Studies (n=15)	Management Studies (n=15)	Grand total (40)
Familiarity	9 (90)	15 (100)	12 (80)	36 (90)
Use	9 (90)	14 (93.34)	12 (80)	35 (87.5)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

D. Online Newspapers: Purpose of Use

Majority (70%) of the students use online newspapers for accessing 'current information' in different fields, thereby keeping themselves abreast of the latest happenings around (Table V). It consists of 80% students from the department of Mass Communication and an equal number (66.67%) of students from the departments of Computer studies and Management Studies. 10% of the students also access the online newspapers for searching various jobs. Besides, 7.5% of the students use online newspapers just for 'Leisure'. Furthermore, only 5% students make use of the online newspapers for 'accessing archives'.

Table V: Usage of online newspapers by the students: Purpose

Purpose of Use	Mass Communication (n=10)	Computer Studies (n=15)	Management Studies (n=15)	Grand total (40)
Current information	8 (80)	10 (66.67)	10 (66.67)	28 (70)
Accessing archives	1 (10)	1 (6.67)	0	2 (5)
Searching new jobs	0	3 (20)	1 (6.67)	4 (10)
Leisure	0	1 (6.67)	2 (13.33)	3 (7.5)
Others	0	0	0	0

E. Online Newspapers: Reasons for No Use

A small proportion (12.5%) of students do not use online newspapers (Table VI). The non-users supporting the reason of 'not being motivated to use them' comprise 5% students. Moreover, same number of students (5%), do not use them because of their 'unawareness'. A small number of students (2.5%) feel 'satisfied with traditional newspapers'.

Table VI. Reasons given by students for not using online newspapers

Reasons	Mass Communication (n=10)	Computer Studies (n=15)	Management Studies (n=15)	Grand total (40)
Not useful	0	0	0	0
Satisfied with traditional newspapers	0	1 (6.67)	0	1 (2.5)
Never got motivated to use them	1 (10)	0	1 (6.67)	2 (5)
Fear of failure to retrieve relevant information	0	0	0	0
Incapability to use	0	0	0	0
Unaware	0	0	2 (13.34)	2 (5)
Others	0	0	0	0

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

F. Online Newspapers: Usage Status

Majority (37.5%) of the students use online newspapers only 'sometimes' (Table VII). This includes 40% students each from the departments of Computer Studies and Management Studies, and 30% students from the department of Mass Communication. This is closely

followed by 32.5% of the students which use the online newspapers ‘once a day’. A small number (10%) of students make use of the online newspapers on ‘an hourly basis’. Furthermore, a very small proportion (7.5%) of the students use online newspapers ‘twice a day’.

Table VII: Students’ usage status of online newspapers

Use	Mass Communication (n=10)	Computer Studies (n=15)	Management Studies (n=15)	Grand total(40)
Twice a day	2 (20)	0	1 (6.67)	3 (7.5)
Once a day	3 (30)	7 (46.67)	3 (20)	13 (32.5)
On hourly basis	1 (10)	1 (6.67)	2 (13.33)	4 (10)
Sometimes	3 (30)	6 (40)	6 (40)	15 (37.5)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

G. Online Newspapers: Students’ Future Perspective

The study reveals that majority of the students (42.5%) intend to use online newspapers ‘frequently’ (Table VIII). In this category of students, 60% belong to the department of Mass Communication, 40% belong to the department of Computer Sciences, and 33.33% belong to the department of Management Studies, respectively. A significant number of students (37.5%) intend to use it ‘regularly’. Meanwhile, slight number (7.5%) of students favor the idea of ‘recommending others’ for the use of online newspapers. This suggests that in future, there is a good potential for the use of online newspapers among the students.

Table VIII: Students’ intentions about continuing with online newspapers

Intended Future Use	Mass Communication (n=10)	Computer Science (n=15)	Management Studies (n=15)	Grand total (40)
Regularly	2 (20)	6 (40)	7 (46.67)	15 (37.5)
Frequently	6 (60)	6 (40)	5 (33.33)	17 (42.5)
Also recommend others	1 (10)	2 (13.33)	0	3 (7.5)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

V. Conclusion

Networked information resources have emerged as the most powerful tool for an instant access to information, transcending the borders of time and space. The internet has become the most extensively used information source that empowers the average person to get in roaming with the latest information. Today's users need not to depend on conventional or traditional information sources to cope up with the latest developments. The study reveals that a good number of students access internet for a sizable portion of time on daily basis; with a majority, 52.5% students using it for 2-5 hours a day. Further it comes out that 72.5% of the students use it mostly for education related purposes, trying to explore new techniques to achieve the said goal and cope-up with the emerging trends. Majority of the students (87.5%) mostly prefer to use technological innovations to evolve with the emerging trends and thus, make use of online newspapers. 70% of the students have adopted online newspapers for staying abreast of the current happenings so as to compete with the changing scenarios. Thus, online newspapers are considered as a valid and current information source by the university students. But they have not incorporated their use with such a great regularity so as to derive all the potential benefits from them, as majority of the students regularly do not make use of online newspapers.

The study underlines the growing importance of internet and the use of electronic medium and emerging channels of information and communication among the university students. There is immense potential of the use of online newspapers, in particular for current information with negligible effect of cannibalization on traditional ones.

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