

# Internet Use among University Students: A Case Study of Assam University Silchar

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## Introduction

Internet is a multipurpose tool with numerous potentials. It enables students to communicate with other students abroad and thus share each other's ideas, knowledge, experiences, and cultures. It enhances skills and capabilities of students, which assist them in studies and in professional life.

The academic landscape in education sector has been comprehensively transformed by the recent advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Consequently, the teaching and learning processes along with educational programmes and pedagogy of instruction are being restructured, reformed to meet the expectations of a whole new breed of students entering the Universities. ICT applications in education sector can greatly enhance the quality of education. The learners, through multifaceted ICT applications, can control the content, time and pace of learning. It is also one of the greatest recent advancement in the world of information technology and has become a useful instrument that has fostered the process of making the world a global village. This is a universal fact that the use of internet has a great impact on the student's academic carrier. The use of Internet has become a very popular in many areas as well as in education in recent years. Accordingly, Internet access in schools has increased greatly over the last 20 years (Berson, 2000). As this study has shown, more students are relying on the Internet for their academic needs than any other areas.



Nowadays internet is very effective and popular tool used by the students for education as well as variety of other purposes including entertainment. Internet provides an interactive environment for sharing as well as seeing of information on a wide, diverse and variety of subjects. Consequently, it has become very popular among the student community; and it is also used by them to supplement their studies.

Many people and students are educated through using internet and media. It is the most obvious and inevitable element to experience this relation in the routine life too. It is clear that internet has a key role in human life. So we need to obtain a lot of important information about internet about relations with other variables especially in educational contexts that are important for young generations. So the present study is an attempt to study the Internet use among Assam university students.

## Review of Related Literature

Hong, K. S., Ridzuan and Kuek (2003) studied students' attitudes toward the use of the Internet for learning at the University of Malaysia Sarawak. The study revealed that in general, students there had positive attitudes towards learning through the Internet. The students had the basic skills in using the Internet and perceived the learning environment in the university conducive to the use of the Internet as a learning tool.

Rajeev Kumar and Amritpal Kaur (2004) studied the use of internet by teachers and students in Shaheed Bhagat Singh College of Engineering & Technology, Ferozepur (Panjab). They found that 46.7% teachers and 36.7% student's daily use the internet. About 90% respondents use internet at their college. Yahoo is found as the favorite search engine. Only 31.7% respondents



were fully satisfied, whereas 36.7% were partially satisfied with internet facilities.

Luambano and Nawe (2004) investigated the Internet use by students of the University of Dar es Salaam. Their findings revealed that the majority of the students were not using the Internet due to the inadequacy of computers with Internet access, lack of skills in Internet use and slow speed of computers. It was also revealed that most students who used the Internet did not use it for academic purposes. It was suggested that more computers connected to the Internet should be provided and that training should be given to the students on the use of Internet.

Ruzgar (2005) studied the purpose of the Internet use and learning via Internet. It was concluded that the Internet has become an integral part of college life and its usage is approaching 100 percent among students. It was found that 36 percent of the students spent 1-10 hours per week on the Internet. In terms of activities online, sending/receiving e-mail topped the list, followed by reading news and finding sports information, research for school-related work, chat, research for products and services, and downloading images. Because of their online activities, students watched less television.

Biradar and others (2006) conducted a study on internet usage by the Student and faculties in Kuvempu University. The results indicated that 42.1 % students use internet twice a week and 31.25% faculties use it every day. The majority of students as well as faculties use Internet for study/ teaching purpose. The favourite place for using Internet is library followed by commercial places. A thumping majority of respondents are satisfied with Internet sources and services.

Ani (2010) investigated the extent and level of Internet access as well as the use of electronic resources by undergraduate students in three Nigerian



Universities. Ani's findings revealed that undergraduate students use the Internet extensively. However, access to the Internet in the university libraries, departments/faculties and university computer/ICT centres was grossly poor due to the infrastructure. The majority of the respondents relied on private, commercial Internet services, and cybercafés. It was also found that Internet education for the respondents is needed for the use of electronic resources and databases.

Ozad (2010) explored the use of the Internet in tertiary media education. It was suggested that in addition to using the Internet as a source of information, students majored in communication and media should also use it as a tool of communication.

Dominika Sokol and Vit Sisler (2010) conducted a Study on Internet Use among University Students in the United Arab Emirates. The study aims to analyze socializing on the Internet and attitudes towards the Internet as a medium of social interaction among university students in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The result reveals that the Internet can largely act as a vehicle for resisting social exclusion and gender segregation; it can also simultaneously serve as a mechanism for reinforcing pre-existing norms within newly-networked traditional communities.

Sakina Bashir (2011) conducted a study on Internet Use among University Students: A Survey in University of the Punjab, Lahore. The objective of the study was to explore the Internet use behaviour of students. The results show that most of the students use this technology for course related reading and research needs. They are new users of the Internet. They use it at the University Library's Digital Lab Unit as well as their departments and homes. A large number of them have learnt to use the Internet tools by



themselves, or relying on assistance from friends without attending any formal training programs. Ease of work and time saving are the reasons of Internet use among university students.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the frequency of Internet use among University students.
2. To find out the preference of place and time for accessing internet.
3. To find out the purpose of using internet among Assam university students.

### **Sample**

The sample of the present study is drawn from PG students, M. Phil and Ph.D. scholars. The sample consisted of 100 students of different subjects in Assam University, Silchar. Out of 100 students 50 each belong to male and female category. For selection of sample purposive sampling technique has been adopted.

### **Procedures of Data Collection**

To collect the requisite data related to various aspects of assessing internet self designed questionnaire was used. The researcher established a rapport with them. Initially the researcher was distributed the questionnaire and requisite directions and instructions were given. One can spend as much as time as required. But in general it consumes maximum 15 to 20 minutes.

### **Tools Used**



The self designed questionnaire comprising of 18 items relating to internet access has been used.

### Statistical Techniques Used

Percentages analysis and pie chart were used to analyse and interpret the data.

### Results and Discussion

**Table -1**

#### Qualification Wise distribution of the respondents

Student Ednl. Qualification	Male	Female	Grand Total
M.A	27	33	60
M.Sc	7	8	15
M. phil	0	6	6
Ph.D.	16	3	19
Total	50	50	100

**Figure – 1 Distribution of the Respondents Qualification**



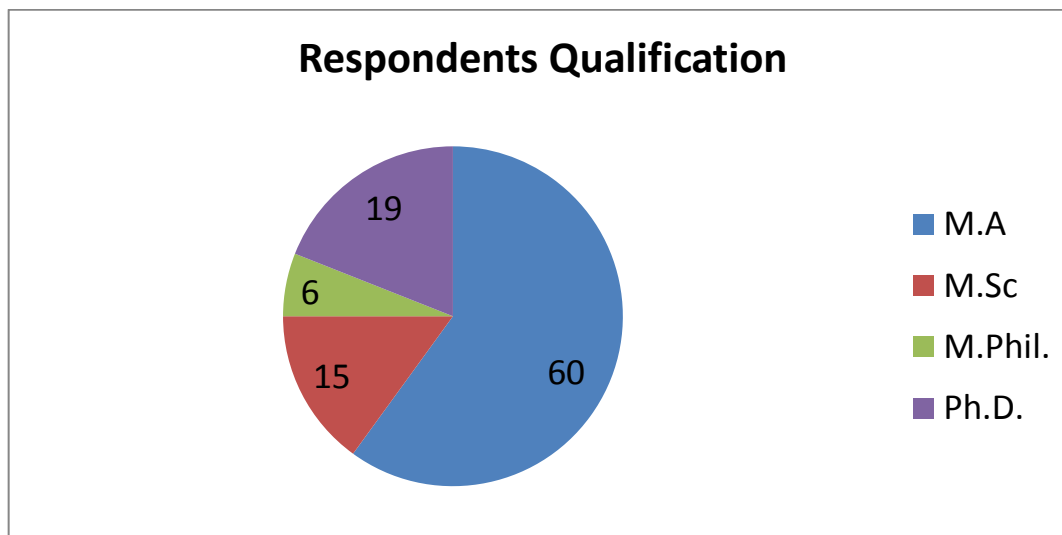


Table -1 and figure – 1 clearly shows the qualification wise distribution of the respondents. Out of 100 respondents, about 60 respondents are M.A, 19 Ph.D. Scholars, 15 M. Sc and 6 M.Phil. scholars.

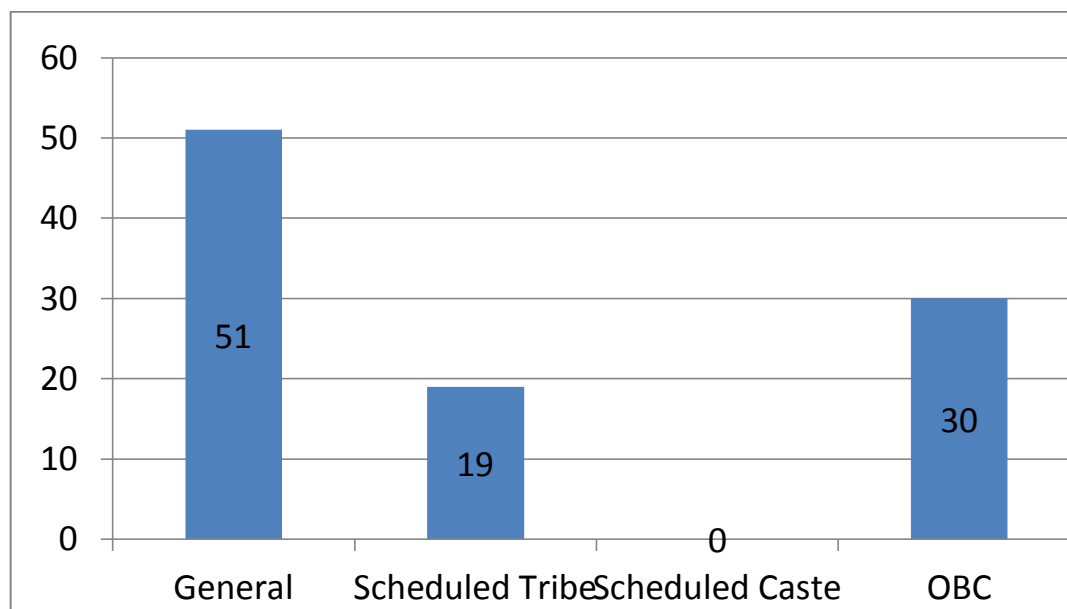
**Table - 2**

**Distribution by Caste Category of male and Female Respondents**

Caste Category	Male	Female	Grand Total
General	26	25	51
Schedule Caste	-	-	0
Schedule Tribe	13	6	19

**Figure -2 Distribution by Caste Category of the respondents**





In the present study, the respondents in the sample have been categorised into four category: 1) General category 2) Scheduled Castes 3) Scheduled Tribes and 4) Other Backward Classes (O.B.C.).

In the study out of 100 respondents 51 belong to General Category, 30 belong to O.B.C., 19 belong to STs and SC category in the sample is nil. Figure – 3 clearly shows this representation.

**Table -3**  
**Getting Knowledge of Accessing Internet**

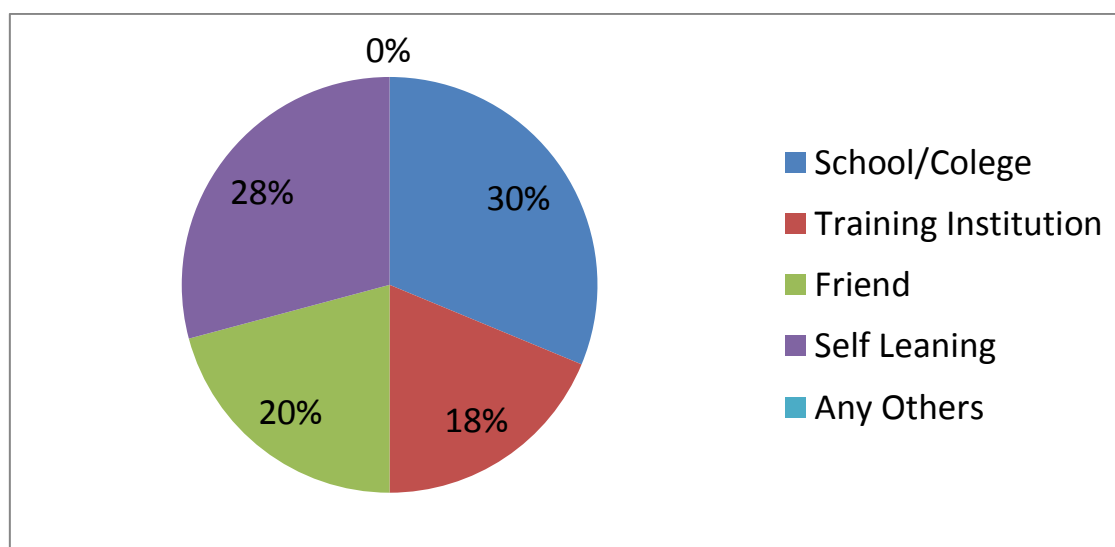
Knowledge of Access to Internet	Male		Female		Grand Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
School College	16	32	14	24	30





Training Institution	7	14	11	22	18
Friend	8	16	12	24	20
Self Learning	16	32	2	4	28
Any Others	3	6	1	2	4
Total	50	100	50	100	100

**Figure - 3 Getting Knowledge of Accessing Internet**



The present table and figure – 3 clearly shows the knowledge of accessing internet of male and female respondents. It reveals that out of 100 respondents more numbers of respondents are getting knowledge of accessing internet from their schools/ colleges. The present curriculum introduces the computer education at a very primary stage. So students get knowledge from their own institution (school).

**Table - 4**



### Frequency of using Internet

Frequency of using	Male		Female		Grand Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Daily	27	54	22	44	49
Twice a Week	9	18	10	20	19
Weekly	9	18	11	22	20
Monthly	1	2	2	4	3
Rarely	4	8	5	10	9
Total	50	100	50	100	100

**Figure - 4 Frequency of using Internet**

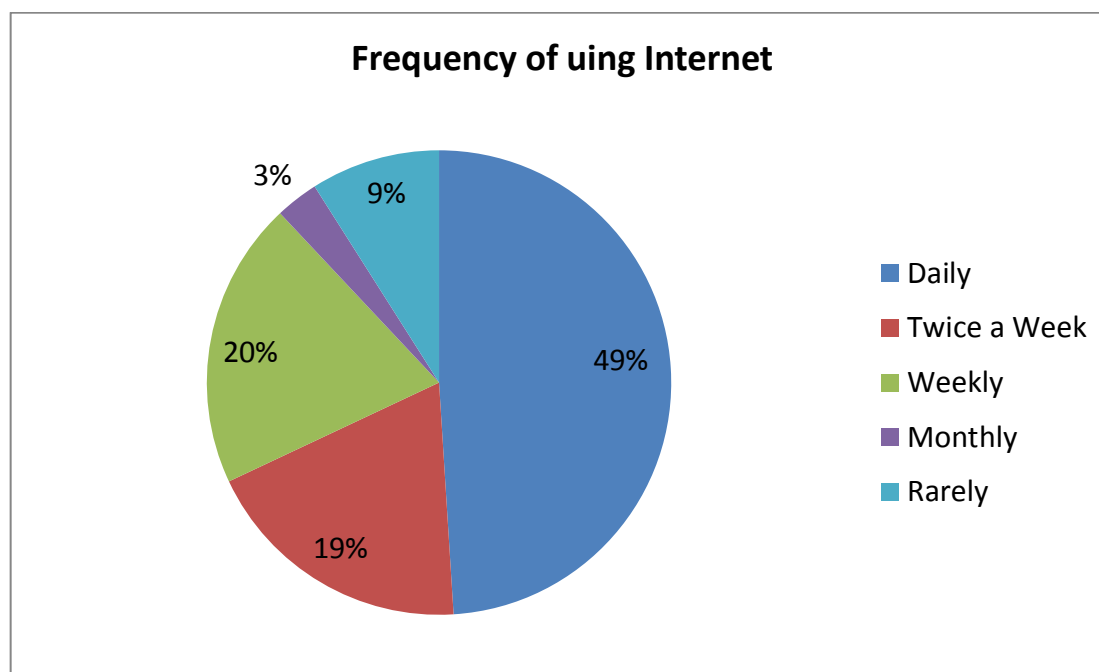


Table – 4 and figure – 4 shows that the frequency of using internet by Assam University students. It has been observed that 49% are used daily, 19% are used twice a week, 20% are used weekly, 9% are used rarely, and only 3% are used monthly. Among 50 male respondents majority 54% respondents are

used daily, 18% are used twice in a week, another 18% are used weekly, 8% are used rarely and very less number i.e. 2% are used monthly.

Among 50 female respondents 44% are used daily, 20% are used twice a week, 22% are used weekly 10% are used rarely 4% are used monthly.

Internet is one of the most important and powerful means for information retrieval and dissemination. It helps students/researchers in collecting the right information at a right time easily and also updates their knowledge. So they use internet daily.

**Table -5**  
**Frequency of Internet use in a day**

Internet Usage in a day	Male		Female		Grand Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Less than 1 hour	13	26	11	22	24
1 hour	5	10	12	24	17
2 hour	14	28	20	40	34
3 hour	8	16	6	12	14
4 hour +	10	20	1	2	11
Total	50	100	50	100	100

**Figure - 5 Frequency of Internet use in a day**



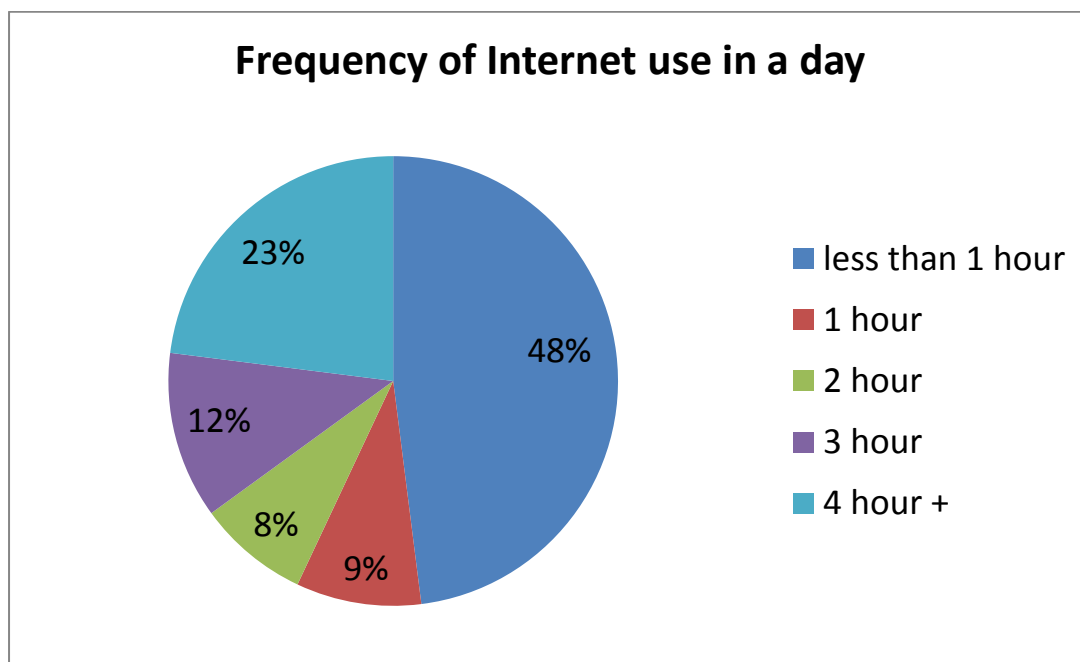


Table – 5 and figure – 5 shows that the frequency of internet used in a day. It also reveals that out of a total 100 respondents, 24% are used less than 1 hour in a day, 17% are used 1 hour, 34% i.e., majority of the respondents are used 2 hour, 14% are used 3 hour and 11% are used 4 hour and above.

Among 50 male respondents, 28% are used 2 hour in a day followed by 26% less than 1 hour, 20% 4 hour and above 16% 3 hour and only 10% are used 1 hour.

Among 50 female respondents 40% are used 2 hour in a day, 24% are used 1 hour, 22% less than 1 hour, 12% are used 3 hour and only 2% are used 4 hour and above.

An observation of above data reveals that both male and female respondents majority of them are used 2 hour in a day.

**Table - 6**

**Preference of Time to Access Internet**

Preference	Male	Female	Grand
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	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Morning	5	10	3	6	8
Afternoon	5	10	6	12	11
Evening	12	24	11	22	23
Night	24	48	25	50	49
Late night	4	8	5	10	9
Total	50	100	50	100	100

**Figure - 6 Preference of Time to Access Internet**

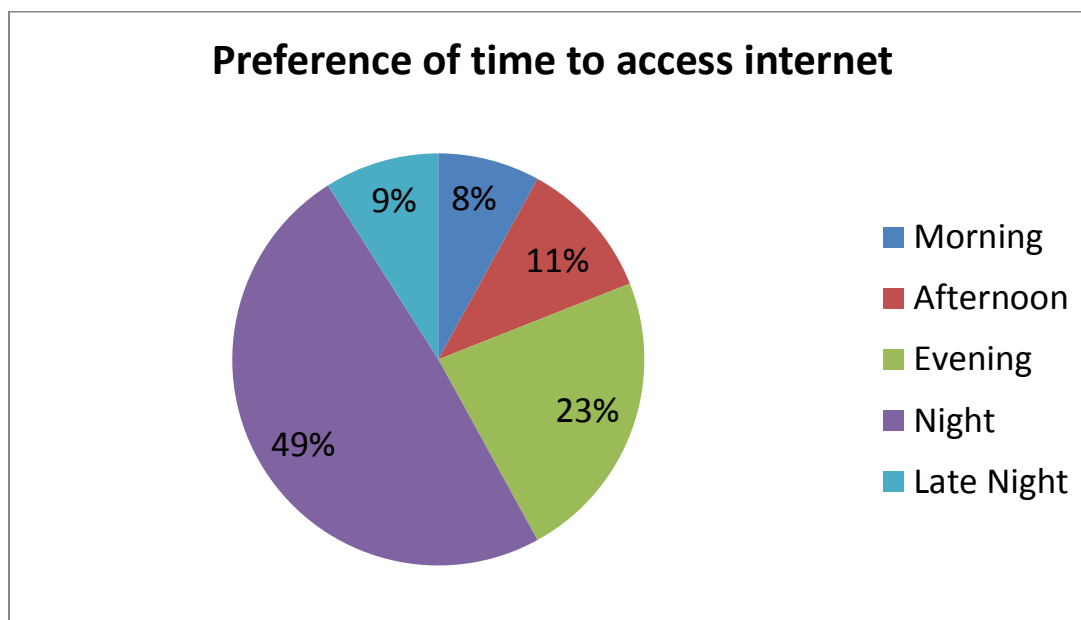


Table – 6 and figure – 6 presents the preferences of time to access internet. It reveals that out of 100 respondents 49% maximum number of respondents



prefers to access at night time which is followed by evening 23%, afternoon 11% prefer at late night and 8% prefer in morning.

Table – 6 further shows that among 50 male respondents 24% prefer night time to access internet which is followed by 12% evening, 10 prefer morning and another 10 % access in afternoon and only 8% late night to access internet.

A close observation of above table reveals that maximum number of respondents prefers to access at night time. Because in morning they are busy for learning in their respective discipline. Afternoon and evening they spend their spare time in department. So they prefer at night time.

**Table – 7**  
**Primary use of Internet**

Primary use	Male		Female		Grand Total
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Education	35	70	45	90	80
Entertainment	6	12	1	2	7
Searching Job	2	4	1	2	3
Online Shopping	4	8	1	2	5
Gathering Information	3	6	2	4	5
Total	50	100	50	100	100

**Figure – 7 Primary use of Internet**



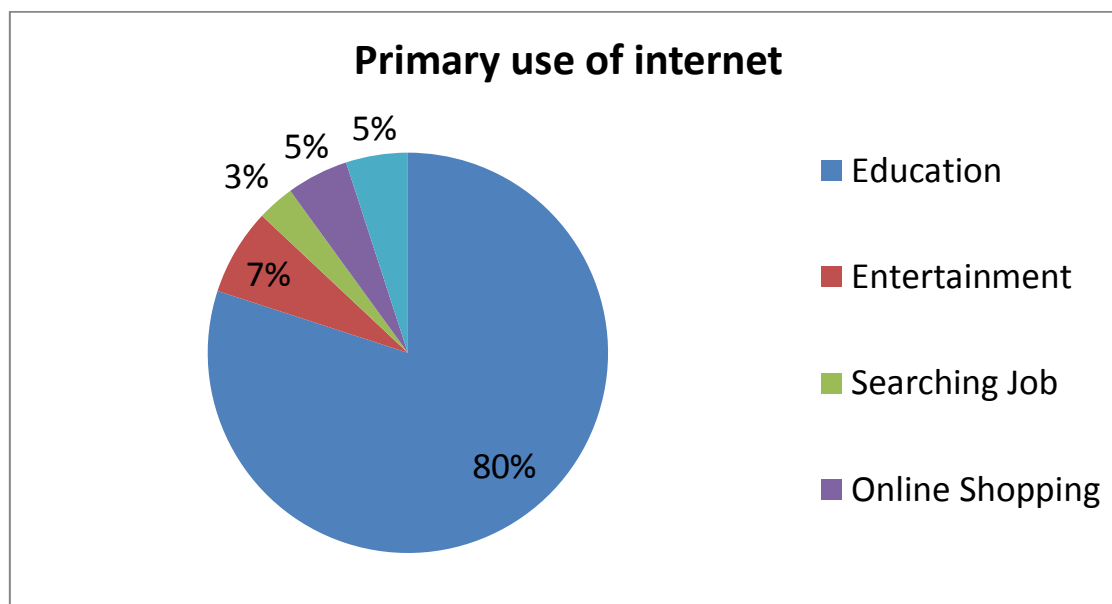


Table – 7 and figure -7 shows that a majority of the respondents 80 (80%) are using electronic resources for study purpose which is followed by the respondents who are using electronic resources for the purpose of entertainment 7 (7%), few respondents 3 (3%) are using for searching job.

**Table - 8**  
**Purpose of using Internet**

Purpose	Male		Female		Grand Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Study	28	76	26	52	54
Chatting	8	16	6	12	14
E-mailing	4	8	5	10	9
Download	6	12	10	20	16
Any Others	4	8	3	6	7
Total	50	100	50	100	100

**Figure - 8 Purpose of using Internet**



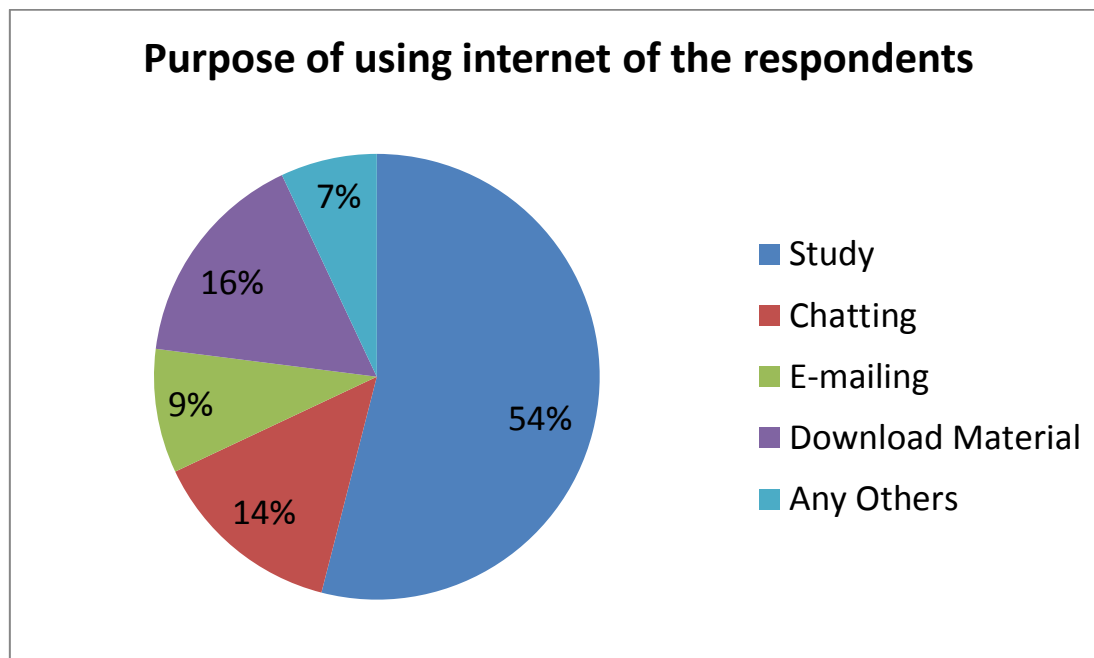


Table – 8 and figure – 8 shows that maximum numbers of respondents (54%) are use internet for their study, which is followed by 16% download material, 14% for chatting with friends, 9% to send e-mail, and 7% used for any others.

The use of Internet has become a very popular in education in recent years. Internet access in schools has increased greatly over the last 20 years (Berson, 2000). As this study has shown, more students are relying on the Internet for their academic needs than any other areas.

### **Conclusion**

The study showed that the use of the Internet has created a great impact upon the students of Assam University in their research and academic works. It is clear from the study that the younger generation has accepted the Internet as a means for accessing to the relevant information for academic and research work. The present study also found that internet plays a key role in day today life.





## IMP PRACTICAL LICATIONS

The findings of the study listed above have important implications in our university. Some implications are mentioned below:

1. Internet has immense potential for the information society. It enables the students to get instant information for their varied purposes. In order to make more beneficial and effective, awareness programme for maximum use of Internet should be undertaken by the Information Technology Institutions, Libraries and Information Centres of Universities.

2. The present study most of the respondents are getting knowledge of accessing internet from their institutions. Proper vigilance in the computer laboratory should be ensured and also provide on-line facilities for students their departments and take some steps to increase the number of systems with higher configuration and speed of access internet.

To prevent misuse of Internet facilities, proper monitoring of services should be ensured as restricted sites should be blocked.

3. Approximately 80% the main purpose of using internet is mainly for study. But frequently power failure is one of the major problems. So the users are facing lots of problem in accessing internet in academic purpose or collecting other information. To maintain their interest towards these the University must ensure adequate and continuous uninterrupted power supply.

4. Some steps to increase the number of systems with higher configuration and speed of access internet and the library service hours should be increased. So that prolonged stay and study, in the library is possible. Proper training is imparted to the faculty members, research scholars and students. The performance of the post-graduate students, research scholars and teachers of the academic community of universities will be increased to make the Assam



University Campus in particular for effectively accessing to Internet for their academic and research work.



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