

# Online Reading Habits of Doctoral Students in University of Calicut

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**ABSTRACT:** *The purpose of this study is to ascertain the online reading habits of doctoral students in university of Calicut. The main objectives of the study are in what extent the online reading influence the reading habit of the doctoral students and how the online reading help the doctoral students on their research .Using a questionnaire, a quantitative approach was administered to 120 doctoral students in the campus. Findings revealed that the respondents were active Internet users. All respondents, regardless of gender had similar online reading habits and yet they were more inclined toward reading as an academic activity rather than social networking activities.*

**Keywords:** Reading Habit, Online Reading, Doctoral Students, Calicut University

**Received:** 10 September 2018, Revised 19 October 2018, Accepted 29 October 2018

**DOI:** 10.6025/jio/2019/9/1/14-20

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## 1. Introduction

Reading is one of the most important components of our language and it is an essential tool for life learning for all learners. Information technology is growing rapidly and the world depends on computers. It has equally penetrated the field of education and research. The advent of digital media and the growing collection of digital documents have had a profound impact on reading. It was argued that the development of digital libraries “is participating a general societal trend toward shallower, more fragmented, and less concentrate reading” (vans, 2005). The impact of digital media on reading has increasingly been the object of empirical and theoretical exploration by researchers from a wide range of disciplines, notably psychology, computer science, education, literacy studies, and library and information science. Each discipline has developed its unique research focuses and methodology. With the growing amount of digital information available and the increasing amount of time that people

spend reading electronic media, the digital environment has begun to affect people's reading behavior. The shift from print to the computer does not mean the end of literacy itself, but the literacy of print, for electronic technology offers us a new kind of book and new ways of reading. Digital media contribute to a transformative shift in reading. They also introduce a number of powerful advantages that are traditionally absent in the printed environment, such as interactivity, non-linearity, immediacy of accessing information, and the convergence of text and images, audio and video etc. With the growing amount of digital information available and the increasing amount of time that people spent on reading electronic media, the digital environment has begun to affect people's reading behavior. Youth are spending increasing amounts of time in conversations with others in this nonlinear, hyperlinked environment which has significantly influenced the way in which youth read and interact with each other (Thierstein, 2009)

Reading online involves eyes interaction, computer screen, texts presented in hypertext, and comprehension of verbal and non-verbal information (Pino-Silva, 2006). Unlike traditional text forms which typically include a combination of two types of media, print and two dimensional graphics, computer texts integrate a range of symbols and multi-media formats including icons, animated symbols, audio, interactive tables, virtual reality environments and many more (Leu et al., 2004). Computers and the internet play a major role in the way readers are reading around the world and serve perhaps as the most comprehensive source of input (Leu, 2002). The World Wide Web is the virtual library bar none and serves as the most readily available information center for language learners believes that the new media and online literacy are now part and parcel of life and educators need to view 166 them as a central aspect of literacy. However, argued that computer is unlikely to affect significantly reading habits in the perspective of history and current literacy trends.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

**David and Maidel- Kravetlhy (2016)** made a research on the impact of collaborative online reading on summarizing skills. The findings indicated that collaborative online reading and writing produce a higher quality than one read and hand written collaboratively face to face. **Abidin, choon (2014)** carried out a study on online reading habits of Malaysian students. The findings revealed that the respondents were active internet users preferring the use of English as a language in online activities, and also the students have similar online reading habits regardless of gender and socio-economic status. The students were more active in social networking activities rather than academic reading. **Quadeen and Abomoge (2013)** carried out a study on reading habits and internet use of under graduate students in selected universities. The study found that the students use internet and read more online materials for examination purpose and their project works. **Richardson and Mahmood (2012)** is carried out a study on e-book reader; User satisfaction and usability issues. The investigators found that the kindle is the most popular, but regardless of reader the respondents also liked the probability of the reader's as well as the ability to have multiple books on a single reader.

**Purnima and Lal, Pay (2012)** conducted a study on the impact of information technology on reading habits of college students by using questionnaire among 100 college students. The result indicated that the rapid in the information age have resulted in literacy becoming more technological oriented. The results also revealed that students read online information than offline information. **Noorizah Mohd.Noor (2011)** made a study on reading habits and preference of EFL post graduates. The present study examines the reading habits and preference of a group of EFI graduate students. The findings reveals i) material that preferred ii) reasons for reading iii) the preferred language for reading. **Pourmohammadi and Jesmin (2011)** carried out a study on the impact of online reading among the Malaysian rural secondary school students reading habits by using questionnaire as a tool for data collection. It finds that online reading was a highly important strategy in enhancing reading habits among these students, and it was differentiated on the basis of gender deference's. i.e., males appeared to read more hours than females.

## 3. Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to find out the impact of online reading habit of doctoral students in university of Calicut. The major objectives of the study were

1. To find out the impact of online reading on reading habit.
2. To identify the purpose and the major type of online reading materials used by the research scholars' for online reading.
3. To understand how online reading habits affect the research of the research scholars.

4. To find out the difficulties facing by the doctoral students while accessing online reading materials.

#### 4. Research Design

Study is intended to give an overview of the online reading habits of doctoral students among University of Calicut. The study was mainly based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire and used survey method for data collection. The study was conducted among 120 randomly selected fulltime and part time PhD/Doctoral students from various departments in university of Calicut. There are total 750 doctoral students in the campus. The information regarding number of doctoral students collected directly from the departments of the campus and from the annual report. Per cent method was used for analyzing the collected data. Microsoft excel was used for the consolidation of data.

#### 5. Results

##### 5.1 Breakup of the Sample

The study was conducted among 120 (40%) doctoral students in various disciplines such as Science, Commerce, Arts and Humanities.. For this study 120 questionnaires distributed among the Research Scholars in Calicut University. Out of these 114 were received back. Gender wise distribution of the total questionnaire received back is given in the table.

Category	Number of Respondents
Male	28 (24.56%)
Female	86 (75.43%)
Total	114 (95%)

Table 1.

##### 5.2 Impact of Online Reading on Reading Habit

Online reading has tremendous impact on reading habit of the doctoral students. By the introduction of the new technologies changes the pattern of reading. It may lead to change the reading behavior and also effect time spends on the reading. The time spends on the reading and opinion about increase and decrease may depend upon which type of the reading they are interested.

Impact	Male	Female	Total
Reading increased	21 (75%)	57 (66.27%)	78 (68.42%)
Reading decreased	2 (7.14%)	3 (3.49%)	5 (4.63 %)
No effect	0 (0.00%)	10 (11.64%)	10 (8.77%)
Can't say	5 (17.86%)	16 (18.60%)	21 (18.42%)

Table 2. Impact of online reading on reading habit

The data depicts that majority (68.42 per cent) of doctoral students having the opinion reading increased due to the effect of online. Because online materials are very easy to access and which save the time required for the reading. Only very few (4.63 per cent) of doctoral students choose reading is decreased. No effect and can't say opted by (8.77 per cent and 18.42 per cent respectively.

##### 5.3 Purpose of online reading among the Doctoral Students

Doctoral students are reading online materials for various purposes such as up to date knowledge, entertainment, for research etc. There for it is necessary to identify the area/purpose of reading by the doctoral students through online. The respondents were asked to indicate the different purposes for their online reading.

Purpose	Male	Female	Total
To up to date knowledge	24 (85.71%)	55 (63.95%)	79 (69.29%)
For research	25 (89.28%)	77 (89.53%)	102 (89.47%)
For entertainment	13 (46.42%)	43 (50%)	56 (49.12%)
For discussion	9 (32.14%)	24 (27.90%)	33 (28.94%)
Writing research proposals	5 (17.85%)	36 (41.86%)	41 (40.38%)
For writing articles	9 (32.14%)	37 (43.02%)	46 (40.35%)

Table 3. Purpose of online reading

Large majority (89.47 per cent) of respondents reading through online for research purposes. 69.29 per cent of the doctoral students use online reading for up to date knowledge. Because online reading helps to respondents to find out new developments in the particular field.

#### 5.4 Usual Reading Materials used by the Research Scholars

There are different online reading materials read by the research scholars. The usage of material is different in scholar to scholar. The materials which are available through the online are e-books, e-journals, e-mails, etc. Table 4.2 shows the reading materials read by the students in online.

Materials	Never	Rarely	Some times	Often	Very often
<b>E-Book</b>	14(12.28%)	14(12.28%)	42(36.84%)	14(12.28%)	30(26.32%)
E- journal	3(2.63%)	32(28.07%)	17(14.91%)	62(54.39%)	
<b>E-magazine</b>	20(17.54%)	26(22.81%)	35(30.70%)	8(7.02%)	25(21.93%)
<b>e-mails</b>	2(1.75%)	12(10.53%)	19(16.67%)	81(71.05%)	
<b>Online news</b>	4(3.51%)	6(5.26%)	27(23.68%)	22(19.30)	55(48.25%)
<b>Horoscope</b>	76(66.67%)	14(12.28%)	17(14.91%)	5(4.39%)	2(1.75%)
<b>Movie reviews</b>	21(18.42%)	37(32.46%)	35(30.70%)	7(6.14%)	14(12.28%)
<b>Market trends</b>	33(28.95%)	36(31.58%)	28(24.56%)	11(9.65%)	6(5.26%)
<b>Others</b>	17(14.91%)	36(31.58%)	49(42.98%)	8(7.02%)	4(3.51%)

Table 4. Usual reading materials read by the doctoral students

Table indicates e-journals (54.39 per cent) and Emails (71.05 per cent) are the most preferred online materials. They are very often read both the online reading materials. A good per cent of the respondents also very often prefer online news (48.25%). Doctoral students sometimes read E-books (36.84 %) e-magazine (35%) movie reviews (30.705) e-journals (28.07%) and read other online reading materials (42.98%). Doctoral students rarely read movie reviews (32.46%) market trends (31.58%) . 26 % rarely read e-magazines and 31.58% rarely read other online reading materials. Majority of the doctoral students never read horoscope (66.67%) and 28.95 per cent of the respondents are also never read market trends. Because doctoral students are more interested in their topic related reading.

#### 5.5 The ways which Online Reading helps to Research

Doctoral students should keep keen in the latest development the in the technology. Most of the doctoral students opined that online reading have effect on their research. The online reading helps to their research in different ways like, to have deep knowledge in their field, to access previous studies in their field, to cope with latest development in their field and for writing

articles. The table 4.14 point out those total responses of both male and female what ways online reading helps to the doctoral students on research.

<b>The ways online reading helps to research</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>
To cope with the latest development in the field	56 (49.12 %)	48 (42.10%)	3 (2.63%)	5 (4.38%)	2 (1.75 %)
To have deep knowledge in the field	49 (42.98%)	52 (45.61%)	5 (4.38%)	4 (3.50%)	4 (3.50%)
To have access previous studies in the field	55 (48.24%)	50 (43.85%)	2 (1.75%)	2 (1.75%)	5 (4.38%)
To help in writing articles	47 (41.22%)	56 (49.12%)	5 (4.38%)	1 (0.87%)	5 (4.38%)

Table 5. The ways which online reading helps to research

The table illustrates online reading helps to the doctoral students in different ways for doing their research. 49.12 per cent of the respondents strongly agree to the option to cop up with latest development in the field and About 45.61 per cent doctoral students agree that online reading helps to have deep knowledge in the field. 48.24 per cent of the doctoral students strongly agree that online reading helps to access previous studies in the field. A good number (49.12 per cent) agree that online reading helps for writing articles.

### 5.6 Device used for Online Reading

There are different devices are used for online reading. Each research scholar is comfort with different devices. These devices influence the reading habits of the doctoral students. The most commonly used devices among the students for read online are desktop computer, laptop, mobile phone and tablet etc. table depicted the devices used by the students for read online.

<b>Devices</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Laptop	22(78.57%)	83(96.51%)	105(92.10%)
Desktop computer	7(25%)	22(25.58%)	29(25.43%)
Mobile phone	18(72%)	49(56.97%)	67(58.77%)
Tablet	4(14.28%)	10(11.62%)	14(12.28%)

Table 6. Device used for online reading

The table shows that large majority (92.10 per cent) of the students use Laptop as a device for read online. This due to laptop is more convenient for doing their research. Majority (58.77 per cent) of the Doctoral students use Mobile phone for online reading. It also founds that a few number (25.43%) of doctoral students read in desktop computers. A few number (12.28 per cent) of the students use tablet for read online.

### 5.7 Negative Sides of Online Reading

Similar as to the positive sides of the online reading, it have some drawbacks also like slow down loading, speed of the internet, Printing facility, etc. For identify the reading habits among the students, there is a necessary need for find the problems faced by the students when they read online. Table shows that the problems affected by the students in online reading.

Negative sides	Male	Female	Total
Speed of the internet	15 (53.57%)	39 (45.34%)	54 (47.37%)
Slow downloading	15 (53.57%)	39 (45.34%)	54 (47.37%)
Lack of Printing facility	7 (25%)	18 (20.93%)	25 (21.92 %)
Not access full text in many resources	18 (64.28%)	57 (66.27%)	75 (65.79%)
Un awareness about the exact URLS	10 (35.71%)	38 (44.19%)	48 (42.10 %)

Table 7. Negative sides of online reading

## 6. Conclusion

In the modern era online reading habit is an essential and important aspect for crating the literate society. Computer technology had an impact on research of doctoral students. It shapes the personality of an individual and it helps them to develop the proper thinking methods and creating new ideas. Doctoral students are need to read online for improve their results of their research. Doctoral students always keen in accessing previous studies in their field. Online reading helps to access previous studies in all over the world which shapes their research. In this study the result is based on the opinion of 114 Doctoral students in Calicut University. The study can conclude that the majority of the doctoral students read in online. Online reading habits have effect on their research in different ways. Majority of the respondents strongly agree on online reading helps to cope with latest development in the field and also to have deep knowledge in the field. They also agree towards to have access previous studies in the field and for writing articles.

Online reading is useful for different purposes. Large majority of the doctoral students use online reading for their research purpose, and also a good number of respondents use for up to date their knowledge. Online reading is always important for conducting their research in a good manner. The time spends on online reading; frequency, device used, and also the place of reading have tremendous effect on research. The online reading helps access a lot of online materials through the proper devices. Majority of the doctoral students prefer electronic journals for their online reading and also read other materials. Doctoral students' face a lot of problems while read in online slow downloading, speed of the internet and not access full text in many of the resources are the main problems faced by the doctoral students. The majority of the respondents satisfied on online reading and also having the opinion that online reading habits provide positive impact on reading. Because doctoral students opined that online reading increases the reading. There are a lot of problems faced by the doctoral students while accessing online reading materials there should conduct workshops and seminars for provide better awareness on the online reading for getting more advanced online reading materials and also provide the proper infrastructural facilities to the doctoral students. These can promote the online reading and also can improve the research environment in university of Calicut.

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