

A Study on The Level of Attitude of The Ph.D Research Scholars of Dibrugarh University Towards Using Web-Based Information Resources

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ABSTRACT:

Currently, the Web 2.0 is reigning the century. Because the web 2.0 is more than just reading and allows people to create, share and access at the same time . The significance of the web- based information resources could be felt at every sphere of our lives be it personal, professional or academics. These days the web –based information resources are working as a supplement for the students, teachers and scholars as it provides millions of information when needed at one go .This study prioritize on the PhD research scholars of Dibrugarh University to find out their level of attitude towards using web-based information resources. For which the scale to measure the level of attitude towards using web-based information resources was used. The study indicated that the PhD research scholars have a favorable attitude towards using web-based information resources.

Keywords: Internet , Web based information resources, Research scholars

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

The advent of the Internet has brought a revolutionary change, in every aspect of life and especially in the field of Education and Research. On a more comprehensive basis, it can be pointed out that the Internet has some functions, especially in education, and these can be listed as (i) storehouse of information, (ii) communication without boundaries, (iii) online interactive learning, (iv) electronic/online research, (v) innovation in the new world, (vi) improve interest in learning, (vii) global education, and (viii) information catalogues (Park, 2009). When educational aspect of the Internet use is considered, it is obvious that students, or people in general, who look for information can access it easily and with low cost. It is evident that the Internet is a source of enormous information that anything can quickly and easily be reached (Nazan Dogruer *et.al* .2011). During Covid -19 the internet was the only mean that kept everyone busy, alive, updated, enabled taking degrees etc. Madhukulya (2020) stated that the consumption of internet during lockdown increased to 13% from 9% nationwide. The Web (World Wide Web) which is a subset of Internet originated in the year 1989 consists of the multiple pages that provide information from various sources when browsed through Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox. Web-based resources are eminent treasure of knowledge for the learners of new generation to acquire latest and fresh information across the globe. It is said that, the span of an

information is supposed to be of 18 months only for the fact that the web resources keeps on updating the latest facts.

1.1 Uses of web-based information resources:

- a) Web 2.0 is the current state of the internet system with more upgrade version which has user generated content and end to end user interaction whereas earlier version was “Read only Web”. The Web 2.0 has given a huge platform to not only gather information but also to create and connect via social media, virtual connections etc.
- b) With the advancement in the Web-based information resource facility the anticipation to satisfy higher level of needs is also increasing.
- c) The web-based information resources are used for various purposes in our daily life. From extracting information pertaining to health, medical science, foods, economy, politics, trade and commerce, tours and travels, history , geography, fun facts and trivia , space , education and a lot more. It encompasses minute of the minute data.
- d) In terms of educational context the various web-based information resources such as videos, contents, podcasts, books, research papers, journals, blogs, sites like -Wikipedia, Quora, Jstor , Sodhganga, Elsevier, Google scholar, Unacademy, Byjus and a thousands more aids for better learning and understanding knowledge gaining.
- e) The web-based information resources gives an opportunity to acquire, create and exchange knowledge. It is now providing opportunity for all the people across the globe and creating a hub of knowledge.
- f) Education is no longer limited to books but it has enabled every person access knowledge on their own through e-books. It has brought a shift in learning process.
- g) Web- based information resources has made learning barrier free and open for all.

1.2 Web-based information resources and the research scholars:

The Web- based resources are the storehouse of knowledge for the Researchers and Academicians. Back in the 20th century researchers were confined only to hand written materials and works were limited to in house publishing with less access and transaction. The emergence of Open Access (OA) resources due to development of Word Wide Web and other advanced new technologies have created huge amount of information in which majority are peer-reviewed (Tina, 2015). In this web-based environment, the information resources and services can be accessed and delivered as and when required, therefore, the services of the libraries are not confined with the four walls, but are integrated into local, regional, national and international networks (Dr.Iqbal.2016). The researchers relies on other web sources such as online newspapers, videos, contents, podcasts, books, research papers, journals, blogs, Wikipedia, Quora, Jstor , Sodhganga and other sites which aid in education and research purpose. The web-based information is a boon to the researchers for not only the purpose of acquiring data but also to store a quality data for future. Web-based resources played a vital role in the time of crisis during the Covid 19 pandemic for the researchers as well to void the physical library access. The web- based resources supported many research work with the secondary data sources.

1.3 Utility of web-based information resources in education during covid -19

During the period of 2020 to 2021 the educational dimension had reached a different level, the web based information resources played a major role. The challenging phase has bound all the students and academicians to double up the usage of the internet and the web based information resource to cope up the situation. The web-based information resources helped the school students to aid the academics, fill the void of a teacher or tutor. The candidates through ODL and MOOC could continue their courses. The competitive examinees could also continue their studies even during lockdown and remained motivated. The research scholars were able to quench the need of data from the secondary sources, the web-based information resources helped the research scholars remain abreast of the latest findings in the research ecosystem during that period.

2.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The 21st century researchers are more active, updated and technologically sound which is why they need an environment that can avail the required resources to cater their needs for brilliant research works to conduct. It is of utmost necessity to know the researchers needs, thoughts, ideas for providing them a better research environment. Thus, in order to read their minds, the present study was conducted to find out how convenient and helpful this web-based information resources are for the Ph.D Research Scholars of Dibrugarh University , to keep update of the emerging problems and find the needs of the society and to connect with the nook and corners across the globe, being situated away from the mainstream India.

The period of Covid-19 pandemic was of great challenge itself for the researchers to conduct the research works in due time for the fact that they could not visit the field for data collection or could not visit library physically. So, they had to draw maximum benefits out from the web based resources and online library facility. To know the minds of the Dibrugarh University research scholars after the pandemic, the attitude test towards the web-based information resources will help to know and how much these web-based information resources compensated their need in the Covid-19 situation and filled the void.

Thus ,also the present study will be of great help for the administrators and the research guides and other academicians to find out the best way out for the research scholars of the university to access web-based information resources and assist them throughout the course to draw maximum benefit out from the web-based information resources for their research work and make a convenient digital learning environment.

3.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE PRESENT STUDY:

3.1.To study the level of attitude of the Ph.D Research Scholars of Dibrugarh University towards using Web -Based Information resources.

4.0 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Considering the constraint of time the study was limited to following aspects-

4.1 The researcher delimited the study only to the Ph.D Research Scholars of Dibrugarh University.

4.2 The researcher delimited the study to the academic sessions of 2019-2020, 2020-21,2021-22 of Ph.D program.

5.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

5.1 Studies conducted in india:

Vasappa & Shivalingaiah (2007) conducted a research entitled “ E –resources of Information: A study of attitudes of Research scholar”. The findings are that the majority of the Research scholars prefer printed forms of information. Science research scholars depend more on electronic resources compared to humanities and social science. Majority of the science scholars have needed electronic resources for their research and due to it they have improved the quality of research. In all the discipline, the research scholars expressed that they need training program for the proper utilization of the resources , facilities and services.

Deepa,P,K & Abdul,A.(2016) in their study on “Use of Web based Information Resources and Services by Research Scholars: A case study of the University of Calicut” found that most of the research scholars are not utilising the web services provided through the library properly as the research scholars are unaware of the facilities which are provided through the web. The web-based services are hidden behind the library website and to reach this service to the users, library should provide training and orientation classes from time to time..

Mumtaj (2019) conducted a research on the Use of Web Based Resources in Research in IIT’s in India whose findings were that all the scholars and faculty members are aware of the web based information and believes it plays a significant role in researcher’s life by helping them in their academic task. Social networking sites are substantial source for familiarizing research scholars and faculty members with web based information. Moreover, training and workshops play a small but important role in getting information about web based information. And researchers of IIT’s came to know about web based information resources from their teachers.

Nisha,C.(2020) conducted a research work entitled “ A study on Attitude of Research Scholars towards Open Access Resources” and the findings were such that as open access journals are more easily accessible and consistent, the graduate students are most interested to use open access and open publishing. The study shows that there is no clarity in opinion regarding the peer - reviewing system in open access platforms. Researchers believe that open access are cost effective and they are used effectively in qualitative research because high quality of the journals and books are published in an open access platform.

5.2 Studies conducted abroad:

Serder,C.*et al.*(2010) conducted a research “Attitude of Distance Education students towards Web Based learning – A case study” to assess the attitude towards web based learning and assess if the attitude towards web based learning differ according to the gender, age, grade level and the program they attend. It is found that attitude did not change according to the age level but changed according to the grade level and there are statistically differences between attitude level scores of students from five different programs.

Dogruer,N.*et al.*(2011) conducted a study “The use of the internet for educational purposes” and the findings were that the majority of the students believed they can use the Internet as an educational tool. They stated that they used social websites to share knowledge and talk about school subjects. They also claimed that they could easily use the Internet to find sources of information, download necessary files and pictures and so on. Moreover, the participants stated that they used e-dictionaries, e-encyclopedias and translation tools to help them write their homework and do their projects.

Duersen,A,J,V.(2020) in the study “Digital Inequality During a Pandemic: Quantitative Study of Differences in COVID-19–Related Internet Uses and Outcomes Among the General Population” found that Several groups of people were identified as vulnerable, such as older people and people with lower levels of education, physical health problems, higher levels of neuroticism, low literacy levels, and low levels of trust. The general conclusion is that people who are already relatively advantaged are more likely to use the information and communication opportunities provided by the internet to their benefit in a health pandemic, while more disadvantaged individuals are less likely to benefit.

Affum,M,Q.(2022) in his study “The effect of internet on students studies: a review” found that the internet is very useful in the learning outcomes of students, however there are several negative impacts that can cause students to decline in their learning outcomes and therefore they have to set time boundaries for themselves when using the internet and authorities should assist students to overcome some of the challenges faced by students in learning electronically with the internet.

6.0 METHODOLOGY:

6.1 Method of the study:

Descriptive survey method was used in the present study.

6.2 Population:

The population for the present study comprised of all the Ph.D research scholars pursuing Ph.D program in the 17 Departments and 7 Centers of Studies of Dibrugarh University in the academic sessions 2019-2020,2020-2021,2021-2022 . The Table 1 shows the detail of the population of the study-

**Table 1
Population of the Study**

SI No.	Departments	No.of Students	Centers	No. of Students
1	ASSAMESE	36	PHILOSOPHY	07
2	ENGLISH	11	PERFORMING ARTS	09
3	HISTORY	24	MANAGEMENT STUDIES	18
4	POLITICAL SCIENCE	20	ATMOSPHERIC STUDIES	06
5	SOCIOLOGY	25	BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOINFORMATICS	04
6	ECONOMICS	26	GEOGRAPHY	10
7	EDUCATION	34	SOCIAL WORK	05
8	COMMERCE	18		
9	PHYSICS	21		
10	CHEMISTRY	48		

11	MATHEMATICS	38		
12	STATISTICS	20		
13	ANTHROPOLOGY	14		
14	PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE	27		
15	LIFESCIENCE	27		
16	APPLIED GEOLOGY	25		
17	PETROLEUM TECHNOLOGY	18		

TOTAL 491

6.3 Sample of the study:

The sample of the present study comprised of all the Ph.D research scholars who were present in the 17 Departments and 7 Centers of Studies of Dibrugarh University at the time of collection of data. Thus, a sample of 132 Ph.D research scholars were selected using Incidental sampling technique.

6.4 Sampling technique:

The sampling technique used in the present study was Incidental sampling technique to select Ph.D research scholars from 17 Departments and 7 Centers of Studies of Dibrugarh University.

6.5 Tool used in the study:

In the present study, Attitude towards using Web –Based Information Resources Scale developed by Mumtaj and Dr. P.M Naushad Ali (2018) was used.

6.5.1 Description of the scale-

The Attitude towards using web-Based Information resources scale was developed by Mumtaj and Dr. P.M Naushad Ali (2018) to measure attitude towards using web resources in higher educational institutes. The scale covers the dimensions viz. Acceptance of web resources, Perceived advantages, User’s satisfaction, Impact of web-based resources on academics and Obstacles during usage of web-based resources. The scale consists of 39 items in total out of which 32 are positive (favorable) and 7 are negative (unfavorable) items.

6.5.2 Scoring procedure-

The scale consists of 32 positive items means favorable worded and remaining 7 negative items means unfavorable worded and the response is on the 5 point Likert type scale which are Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. The table below shows the scoring of the scale.

Table 2 Scoring Key

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

6.5.3 Reliability –

The reliability was obtained by Mumtaj and Dr.P.M Naushad Ali of Aligarh Muslim University calculating AlphaCranach’s between domain and total values. It was found to be .81 as shown in the given table 3 which is very high which denotes that the scale is highly reliable.

Table 3 Reliability of the scale

Cronobach’s Alpha	Chronobach’s alpha Based on Standardised Items	No.of items
.826	.815	39

6.5.4 Validity-

Face and content validity of the scale were tested by Mumtaj and P.M.Naushad Ali of Aligarh Muslim University. They gave the scale to 12 experts to evaluate the items, only those items with 75% agreement were retained but in order to formulate definite validity items were selected having the ‘t’value equal or more than 1.75.

6.5.5 Norms-

An individual’s score on the scale is the sum of the score of 39 items. The score ranges from 30 to 195. The minimum score that one can get is 39 and the maximum score that one can score is 195. The norms of the scale is mentioned below.

Table 4 Norms of the Scale

Interpretation	Scores
Highly Unfavorable	39-50
Unfavorable	51-78
eutral	79-117
Favorable	118-156
Highly Favorable	157-195

6.6 Statistical techniques used:

In the present study, Mean ,Median, Mode , Skewness and Kurtosis were used to study the level of attitude of the Ph.D research scholars of Dibrugarh University towards using of Web- Based Information resources.

7.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis and interpretation of data has been discussed under the following heading-

7.1 LEVEL OF ATTITUDE OF THE PH.D RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY TOWARDS USING WEB -BASED INFORMATION RESOURCES:

To study the level of the attitude of the Ph.D research scholars of Dibrugarh University towards using web- based information resources, a standard classification based on the norms as specified in the Manual of the “Attitude Towards using Web-Based Information Resources Scale” developed by Mumtaj and P.M Naushad Ali is presented below in the Table No.5

Table 5 Level of Attitude of the Ph.D research scholars of Dibrugarh University towards using Web -Based Information Resources

INTERPRETATION	SCORES	NO.OF STUDENTS
Highly Unfavorable	39 -50	0
Unfavorable	51-78	0
Neutral	79-117	1
Favorable	118-156	105
Highly Favorable	157-195	26

The table 5 shows that **0** no. of Ph.D scholars fall in Highly Unfavorable and Unfavorable category , **1** no. of Ph.D scholar fall in Neutral category, **105** nos. of Ph.D scholars fall under Favorable category and **26** nos. of Ph.D scholars fall in Highly Favorable category. On the basis of these it can be interpreted that no Ph.D scholar have highly unfavorable and unfavorable attitude towards using Web-Based Information resources. On the other hand **1** Ph.D scholar is neutral in his/her attitude towards using Web-Based Information resources. Again, **105** Ph.D scholars have favorable attitude towards using Web-Based Information resources and **26** Ph.D scholars have highly favorable attitude towards using Web-Based Information resources.

For better understanding the graphical representation of the level of attitude of the Ph.D Research Scholars of Dibrugarh University towards Using Web-Based Information Resources is presented below-

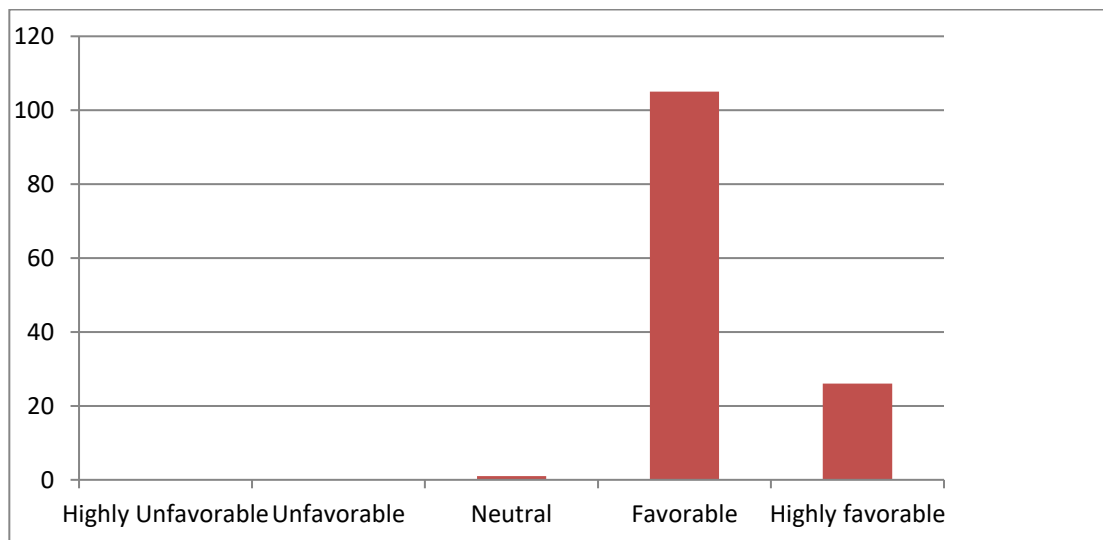


Figure 1 : Level of Attitude of the Ph.D research scholars of Dibrugarh University towards using Web -Based Information Resources

Different measures of attitude of the Ph.D Research Scholars of Dibrugarh University towards using Web-Based Information resources shows a clear picture in this context

Table 6 Levels of Attitude of the Ph.D Research Scholars of Dibrugarh University towards using Web-Based Information resources

Variables	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Attitude towards using Web-Based information resources	147.98	148.00	154	11.16	-.080	0.303

The computed value of mean, median and mode mentioned in the table above is 147.98 , 148.00 and 154 respectively which shows that the average score obtained by the Ph.D scholars is 147.98 , the middle value is 148 of the total data and most frequently scored number is 154. The computed standard deviation is 11.16.

The computed value of skewness -.080 indicates that the distribution of the scores in the attitude scale is skewed negatively or towards left as scores are massed at the high end of the scale. The kurtosis value is .303 which indicates that the distribution of the attitude score is platykurtic. **8.0**

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

8.1 LEVEL OF ATTITUDE OF THE PH.D RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF DIBRUGARH UNIVERSITY TOWARDS USING WEB-BASED INFORMATION RESOURCES:

The study revealed that, **0** no. of student fall in Highly favorable and Favorable category , **1** no. of student fall in neutral category, **105** nos. of students fall under Favorable category and **26** nos. of students fall in Highly Favorable category. The computed value of mean, median and mode is 147.98 , 148.00 and 154 respectively which shows that the average score obtained by the PhD scholars is 147.98 , the middle value is 148 of the total data and most frequently scored number is 154. The computed standard deviation is 11.16.

The computed value of skewness -.080 indicates that the distribution of the scores in the attitude scale is skewed negatively or towards left as scores are massed at the high end of the scale.

The kurtosis value is .303 which indicates that the distribution of the attitude score is platykurtic.

9.0 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

- This study provides a clear picture to the academicians and the administrators regarding the attitude of the Ph.D Research Scholars towards using Web-Based Information resources to take initiatives accordingly.
- This study may also help the concerned authority to take steps to improve the existing internet facility, Web OPAC facility in order to make the researchers more motivated to work in a fast pace and make optimum use of web resources.

10.0 CONCLUSION:

Web –based information resources are a pivotal part of a researcher’s life. Every Ph.D Research Scholar is found incorporating online resources and relying on web-based information for their research work. From this study, it is revealed that the Ph.D Research Scholars are having a favorable attitude towards using Web-Based Information resources.

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