

USERS PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS OF INTERNET SERVICES IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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Abstract:

Internet is the most important advent of Information Technology. Internet today represents millions of computers and the world connected in a single network in which the ranges of services are available. Internet is a world wide network of computers resources. It has emerged as an important source of information for all sections of people. Faster and widely available internet is considered an important requirement for communication, public administration, entrepreneurship and innovation in the community. Internet is the main source of academic reference. Internet services are available in all parts of the country including rural and remote areas. As internet services are widely used by the public, also much technological advancement are coming up every day, the internet service providers need to understand their customers, in order to segment their potential and profitable customer market. A study to assess the preferences, technical requirements, and economic considerations in the light of their socio economic factors of internet service buyers with a specific geographical area is required. The Internet has experienced tremendous growth worldwide. Internet is a world wide computer network that can be accessed via a computer, mobile telephone, PDA, games machine, digital TV, etc. An Internet User is therefore defined as an individual who can access the Internet, via computer or mobile device, with in the home where the individual lives.

Keywords: Internet, Service providers, Computer network, Customers, Entrepreneurship and Technology.

Introduction

Internet is a world wide network of computers resources. It has emerged as an important source of information for all sections of people. As of now, many people log on the web and search for information instead of going to the newspaper or television to get information. As the number of people who use the Internet is growing, most people now accept that Internet is a revolutionary new medium that has changed the lifestyles remarkably. The Internet has several distinctive features. First, the Internet is an active and interactive medium. In other words, the Internet is a two way medium. The person who uses the Internet is called as the 'user', not a viewer or listener. 'User' suggests activeness and controllability. Internet

users can create information by themselves or actively search and reach the information on the web. Internet has created new challenges for the society and most threatening among these is the impact it has had on the young generation of users including the children, adolescents and youth. Internet addiction has been recognized as a disorder in many countries, and rehabilitation centers have been created to help people to get over it. Customers availing the internet services are spread across various demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic groups of the society. Internet services are being provided by the government-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd and many other private internet service providers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the present age of information Technology, use of Internet is becoming quite popular for accessing information on any topic of interest. It also provides tremendous opportunities to students; researchers and professionals for getting information on matters related to academic and professional topics and lot more. In the present world, most of the people who have computers around themselves use Internet to access information from the World Wide Web, exchange messages and documents and e-services. Buying internet services and the choice of an internet service provider depend on many economic and non-economic variables. Therefore it is necessary to study the buying behaviour of internet users and the factors influencing their choice of internet service providers. Hence, the researcher has attempted this study titled “Users Perception and Awareness of Internet Services in Coimbatore District”.

OBJECTIVES

- To know the level of awareness on the features of Internet by the Internet users
- To identify the service factors influencing the selection of Internet service.
- To know the sources and perception of the Internet user in choosing Internet service
- To identify the satisfaction level of Internet user on Internet service

1.7 HYPOTHESES

1. Awareness regarding internet varies according to category of users
2. Buying decisions of the internet users are influenced by their peers, relatives or friends
3. Choice of Internet Service Provider is influenced by the demographic, socioeconomic factors of internet users

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is confined to the geographical area of Coimbatore District, including all urban and rural areas in the district. This study will focus on the internet service users through an identifiable single telephone, mobile phone or a computer. Internet access through Wi-Fi connections are covered in this study as it is an institutional arrangement for a mass. The study will include the information captured from the internet users and internet service providers through two separate enquiries. Findings of the study

dy will add to the theoretical body of knowledge by providing a base for market segmentation of internet users which may be considered for extending to other geographical regions. The study will be useful for government and the service providers in making policy on internet.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study confines to a sample of respondents restricted to a geographical area. The results of the study are based on the perception of sample respondents of the study area. Therefore, its findings are difficult to be generalized beyond the universe. However, the methodology is replicable. Personal interview method of data collection and scaling techniques were used to minimize response error. The instrument of data collection was carefully evaluated for its construct validity and reliability. These efforts minimized errors in measurement and bias in response, but they are not totally absent.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Srikantaiah and Xiaoying (1998)¹ stated that the internet has significantly changed information management in developed countries through creating pressure to improve communications systems and develop more user-friendly environments for information sharing.

Xun Liu and Robert LaRose (2008)² examined whether the Internet improves life satisfaction. The study revealed that Internet use, perceived online social support, and online social self-efficacy had direct positive impacts on school life satisfaction. This study established a possible causal mechanism that links life online to an indicator of psychological well-being.

Xu, J. (2015)³ investigated how consumers adopt and use the mobile Internet by focusing on consumers' cross-platform consumption behavior on mobile devices. The author examined whether the quality of local fixed-line Internet service influences mobile Internet adoption and usage.

REVIEW OF INDIAN STUDIES

Bavakutty and Salih (1999)⁴ conducted a study at Calicut University which showed that students, research scholars, and teachers used the Internet for the purpose of study, research and teaching respectively.

Manjunatha S (2013)⁵ brought out that the rampant usage of Social Networking sites among young college students in India. Their usage pattern of Social Networking sites, hours spending per week, gender differentiation in its usage, purpose of membership, their level of intimate relationships with online friends and much more interesting aspects have been dealt scientifically in this paper.

Saranya, J., and Sudha, D.S. (2014)⁶ showed how the youngsters are getting addicted towards usage of internet. Internet is easy to access for youngsters for the new research findings and to obtain information. Youngsters can easily adopt also new digital technologies from the internet.

Research Gap:

Internet provides an economical and speedy communication for the world community. Right from the children to the elders, all are highly dependent on internet for their communication and information searching needs. Most of the e-governance system has been accessed through internet. Not much of the studies have been documented in the theory on the buying behavior of all the internet users and their preference in the choice of internet service providers, particularly in a geographical region like Coimbatore District. This research gap would be addressed by the present study. Through the present study, the service providers may be able to understand the buying preferences, choices and technical requirements of the internet users relating to internet services.

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ANALYSIS OF BUYING STRATEGIES OF INTERNET USERS

OVERALL LEVEL OF AWARENESS

Table: 1.1 Descriptive Statistics for the Level of Awareness on the Features of Internet

Features	Urban			Rural			Overall Mean
	Mean	Rank for Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Rank for Mean	Std. Deviation	
E-mail	4.80	1	.437	4.89	1	.358	4.84
Browsing	4.19	2	.468	4.09	3	.527	4.14
E-Booking	4.10	3	.559	4.11	2	.541	4.10

Features	Urban			Rural			Overall Mean
	Mean	Rank for Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Rank for Mean	Std. Deviation	
Search engines	3.99	4	.678	4.08	4	.586	4.03
Chatting	3.88	5	.728	3.90	5	.739	3.89
Frequently Asked Questions	2.93	6	.435	2.95	6	.368	2.94
Remote login (Telnet)	2.86	9	.477	2.92	7	.398	2.89
E-Banking	2.88	7	.501	2.88	8	.469	2.88
Bulletin Board Service (BBS)	2.88	8	.471	2.88	9	.454	2.88
Archie	1.25	10	.435	1.25	10	.436	1.25
Listserv/Discussion Group	1.24	11	.428	1.22	11	.414	1.23
File Transfer Protocol (FTP)	1.22	12	.418	1.18	12	.389	1.21
Overall Awareness	3.02	-	.19565	3.03	-	.18299	3.024
Total	321			292			613

Source: Primary data collected by the Researcher

TEST TO COMPARE AVERAGE LEVELS OF AWARENESS

Table: 1.2 Results of the Test for comparing the average level of awareness between Urban and Rural Respondents

Feature of Internet	Value of t	df	Sig. p (2-tailed)
E-mail	-2.685	604	.007
Browsing	2.676	611	.008
Search engines	-1.780	611	.076
Remote login (Telnet)	-1.641	607	.101
File Transfer Protocol (FTP)	1.208	611	.227
Archie	-.031	611	.975
Listserv/Discussion Group	.607	611	.544
E-Banking	-.129	611	.898
E-Booking	-.369	611	.712
Bulletin Board Service (BBS)	-.218	611	.827

Feature of Internet	Value of t	df	Sig. p(2-tailed)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	-.635	608	.526
Chatting	-.264	611	.792

Source: Primary data collected by the Researcher

t-TEST TO COMPARE AVERAGE LEVELS OF INFLUENCE OF THE SOURCES

H₀:

There is no significant difference between the average levels of influence of the sources between rural and urban respondents in buying internet services.

H₁:

There is a significant difference between the average levels of influence of the sources between rural and urban respondents in buying internet services.

Table: 1.3 Result of the Test for comparing the average level of influence of sources

Source of Influence	Value of t	df	Sig. p(2-tailed)
Newspapers	-1.500	611	.134
Television, Radio	.036	611	.971
Websites and Internet	-1.822	611	.069
Family Members	-.189	611	.850
Friends and Relatives	.415	611	.679
Retail Service Provider	-.082	611	.934
Employer organization	-.677	611	.499

Source: Primary data collected by the Researcher

OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE FACTORS

Table: 1.4 Distribution of Respondents by their Level of overall importance on internet service factors

Level of overall importance		Urban	Rural	Total
Moderate	Count	112	87	199
	% of Total	18.3%	14.2%	32.5%
High	Count	199	188	387
	% of Total	32.5%	30.7%	63.1%
Very High	Count	10	17	27

	%ofTotal	1.6%	2.8%	4.4%
Total	Count	321	292	613
	%ofTotal	52.4%	47.6%	100.0%

Source:PrimarydatacollectedbytheResearcher

PERCEPTIONONTHECHOICEOFINTERNETSERVICEPROVIDERS

Table:1.5StatementsontheChoiceofInternetServiceProviderswiththeir MeanScores

Sl. No	Statement	Mean Score	StdDeviation	RankfortheMeanScore
S1	Tohaveaserviceproviderwhohaswidenetworkcoverage.	4.35	0.651	2
S2	Customercareavailabilityhelpsalotinadoptinginternetserviceprovider.	4.25	0.709	3
S3	AdoptinganinternetserviceproviderhavinggoodImage.	3.56	0.685	9
S4	AttractedtowardsthenumberoffreeDatadownloadgivenbyserviceprovider.	4.08	0.386	5
S5	Advertisement/mediainfluencesmosttohaveaspecificserviceprovider.	3.69	0.662	8
S6	Tohavelesspaperformalities.	3.46	0.726	10
S7	Botherabouttheconvenienceofbillpaymentcentres.	2.98	0.41	12
S8	Localretailerrecommendedtohaveaspecificinternetserviceprovider.	3.88	0.549	6
S9	Lowchargesmotivatetoadoptaninternetserviceprovider	4.19	0.698	4
S10	Alwayspreferconvenientpurchaseofinternetserviceinmyarea.	2.94	0.379	13
S11	Properguidanceandknowledgeprovidedbyserviceproviderhasadvantageofotherserviceprovidersinthemarket.	2.76	0.471	14
S12	Totrytheserviceproviderwhoprovidesmorevalue-added services.	3.79	0.57	7
S13	Neighboursandfriendshavetheconnectionofserviceprovider.	3.02	0.406	11
S14	Idon'ttakeintoaccountthevarietyofplansandattractingschemesprovidedbyinternetserviceprovider.	1.85	0.524	15
S15	Serviceisanimportantvariablewhileoptingforinternetserviceprovider.	4.62	0.605	1
S16	Noconsiderationforotherpeople'sexperienceabouttheserviceprovider.	1.77	0.418	16

Source:PrimarydatacollectedbytheResearcher

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TEST FOR THE PERCEPTION ON CHOICE OF INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER

H₀:

‘There is no significant difference in level of perception among the subgroups of the variables as far as the choice of service provider is concerned’ was tested at 5% level of significance using ANOVA test.

Table: 1.6 Result of Analysis of Variance Test for the significance of Difference among the subgroups

Variable	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Value of F	Sig. p
Age	Between Groups	.240	4	.060	1.010	.401
	Within Groups	36.137	608	.059		
	Total	36.378	612			
Educational Status	Between Groups	.331	5	.066	1.115	.351
	Within Groups	36.047	607	.059		
	Total	36.378	612			
Employment Status	Between Groups	.490	5	.098	1.656	.143
	Within Groups	35.888	607	.059		
	Total	36.378	612			
Family Size	Between Groups	.062	3	.021	.346	.792
	Within Groups	36.316	609	.060		
	Total	36.378	612			
Number of Earning Members in the Family	Between Groups	.114	3	.038	.641	.589
	Within Groups	36.263	609	.060		
	Total	36.378	612			
Monthly Family Income	Between Groups	.155	5	.031	.519	.762
	Within Groups	36.223	607	.060		
	Total	36.378	612			

NumberofYears ofUsingInternet	BetweenGroups	.250	3	.083	1.403	.241
	WithinGroups	36.128	60 9	.059		
	Total	36.378	61 2			
ModeofInternetAccess	BetweenGroups	.449	3	.150	2.538	.056
	WithinGroups	35.928	60 9	.059		
	Total	36.378	61 2			
InternetServiceProvider	BetweenGroups	.809	8	.101	1.717	.091
	WithinGroups	35.569	60 4	.059		
	Total	36.378	61 2			

Source: Primary data collected by the Researcher

CHISQUARETESTFORTESTINGTHERELATIONSHIPOFTHELEVELOFPERCEPTIONANDSOCIOECONOMICFACTORS

H₀:

There is no significant relationship between the level of perception on the choice of service provider and the socio-economic variables, viz., Domicile, Age, Gender, Educational Status, Employment Status, Family Size, Number of Earning Members in the family, Monthly Family Income, Years of Using Internet, Mode of Accessing Internet, Internet Service Provider, Scheme of Payment, Awareness on Internet Features.

Table: 1.7 Result of Chi Square Test for Testing the Relationship between Perception on Choice of Service Provider and Socio Economic variables

Sl.No	Relationship between Perception on Choice of Service Provider and Socio Economic variables	Chi-Square	df	p value	Inference at 5% level of Significance
1	Domicile	11.009	2	.004	Relationship is very Significant
2	Age	6.936	8	.544	Relationship is not Significant
3	Gender	4.946	2	.084	Relationship is not Significant
4	Educational Status	16.357	10	.090	Relationship is not Significant
5	Employment Status	10.243	10	.419	Relationship is not Significant

Sl.No	RelationshipbetweenPerceptiononChoiceofServiceProviderand Socio Economic variables	Chi-Square	df	pvalue	Inferenceat5%levelofSignificance
6	FamilySize	6.505	6	.369	RelationshipisnotSignificant
7	NumberofEarningMembersinthefamily	10.240	6	.115	RelationshipisnotSignificant
8	MonthlyFamilyIncome	11.328	10	.333	RelationshipisnotSignificant
9	YearsofUsingInternet	2.780	6	.836	RelationshipisnotSignificant
10	ModeofAccessingInternet	12.446	6	.053	RelationshipisnotSignificant
11	InternetServiceProvider	17.903	16	.330	RelationshipisnotSignificant
12	SchemeofPayment	7.206	2	.027	RelationshipisverySignificant
13	AwarenessonInternetFeatures	5.093	6	.532	RelationshipisnotSignificant

Source:PrimarydatacollectedbytheResearcher

FACTORANALYSISFORTHESTATEMENTSONCHOICEOFSERVICEPROVIDERS

Table:1.8StatementsAdoptedinthestudyforchoosingaServiceProvider

S.No	PerceptiononChoosingServiceProvider
S1	Tohaveaserviceproviderwhohaswidenetworkcoverage.
S2	Customercareavailabilityhelpsalotinadoptinginternetserviceprovider.
S3	AdoptinganinternetserviceproviderhavinggoodImage.
S4	AttractedtowardsthenumberoffreeDatadownloadgivenbyserviceprovider.
S5	Advertisement/mediainfluencesmosttohaveaspecificserviceprovider.
S6	Tohavelesspaperformalities.
S7	Botherabouttheconvenienceofbillpaymentcenters.
S8	Localretailerrecommendedhavingaspecificinternetserviceprovider.
S9	Lowchargesmotivatetoadoptaninternetserviceprovider
S10	Alwayspreferconvenientpurchaseofinternetserviceinmyarea.

S11	Proper guidance and knowledge provided by service provider has advantage over other service providers in the market.
S12	To try the service provider who provides more value-added services.
S13	Neighbours and friends have the connection of service provider.
S14	I don't take into account the variety of plans and attracting schemes provided by internet service provider.
S15	Service is an important variable while opting for internet service provider.
S16	No consideration for other people's experience about the service provider.

Factor Analysis can be applied only if there is evidence for significant correlation among these statements. It is to be ascertained whether the statements are correlated and then to reduce the number of variables to fewer Factors. The correlation matrices (Annexure I) are computed and examined which revealed that there are enough correlations to go ahead with factor analysis. For applying the Factor Analysis technique, first the sampling adequacy is tested using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy is computed as 0.768 for these 16 statements. The overall significance of correlation matrices is tested with Bartlett Test of Sphericity. Statements adopted in the study of reasons for choosing a particular service provider by the buyers (approx. chi-square = 3000.066 significant at 0.0) provided as well as support for the validity of the factor analysis of the dataset. Bartlett's test was used to test the null hypothesis that the variables of this study are not correlated. Since the appropriate chi-square value is 3000.066 which is significant at 5% level, the test leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirmed that the statements are correlated and hence factor Analysis applied.

TABLE: 1.9 Results of KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.768
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3000.066
	df	120
	Sig.	.000

Number of factors to be retained depends on the proportion of total variance explained by each factor. The proportion of variance expressed by Eigenvalue of the factor. In a factor analysis, all factors having the Eigenvalue greater than 1 are generally retained. This can also be verified through a pictorial method, called Scree Plot, which will have a sudden elbow break at the number of factors to be retained in a Factor Analysis. Results of Factor Analysis are represented.

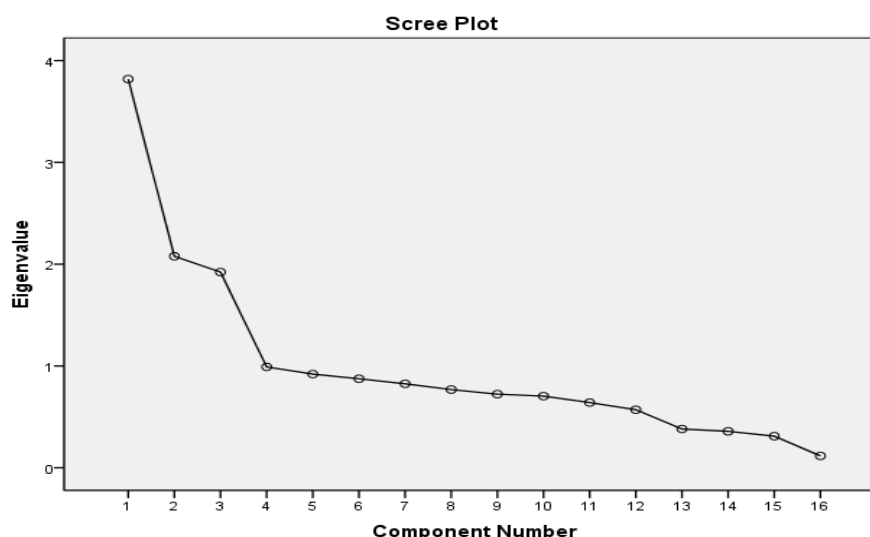


Figure:1.1 Scree Plot for deciding the Number Factor to be retained

Table:1.10 Factors Extracted

Factor No.	Name of Factor	Statement	Statement No.	Factor Loading
Factor1	Impression and Infrastructure	To have a service provider who has wide network coverage.	S1	0.927
		To have less paper formalities.	S6	0.864
		Adopting an internet service provider having good Image.	S3	0.744
		Advertisement/media influences most to have a specific service provider.	S5	0.701
		Local retailer recommended having a specific internet service provider.	S8	0.657
		Bother about the convenience of bill payment centers.	S7	0.541
		Customer care availability helps a lot in adopting internet service provider.	S2	0.511
		Attracted towards the number of free Data download given by service provider.	S4	0.418
Factor2	Economy and convenience	Low charges motivate to adopt an internet service provider	S9	0.872
		To try the service provider who provides more value-added services	S12	0.801
		Always prefer convenient purchase of internet service in my area.	S10	0.567
		Proper guidance and knowledge provided by service provider has advantage over other service providers in the market.	S11	0.545
Factor3	Service Attraction	Service is an important variable while opting for internet service provider.	S15	0.871
		No consideration for other people's experience about the service provider.	S16	0.715
		Neighbours and friends have the connection of service provider.	S13	0.637

		Idon'ttakeintoaccountthevarietyofplansandattractingschemesprovidedbyinternetserviceprovider.	S14	0.499
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MULTIPLELINEARREGRESSIONMODELFORCHOICEOFSERVICEPROVIDER

Levelofperceptiononthechoiceofinternetserviceproviderishypotheticallydependentonmanysocioeconomicandothervariablesrelatingtoabuyer. Therefore, a multiple regression model is attempted for empirically computing the level of perception on choice of service provider (CSP) (dependant Variable) with a set of predictors (independent variables) such as Domicile (D), Age (A), Gender (G), Educational Status (ED), Employment Status (EM), Family Size (FS), Number of Earning Members (NE), Monthly Family Income (MI), Year of Using Internet (YRS), Mode of Internet Access (MO), Internet Service Provider (ISP).

$$CSP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 D + \beta_2 A + \beta_3 G + \beta_4 ED + \beta_5 EM + \beta_6 FS + \beta_7 NE + \beta_8 MI + \beta_9 YRS + \beta_{10} MO + \beta_{11} ISP$$

Table:1.11 Estimated Linear Regression Coefficients for Choice of Service Provider

Variables of Regression Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig. p
(Constant)	3.513	.075		46.967	.000
Domicile (D)	-.010	.020	-.021	-.509	.611
Age (A)	-.002	.011	-.007	-.140	.888
Gender (G)	-.048	.020	-.099	-2.393	.017
Educational Status (ED)	-.001	.010	-.004	-.068	.946
Employment Status (EM)	-.008	.007	-.055	-1.140	.255
Family Size (FS)	-.025	.019	-.092	-1.317	.188
Number of Earning Members (NE)	.009	.031	.029	.298	.766
Monthly Family Income (MI)	.014	.016	.072	.878	.380
Year of Using Internet (YRS)	.015	.014	.055	1.030	.303
Mode of Internet Access (MO)	.019	.011	.072	1.766	.078
Internet Service Provider (ISP)	-.010	.005	-.080	-1.985	.048

Source: Primary data collected by the Researcher

Hence, the estimable regression model is

CSP=3.513-0.021D-0.007A-0.099G-0.004ED-0.055EM-0.092FS+.029NE+.072MI+.055YRS+.072MO-.080ISP

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Major findings of the study are represented here

1. Respondents from urban and rural areas are 52.4% and 47.6% respectively.
2. About 46.5% of the respondents are below the age of 30 years.
3. About 51.2% of the respondents are females and 47.6% are males.
4. Graduates, postgraduates and Doctorates constitute around 65.3% of the respondents.
5. On employment status, the highest of about 43.1% of the respondents are in salaried employment and 20.2% of the respondents are self-employed.
6. About 50.2% of the respondents are having a modal family size of 3 or 4 members.
7. Families of 64.3% of the respondents are having only one earning member and 24% of families have two earning members.
8. Monthly Family income of the respondents is skewed towards lower and middle income groups. About 41.4% of the respondents are in the family income group of Rs 10000-Rs 20000. Another 20.1% of the respondents have a family income of Rs 20000-Rs 30000.
9. On experience in using internet, about 40% of the respondents are having experience of more than 5 years and another 33.8% use internet for 3-5 years.
10. Mobile phone has emerged as the main mode of internet access. About 43.1% of the respondents access the internet through their mobile phones while 24.3% through computer (Modem), and 22.3% access through wireless modem.
11. Airtel, Aircel, BSNL, Idea Cellular, MTS, Reliance, Tata Docomo, Vodafone are the major internet service providers in the study area. Among them, Airtel has the highest base of 33.4% of the respondents; AIRCEL has a base of 19.2% of the respondents. BSNL has more reach in rural areas.
12. About 67.4% of the respondents are under prepaid scheme 32.6% of the respondents are under postpaid scheme.
13. About 48.3% of the respondents have high level of awareness on the features of internet. However, about 50.6% of respondents have only moderate level of awareness and another 1% has only low level of awareness. Level of awareness on E-mail and Browsing differs significantly between rural and urban respondents.
14. Newspaper and Television/Radio are the main influencing source for buyers of internet service.

15. Education and Business Developments are the most popular purposes of using internet both in urban and rural areas
16. Network coverage and Access Speed have emerged as the most important service factors affecting the selection of internet service providers
17. 'Mode Internet Access (MO)', and 'Brand of Internet Service Provider (ISP)' are the variables with the highest magnitude and significance of regression coefficients in the Regression model. These three variables play an important role in the choice of service provider.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestion for Internet Service Providers for Market Segmentation

- The market strategy requires market segmentation by gender, age, and income status of the buyers. This study shows that, females, youth and middle-income groups are the target buyers for internet market segmentation. As a major proportion of the respondents are youth, internet market strategy may focus on segmenting towards the youth, with features desired by them.
- As Network coverage and Access Speed have emerged as the most important service factor the internet service providers may upgrade their technical infrastructure to extend high speed connectivity to all areas. BSNL has penetrated even to the remote rural areas but other operators have a limited coverage only. All the service providers have to reach every pocket in order to face the competition.
- Newspaper and Television/Radio are found to be most influencing sources in buying of internet services. Service providers may float their advertisements mainly on these media.

Suggestions for Development of Internet Services in Rural Areas

There are various reasons behind not using the internet services. The reasons can be based on the factors such as Lack of Knowledge of Internet, Lack of Means (or infrastructure) and Beliefs (the opinions held by the non-users). Internet unawareness continues to be the primary reason why people do not access Internet in Rural India.

The country's growth is interlinked to the 'Digital India' programme. The government has dedicated to creating a digital ecosystem that will enable internet to touch the lives of all Indians. It is imperative to create hubs in rural India that will help the growth of internet which remains unexplored so far. Unless connectivity reaches every village of India, the dynamics of growth will remain unchanged. The existing fiber infrastructure is highly inadequate to connect villages in rural India and even many small towns in urban India. Therefore, Government of India, through BSNL, has to create required infrastructure including required fiberoptic cabling, for providing internet access to the remote rural and tribal areas.

.Internet service providers in the private sector may be encouraged through proper incentives and concessions or by allowing share the services of public sector communications system, to provide more coverage connectivity to rural areas. Government may come out with special policy for rural communication covering internet and mobile phones system. In order to increase the subscriber base in rural areas, special concessions may be extended to rural wireless internet subscribers.

CONCLUSION

Internet has emerged as a key source of information and knowledge for people across the globe. It has also played a crucial role in giving voice to people who have previously remained largely unheard and, most importantly, has strengthened democratic processes by improving citizen participation and government accountability and transparency. India stands at the verge of the Internet era where it is poised for transforming large part of its economy and society. Achieving large scale internet penetration and usage can enable India to double the contribution of Internet to its GDP. India with its advantage of having a youthful demographic profile that will adopt new technologies faster can achieve Internet fuelled growth in a broad-

based inclusive manner. Mobile Internet penetration in India is growing at a fast clip and holds a promising future with the very player in the ecosystem having their own important role to play and contribution to make.

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