

THE IMPACT OF INTERNET CULTURE ON YOUTH GROUP OF BANGLADESH:

A SOCIO-CULTURAL STUDY

BY:

MD. JAHIRUL ISLAM MIAH

THESIS

Submitted to

KDI School of Public Policy and Management
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY

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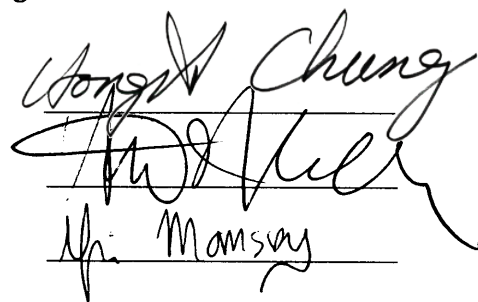
MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY

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The image shows three handwritten signatures in black ink, each written over a horizontal line. The top signature is 'Hong Ik Chung', the middle one is 'Hun Joo Park', and the bottom one is 'Yuri Mansury'.

Approval as of October , 2008

ABSTRACT

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Md. Jahirul Islam Miah

The Internet came late to Bangladesh. Over the last few years, its growth has been dramatic. ICT is the most popular term in Bangladesh today. Almost every middle class family owns a computer. Availing Internet service, designing and hosting a website, or participating in computer fairs or web programming contests have all become part of the culture in Bangladesh. Noticeably, the young generation of Bangladesh is taking the lead in these IT efforts.

The characteristic of Bangladeshi Internet users is that most of the Internet users are from young age group. Doing research on “The Impact of Internet Culture on Youth Group of Bangladesh: A Socio-Cultural Study” is an important research for Bangladesh. Capital city Dhaka, the biggest city, is the cultural and political centre of Bangladesh, where youth is easy to absorb new ideas and technologies, is an ideal place to do a case study. In seeking an answer to the question of how the Internet affects on young users in Dhaka, I find it from different viewpoints. Some of them are (i) the relation between social context and the Internet use, (ii) the social capital and the Internet use, (iii) the differences of the Internet use and (iv) the theory of imitation.

In Conclusion, the study shows some social and cultural changes from the Internet use such as a virtual world is emerged from the Internet use; some new social values are being created including new friendship, love etc. or some new crimes are come out with sex offering, deceptions, destroying and cracking information, illegal copying information, virus etc.

In terms of solutions to promote the Internet use, this study suggests that it is necessary to popularize the Internet use. The government has its own policies and development objectives in near future. Bangladesh should combine the provision of infrastructure (computers, high speed line) with the training of informatics teachers, the strengthening and providing the content of Bangladeshi websites, as well as setting up proper websites for young users. Media solution should be also put forward to paying more attention to positive aspects that the Internet can bring to the society, as well as encourage the young users access helpful websites for their education, communication etc. The education solutions should be such as following: (i) put forward some contents into citizen lectures or in class meetings of how the Internet bring benefits and negative influences, (ii) bring these contents into social union activities, (iii) set up educational websites for each school, college or university and (iv) have more extra-curricular and leisure activities so that the youth has more chances for face to face communication. No mentionable research work has been found on the impact of Internet culture on Youth Group of Bangladesh till date. This work only initiates the process.

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Md. Jahirul Islam Miah

2008

Dedicated to

My son Aditya Jaber Kabbya, my wife and other members of my family whom I failed to give time because of this thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is a result of wise opinion of many Internet users of Bangladesh. Professors, sociologists, media officials, service holders, students, Cybercafé owners spent their valuable time in answering my questions. I would like to thank them all. My sincere thanks to CPI and KDI for providing me a great opportunity to this research and helping me to make my dream come to true. I would like to thank my wife Irin Pervin, my brother Md. Mahfuzul Islam, my colleague and friend Mr. Shahriar Mohammed Hasan who helped me a lot in conducting the survey. My special thanks to Mr. Abdul Halim Khan and Ms. Ha for their unwavering supports. I acknowledge my gratefulness to Ms. Ferdous Ara Begum, Member UN CEDAW Committee and Former Director General, BTV; who inspired me a lot. I also acknowledge my gratefulness to Professor Hong Ik Chung who inspired me to work on this topic and advised me throughout the whole process of writing this thesis.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARP NET	Advanced Research Project Agency Network
BITNET	Because its Time Network
BTCL	Bangladesh Telecommunication Company Limited
BTRC	Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
BTTB	Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All sort of Discrimination Against Women
CSE	Computer Science and Electronics
CSNET	Computer Science Research Network
DoD	Department of Defence
DU	Dhaka University
E-MAIL	Electronic Mail
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ISP	Internet Service Provider
MILNET	Military Network
MIU	Minimum Investment Unit
NCP	Network Control Protocol
NSF	National Science Foundation
PSTN	Public switched Telephone Network
SATNET	Satellite Network
SEA-MEA-WE-4	South East Asia-Middle East-West Europe 4 Project
TCP/IP	Transmission Control Protocol/ Internet Protocol
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
USD	United State's Dollar
USENET	The Decentralized News Group Network
UUCP	UNIX to UNIX Copy
VoIP	Voice over Internet Protocol
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
Wi-Fi	Wireless Fidelity
WWW	World Wide Web
Wi-Max	Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

One of the most important characteristics features of human being is his or her culture. It is culture that makes the basic differences between human and other animals on this earth. This culture is a major means and reason for our adaptation, development, evolution, transmission and success along with changes in general. As human beings we are also an integrated part of society with an organized way of life with in the groups as well as communities. What does culture mean to us is what we are as human being, what we have in our mind, what are our thought and behavior and also our way of life. From a time perspective culture and society to which we belong changed and transformed from somewhat primitive to hunting-gathering, horticultural, pastoral, agricultural and industrial or civilized society with distinctive culture patterns in each of these conditions. These changes are not only in the basic needs of human being to lead the way of life but also in the cultural patterns and processes through the consumption of power and energy and the technological means with which the energy is put to function. The articulation of both science and art contributed to the cultural patterns and their changes in course of time. But to a large extent it is the development and transformation of technological means or technology which have a direct impact upon the culture and heritage of humans. This research has tried to find out some trends of cultural changes due to Internet uses.

1.2 Proposal of the Study:

Every human being has his or her own social and cultural identity. From primitive to the present time man has surpassed several forms and regulations in the social as well as cultural field. In present days the urban way of life throughout the world has undergone some major

changes in their cultural settings by adopting new energy resources and technologies. This is true for both the developed and the developing countries. However, one of the most significant input and integration to this changing cultural pattern is the access to Internet browsing which, in this research, is referred to as impact of the Internet Culture on Youth Group of Bangladesh.

Therefore, in a least developed country like Bangladesh the introduction of Internet is bringing about a new culture sphere and parameter to the people of urban life and their ways of living. Though Internet came late in Bangladesh, it has already reached to a certain level of society and particularly the young people, the youth group (group consisting people aged between 15 to 30) in the urban life are mostly invoked and motivated by this new culture. Today our ways of thought, different academic or business issues, commercial purposes as well as our entertainment sectors are quite significantly affected or driven by Internet. Our practices of language, reading and writing are also facing a renewed spirit brought about by the introduction of Internet access to the people. Now this is to be configured out as what is our cultural identity, what is its future, how is this been integrated into the world perspective and how it been globalized, and also how our tastes of thought, focus, view, behavior and communication are being generated by this Internet culture sharply. With both positive and negative aspects the effect of Internet is obvious upon the youth group from various perspectives.

However, in an editorial of the pioneering and bold computer magazine of Bangladesh, The Monthly Computer Jagat, it is stated, “Revolutions have been created round the world to use Internet for extension of knowledge, scientific activities and education. Though in Bangladesh we do not have such type of productivity of Internet, but certainly it has

motivated a large number of people within this domain”¹. Therefore, it is the central view of this research work to have an in-depth study about how Internet Culture has become an integral aspect of the urban life of Bangladesh and to analyze its effects and productivity upon youth group as well.

1.3 Objectives of the Study: With this research, we try to focus on these following objectives:

1. The social, cultural and political contexts of the Internet usage of Youth Group in Bangladesh in general and Dhaka in particular.
2. To analyze the nature of cultural integration, global communication and social network through Internet in urban life particularly on youth group.
3. Profile of the young Internet users in Dhaka (who are they? favorite the Internet activities? Purposes of the Internet usage?...).
4. Threats and opportunities in using the Internet in young users (Double-edged nature of the Internet; Risk involved with the Internet usage; Impacts on social life and values...).
5. To assess in what level of people and society it has reached so far and its productivity.
6. To assess the impact of Internet on socio-cultural diversity.

1.4 Operational Definition of the Study

The study on the Impact of Internet Culture on Youth Group of Bangladesh takes into account various issues, terms and understandings that help in the accumulation of Internet Culture in world today. Some of the terms used in study, are needed to be conceptualized and self determinant or defined which reveal the researcher understands and conceptualization

¹ Editorial, The Monthly Computer Jagat, 1996, 6(3):19

of the terms integrated to Internet Culture. However, some operational definitions of various terms are included here which will be important in the understanding the impact of Internet Culture on Youth Group of Bangladesh.

Culture: Culture is the understanding of complex status of human behavior including values, norms, ideas, beliefs, rituals, and understanding of several other issues that are not organic in nature and expressed through human nature, motivation, articulation, and conceptualization of real life perspectives under any social circumstances and with a view to making a definite or distinct way of life, represented and generated as well as hold in action from generation to generation, and also a subject of change, integration, sharing and diffusion on the whole.

Internet: ‘Internet’ refers to the global information system that (i) is logically linked together by a globally unique address space based on the Internet Protocol (IP) or its subsequent extensions/follow-on; (ii) is able to support communications using the Transmission Control Protocol/ Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) suite or its subsequent extensions/ follow-ons, and or other IP compatible protocols; and (iii) provides, uses or makes accessible, either publicly or privately, high level services layered on the communications and related infrastructure.

Internet Culture: Cyber culture is the culture that has emerged, or is emerging, from the use of computers for communication, entertainment and business. Internet Culture represents the adaptiveness of human nature to the net, diffused around the globe as a part of techno-culture of how people feel, think and act about Internet as a complex understanding and visualization of their way of life in both the individual and commercial sense of living.

Virtual Community: By the term virtual community it can be referred to such a community, where community means groups of people having commonality in their understanding and behavioral pattern, which has the real world intensive and perspective and which is authentic in nature; that is, a community that sets a boundary between the fact and fantasy of meaning and a realm of appearances and exchange as well as consist of some common values and feelings of sharing to form a common body of interest on the net.

Technology: From a general perspective technology is the factor that is used to put the energy into work or action; in other words it is a kind of tool that helps in the application of any order into function from a real world perspective and practical consideration.

Cybercafé: The word cybercafé refers to a place where one can be facilitated with having easy access and availability to the Internet connection for exchanging thoughts, global communication, social network and transformation of information from around the global by sitting in one small room with some interconnected computers having Internet connection and concentration of different categories of people communicating with the world of information and communication technology at the same time.

Cyber society: Cyber society refers to a society that consists of a group of people having some common values, understanding as well as settings of language, reading and writing pattern that are manifested, articulated and represented through Internet Culture on the basis of information and communication technology.

Youth Group: Group consisting of people aged between 15 to 30 years is taken as youth group in this study on the Impact of Internet Culture.

Cultural Integration: The word cultural integration means the interconnection and sharing or transmission of different cultural traits of various regions and various group or communities of people of the world; in other words the combination of different cultures into a single culture of origin.

Democratization of Communication: The term democratization of communication can be referred to as maintaining a democratic view of collecting information and building communication from various issues and different regions of the world with a preference to keep a non-judgmental ascertain by giving importance to any information received or exchanged and every communication being made.

Social Network: A social network is a social structure made of nodes that are tied by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as values, visions, ideas, financial exchange, friendship, kinship, dislike, conflict or trade. Social network can be defined as a form of network through information collection and communication on the whole from different cultures and societies of the world with a view to making some sort of common understanding, communal sense and integration of culture and a socialization process to build a bridge of relationship and sharing of thoughts on the basis of network practice via Internet Culture.

Globalization: Globalization can be referred to as a process of connecting people of different regions of the world in terms of economic stability, gathering of information, building communication and establishing social network, and several other forms of interaction in general; in other words globalization can be defined as crossing the border of countries on various scales or not maintaining any boundary at large.

IT Globalization: IT globalization can be defined as crossing over any kind of information and communication originated in any part of the world through information technology; that is, overthrowing the limits and boundaries in information technology throughout the globe.

Pornography: The explicit depiction or exhibition of sexual activity in literature, films or photography that is intended to stimulate erotic, rather than aesthetic or emotional feelings. We can define pornography as Verbal or visual material or acts that embody violence, coercion, discrimination, force or brutality on women, men, children, or animals in sexual acts, and represent them in a degrading position. Pornography is anything that is created to cause sexual excitement or arousal, sexually explicit pictures, writing, or other material whose primary purpose is to cause sexual arousal.

Genetics of Internet Culture: Genetics is a biological term that keep the organ of any being to its natural settings and by the term genetics of Internet Culture it can be referred to as the underlying tools and technologies including hardware and software support to run the machine of Internet smoothly and any change in the backup settings may cause several shift or damage on the part of how Internet works and transmits throughout the world.

Web site: a group of World Wide Web pages usually containing hyperlinks to each other and made available online by an individual, company, educational institution, government, or organization.

E-mail: a means or system for transmitting messages electronically (as between computers on a network).

Chat: a form of informal electronic talks by writing and receiving messages at nearly the same time.

Chapter 2: Research Methods

2.1. Background and rationale of the research

We are in the era of information. In this era, information is being disseminated rapidly; and social values are shared widespread, and thus it creates opportunities, advantages as well as disadvantages to cultural researchers and policy makers.

Globalization is also an unavoidable trend, and information is a means of that trend. We all agree that information is power in a society and those who hold information will get essential controls over others. Information creates money, prestige, and power to any institutions. The result is that information seems to be an independent variable in the way we are discussing and analyzing any society, institution and even individual in this century.

Today the Internet is connecting most people in the world together. Through its capacity, the Internet cracks all the gaps in borders, spaces and time as well. The Internet creates its own power and will be the future for this world soon. However, in Bangladeshi society, the Internet is still new. On the one hand, we have not understood quite well such as its SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), on the other hand, there is a popular view that the Internet is a form of American temptation or a means to disseminate the American ways of life and that will lead other people thinking and doing as the same as the American. And the result is other cultures will disappear sooner or later. Others argue that the Internet has some vital effects on culture, including the way it "disable person's mind", especially young people, due to their massively concentration on the Internet while ignoring communication activities and other.

The Internet is being used so popularly in young people and has a powerful effect on youth now and in the future. It is unavoidable trend and we must get used with that by promoting its advantages and controlling its disadvantages. Researching on impact of the Internet culture on youth group of Bangladesh is a meaningful research. And Dhaka, The biggest city, the cultural and political centre of Bangladesh, where for the youth it is easy to absorb new ideas and technologies, is an ideal place to do a case study.

2.2 Research contents

- The Internet profile of Bangladesh;
- Internet users of Youth Group from view of some research perspectives;
- An assessment on young Internet users in Dhaka;
- Recommendations.

2.3 The scope of the research

The scope of the research is youth group of different professionals (students, service holders, cybercafé owners and other Internet users of Youth Group) in Dhaka.

2.4 Research methods

To answer all above questions, qualitative methods are useful. Thanks to their discovery characteristics. Up-to-date data and information regarding different issues

of Internet culture and its impact were collected during the study both from Bangladesh and from around the globe through Internet browsing which helped to enrich the study. Choosing

Internet Café, high school, colleges and universities and different offices, I have carried out interviews of individuals and groups of young users. Moreover, analyzing archival documents is a good way to review literature.

Observation method is also useful to discover some aspects of users' attitudes and behaviors. I have chosen some cybercafés to do observation for two consecutive weeks. In this observation I included all age's people, the total number is 400, where age over 30 years is 4% and below 15 years is 6%(appendix, page-74) where people of youth group is 90%. All Internet users were recorded with some specific information (appendix).The result is young users' habit to come to the Internet café and their favorite activities as well as browsing Internet as pastime.

I use a questionnaire for quantitative method. There have been 600 respondents for this questionnaire, all of them from youth group. The respondents are High School, college and university students, different professionals, Cybercafé owners, Cybercafé users. Article published in Daily newspapers, several websites, Weekly magazines and Monthly computer related magazines, so far provides information about impact of Internet on people of different ages and sexes of Bangladesh, I've used these data. I interviewed some high school, college and university students and some officials from different age groups, economic conditions and sexes. All of them are in Youth Group, though among them 30% never used Internet. The data have been analyzed by SPSS. The questionnaire content is in the annex.

2.5 Research hypothesis

- Information technology has its extreme effects on youth group, especially in terms of their conceptualizing of life, friendship, and love affair (observation on Cyber café users, annexure).
- A virtual world is created among the users of Internet. In this virtual world, virtual communication presents real ideas of users because these ideas could not be done in real world by many reasons.
- Some social issues have emerged with the boom of the Internet users in Bangladesh. In the near future, these social issues will be popular and these issues should be addressed comprehensively.

2.6 Limitation of the Study

Urban life is complex and heterogeneous in nature. It consists of different type of people and faces vast array of cultural integration where culture itself is complex and refers to the entire way of life of the people. No study is found to have been conducted on this issue and here lies one of the limitations of the present study as of having minimal availability of related material support to this study. Having limited time after doing official job regularly and no financial support are other drawbacks which limited the scope of the study to go with more in-depth analysis and understanding of several issues of effect of Internet culture on youth group. Another limitation of the study is that in some instances people have not unambiguously talked about several grounds of Internet Culture. They hesitated to express their real life feelings which put some pictures of their cultural attitudes out of scene. However, despite these limitations there has been no effort and sincerity left by the researcher in the present study which made it more valid and objective.

Chapter 3: Internet Culture – Origin and Development

3.1 Origin and Development of Internet Culture

Internet Culture is a recent phenomenon which is attached to the urban setting and in terms of concrete understanding it has become a regular aspect including various dimensions of global mind setup of human being. Internet Culture itself is a part of technological advancement process that has revolutionized the communication world with a world-wide materialization of technological development. The following table-1 shows the origin and development of Internet Culture in a time order at a brief glance.

Table-1: Origin and Development of Internet Culture²

Time Order	Periodical Origin and Development Sequences of Internet
1957	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launching of Sputnik by USSR. - ARPA developed by US Department of Defense (DOD)
1962	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of packet switched network by Baran of RAND - First recorded description on ‘Galactic Network’ concept by J. C. R Licklider of MIT.
1968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ARPANET contract with BBN. - Construction of physical network by wired circuits.
1974	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First use of the term ‘Internet’ by Vinton Cerf and Bob Kahn in paper on Transmission Control Protocol.
1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of Ethernet by Robert M. Metcalf. - Practical use of packet satellite project: SATNET - UUCP (Unix-to-Unik copy) developed at AT &T bell Labs. - Experiment with the TCP/IP protocol by DOD.
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of decentralized news group network: USENET - Creation of BITNET by IBM; ‘Because it’s Time Network’.
1981	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NSF created CSNET. An Internet-network connection between CSNET and ARPANET: Proposed by Vinton Cerf.

² Source: Dave Kristula, 2001, Reading, PA, USA, pp. 1-3

1983	- Creation of IAB. TCP/IP became the core Internet Protocol.
1984	- ARPANET divided into networks: MILNET and ARPANET
1985-88	- Deploying TI by NSE. IETF was created to serve as a forum for DARPA. BITNET and CSNET merged to form CREN. - Up-gradation of network with increasing traffic on Internet
1990-93	- Implementation of hypertext system for information access. - Network to conduct high speed networking research by NSF. - Internet Society Chartered. World Wide Web (WWW) by CERN
1994-95	- Major changes to physical network. New hosts added to Internet. - Opens first virtual / cyber bank. - Companies, organizations and groups connected to Internet access.
1996-date	- Most Internet traffic carried by independent ISPs including NCI, AT & T, BBN planet, ANS and more. - Afford to build new TCP/IP by current Internet Society that controls the Internet.

The Table 4.1 briefly depicts the origin and development of Internet in a time framework which dates back to 1957 with the attempts taken by the US Department of Defense and since 1996 almost all people have access to Internet through independent organizations and ISPs.

3.2 Introduction and Development of Internet Culture in Bangladesh

The Internet came late to Bangladesh and hence the introduction and development of this new culture took some time to be scheduled. The ever beginning of Internet in Bangladesh was the set up of UUCP email in 1993 (Press, 1999, p.1). On June 04, 1996 the VSAT base circuit was commissioned for the first time in the country and opens the commissioning Internet connectivity was established and its services were made available to the public. After Internet was launched, in June 1996 National polls results were made available all over the world using World Wide Web (WWW). This was the first ever event of its kind in Bangladesh

which was appreciated among the Bangladeshis living abroad. However, this led the foundation of a new cultural trend in Bangladesh, particularly in the urban region. It is through this path that many other issues, that is seen today, were integrated to the Internet world which included cyclone warning and disaster information, sports news, a wide variety of business information, local level educational and other programs, entertainment and many that surrounded different layers of significant thoughts and behavior of human being.

By the year 1997 international links are obtained through BTTB under Ministry of Postal and Telecommunications and people had oriented to the Internet services more easily. In course of time several Internet Service Providers (ISPs) grew up in the country which provided people with whatever services are available on the net to this culture. Now in the 21st century and in the context of urban area with the on-line services all other usage and services of the Internet are available to the end users of the Internet in Bangladesh. Now it has become the apparent that in terms of the origin and development of Internet culture in Bangladesh different levels of people and different institutions and organizations, both at the group and individual level, are somehow connected to this culture.

3.3 Internet and Bangladesh Profile

Bangladesh is a traditional and agriculture based rural society. Dense population, massive illiteracy, poverty, poor health, low agricultural productivity, underdeveloped industrial base, lesser amount of energy and natural resources, and quite lower improvement of technical means in comparison to the developed countries are some of the major characteristics of this country. But this country has a distinct cultural trends and traditional regulations. Despite some limitation the country and especially the society with urban trends is facing towards a

transforming status and urbanization process with cultural changes and the adaptation of new trends.

As on March, 2008 the estimated population of Bangladesh is about 153.5 million out of which more than 77% live in the rural areas, whereas about 23% in the urban areas of the country³. Total Population of Capital city: Dhaka is about 7 million. However, a recent study reveals that the number of the users of Internet in the urban life of Bangladesh is about 1,000,000 or more and number of PC is about 3,000,000(Daily Ittefaq, National Daily Newspaper of Bangladesh) and penetration rate is 0.3%⁴. Though the total number of Internet users is small in terms of national scale, there has been increasing number of young Internet users recently. Cost cut, improved transfer rate, as well as the increasing need of searching and sending information through Internet has prompted the use of Internet. Hopefully, Bangladesh will have more computers connecting onto Internet in the near future.

Internet is still an abstract idea especially among those who live in rural and remote areas. Most of Internet users are living in Dhaka city. More than 200 Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are there in Bangladesh, most of them are Dhaka based.

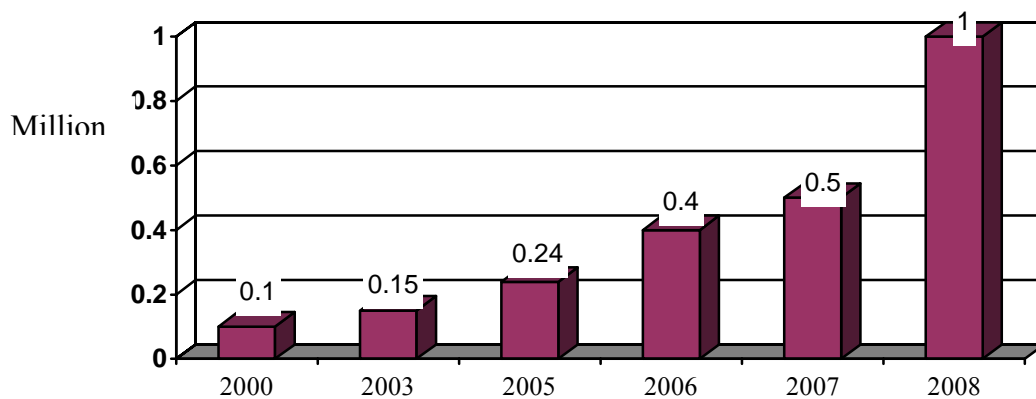
Bangladesh has joined the Information Super Highway through submarine connectivity (SEA-MEAW-4) consortium in 2006. BTTB was the official custodian of the new connectivity backbone. Now particular Submarine Cable Company has been formed by the government. Available capacity for this cable is 468,000 MIU* Km which may have a maximum of 64 STM-1 (10 Gbps) at the landing station. MIU is equivalent to one STM-1.

³ Source: Internet World Stat- website's data

⁴ Source; National Daily Newspaper of Bangladesh-The Daily Ittefaq, July 18, 2008

BTRC is processing on to get another submarine cable connection to be hosted by private entrepreneurs. Although the connection to the Submarine Cable Super Highway presents tremendous improvement opportunities for Bangladesh, the present situation in terms of Internet connectivity is not at all satisfactory. One of the reasons is high bandwidth charge claimed by BTTB. To overcome this problem, this year government has reduced 60% of bandwidth charge comparing to the previous year. Another problem was, though bandwidth charge has been reduced, the ISPs were not reducing their connectivity charge and per minute using charge (connectivity charge USD 15 to 22 per month for 52-102 kbps and using charge 44 cent per hour). In this regard, BTRC has taken initiatives to reduce ISPs connection charge and per minute using charge. Recently, all ISPs has reduced about 30% of their connection fees and using charge. So, the number of Internet users is increasing in geometrical rate. The increase of Internet user during last 8 years is shown in the following Bar diagram.

Chart 1: Internet user development⁵



The above diagram shows that the number of Internet users has increased 10 times within 8 years and it has become double in last 1 year.

⁵ Source: Daily Ittefaq of July 18, 2008 and Internet World Stat Data.

As on July, 2008, six mobile phone companies are operating their network in Bangladesh and the number of their subscribers is about 44.80 million. At the same time twelve PSTN phone company's subscribers is about 0.13 million. All of these phone companies have declared their own package for using Internet through their mobile phone or land phone. More than 99% population is in their coverage area. So these companies are playing important role for increasing Internet user. So the number of Internet user, particularly among Youth Group, is increasing very rapidly (Source: Daily Ittefaq of July 18, 2008). The government of Bangladesh has declared the ICT sector as one of the major 'thrust' sectors. BTRC is an independent commission established under Bangladesh Telecommunication Act-2001, which started functioning from January 31, 2002 with bearing vision "To facilitate affordable telecommunication services of acceptable quality for all regardless of their location". BTRC is formulating new rules and regulations for opening new doors for enhancing Internet facilities through wireless network by giving license for using WiMax and Wifi technology in order to ensure rapid expansion of services and accelerated increase in Internet penetration. Govt. has already opened VoIP and is in the process of allowing WiMax for data communication. Growth of telecom sector has been extremely high and penetration of Internet has increased 5 times in last one year. In the beginning, BTRC will give license for using WiMax technology to 4 companies with BTTB (BTCL). Broadband Penetration Targets to be fulfilled by the licensees by connecting:

A. Areas to be covered by the end of following year of issuance of license

First Year: (i) The operators, within 1 year of issuance of license, shall have to cover each Divisional Headquarters (including the whole District), all districts town and (ii) 20% Upazilas and 10% of villages of Bangladesh.

B. Second Year: (i) 40% Upazilas and 20% of villages, (ii) All Universities, Medical and Engineering Colleges and research institutes in public sector, (iii) All Ministries, Divisions, Attached Departments, Government Boards, Corporations, Semi government and Autonomous organizations, Commissions, Statutory bodies, (iv) 50% of secondary educational institutes in district headquarters and 25% of secondary educational institutes at Upazila headquarters and (v) All local government institutions (e.g. City Corporation, Municipality/Pourasava) up to district level.

C. Third Year: (i) 60% Upazilas and 30% of villages, (ii) All Universities, Medical and Engineering Colleges and research institutes in private sector, (iii) All public libraries, (iv) 50% of higher secondary educational institutes situated at district headquarters, and (v) 50% of secondary educational institutes in district headquarters and 25% of secondary educational institutes at Upazila headquarters.

D. Fourth Year: (i) 80% Upazilas and 40% of villages, (ii) All higher secondary educational institutes situated at district headquarters, (iii) All secondary educational institutes in district headquarters and 50% of secondary educational institutes at Upazila headquarters, and (iv) All local government institutions (e.g. City Corporation, Municipality/ Pourasava) up to district level.

E. Five Year: (i) All Upazilas and villages and connectivity to community access points, (ii) All higher secondary, secondary and primary educational institutes, (iii) All cultural centers, museums, post offices and archives and (iv) All Union Parishad Offices.

The annual cumulative BWA subscribers (minimum) to be achieved by the licensee(s) are as below: 1st year 25,000, 2nd 75,000, 3rd 175,000, 4th 250,000 and 5th 500,000⁶.

Registration of Bangladesh Domain is .bd. There are some categories of Bangladeshi domain names:

.com.bd , .gov.bd , .org.bd , .net.bd , .ac.bd etc.

The Bangladesh Government has taken initiatives to build an ICT-driven nation comprising a knowledge-based society. In view of this, a countrywide ICT infrastructure is being developed to ensure access to information by every citizen to facilitate empowerment of people, and enhancement of democratic values and norms for sustainable economic development. Information technology has become one of the thrust sectors of the government's short and long-term planning.

Government and private sectors are increasingly going for mass automation with an aim to embrace e-Governance with its huge base of skilled ICT human resources⁷. Cyber Law and Intellectual Property Rights Law are well-defined. Recently government has declared, IT education will be compulsory for high school student from next year⁸.

In recent year, a major change is noticed in the field of cultural patterns of urban life and this is because of the introduction of Internet within the sector of Information Technology, we find its most effect on youth group (observation result in appendix). Access computer based technology, particularly the habit of Internet browsing has become a distinctive cultural

⁶ Source: BTRC website- www.btrc.org.bd

⁷ Bangladesh Computer Society-website: www.bcs-bd.org and <http://moict.gov.bd>

⁸ Source: Daily Ittefaq, September,14, 2008

pattern of the urban life in Dhaka, a mega city and also the capital of Bangladesh. Today in banks, commercial offices, institutions and enterprises, etc. access to Internet has become a part and parcel of the institutions leading to a distinctive cultural heritage.

This is an intensive research which is focused on the Impact of Internet Culture on Youth Group of Bangladesh: A Socio-Cultural Study, where the study centers on the process of culture and changes of activities among urban people and ways of life, particularly the people of Youth Group of urban Dhaka. Any change in the developed countries of the world, whether it is cultural or technological, is quickly adopted by the people of urban areas of developing countries too. This, in turn, leads to the transformation as well as diffusion of culture and life style of these people.

In the context of urban life of Dhaka, it is seen that a new cultural trait has already been emerged along with the existing old ones and sometimes replacing the traditional ones. The change and the introduction of a new culture, notably Internet Culture, are so absorbing and continuous in the life of urban people of Dhaka. However, today people from diverse field ranging from academia, business, and officials to engineers, students and others are very much integrated with this cultural trait. This is very much in line with the computer based technology as well as Information Technology that the communication pattern, transformation, maintaining social network, global connection, interrelations and communal sense-all these are attached with this new tradition of culture which can be termed as Internet Culture in regard to urban life. Therefore, in this regard, the formation of this new culture and adoption of people to it is so factual that people of all ages are now waved in this bay and this research monograph tries to state the present status of Internet Culture and its impact upon

youth group of urban people, particularly in Dhaka city. However, the impact of Internet Culture upon Youth Group of Dhaka city is totally an unexplored and new avenue for study.

3.4 Internet culture: Role of Internet ISPs

Internet Culture is a technology based culture that operates through computer connection and networking and facilitated as well as generated by the infrastructural and institutional support given by the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Bangladesh, and particularly in urban Dhaka. The ISPs are the kind of institutions or organizations that help in getting connected to Internet by virtue of some standard payment as being set by them. In the context of Bangladesh these ISPs are the member of an association that is known as Internet service Provider Association of Bangladesh (ISPAB) which is run by some active executives of the leading ISPs in Dhaka. In general, these ISPs play a significant role in the expansion and spread of Internet to reach the door of people that help in the accumulation of Internet Culture and the dissemination of knowledge regarding this.

3.5 Internet Culture: Findings of this study

User Group of Internet of the Youth

Internet is a social connecting device that helps in the building of relationship and communication through several technical supports on the net. In doing so it has become an urban phenomenon with the integration of different categories of people. These people contribute to the construction of a group who are the users of Internet of their own accord. In other words, the culture of Internet is coherent with those people who are regular in the utilization of different purposes of Internet. The question is likely that different categories of people including various ages and occupational status are the users of Internet in urban life

can also be referred to as having usual understanding and behavioral pattern in connection with Internet Culture.

After the introduction and development of Internet in this part of the world, which does not date back more than a decade or so, the number of the users of Internet in the urban area has increased ever before. Not yet any reliable survey or study has been conducted to figure out the actual number of Internet users in the urban life of Dhaka or elsewhere in Bangladesh. However, a recent study reveals that the number of the users of Internet in Bangladesh is about 1,000,000 or more and number of PC is about 3,000,000(Daily Ittefaq, July 18, 2008, National Daily Newspaper of Bangladesh). It is to be kept in mind that this is not the absolute counting or recording of actual number of Internet users because today lot more people are motivated by this culture. Again this is not only the qualification of Internet users but also the representation of the expansion of Internet Culture to a larger extent that was not thought or seen earlier.

There is not any age boundary of using Internet among urban people because anyone can have access to this new culture. From this point of view and to keep the research in an organized fashion as selected aged group of people are taken into consideration which includes the ages between 15 and 30 and is referred to as the Youth Group in this research. In this regard the Internet Culture has its maximum effect upon this group of people living in the urban areas. To make this clear for the understanding of the involvement of people from various ages to this new culture, some quantitative analysis along with qualitative generalization, has been made here. Several occupational groups of people are integrated herewith the age set group to find out their number and range of ages status. From this study, the age group of Internet users of youth is illustrated in the following table:

Table 2: Age Group of Internet Users within Youth Group

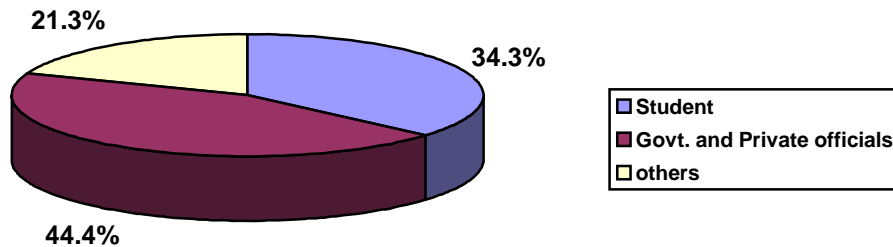
Age Group (in years)	General Users of Internet		Owner of Cybercafé (%)	Owner of ISP in Dhaka (%)
	Students/ Academia (%)	Different Officials (%)		
15-18	13.33	-	-	-
19-22	26.67	11.2	10.4	-
23-26	33.33	37.4	40.3	20.2
27-30	26.67	51.4	49.3	79.8
Total	100	100	100	100

(Source: data from the survey)

From the abovementioned table on the age group of people involved in the practice of this new culture in the urban context of Dhaka, it can easily be described that the Internet Culture has reached to different ages of people. There is no boundary attached with the age limitation of this culture. Whatever age of one may be, he/she has a minimum level of knowledge regarding the operation of Internet with an understanding of its integrated technological uniformity of this culture where it has become a common phenomenon of urban life including variations in the ages of people related to this culture.

Occupations of Youth Group

Chart 2. The occupation of the Internet users of Youth Group



(Source: data from the survey)

As shown in above chart, Youth Group has included three groups of users. The data also mean that highest portion of internet user are employees and second highest portion are students.

The previous chart shows that in terms of the urban life of Dhaka people of different occupational status are now a part of this new culture. In reality the holding of any definite occupation does not necessarily refer to the prerequisite of getting access to Internet and hence this is the culture that integrates a large number of people orienting to any occupational status group where they are easily building relationships and exchanging their values, norms, ideas and perspectives.

The age and sex, whatever the status of occupation, or whatever the background, now a days, these identities do not carry much importance in the order and preference to be involved with and generated by the wave of Internet Culture. What is of importance is that in the urban life of the people of Dhaka city a new culture has emerged with all its potentials and attractiveness and making a smart move among the urban people where these people now represent themselves and their beliefs, ideas and values as well as traditions through Internet

to the outer world. A fresh look into the underlying facts and realities of Internet Culture in urban life helps in understanding that in this complex urban society it is the youth group or people of young generation that are new delved into a new architecture of urban way of life where they constitute the basis of Internet users and hold the new culture as an integrated part of their lives.

Behavioral Pattern of Youth Group

Internet Culture is a new phenomenon of urban life. It is new to people who are using it and to those who are not conversant with this culture. What is regulative here is the behavioral pattern of a person and the behavior of the youth group or young generation who are the biggest users of Internet. This new culture has developed some adaptation among the users and consequently the impact can be seen upon the behavioral pattern of the users. Here behavior of an individual can be thought of as a function of a person in interaction with situation. Everyone has a goal to reach and this behavior can be seen as goal-oriented, action-oriented and as environmental determinant. It is the truth of one's construction of ideas and thoughts and helps to regulate those ideas and thoughts.

The behavior of an individual is closely associated with personality, which is guided by attitudes, interests, values, norms, temperament, aptitude, need or motivation and many other psychological as well as socio-cultural aspects. What one thinks and has learnt from the surrounding environment that he or she belonged to is displayed through his behavior by pattern of an individual is a showcase of the culture and society in which each represents culture of a special society. This is also the same in case of the urban society of Dhaka where the behavior of the youth group is generated through the urban cultural pattern and Internet Culture is a new addition to this.

The culture and society in which an individual is born influence his or her behavior and personality through tradition, customs, norms, values, religion, art, literature and language and this behavior and personality is an expression of culture of the society⁹. However, Internet Culture is a culture that is based on technology and powered by the fuel of human behavior. It is an attractive one that, in some cases, forces people to get access to it. The world of Internet or the net world is full of fantasy and reality on diversified issues of different social contexts and integrates people to a channel of global communication and mitigates the cultural boundaries. The huge intention to this culture among the youth group of urban life helps in the interpretation of its popularity and factors to become attached to this culture. It may vary from one individual to another, but in general it can be said that self interest, necessity, information and communication, and being motivated by others are some of the causes that lie behind the acceptance, reliability and interest to this new culture, which is a culture of urban life. From my research, the The following Table 5.3 shows some of the factors or reasons lying behind getting access to Internet among the youth group and is developed on the basis of their perspectives.

Table 3: Factors for getting access to Internet

Factors of access Internet	Students/ Academia (%)	Different Officials (%)	Others (%)
Own Interest	26.67	34.2	19.4
Necessity	26.67	41.6	38.9
Information and Communication	33.33	20.1	41.7
Influenced by friends	13.33	4.1	-
Total	100	100	100

(Source: data from the survey)

⁹ Upadhyay V.S. & G. Pandey, 1997, P. 306

Now with the impressive articulation of Internet Culture in urban life what sort of changes can be measured and viewed among the behavioral pattern of youth group and to what extent is a matter of great concern. This new culture is bringing some superficial as well as eternal changes among the youth group in the way they think and act and to this way they are making adjustment to the acts and attitudes. Now the playground has taken place on the net, a computer mediated technology is bringing people to such a state where one can see and diffuse around the globe by sitting at home. The nature of this culture is that at present one can serfs around the world without much physical stress but only with the quick movement of fingers. In reality only a command on the computer having Internet connection get one into the world of global communication which was not so easy a few decades ago. Not only goal or action but also values, norms, feelings and such other issues are the most predictable group by Internet. Thus it is obvious that some proportions of changes are seen in the behavioral aspects of the Internet users. Though it may vary from one individual to another but to some extent the behavioral changes are evident in the processes of what they think, how they act or response, and what their perspective is in general. However, the following Table 5.4 shows the proportion of changes in the behavioral aspect of the Internet users by using Internet in the urban life.

Table 4 : Changing behavioral pattern

Proportion of Changes in Behavior	Users of Internet of Youth Group		
	Students/ Academia (%)	Different Officials (%)	Others (%)
Yes	66.2	98	80
No	33.8	2	20
Total	100	100	100

(Source: data from the survey)

The data derived from different individuals including different occupational group has helped in generalizing that certain changes are seen in the behavioral aspects of the Internet users. This is evident in their day to day activities, in their language, mode of thinking, sharing of values and norms, building relationships, and dealing with various categories of people directed and driven by Internet. One of the most significant facts about the behavioral pattern of the youth group or Internet users in terms of Internet Culture is that they are now on the platform of net that works through information and communication technology where they relish their test within this techno-culture and relocate them in a world of global connection, diffusion and changing behavioral pattern respectively.

Proportion of People Using Internet (different sexes)

Internet Culture has not only generated people of different ages but also the proportion of gender. Though there are actually significant gender differences among Internet users, both male and female users are now motivated and integrated with this culture trend on different layers and utilities of Internet. It has become the mode of what one thinks of real world parameters and crossed the boundary of users by integrating both sexes into a platform. To compare the common picture of the Internet usage with young users, some data has been collected through this research. After three months, I obtained 600 respondents with following percentages. The available data are as follow:

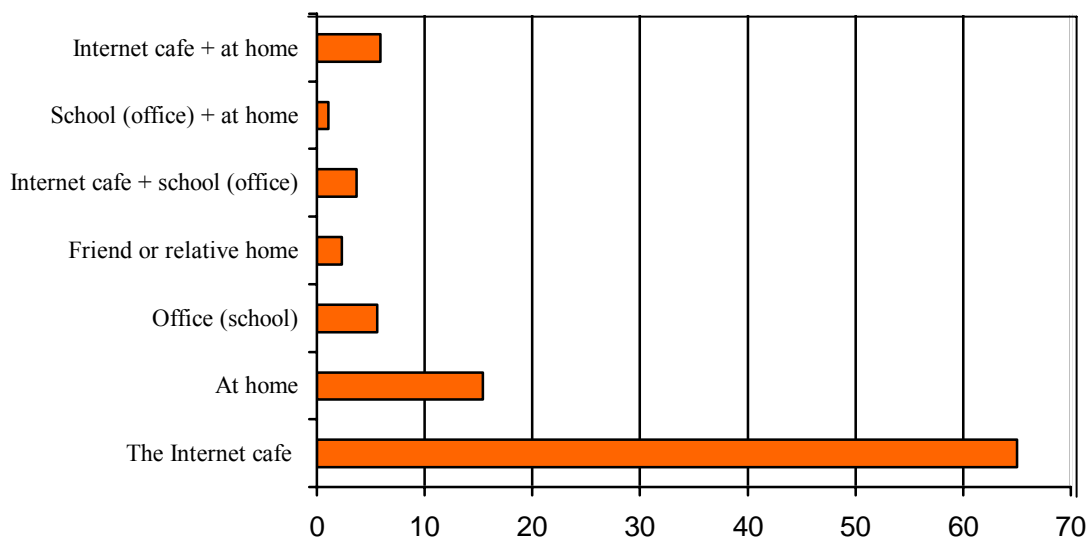
Table 5: Proportion of people using Internet (depending on sex)

Gender	Users of Internet of Youth Group		
	Students/ Academia	Different Officials	Others
	%	%	%
Male	53.33	56.1	64
Female	46.67	43.9	36
Total	100	100	100

(Source: data from the survey)

Place of using Internet:

Chart 3: the place to using the Internet



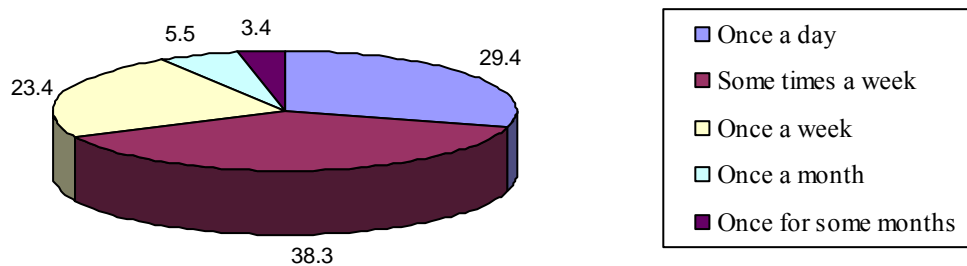
(Source: data from the survey)

The Chart 3 shows that the Internet café (cyber café) is playing vital role for using Internet (68%) and exploring new technology-based culture.

Today, people of both sexes have some sort of contact or access to this culture. This can further be intensified by taking into account the amount of days in a week involved in using Internet. It may vary from person to person but the overall picture generalizes the fact that it has become a daily activity of urban life where one cannot think of passing a day without being connected to Internet world or to the net. The time period involved with the use of Internet varies from one individual to individual but it makes no difference in the nature of using and practicing this culture.

The following Chart shows how common it is to use by the Youth Group.

Chart 4: The frequency of Internet use



(Source: data from the survey)

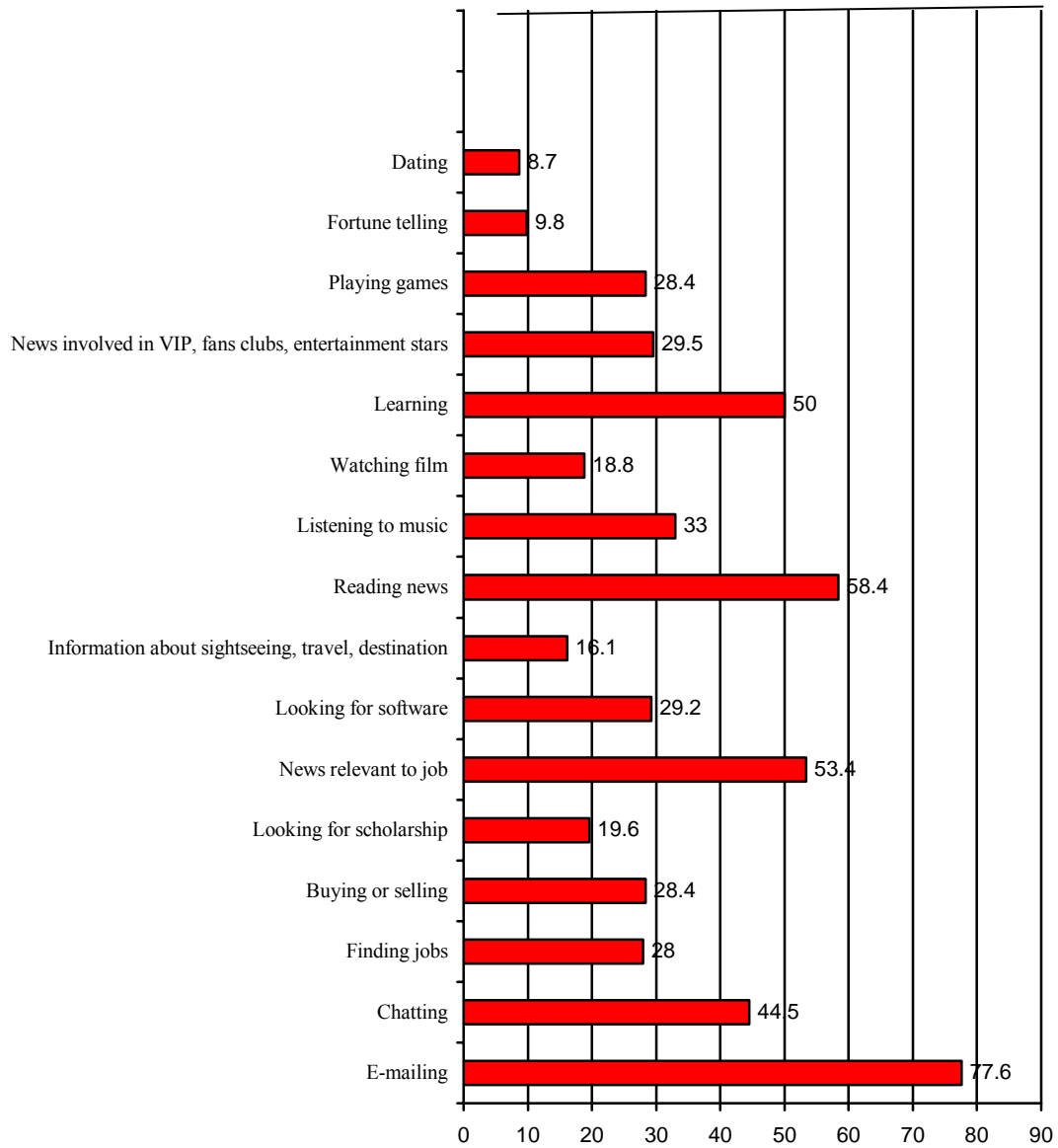
The above data shows large portion (38.3%) uses at least once a week and second highest portion is once a day (29.4%).

Purpose of Using Internet by the Youth

It is proportionate to one's nature of using Internet as a lot of purposes are served or sought through this culture. In other words, and as figured out from the following study, one can possibly be adapted or attracted to this culture because of self interest and embarked upon in expending lot more time on the net.

From this research, the purposes of using Internet are illustrated in the following Bar Diagram:

Chart 5: Purpose of using Internet



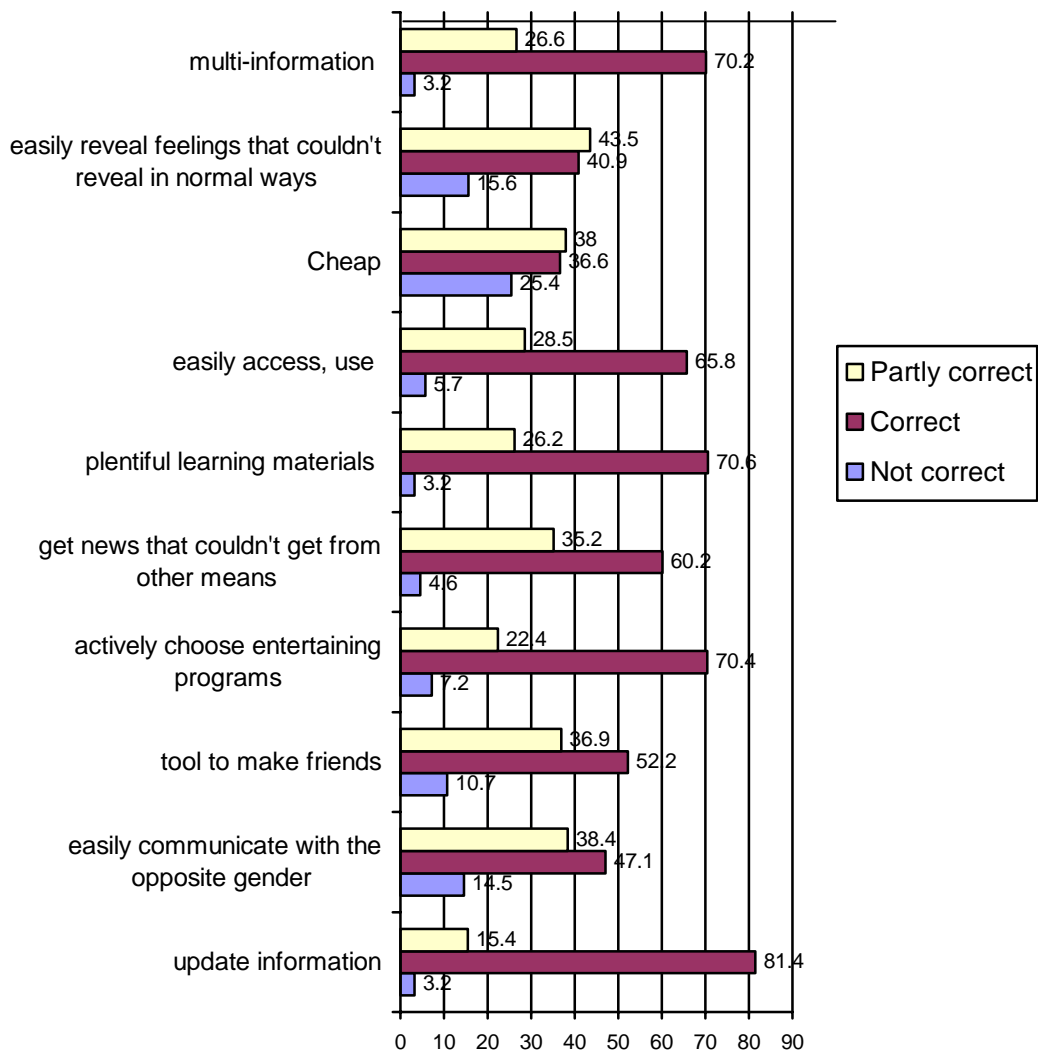
(Source: data from the survey)

The above diagram shows, among Youth Group, emailing is the highest portion's (77.6%) purpose for using Internet.

Benefits from using Internet

In this research, the respondents mention the following benefits of using Internet: easy access and plenty of multi-information actively choose entertainment programs, too make friends, easy to communicate with others all over the world, get update information etc. These benefits are shown in the following chart:

Chart 6: Benefits of using Internet

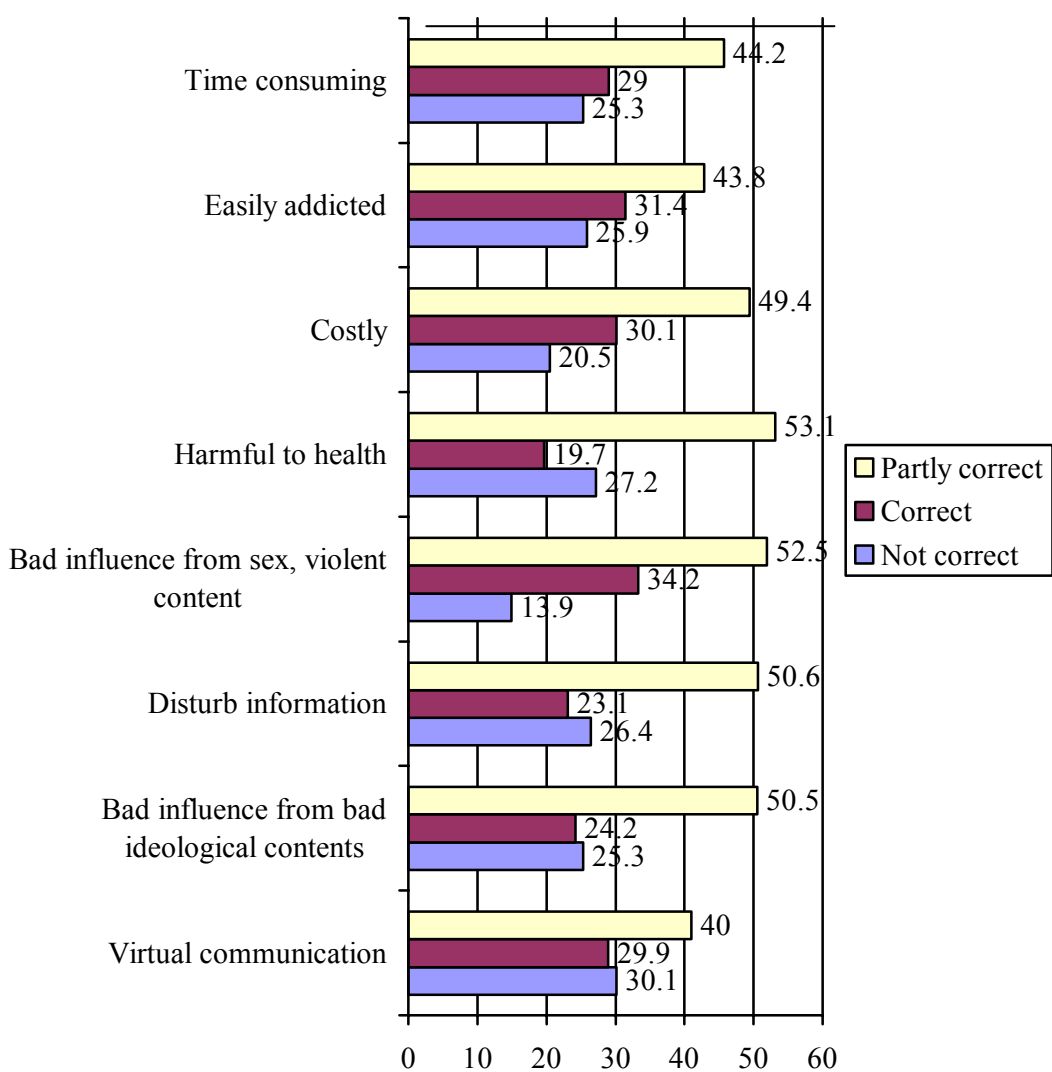


(Source: data from the survey)

Risk of Using Internet

In spite of having a lot of benefits, there are some risks or adverse effects of using Internet. These are bad influence from sex and violent content, easy addition, time consuming, harmful to health, money costing etc. Finding from this research are illustrated in the following chart:

Chart 7: Risks of using Internet



(Source: data from the survey)

Chapter 4: Findings- Social and Cultural impact (on youth group) of Internet Use

4.1. The Internet users from view of some research perspectives

I deploy four theoretical perspectives for the research such as follow:

4.1. 1. Theoretical perspective 1: relation between social context and the Internet usage

The Internet usage must be attached to the context of economy, politics, culture, and technology of a given society. It is so clear that these contexts will determine how the Internet develops.

Internet was first introduced in Bangladesh in 1996, being real boom in the early 21st century; the characteristic of Bangladeshi Internet users is that most of the Internet users are in Youth Group. It is quite simple if we understand that the Internet in particular and computer in general are new in this country. These new technologies ask their users for sharp-witted to new things, and it is ideal for them to have certain knowledge of English on computer, hardware and software. These above-mentioned advantages seem not belong to the old. The result is that youth group or under 30 year-old people are dominant users of computer and the Internet market in Bangladesh.

The number of the Internet users in Dhaka in particular and Bangladesh in general has been increasing due to many reasons. However, it is firmly believed there are some main reasons as such following:

Government policies to popularize the Internet: In terms of the Internet development, government orientations play its important role. The government policy on popularizing the Internet in schools nationwide, the number of users who have basic knowledge of computer

and the Internet are increasing rapidly though they do not own their computer at home. The Internet café owners have found prosperous Internet market and therefore massively established their business and found their best competitive ways to attract their customers.

The Internet access discount: the Internet access discount is definitely increasing the number of the Internet users, especially for the disadvantaged group who could not access the Internet due to financial constraints (for instance students, un-employment...), and give users an opportunity to access with longer duration and more web pages without getting worried about access fee.

The boom of the Internet café and the active role of the owners: This boom is seemingly based on two things. The first is the encouraging policy of the government. The second is the dramatic growth of the users. It is so clear that in terms of the Internet café owners, profit is always a driving force to do their business. There are usually some skilled keepers in these Internet cafés (e.g. Internet café keepers or their employee). Because of their business intentions, they try to attract customers by many methods such as free guiding to access or open mail account, helping to search web sites and information, fee discount to regular customers, air conditioner room, modern computer, fast accessing, soft drink, motorbike keeping space.... Because of this comfortable environment, the number of Internet users is increasing rapidly in the Internet cafés. As a result, the number of the Internet cafés is also increasing.

The increase of Bangladeshi web sites: Bangladeshi web sites are coming alongside with the diversity of cyber-services, especially entertainment services. The users should know

certain knowledge of English to use the Internet properly. These days the number of Bangladeshi web sites is appearing numerously day after day, and meeting with different demands of Bangladeshi users. The number of increasing Bangladeshi web sites has created favourable condition to the people. The information is also diversified. There are many web sites from government ministries, departments, companies, restaurants, hotels... and especially entertainment web sites, chat rooms, and webs created by a group of friends for young users.

Thus, agreeing with the theoretical perspective of a relation between social context and the Internet usage, it is clear to determine that the context of economy, politics, culture, and technology of Bangladeshi society has given advantages to boom the Internet users (mainly Youth Group) in Bangladesh generally and Dhaka particularly.

4.1.2. Theoretical perspective 2: social capital and the Internet usage.

The rise of the Internet has led to severe though ambiguous debate and assumption about its influence on society. These arguments could benefit from being organized by distinctions initially suggested by James S. Coleman (1988, 1990). According to Coleman, individuals have three fundamental resources at their disposal: financial capital, human capital, and social capital. Each can be connected to new technologies generally and the Internet particularly.

The dissemination of the Internet has revised the anxiety that social capital may be declining (cf. Kaz and Aspden, 1998). This anxiety is based on two reasons: first, using the Internet is prevailingly an individual activity, as watching TV. The Internet users will take time out of other activities to surf the net. Clearly, if the Internet users take the time for surfing the net

ahead of other individual activities then no negative consequences regarding social involvement are to be expected. On the other hand, if the Internet users reduce using time they would fail to communicate with others, then it would take them away from social communication. Thus, if the Internet increases the individualization of free time it could cause a decrease in social interaction and finally to a decrease in individuals' networks or social capital.

Secondly, if someone uses the Internet, it is increasingly unnecessary to leave home for personal tasks, such as shopping or even working. Consequently, many daily transactions can be done exclusive of face-to-face communication, which could finally reduce social contacts.

However, there are also reasons why the Internet could increase social involvement. First, the Internet is seen as a fast and cost efficient communication tool. In particular, e-mail offers the opportunity to keep geographically varied networks. Additionally, some professions are allowed to work from a home based office. This may possibly add to time flexibility and permit more social contact within families. To summarize, there are different prospects of how the dissemination of the Internet affects people's lives. The actual effect of the Internet is an empirical matter that may depend on how it is used (Axel Franzen 2003).

Discussing on the reasons of using The Internet, J. Fiske argues that "people tended to use newspapers, radio, and television to connect themselves to society, but used books and films to escape from reality for a while. The better educated tended to use the print media; those with less education were inclined towards the electronic and visual media. Books were the

medium most used for improving one understands of self¹⁰. In terms of the Internet usage, first, to a certain extent, individual can get both: connect to society and to escape from reality; second, Fiske's argument could not be correct when he determines that electronic media's users (herein the Internet users) are not less educated because the Internet users are not passive receivers, they join actively in their entertainment, and moreover they can only access the Internet after getting certain knowledge.

The research outcome shows that people of Youth Group access the Internet for many reasons. Relatively they use for following purposes: (i) update information (81.3%); (ii) actively choose entertaining programs (70.4%); (iii) plentiful learning materials (70.6%); (iv) multifaceted-information (70.2%); (v) easily access, use (65.8%); (vi) get news that you couldn't get from other communication means (60.2%); (vii) tool to make friends (52.2%); (viii) easily communicate with the opposite gender (47.1%); (ix) easily reveal feelings and thoughts which you couldn't reveal in normal ways (40.9%); (x) cheap (36.6%).

In terms of favourite activities, 10 favourite activities are relatively ranked as follow: (i) e-mailing (77.6%); (ii) learning and the relevant information on net (53.4%); (iii) reading news (58.4%); (iv) chatting (44.5%); (v) listening to music (33.0%); (vi) searching for software (29.2%); (vii) looking for news involved in VIP, famous clubs, entertainment stars...(29.5%); (viii) playing games (28.4%); (ix) looking for buying or selling things (28.4%); and (x) finding a job (28.0%).

¹⁰ Fiske, J. 2000. Introduction to Communication Studies. London: Routledge. p 19.

If we link favourite activities and the reasons, the result will show as follow:

Table 6: Favourite activities and reasons for using Internet

No.	Reasons	Favourite activities
1.	update information	e-mail
2.	actively choose entertaining programs	learning and the relevant information on net
3.	plentiful learning materials	reading news
4.	multi-information	chat
5.	easily access, use	listening to music
6.	get news that you couldn't get from other communication means	searching for software
7.	tool to make friends	Looking for news involved in VIP, famous clubs, entertainment stars...
8.	easily communicate with the opposite gender	Playing games
9.	easily reveal feelings and thoughts which you couldn't reveal in normal ways	looking for buying or selling things
10.	cheap	finding a job

(Source: data from the survey)

Thus, the result indicates that the communication need of users of Youth Group is high, and these users would see the Internet as a tool to help them communicating. In terms of social capital's speculation, the Internet contributes to increase individual social capital. Besides communication need, learning and entertainment are also both the reasons and favourite activities on net for the youth group. These above mentioned reasons and favourite activities demonstrate that social capital increased along with the Internet usage is reasonable.

Based on collected data, it is clear that communication on net plays a key role in using the Internet. Though communication on net is virtual, many young users do not regard it as a reason to reduce face-to-face communication. Assessing from viewpoint of social capital, collected data support the tendency of increase in which the Internet users have more opportunities to make friends through chatting and e-mailing.

However, the next question is that whether using the Internet increases or decrease social capital? As discussing at the beginning about the decrease of social capital due to the Internet usage, it is obvious to think of it especially when a study shows that in the United Kingdom many children love their computer more than their parents, or according to Mr. Lee Su Jin, a psychologist and researcher, an Internet centre in South Korea, “Youngster those addicted to the Internet usually get unhappy in terms of their learning. They rarely communicate with their family and friends therefore they always feel dreary and lonely”¹¹. Moreover, Lepastier argues that danger is now the indifference of gender issue, especially because machines or non-gender objects are dominant to our society. It is clearly seen in young users in case of watching television, playing video games with virtual persons... These environments are so worried, and do not help to build individual personality¹²... One respondent also tell me that “making friends on net does not last long. From our observations, we assume that (i) though the young Internet users have more friends on net, and these friendships are not close enough. Therefore, the friendships do not show the increase of social capital (if we regard social capital as quality plus quantity of social relations); (ii) obviously the use of the Internet could lead to the decrease of other individual social activities. Though the activities of e-commerce, e-conference or e-working are not popular in Bangladeshi, it is easily seen that the Internet

¹¹ Tuoi tre (youth) newspaper, Wednesday, November 27, 2002

¹² Sport and Culture newspaper, issue 70 (1055) 31-8-1999

use is reducing individual time to take part in collective activities or social network. These above-mentioned reasons could decrease individual social capital.

However, our results indicate that the Internet use does not reduce social involvement. The Internet users even have more friends and also spend more time with their social network. Thus, the real effect of the Internet is an empirical question that may also depend on how it is used.

4.1.3. Theoretical perspective 3: the difference of the Internet usage.

As a means of media, the Internet has its own audience. Discussing on audience (herein the Internet users), we mean different audiences. In terms of the Internet use, our viewpoint is that, there are different groups of audience using the Internet for different purposes. The purposes of using the Internet depend on many factors those could identify within a given social context. The purpose of young users for instance could be different from old users, or government officers could use the Internet differently to compare with pupils and students...

The research's outcome indicates some differences within users of Youth Group. For example, relatively ranking, there are 10 favourite activities as follow: (i) e-mailing (77.6%); (ii) learning and the relevant information on net (53.4%); (iii) reading news (58.4%); (iv) chatting (44.5%); (v) listening to music (33.0%); (vi) searching for software (29.2%); (vii) looking for news involved in VIP, famous clubs, entertainment stars...(29.5%); (viii) playing games (28.4%); (ix) looking for buying or selling things (28.4%); and (x) finding a job (28.0%). From our research, comparative ten favourite activities in Internet use between student group and general young users of Youth Group are shown in the following table 7.

Table 7: Ten favourite activities between student group and rest of young users:

Favorite activities	Students (%)	Rest of young users(%)
E-mailing	48.40	51.60
Learning	58.10	41.90
Reading news	44.00	56.00
Chatting	64.50	33.50
Listening music	54.20	45.80
Searching software	63.60	37.40
Finding job	44.30	55.70
Searching scholarship	65.60	34.40
E-commerce	52.80	47.20
Game and other entertainments	50.30	49.70

This result of the above table has clearly indicated the differences between student group and young users generally. We also see some differences such as less than 25 year-old users prefer e-mailing and e-learning. These results do not mean any scientific disagreements since they could be answered from different viewpoint including the difference of user groups, or in other words we have different audiences in different contexts.

Relating to the difference of the Internet use, the study indicates that male young users prefer searching for software, looking for information of VIPs, entertainment stars, sport clubs, playing games, making friends. Other differences will be shown in the next part of this report. In summary, it is useful to explain the Internet from viewpoint of differences of its use.

4.1.4. Theoretical perspective 4: theory of imitation.

This theoretical perspective is interpreted as follows: in a certain circumstance, human being usually imitates each other in life. The imitation helps people feel safe in their social behavior, particularly when they are in a new environment and have no experience... The next step is that individual wants to know which group he/she belongs to and which expected activities are suitable in that group.

In terms of the Internet use, this theoretical perspective is deployed such as the Internet is obviously considered a vogue. The person who doesn't know how to use the Internet (e-mailing, chatting or etc.) is seen as dull boy/girl. In young group, the boys/girls who do not use the Internet for chatting or e-mailing are considered "don't want to update information". They could have no friend if they are not in an Internet group, chat room. Thus, one of the reasons for increasing the Internet users could derive from this theory. Taking as a reference, a Chinese female pupil reveals "In my school, a pupil who is yet to use the Internet is seen as cloddish... I myself feel uncomfortable if I don't access the Internet in a day. Consequently, I access the Internet everyday even if for a moment"¹³. The outcome also indicates that the

¹³ The Internet threat in China: torture children's spirit and body. Sport and culture newspaper, issue 77 (1482), Friday 26/9/2003, p. 32

Internet cafés is a dating place for many Internet young users. Particularly many users who have the Internet at home still come to the Internet cafés.

In conclusion, in seeking an answer to the question of how the Internet Culture affects young users in Dhaka, we could find it from different viewpoints. We are proposing some of them herein (i) the relation between social context and the Internet usage; (ii) the social capital and the Internet usage; (iii) the difference of the Internet usage; and (iv) the theory of imitation.

4.2. Positive and negative influence of the Internet on Youth Group:

4.2.1 Positive influences

Posing a hypothesis such as the Internet is disappeared. How this world would be transform appallingly? Everything would be back to at least 10 – 15 years: all mail would need stamps, send through post offices; the stagnation of works, slow transactions; information only from books and newspapers, public libraries or direct conferences... and other many difficulties that we would have to face with. (One day without Internet, svn.com.vn).

History shows us that new technologies such as radio, television, or computer... have always transformed a society and culture. It is generally agreed that Internet is changing our society and also bringing many benefits to human being. When we are mentioning to an intellectual economy and information society, we are at the same time put the Internet as a vital means to enhance that society.

Scientists have demonstrated the influence of emergence of new technologies towards considerable social changes. In the past, the appearance of power-loom, printing, steam engine, Morse signal, radio, television have marked socio-economic booms at that time, we are now hoping for that kind of miracle from computer and the Internet. These changes have always come along with negative aspects however we should appreciate their positive influences. It is correct in terms of Internet use.

In 1998, American Online showed their interesting study: more than 40% respondent saying that the Internet makes their lives more wonderful. 90% said that they would leave the Internet only if it did not exist. When they are asked how to do in a desert island, 68% said they need a computer to connect to the Internet, 23% need a phone and only 9% need a TV or radio. (One day without Internet, svvn.com.vn).

❖ **The Internet enhances individual communication and entertainment**

In terms of communication studies, the Internet has three main functions: Firstly, it is an individual communication. It includes sending messages by e-mail or chat. This function is easily to create favorable condition to individuals and institutions contacting with each other; Secondly, it is a group communication. Different groups can communicate with each other through a medium of the Internet. It includes e-conference, e-learning or e-working; Thirdly, It is a mass communication. All people can access the Internet as using radio, television or newspaper to update information.

Our finding shows that most favorite activities are e-mailing, reading news, chatting, and playing games, listening to music or watching films. Obviously, communication need does exist in youth group, and the Internet meets with this demand.

Actually, 90% of students search webs for chatting, or to communicate with their friends, including friends abroad. They can chat for hours because it is so cheap to compare with using telephone or cell phone.

E-mailing is the most popular activity but chatting is the most favourite and time consuming activities. The question is that why young users like chatting? Our research reveals that chatting on net brings to young users some benefits that they cannot find from other communication means. First, the Internet's technological advantage; it has instant messages and quick responses from friends; second, it is easy to communicate with one's opposite gender friends without any nervous feeling. In psychological terms, youth is the period of stabilizing personality. Especially in terms of Bangladeshi youth group, they are usually not brave enough to speak individually with their opposite gender friends. They now feel self-confident to chat with opposite gender friends particularly in case of love affair. They can reveal their feelings that they could not disclose in a normal situation. One respondent exposes "In my opinion, the chat brings a benefit such as it makes friends closer and easier to talk what we couldn't in face-to-face communication. The relation on net is virtual so if we speak out or complaint, the partners will not know who we are, and it is easier to talk what normally we do not talk to strangers. And in my own opinion, it will clear away bad mood; third, using the Internet gives users more time to think of what to say and hide one's real face. One can talk whatever he wants and imagines, and does not care about your friend behaviour. For these advantages, users feel more comfortable to talk with their friends. One interviewee reveals that "You have to answer immediately in face-to-face communication. However, you

have more time to think of when you are chatting. You can type, think and sometimes find interesting answers and initiatives. A girl told me that "you can exaggerate anything because your partners do not know who you are, it is virtual though" (...) I read in a newspaper telling that chat is also a way of thinking because it is a virtual space. You feel calm and self-confident"; the fourth reason is that, increasing stressful learning at schools and family problems also push the computer and chatting addiction to young users. They feel relaxed to be friend with a computer in which they can do whatever they want and like. One respondent claims "I think they (users) may have too much stress. Their parents push them into stressful learning. Their teachers also criticise them heavily. When they are chatting, they can chat all kind of stuffs they want. They can throw their stress away, and encourage their friends. It is like opium, light but addicting if you use frequently"; the last reason is using the Internet is cheaper than other communication means.

The computer and Internet is obviously considered not only a communication tool but also a tool of education. Parents must bitterly resent their children chatting but they are definitely willing to connect them to the Internet for their loved ones' e-learning. Changing from main function to subordinate function of the computer is only the issue of children's users, especially when the parents are not looking after their children all the time. After the Internet cafés have emerged, the existing need of children has been more activated since they can access the Internet without permission of their parents. More and more people are joining in the Internet, and parallel with learning on net the Internet has also created an enjoyable environment of entertainment. "The Internet creates ideal opportunities to make friends for youth group. In the condition of hidden name, these friends easily reveal their emotion, and then easily to make friends." (Thanh An, Love on net, Women World newspaper, issue 8/03 March 3, 2002).

It is strongly argued that chatting and playing games is harmful to young users. In my opinion, it is not appropriate to spend too much money and have bad influence on their study. One student tells that he does not know what to do without the Internet in a day. He and other youngsters could only leave home and wander aimlessly. (Hang Phuong svvn.com.vn) If someone needs to blame for, it is schools and social associations. It is not right to blame all negative influences the young Internet users while collective activities and educational environment are not in good condition. Besides learning purpose, the Internet is also to create an interesting place of entertainment and communication. It provides diversified information, learning opportunities, and clear away individual stress from their everyday life, as well as strengthen some personalities, or even help avoid social evils.

The Internet is good for education

E-learning and finding the relevant materials are also favourite activities. E-learning is a new form. This learning includes three ways, firstly users access educational web sites, university web sites to download materials and search information; secondly, users exchange their study, homework with each other through e-mail and chat; thirdly, it is online learning. This is not popular in Bangladesh.

It is undeniable that for students study is their most important task. The Internet totally helps them to do this task. Parents are willing to allow their children using the Internet if they are persuaded that the Internet will help their children better learning. And it is completely reasonable.

There are many websites that can help to study. Many websites help to study English, mathematics or different subjects, as well as show tips to get good marks. E-learning could help much, even more than ordinary learning at class. Classmates can study online with gathering at one room. They may set up a forum or chat room to connect each other for studying. Only by searching on net, one can find a typical exercise or proper answers to one's interest. It does not cost much is another strong point of this use.

Not only e-learning, there are lots of relevant materials on net. Many Bangladeshi newspapers have their own websites. People can easily read news paper by browsing their websites through Internet. There are many websites in Bangladesh which make link with all Bangladeshi daily newspapers and Bengali songs and other entertainment materials. These are e-mela.com, www.ferdous.org, www.velki.com, www.bdnews.com , www.banglamusic.com etc.

Searching for scholarship on net is one of favourite activities. Many students appreciate this source of information. One respondent answers that she finds searching for scholarship on net more trustful than the agencies for abroad study.

New learning method has transformed Bangladeshi traditional ways of study. This method helps student to approach rich knowledge treasure of human being, and diversified information, as well as actively receive information. Now the Internet is providing a newer and higher foundation to compare with last generations. We could not understand well what will happen with the Internet, but Bangladeshi society has been changing from its educational foundation because of the Internet.

❖ **The Internet strengthens some individual personalities**

Our hypothesis is that a virtual world is created thanks to the Internet. In this virtual world, virtual communication presents real ideas of users because these ideas could not be done in real world by many reasons. An expert says that the Internet is one of many channels to communicate between people, and this is a place where young people can exercise their social communication skills to strangers. Dr. Ellen Kriedman indicates that online dating is to make good for shy persons who dare not to meet their friends in public place. Dating online service is also a good choice if you are always away from home or busy with your business trips. Our research shows that these virtual communication and entertainment also help young users strengthen their personality. The personality is strengthened by two ways. First, the communication skill of young users is improved, especially in terms of opposite gender communication because they get used with keeping contact with strangers on net; secondly, thanks to access diversified information, the young users have better knowledge of what happening around them (including the information about which they are curious and suitable with their age group but they hardly find it from other information sources) since they are more confident to deal with different information.

It is not accidental when e-mailing and chatting are two most favourite activities on net. Besides the utility of instant message, e-mailing and chatting help individual become more confident to communicate with others as well. One respondent reveals that "I have a friend. She is closed within herself, and has few friends. She only accesses the Internet to find pleasure. (...) Through chatting she shows she has a strong and consistent will. But she is not that in reality" (one respondent said, who is a student). The research data indicate that young users access the Internet due to many reasons including their personality completing such as

making friends with the opposite gender (45.0%), a tool to make friends (51.2%) or easily revealing feelings and thoughts which you couldn't reveal in normal ways (39.9%).

Many people argue that the virtual world will have bad influences on youth since it brings young users to a world hidden everyday and face-to-face communication, however, increasing number of users coming to this world reveals that virtual world could solve some problems in their everyday communication. It is obvious that these virtual communication and entertainment provide information and experience that young users could not get in real world. They become more and more confident through their virtual communication. It is clearly said that if youth users' personality is completed and strengthened, it is obviously an advantage of the Internet use.

4.2.2 Negative influences

Each time a new technology has emerged, public opinion has always assessed both its positive and negative aspects. The Internet is seen from that viewpoint of public opinion and media, and it is even more negative aspects than positive ones from Bangladeshi case.

It is not entirely difficult to track down the negative aspects of the Internet use. Unlike the easy censorship of television, the Internet is more complicated to control. Though the government tries to set up firewalls, young users always easily crack this wall to access which information they want.

The negative aspects could be counted for the following reasons: (i) harmful and non-oriented information; (ii) social evils coming along with the Internet use; and (iii) Hacker, virus and fake information.

❖ **Distributing harmful and non-oriented information**

There are in fact much harmful and non-oriented information on net. In Bangladeshi context, we are mentioning depraved websites such as sex films, cartoons, and pictures, or the websites containing information to undermine the policies of national unification of the state and the party.

The data shows that 33.3% young users completely agree in using the Internet is easy to be affected by the content of inciting the activities of violence and sexuality (51.9% partly agree with this comment); and 24.2% respondents consent that using the Internet will be affected by "bad" political and ideological thoughts¹⁴. (50.6% partly agree with this comment.) These are all biggest negative aspects of the Internet use according to youngsters' assessment.

Actually negative aspects are not Vietnam generally or Hanoi particularly but also global problems. The neighbour countries such as Thailand, China, or South Korea are also having headache with these issues. A report shows that in China, many teachers and parents claim that the Internet is an awful threat to their children when it affects on them as something addicted. Moreover, children are also the victim of pornographic picture and violence on net, as well as virtual love. The report indicates that 17.1% Internet users are children under 18

¹⁴ It includes the information to undermine the policies of national unification of the state and the party, as stated widely in this country.

years old. 70% of them coming to the Internet cafés for chatting, and 40% are frequent customers of sex websites¹⁵.

It is obviously clear that the young users are aware of these above mentioned negatives. However, some of them still find the way to access. "There is reactionary information on net, and they all know the government forbids, and have to bypass firewall, but they are still downloading". The psychological characteristics of youth are curious, and they do not have adequate knowledge backdrop to resist different or even opposite information. If the above deviant information is merely controlled by techniques without explaining why is bad and should not access, the firewall control or any type of technology is only a temporary method and ineffective.

The information of inciting the activities of violence and sexuality is a truly concern of the society and families. It is not exaggerated to say that there are websites on net flooded with sex and violence. The sex websites have buyers and sellers; and downloading pictures, films, and cartoons is not difficult at all.

Our study is not included how many percent of young users accessing the Internet mainly for this information, but we may estimate a number of young users surfing these websites due to their above mentioned psychological characteristics. "I was so surprised to see some children in grade 4 or 5 surfing sex websites. Filtering information for young users is so complicated. We should accept it like we accept our open economy with some evils. Limit it but not reject it." (One respondent says).

¹⁵ The Internet threat in China: torture children's spirit and body. Sport and culture newspaper, issue 77 (1482), Friday 26/9/2003, p. 32.

❖ **Social evils coming along with the Internet use**

One of dark sides is social evils coming along with the Internet use. Besides a tool to provide information, the Internet is also a tool of communication. Our data indicates that two of favourite activities are e-mailing and chatting. The communication itself is neutral neither good nor bad. However, in certain context, human beings use communication for their own purposes, and these purposes are not neutral then. Thanks to our collected outcome, we consider that the Internet communication could create conditions to emerge social evils, particularly including prostitute offer and cheating on net.

Chat is one form of communication that easiest to emerge social evils. As we discussed, chatting with strangers, especially without web cam, will make people easily to reveal their emotion and also to tell lie. If you are close friends, you should not tell lie to each others. Since the Internet has appeared, a new concept of friendship is also come out. New friends needn't know partner face, name, age or even gender; they know each others on net, then chat and show their emotion. They are easy to make friend and break up without any reason. This new friendship is easy to use each others. Youth is the period of growing up. They have not much experience in life, and therefore they are also easy to be victim of joke or social evils on net. In Bangladesh, there are many stories about cheating love, money and everything on net. They are also gathering together to be a gang etc.

Sex offering on net is now not a new crime. This crime is obviously connected to the Internet users including young users. The persons who do sex offering knows well the advantage of this technology such as rapid - convenient - cheap - secret feature, as well as the users they are aiming to offer (curious, young, closed Internet users). One respondent reveals that "they

are actually addicted to the Internet and forget the time. They do not feel tired though it is more tiring than working.

Furthermore, we can find information on crime relevant to the Internet use throughout Bangladeshi newspapers. Consequently it is concluded that new technology (the Internet) could create new social evils. However, it is an unavoidable trend and we mustn't forbid young users to access the Internet, as well as ignore the positive aspects the Internet that brings into human life.

❖ **Hacker, virus and fake information**

Another negative aspect of the Internet use is hacker, virus and fake information. Today, human beings are more and more dependent on our machine including computer and the Internet. As discussed in a newspaper, many people have chosen computers when they are lost in a desert island. Technologies have many capabilities to enrich our lives on the condition that we have to manage and control them.

We are living in an information age. We are now dependent on information, even more than we could imagine. With a modern man, the world will be uninhabitable without information technologies such as television, newspaper, radio, facsimile, telephone. There are information wars occurring in this age. When information network is blocked, it will lead to huge damage to economy and politics of a society in particular and global in general. Much information has been distorted to push this world on to a war such as the war in Iraq, some fake massacres in Kosovo... We have been reported the overturn of the president of the

Philippines Joseph Estrada by information technology, or hackers have attacked political websites everywhere.

Bangladesh's Internet use is not out of this context. Despite the fact that hackers, virus are not popular because of small information technology's infrastructure and unpopular Internet usage... in this country, it is scatteredly occurred the use of virus or password steal in young users.

As we may know, there are some websites providing methods to crack or steal passwords on net, and send viruses to destroy other individual mail accounts. The importance is that these activities are not condemned and youngsters think they are genius to do these illegal activities, their fellows also appreciate and imitate these kinds of activities.

Moreover, the Internet is considered a network that provides "saturated information" to young users. The saturation means the users can search any information they want. They only type key words into search machines such as Google, and the information will be available. The information is numerous but lack orientation; different dimensions both negative and positive aspects while young users have the unstable frame of reference. The information and knowledge that the young users receive from social institutions such as family, education... could be re-processed by the Internet from different dimensions. This information is not always correct, reliable and good because it is not under any control. The Internet is sometimes seen as a tool to de-stress individual problems. Young users' problems are sometimes posted on net. Too many problems on net will make chaos on the Internet. Bad consequence is that the young users do not sometimes differentiate which is right or wrong,

and then the young users listen to deviant information, or in higher extent, they lose their belief in life.

❖ **Cultural Invasion**

a. The Internet advocates western life-styles. These websites display various aspects of western society and life, and the overwhelming majority of them have positive portrayals of the western life-style. It makes people believe that the West seems to be countries of absolute freedom and paradise for individual achievement where private life is without obstacles and external interferences. Partial information which is particularly appealing to our youths; whose life philosophy and worldview have yet to mature. Many of these youths aspire with great diligence to go abroad just to “change a way of living.”

b. The Internet helps dominant cultures impact and homogenize cultures in an inferior position. Because the Internet overwhelmingly is a culture of the English language, it further strengthens throughout the globe the culture based upon the English language. In comparison, cultures based upon the Chinese, the French and other languages have been weakened. Because of the introduction of the Internet, some under-developed countries have made themselves vulnerable to foreign dominant cultures, busy defending themselves. This situation has become so bad that scholars in some developing countries are concerned about their indigenous cultures being homogenized and have provided proposals to counter “cultural invasion” on different fronts.

c. The Internet corrupts people’s minds, influences and changes people’s moral perspectives and ethical values. Driven by the profits in the numbers of hundreds of millions of dollars, the pornography merchants in Western countries have opened pornographic websites, massively

producing various kinds of sex information. Nude males and females are everywhere; performances by “computer prostitutes” have also openly entered the Internet. This development has led the Commerce Committee of the U.S. Senate to propose the “1995 Communications Act for Good Behavior” to prohibit sex crimes committed on the Internet.

3. The Security Threats

a. Internal networks become susceptible to invasion. Various kinds of computer hackers (excluding the just curious) consist of complicated groups with all sorts of ulterior motives. They can strike anywhere, making trouble to no end. Some hackers defaced the website of the U.S. Department of Justice and changed it to include a Nazi emblem. Others have entered other people’s computers and destroyed programs and data. In this regard, our country has seen an increasing number of hacker attacks. Furthermore, some unnamed organizations have entered our internal networks and caused major damages to some technical devices. The Internet can also be used to launch computer viruses targeted at specific networks so that the networks will be damaged or paralyzed. At present, live computer viruses are numbered more than 14,000, and they constantly evolve, the danger of which can never be underestimated.

b. The Internet makes it easy to lose and leak secrets. Because cleared staff can freely send and receive electronic mail, voluntary leaking of secrets has become remarkably easy. Under the current circumstance, stealing secrets by people from outside is not all that difficult either. As long as one knows the working mechanism and the techniques of breaking passwords, many internal networks can be broken into at ease. Therefore, obtaining political, economic and technological intelligence through the Internet has become one of the important methods in contemporary political and economic espionage. To use the Internet to steal new and advanced technologies, economic policies and other classified information is a modality of

obtaining enormous benefits with relatively low cost. According to the statistics of the U.S. FBI, incidents of the American Internet networks being broken into are rapidly increasing by 30% annually, making the U.S. suffer tremendously. With the widening application of the Internet in our country's political, economic and military realms, we must keep sufficient vigilance against such situations.

c. The Internet poses potential threat of information warfare. Some countries have applied the Internet into military operations, have conducted mock attacks against other countries' networks, or have fabricated deceptive information harmful to other countries' military forces. At a time when the information networks have become an important infrastructure of the nation and the military, the information warfare will be a war without the explosives, a war with a high invisibility, low cost, international, and multi-area (political, military, economic, social and material resources etc.) approach. The high-tech nature and the unpredictability of combat intelligence in information warfare have made it extremely difficult to organize an information defense. The U.S. Department of Defense has specifically established an "Executive Committee on Information Warfare," which is devoted to studying national policy for information warfare, and conducting war games on some websites. According to a report by the Sunday Times of England, on 29 June (1998), experts from Great Britain and the United States conducted a secret military exercise in the destructive attacks on computers, with the objective of preventing a blitzkrieg in an information war. The result of the exercise indicates that just a few hackers can paralyze the stock market, military systems and airports, making the superpower, the United States, unable to move around. This exercise greatly shocked the Clinton Administration. In a future information war, national financial transaction centers, stocks exchange centers, air traffic control centers, telecommunications

control centers, railway control headquarters and various military networks, will inevitably become the main targets of information warfare.

d. The Internet can be used to commit crimes. The globalized Internet has provided wider horizon and more numerous technical means to commit computer crimes. In recent years, Internet crimes have skyrocketed. Mainly, these crimes include illegal intrusion into others' computer facilities, spreading viruses through the Internet, stealing and modifying commercial secrets, unlawful transfer of others' funds, and intentional destruction of parts of the networks by using computer programs. In the United States, where the Internet was invented, the financial sector loses \$10 billion every year to Internet crimes. Other major developed countries also suffer from losses between tens of million dollars and several billion dollars annually. In our country, computer crimes are also increasing. So much so that in the new Criminal Codes implemented on 1 October of last year, specific clauses on punishing computer crimes were added. The North American Security Management Association warns, "If people are not careful, the information super highway will become a criminal super highway."

4. Information Flooding Has Caused Waste of Resources and Time

On the one hand, because the Internet is capable of connecting tens of millions of consumers all over the world, some smart and omnipresent merchants have figured out all the methods to penetrate everywhere; and many of them use the Internet to disseminate their product catalogues and advertisements, thus creating "Internet junk." Many who manufacture and disseminate "Internet junk" have mastered the complicated Internet skills and are able to, at extremely low cost, spread massive amount of "junk" to create Internet traffic jams, making it difficult for the normal information traffic to go through smoothly. On the other hand,

because of the lack of regulations and standards to follow, anybody can use any means to produce any type of information—real and fake information, correct and wrong information, good and bad information, wanted and unwanted information—thus creating a flood of information online. The result is to make it easier to mislead people into prohibited areas, while in the meantime increasing the difficulty and cost of searching and using valuable information, thus wasting considerable Internet resources and time.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

5.1 Social and cultural changes from the Internet use

5.1.1 A virtual world is emerged from the Internet use

As we discussed, now we can determine that a virtual world has been created through the Internet. This world is presented by virtual persons and communication. We now have virtual chicken, singers, games, models, and individuals have more virtual friends on net.

The virtual world is seen as a supplemental part of the real world. The virtual communication presents real ideas of users because these ideas could not be done in real world by many reasons. The young users can easily take part in this virtual world due to their particular individual psychology as well as different effects from their schools, families and society (e.g. the parents are so busy to take care of their children; the users have been facing with heavy study at schools; and they have not had many chances to access with the sensitive information of their ages such as gender relations, sexuality...).The social context has disseminated this virtual world, and it is inevitable trend of the future.

5.1.2 Some new social values are being created

The number of the Internet users has been increasing dramatically in Dhaka. There was a small group of users in the beginning years, now in Dhaka, there have been a considerable number of users, particularly Young users. We have mentioned about these reasons in the last parts. One of mentionable things is that theoretically the group of users is getting bigger, and as a role of social group with its own sub-culture, this group's social values are now wide spreading to other social stratum. And this group will definitely assert its influences onto society as a whole.

One of social values on the edge of change is friendship. In a normal way, the friendship is understood as something based on mutual understanding and respect; believe in each others; relatively long lasting; face-to-face communication; having making friends, giving gifts, being sulky, separation etc. Now the concept of friendship on net is changed a little bit. The young users can make friends on net. They have their communication (even face-to-face through Web Cam) to same favorites, especially virtual favorites on net. They are easy to make friends and break up. It is almost unstable. The concept of belief in friendship does not nearly exist. They meet up, make friends and break up simply, or even no-one says break-up to another, just ignore those friends, as well as do not reply the friend's messages. You can make friend with hundreds people on net a day, share with them your secret moods both fake and real...

One of other social values which are being certainly changed is love. In terms of youth, the love is something new, mysterious, and attractive. In Bangladesh, the information on this topic from school, family, and society is not enough to them while they have real needs on this information. The result is that many searches and communications on net are turned around this topic. The notion of love is operated and exchanged on net by the young users. The Internet is also a medium to convey love affair between sometimes strangers. This kind of love is somewhat different from ordinary love. This love is built up from virtual communications such as e-mailing and chatting therefore it is not firmly rooted for face-to-face and long lasting relationship. One can love many at the same time on net. The love appears quickly and also disappears at the same pace. Just through some chats, some users could travel miles to come to their virtual partners. Though they are crazy for love on net, they are breaking up after the first face-to-face meeting. Most love affairs on net are to satisfy

temporary communication needs, and few of them lead to a true love and firm marriage. However, it is possible that in the near future this communication will increase, and loving and dating on net will be therefore improved. If this happens, we will feel sorry for sweet love stories, loves at first sight, and romantic flirts...

Furthermore, many social values are transformed more or less the youth thinking of life, work, and family etc. It is now difficult to evaluate the good and bad points of these changes due to new technologies such as the Internet. History is the best judgment of what is happening. However, we should have our insights to adapt with technological changes to avoid unnecessary shock when we join in this information society.

5.1.3 Some new crimes are come out

Some social issues have been clearly emerged paralleling with the boom of the Internet users in Bangladesh generally and Dhaka particularly. Some new crimes are included sex offering, deceptions, destroying and cracking information, illegal copying information, virus etc. These social issues will be more popular and need to be proper control in the near future.

5.1.4 Cultural Integration through Internet

Internet, today, is seen as a ground and platform for the integration of culture of different origin throughout the globe where by the term cultural integration it can be meant to have interconnection and sharing or transmission of different cultural traits. Now it is quite possible, not only in imagination, to integrate dreams, opportunities, information and knowledge pertaining to different individuals with different culture of origin. In this civilized and extremely urbanized world, including the urban Dhaka, with the technological innovation

and development human sufferings and incapability began to lessen on the one hand, and integration on the economic, social, political, informational and to a greater extent on the cultural aspects of human being increased on the other hand. In this era of Information Technology based on computer mediated infrastructural articulation and innovation and also in the 21st century, an advancement is observed and is being observed in the trespassing of information and crossing over the boundaries by taking into account the elements and aspects of various cultures of the world. In terms of youth group in this study this is even deeper in sense and reality. People now either adapt with new cultural trends or regret any aspect on their will at the rate of free and flow movement on the Internet world. If computer is thought of as a source for underlying support then the connection of Internet to it is the live presentation of diffused aspects, whatever is the interpretation and wherever is the origin of Interest. The integration of culture is made easier in the pattern of text (writing) or in the pattern of reading and language of symbols. Sitting in front of a computer, either in home or in the cybercafé, one can go beyond one's imagination. In this process one can integrate to the varieties of culture as stands for his or her realization as well as understanding.

Whether it is music, movie, art gallery, photographic presentation, modern art and fashion, or simply the presentation of life style of western origin or not, these can easily be downloaded as well as integrated from browsing Internet. In this regard it can be said that sitting in a cybercafé situated at the Mirpur area of urban Dhaka one can materialize on what is so popular in United Kingdom (UK) or in United States of America. What is the latest musical instrument and production, what is the latest fashion (either in dress pattern or in food habit), what are the current beliefs and values for emancipation, how is the world of communication from North pole to the South pole, or what are the cultural patterns and attributes throughout the world-all these can easily be gathered and integrated when one has access to Internet. In

the urban areas of Dhaka and for the youth group these integration processes are relatively new as these were not seen a decade or so ago. When compared to the western culture the culture of urban Dhaka is traditional Bengali culture where, in recent times, the modern Western culture finds its integration. It would be wrong to conclude by saying that the technological innovation has made it easier for global communication and sharing of values and norms. It is people, or the Internet users, who consider Internet as a culture and a platform for the integration of different cultures of the world. With the increase in the use of Internet the integration process is also increasing.

The integration of culture through Internet can also be evaluated by term “diffusion”. Diffusion of culture reveals the fact that the traits of culture are not static rather diffused around the world, accepted by the people of different regions and so on. This is also the same and quite eventually seen in the context of present study where most of the Internet users argued that it is Internet which is responsible for cultural integration.

5.2 Solutions to promote the Internet use

Many people say that with the birth of new technologies, especially the information technology, the behavior of human beings will be mixed up between themselves and other natural objects. Everything will be changed quickly and it scares everyone. However, we could not avoid applying new technologies to enhance a social development that's why we should know how to use new technologies properly.

5.2.1 Policy solutions

The policy solutions should aim to two objectives: firstly, to ensure and create good conditions to the Internet development, and avoid blocking this indispensable development; secondly, to limit the negative aspects of the Internet use to the society in general and young users in particular.

To deal with these above objectives, government institutions should actively join in the Internet. The firewall solution is not only solution. It is a situation resolution and could not be an absolute answer for the issues of accessing unsuitable websites. Policy solutions should take into account the combination of techniques (firewall), propaganda, and education for young users about the Internet's bad influences from inappropriate websites through families, schools, media, and social associations such as youth unions, clubs etc.

It is necessary to popularize the Internet use. The government has its own policies and development objectives in near future. To avoid the formality of this work, Bangladesh should combine the provision of infrastructure (computers, high speed line) with the training of informatics teachers, the strengthening and providing the content of Bangladeshi websites, as well as setting up proper websites for young users. Hopefully these policies could reduce the young users to access unsuitable websites.

5.2.2 Media solutions

One of current situations that Bangladesh is facing is that the media see the Internet use as something bad or harmful to the young users. News on the Internet is flooded with negative aspects such as social evil. Newspapers have exploited too much the negative aspects of the

Internet. The crimes relevant to chatting and the Internet such as providing prostitution on net, murder commitment, robbers through dating on net, death due to playing games too much, appear every corner in the newspapers nationwide. In the one hand this could help people avoiding such social evils but on the other hand, many people have to see the Internet with their doubtful eyes.

Therefore, besides the coverage of negative aspects of the Internet use, media should pay more attention to positive aspects that the Internet brings to our society, as well as encourage the young users' access helpful websites for their education, etc.

5.2.3 Education solutions

In terms of the youth, education is one of the vital institutions in which the youth is not only equipped knowledge but also affected to the development of personality. The education solutions should be such as following: (i) putting forward some contents into citizen lectures or in class meetings of how the Internet bring benefits and negative influence; (ii) bringing these contents into union activities so that the young users realize the negative aspects of the Internet use, and they will see the access of inappropriate websites is a disgraceful activity, and will be condemned by other; (iii) setting up educational websites of each school; (iv) having more extra-curricular and leisure activities so that the youth has more chances to communicate face-to-face with each other.

5.3 The last words:

The advantages of information technology, human beings are now having more choices and comfortableness, but we should have good choices to all technological changes. Though

information technology is neutral, the ways we use it will affect positive or negative on users and society.

Youth is a special group in society. They are generally seen as the future of a country. However, they should be well equipped to take their heavy tasks tomorrow. Through what they are receiving today, we can primarily predict the prospect of our society. Depending on scientists' different perspectives, the society we are coming to is shaped in a different way, but it is totally agreed to the win of information technology. Consequently it is crucial to actively involve in new information technologies including the Internet. To properly engage in the age of information technology, we have to identify which should and shouldn't follow to participate in that society. It is argued that people are so equipped that they do not need face-to-face communicate with each other, and therefore their social capital is decreasing. Social evils are also coming to every corner of our society paralleling with information technology. They are obviously negative aspects. However, the existence of new technologies is unavoidable and necessary. We need to co-exist with new technologies. These technologies bring us infinite knowledge treasure; give us the insight of different cultures; and extend individual and social communications, as well as destroy space borders.

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Annexure

To grasp a relatively exact picture of Youth Group’s Internet users in Dhaka, I designed a questionnaire to elicit information about a wide range of issues concerning the Internet use in Dhaka.

Questionnaire

Personal details:

Age: Occupation:

Educational level: Gender: Male Female

Q1: Where do you usually use Internet? (please tick (v) in suitable box)

- Internet cafe - At home

- At your office - At your friend's house, etc

Q2: Which are your purposes of using Internet?

1. E-mail <input type="checkbox"/>	9. Read news <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Chat <input type="checkbox"/>	10. Listen to music <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Look for a job <input type="checkbox"/>	11. Watch film <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Look for buying or selling things <input type="checkbox"/>	12. Learning <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Look for overseas scholarship <input type="checkbox"/>	13. Look for news involved in VIP, famous clubs, entertainment stars... <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Look for news relevant to your job. <input type="checkbox"/>	14. Play games <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Look for information about sightseeing, travel, destinations <input type="checkbox"/>	15. Fortune telling <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Look for software <input type="checkbox"/>	16. “Dating” <input type="checkbox"/>

Q 3. In your opinion, which are benefits of using Internet? (not correct = 0, correct = 1, partly correct = 2) (please circle () your choice)

1. Update information <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	6. Plentiful learning materials <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2
2. Easily communicate with the opposite gender <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	7. Easily handle, use <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2
3. Tool to make friends <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	8. Cheap <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2
4. Actively choose entertaining programs <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	9. Easily reveal feelings and thoughts which you couldn't reveal in normal ways <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2
5. Can get news that you couldn't get from other communication means <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	10. Multi-information <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2

Q 5. How often do you usually use the Internet:

- Once - Some - Once a - Once a - Once for
a day times a week week month some months

Q 6. Does Internet have any effect upon your own culture and way of thought? (√)

a) Yes b) No

Q.7. Is there any cultural integration through Internet taking place? (√)

a) Yes b) No

Q.8. Is there any loss of one's own cultural identity and diversity by using internet?

(√)

a) Yes b) No

Q.9 Is there any change in the behavioral aspect by using internet? (√)

a) Yes b) No

Q.10. Is cultural diversity enhancing through internet? (√)

a) Yes b) No

A case study on ten Internet Cafés of Dhaka City

Time: 2 weeks (7/7/2008 to 21/7/2008)

Methods: Structure observation

Content: Customers were recorded with following information:

Date.....	Gender/ Age	Education level	Occupation	Activities	Accessing time/Duration
User's number.....					
User's number.....					
User's number.....					

Findings

Total number of Cyber café users for two weeks (in my observation): 400 of all aged people, students 248 (62%), other professionals 152 (38%); Male is 224 (56%) and female is 176 (44%).

Age level of Cyber café users:

Age	Number	Percentage (%)
Over 30 years	16	4%
15 to 30 years	360	90%
Less than 15 years	24	6%

Age: Under 30 is 96% and over 30 is only 4%.

Educational level of Cyber cafe users:

Educational Qualification	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	-	-
Under S. S. C	4	1%
S. S.C	40	10%
H. S. C	120	30%
Under Graduation	126	31.50%
Graduation and UP	110	27.5%

S.S.C: Secondary School Certificate, H.S.C: Higher Secondary Certificate.

Favourite activities:

E-mailing	87.3%
Chatting	80.1%
Reading news	48.8%
Learning	10.2%
Listening music	11.7%
Searching for software	7.1%
Playing games	3.8%
Looking for jobs	6.4%
Information on landscapes	3.6%
Information relevant to jobs	2.0%
Searching information on VIP, stars	1.0%

Watching films	1.4%
Selling and buying goods	0.4%
Looking for scholarship	1.2%
Fortune telling	0.1%

Accessing time:

Before 11	11-14	14-18	18-20	20-23
19.4%	21.7%	23.5%	15.0%	20.5%

Time consumption:

under 1 hour	1 - 2 hours	more than 2 hours
37.7%	41.0%	21.3%

