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### Experiences Of Online Reading

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*Experiences Of Online Reading*

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the online behavior of professionals and students. This research applied the qualitative method to get the objectives. The sample consists of 50 respondents of Karachi. These are selected from various professions such as doctors, teachers, researchers, bankers, businessmen, journalists, librarians and regular students of the University of Karachi. The data was collected through face to face interviews that recorded on the smartphone. The recorded interviews were transcribed and then analyzed. The findings indicated that internet increases the reading habit. Availability and accessibility of material improve the reading amount whereas cross-references, hyperlinks, and link to link movement developed the reading interest. Multimedia type information i.e. animation, pictures, charts, and graphs increase the online reading interest. It fulfills the professional needs on workplace at any time. Internet improves the professional skills because it provides the current research articles, teaching methodology, surgical videos, hot issues and every type of information. Online lectures, tutorials, demos enhance the independent lifelong learning skills. Internet increases the knowledge of users because of the availability of information across the world. While translation service, online dictionaries, pronunciation, and vocabularies also enhance the language skills. The results revealed that they read online for recreational purpose and general information. Moreover, they prefer print reading for recreational purpose and online reading for professional need. For ready reference service, they read directly on the screen. Full-text reading now converted into skimming. Whereas, the experiences of online reading about comprehension, concentration, absorption, recall, and relaxation depend on the topic and their interest in reading.

## **Introduction**

Libraries presented knowledge in an organized and systematic way. Hence the development

In ICT changed the procedure of work, information is shared and received, formats of information and forms of the library. Now libraries have transformed into the virtual library and digital library. Moreover, books and other reading material changed into a paperless medium. Drastic changes in forms and formats of information have altered the reading and reading behavior. According to Liu (2005) readers spent more time on screen-based reading.

Reading is a process of glancing the written words and symbols and getting meaning from them. First we read something, second we looking at the written symbols and finally, we use our brain to translate them into words, sentences, and paragraph that communicate something to us. It is the ability to interpret anything that is intended to convey or communicate.

Guthrie, Benneth & McGough, (2007) believe that "Reading is the act of getting meaning from printed or written words, which is the basis for learning and one of the most important skills in everyday life".

Reading is the mental activity which requires concentration. Paper reading is the linear reading which totally grasps the attention of the reader. There is no intervention whereas various types of things interrupt in online reading. It is challenging for the reader to keep his reading sequential.

The positive reading is necessary for our intelligence. It is the activity of the mind that encourages and motivates us to learn and get new and interesting information. Thus, reading is the vital part of human life. It has become crucial need to understand the online and digital reading phenomena of reading. It would help to enhance the reading practices. Methods of online reading can be improved by exploring the experiences of online reading and also the amount of reading can be increased.

## **Objectives**

To investigate the experiences of online reading

To know time spent on online reading

## **Relevant Studies**

Reading habit is the topic on which many studies have been conducted. The literature traces the number of aspects of reading habit but these days reading habit with respect to technology and internet most attentive topic.

Kazanci (2015) conducted a longitudinal study on the preference of university student reading from a printed paper or a digital screen. The researcher collected data in 2008 and after a period of 6 years 2014. The results reveal the majority of the students prefer to read the printed paper. Not much difference is found after a time frame of 6 years.

Ajayi, Shorunke, and Aboyade (2014) studied the influence of electronic resources use on reading culture and reading pattern of the students of Adeleke University. This research revealed that e-book, e-journal, and e-news are the most commonly used by students. Reading pattern of the students showed that they read less than two hours daily. It also identified that poor internet facility is a key factor hindering the use of electronic resources in the library. Not a single finding on reading culture.

Hooper and Herath (2014) studied the impact of the internet on reading behavior and difference between online and offline reading. The findings indicated respondents reading behavior changed in the digital environment. Majority of people read online at the workplace in the daytime, while reading offline in the evening at home. Respondents prefer online reading for the

information seeking and commitments and prefer offline reading for the pleasure and detail reading. Furthermore, availability of cross-references and hyperlinks on the online reading encourage people to read more. Online reading has had a negative impact on people cognition and concentration. Comprehension, absorption, recall rates are low in online reading as compare to offline reading.

Chauhan and Lal (2012) investigated the impact of information technology on reading habits of four college students in H.P. University. The findings indicated that reading habits changed in internet-based resources. Students read online information for news, e-mails, sales information, movie review, fashion news, newspapers and magazines every day. They performed many activities through the internet: checking e-mails, listening to music, chatting with friends, using MSN, reading online information, viewing online photo albums, using Yahoo Messenger and online shopping.

Mangen, Walgermo, and Bronnick (2013) explored the effects of the technological interface on reading comprehension in a Norwegian school context. Main findings show that students who read printed text got significantly better on the reading comprehension test than students who read the texts digitally.

Solak (2014) determined the views of prospective English teachers about screen-based computer and paper-based reading. The results revealed that participants highly preferred paper-based reading because computer-based reading influences reading speed, accuracy, and comprehension. They could not use reading strategies effectively and could not concentrate on the screen. They also face physical problems like eye strain, tiredness. However, they considered online reading more effective in terms of accessibility, practicality and free of charge. Moreover, it was observed that reading speed, accuracy, and comprehension in paper-based reading is better than the computer version.

Loan (2012) investigated the impact of internet surfing on reading practices and choices of the net generation of students of degree college of Kashmir. The result revealed that internet surfing has altered the reading practices. On the internet, concentration cannot get and depth is not found in reading. Resulted superficial nature of reading is increased. The 47.35% students admit that internet surfing increases extensive reading even as 40.40% students admit that internet surfing decreases extensive reading. Furthermore, internet surfing has increased reading of news, reviews, general information, selected fields, spiritual/religious text and has decreased reading of literature.

Sarkhel and Das (2010) reviewed different research on reading habits. It is focused on the comparison of digital formats reading with contrast to print format reading. Findings revealed participants read both printed and digital items side by side and internet is not a threat but it enhanced the traditional reading habits. However, the influence of electronic and digital

technology may lead to less paper society. The study provides the deep understanding of the advantages and limitations of online-based reading habits.

Uso-Juan, E. and Ruiz-Madrid, M. N. (2009) determined the effect of the textual medium on learners' EAP (English for academic purposes) reading comprehension. The researchers formed two groups. One group read online version and second read the print version. It disclosed that no significant difference between both groups in their reading comprehension. The hypertextual medium does not affect learners' EAP reading comprehension. However, the group working with the on-screen version showed a favorable attitude toward the medium and considered hyperlinks as helpful tools for text comprehension purposes.

Mokhtari, Reichard, and Gardner (2009) studied the impact of internet and television use on the reading habits and practices of college students. The result revealed that students used internet for using e-mail, chatting, instant messaging, surfing the web, listening to music and conducting research. A majority of the students enjoyed internet for recreational purpose.

Loan (2011) reports new generation spend less time on paper reading and more time on online reading. The Internet has increased access to information, use of foreign sources, contacts with worldwide readers and time spent on reading. Simultaneously reading of print sources and reading of books in local languages are decreased.

Liu (2005) investigated the changes over the past ten years in reading behavior in the digital environment. The data was collected from the respondents which have an accurate memory of their overall reading habits over the past ten years. The results revealed that screen-based reading behavior rose due to increasing amount of time spent on reading electronic documents. The respondents spent more time on browsing and scanning. Moreover, their behavior show keyword spotting, one-time reading, non-linear reading, and reading more selectively, while they less time spent on in-depth reading, and concentrated reading. Decreasing sustained attention is also observed.

Conklin (1987) identified that multiple links can actually become obstacles in the reading comprehension process since learners are not trained to manage the complexity of such hypertexts and therefore, distract them from their main goal, which happens to be comprehension of the text and not struggling with technological literacy.

## **Research Design**

Neuman (2000) indicated that it is necessary for the researchers to establish the basic purpose of the study and the research approach prior to carrying out the practical work.

Due to the limited time, the focus objectives and methods of the study save the time of

researcher and make the research accurate. The purpose of this research is to identify the experience of online reading.

For investigation of this purpose researcher, the questionnaire developed to fulfill the objectives of this study. The questionnaire consists of three parts. First part base on demographic questions e. g. name (optional), gender, profession, and age. Second part investigated the experience of online reading.

A pilot study was conducted to ensure the effectiveness and reliability of the questionnaire and interview guide designed for the research. Three interviews were conducted for the pilot study and minor changes were made.

## **Population**

The population of this study comprises of different professionals These are teachers, doctors, researchers, bankers, journalists, librarians, businessmen and students (Regular Students of University of Karachi) who use the internet and online materials frequently.

## **Sampling**

The sample size of the study is of 50 professionals and students. Participants selected by purposive sample method. "A purposive sample is a nonprobability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. "This type of sampling can be very useful in situations when you need to reach a targeted sample quickly, and where sampling for proportionality is not the main concern" (Ashley, 2016). For this study, the participants selected who read online for an average of > 12 hr or =12 hours per week.

## **Data Collection**

For the data collection researcher contacted with the participants by sending the

consent form and took the time for the interview. The data were collected through the interview as it is the best way to acquire the extensive data. Interviews were recorded on the smart phone. These interviews were recorded and transcribed later on for analysis.

Interview conducted at respondent's workplace and their home. All students'

interviews conducted on the premises of the University of Karachi. For conducting the interviews date and time priory fixed so that without any interruption they gave the interview.

## **Data Analysis**

The questionnaire consists of two types of questions open-ended and close-ended. Close-ended questions were analyzed by SPSS statistics software whereas open-ended were analyzed by "Grounded Theory" method. According to grounded theory interviews were transcribed. Through this method, descriptive data were collected. Various themes were discovered from the transcribed data and these themes were encoded by open coding method. "In open coding, the codes are suggested by the researcher examination and questioning of the data" (Rubin and Babbie, 2005).

## Codes

For the explanation of qualitative data respondents are coded as:

Professionals	Codes
Banker	Bk
Businessman	Bm
Teacher	Tch
Doctor	Dr
Researcher	Re
Journalist	Jr
Librarian	Lb
Student	St

Selection of respondents from each profession

Profession	Frequency	Percentage
University Teachers	9	18%
Doctors	5	10%
Researchers	8	16%
Librarians	5	10%
Journalist	5	10%
Bankers	6	12%
Businessman	4	8%



Students	8	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 Selection of participants

## Results and Discussion

### Demographic information

Demographic	Parameters	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	11	22%
	Female	39	78%
Profession	University Teachers	9	18%
	Doctors	5	10%
	Researchers	8	16%
	Librarians	5	10%
	Bankers	6	12%
	Journalist	5	10%
	Businessman	4	8%
	Students	8	16%
Age Group	18-22	6	12%
	23-27	24	48%
	28-32	11	22%
	33-37	4	8%
	38-42	2	4%
	43-onwards	3	6%

Table 2 Demographic information

Table 2 shows the gender distribution of the participants these are, 11 male (22%) and 39 female (78%); the majority of the respondents were female. The profession distribution is university teachers 9 with 18%, doctors 5 with 10%, researchers 8 with 16%, librarians 5 with 10%, bankers 6 with 12%, journalist 5 with 10%, businessman 4 with 8% and students 8 with 16%. The age distribution of the respondents are, the age group from 18-22 have 6 number of respondents with 12%, from 23-27 have 24 number with 48%, from 28-32 have 11 number with 22%, from 33-37 have 4 number with 8%, from 38-42 have 2 number with 4% and from 43-onwards have 3 number with 6%.

### Preferred Sources for Reading

Type of Resources read	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Print	35	70
Online	37	74
Offline	21	42

Table 3 Type of resources read

Its the multiple choice question As shown in Table 3 majority of the respondents' i.e 74% read online, While 70% respondent read print resources and only 42% read offline. Results show all participants prefer all types of sources for reading.

### Time Spend on Online Reading

Time spend on electronic reading	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30 min-1 hr	13	26
1-2 hrs	13	26
More than 2 hrs	24	48

Table 4 Time Spend on Electronic

Table 4 shows majority 48% respondents read more than 2 hours on electronic reading, while 26% read 30 minutes to 1 hour and 1 to 2 hours on online reading with the same ratio.

## Experiences of online reading

The findings indicated that respondents have the mix of positive and negative experience of online reading.

The Internet is easily accessible. It can be accessed without going anywhere i.e at home, office, during travel. It explores the variety of information in a variety of formats. Simultaneously, it is a great source of recent and updates information. Positive experiences of online reading reveal

easy accessibility. Respondents shared their experience about comprehension, concentration, absorption, recall, and relaxation while they read online these experiences are as under:

## **Comprehension**

Almost respondents voiced that the comprehension level of the reading is superior through the internet. When they find any new term and topic to understand they can get information relevant to these terms which helps to comprehend the topic. Another thing is hyperlinks which are given in the text. These hyperlinks provide more information which helps to understand the new terms. Sometimes information found in foreign language, these reading materials can be translated through internet translation services. All these things provide more and more information to understand the subject which increases the comprehension level.

Re.1 responded that:

"Comprehension level of the online reading is encouraging due to the understanding of scholarly articles because the internet provides access to hyperlinks, language translation services, and online dictionaries".

Tch.6 said that:

"When we got information with our interest and need so we read online with involvement".

Tch. 9 indicated that:

"Further searching on the topic develops the strong comprehension."

On the other side, few respondents pointed out that comprehension level of online reading is not good because reading on electronic devices i.e computer, tablet, and smartphones are harmful and painful. It causes a headache, neck ache, eye strain simultaneously comprehension level decrease.

Re.2 commented

"Rays of electronic devices harmful for our eyes".

Majority reveal comprehension level is high through online reading. Availability and accessibility of hyperlinks and cross-references make possible to comprehend any new term and topic. Furthermore, few respondents pointed out that comprehension level of online reading is low on digital devices i.e computer, tablet and smartphones as rays of these electronic devices are painful for their eyes. Same as Hooper and Herath (2014) indicated that concentration level low on online reading.

## **Concentration**

It identified that the concentration level of the online reading depends on the reading interest of the respondents. Reading interest creates when respondent found new and recent information on their topic of interest. It develops the interest which helps to build up concentration when concentration develops advertisement and any other things do not distract their concentration. Online journals or articles enhanced the concentration level. The Internet presents the information in a variety of formats i. e audio, a video which catches attention. Current, latest and up to date information makes the concentration on online reading.

Tch. 3 pointed out:

"I get my needy and interesting articles on the internet that's why my concentration level on the internet is good".

Tch. 5 said:

"When I get my required information on the internet than I ignore all advertisement and hyperlinks which disturb my concentration".

Jr. 3 voiced:

"Collective information and relevant topics develop my concentration on online reading".

Re. 1 indicated:

"Internet facility available on portable devices that make my reading concentration because through it can read in an any peaceful environment".

It explored that internet is available on portable devices by which they sit and read any peaceful environment. It is very necessary for the concentration.

Not all but mostly respondents pointed out that their concentration level increased due to printed reading. Majority of the respondents replied that the advertisement and hyperlinks diverted their concentration when they read on the internet. On the smart phones and PC screens, they cannot focus on reading for much time.

### **Distraction of concentration**

The concentration level of the online reading depends on the reading interest of the respondents. It is high in serious reading. As well as current, latest and up to date information improves concentration level. On the other hand, not all but Majority of th respondents pointed out that their concentration level is high in printed reading as compare to online reading. It seemed that the advertisement and hyperlinks diverted their concentration when they read on the internet. They cannot focus on reading for much time on the smart phones and PC screens because its rays disturb them.

Re.3 identified:

"I can make concentration on the online reading maximum half hour to 1 hour".

Lb.2 indicated:

"I have to make concentration when I read on the internet because advertisements and different links divert my concentration".

On the internet many things liked fashion, advertisement and job advertisement etc distract attention and concentration of reading while this distraction is not found in paper reading.

Tch. 1 pointed out:

"When I got any research article on the internet so I must take its printout because concentration level of printed reading higher rather than online reading this may be due to childhood habit".

Bk. 5 indicated:

"Job and fashion advertisements divert my concentration on the internet".

## **Absorption**

Absorption depends on concentration level. When respondents read with concentration the input of information increases at the same time the absorption increase

## **Recall**

It is indicated that recall level of online reading is also based on the level of concentration. Recall level high if they read with concentration.

As far as the absorption and recall level is concerned it depends on concentration. The more concentration the more absorption and recall level. Moreover, participants feel more relax when they read on the internet because portable devices help them to download save and read information anywhere. It provides every type of information at any time without any limitations. The Internet provides the attractive things which help to relaxation of mind. While some respondents identified that printed reading makes them more relax because online reading makes tired them.

## **Relaxation**

Majority of the respondents indicated that they download and save on portable devices and read whenever they want to read this information. It is relaxing for them. Moreover, it provides every type of information at any time without limitations. It also relaxed them.

The Internet provides the attractive things which help to relax the mind.

Tch. 5 indicated:

"Internet facilitates me to download and save any information in USB and other devices and I can send the information to my e-mail".

Bm. 4 indicated:

"Though the internet I can access information on smartphones so I feel relaxation because I can read information when I want".

Smarts phones are the devices which are portable and handy and it would keep every time. So information is accessible through smarts phones anywhere anytime. It creates relaxation.

Furthermore, some respondents identified that printed reading makes them more relax because online reading makes them tired.

Re. 1 pointed out:

"I feel more relax when I read printed material because of the rays of computer, tablet and smarts phones harmful to our health and printed material harmless for us".

Tch. 5 pointed out:

"I read articles on the internet that's why I have to alert to read".

## **Conclusion**

Experience of online reading is positive due to the accessibility of information at home, workplace, and travel. Internet explores the information and is a way to take recent and up to date information without going to the library and without waste of time. It is the tool to provide a variety of information with quick response.

Digital media shift the reading behavior. The participant prefers paper reading for recreational purpose and online reading for professional need.

Moreover, some respondent's online reading experience is negative because they feel tiredness and faced eye strain. As well as online reading takes time to get required information because on the internet vast amount of information available and they have to filter the information to fulfill their needs.

Internet increases the reading habit and reading interest because of availability and accessibility of a large amount of information at all time. Moreover, hyperlinks, cross-references, and links to links movement enhanced the reading habits. A smarts phone is an effective electronic mobile device which is playing an important role in increasing the reading habit. Online information

presented in an attractive manner by graphic, charts, images, and colors which develop the reading interest. Accessibility of internet at the workplace and anywhere is playing a major role in fulfilling the professional and other information need. While satisfaction of professional and other needs are enhancing the professional skills. Also, it improves independent lifelong learning skills of users through online lectures, tutorials, demos. The internet increases the knowledge of users because it provides the information of the globe.

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