



Study of Internet Use and Health Related Implications of Internet Users

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Abstract--- *The scope of this paper is to analyze the effects of internet on the health of internet user. Internet can have both positive and negative consequences on internet user of different walks of life at different times. The need is to understand the true impact of internet so that everybody gathers benefits that yield a healthy life. In this paper, an empirical study is conducted to examine whether the more internet use affect the health of internet user. The impact of the internet technology can be felt on the health of internet user. Seeing the pace at which the use of this technology is spreading all over. Both, the beneficial and harmful health related implications of the internet technology will also be discussed.*

Keywords--- *Internet technology, health, impact of internet, internet user.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The internet is a vast collection of world-wide inter-connected networks. In this new world of internet connectivity people can share their experiences, ideas, suggestions and problems. People try to exert influence to get fast responses and reactions from friends and strangers. The Internet is become very powerful because the Internet contains the biggest resource of information in the entire world and it enables people to obtain an interactive mechanism to instantly communicate with each other. Especially the Internet is becoming more and more important for nearly everybody. Technology is continuously changing. These growing changes bring health related implications on different aspects of our daily life. There is a big influence of internet technology on our daily life. Problems arising by excessive Internet use have been documented worldwide. The Internet has some positive aspects but there are also negative aspects to the information highway. There is now some concern from educators and psychologist about the impact of the Internet on the physical, cognitive and social development of children. The main use of the Internet for teenagers is to play games, to listen to music, and to meet new people. For youth, the negative aspects of the Internet include Internet addiction as well as online risks such as exposure to sexually explicit material and online victimization including harassment or cyber bullying and sexual solicitation.

Internet Addiction and Health Effects-

More and more people are getting engulfed in virtual world and drifting apart from their friends and family. Even children prefer to play online games rather than going out and mingling with other kids. This may hamper a healthy social development in children. The health effect due to unnecessary and more Internet use are, Carpal Tunnel syndrome (pain, numbness, and burning in your hands that can radiate up the wrists, elbows and shoulders), dry eyes, backaches, severe headaches, eating irregularities, such as skipping meals failure to attend to personal hygiene, sleep disturbances etc. Internet addiction is another type of disease. Internet users suffering from internet addiction due to more and more internet use or unnecessarily excessive use of internet.

Internet Addiction-

Internet addiction disorder (IAD), or more broadly Internet overuse, problematic computer use or pathological computer use, is excessive computer use that interferes with daily life. Classification of internet addiction is as follows,

Cybersexual Addiction-

Individuals who suffer from Cybersex/Internet pornography addiction are typically engaged in viewing, downloading and trading online pornography or involved in adult fantasy, role-play, and chat rooms.

Cyber-Relational Addiction -

Individuals who suffer from an addiction to chat rooms, IM (Instant Messaging), or social networking sites become over-involved in online relationships or may engage in virtual adultery. Online friends quickly become more important to the individual often at the expense of real life relationships with family and friends. In many instances, this will lead to marital discord and family instability.

Net Compulsions-

Addictions to online gaming, online gambling are fast becoming new mental problems in the post-Internet era. With the instant access to virtual casinos, interactive games, and eBay, addicts loose excessive amounts of money and even disrupt other job-related duties or significant relationships.

Information Overload -

The wealth of data available on the World Wide Web has created a new type of compulsive behavior regarding excessive web surfing and database searches. Individuals will spend greater amounts of time searching and collecting data from the web and organizing information. Obsessive compulsive tendencies and reduced work productivity are typically associated with this behavior.

Computer Addiction

In the 80s, computer games such as Solitaire and Mind sweeper were programmed into computers and researchers found that obsessive computer game playing became problematic in organizational settings as employees spent most days playing rather than working. These games are not interactive nor played online.

An Update Survey of Internet usage in India-

According to Internet in India (I-Cube) 2011 report, the number of 'claimed' internet users in India **has crossed the landmark 100 million mark in September**, at 112 million users (88 million urban + 24 million rural villages) who have used the internet at any point in time in the past. Of 112 million claimed internet population, **90 million users have been 'active' internet users** who have accessed internet at least once a month. Further the IAMAI report indicates that the positive internet momentum is likely to continue into December 2011 to notch a higher 121 million claimed internet users' mark, largely driven by youngsters in India including school going kids.

While urban metro areas are at forefront in terms of internet growth points, the smaller towns and non-metros have shown a considerable grouped dominance over the top 8 metro cities. Amongst top metro cities, Mumbai's claimed internet users stood at 8.1 million, followed by 6.2 million users in Delhi and NCR and 3 million internet users in Kolkata. Going by the age segment, the Generation Y dominates the scene in terms of internet usage pattern, with more than three-quarters of internet population driven by young men (27%), school (21%) and college (27%) going kids. The rising segment of school kids is mainly driven by new generation e-learning services and educational information available on the Web. While a majority 89% of the surveyed urban city population use internet to access emails, 71% use it for networking with friends and families. Interestingly, 55% of population use internet for chatting purposes even today. On the other hand, the rural internet users have preferred to download or listen to music and videos to the extent of 46%.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. **M. Y. Abdulkareem** , conducted the study Characteristics and information-seeking behaviour of cybercafé users in some Nigerian cities, Data analysis revealed that about 60% of respondents were male, and nearly 80% were less than 36 years old. Furthermore, 91% of respondents had above 12 years of formal education, while 30% had no formal training in use of computer. Majority (40%) had 1 - 4 years of Internet use experience, while students constituted about 40% of respondents. About 40% had no formal source of income. It was further revealed that 59.4, 13.4, and 27.2% of respondents used the Internet for academic, business, and 'social' purposes respectively. The paper concludes that cybercafé users in Nigerian cities are mostly students and academics, and proffered some useful recommendations for improvement.

2. **Rachana**, study conducted on Profile Of Internet Users At Cyber Cafes Of Mumbai , The findings revealed that majority of the respondents were from 20 to 25 years of age, who uses Internet regularly, but the range of age of users varied from 10 to 50 years. Maximum No. of respondents were of male gender, students by occupation, used English as the prime language for internet and accessed Internet at Cyber Café. Expenditure on Internet at Cyber Cafe doesn't make much difference between earning and non-earning respondents. Chatting is the main purpose for accessing net after e-mail. It is also used for gathering information and for business purposes.

3. **Thompson S. H. Teoa, Vivien K. G. Limb, Raye Y. C. Lai a**, Intrinsic And Extrinsic Motivation In Internet Usage, the study found that, gender has significant negative effects while education has significant positive effects on perceived usefulness. The control variables contributed 3% to the variances in perceived usefulness. Although age and gender were found to have significant negative effects on perceived enjoyment in step 1, in the presence of perceived ease of use in step 2, the results are no longer significant. In fact, the control variables contributed only 1% to the variation in perceived enjoyment. The control variables generally contribute about 2 to 4% of the variance in the three Internet usage dimensions. Gender has significant negative effects on frequency of Internet usage and diversity of Internet usage, thereby implying that males use the Internet more frequently and for a greater number of tasks than females. In contrast, age has significant negative effects on daily Internet usage and diversity of Internet usage, thereby implying that older Internet users use the Internet for a lesser number of hours per day and a lesser range of tasks than younger Internet users. Education level appears to negatively affect daily Internet usage but positively affect diversity of Internet usage , thereby implying that the higher the education level of Internet users, the less time is spent on the Internet daily but the diversity of tasks performed is greater compared to less educated Internet users. One possible reason is that more educated users may have less time daily to use the Internet perhaps due to work commitments. Alternatively, more educated Internet users may be more focused on using the Internet to perform specific tasks, thereby requiring lesser time on the Internet daily. Diverse tasks are performed by more educated Internet users probably because they are more knowledgeable about the Internet compared to less educated Internet users. An additional explanation is that the work of more educated people may be more diversified.

4. **John A. Bargh and Katelyn Y. A. McKenna**, The Internet and Social Life, the study reveals that, People are not passively affected by technology, but actively shape its use and influence (Fischer 1992, Hughes&Hans 2001). The Internet has unique, even transformational qualities as a communication channel, including relative anonymity and the ability to easily link with others who have similar interests, values, and beliefs. Research has found that the relative

anonymity aspect encourages self-expression, and the relative absence of physical and nonverbal interaction cues (e.g., attractiveness) facilitates the formation of relationships on other, deeper bases such as shared values and beliefs. One's own desires and goals regarding the people with whom one interacts has been found to make a dramatic difference in the assumptions and attributions one makes within that informational void.

5. **Leo Sang-Min Whang, Sujin Lee, Geunyoung Chang**, Internet Over-Users' Psychological Profiles: A Behavior Sampling Analysis On Internet Addiction, *Cyberpsychology & Behavior*, What kinds of psychological features do people have when they are overly involved in usage of the internet? Internet users in Korea were investigated in terms of internet over-use and related psychological profiles by the level of internet use. The researcher used Young's Internet Addiction Scale, and 13,588 users (7,878 males, 5,710 females), out of 20 million from a major portal site in Korea, participated in this study. Among the sample, 3.5% had been diagnosed as internet addicts (IA), while 18.4% of them were classified as possible internet addicts (PA). The Internet Addiction Scale showed a strong relationship with dysfunctional social behaviors. More IA tried to escape from reality than PA and Non-addicts (NA). When they got stressed out by work or were just depressed, IA showed a high tendency to access the internet. The IA group also reported the highest degree of loneliness, depressed mood, and compulsivity compared to the other groups. The IA group seemed to be more vulnerable to interpersonal dangers than others, showing an unusually close feeling for strangers. Further study is needed to investigate the direct relationship between psychological well-being and internet dependency.

6. **Kimberly S. Young**, Internet Addiction: The Emergence Of A New Clinical Disorder, the investigator reviewed the various report published in journals that shows, Internet in much the same way that others became addicted to drugs, alcohol, or gambling, which resulted in academic failure (Brady, 1996; Murphey, 1996); reduced work performance (Robert Half International, 1996), and even marital discord and separation (Quittner, 1997). Clinical research on behavioral addictions has focused on compulsive gambling (Mabilia, 1993), overeating (Lesieur & Blume, 1993), and compulsive sexual behavior (Goodman, 1993). Similar addiction models have been applied to technological overuse (Griffiths, 1996), computer dependency (Shotton, 1991), excessive television viewing (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; McIlwraith et al., 1991), and obsessive video game playing (Keepers, 1991).

7.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the frequency of internet use by different demographic classes.
2. To find out amount of time spent for internet use by different demographic classes.
3. To study purposes for which internet is used.
4. To study demographic and other health related implications of internet user.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We have used a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques for our study. We conducted a comprehensive survey of 10 registered cyber café of Satara. We used the convenient sampling technique to select the Internet users. The total samples selected for study are 320. The data is collected their demographic variables like gender, age group.

The collected data is used to analyse the purposes for which the internet is used and what are the effects of more internet use on health of internet user.

For this study, we interviewed 275 Internet Users among eight age groups and two genders. Therefore random sample of users used for statistical analysis and for drawing inferences about the user population.

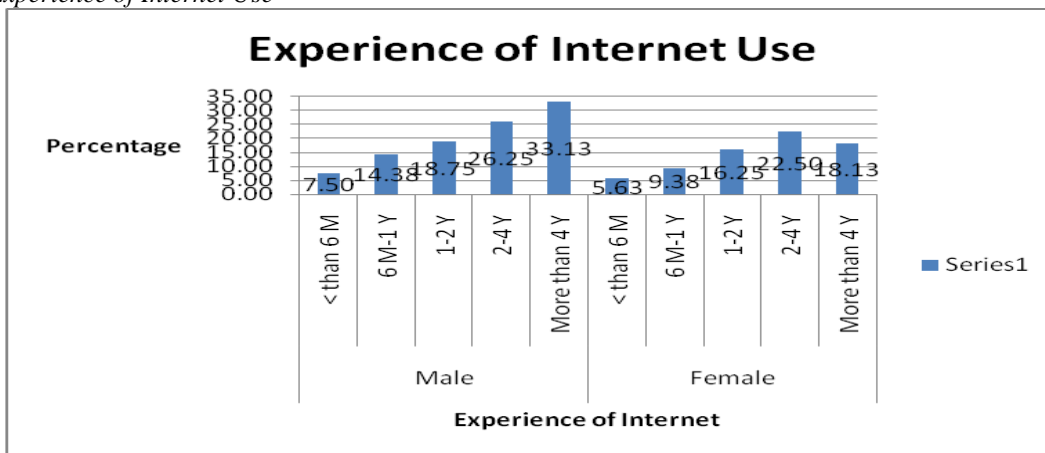
Our main sources of qualitative data were from structured and close-ended interviews schedules with Internet users. The study was conducted during July 2010 –May 2011. The data has been analyzed by using simple statistical tools. Following table shows the status of respondents in eight age groups of male and female.

Sr. No.	Age Group	Male	Female	Total
1	18-23	20	20	40
2	24-29	20	20	40
3	30-35	20	20	40
4	36-41	20	20	40
5	42-47	20	20	40
6	48-53	20	15	35
7	54-59	20	0	20
8	60 and above	20	0	20
	Total	160	115	275

Total samples selected for study were 320 but at the time of study we got data from 275 samples. We got zero respondents from the age group 54 – 59 and 60 and above, 15 respondents from the age group 48-53 of female.

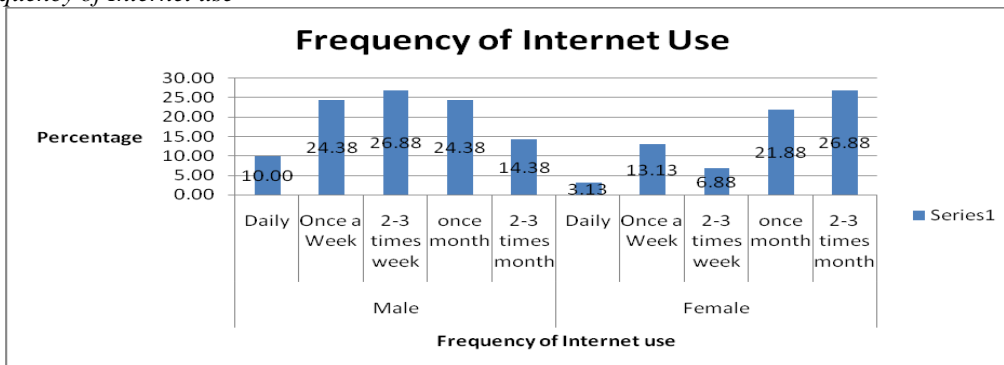
V. RESULTS, FINDINGS and DISCUSSIONS

Graph 1: Experience of Internet Use



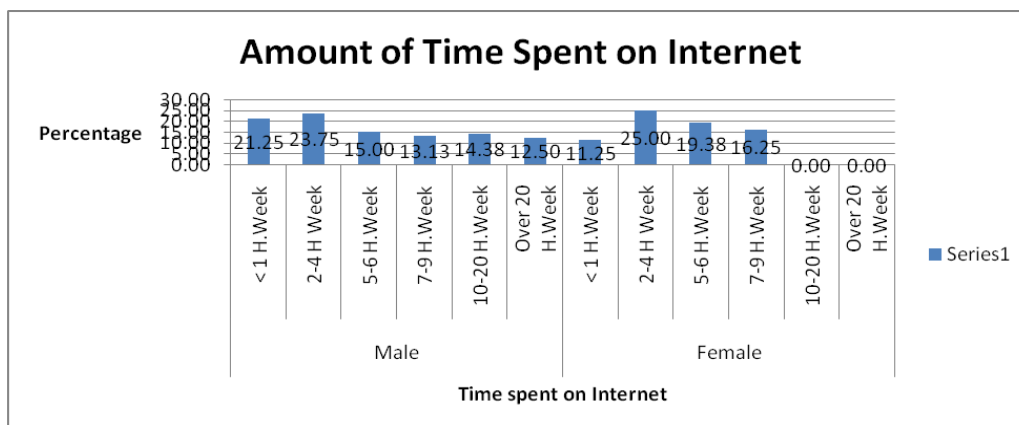
The first question was asked to male and female internet user to find out what is the experience of internet use. From the above graph it is seen that the maximum experience of internet use is more than 4 years in male (33.13%) and 2-4 years in female (22.50%). Very less experience of internet use in male and female is less than 6 months (7.50% and 5.63% respectively).

Graph2: Frequency of Internet use



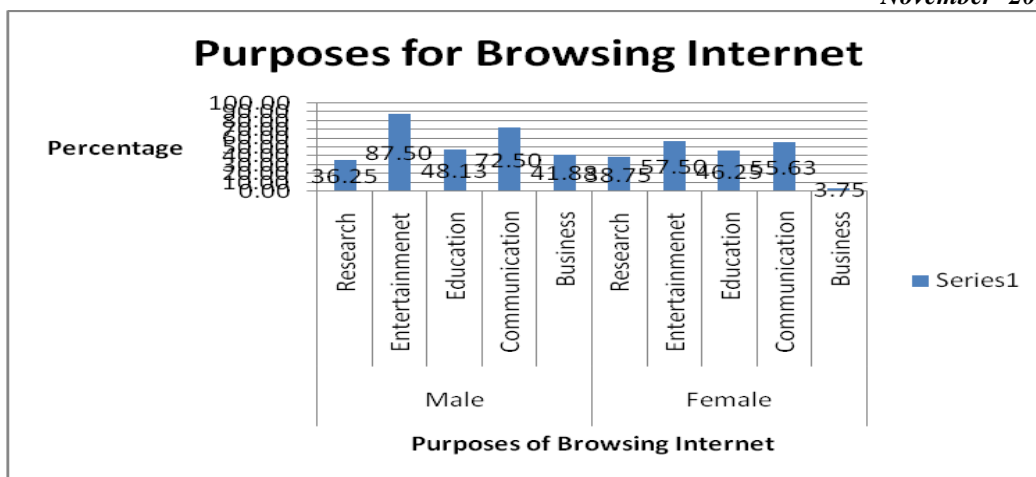
The second question was asked to find out the frequency of internet use. From the analysis it is seen that the percentage of daily usage of internet is very less (10.00% in male and 3.13% in female) and maximum usage is 2-3 times a week in male (26.88%) and 2-3 times a month in female (26.88%). The frequency of internet use in male is more than female internet user.

Graph3: Amount of Time Spent on Internet



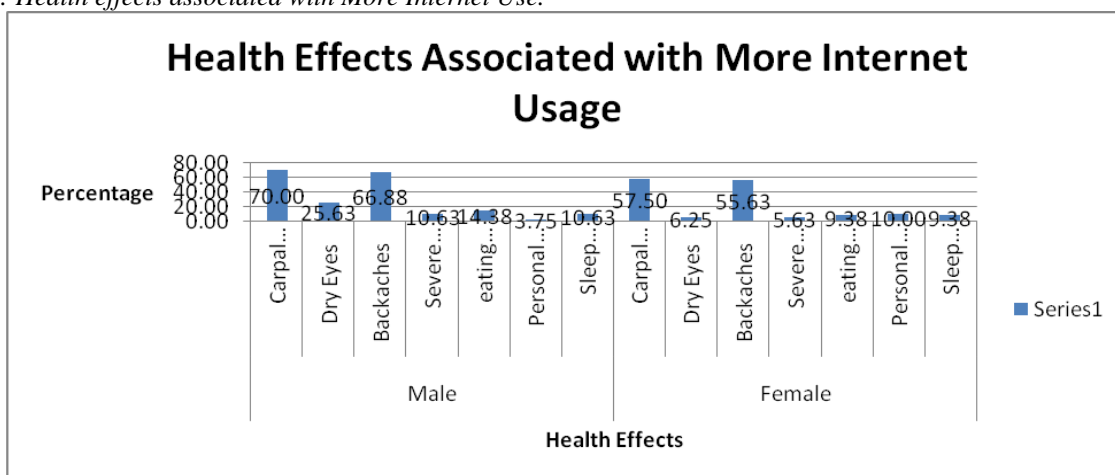
Amount of time spent on internet is more i.e. 2-4 hours per week in male and female (23.75% and 25.00% respectively), where very less time spent on internet by male internet user is over 20 hours per week (12.50%) and by female 10-20 hours per week and over 20 hours per week (0%). Time spent on internet by male user is more than female user.

Graph4: Purposes for Browsing Internet



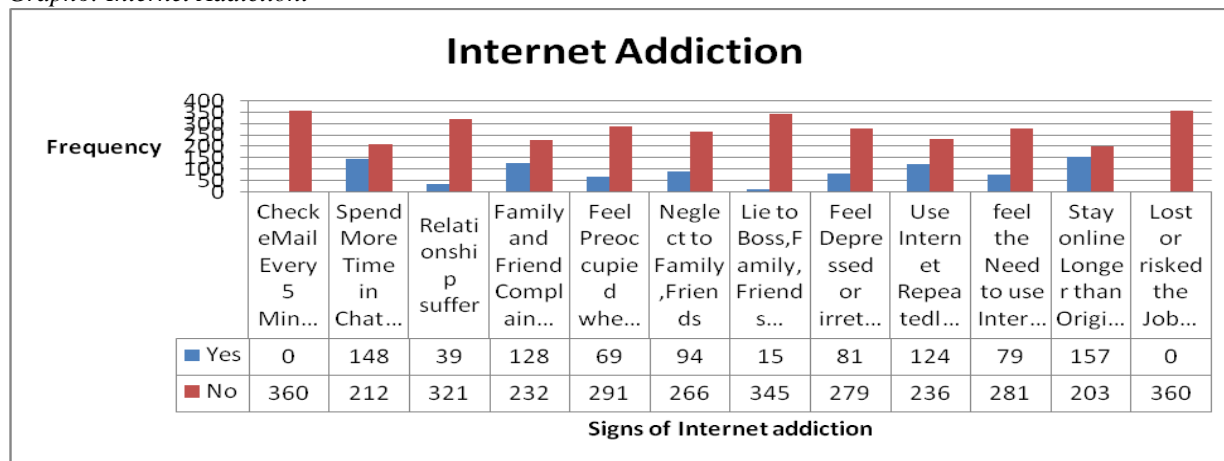
The question was asked to internet user to study the purposes for which the internet is browsed. From the analysis it is seen that maximum male and female internet user browses the internet for entertainment purpose (87.50% and 57.50% respectively). Very less male and female user use internet for research purpose and business purpose (36.25% and 3.75% respectively).

Graph5: Health effects associated with More Internet Use.



The more internet (computer) use is affect on health of internet user .the question was asked to study the health effects associated with internet use. The male and female respondent answered the maximum (70.00% and 57.50%) effect is carpal tunnel syndrome i.e. pain, numbness, and burning in their hands that can radiate up the wrists, elbows and shoulders. The less effect of internet use on health of male internet user is failure to attend to personal hygiene (3.75%) and in female it is severe headaches (5.63%). As compared to male internet user the female internet user has less health effects on the health of internet user.

Graph6: Internet Addiction



Total twelve questions were asked to the respondents to check the internet addiction. From the analysis it is seen that nobody respondent checked for checking e-mails for every five minutes. Maximum (157) respondents said yes to stay online longer than originally intended. 148 user said that they spend more time in chat rooms than chatting in their living

room with friends and family. 128 user said that family and friends complain about internet use. 124 user checked out that, they use internet repeatedly as an outlet when they are sad or upset. From the above graph it is seen that some psychological effects are also associated with internet use.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, results of a survey on the use of the internet and its effects on the health of internet user are presented. Most important conclusion is that nobody female user from age groups 54-59 and 60 and above were came for internet use. The results suggest that, in general, majority of the users use the internet as informative source. The survey shows that the ratio of users of entertainment is significant. From the statistical analysis some are conclusions. Internet usage is independent with reference to demographic variables like age and gender. The average time spent for internet in male is maximum than female. Maximum use of internet in male and female for entertainment and communication. Use of internet has its impact on health of internet user. The physical and mental effects of the health are associated with the internet use. In this study, 80% people have declined the effect of Internet on their routine physical activities.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

Internet is a marvelous invention in this modern era. It provides lots of benefits to internet user. The internet user should get the benefits from Internet to maximum level. They should not waste their precious time and money for unnecessary sites. They should use it for a reasonable time so that the excessive use of Internet may not affect their health. The several techniques to treat Internet addiction are , practice the opposite time in Internet use, use external stoppers, set goals, abstain from a particular application, use reminder cards, develop a personal inventory, enter a support group, and family therapy.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have completed research work on the topic "STUDY OF INTERNET USE AND HEALTH RELETED IMPLICATIONS OF INTERNET USERS" under the guidance of Dr.K.M.Nalawade(HOD.Department of Statistics D.G.College of Commerce Satara , Maharashtra). In the first place I would like to gratefully acknowledge the encouragement and supervision of Professor Dr.K.M.Nalawade to ever remain deeply for his inspiring encouragement contributing support throughout my research work. This study has remained incomplete without his expert guidance and encouragement.