Due to the enormous development of technologies, the present era can be called the Age of Technology. The most profound changes in the past decade, has been the widespread proliferation of information and communications technologies (UNICEF, 2011). It is believed that technological advancements continue to progress at a rapid rate. However the technology that was a luxury a few years ago is now considered a requirement. The main changes, this technology has caused, have been summarized by "Marshal McLuhan" as the term of “universal village” that people, all around the globe, can communicate as easily as the live in a village (Farshbaf, et. al. 2009). The fact that our world has been turning into an information-based world, the value of information increases; the acquisition of information in the right place and at the right time is of vital importance for individuals and society. The widespread use of ICT in all areas has a direct effect upon the way in which the world is perceived. The permeating presence of telematic networks in all scopes of life allows unlimited access to information and a flexibilization of time and space barriers. The last two decades have witnessed a revolution caused by the rapid development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). It is difficult and impossible to imagine future that is not supported, in one way or another, by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). While looking into the current widespread diffusion and use of ICT in modern societies, especially by the young the so-called digital generation then it should be clear that ICT will affect the complete way of life today and in the future. (ICT) at present is influencing every aspect of human life. The way the different fields operate today is vastly different from the ways they operated in the past. ICT plays salient role in work places, business establishments, education, and entertainment. Moreover, ICT proves catalyst for change; change in working conditions, handling and exchanging information, teaching methods, learning approaches, scientific research,
and in accessing information. According to Blurton, (2010), the power of information technology has been significantly stronger due to its presence is *anytime-anywhere*. It has the ability to transcend time and space. Fabunmi, (2012) quoted......

‘*Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the means of accessing or receiving, storing, transferring, processing and sending ideas, perception or information through computers and other communication facilities*’. 

Technological advancement gives rise to so many ICT tools which seem to be central to contemporary societies and therefore referred this era as information technology age determined by *knowledge society*. It is reported that ICTs in general and the Internet in particular is one of the most important and complex innovations of mankind. The role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in human development has received growing attention due to the growing proliferation of the Internet, convergence in Information technology and telecommunication technologies. Creation of the Internet has brought about a change in lifestyle of the people which is reported to rely on Internet. The role of Information and technology (ICT) in human development has received momentum due to growing proliferation of the Internet. ICT has been viewed as a cluster of associated technologies defined by their functional usage in information access and communication of which one embodiment is the Internet (Ogunsola & Aboyade, 2005). Being a newly established dimension of modern technology in the contemporary world, Internet plays a vital role in the change and evolution of lives of the people in present society. From its beginning, it has grown like an octopus to affect different spheres of human endeavour. It has become a necessary tool, so that removing it from life is not imaginable (Aslvyn, 2001). It has become a global source of information accessible at *anytime by anyone* from anywhere on this planet. It has converted the whole world into a global information web. Internet has changed our lives in a revolutionary way regardless of any geographical boundaries. Due to Internet use, people across the globe have become part of a networked society, whereby time and distance have lost their meaning (Holtz 2002). This indicates that communication has shifted from the ‘*one-to-many*’ to ‘*many-to-many*’. It is arguably one of the most significant technological developments of the late 20th century and a mechanism for information dissemination and a medium for collaborative interaction among and between the individuals and their computers without the geographical limitations associated with space (Leiner,
et al. 2000). It is a ‘live’ but constantly ‘moving’, theoretically borderless, potentially infinite space for the production and the circulation of information. So, the Internet is one of the greatest recent advancement in the world that has fostered the process of making the world a global village. Spring (1994) quoted.....

“The revolution will not be televised, but the proceedings will be available online.” Quoted from Whole Earth Review

The Internet has come with an evolution that cannot be compared with the existing technologies that existed before. It is a new and innovative medium that can completely change the lives of people much as television did in fifties. The Internet is only two and half decade old, but it is already the key catalyst of the most extensive and fastest technological revolution in history. The Internet changes people’s lives in terms of reaching, disseminating, creating, and evaluating a huge amount of information easily and so rapidly. Shitta (2002) asserted that the Internet is a communication super highway that links, hooks and focuses the entire world into a global village, where people of all races can easily get in touch, see, or speak to one another and exchange information from one point of the globe to another. The Internet is referred to as an ocean of information and knowledge which is now globally used in every facet of human endeavour. It is one of the facilities through which information and knowledge can be stored, arranged and transmitted return to its users quickly, timely, and accurately (Adegbija & Daramola, 2007). It is also regarded as a powerful communication medium due to its unique characteristics. It includes interactivity, hypertextuality and multimediarity (Severin & Tankard 2001). These characteristics help users to be active and to exchange the roles in their mutual discourse. Peter Cochrane, (1998) predicted what the world was heading towards in the 21st century by saying, “If you are not online, you don’t exist” (Seitel, 2001). It is beyond doubt that the Internet has emerged faster than any other communication channel and has cogently changed our mundane life.

Since Internet appeared before the general public in early 1990s, and its growth rate has been seen unusual. Its penetration had far surpassed the diffusion speed of the traditional media. Internet took nearly three years to reach 50 million users, as compared to radio, and television which reached to general public with 38 and 13 years respectively (Molosi, 2001 & Dholakia, 2004). The changes brought about by the Internet surpassed the impact of television and revived the effects of the
print press. Internet being a global network interlinking millions of computers all over the globe and provides an infinite variety of contents as well as a diverse range of applications (Goggin & Griff, 2001). It is becoming a widely accepted channel for information exchange and powerful networking because it 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 through the Internet using a range of applications. voice-over-Internet-protocol (VOIP), checking traffic news, purchasing cinema tickets, and carrying out online share trading, downloading music and video, chatting and playing games, email, and have access to the encyclopaedia, newspapers, bulletin boards, video arcade, hyper mails, broadcast stations, the movies, mail order, music entertainment, etc, all at one stop in a global village (Kuhlemeier, 2007; Wishart, 2007). It provides that store of information which is not possible for any single entity to hold or manage. Ani (2005) quoted....... 

The Internet is a network of linked computers which are located at different points all over the world that provides easy communication between persons and organizations no matter where they are located.

The ‘Internet’ is formed by conjoining two words that imply an international network: Inter “international” and Net “network” (Isman, 2003). The Internet therefore can be defined as an international computer network of information available to the public through modem links (Bassey, 2003). The word Internet emanates from the words “Internet Connection Network”, connecting computers around the world by the use of a standard protocol (Greenfield, 1999). IT Encyclopaedia (2001) in the same vein defines Internet as an essentially whole bunch of computers connected together by wires which they can talk over. Ogedebe (2004) Internet is a large computer network formed out of some thousands of interconnected networks, and it supports a whole range of services such as electronic, file transfer protocol, database access and many others. DiMaggio et al, (2001), the Internet is “electronic network of networks that links people and information through computers and other digital devices allowing person-to-person communication and information retrieval.” Nwafor & Ezejiofor (2004) observe that the Internet is not a single network of computers but a network of nets, a large network that connects many smaller networks to one another. The advent of the computer and the Internet has brought a whole new world in terms of gathering, disseminating, creating, and criticizing.
information and communicating with people. On the other hand, the “Internet” is a “giant network” which interconnects innumerable smaller groups of linked computer networks” or which virtually covers the entire globe. On this network, the World Wide Web provides a global platform for information storage, resource sharing, communication, research, entertainment, education and business transactions etc. The web is actually a collection of electronic documents that are stored on computers throughout the world (World Wide Web, 2002; Howe 2007). Through the use of a web browser these documents can be easily accessed by anyone who knows what to look for and are frequently identified through the use of search engines designed to access these documents based on key words (Search Engine, 2009, Schneider, et.al. 2006). Ezomo (2006) asserts that Internet is the gateway for libraries and information centers to enter the electronic information era and provides information generated by different organizations, institutes, research centers, and individuals all over the world.

Nowadays, with the popularization of the network, the on line life is not just for those computer geeks. Also, the Internet network is widely used by people all over the world. More and more people are accustomed to search resources from the Internet which is not easy to realize without the mature network technology. It seems no matter what difficulties people meet, the first reaction is almost to ask Google or Wikipedia. Michael Hart's (1995) pointed out "for the first time we actually have the opportunity for a whole world's population to share not only air or water, but also to share the world of ideas, of art or of music and other sounds…anything that can be digitized. In fact, it is certainly true that life online is inescapable, especially in the information explosion society. The Internet can supply numerous information resources which is renewed and up to date. For instance, you can read the newspaper and books in the online library for free instead of buying a new one. This is very attractive to Netizen ('Netizen', which means net citizen) especially for students. That is why today, the Internet has linked thousands of nations and enterprises across the world. Hence, the world which appears physically large has been made too small by Internet and reference to it as “global village”. In addition, Chou (2001) indicated that the most appreciated Internet features included interactivity, simplicity, and availability, viz-a-viz abundant and updated information. In fact, the attractiveness of Internet has increased as a result of its availability, accessibility, and affordability. Matisse Enzer glossary of Internet terms (2000–2008) revealed.....
Internet: As a wide-area network connecting millions of computers globally for the purpose of allowing people to access information contact each other and share information resources

The Internet developed from a United States Department of Defence project (Dawson, 2005). During the Cold War there was concern that in the event of a nuclear attack, US communication systems could be knocked out by missiles hitting key communication centres. The initial core of what would become the Internet was the network that was designed by the defence ministry of America to help informing in the military and top secret projects. The network was linked to some other networks while continuing its work consider its high efficiency, and the scientists as well as research institutions were soon attracted to that. The rudimentary network was abandoned by the American Government but this developed form of network is now transmitting so much diverse and expanded information all over the world to millions of users (Sedigh, 1996). The Internet was originally developed in the 1960s, when several computer scientists were hired by Pentagon at the U.S. Defence Department headed by Dr. Robert W. Taylor (Schneider, Evans, & Pinard, 2006), to build a system to decentralize communication network primarily for military purposes. There was therefore a need to develop a distributed system that could withstand such destruction. In late 1960s, the Internet (under its original name Advanced Research Projects Agency Network–ARPANET) was designed (Hinson & Amidu 2005). ARPANET developed out of the government’s effort to connect computers together throughout the country. The main purpose of ARPANET was to secure communication between military organizations and safely store large amounts of critical information in the event of a nuclear holocaust (Bogard, 1996). The researchers soon realised the importance of networking and by 1986, the U.S. National Science Foundation network NSFNET established to extend the network to more research institutions. ARPANET ceased to exist in 1990. Over time the network grew rapidly to interconnect numerous universities, research centers as well as commercial organization. Thereafter, the word and use of the INTERNET expand globally. In 1989, the World Wide Web (WWW) went global, and brought about the instantaneous access of information to every corner of the planet. Internet spread rapidly across the globe and grew to one million users in 1992 (Giovannetti, Kagami & Tsuji, 2003). It has been providing a novel type of communication that enables the
user to access large amounts of information with a touch of a finger. The number of Internet-users started to increase in 1993 and has steadily increased since that time. The greatest increase in the number of users accessing the Internet began in 1999. Since then, the continual improvement of the Internet technology has provided an extraordinary level of public accessibility to a wide range of forms of communication, e.g. intra-organisational and inter-organisational email; data storage, management and transfer; social websites like Facebook; text messaging such as Twitter, and so forth. Due to the development and spread of cheaper and more user-friendly computer technology and software (e.g., portable computers, Microsoft Word etc), the use of the Internet has increased dramatically. The remarkable growth in the Internet’s functionality, capacity, accessibility and convenience, these improvements have encouraged more people to use it more often, and it has become a powerful application in modern society. The Internet access and usage in the world has been proliferating year by year, conservative estimates put the number of Internet-users worldwide. The Internet is estimated to be growing at a rate of 10.15 per month with numbers rising from about 56 million Internet-users worldwide in 1995-96 (Daly 2000), and increased 150 million at the end of 1998 and 200 million people in 1999 and at 500 million by the year 2000 to 2001(Castells, 2001) with an associated exponential growth in the number of web sites. According to the Computer Industry Almanac (2009) the worldwide number of Internet-users surpassed one billion in 2005 (up from 45 million in 1995 and 420 million in 2000). By March, 2006, there were over a billion Internet-users worldwide (Internet World Stats, 2006). The number of Internet-users grew by 114 percent when compared with the figure in 2000 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2006; Internet World Stats, 2006). Burns (2006) predicted that the adoption of various information technologies, including Wi-Fi connectivity, RSS feeds, blog authoring and podcasts, will drive Internet usage worldwide. Statistical research tell us that Approximately 1.11 billion users in 2007, 1.67 billion in 2009, and 1.97 billion in 2010 (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2010), indicating an upward trend in the number of digitally literate people. Such a rapid growth has been interacted with people’s needs and motivation. Within a decade, from 2000 to 2011 the number of Internet-users globally rose from 360 million to 2.267 billion and by the end of June 2012 there were over 2.4 billion Internet-users in the world (Internet world Stats, 2012). The number of Internet-users in the world has
experienced a growth of 480.4% between 2000 and 2011 with the number of Internet-users around the world estimated to be over 2 billion people within a world population of approximately 6.93 billion by March 31, 2011 (World Internet-users and Population Stats 2011). In 2010, the world’s Internet use was 28.7% of the population. While this may not seem like a very large portion of the world’s population, the growth in Internet use worldwide has increased dramatically from 2000-2011. In recent years, the number of Internet-users has increased worldwide. The growth of Internet use in Asia is higher than that in Europe and North America. Around 40% of the world population has an Internet connection today. In 1995, it was less than 1%. The number of Internet-users has increased tenfold from 1999 to 2013. The first billion was reached in 2005. The second billion in 2010. The third billion is expected by the end of 2015.

India stands fourth in the world after US, China and Japan in terms of the Internet-users (Internet World Stats, 2010b). In India, the major group of Internet-users belongs to the academic community as the Internet came to India primarily for academicians through Educational and Research Network (ERNET). Internet came to India in the early 1990s for a restricted group of users through some leading Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The Education and Research Network (ERNET), National Informatics Centre Network (NICNET) and Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) have been offering Internet services with very different charters and growth histories. ERNET was designed to provide Internet access to the Indian educational and research institutions, NICNET was designed to provide Internet access primarily to Government departments and STPI was permitted to serve only the software exporters falling under the Software Technology Park scheme of the Department of Electronics. Later on, Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL), Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) entered into the market. The Indian Internet services market was opened for private sector participation in November 1998. India’s first private ISP is "Satyam Online" launched by Satyam Info way. Thereafter, Sify, Airtel, Netcom, Reliance and Hathway became the major private ISPs of India.

The Internet services were introduced in the Kashmir Valley during 1994-95 by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). With the passage of time, three more privately owned ISPs- IPEAKS, SLICNET and INFONET were registered but only
IPEAKS was operational till 1997, (Chawla, 2003). Presently, six ISPs namely BSNL, AIRTEL, AIRCEL, IDEA, Tata Indicom, Reliance, and Vodafone are operational in all the major towns of the Valley. The Commercial Cyber Cafes are also available in all the major towns of the Valley. The population composition of the Internet-users ranges from decision makers to commoners, professionals to students, business giants to common workers, producers to consumers, irrespective of age, gender, generation, religion, region, race and colour. The highest percentage of Internet-users belongs to younger generation. Since its inception, the Internet has grown exponentially over the years and has emerged as the foremost healthy source of disseminating information to a large audience, transcending the limitation of time and space. There has been remarkable growth in the Internet’s functionality, capacity, accessibility and convenience. These improvements have encouraged more people to use it more often (Leiner et al., 2000; Singh, 2002).

The first decade of the 21st has seen dramatic changes due to the exponential proliferation of the Internet in all aspects of life. What has been called the digital culture has had an extensive influence on education. Internet use has become very popular in many areas including education in recent years. It has affected the field of education at all grade levels (Sati and Khalid, 2002). The widespread availability of resources on the Internet and their potential use in educational settings has driven much debate its usability (Sinha, 2004). The use of the Internet in education allows a wide range of international resources to be accessed. Resources can be very well organized on the Internet, which allow for easy information access and exchange (Hicks, 2002). Internet can be used as a supplement to traditional instructional methods, to complement a lecture; instructors may ask students to find specified web sites to gain more in-depth knowledge about a particular topic (Robinson, 2005). Integrating Internet, mobility, and multimedia as well as other software powerful facilities lead to tremendous potential in education process with special impact on students, lecturers, and researchers. It has made considerable and dramatic impact on contemporary educational practice (Chou, et al., 2002; Havick. 2000; Tsai.2001). For example, the Web-based learning where educators integrate the Internet into instructional practice can not only provide learners with distant, interactive, broad, individualized and inquiry-oriented learning activities, but also promote their knowledge construction and meaningful learning (Leflore, 2000). Learners consider
Internet as the main and initial source of information (Tuncer, et al. 2011). As the Internet is broadly used for educational purposes; learners may have more rich experiences of utilizing the Internet. Levin (2003) stated the Internet as a new invented technology that holds the greater promise humanity has known for learning and universal access to quality education. As an educational tool Internet lets access to inexpensive, global, interactive and intensive computer communication and it also enables the student to improve his/her learning experience (Deniz & Coskun 2004).

The comprehensive literature available shows that the Internet has the following functions in education: (i) storehouse of information, (ii) communication without boundaries, (iii) online interactive learning, (iv) electronic/online research, (v) innovation in the new world, (vi) improve interest in learning, (vii) global education, and (viii) information catalogues. As the Internet have many potentials and functions. Fuchs (2008) expressed:

*The Internet is the global techno–social system that is based on a global, decentralized technological structure consisting of networked computer networks that store objectified human knowledge*

The Internet has experienced vast expansion in recent years, leading to its extensive use by people from all generations. People in different age groups and jobs, students and academicians using the Internet because it is the easiest, fastest, and cheapest ways of accessing necessary information. For a generation of young people, technology has assumed a substantial stake in their social and educational lives. According to Chan & Fang (2007) found that Internet is used for different purposes by young people such as making friends, shopping, listening to music, having fun, doing homework, and finding information for further education. Internationally, there are many surveys on the use of the Internet, and nearly all find that Internet use is most prevalent amongst younger, more educated people (Hoffman, Novak & Schlosser, 2000). Chan & Fu (2009) Internet searching helps university students to boost their intellectual development and job preparation. Due to the endless nature of information resources on the Internet. Researches indicate that seeking information on the Internet has become the first choice option for many people, especially for students (Cole et al., 2003; Lawrence & Giles, 1999). About half of the students begin using computers during their undergraduate years, and nearly two-thirds of them make use of Internet for educational purposes (Usta & Yildirim, 2007). Students
accepted that the Internet is more informative, useful, less expensive, time saving. It has made a tremendous impact on the academic activities of the students. Students use the Internet activities (facilities) especially for seeking homework and their projects by using search engines. Glenda et al. (2006) some of the most important reasons why students go online include research, school assignments, e-mails and chatting. Ibegwam (2004) that majority of the students used the Internet for academic purposes. They use e-journals, e-libraries, e-books, and online databases as academic resources for their related courses (Shahin & Ercan, 2010). New times are characterised by new ways of learning, primarily through use of the Internet (Kerry, 2000; Moor & Zazkis, 2000). The Internet is a relatively new channel for scholarly resources, and contains vast quantities of information that vary a great deal regarding its contents, aim, target group, reliability etc. Hence, it is important that the end-user is aware of the diverse information available on the Internet, and educated in the criteria by which the information content should be assessed (Chapman, 2002).

Today’s students are believed to integrate technology in all aspects of their lives for varied purposes, particularly socializing, entertaining and shopping (Asselin, Moayeri, 2008) as well as doing homework (Lenhart & Hitlin, 2005). Students have easier access to a wider range of material, and can established links between different information in variety of ways. Adeya & Oyelaran-Oyeyinka (2002) noted that the Internet will increase student access to education, improve curriculum and quality of instruction and increase the productivity of academic publications. It allows learners to ask questions or share ideas with teachers and friends via electronic mail (James, 2001), to do hands-on activities using Internet-based manipulative (Crawford, 2003), to engage in collaborative-projects with other students in different countries (James, 2001), to collaborate in discussion forums (Yang, 2002), to ask questions directly to experts, or to obtain primary resources (Kerry, 2000). Anything from discussions to research based activities with off country studying is possible. It allows students to broaden their academic experience, access important information and communicate to others within academic community. Ojedokun (2001) noted that the Internet has many benefits in the academic cycle, including provision of round-the-clock access to a wide variety of information sources globally and the ability to discuss and share experience. Through the Internet, many different activities can be assigned to the students, which will enhance their education. With the Internet activities, which
previously required students to be physically present in the classroom, can now are performed virtually without attending classrooms (Bellon, 2002; Foster, 2003). All of these are new ways of learning which were unknown two decades ago. Dehmler (2009) asserts that students today are growing up in an interconnected, networked world; they have unprecedented access to modern technologies and are use them in expected and unexpected ways.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has now broadened the horizon of the opportunities among institutions of higher learning, giving hopes to members of the academic communities to cooperate with their counterparts all over the world (Collis & Wende, 2002; OECD, 2005), and strengthened their mandate of teaching and carrying out research (CHEPS, 2000). Internet use has become a way of life for the majority of higher education students all around the world. It affects the way people learn especially in higher learning institutions (Edmunds & Conole, 2010). It serves as a useful tool in support of the various educational activities that ranged from research to teaching. It also enables scholars and academic institutions to disseminate information to a wider audience around the globe through websites (Luambano & Nawe 2004). Students prepare course assignments, make study notes, tutor themselves with specialized multimedia, and process data for research projects. Most of them exchange emails with faculty, peers, and experts working at distance places. They keep up to-date in their fields on the Internet, accessing newsgroups, bulletin boards, listservs, and web sites posted by professional organizations. Usun (2003) indicated that Internet is appealing to higher education for a number of reasons: it reduces the time lag between the production and utilization of knowledge; it promotes international co-operation and exchange of opinions; sharing information and it helps to promote multidisciplinary research. Students receive the opportunity to use the Internet to seek and obtain scholarly material. Wilkinson et al. (2003) reports that most of the links between universities home pages were associated with information on research or education. Omidian (2011) identified that university students prefer to use the Internet for their information need more than traditional print sources due to being quickly and easily valuable resource. It has been seen that students utilize the Internet for the university education all over the globe (Isman & Dabaj, 2004). Students use Internet because of the perceived effectiveness of the facility in information access on assignments and research projects. It is common to
say that more than 50 percent of students’ assignments are based on information from the Internet (Norzaidi & Salwani, 2008a, b). Thus, today, academic life without the access to the Internet is hardly imagining (Spennemann et al., 2007). However, much still is unknown about how university students use the Internet information systems for academic work (Aiken et al., 2003). As a matter of fact, majority of higher institutions of learning have now established their online presence with their researchers and students also having access to journals, magazines, newsletters and books (Jagboro, 2003). There are great possibilities for higher education at all levels through the use of the Internet because curricula can be developed collaboratively and educational materials distributed and updated more cheaply, offering additional ways for students to interact with their study materials as well as their instructors. There are also pressures to make learning more flexible even for those students who have access to the Internet on a university campus (Brown, 2001). Further, there are multiple forces driving Internet expansion in higher education including globalisation and the need for workforce training, learner on-demand services, digitisation, knowledge explosion, and cost effectiveness (Bates, 2000). University students showed a positive attitude toward using the Internet as a teaching and learning tool. Technologies like the Internet to accelerate university students’ learning enhance and democratize access to educational opportunities, and support interactivity, interaction, and collaboration (Draper & Brown 2004; Oliver 2006). Schrofer (2007) stated that university students take responsibility more for determining educational learning strategies and think that the reason for this is the quality of the information obtained from Internet is getting higher. Mathew & Schrum (2003) found that university students use the Internet for communicating with the professors through emails by asking for clarification or reporting information, e-mailing papers, and getting feedback. Secondly, they use the Internet to get materials (web links, notes, practice, quizzes, hints for test etc.) from professional websites, checked grades, and accessed resources from Web CT. Adegboji & Toyo (2006) concerned that Internet contributed significantly to the ease of research through downloading course related materials. They relied mostly on Internet sources for the big projects they downloaded study aides.

In today’s fast changing world, research has become one of the most important intellectual possessions for every human being to change his way life in accordance to
the needs and demands of the society. It is a key ingredient in shaping up the world. It opens new frontiers to many fields like, education, business, economics, medicine and science. Truly, research in itself had made a significant contribution in man’s giant leap towards the future. Internet has emerged as a formidable social and cultural institution of global proportions facilitating access to a wealth of information on the web for the academic society to support their academic and research activities. The use of information technology has been reported to increase the research productivity of scholars (Misra & Satyanarayan, 2001). Information is just a ‘finger touch’ away from the user and it would not be inappropriate to say that the Internet has become the biggest global digital information library, which provides the fastest access to the right kind of information in nano-seconds to end user at any time and at any place in the world. With the advent of Internet, a significant transition can be seen in the academic communities’ approach and the way they seek information and the methods they employ for teaching and learning activities. The principal functions of Internet are increasing the means of researches, facilitating the communication and enabling data share. Agarwal & Dave (2009) reported that students depend on the Internet as a veritable source of research information. Kumar & Kaur (2006) indicated that Internet resources are now preferred source of research information to the print resources among the students. Kamba (2008) maintains that the Internet has not only reduced the need to store information resources but has also increased the output of research publications globally. Jagboro (2003) Internet was the fourth most important resources for materials among the postgraduate students with respondents using the Internet to access research materials and for email. Internet use for academic activities would improve significantly with more access in departments and faculties. Fasae & Aladenyi’s (2012) stated that students use the Internet for research more than they use it for communication and entertainment. Massaquoi (2006) also confirms that 84 percent of journal articles and 97 percent of completed research works are now available on the Internet. He adds that making use of the Internet helps in conducting research, publishing articles and exchanging ideas. Similarly, Yusuf (2006) stated that the Internet provides wide range opportunities for easy access of relevant and current literature, wide range of instruments, online opportunity for validation of instrument, simulation of an on-going research, and so on. He further adds that collaboration of research (trans-institutional, trans-national and trans-continental) is possible, and wide
range of opportunities exist for the dissemination of research findings (journals, personal web page, foundations/organizations’ web pages and so on). The only way to pursue knowledge is through research and the Internet is having a profound impact on the research process and dissemination of information. The Internet therefore, be described as a ‘sea of information’ and ‘reservoir of information’ containing texts which are not housed between library and bookshop walls and subject areas span across all fields of knowledge. Restrictions created by distance, availability and access to information have to a large extent been removed. More information continues to become available in electronic format as this medium is embraced by publishers, museums and archives (Schmidt, 2003). It contains more information than the world’s largest libraries (Emeagwali, 2000). With access to the Internet one can retrieve information from the world’s largest information database. Also, thousands of libraries are connected to the Internet, permitting even casual users to access their catalogues and request learning material through interlibrary programs. In addition to those information services, the number of on-line journals, newspaper and trade magazines increase each month. Much of the information in these publications is free. It is a virtual treasure trove of information. Any kind of information on any topic under the sun is available on the Internet. It is a truly “open technology”, allowing users with any hardware and software to derive the necessary information from the network, independently from the location of data and knowledge bases. Hence, Internet can therefore be described as a super highway of information carrier, where information seekers on any subject or area of discipline can obtain current and useful information and knowledge. In the academic perspective, the Internet host and allow access to subject gateways, databases and professional websites which contain various types of scholarly resources like electronic copies of journals, articles, books, datasets, short communications, formula, monographs, encyclopaedia, dictionaries, instructional notes, informative web-pages, with numerous links to search and research related websites. Consequently, researchers all over the world are taking advantage of the Internet. “The Internet has revolutionized our lives!” often heard exclamation.

The Internet has added a lot to our lives and has also made a certain things disappear. The Internet can be beneficial for students as it allows them to obtain relevant academic information; it also offers other possibilities that may be harmful to
their academic experience. In the literature, there are studies about Internet and its effects on students, the relationship between educational performance and Internet addiction (Siomos et al., 2008; Ghassemzadeh et al., 2008; Del Castillo et al., 2008; Recabarren et al., 2008; Tahiroglu et al., 2008). Sahin, Balta & Ercan (2010) found strong relationship between Internet use trends and educational performance, and wrong use of the Internet can cause a major decrease in students’ academic performance. Anunobi (2006) reflected that majority of university students used Internet for academic purposes and minimum students used it for entertainment purposes. Kumar & Kaur (2006) students are the most frequent users of the Internet. They used the Internet mainly for educational purposes rather than for entertainment. Papastergious & Solomonidou (2005) majority of the students searched the web for information about school courses, while fewer of them engaged in communication activities via chat, email or video conferencing and in web page creation. Suhail & Bargees (2006) Internet usage impacts education in a positive way by increasing communication with classmates and professors, increasing access to libraries and educational databases, and improving study hours and study habits. Some studies have suggested a positive association between students’ Internet use and their learning. Jackson et al. (2006) students, who used the Internet more, scored higher on standardized test of reading achievement and had higher grades. Similarly, Turner & Farmer (2008) students’ outcomes in term of grade, of the Internet-based multimedia classroom, seen with 36 percent increase in grades, and a 56 percent reduction in failures. The significant drop in failure rate could be attributed to the integrated blending of online and in class format through the cyber classroom, since most failures were due to external problems and commitments. However, some other investigators have found negative effects of Internet use on academic outcomes (Choi, 2007; Sirgy, Lee, & Bae, 2006). Some studies found that computer and Internet has become important tools for students’ communication and entertainment; however, it has not yet become a useful tool for their study (Zhang & Jia, 2002). Galuszka (2007) technologies, such as the Internet and computers, were not in widespread use for academic purposes. Some studies focused on the general pattern of the Internet usage among students found that students tend to use the Internet less for academic purposes. A study carried out by Pew Internet and American Life project (Asfaw & Bo, 2003) that college students use the Internet more for social activities like
communicating with friends than for academic-related tasks. Pierce & Vaca (2008) reported significantly lower grades of Internet-users than those who did not use the service. However, Kuh & Hu (2001) argues that surfing the Internet for course material had positive effect on intellectual development and vocational preparation, in addition to personal development of college and university students. A significant difference in academic performance between students have Internet based infrastructure and access on their campus and those that do not (Osunade et al. 2009). Tella (2007) was also found most of the respondents reported using the Internet for the purpose of obtaining course related information and that the Internet contributes significantly to their academic performance. Among college students, however, searching information online about course materials helps boost intellectual development and facilitates preparation for future jobs. On the other hand Luban (2000) Internet had positive influence on the number of sources found and quality of the students' written work.

Students are lured by easy access and often do not question the value or quality of material. Most of the students are careless about the reliability of the information available on Internet (Weitzner 2007). There are not necessarily quality or authenticity checks on information on the Internet. Misrepresented, fake, and pirated literature causes problems for researchers and students. There are sites that many users may find offensive, as well as instructions for carrying out violent or illegal acts. This has a bad effect on their grades when they use more accessible and less secure Internet sites in such kind of courses and projects (Yasar & Tuncay, 2010). However, researches indicate that students do not have enough ability and knowledge to search for information on the web (Wallace & Kupperman, 1997), which ends up obtaining a large amount of irrelevant information about their studies. They pay little attention to what the information is (e.g., the source, date, and reliability) focusing instead on what it says. This strategy is similar to the "copy-paste" strategy (Bereiter & Scardamalia 1989). In accord with this conception, most of these students accepted what they found on the Web as true, with no consideration of the source or purpose of the information. This brings about some important and interesting issues with it. The Internet is a 'chaotic' library because it displays no discernible order, classification or categorization. It therefore poses a challenge on the students' ability to distinguish
between information from refereed scholarly journals available digitally and the digital equivalent of vanity press publications.

However numerous students have positive perception about the quality of learning through the Internet and also identified online interactive learning, electronic research, innovation, communication and global education (Muniandy, 2010). Majority of the students have positive attitude about Internet (Asan & Koca (2006). Majority of students opine that Internet is a universal digital library which provides fastest way to reach knowledge. The idea that is learning is constructive process widely accepted; learners do not passively receive information but instead actively construct knowledge. Through the constructivist approach, integrating Internet to the education is so easy and effective. Some students strongly prefer using the Internet as their primary information source (Gibson & Mazur, 2001). One reason students give for preferring the Web over traditional print materials; they feel they can locate information faster when using the Internet (Vansickle 2002).

It has been observed that excessive online stay closely linked to low academic performance (Kubey, Lavin, & Barrows, 2001). Students who use the Internet “excessively” experience a decline in their study habits and grades (Young, 1996). Studies revealed that excessive Internet use is linked to loss of sleep. Besides, feeling that life without the Internet would be boring. Few students who use the Internet perceive they have a negative impact on their academic performance their grades, their health, or their social lives (Scherer, 1997; Anderson, 2001). Excessive use of Internet has been associated to problems with maintaining daily routines, school performance, and family relationships (Rickert, 2001). Chen & Peng (2008) non-heavy Internet-users have better relationship with administrative staff, academic grades and learning satisfaction than heavy users, and claimed that the heavy Internet-users were likely to be depressed than non-heavy users. Social network websites grab attention of the students and then divert it towards non-educational, unethical and inappropriate actions including useless chatting, time killing by random searching and not doing their jobs (Kuppuswamy & Shankar 2010). Students are seems connected with each other for sharing their daily learning experiences (Liccardi et al., 2007). reported that social networking websites keep them in touch with friends (Madden, 2007). On the other hand Greenhow & Robelia (2009), Madge et al. (2009) & Selwyn (2009) revealed that social networking websites serve educational goal as connects students
through such informal methods. Lampe *et al.* (2008) reported that social networking websites enable collaborative sense making among students as it is used by majority of students. A number of studies have found relationship between social media and student commitment in higher education. Nicole *et al.* (2007) found strong link between social networking websites and students involvement. Such connections could help students in term of home assignments and projects in terms of job, internship and other opportunity. Madge *et al.* (2009) argue that often students use social networking websites to discuss their academics issues formally and informally and also to interact with their instructors, teachers and professors. Research examining student instructor relationships suggests that professors who have online profiles with high disclosure levels are associated with increased student motivation (Mazer *et al.*, 2007) and that self-disclosures decreased uncertainty, increased student motivation, and created more positive attitudes toward both the course and the professor (Sullivan *et al.*, 2004). In addition to its popular acceptance, the Internet is rapidly becoming an integral part of the daily lives of students. Since the Internet has become an essential component of students everyday life throughout the world. So an information world, called the *cyber world*, comes into being between the social and physical worlds. The number of people using Internet is growing day by day most of them accepts that Internet is a revolutionary new medium that has changed our lifestyle one way or the other way. Daramola (2004) maintains that an observable trend in the Internet is that more and more resources are moving to it. The spectacular increase in the use of the Internet has stimulated research on its impact on our everyday lives. New technology brings the new lifestyle to people mostly to the students. Internet already has the ability to influence so much in our daily lives (Bloch, 2007; Driskell & Lyon, 2002; Rohlinger & Brown, 2009; Tufekci, 2008). It has significantly impacted the lifestyle of everyone; changing the way people work, live and learn (Gates, 2000).

Researchers have studied the relationship of new technologies on interpersonal communication and relationships. Merkle (2000) reported that Internet as a social technology give rise to interpersonal relationships. The online social interaction seems to affect the people. McKenna et al. (2002) found that Internet use reduces feelings of loneliness by increasing users’ social circles and helping them to become less socially anxious. Selfhout *et al.* (2009) explored that use of the Internet for communication
predicted less depression among the youngsters who have low friendship quality and played a role in the well-being of the users. Some studies found Internet as contributory to psychological well-being (Weiser, 2002, and Wellman et al., 2001). Internet communication has been shown to increase measures of social support (LaRose et al., 2001). Brignall & Valeyb (2005) observed that using Internet among youngsters has increased greatly by communicating through the Internet. Among users, greater use of the Internet was associated with increased contact with family members and an increased participation in online communities. Hoffman & Venkatesh (2004) point out the Internet-users had more total contact with family members than Internet Non-users. Many Internet-users believe that using the Internet has improved their lives in this way, even providing an essential link to other. Some studies suggest that Internet-users have higher levels of community and political involvement (Wellman, 2001) and have higher levels of generalized trust and larger social networks (Cole et al., 2000). Internet-users are reported to spend three times more time in attending social events than Internet Non-users (Neustadtl & Robinson, 2002). Internet-users actually have the larger social networks, it allows them to stay in touch with family and friends and, in many cases, extend their social networks (Howard et al. (2001). McKenna (2002) stated that people use the Internet to form new relationships online. Growth of the Information Technology caused an increment on use innovative applications, in order to promote behaviours related to healthy lifestyle (Crutzen et al., 2008). Rice (2006) consider that the use of Internet as information source regarding healthy lifestyle. Mitchell et al. (2009) the Internet has been acknowledged as a valuable means of health promotion; with information in web spread throw static health educational sites, peer support groups, online health consultations and delivery of Internet interventions. Lewis et al. (2009) refer that interactive health communication applications are effective for increasing knowledge and may improve outcomes, regarding the adoption of healthier lifestyle.

On the other hand studies indicated that Internet use undermines well-being because online connections are weaker than real-life connections, or because online connections are often used to replace real-life relationships and activities (UCLA Internet Report 2001). Some even go so far as to implicate Internet use as a causal factor for psychological harm among users (Eastin & LaRose, 2000). Yet other studies suggest that the Internet can have direct negative effects such as psychological
problems including social isolation, depression, loneliness, and difficulties with time management (Choi, 2007). Katz et al. (2001) stated that the more time Internet-users spent on-line; the more likely they were to belong to off-line religious, leisure, and community organizations, compared to nonusers. Nie & Erbring (2000) argued that the Internet was creating a “lonely crowd” in cyberspace, because Internet use “necessarily” takes time away from family and friends. They also revealed that heavy Internet use resulted in less time spent with one’s family and friends. It has been vilified as a powerful new tool for the devil, awash in pornography, causing users to be addicted to hours each day of “surfing” hours during which they are away from their family and friends, resulting in depression and loneliness for the individual user, and further weakening neighbourhood and community ties. Nie (2001) arguing that time is a limited commodity, so that the hours spent on the Internet must come at a cost to other activities. Internet use has been found to be associated with negative personal and social developmental outcomes (Lloyd et al., 2007). Therefore, time spent on online activities may cut other activities such as reading and social interaction, which are essential to normal development (Morgan & Cotton, 2003; Nie, 2001; Hillygus, & Erbring, 2002; Weiser, 2001). Internet use as linked to the quality of social relationships. Certain studies reveal that Internet use lowers the quality of social relationships (Morgan & Cotten, 2003). Yet other studies, reported that there have been no linkage found between the two (LaRose, Ghuay, & Bovin, 2002; Sanders, Field, Diego, & Kaplan, 2000). Some researchers believed that Internet is making people isolated, depressed and lonely. People who use Internet remain cut off their environment and lose face to face relations which are strong by spending time in virtual reality with unknown people, which results in weaker relations. Some other researchers supports that people become more social, have chance to meet variety of people of their interests without any time and space barrier. Some found Internet as neutral without any significant affect.

Gender differences in Internet usage has remained a matter of concern to researches are another attractive concern of the research studies (Hupfer & Detlor, 2006). Shaw & Gant (2002) found that no gender differences are detected when participants are involved in various online activities such as synchronous and dyadic chat sessions. Jackson et al. (2001), Odell et al. (2000), Nachmias et al. (2000) Schumacher et al. (2001) & Durndell & Haag (2002) does not provide consistent
evidence for the presence or otherwise of a gender gap in Internet use across different groups of males and females. Some studies indicate male domination in terms of usage and attitude towards, the Internet. Weiser (2000) observed that there is significant gender difference in Internet usage. Males tend to be more familiar with the computers and Internet as compared to females. Similarly Morahan & Schumacher (2000) observed that males were more likely to be pathological Internet-users than females. Nachmias & Shemla (2000) reported that gender differences exist in the use of the Internet with a higher and more extensive usage by males when compared to females. Males were found to spend more of their time on the Internet, indicating preferred locations for use, resource downloading, website creation and participation in discussion groups. Sherman et al. (2000) supported the bias towards males. More males tend to use the World Wide Web; they are also more likely to have their own e-mail addresses and web pages and spend longer hours than females surfing the Internet. He further reported that males, other than for e-mail, used the technology more often and had more positive attitudes than females. The bias is seen even though both girls and boys are equally comfortable and show positive feelings toward the Internet. Moreover, Bimber (2000) gender differences exist due to socioeconomic status, in which men and women may differ in technology adaptation which in return influences computers and Internet access and usage. He further argued that women are substantially less likely to be frequent users, equally likely to be infrequent users, and more likely to be intermediate users. Ono & Zovodny (2003) females to be less frequent and less intense users of the Internet. Mishra & Bisht (2005) majority of the students used the Internet in which male students use Internet in greater numbers than females. Numerous studies have documented that overall, boy’s use the Internet more frequently, for longer and for a wider variety of uses than girls do (Gross, 2004; Haythronthwaite & Wellman, 2002; Subrahmanyam, Greenfield, Kraut, & Gross, 2001).

It has been found that a number of studies revealed certain types of gender differences in various domains of the life. Men and women use the Internet for different purposes. Odell et al. (2000) the gap in use of the Internet among male and female students has nearly closed, there remain differences in how male and female students use the Internet. Researchers have shown little difference in the amount of time men and women spend online, yet they have consistently found that men and
women differ in their reasons for accessing the Internet. Hupfer & Detlor (2006) reported that male and female differences in web searching appear to persist such as women are more into e-mail, chat, and search reference materials about medical and government information whereas men tend to focus on information about investment, purchase and personal interests. Garbarino & Strahilevitz’s (2004) females perceived Internet as a tool of maintaining social values. Significant difference between male and female Internet-users in terms of online health information users (Lorence & Park 2007). Males were more likely to be Internet-users but in terms of online health information users, females were the dominant users. However, Wolin & Kargaonkar (2003) gender differences in beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour towards web advertising reported a slight difference that males are likely to browse the Internet for functional and entertainment purpose while females are more into shopping reasons. Moreover, Niemivirta (1997) there is a difference in academic interest between genders; males are more extrinsically motivated while females are more intrinsically motivated in terms of furthering their education. On the other hand, Heimrath & Goulding (2001) female students felt that the Internet was too big and unstructured thus, searching the Internet difficult, not enjoyable and will use it only when unavoidable whereas male students were happy to search the Internet for relevant information.

Men were more likely than women to use the Internet for purposes related to entertainment and leisure, whereas females use it primarily for interpersonal communication and educational assistance Weiser (2000). Sherman et al. (2000) further supported the Internet gender gap among students by comparing the usage patterns of male students participated more in surfing, newsgroups and chat groups, while female students reported significantly higher e-mail use. Similarly Odell et al. (2000) men reported greater use of the Internet for visiting sex sites, researching purchases, checking the news, playing games, and listening to and copying music, whereas more women used the Internet for e-mail and school-related research. Female adolescents use the Internet to search for information and likely to use the Internet for educational purposes (Chen & Peng, 2008). On other hand male adolescents use the Internet to play games. Similarly, men surfed the Internet for entertainment or fun more than did women and male students’ downloaded music and videos more than did their female counterparts (Jones et al., 2009). Tsai & Lin (2004) gender differences in perceptions of the Internet among adolescents, males perceived its use
as a source of enjoyment or "toy", while females took a more practical approach and perceived it as a "tool", "technology" or "tour" (providing the ability to navigate around different sites and people). With respect to other uses of the Internet, there is evidence that some of these too are gendered. So the notion of Internet use among males is more task-oriented than women’s, and the tendency for women to use e-mail more accords with their greater interpersonal orientation (Jackson et al., 2001). Jones et al. (2009) demonstrating that female college students used the Internet for communicative and academic purposes more than did their male counterparts, while male students used the Internet for a wider variety of leisure activities than did female counterparts. Liu & Huang (2008) male/female differences in web searching materials by focusing on the online reading environment shows that there is a significant difference between genders in which female readers have a strong preference for paper as a reading medium than male readers. On the other hand male readers have greater sense of satisfaction with online reading. Thus there are some significant differences between male and female behaviour in the online reading environment. In relation to the different purposes of Internet use, studies show gender differences in a range of topics of interest. Women tend to go online for a narrower range of topics, such as health and religion, while men tend to engage in a broader range of activities (Fallows, 2005). Similarly, Jones et al. (2009) reported that male students pursue a wider variety of activities including games, sports, technology, politics, personal finance and adult content than do their female counterparts. While some studies indicated gender differences in Internet abuse. Males were more likely to become Internet abusers than females (Bayraktar & Gun, 2007; Frangos & Kiohos, 2010; Tahirolglu et al., 2008; Yang & Tung, 2007). Research shows that males are more likely to frequent sexual websites than females are (Doring 2010; Mitchell et al., 2003). This difference could mean that males are exposed to more alternative sexual material when they go online, than females are. Gender difference was also found to be significant in the students’ confidence about computers and stereotypical views of computer users (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Concern about gender inequality has now shifted from access to intensity. Skills do play an important role in framing gender inequalities in terms of Internet usage. Skills are the user’s ability to locate content online effectively and efficiently. Therefore, men and women may differ significantly in their attitudes towards their technological abilities (Hargittai & Shafer, 2006).
Significance of the Study

Information and communication technology has been a significant research area for some time, but its nature has changed considerably since the Internet became prominent just over a decade ago. The significance of present study is the fact that nowadays the Internet is pervasive in the lives of individuals, institutions, and societies all over the world, so in India. The recent decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in the use of the Internet and computer technologies which become a common instrument in our daily living and have a significant influence on quality of life (Israel, 2000). The Internet has been used for last two decades in our society and we have a generation of students, who grew up with the Internet. Since its inception, it is generally acknowledged that its appearance, not only brings convenience to mankind, but also may cause a great deal of potential problems. The benefits of the Internet have been widely researched. Despite the positive effects of Internet, there is growing literature on the negative effects of its use. Many researchers herald the Internet to be beneficial and educational (Donnerstein & Smith, 2001 & Hitlin & Rainie, 2005; Pew Internet and American Life Project 2005b). Nevertheless, concerns about online risks and consequences are increasing (Byun et al., 2009; The Star, 2009; The Strait Times, 2009b). However it cannot be believed that Internet is beneficial under every circumstance and situation, regardless of its regulation. Hicks (2002) revealed Internet as a double-edged sword; some accept it as a panacea while others are appealing its negative growth.

Undoubtedly, appropriate attitude toward the Internet is a prerequisite for successful Internet based instruction. Attitude towards a new technology plays an important role in its acceptance and usage (Liaw, 2002). Researchers that there is a group of students interested in and are competent with technology and also a group of students not interested in and not very competent with this technology (Vogel & Heinz 2000; Minks 2000). Some students prefer to reference only traditional print materials, despite the increasing prevalence of electronic sources (Large & Beheshti, 2000). Majority of students tend not to synthesize the information in their research (Guinee, & Langlais, 2003). Students report that they don’t copy from the Web or that they are less likely to copy from the Web than from traditional print sources. However, students are still reliant on their library as a physical space for the discovery of research content (Nicholas & Rowlands 2008). The benefit from the huge resources
that exist on the Internet, students must necessarily have information technology literacy. Every year thousands of young students register at universities. It becomes clear that not all of them have the necessary skills to work with all of the ICT resources available to them. The gap in Internet usage is labelled as ‘the digital divide’. Indeed, upon closer inspection many of the studies actually convey a sense that not all students are as inclined to integrate Internet use in their studies as might be assumed. As is usually the case in educational debate, blame for this disparity has been most frequently attributed to deficits of skills, motivation and know-how on the part of students. For example, some researchers have reasoned that university students’ (non) engagement with the Internet is influenced by perceptions of usefulness, ease-of-use and other psychological attitudes towards both technology and learning (Cheung & Huang, 2005). Peter & Valkenburg (2004) advocate a ‘digital differentiation’ approach to replace the digital divide. Cushman & Klecun (2006) suggest replacing the term ‘digital divide’ with that of ‘digital exclusion’, to better assess the complex nature of the processes involved in understanding the use and non-use of ICT. A new type of digital exclusion is emerging due to this variation of usage and appropriation. Brotcorne (2005) says use or not to use the Internet was not always due to a disadvantage but “more due to matters of “digital choice” rather than “digital divide”.

On the other hand, Hinson & Amidu (2005) analysed that lack of electronic literacy skills among the university students was a great obstacle in using Internet resources. This paints a gloomy picture of low levels of Internet skills and literacy because the natural assumption is that university students should be at the forefront of development and must be skilled in how to use the Internet. Ngulube et al. (2009) found that there was limited use of the Internet due to the students' poor level of network literacy. Luambano & Nawe (2004) reported that majority of university students were not using the Internet due to the inadequacy of computers and lack of skill in Internet use. Sinha (2008) reported ICT and Internet awareness among university students in India was very poor. Internet-users and Internet-Non-users have different ideas of what the online world is like. Generally, Internet Non-users are tempered by fears that the Internet is a dangerous place that its cost is beyond their reach, its content holds little meaning for them, and that they do not want to waste precious time online. Horrigan (2009) claimed that the main reason behind the
student’s Internet Non-use was a lack of interest in using the Internet, as they considered it irrelevant to their daily lives. Other criteria included cost, availability and usability. In this way, Internet Non-use may be explained by a negative attitude towards ICT, as well as the perceived lack of pleasure or 'behavioural control' that reflects a desire to control the use of certain technological tools. The prevailing understanding is that they are students who, for one reason or another, have not yet gained access to the benefits that a technical application has to offer.

Over the last 15 to 20 years research has focussed on the use of the Internet by various sectors of society. These researches have considered a wide range of subjects. The impact of Internet use is being investigated increasingly, and researchers addressed greater number of related issues, like syndrome of intense preoccupation with using the Internet, excessive amounts of time spent online, compulsive use of the Internet, difficulty in managing the time spent on the Internet, feeling that the world outside of the Internet is boring, becoming irritated if disturbed while online etc. The resources of the Internet give enormous scope for a richer academic experience for students but also potentially offer a vast range of distractions. There is a large body of research spanning several domains, disciplines, and approaches that has investigated’ use of technology, but no work has focused on studying the comparative Use and Non-use of Internet among higher education students. With regards to Internet use and Non-use, proportions of studies have been conducted on different categories of people but university student population have not been looked. With the surge in the use of information and communication technology, Users and Non-users of ICT can be considered to be more than just a simple anomaly, especially where the Internet is concerned. Internet usage based research is therefore still in its infancy, mostly among the higher education students as far as the concrete interests of both Users and Non-users are concerned. In light of the fact, it was found that there is paucity of research linking to Internet usage among University students. Also the investigator noticed that, there is no recent literature that documents the influence of Internet usage on university students in relation to their Lifestyle, academic achievement and attitude towards research. So from the forgoing discussion, a gap in knowledge is observed by the present investigator, which needs to be filled by this present study. Therefore, there is a critical need to have standardized and more reliable research in this area as a way of advancing the Internet usage and providing an insight to determine the
Lifestyle, academic achievement and attitude towards research among university students in Kashmir (J&K).

Statement of the Problem

Internet Usage among University Students in Relation to their Lifestyle, Academic achievement and Attitude towards Research

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives have been formulated for the present investigation:

1. To identify Internet-users and Internet Non-users.
2. To find and compare the Lifestyle of Internet-users and Internet Non-users.
3. To find and compare the Academic Achievement of Internet-users and Internet Non-users.
4. To find and compare the Attitude towards Research of Internet-users and Internet Non-users.
5. To find and compare the Lifestyle of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on the basis of gender.
6. To find and compare the Academic Achievement of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on the basis of gender.
7. To find and compare the Attitude towards Research of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on the basis of gender.
8. To find and compare the Lifestyle of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on the basis of their stream differences.
9. To find and compare the Academic Achievement of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on the basis of their stream differences.
10. To find and compare the Attitude towards Research of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on the basis of their stream differences.
11. To find out the dominant set of factors of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on Lifestyle and Attitude towards Research (separately)

Hypotheses

Following hypotheses have been framed for the proposed investigation:

1. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Lifestyle.
2. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Academic Achievement.
3. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Attitude towards Research.
Internet Non-users on their Academic Achievement.

3. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Attitude towards Research.

4. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Lifestyle on the basis of gender.

5. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Academic Achievement on the basis of gender.

6. There is significant difference between the Mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Attitude towards Research on the basis of gender.

7. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Lifestyle on the basis of stream differences.

8. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Academic Achievement on the basis of stream differences.

9. There is significant difference between the mean scores of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on their Attitude towards Research on the basis of stream differences.

10. The dominant set of factors of Internet-users and Internet Non-users on Lifestyle and Attitude towards Research bear no similarity.

**Operational Definition of Variables**

The variables under investigation are:

1. Internet Usage
2. Lifestyle
3. Academic Achievement
4. Attitude towards Research

**Internet Usage:**

The Internet is a vast computer network that connects computer networks and organizational computer facilities around the world (Random House Dictionary, 2005). Internet usage has been defined as the interconnected system of networks that connects computers and Internets around the world via the Internet Protocol. For the purpose of this study Internet usage has been defined as using of laptop or desktop computer. Thus, other devices, such as cell phones, I-pods have been excluded from this definition. Therefore, for the purpose of present study, the Internet usage includes
the experience and knowledge of the University students’ towards using Internet. However in the present investigation Internet usage has been labelled with the following nomenclature - Internet-users and Internet Non-users.

**Internet-Users:**

Internet-users are those who have direct access to the worldwide network and have their own skill and exposure to use the Internet. One cannot access Internet-based resources without the adequate Internet skills (Okello-Obura & Magara 2008). Tella & Ayeni (2007) argue that students’ ability to find and retrieve information effectively is a transferable skill. In order to make use of the growing range of Internet resources, students must acquire and practice the skills that are necessary to exploit them. In addition, students should be network literate. Network literacy has been defined as the ability to: participate in the emerging knowledge networks on the Internet and has a deep understanding of the logic or protocols of these networks. This means that students should understand how to participate on the Web by writing and connecting the public sphere (Eziani 2011). Network literacy for students consists of knowledge of network information and skills to locate, select, evaluate and use the network information. (Asemi & Riyahiniya 2007). Keeping in view the above observations an Internet user is considered as an active participant of Internet based activities in a versatile way.

In the present study Internet-users are those university students who have direct access to the worldwide network with their own exposure and skill in Internet usage through laptop or desktop computer and have minimum of one year’s experience in the field. The similar procedure for the identification of Internet-users has also been adopted by a number of researchers in the field (Eynon & Helsper, 2011; Cushman & Klecun, 2006; Selwyn, 2003, 2004; UCLA Internet study 2001).

**Internet Non-users:**

Non-users usually are fairly well informed about the Internet despite the fact that they do not use it. Closely related to underlying reasons and motivations for the Non-usability of Internet are attitude towards technologies, as well as perceptions and experiences. The conscious or unconscious decision to be a non-user can be fuelled by many reasons, such as those who are not online is actually lacking desire, do not want the Internet, do not feel that they need it, do not feel that it holds anything of interest or value for them, economic constraints, discomfort with using technologies, not
seeing any benefit or avoiding some degree of reliance on technologies. Abudullakutty (2009), studied the digital divide among students pursuing higher education, pointed out the gulf between the haves and have-nots. A high percentage of students studying for graduate and post graduate courses do not have any basic knowledge of Internet and are unable to make use of its immense possibilities in higher education. The widely assumed negativity of Internet non-use makes off liners behind and is perceived as outsiders (Klecun, 2008). Sally Wyatt (2003) presented a model that divides non-users into “have-nots” and “want-nots” and also emphasises that non-use does not only cover people who never gained access to some technology but also the behaviour of non-use may be an act of active resistance or passive avoidance. The motives for non-use are manifold and reach from a delayed adoption through a perceived lack of value for the individual to pure disinterest in the services offered. Studies on non adopters of digital technologies usually attempt to find out why some students choose not to be connected and find no uniform reason. But they have shown that socio-economic status and associated costs of adopting new technologies are less significant than factors such as: skills and efficacy (World Internet Project, 2010), motivation and disinterest (Verdegem & Verhoest, 2009; Zickuhr, 2010), and attitudes and personal traits (Davis, 1989; Matei & Ball-Rokeach, 2003; Stanley, 2003; Vishwanath & Golohaber, 2003). The lack of use among non-users can be explained by the lack of knowledge of Internet tools (Mike Cushman & Ela Klecun, 2006). Non-users” have been variously labelled and constructed as subjects of research: dropouts (Katz, Rice & Aspen, 2001), laggards (Goldenberg & Oreg, 2007), unadopters (Dailey et al., 2010), narrow frequent users, occasional users and non-users (Selwyn et al., 2005; Selwyn, 2006), unengaged and marginalized (Longley et al., 2006), non- or sporadic users (Brandtzaeg, Heim & Karahasancovic, 2010) and lapsed users (Eynon & Geniets, 2012). Such people are hard to understand as a collective, as well, since many move back and forth between being users and non users (Mehra, Merkel & Bishop, 2004). Keeping in view the above observations Internet Non-user is reported to be unfamiliar with the Internet based activities and do not have an exposure to the online world and have never consciously accessed the Internet.

In the present study Internet-Non-users have been considered those university students who lack a direct access to the worldwide network and have not their own
exposure and skill to use Internet. Besides non-users are the respondents who never used the Internet or did not list any Internet activities. The same procedure has also been adopted by a number of researchers in the (Grant, 2012; Eynon & Geniets, 2012; Chen, Su-Yen; Fu, Yang-Chih, 2009 Hargittai, 2007; Morris, et al. 2007; Suhail & Bargee, 2006; Selwyn, 2006; Mitra, et al., 2005; Selwyn et al., 2005; Robinson, et al., 2004; Ono & Zavodny, 2003; Katherine Allen et al. 2003; Sally Wyatt, 2002); Katz & Aspden, 1997).

**Lifestyle:**

Lifestyle is a way of living of individuals, families and societies, which is manifested in coping with their physical, psychological, social, academic and economic environment on day to day basis. Lifestyle is defined as a way of living: the things that a particular person or group of persons usually does. It is based on individual’s choices, characteristics, personal preferences and circumstances. It is a way of life or style of living that reflects the attitudes, habits or possessions and values of a person or group. It defines the attitudes, values and somewhat exhibits the social position. Moreover, it also includes pattern of social relations, consumption, entertainments and dressing style. It reflects person’s views, habits and etiquettes and the way of life which has direct influence on the type of service. Thus, lifestyle can be defined as “a pattern of an individual’s living expressed through his/her activities, interests and opinions.

*In the present study, Lifestyle has been considered as dominant set of scores as measured by Lifestyle Scale by S. K. Bawa and S. Kaur (LSS–BK).*

**Academic Achievement:**

Academic achievement refers to the degree or level of success or proficiency attained in some specific area concerning scholastic or academic work. Besides, knowledge attained and skills developed in the academic subjects by the students are referred as academic achievement. It depends on the ability to read, comprehend, and communicate at high levels (Holcomb, Castek, & Johnson, 2007). It is considered as the mean of the total examination scores or marks obtained by the sample groups in examination. It could be more than the total sum of examination marks, but only this dimension is more clear and measurable than any other. It is perhaps for this reason that almost all the researchers have considered marks in an examination as an index of
one’s academic achievement. So, academic achievement has been measured in terms of aggregate of marks percentage obtained by the students.

Academic achievement in the present study has been assessed on the basis of aggregate percentage of marks secured by the students in their two consecutive examinations i.e. aggregate percentage of marks in two semesters conducted by the University of Kashmir (J&K). This procedure has also been adopted by a many of researchers as: (Sugra, 2004; Mir, 1996; Matoo, 1994; Chanda, 1984; Zargar, 1980; Mehta, 1980).

Attitude towards Research:

Attitude is the readiness to act in a certain ways to certain issues. It, therefore, refers to one’s positive or negative judgment about a concrete subject. Attitude is not an innate tendency rather it is learnt. More recent research indicates that attitude represents a summary evaluation of a psychological object and is described both internally and externally in dimensions such as good-bad, likeable-dislikeable, harmful-beneficial, and pleasant-unpleasant. Attitudes whether positive or negative affect a particular subject. Ajzen & Fishbein, (2000) reported “An attitude as a predisposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, or event. As implied in this definition, attitudes possess cognitive (beliefs, knowledge, and expectations), affective (motivational and emotional), and performance (behaviour or actions) components.” So, attitude is a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person's behaviour.

On the other hand, Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. So, attitudes toward research have been defined as a person’s general evaluation or feeling towards research. The attitude towards research basically means a detailed study of thinking, feeling and the person’s behaviour towards research. It also specifies how a person is acting in the research field and what importance is given to him in different aspects of research. A positive attitude enables students to solve the problem quickly whereas; a negative attitude hampers the efforts in research both technical proficiency and interpersonal relationships. The attitude towards research means a detailed study of thinking, feeling and the person’s behaviour towards research. It also specifies how a person is acting in the research field and what importance is given to the different aspects of research by him? The
literature shows that many studies are designed on identifying attitudes towards research from different perspectives such as practitioners (Bjorkstrom & Hamrin, 2001; administrators, faculty and teachers (Ladebo, 2003; Tercanliiolu, 2004; Vyas, 2007), and students (Lazar, 1991; Papanastasiou, 2005).

In the present study, Attitude towards Research refers to the dominant set of scores as measured by Attitude Scale towards Research by Vishal Sood and Y. K. Sharma (ASTR–SVSY).

**Delimitation**

Keeping in view the time and resources at the disposal of the Investigator, the present investigation was delimited to the Post graduate students of Kashmir University (J&K).