

PERCEPTIONS OF MILITARY FAMILIES ON THE IMPACT OF INTERNET APPLICATIONS ON EMOTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The internet applications due to its utility and convenience have made an impact on our emotions. The aim was to study the impact of internet applications on emotions as perceived by the Indian Military Officers and their wives and whether the difference in perceptions is dependent on the service, level of education or place of posting. The method used is quantitative research and the population comprised of Indian Military Officers and their Wives. A random sample was taken from the said population from various Military establishments throughout India. The survey instrument was a questionnaire through which data were obtained from the sample to seek their inputs on the impact of the internet applications on human emotions. Based on literature review it is seen that the internet has affected our emotions and it is interesting to study if there exists any difference in perceptions. The hypotheses for the study were formulated as “The perceptions of Indian Military Officers and their wives on the impact of internet applications on emotions is not dependent on the ‘service’ or ‘level of education’ or ‘place of posting” and the results have supported two of the hypotheses and rejected the third hypothesis.

Keywords – Internet, internet applications, convenience, emotions, perceptions

1. INTRODUCTION

The internet applications as a means for socialization, education, information access, entertainment, shopping, and communication is increasing dramatically and its impact on our personal lives has been a topic for study by many researchers. This study attempts to understand the perceptions of Indian Military Officers and their wives on the impact of internet applications on emotions and if it is related to the service,

level of education or place of posting of an individual.

The literature review on the topic and the variables under study reveals that very little study has been carried out on this specific topic. Therefore this study was more exploratory in nature for the said population. A few studies having some relation to the topic under study have been highlighted to draw certain hypotheses for this study.

The role of internet and its impact on humans have been researched in many different ways by different people. Academic research has been more qualitative in nature in this area and has primarily taken a 'domestication of new technology' approach [1], focusing on how families are appropriating the internet into the home, within domestic practices of space, time and social relations [2],[3] and integrating it within the already-complex media environment [4]. The usefulness and reliability of the web content especially the Web 2.0 has been researched and it was deduced that there were insignificant relations between gender, ages, and careers and the perception of user created content usefulness [5].

Research has shown that human emotions like Happiness, Satisfaction, Fear etc. have been impacted due to the multifarious roles that the internet applications play. Emotion has been conceptualized in three distinct ways. It can be a psychological state (e.g., frustration or joy), a value judgment in response to a situation (e.g., fear to a perceived threat or joy for a reward), or a transformation or enlightenment from an experience [6]. Emotion as per the 'Social constructionists' view considers it as a socially created phenomenon, and exist as a response to an external environment and through interpersonal interactions [7],[8]. They can only change in response to changes in the context or changes in the individual's interaction with the environment which is greatly influenced by the internet applications.

Research has concluded that social communication is one of the most common reasons for using the Internet [9] and communicating online has made it easy for people to begin and develop interpersonal

relationships [10]. Entertainment also is concluded to be an important factor of consumers' satisfaction with Internet shopping, and is associated to pleasure of browsing, advertising and bonus offer in web sites [11].

Although the Internet has consistent positive impacts on modern society, it has also caused various societal concerns about privacy, security, pornography, Internet crime, and virtual community [12]. Studies on online social networking and e-commerce have explored the impact on the security of personal data and identity. Also the security problems mainly personal data transmission and payments with credit cards have been stated by most researchers as the major risks affecting online transactions and as the barriers to electronic commerce. The security perception and privacy assurance with Internet shopping have been concluded to have the biggest impact on e-satisfaction [13]. The impact of internet applications are also perceived differently by people who have adequate access to the internet and who do not. It has been found that digital divides exist and that rural residents say they have less choice than others about the way they access the internet [14].

The above review of literature shows that the internet applications can have a positive impact on our emotions but there is scope for study on how it is perceived by people of different demographic profiles. The purpose of the research was to know the perceptions of Indian Military Officers and their wives on the impact of internet applications on emotions and whether the perceptions are dependent on the service, level of education or place of posting. The hypotheses were thus formulated keeping these variables in view.

1.1 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 - The impact of internet applications on emotions as perceived by the Indian Military Officers and their wives is not different for the persons from different service.

Hypothesis 2 - The impact of internet applications on emotions as perceived by the Indian Military Officers and their wives is not dependent on the education level of a person.

Hypothesis 3 - The impact of internet applications on emotions as perceived by the Indian Military Officers and their wives is not dependent on the place of posting.

2. METHODS

2.1 Participants

The population under study was the Indian Military Officers and their wives. The participants for this survey were based on a random sampling technique from various military establishments throughout India and at the Defence Services Staff College. The respondents were Indian Military Officers and wives from various services like the Army, Navy, Air Force and House Wives who were posted at Peace stations (family stations and maximum infrastructure availability) and Field stations. The education levels were basically categorized as graduates and below and post graduates for this study. The representation of the respondents consisted of; Males accounted for 67% and females accounted for 33%. The age distribution of respondents ranged between 20 to 50 years of age, with the largest group of respondents aged between 30 and 34 years.

2.2 Measures

The method used was quantitative research. The survey instrument was a questionnaire which comprised 35 questions and assessed the use of internet applications and the impact these applications have on our emotions. The questions covered the acceptance/usage of internet applications for Communications, Social Networking, Utility and e-commerce and the perceptions of the respondents on the impact of these applications on negative emotions like Fear, Security, Worry and positive emotions like Desire, Satisfaction, Happiness.

A 5 - point Likert-type scale was adopted from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) as the response format. The variables under study were Service, Level of education and the Place of posting.

The validity of the survey instrument which in this case was a questionnaire was checked. The validity is defined as “the degree to which a measure accurately represents what it is supposed to” [15], and thus validity is concerned with how well the concept is defined by the measure(s). The validity of the questionnaire was addressed by putting the questionnaire through a pilot study. The pre-pilot questionnaire was given to a few respondents who were asked to identify any ambiguities in the questions, comment and suggest changes. The changes were incorporated in the pilot questionnaire and responses received. The responses were compared and changes made to the final questionnaire.

The reliability of the questionnaire was also confirmed by statistical analysis. Reliability indicates the extent to which a variable or set of variables is consistent in what it is intended to measure [15]. A Cronbach

alpha with acceptable cutoff point 0.70 demonstrates that all attributes are internally consistent, and as a rule of thumb for describing internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha is acceptable among many researchers [16]. The statistical analysis for Reliability gave a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.841 (Table 1) which indicate that the 'alpha value' of all items exceeded recommended criterion of 0.70 for scale reliability [17] and thus the tool was reliable enough to collect the right data.

Table 1 : Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
.841	35

2.3 Procedure

Data were obtained by surveying respondents who were internet users through a questionnaire to seek their inputs on the study and a total of 1032 completed questionnaires were received. The questionnaire was distributed and collected through postal means and also by hand from the respondents. This questionnaire administration approach was chosen because it is less expensive to administer and allows respondents time to reflect on the questions thus improving collection of quality data. Of the total 1200 questionnaires, 1032 were fully completed, response rate was 86% which is an acceptable response rate and indicates data is representative enough. The collected data was coded and processed for analysis using SPSS.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The profile of the respondents is detailed at Table 2.

3.2 Hypothesis Testing

3.2.1 Hypothesis 1 - Perception is not different for the persons from different service.

A 'One Way ANOVA' was used to test the hypothesis. The various statistics obtained on conducting ANOVA are given in Table 3.

There was no statistically significant difference between persons from different service as determined by the one-way ANOVA ($F(3,1028) = 1.241, p = .293$).

3.2.2 Hypothesis 2 - Perception is not dependent on the education level of a person.

A 't test' was used to test the hypothesis. The statistics obtained on conducting 't test' are given in Table 4.

The 't test' failed to reveal a statistically reliable difference between the scores of Military Officers and their wives with different education levels. Graduates ($M=3.10, SD=.851$), Post Graduates ($M=3.11, SD=.917$); $t(1030) = .157, p = .876, \alpha = .05$.

3.2.3 Hypothesis 3 - Perception is not dependent on the place of posting.

A 't test' was used to test the hypothesis. The statistics obtained on conducting 't test' are given in Tables 5.

The 't test' reveals a statistically reliable difference between the scores of Military Officers and their wives with different place of postings. Peace ($M=3.13, SD=.869$), Field ($M=2.96, SD=.906$); $t(1030) = 2.143, p = .032, \alpha = .05$.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Summary of findings

The study assessed the use of the internet applications and the impact these applications have on our negative emotions like Fear, Security, Worry and positive emotions like Desire, Satisfaction, Happiness. The three hypotheses were formulated and an effort was made to analyse if the three hypothesis formulated has been supported on analysis of the data.

The results suggest that in the case of Military Officers and their wives, all services perceive similarly, the role played by internet applications on human emotions. There is a similarity in the way graduates and below and post graduates within Military Officers and Wives perceive the role played by internet applications on their emotions, however Military Officers and Wives posted to Peace and Field stations perceive differently, the role played by internet applications on their emotions.

4.2 Implications

The topic for study was to ascertain how Military Officers and their wives, whether from different service or education level or place of posting perceive the role played by internet applications on human emotions. Also it aimed to see the relationship to human thought and feelings. The main implication of this study is that no special action is required to separately target any service or education level to increase the internet usage as both perceive similarly, the role played by internet applications on human emotions. However if the internet is made available with all its applications as in a peace station to all field stations, the persons posted to field will be able to exploit it further and thereby perceiving its utility

better.

4.3 Limitations

This study is not without its limitations. The subjects of the study came from a population which is diverse and even though was sampled randomly there can still be an element of subjectivity and hence the sample may not be fully representative of the population. The sample is a little biased towards the males as the strength of males in proportionally much larger in the population under study than the females and the majority of the population falls in the age group of 30 to 34 and not spread out. Also even though the sample size is large enough, an increase in field sample strength would give a more generalised result for the study.

5. CONCLUSION

The study was carried out to ascertain if the Indian Military Officers and their wives perceive similarly, the role played by internet applications on human emotions. The review of literature in this area had shown that very little research has been done on this topic and hence this study was undertaken. It was a questionnaire based study in which the variables were service, education level and place of posting. The importance of this study lies in the fact that an exploratory attempt has been made to see how this specific population perceive the internet applications impacting their emotions mainly Fear, Security, Worry, Desire, Satisfaction and Happiness while using these applications. The results have shown that the perception of Military Officers and their wives on the impact of internet applications on human emotions is same for all services, graduates/below and post graduates but is perceived differently by persons posted to peace and field stations.

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 2 : Profile of Respondents

Table 2A : Occupation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Army Officers	554	53.7	53.7	53.7
Navy Officers	73	7.1	7.1	60.8
Air Force Officers	76	7.4	7.4	68.1
Housewives	329	31.9	31.9	100.0
Total	1032	100.0	100.0	

Table 2B : Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Graduate & below	657	63.7	63.7	63.7
Post Graduate	375	36.3	36.3	100.0
Total	1032	100.0	100.0	

Table 2C : Posting

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Peace	890	86.2	86.2	86.2
Field	142	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	1032	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 : Results of One way ANOVA – Testing of Hypothesis 1 – Service

Table 3A : Descriptives

Emotions

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Army Officers	554	3.10	.883	.037	3.02	3.17	1	5
Navy Officers	73	3.26	.834	.098	3.07	3.45	1	5
Air Force Officers	76	2.99	.808	.093	2.80	3.17	1	4
Housewives	329	3.11	.886	.049	3.01	3.20	1	5
Total	1032	3.10	.875	.027	3.05	3.16	1	5

Table 3B : Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Emotions

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.786	3	1028	.502

Table 3C : ANOVA

Emotions

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.851	3	.950	1.241	.293
Within Groups	787.055	1028	.766		
Total	789.906	1031			

Table 4 : Results of ‘t’ Test - Testing of Hypothesis 2 - Level of Education

Table 4A : Group Statistics

	Education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Emotions	Graduate & below	657	3.10	.851	.033
	Post Graduate	375	3.11	.917	.047

Table 4B : Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Emotions	Equal variances assumed	2.574	.109	-.157	1030	.876	-.009	.057	-.120	.102
	Equal variances not assumed			-.153	731.48	.878	-.009	.058	-.122	.105

Table 5 : Results of 't' Test - Testing of Hypothesis 3 - Place of Posting

Table 5A : Group Statistics

	Posting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Emotions	Peace	890	3.13	.869	.029
	Field	142	2.96	.906	.076

Table 5B : Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Emotions	Equal variances assumed	.301	.584	2.143	1030	.032	.169	.079	.014	.324
	Equal variances not assumed			2.078	184.74	.039	.169	.081	.009	.330