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# Internet Shutdown, Exam Fear and Role of Libraries: A Survey among PG students of Assam University Silchar

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**Abstract:** *The present survey was conducted to find out that how library comes handy in crucial time like shutting of internet by the Government during exam time. Library emerged as a savior for the students. During an internet shutdown, students are barely accessible to the information. Thus this survey reveals that PG students of Assam University prefer to find the resources they find through the internet more easier than the resources available in their library. The shutting down of internet during exam time does leads the students to the psychological phase and thus this phenomenon resulted in fear of failure in exam. The researcher evaluated every perspective of the present study that directly or indirectly related to the PG students of Assam University Silchar about their views on how their library and library professional helps them in internet shutdown during exam time. However, every research has a future scope.*

**Keywords:** Internet Shutdown, Exam Fear, Role of Library, University Library, Assam University Silchar.

### 1. Introduction

The internet has long been considered as one of the greatest technological growth of this recent world. The internet has become essential tool for today's world. All the availability of all types of information are being available at one click only. But constantly shutdown of internet by the local, state and national government comes with certain problems in one's life. In student's life it is like obstructing the free flow of information, and without the internet the functioning of one's automatically got broken in educational institutes especially in the time of examination Since it includes the blockage of social medias platforms, thus called as "blackouts", "kill switches" or "network disruptions".

Since because of blockage the flow of information got disrupted, it does not allows information transfer from person to person via electronically. Although it is well known that

the internet has become the essential tools in our lives. Cyber has made everyone's life so easy that people now don't often seek to library for the information.

Internet has become essential and inseparable from everyday life. So cutting of internet in exam time might prove to be more damaging rather than constructive for students. As a disconnection from the internet restricts the students during the examination from accessing the knowledge, as students are disconnected from the WhatsApp, Facebook or Twitter, which gradually leads the students to the psychological impact on them.

Thus, in this crucial time library emerged as a savior for the students. Library is a knowledge center for users, library is a place where the users can get the information. Library is definitely a hub for the students. Library is a collection of both printed and audio-visual materials which are organized systematically and in convenience manner for their patrons or users.

Thus, the library has contributed positively in improving the search effectively, which in the results has leads to offering students psychological boost and helps in their problems solving ability. Library serve not only to the students but also to a variety of users such as faculty, staffs with differing needs of information for individuals.

The library of Assam University Silchar provides sources on different subjects areas like agricultural, technology, education etc. We say that thus the library provides resources in a vast range of knowledge. Library provides several contents likes books, thesis and dissertation, practical research records, journals articles, project reports, workshop reports, conference papers, conference proceedings, field trip records etc. Library accumulates various of information sources and provide various services for aiding instructional, research and learning activities. Hence the significance of library is abundant in the life of students of an institution specially during examination and library is generally viewed as a core of academic activity.

Covid-19 put brake to the academic activity, but digital libraries has ensure the continuity in the institution by shifting courses online. Due to the ongoing impact of the corona virus pandemic, there have been a disruption to the supply for printed journals.

So students are engaging en masse with e-books and e-learning as well as researchers are drawing their attention on electronic journals.

Assam University library have risen to the occasion and offering more free educational content and personalized collections so that users or patrons can continue to read and learn without disruption.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

During an internet shutdown, students are barely accessible to the information, educational activities, education programs etc. During the crucial and important time like exam time the lack of adequate amount of required and proper internet services in any institution impact students psychological

also. When internet services stop and suddenly become unavailable at such an important time, when so many student's lives are dependent on it. The impact of that effect the students not only economically but it effects the students psychologically as well. Shutdown of internet causes interference to the research and study of the students. Since the blackout leave students separated from the rest of the associated group.

Students of university experience a variety of stress situation during exam time, thus the fear of failure over power them after the blackout of internet. Exam fear mostly measured at the exam period. Thus exam periods and exam situations are highly stressful for students. It is extremely disastrous as it affects the students psychologically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. Shutdown of internet has happened for a variety of reasons, sometimes due to national security as well as to stop any occurring disturbance the internet shutdowns imposed by local, state and national Government.

Library as collections and services has changed and developed to meet new challenges according to changing environment. There are various resources available for post graduate students in prints as well as in non-prints to cope up the critical situation like internet shutdown.

The study has to find the answer for the following questions that abound among the students making use of the university library.

- Are the post graduate students are aware about the resources and services provided and are available in library for them in the time of crisis?
- Do they know how to retrieve all those resources available in library for their study?
- What type of resources do students prefers to use during exam time.
- Do the students consider their library as resourceful library?
- How periodically the students of post graduate anticipate for seeking

information from the electronic resources of the university library.

- Do the post graduate students feel that resources provided by the library could get them the academic success rather than the resources available on the internet.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present survey are as follow:

- To identify the problem faced by the PG student during internet shutdown.
- To find out the efficiency and effectiveness of library resources for exam during internet shutdown.
- To study the satisfaction level of users for available library resources during internet shutdown.

### Scope and Limitation

At present the Governments are authorized to rattle the access of internet services. There are no international norms for this phenomenon even there is no reinforced principles.

Internet shutdown has become major drawback in India. The internet is being considered the extreme technological upgrade in today's time, but constantly shutdown of internet by the state bringing out several problems as well. Majorly in the time of exam the free flow of information becomes obstructed and without the internet the day-to-day functioning are being deformed in the institutions.

### 4. Review of Literature

Review of literature has a great role in the field of research as because it is essential for researcher to have advanced knowledge on the particular subject of research. This helps the researcher to get a good idea of the covered areas so that it helps to proceed in a proper direction. So, review of literature is necessary in a new research topic. The investigator reviewed those studies which are similar to the present area of research.

(Wagner, 2018) provides the overview about the article that internet shutdown has become

an increasingly common phenomenon. Shutdowns have been occurred between 2012 and more than 41 times. It argues that to understand how shutdowns became normal in Pakistan. It is very necessary to look upon the dynamics of how shutdowns take place. The concept of communicative breaks develops to understand government shutdowns of communications. The article discusses internet shutdowns in the wider context of authoritarian practices before concluding with the urgent need for further research.

(Goothy et al., 2019) described that being away from college without a valid reason is called absenteeism. Pre-exam absenteeism is all about being absent just before exam and mostly students intentionally do that. The student was to observe the impact of pre-exam absenteeism on academic performance among five year BDS students. The results of the study indicate that pre-exam absenteeism has negative impact on academic performance. This study also suggests further detailed and multi-centered studies in this area.

(Arun&Nayak., 2016) provided the view that during the riots like Muzaffanagar 2013 communal riots in which over sixty people died and thousand people displaced, social media have played an important role in spreading rumors and propaganda. Disturbing images were circulated on Facebook and through internet messaging applications on smartphones

### 5. An overview on Internet Shutdown

Internet shutdowns in some places are surprisingly the common phenomena having occurred in at many countries over the past 10 years including Syria, Nepal, Pakistan, Myanmar, Egypt, Uganda, North Korea and many more. Although this is also essential for security or public order measures. Many shutdowns occur in the context of political rallies, election and public assemblies. Although there always been a security risks associated with such events.

To understand why internet shutdown are so common in some countries, it is very important to clearly define them first. Internet shutdowns are defined as intentional disconnections digital communications by government authorities. Shutdowns clearly effect many things such as shutting of mobile phone services etc.

Societies now-a-days across the world are increasingly dependent on communication infrastructure, the internet, telecommunications and many information services. People find it difficult to imagine to live without internet. Internet shutdown means sometimes the enclose of all the forms of digital communications. Although internet shutdowns should be considered a distinct phenomenon and are worthy of further study for many several additional reasons. Politically shutdown of internet connected to human rights violation and a great threats to democracy and one's freedom. Sometime governments hides their shutdown requests and claim that digital communications have the technical error. Internet shutdowns typically take place for one day or so but although they are sometimes extended for up to some weeks or so. Though shutdown by government during exams are pathetic and in the result a lack of responsibility on decision of internet shutdown effects students' life. Shutting down the internet during exam times by the government for their own propaganda interrupt in the flow of digital based information and communication. It appears that disruptions are implemented more effectively if the government is able to control the role of telecommunication companies.

## **6. An overview of Exam Fear**

Stress or fear is body's reaction to changes that requires responses. The body reacts to the changes with physical, mental and emotional responses. The stress is part of one's normal life. Stress can occur from environment from body and even from the thoughts. Even positive changes in life also leads one to the stress. There could be negative stress too.

Emotional problems can also results from stress only. Stress can occurs from environmental, from body and even from the thoughts. Various studies across the globe says that students are more prone to high stress. More stress leads them to psychological problems such a depression and anxiety. Students who are tired or do not feel well because of these effects their performance and attendance. They required more times for goals to achieve and this can also be one the additional contributors to stress. Low performance of academic leads to failure , a major problem to the student is stress level during exam which leads to the feeling of hopelessness that effects study habits and then their further weaken academic achievement. Fear in exam arises with the combination of both internal and external pressures exceeds individuals resources to cope up with the situation.

Fear is the part of the normal life. However, if students failed to manage stress in their life it will interfere with the studies and health. The fear due to stress guides the students in a wrong way such as excessive worry and difficulty in handling problems. The pressure of maintaining balance between personal relationship and academic demands is an extremely difficult task.

Thus, exam fear during shutdown of internet or in other way is one of the highly recognized disorders.

## **7. An overview on uses of Assam University Silchar library and its resource**

One of the main motives of setting up a library is to encourage and promote scholars and students to visit library and to promote the encouragement towards their studies or research field. Assam University library named as Rabindra library was started with the establishment of the Assam University in the year 1994 as a central organization for meeting requirements of the academic community of this university. The University shifted its new permanent central library cum computer centre

building since 21<sup>st</sup> January 2006. The library is situated at the centre of the university campus with all the other departments around it for easy access of the users from all the schools of departments. The total area of building is 38,700 square feet. A statue of the great poet Rabindra Nath Tagore with inscriptions from his writings regarding library in front of the building and a well maintained garden has made the library a nice place of learning.

The University has 16 schools of different faculties. There are thirty five departments under these 16 schools. No University will claim to promote research without the provision of well balanced collection of books and periodicals related to the research needs of the university. Hence it is very important to read the attitude of researchers and the students towards the library and the resources available in the library. Assam University library has the adequacy of resources, quality of library collection and library services.

Assam University library has a very good number of collection of both print and non-print materials. There are plenty collection of printed resources available like text books, reference books, periodicals both current and back volumes. Both PhD and M.Phil theses are there, many reports and conference proceedings and many more. E-resources like CDs, DVDs, Audio cassettes, CD ROM databases. e-journals and e-resources are available through UGC-Infonet digital library Consortium, DeLCON and DELNET Consortium. In North-East including 18 institutions relating to Bio-Technology Assam University since January 2009 have also the opportunity to access to the e-resources available under DeLCON . All these online e-resources are available through UGC Infonet e-Journal Consortium. DeLCON and DELNET consortium can be accessed from anywhere within the university campus only. In information seeking, today's users seem to be more comfortable with using a wide variety of sources for information. Internet search

engines, print resources, e print, e- journals etc are all used the most by students

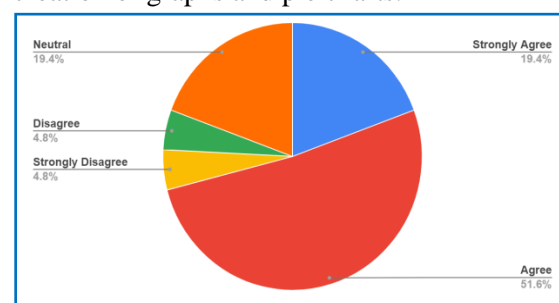
## 8. Research Methodology for the Present Study

The present study has been conducted using survey method. Survey deals with gathering information from a sample of individuals. This method focuses on the collection of the opinion of the respondents on a subject of study. It facilitates the generalization about a large population on the basis of the representative samples.

For getting a high response rate, it is essential to use different data gathering tools in the survey. In the present study, a structured questionnaire has been used as a data collection tool followed by the observations and formal interviews in some cases. For the purpose of this study, other sources of information have also been consulted. So, it is very essential to follow a certain methodology to carry out the research problem.

## 9. Analysis

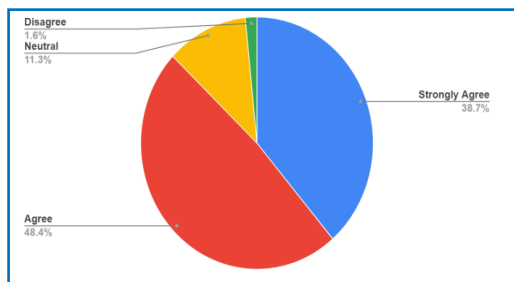
Data has been collected by means of the questionnaire. All the information collected is presented by the graphs and the results are expressed in percentage terms. The software Microsoft Excel 2007 has been used for the creation of graphs and pie charts.



**Figure 1: Internet Shutdown initiated by regional or national authorities to control social disturbances like riots**

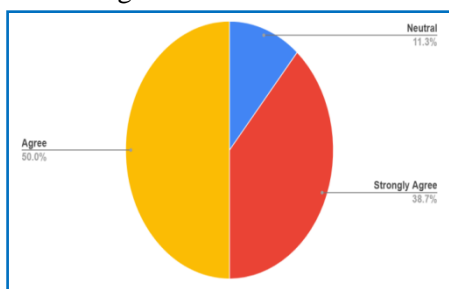
From the diagram it is clear that 51.6% students agree about this statement. On the other hand 19.4 % students strongly agree that internet shutdown initiated by regional or

national authorities is to control social disturbances like riots whereas same 19.4% responses neutral. 4.8% disagree and strongly disagree respectively.



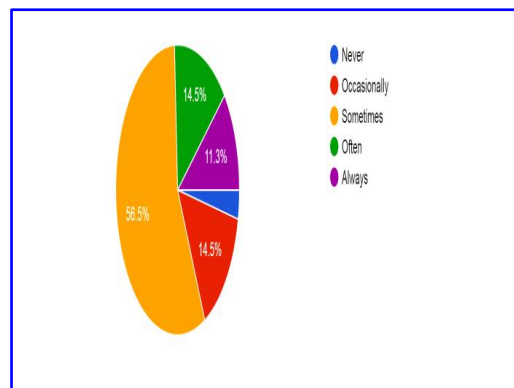
**Figure 2: Internet blockage leads the students to the psychological distress during exam time**

From the above diagram it is clear that 48.4% students agree that internet blockage leads the students to the psychological distress during exam time whereas 38.7% strongly agree on that, 11.3% were neutral with this statement and 1.6% disagree.



**Figure 3: Students seek more often for library resources during exam time to search the required information**

From the above diagram it is clear that 50% students agree that students seek more often for library resources during exam time to search the required information whereas 38.7% strongly agree on that, 11.3% were neutral with this statement.

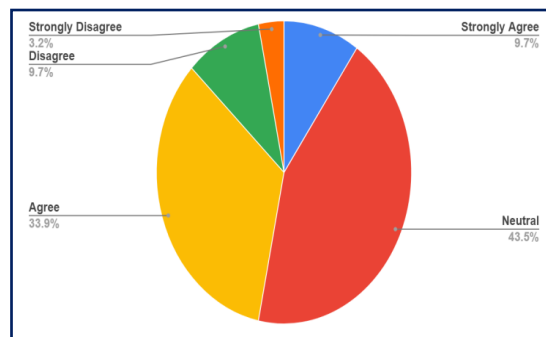


**Figure 4: The fear of failure overpowers more after the blackout of internet during exam time**

Above figure shows that 56.5% PG students of Assam University sometimes fear the failure about exam after the blackout of internet. Whereas on the other hand 14.5% students occasionally feels that. 11.3% always fears about the failure during exam after the blackout of internet.

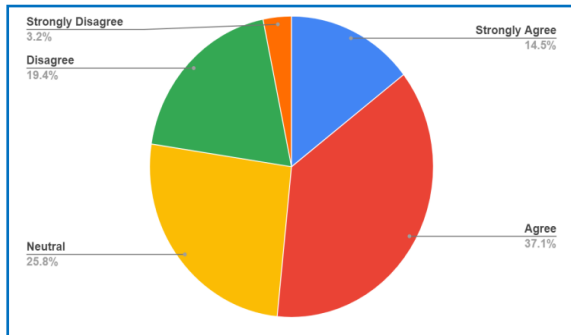
**Figure 5: Where do you find most of your information for your papers in exam time?**

Above figure shows where PG students of Assam University mostly found information for their papers in the exam time. Among 62 respondents 67.7% get their mostly information through the internet whereas 32.3% still visit the university library for getting the information.



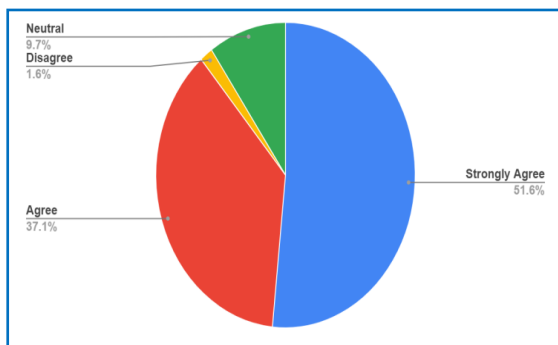
**Figure 6: I prefer library resources more than the resources available online during exam**

From the above diagram it seems that 35.5% students agrees that they have visible signs of nervousness such as sweaty palms, shaky hands and so on right before exam whereas 27.4% were neutral on that, 14.5% strongly agree and 9.7% disagrees as well with this statement.



**Figure 7: The Library has all the materials that are useful to me**

Above diagram shows that 37.1% students agrees that their library has all the materials that are useful to them whereas 25.8% were neutral on that, 19.4% were disagrees and 3.2% strongly disagree with the statement.



**Figure 8: During internet shutdown library is the only source to collect information**

Above diagram shows clearly that 51.6% students strongly agree that during internet shutdown library is the only source to collect information whereas 37.1% agree, 9.7% were neutral on that, 1.6% were disagree with this statement.

## 10. Major Findings

The survey was carried to find out about the internet shutdown during exam time and how library comes handy in such situation among the PG students of Assam University, Silchar. On the basis of the responses given by the respondents, following are the major findings:

- From the analysis portion of the study, it has been noticed that good number of PG students agree that in chaotic situation, society needs libraries and librarians in organizing disseminating the accurate information.
- This survey reveals that students agree that internet shutdown initiated by regional or national authorities is to control social disturbances like riots and for their propaganda.
- Maximum number of students thinks that Government shutdowns the internet to stifle the critics, but students have to face the troubles.
- This survey reveals that students use internet and internet shutdown restricts the students from accessing the knowledge.
- During exam time the blockage of internet leads them to psychological distress.
- A good amount of students seek more often for library resources during exam time to search the required information.
- Students do believe that their dependency on libraries increases during internet shutdown.
- From this survey we can analyse that PG students of Assam University, Silchar visit their library more often during exam time.
- 72.6% students feels that shutdown of internet gives them the fear of performing poorly in their exam. Thus maximum number of student are depended on the internet now a days, resulted in the fear of failure overpowers more after the blackout of internet during exam time.
- Huge percentage of PG students prefer preparing potential test questions from old question papers, from their syllabi and

information that the professor emphasized rather than visiting university library.

- Huge amount of PG students get most of their information for their papers in exam time through internet rather than University library.
- Maximum of them feel that there is a huge difference between what they find through the internet and the information they get through the library's resources.
- Most of them generally get all their required information through the internet and sometimes get the information from the references provided by the internet to them.
- Survey reveals that internet blockage leads the students to the psychological impact during exam time.
- Most of the students believe that they can perform better in exams with the help of the internet than the library. Thus internet plays an important role.
- This survey reveals that student have visible signs of nervousness such as sweaty palms, shaky hands and so on right before the exam.
- Not much students were sure about the library resources available rather than resources available online during exam.
- Most of the students find the study materials for their papers through the internet more easily than the library.
- Students consider visiting library and using the library internet for their academic work only.
- Majority of students use the library during exam time only.
- Since from the survey it is clear that maximum number of them are aware about the library services.
- They also agree that their library has useful materials for them but they still consider the internet and they appreciate having the access to library e-books.
- Survey reveals that technology matters more since technology has enhances the learning experiences so as a results they

do search the items in library online catalogue. During internet shutdown library is the only source to collect information.

- During the internet shutdown teachers has provided guidance that matches the needs. They have also adopted different strategies for guiding studies.
- Teachers being the utmost support to cope up with the exam fear. Teachers the one who has helped to make contacts and network with other resources and provides positive acknowledgement in the studies by the feedback and constructive criticism.
- During internet shutdown, university library and LIS professionals become helpful. Library professionals were available all the time for the consultation and operated in a timely, efficient and up-to-date manner in relation to the university exams. Thus the library professionals were supportive in academic difficulties.

## 10. Conclusion

On the basis of the above observation one can conclude that the internet has become essential tools for today's life. All type of required informations are available at one click only. However constant shutdown of internet by the government creates problems in one's life. From students' view the shutdown of internet broke the free flow of information specially in the time of examination. Internet has contributed positively in providing quality reference service and has improved individuals' performances. So the cutting of internet in exam time might prove to be more damaging rather than constructive for students which impact the students psychologically and leads the fear of failure in exam. The library emerges as a savior for the students in this crucial time. Thus, the library boosts students psychologically during exam time by providing all sort of required information from the available resources.

The survey highlighted that PG students as a whole use physical library to a great extend for



study purpose and that they do see university library as useful in examination especially during shutdown of internet. Students other purpose for visiting the library was to use the electronic resources. As the need of the information is tremendous in every individual today they are more lured towards the easy access to information especially through the internet. This study also reveals that students today are more dependent on the internet and they prefer useful the resources they get through the internet rather than the resources available through the library. Resolving the problem like shutting down the internet is achievable through a closer look at state or districts level dynamics.

Through this study on internet shutdown, exam fear and uses of library an attempt has

been made to analyse the interest of the PG students of university towards their library and their available resources, there are view points towards the library and services especially in situation like internet shutdown during the exam time. However challenges which are brought about by the information explosion in the intellectual arena for the library will be to be more resourceful by expanding their collection and services according to their patrons' requirement. Hence, this study highlighted the satisfactory level of the PG students of Assam University, Silchar on the resources available in library during the situation like internet shutdown by the government for longer time.

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