A Study on Profile Characteristics of Digital Natives

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ABSTRACT

The accessibility of the ICTs must be there because it is Digital access which divides the society not the Digital technology as technology integrates the society. So an effort is to be made to provide digital technologies to the members of the society. Simply providing access is not the only solution but also making the people empowered to use the digital technologies. Therefore there is a need to know the digital empowerment status of the individuals by developing a tool. Before knowing digital empowerment status it is necessary to have the study on theie socio economic profile. The sample was of 170 respondents of which all were young students. Study reveals that (51.18%) of the respondents were male and (48.82%) female. Education status of the respondents ranged from Graduation (53.52%) Master (38.24%) Ph.D (8.24%). Respondents completed their schooling from rural area (40.58%) and urban area (59.42%). Medium of Basic School Education of the respondents was from English (67.65%), Hindi (30.58%) and others (1.77%).Type of schooling ranged from Public (50.58%), Private (38.25%) and Convent (11.17%).

Key words: *Digital; Empowerment; Digital empowerment; Digital natives; Socio economic profile;*

Due to the rapid development and distribution of digital media over the last two decades, access to this media has become crucial to being an active player in our contemporary society. In most developed countries computers and mobile phones have become indispensible to how people communicate, work and learn. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been used as tools to bridge digital divides, increase economic development and empower poor and disadvantaged groups. Government of India has announced "Digital India" a programme to prepare India for a Knowledge Future. It aims at changing the manner in which governance and public services are provided to citizens. Digitally empowered society and knowledge economy are the major initiatives of "Digital India Programme".

To make this programme success citizen must have access and some competency to use digital technology. Now a day's Indian users or learners have internet as their first choice for seeking information, but most of them are not having the basic skills to navigate the information super highway. The information seeker should have the basic knowledge for making search strategies, critical thinking and decision making skills for proper use of digital information. The academic organizations, like universities in particular have good prospect to exploit the full potential of ICTs in research, class room teaching and learning innovatively. Since the use of ICTs in the academic activities has now become omnipresent, students should always be prepared to make full use of digital devices and enhancing the ability to use the digital contents. Students must have a culture of connectivity and online creating and sharing of ideas. They must have e-lives that revolve around the Internet, where they access information and interact with others, for example blogging, playing online games, downloading music, purchasing and selling online and socializing via social media networks. They should be active experiential learners who like receiving information quickly and prefer graphics first over texts.

For making them enabled to use the technologies in their day to day life they must be empowered digitally.

Now there are four words namely "Digital", "Digital natives", "Empowerment" and "Digital empowerment". These concepts have been defined by various authors.

Digital describes electronic technology that generates, stores, and processes data in terms of two states: positive and non-positive. Positive is expressed or represented by the number 1 and non-positive by the number 0._ *(http://whatis.techtarget.com).*

The concept of *'digital natives'* was first proposed by *Prensky (2001)* as a generation of people born in or after 1980. He described digital natives as people who lives their lives immersed in digital technologies and that they learn differently from previous generations of people.

Empowerment is defined as the development of the information, skills and abilities that are necessary for individuals to control their own learning activities *(Harvey, 2004).*

Digital empowerment means, as digital participants, being adapted to information technologies digitally and making maximum use of the potentials of information technologies *(Akkoyunlu , et al., 2010).*

Petrou (2011) defined digital empowerment as the process of developing communication skills by using creative tools/media techniques, focused on peoples' own lives, through story-telling, photography, music, video and narrative. Digital Empowerment places the learner at the centre of the teaching method, and draws upon personal experiences to engage them.

Now the question arises, is there any role played by socio economic profile of digital natives? To answer this question a specific objective has been framed as under: "To study the socio-personal profile of the respondents".

METHODOLOGY

Institute of Agricultural a science, Banaras Hindu University was selected purposively. Students represents the real digital native generation. One Hundred Seventy individuals from the population of Twelve Hundred Twenty FiveB.sc (Ag.), M.sc (Ag.) and Ph.D (Ag.) were selected through stratified random sampling and allocation of student was done by proportionate sampling. The research design adopted for the present study was **ex-post facto**, since the phenomenon has been already taken place.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socio-personal characteristics of the respondents were studied in terms of their gender, education, schooling, Medium of Basic School Education, Type of Schooling, Training, Educational background of respondent's Father and mother, Occupation of Respondent's Father and mother, Family Income, Family Background , Family Type , Family Size and Social Participation. The results as obtained are shown below in both frequency and percentage and discussed under individual sub headings.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents on the basis of Gender and Education (N=170)

Variables	Category	No.	%
Gender	Male	87	51.18
	Female	83	48.82
Education	Graduation	91	53.52
	Master	65	38.24
	Ph.D	14	8.24
Schooling	Rural	69	40.58
	Urban	101	59.42
Medium of Basic		115	67.65
Education English	Hindi	52	30.58
	others	03	1.77
Type of Schooling	Public	86	50.58
	Private	65	38.25
	Convent	19	11.17

From the table 1 it can be revealed that (51.18%) of the respondents were male and (48.82%) female. Education status of the respondents ranged from Graduation (53.52%) Master (38.24%) Ph.D (8.24%). Respondents completed their schooling from rural area (40.58%) and urban area (59.42%). Medium of Basic School Education of the respondents was from English (67.65%), Hindi (30.58%) and others (1.77%).Type of schooling ranged from Public (50.58%), Private (38.25%) and Convent (11.17%).

From the above table it can be revealed that (19.41%) of the respondents received training on Computer as well as Participated in any computer related competition, (26.47%) Either received any training on Computer or Participated in any computer related competition and (54.11%) of the respondents neither received training nor participated in competition related to computer.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents on the basis of Training received (N=170)

Training	No.	%
Either Received any training on Computer or Participated in any computer related competition	45	26.47
Received any training on Computer as well as Participated in any computer related competition	33	19.41
Neither received training nor participated in competition related to computer	92	54.11
Total	170	100

Table 3. Distribution of respondents on the basis of Educational background of respondent's Parents (N=170)

Category	Father		Mother	
	No.	%	No.	%
Illiterate	05	2.94	18	10.58
Primary	03	1.76	12	7.06
Middle School	07	4.12	12	7.06
High School	10	5.88	24	14.12
Intermediate	18	10.58	39	22.94
Graduation	94	55.29	55	32.36
Post Graduation	33	19.43	10	5.88
Total	170	100	170	100

From the above table it can be evealed that (2.94%) respondent's Father and (10.58%) mother were Illiterate ,(1.76%) father and (7.06 %) mother were educated upto primary level,(4.12%) father and (7.06%) mother have education till middle school, upto high school (5.88%) of respondent's Father and (14.12%) mother, (10.58%) father and (22.94%) mother had completed intermediate, (55.29%) father and (32.36%) mother were graduate and (19.43%) respondent's father and (5.88%) respondent's mother were post graduate.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents on the basis of Occupation of respondent's Parents (N=170)

Category	Father		Mother	
	No.	%	No.	%
Government Service	81	47.64	10	5.88
Business	26	15.29	02	1.18
Private Sector	22	12.94	01	0.58
Administrative Service	05	2.94	02	1.17
Labourer	04	2.37	01	0.58
Farming	32	18.82	04	2.38
House wife	00	0.00	150	88.23
Total	170	100	170	100

From the above table it can be revealed that (47.64%) respondent's Father and (5.88%) mother were in Government Service ,(15.29 %) father and (1.18%) mother were having their own business, (12.94%) father and (0.58%) mother were working in Private Sector , (2.94%) of respondent's Father and (1.17%) mother were in administrative services, (2.37%) father and (0.58%) mother were labour, (18.82%) father and (2.38%) mother were having farming as their occupation and (88.23%) respondent's mother were house wives.

Table 5. Distribution of respondents on the basis of Family Income, Family Background, Family Type and Family Size (N=170)

Variables	Category	No.	%
Family Income	Below 10,000	11	6.47
	10,000 to 20,000	31	18.24
	20,000 to 40,000	47	27.65
	Above 40,000	81	47.64
Family Background	Rural	65	38.23
	Semi-Urban	57	33.53
	Urban	48	28.24
Family Type	Joint	73	42.95
	Nuclear	97	57.05
Family Size	Small (<5)	66	38.82
	Medium (5-10)	84	49.42
	Large (>10)	20	11.76

From the above table it can be revealed that (6.47%) of the respondents Family Income was below 10,000, (18.24 %) 10,000 to 20,000, (27.65%) 20,000 to 40,000 and (47.64%) above 40,000.Respondent's Family Background ranged from rural (38.24%), Semi-Urban (33.53%) and Urban (28.24%). (42.95%) respondent belongs from joint family and (57.05%) from nuclear type family.(38.82%) of respondents belong to small family size, Hindi (49.42%) medium size and Large (11.76%).

Table 6. Distribution of respondents on the basis of Social Participation (N=170)

Variables	No.	%
Member of One Organisation	30	17.64
Member of more than one Organisation	19	11.18
Office Holder	06	3.53
Public Leader e.g. MLA,MP etc.	01	0.59
No Membership	114	67.06

From the above table it can be revealed that in social participation (17.64%) are member of one organization, (11.18%) are memberof more than one Organization, (3.53 %) are Office holder,(0.59%) are public leader and (67.06%) are not having any membership.

CONCLUSION

To know the socio economic profile of the Digital natives various independent variables were taken considered as parameters and found that in many aspects profile characteristics were varying by marginal difference while in others by huge gap. So it can be summed up that profile study will help to measure and judge the digital empowerment of students for implementing any digital as well as developmental programme.

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