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# EVALUATION OF ONLINE DICTIONARIES IN SELECTED SUBJECTS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCE DISCIPLINES

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## ABSTRACT

*Traces out the results of evaluation of online dictionaries of selected subjects in Social Science and Physical science disciplines. A total of 172 online dictionaries from 7 subjects were evaluated based on the predetermined criteria. Study found that 87.21% of online dictionaries are found relevant. It is also interesting to note that 26.74% of dictionaries have author as the authority and the rest have publishers and email addresses as authority. Alphabetical arrangement is common among the online dictionaries. The study also tries to give emphasis on the availability of multimedia features, hit counters and copyright statement. The time taken to load the web pages of online dictionaries and the size of the home pages were also calculated from ping.com a free application software and results were presented. Suggestions are also given to strength the existing online dictionaries of selected subjects.*

**KEYWORDS:** Evaluation, Online Dictionaries, Social Science, Physical Science

## Introduction

Today everyone turns to the web for information. We use it for research, information, socializing, shopping and much more. Information seekers do most of their information search online. However, anyone can publish the information on the web. Thus, Internet has millions of WebPages in its store. Those pages involve information on everything on the earth. It has become difficult to get the required thing without knowing the authority, reliability, coverage of the electronic sources. Many learners would not evaluate the online information. Unfortunately many learners think that if they find the information on the web then it must be true (Berger, 2007)<sup>1</sup>. Internet posed bad impact on information user in search of need based and exact information. It has become hard to locate and

retrieve relevant information due unimaginable flow of information on the WWW. In this regard evaluation of information sources available on the Internet is very important. Hence, evaluation is the process of determining significance or worthiness. This involves assigning values to the thing or person being evaluated.

Internet users are also depending upon the online reference sources. Among different kinds of online reference sources online dictionaries are being used frequently. It is inevitable to check those online dictionaries in order to realize their reliability. Thorough evaluation of this electronic form of dictionaries determines the worthiness of the sources.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To know the availability of online dictionaries in selected social science and physical science disciplines.
- To determine the relevancy of the online dictionaries those are retrieved through Google search engine.
- To identify the domain names associated with selected online dictionaries
- To check the copyright holder of selected online dictionaries.
- To determine the information organization and availability of multimedia features in the selected online dictionaries.
- To know the size and time taken by home pages of online dictionaries to load the page over a browser.

### **Review of Related Literature**

#### **Use of E-Resources**

Rosen and Castro (2002) described university students as thirsting for electronic information<sup>2</sup>. Wei and Trudi (1996) conducted a study on the use of Internet resources in a university library. Among all the search tools for Internet information resources the use of search engines ranked first. It shows the dependency on the search engine to collect necessary information from the web resources<sup>3</sup>. Bao's studied the use of web in two phases i.e. in 1998 and 2001. First phase of study found that 40.7% of users were using the Web on a daily basis, of which three quarters were undergraduates. His follow up study three years later found that the number of users who used the Web on a daily basis had doubled from 40.7% in 1998 to 84.3% in 2001<sup>4</sup>. Swain (2010) studied and identified that the students of Business schools of Orissa express keen interest in the use of e-journals, followed by e-books, e-newspapers, e-reports, and e-articles<sup>5</sup>.

### **Reasons and Criteria's to Evaluate Web Resources**

Bao's (1998) studied the satisfaction level of the use of web also. He identified only 7.7% of the undergraduate students are satisfied with the web sources. The satisfaction level of using the web based sources is mainly depending upon their quality, timeliness and currency<sup>6</sup>. Grimes and Boeing (2013) studied whether students are using unauthenticated resources, whether they are evaluating their resources, and whether there is a gap between the quality of resources expected by instructors and the quality of resources used by students. The findings show that students *are* using unevaluated resources and that there *is* a gap between what instructors expect students to use and what students actually use<sup>7</sup>. Similarly, Ann Scholz- Crane in 1998 made an attempt to test the student's ability to evaluate the web resources. Ann Sholz-Crane's preliminary study was to gain insight into how students evaluate Web information and what implications this might have for teaching students to enhance their existing evaluation skills<sup>8</sup>. Singh (2003) emphasizes the need of knowing how to evaluate CD-ROMs and online reference sources, enumerates the important characteristics of reference sources. In his article the author also describes in detail various criteria which can be used for evaluation of e-sources. Few experts developed their own instruments to evaluate the web resources<sup>9</sup>.

### **Evaluation of Web Resources**

Sampath Kumar and Biradar in 2009 evaluated the Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Handbooks, Biographies, Directories of Physics subject available on the World Wide Web. Result of their study shows that 52% of Web based sources contain the author's name and remaining 48% of Web based sources have no author's name. Among 404 Web based sources, 27% of them belong to commercial domains (.com) followed by educational domain (19.6%) and organizational (8.4%). Study also reported that 86.9% of dictionary and glossary's content is arranged in alphabetical order followed by subject wise arrangement (13.1%). In case of encyclopedia 71.4% of source's content is organised in alphabetical order and only 28.6% is subject wise arrangement. It indicates the web sources are variety in nature. They are available from different domains. Sometime the authority may be not so clear<sup>10</sup>. Biermann et al. (1999) reviewed medical information regarding a single cancer topic, and they found abundant non peer-reviewed material and a 6% rate of factual inaccuracies. Therefore the authors recommend that physicians maintain an open mind regarding searches done by patients and questions rose by those searches, and suggest that physicians take an active role in identifying or creating patient information Web sites and in educating the lay public regarding variations in the quality of information and the contribution of the peer review process<sup>11</sup>. Similarly Johnson (2012) evaluated five online encyclopedias in regard to their web design, search functionality, features,

scope and currency. He identified that state encyclopedias provide different types of information with varying web design and structure. His study also shows that encyclopedias are continuously updated with new material and have better interfaces, features, and search functions, each site is valuable for the authoritative information it provides<sup>12</sup>. Similarly, Ramsey (2003) evaluated Encyclopedia of Operations Research & Management Science. He identified that the user interface is visually appealing and extremely easy to use and the option of browsing by clicking on a letter of the alphabet is provided in encyclopedias<sup>13</sup>.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The Present study covers two major disciplines. Those are Social sciences and Physical sciences. Under the social science discipline Economics, Political science, Criminology and Journalism subjects were selected. Similarly, under physical science discipline Library and Information Science, Electronic Science and subjects were selected for the study. The online dictionaries of the above mentioned subjects were selected randomly using Google search engine.

### **Methodology**

For evaluation purpose some important criteria to evaluate a website is mainly considered. Few criteria to evaluate a physical dictionary also considered along with these criteria's. Against each criterion, selected online dictionaries were examined and evaluated. The URLs of the online dictionaries were extracted using Google search engine. Top results obtained from the search engine were considered for the study. And the same were copied in a MS-Excel sheet for the further analysis. Further, the data analysis was made using the primary collected data. The data is classified and put into tables for further analysis. MS-Excel application software was used to derive the statistical values. The analysis has been made on the basis of simple calculations.

### **Results and Discussion**

Study has covered a total of 172 online dictionaries in two major disciplines viz., Social science and physical science. A total of 7 subjects from both disciplines were considered for the study.

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**Table 1: Distribution of Online Dictionaries Subject wise**

Subjects	No. of Online dictionaries	Mean	Cumulative total	Cummulative mean
Economics	22	12.79	22	12.79
Political Science	10	5.81	32	18.60
Library Science	26	15.12	58	33.72
Journalism	5	2.91	63	36.63
Criminology	26	15.12	89	51.74
Computer Science	34	19.77	123	71.51
Electronics	49	28.49	172	100.00

Table 1 provides the distribution of online dictionaries among various subjects. Table indicates that majority of the online dictionaries are of Electronics subject (28.49%) followed by Computer Science (19.77%). Library Science and Criminology subjects covered 15.12% of the total.

**Table 2: Relevancy of Online Dictionaries**

Subject Name	Relevant	Mean	Irrelevant	Mean	Total	Mean
Economics	14	63.64	8	36.36	22	100
Political Science	9	90.00	1	10.00	10	100
Library Science	26	100.00	0	0.00	26	100
Journalism	5	100.00	0	0.00	5	100
Criminology	20	76.92	6	23.08	26	100
Computer Science	29	85.29	5	14.71	34	100
Electronics	47	95.92	2	4.08	49	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>87.21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>12.79</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 clearly shows the relevancy of retrieved online dictionaries among seven subjects. Of 172 total websites that are selected as online dictionaries 150(87.20%) were relevant and 22(12.79) were irrelevant. A total of 26 online dictionaries of Library Science were identified during the search in which all 26(100%) are relevant. The level of relevancy is same in case of Journalism (5). Followed by 47 (95.92%) of Electronics online dictionaries and 09. Political Science Online dictionaries (90%) are found relevant. 63.64% of online dictionaries of Economics (14) are found relevant. It can also be seen that 36.36% of Economics dictionaries and 23.07% of Criminology dictionaries are relevant.

**Authority**

Website on any subject can be designed and hosted by anyone and there is no control on the Internet (Sampath Kumar and Biradar, 2009). It is easy to judge online dictionary contains author name or publisher details. Hence, an attempt has been made to check the information on these aspects and the data is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Authority Associated With Online Dictionaries**

Subject Name	Author	Mean	Publisher	Mean	Other*	Mean
Economics	9	40.91	9	40.91	4	18.18
Political Science	2	20.00	3	30.00	5	50.00
Library Science	6	23.08	7	26.92	13	50.00
Journalism	1	20.00	1	20.00	3	60.00
Criminology	16	61.54	3	11.54	7	26.92
Computer Science	7	20.59	6	17.65	21	61.76
Electronics	5	10.20	34	69.39	10	20.41
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>26.74</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>36.63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>36.63</b>

\* Unknown Email ID, Unknown Publishers

Table 3 and Figure 1 depict the authority associated with online dictionaries. Out of 172 online dictionaries 46(26.74%) are having an author as authority, whereas, 63(36.63%) of online dictionaries have publisher and others authority such as e- mail id, unknown publisher as the authority.

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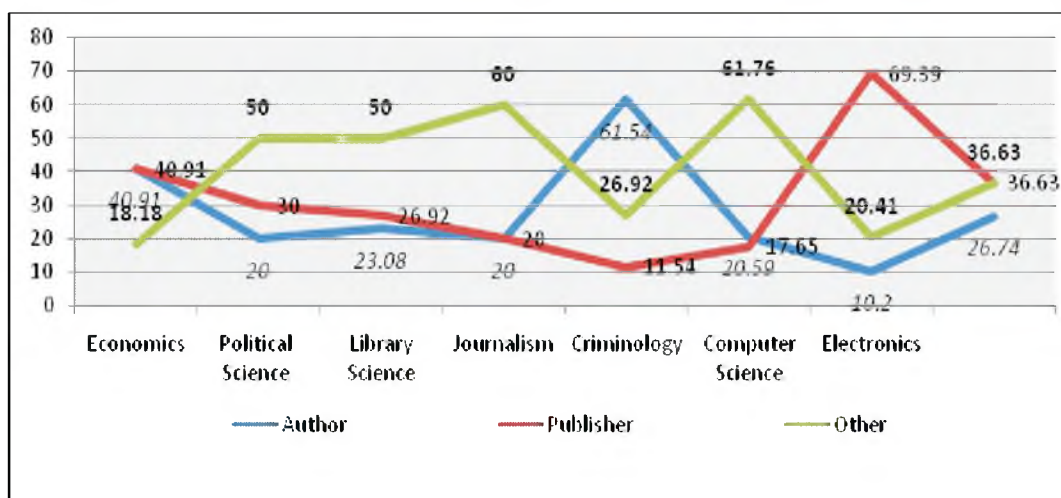


Figure 1

It is evident from the table that 61.54% of online dictionaries of Criminology Subject has single author as an authority. 69.39% of online dictionaries that are belonging to Electronics Subject had Publisher as authority. 61.76% of Computer Science dictionaries, 60% Journalism online dictionaries had other authorities. Table 3 also indicates that major number of the online dictionaries has unknown authority (36.63%).

Copyright

Table 4: Copyright Statement Associated With Online Dictionaries

Subjects	YES	Mean	NO	Mean	Total	Mean
Economics	14	63.64	8	36.36	22	100.00
Political Science	5	50.00	5	50.00	10	100.00
Library Science	18	69.23	8	30.77	26	100.00
Journalism	4	80.00	1	20.00	5	100.00
Criminology	21	80.77	5	19.23	26	100.00
Computer Science	21	61.76	13	38.24	34	100.00
Electronics	42	85.71	7	14.29	49	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>72.67</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>27.33</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100.00</b>



Table 4 presents the data on the availability of Copyright Statement in the webpage online dictionaries of Electronics subject had Copyright Statement followed by 80.78% of Criminology subject dictionaries and 69.23% of Library Science dictionaries. Out of 172 online dictionaries 72.67% had Copyright Statement, whereas, 27.33% of the same did not provide Copyright Statement in their home page.

**Top Level Domains**

**Table 5: Domains Associated With Online Dictionaries**

Subjects	Domains													
	1	%	2	%	3	%	4	%	5	%	6	%	7	%
Economics	15	68.18	3	13.64	3	13.64	1	4.55	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Political Science	6	60.00	2	20.00	2	20.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Library Science	18	69.23	2	7.69	2	7.69	1	3.85	2	7.69	0	0.00	1	3.85
Journalism	5	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Criminology	21	80.77	0	0.00	3	11.54	0	0.00	1	3.85	0	0.00	1	3.85
Computer Science	26	76.47	3	8.82	3	8.82	0	0.00	1	2.94	1	2.94	0	0.00
Electronics	44	89.80	1	2.04	3	6.12	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	2.04	0	0.00
Total	135	78.49	11	6.40	16	9.30	2	1.16	4	2.33	2	1.16	2	1.16

1= .com, 2=.edu 3=.org 4=.gov 5=.Net 6=.in 7=.ac

Table 5 illustrates the domains associated with online dictionaries of various subjects. Of 172 online dictionaries are associated with .com domain. Remaining 78.49% of online dictionaries has other domains such as .edu (6.40%), .org (9.30%), .Gov (1.16%), .net (2.33%), .in (1.16%) and .ac (1.16%). It is interesting to note all subject online dictionaries are associated with more than 60% of



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.com domains. It is also identified that 16 (9.30%) online dictionaries. Economics (3), Political Sciences (2), Library Science (2), Criminology (3), Computer Science,(3) and Electronics(3) has Government domain. Of the 11 online dictionaries of various Subject has educational domain and only 2 online dictionaries has academic domain.

**Multimedia Features**

Multimedia has several advantages such as it increase learning effectiveness, it is more appealing over traditional, easy to use, and it is attractive. Multimedia feature in an online dictionary promotes effective search and learning. An attempt has been made to check the availability of multimedia features in selected online dictionaries.

**Table 6: Multimedia Features Associated With Online Dictionaries**

Subject Name	Audio/ Video	Mean	Special Icons	Mean	Images	Mean
Economics	11	50.00	5	22.73	15	68.18
Political Science	4	40.00	1	10.00	7	70.00
Library Science	3	11.54	14	53.85	25	96.15
Journalism	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	100.00
Criminology	9	34.62	1	3.85	26	100.00
Computer Science	2	5.88	18	52.94	33	97.06
Electronics	2	4.08	27	55.10	0	0.00
Total	31	18.02	66	38.37	136	79.07

Table 6 illustrates the availability of multimedia features in online dictionaries out of 172 online dictionaries 31(18.02%) had audio –visual aids to uses .66(38.37%) online dictionaries have special icons such as PDF, new symbol etc. 136 (79.07%) dictionaries contain images in their web pages. Of the total 49 online dictionaries of Electronics Subject 20 (68.97%) online dictionaries are not having any multimedia features. They are text only web pages. Table also illustrates more number of online dictionaries i.e. 79.07% has Images than of audio/video aids (18.02%) and special icons (38.37%) to support the user in easy search. Cent percent of online dictionaries of criminology have images than

of other subject dictionaries out of 49 online dictionaries (55.10%) of Electronics subjects online dictionaries had special icons.

### Hyperlinks

A hyperlink has an anchor, which is the location within a certain type of a document from which the hyperlink can be followed only from the homepage; the document containing a hyperlink is known as its source code document (Wikipedia, 2013). In computing, a hyperlink (or link) is a reference to data that the reader can directly follow, or that is followed automatically. A hyperlink points to a whole document or to a specific element within a document (Merrimu Webster Dictionary, 2013). A user of online dictionary can point with a mouse and click on certain screen objects such as, button or highlighted text and cause the program to respond in a certain way (Sampth Kumar and Biradar, 2009). Hyperlink to a text or object helps to navigate between the web pages.

**Table 7: Availability of Hyperlinks and Navigation**

Subject Name	Yes	Mean	No	Mean	Total
Economics	14	63.64	8	36.36	22
Political Science	4	40.00	6	60.00	10
Library Science	24	92.31	2	7.69	26
Journalism	5	100.00	0	0.00	5
Criminology	22	84.62	4	15.38	26
Computer Science	29	85.29	5	14.71	34
Electronics	15	30.61	34	69.39	49
Total	113	65.70	59	34.30	172

Table 9 presents the availability of hyperlinks in the selected online dictionaries of various subjects. Out of 172, 113 (65.70%) of online dictionaries contain hyperlinks and navigation. 100% of Journalism, 85.29% Computer science and 84.62% of Criminology online dictionaries has hyperlinks and navigation which are the highest compared to other subjects.

### Arrangement of Information

The arrangement of words varies from one dictionary to another. Online dictionaries follow

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alphabetical or subject wise arrangement as a default. Here an attempt was made to know the pattern of arrangement of words in online dictionaries.

**Table 10: Pattern of Information Organization on Online Dictionaries**

Subjects	A	%	R	%	C	%	G	%	S	%
Economics	5	22.73	7	31.82	5	22.73	3	13.64	2	9.09
Political Science	3	25.00	3	25.00	5	41.67	1	8.33	0	0.00
Library Science	11	47.83	7	30.43	2	8.70	2	8.70	1	4.35
Journalism	4	80.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	20.00	0	0.00
Criminology	6	22.22	11	40.74	7	25.93	3	11.11	0	0.00
Computer Science	15	44.12	10	29.41	8	23.53	0	0.00	1	2.94
Electronics	10	20.41	3	6.12	3	6.12	33	67.35	0	0.00
Total	54	31.40	41	23.84	30	17.44	43	25.00	4	2.94

A= Alphabetical      R= Random      C= Classified      G= Geographical      S= Search box only

Table 10 shows that 31.40% of online dictionaries followed alphabetical arrangement followed by geographical (25.00), random (23.84%), classified (17.44). 2.94% of online dictionaries have been provided search box so that the user can directly type the word in the search box and obtain the results. It can also be observed from the table 8 that 67.35% of online dictionaries of Economics subject used geographical order of arrangement. 41.67% of online dictionaries belongs to Political Science subject followed classified arrangement. 40.74% of online dictionaries of Criminology subject followed random arrangement.

**Cost of Dictionaries**

Internet provides free information. Many online dictionaries on various subjects are available at free of cost. The users need not to pay a single rupee to access those dictionaries except the Internet connection charges.

**Table 11: Cost of Dictionary**

<b>Subject Name</b>	<b>Free</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Paid</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Economics	16	72.73	6	27.27	22	100
Political Science	9	75.00	3	25.00	12	100
Library Science	21	80.77	5	19.23	26	100
Journalism	4	80.00	1	20.00	5	100
Criminology	16	61.54	10	38.46	26	100
Computer Science	30	88.24	4	11.76	34	100
Electronics	48	97.96	1	2.04	49	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>81.98</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>18.02</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100</b>

It is evident from the study that 81.98% of online dictionaries are available free. Out of 172, only 31 (18.02%) is found to be paid online dictionaries.

### **Last Updated Information**

Currency of the words in a dictionary is quite important. All reputed publishers of dictionaries keep on updating their dictionaries at regular frequencies in order to incorporate the updated information. Users get diverted from the search if they fail to get the meaning for a new word. Hence, the currency is important in online dictionary. The statement of the last updating provided in the home page of online dictionaries shows its reliability and currency.

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**Table 12: Last Update Information on the Online Dictionary Web-Pages**

Subject Name	Available	Mean	Not available	Mean	Total	Mean
Economics	6	27.27	16	72.73	22	100
Political Science	4	40.00	6	60.00	10	100
Library Science	8	30.77	18	69.23	26	100
Journalism	0	0.00	5	100.00	5	100
Criminology	6	23.08	20	76.92	26	100
Computer Science	5	14.71	29	85.29	34	100
Electronics	9	18.37	40	81.63	49	100
Total	38	22.09	134	77.91	172	100

Table 13, illustrates the availability of update feature in online dictionaries. A total 134 (77.91%) online dictionaries out of 172, have not updated, where as only 38 (22.09%) have updated their content. Up datedness is more in Political Science dictionaries with the percentage of 40, followed by Library Science (30.77%) and Economics (27.27%). It is evident from the table that no online dictionaries of Journalism subject have this feature. Up datedness shows the relevancy of the online dictionaries.

### Hit-Counters

Availability of information regarding the number of time an online dictionary is used indicates its popularity (Sampath Kumar and Biradar, 2009). Hit counters indicate the number of time an online dictionary is used.

**Table 13: Availability of Hit Counters**

Subject Name	YES	Mean	NO	Mean	Total	Mean
Economics	1	4.55	21	95.45	22	100
Political Science	0	0.00	10	100.00	10	100
Library Science	8	30.77	18	69.23	26	100
Journalism	0	0.00	5	100.00	5	100
Criminology	3	11.54	23	88.46	26	100
Computer Science	4	11.76	30	88.24	34	100
Electronics	5	10.20	44	89.80	49	100
Total	21	12.21	151	87.79	172	100

Table 14 and Figure 5 indicate the availability of hit counters in the sites of online dictionaries of various subjects. Among 172 online dictionaries selected for the study only 21 (12.21%) had hit counters, where as 151 (87.79%) online dictionaries do not have the same. Individually 8 (30.77%) Library Science Subject online dictionaries had hit counters followed by Computer Science (11.76%).

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**Table 14: Loading Time of Online Dictionaries**

Subjects	1ms	%	1-2s	%	2-3s	%	3-4s	%	4s	%	Total	%
Economics	7	31.82	7	31.82	4	18.18	2	9.09	2	0.91	22	100.00
Political Science	3	30.00	3	30.00	3	30.00	0	0.00	1	1.00	10	100.00
Library Science	7	26.92	5	19.23	5	19.23	4	15.38	5	1.92	26	100.00
Journalism	1	20.00	1	20.00	1	20.00	2	40.00	0	0.00	5	100.00
Criminology	3	11.54	11	42.31	10	38.46	1	3.85	1	0.38	26	100.00
Computer Science	5	14.71	11	32.35	10	29.41	5	14.71	3	0.88	34	100.00
Electronics	14	28.57	12	24.49	12	24.49	9	18.37	2	0.41	49	100.00
Total	40	23.26	50	29.07	45	26.16	23	13.37	14	0.81	172	100.00

Table 15 clearly shows the time taken by online dictionaries to load over the computer screen. To know the time taken by online dictionaries to open over a browser, we used Pingdom.com which can be accessed with the URL - <http://tools.pingdom.com/fpt/online>. The results were collected and classified according to preset criteria and the same was presented in table 15. A total of 50 (29.07%) online dictionaries took 1-2 milliseconds to open where as 45 online dictionaries (26.16%) took 2-3 milliseconds. Followed by 40(23.26%) online dictionaries of various dictionaries took 1 milliseconds and less. It is an interesting finding of the study that 78.49% of the total online dictionaries can open in 2-3 milliseconds.



**Table 15: Size of Home Page of Online Dictionary Pages**

Subject Name	100-300	%	301-500	%	501-700	%	>700	%	Total	%
Economics	8	36.36	6	27.27	5	22.73	3	13.64	22	100
Political Science	4	40.00	1	10.00	3	30.00	2	20.00	10	100
Library Science	18	75.00	2	8.33	2	8.33	2	8.33	24	100
Journalism	3	60.00	1	20.00	1	20.00	0	0.00	5	100
Criminology	11	45.83	3	12.50	4	16.67	6	25.00	24	100
Computer Science	23	67.65	8	23.53	1	2.94	2	5.88	34	100
Electronics	26	54.17	11	22.92	2	4.17	9	18.75	48	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>55.69</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>19.16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10.78</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14.37</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 16 reports the size of the online dictionaries home page. For the convenience of the researcher the size are categorized into 4 categories, viz. 100-300kbs, 301-500kbs, 501-700kbs and >700kbs. 93(55.69%) online dictionaries of all subjects have the Web page size of 100-300kbs which covers the major part of the total. 75% of online dictionaries of Library Science have the web pages size of 100-300kbs; followed by 67.65% of online dictionaries of Computer Science subject, 67.65% of online dictionaries of Electronics subject had the file size of above 300kbs.

### Major Findings of the Study

Finding information on the web is a matter of setting up proper search strategies and its evaluation. Evaluated materials provide reliable information. Hence, the information over the WWW should be evaluated with few predetermined criteria. Present study has major insights on online dictionaries in social science and physical science discipline.

Of 172 total websites that are selected as online dictionaries 150(87.20%) were relevant. A total of 26 online dictionaries of Library Science were identified during the search in which all 26(100%) are relevant. Study indicates that major number of the online dictionaries has unknown authority (36.63%).

## EVALUATION OF ONLINE DICTIONARIES IN SELECTED SUBJECTS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCE DISCIPLINES

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Majority of online dictionaries have .com/.co as their domain followed by other domains such as .edu, .org, .gov, .net, .in and .ac.

Copyright statement is not found in many online dictionaries.

18.02% of online dictionaries have audio–visual aids and 38.37% of online dictionaries have special icon such as PDF, new symbol etc. Majority of (79.07%) online dictionaries contain images in their web pages. The availability of multimedia feature is quite good among online dictionaries (Table 6). 65.70% of online dictionaries contain hyperlinks and navigation (Table 7). 87.21% of online dictionaries do not have hit counters in their home pages .

31.40% of online dictionaries followed alphabetical arrangement followed by geographical (25.00), random (23.84%), classified (17.44). 2.94% of online dictionaries have been provided search box so that the user can directly type the word in the search box and obtain the results. Among the total 81.98% of online dictionaries are free based.

It is an interesting finding of the study that 78.49% of the total online dictionaries can open in 2-3 milliseconds.

93(55.69%) online dictionaries of all subjects have the Web page size of 100-300kbs which covers the major part of the total.

### **Suggestions and Conclusion**

A good number of online dictionaries have no copyright statement in their respective home pages. Hence, it is recommended that the copyright statement should be provided in their home pages.

Study also identified that very less number of online dictionaries had audio-visual aids. It is recommended that the audio visual aids should be provided which would guide the users of online dictionaries to gain knowledge towards pronunciation, spelling and meaning.

Active hyperlinks and navigation provides an opportunity to navigate throughout the related WebPages. It is recommended that the hyperlink to reliable sources should be given.

Provision to hit counters should be made on the home page of the online dictionaries. It records the usability of the dictionary over the World Wide Web. Also it indicates the popularity of the online dictionaries.

Dictionaries usually follow alphabetical or classified order. Arrangement of the terms should be upgraded to user friendly pattern.

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