Internet as a Source of Information: Usage among the Faculty Members and Students

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Abstract

Applications of ICT in Libraries and Information centres have a positive impact in changing the library environment. In this context, this paper made an attempt know the use of Internet by the faculty members and students of Engineering college libraries in Tumakuru city. The questionnaire was used to collect the data from the faculty members as well as students. The results of the study show that, the majority of respondents accessed the Internet using smart phone (67.40%) and 49.25% of them used at their college campus. The most of respondents visited library to read newspaper (61.48%) and 38.88% of respondents visited library to borrow and return books, while only 30% of respondents visited to library to read e-journals. Majority of faculty and students opined that the low Internet speed (46.29%) and high Internet cost (31.48%) are the major problems faced by the users.

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Keywords: Internet, Students, Faculty members, Engineering colleges.

1. Introduction

In this era of information, Internet has made tremendous impact on the academic activities of the faculty members, researchers and the students. The advent of Internet has transited the users' approach towards seeking of information and the methods they use it in teaching and learning activities. The Internet also provides wealthy information and acts as a powerful supplement to the traditional ways of studying and learning (Ramadevi, 2015). The use of Internet is rapidly increasing due to its effectiveness and ability in providing right information to the right person at the right time. It works around the clock and links every corner of the world. Internet has become an inescapable need for every institution of higher education (Thanuskodi, 2011).

Further, the applications of ICT in Libraries and Information centres have a positive impact in changing the library environment. ICT has enabled the libraries to introduce different services viz., E-mail, online retrieval, networking of libraries, resources sharing, remote information use. The multimedia is an important technology which helps to introduce different forms of information. Keeping in view the importance of Internet and its applications in libraries, this study has been tried to know the use of Internet by faculty

member and students of selected engineering colleges in Tumakuru city. The findings of the study can form the basis for the formulation and implementation of policy for better acquisition e-sources in libraries.

2. Literature Review

The review of literature is based on the previous studies conducted by various authors. A large number of studies related to various aspects of use of internet in engineering disciplines have been reported in the earlier studies. The emphasis has been given in this chapter to review the literature published in various national and international journals.

Madhusudhan (2007) investigated the use of Internet by research scholars of the University of Delhi, India and found that the University provided free Internet services and 70% of respondents used it daily for academic purposes. Google was the most familiar search engine (86%) followed by Sirus (78%). The most common problem related to internet use was the low bandwidth (72%) and retrieval problems. Kaur and Manhas (2008) conducted a survey on the use of Internet services and resources by students and teachers in the engineering colleges of Punjab and Haryana states of India. The findings revealed that all respondents used the internet frequently; access points being either college or at home with over 75 percent using it mainly for educational and research purposes.

Nwagwu et al. (2009) carried out a study to investigate the "use of the internet by students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The study also examined the purpose of using the internet; as well as students' opinions regarding the characteristics of the Infrastructure and the problems they encounter in using the internet. The findings of the study showed that, the use of the internet by the students varies significantly with age, gender and level of study. Across gender, educational purpose dominates the use of the internet, but it varies with age, level of study and faculty. Higher educational level is associated with less use of the internet for leisure and entertainment. A study by Sampath Kumar and Kumar (2010) showed that the students and faculty who participated in survey are aware of e-sources and also the internet. Even though majority of the academic community use electronic information sources for their academic-related works, most of them prefer print to electronic information sources. Many of the students and faculties learnt about the electronic information sources either by trial and error or through the advice of friends.

Olubanke (2013) shows that the use of Internet use was widespread (100 %) among the scientists with the Majority (43.6 %) using it every day, and mean internet use experience being 6.3 years. The majority of respondents (64.5%) accessed the Internet from a commercial cybercafé ´followed by homes (49.1%). Most of the respondents (59.2%) acquired Internet use skills through colleagues and friends and 32.7% on their own by trial and error. The respondents used Internet mostly for communication, research and updating knowledge. Email was the most popular Internet service, while Google, followed by Yahoo and Google Scholar, were the most used search engines. The majority of the scientists (67.3 %) preferred to information from the internet, while less than one-third (30 %) still preferred the traditional library.

3. Research Questions

The study has been conducted with the following research questions:
Q1: How frequently the faculty members and students visit the college library?

Q2: For what purpose the faculty members and students visit the college library?
Q3: which are the preferred places to use internet and how much of time the spent to access Internet?
Q4: What are the problems faced by the faculty members and students while using Internet?

4. Scope of the Study

The present study is confined to only faculty members and students of the following engineering colleges in Tumakuru district of Karnataka state.

a. Siddaganga Institute of Technology
b. Sridevi Institute of Technology
c. Akshaya Institute of Technology
d. HMS Institute of Technology
e. Siddartha Institute of Technology

5. Methodology

The survey research method was used for the study. The present study is based on the results of a questionnaire. The questionnaire has been designed to fulfil get answer to the stated research questions. The study used a questionnaire with 19 questions spread over three parts (a) Personal Information, (b) Use of Library and (c) Use of Internet. A total of 296 questionnaires were distributed among faculty members and students. Out of which, 270 duly filled questionnaires were received. The analysed data is presented in tabular and graphical form. The data collected were analysed quantitatively using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

6. Data analysis and Interpretation

The Demographic characteristics of the population is show in Table-1

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demography of respondents (n=270)		No. of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	219	81.1
	Female	51	18.9
Age group	Below 20	131	48.51
	21 to 30	121	44.81
	Above 30	18	06.66
Academic status	Faculty members	44	16.29
	Students	226	83.70

The data summarized in the table-1 shows the demographic characteristics of respondents. It shows that 81.1% of respondents are male and while only 18.9% of respondents are female. 48.51% of respondents come under the age group of below 20 years and 44.81 % of respondents come under the age group of 21-30 years. Table also shows that 83.70% of respondents are students and 44 (16.29%) of respondents are faculty members. It is evident from the table that more than 89% of respondents are belonged to the age group of less than 30 years and most of them are students.

Q1: How frequently the faculty members and students visit college library?

Table 2: Frequency of visit to library

Frequency	No. of respondents	Percentage
Daily	113	41.85
Once in a three days	52	19.25
Once in a week	64	23.70
Rarely	41	15.18
Total	**270**	**100**

Table-2 shows the frequency of visit to library by users. It can be seen from the table that 41.85% of respondents visited library every day. Only 23.70% of users visited library once in a week and only 15.18% of respondents visited library rarely. The data shows that the faculty members and students frequently visit the library for various academic works.

Q2: For what purpose the faculty members and students visit library?

Table 3: Purpose of visit to library

Purpose	No. of respondents	Percentage
Reading newspapers	166	61.48
Borrow and return books	105	38.80
Reading reference sources	69	25.55
Reading journals	81	30.00
Reading competitive book	43	15.92
Reading novels & stories	13	04.81

Table-3 shows the purpose of visit to college library. Majority of respondents visited the library to read newspaper (61.48%). It is followed by 38.80% of respondents visited library to borrow and return books, while 30.0% of respondents visited to library to read e-journals. Only 4.81% of respondents visited library to read novels and stories. This situation is explained by the fact that the respondents are considerably focused on the updated information that is available via newspapers and significantly a larger number of respondents have been interested to take books home.

Q3: Which are the preferred places to use Internet?

Table 4: Place of use of Internet?

Place	No. of respondents	Percentage
Home	104	38.51
College library	92	34.07
College	133	49.25
Cybercafé	16	05.92
Smart phone	182	67.40

Respondents were asked to indicate the place of use of Internet. It is clear from the table-4 that the majority of respondents used Internet using their smart phone (67.40%). While, the respondents also used Internet at their college campus (49.25%), home (38.51%) and college library (34.07%). Only 5.92% of respondents used Internet at the cybercafé.

Q4: **How much of time the faculty members and students spent to access Internet?**

Table 5: Time spent in the use of Internet

Frequency	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 hour per day	95	35.18
2-3 hours in a day	120	44.44
4-5 hours in a day	33	12.22
Above 5 hours in a day	22	08.14
Total	**270**	**100**

Table-5 shows the time spent by the respondents to use Internet. 35.18% of respondents have spent below one hour per day for using Internet, while 44.44% of respondents spent 2 to 3 hours per day. Only 12.22% of respondents spent more than 5 hours per day. It can be seen from the table-5 that a larger percentage of respondents i.e. more than 70% use the Internet for more than 2 hours per day. This shows that there is an increasing dependency on the Internet for accessing information among the respondents.

Q5: **For what purpose the faculty members and students use internet?**

Table 6: Purpose of use of Internet

Purpose	No. of respondents		Total	Percentage
	Male	Female		
Searching for information	157	44	201	74.44
Reading blogs	7	3	10	3.70
Checking emails	93	20	113	42.85
Online shopping	77	18	95	35.18
To read e-newspaper	80	17	97	35.92
Downloading and uploading information	59	13	72	26.66
To use social media	100	17	117	43.33
Internet banking	35	4	39	14.44
To see exam results	74	11	85	31.48

The Internet is a major learning and research tool with a lot of academic resources and information to support students in their day-to-day academic endeavours in the engineering colleges. Consequently, the respondents were asked to indicate different purposes that they use the Internet for in support of their academic activities as shown in Table-6. Majority of respondents (74.44%) have used Internet for searching information. While, 42.85% of respondents have used it for checking their emails followed by accessing social media (43.33%), reading newspaper (35.92%) and reading blogs (3.70%).

The easy accessibility of Internet has enabled the Internet users to easily locate and retrieve web based information. Therefore, Internet has been a prime preference of faculty members and students to obtain the required information that is published globally.

Q6. What are problems faced by the faculty members and students while using Internet?

Table 7: Problems faced while using Internet

Problems	No. of respondents	Percentage
Low Internet speed	125	46.29
Lack of relevant information	29	10.74
High cost of Internet	85	31.48
Page not found error	67	24.81
Lack of knowledge of proper search strategy	21	7.77

Though the Internet has become most popular information source among the academics, the majority of Internet users in engineering colleges have obstacles in using Internet. The specific problems faced by the users are given in table-7. Low Internet speed (46.29%) and high Internet cost (31.48%) are the major problems faced by the users. Whereas, 10.74% of respondents have also opined that the problem of difficulty in finding relevant information is one of the major problems. Only 7.77% of respondents felt that lack of knowledge of proper search strategy is a problem for using Internet. Therefore, it can be understood that the slow Internet connection and its high cost are the prime problems to use the Internet.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The study has found the findings with regard to the frequency, purpose, and problems of using the Internet. Most of respondents visited library everyday (41.85%) and (61.48%) visited library for reading newspaper. The majority of faculty members and students were using Internet smart phone (67.40%). It is also found that majority of faculty members and students used Internet for searching information (74.44).

Since most of the students and faculty members are used Internet regularly, it is very essential to provide the Internet facility in the college library for free of cost. It is also necessary to conduct orientation program, training program for students and faculty members to learn about use of Internet in relation to access to academic and scholarly information. The effective use of search engines using standard search strategies could be taught through regular orientation programmes.

It was also found that low Internet speed is the major problem faced by the users. The college management should take necessary steps to increase the Internet band width so that the users can access Internet without hindrances. Majority of respondents are not aware other search engines except Google and Yahoo. It is also necessary to introduce a training program on effective use of different search engines as well as meta search engines.

Simultaneously, it is the duty of the librarian to introduce the use of Internet to access open access databases in the field of engineering science. Majority of engineering college libraries can access open source journals as well to satisfy the scholarly information needs of the library users. The Internet has provided the opportunity to introduce ICT enabled service viz. electronic SDI, Document Delivery Service etc. in the libraries.

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