

Chapter 20

Use of Internet among Students and Researchers at Alagappa University

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ABSTRACT

The fast growth of information and communication technology and particularly the Internet has changed traditional methods of research, storage, retrieval, and communication of information. Internet has emerged as the most powerful medium for storage and retrieval of information. The Internet facility has enabled teachers and students to enhance their academic excellence by providing them the latest information and access to worldwide information. The present study highlights the existing situation of Internet services provided by the various departments of Alagappa University. The study shows that female respondents constitute more in number than male respondents, corroborating the greater number of women in higher education in Tamil Nadu state. It also reveals that most respondents (56.76%) use the Internet for educational purposes, while 36.49% use online services for research purposes.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet can be compared to a library. Like a library, the Internet is a source of enjoyable, important, and varied information that can be obtained and used by people across the world. Also,

just as our library contains different media, such as text, sound, and graphics, so does the Internet. As certain libraries allow only authorized users to browse books, CDs, or DVDs, only authorized users of the Internet can access it to obtain information. The Internet is a worldwide collection of computer networks and is a cooperative effort of many people and organizations. The computers

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on the Internet can communicate because they are physically linked and because they share a common language called TCP-IP.

The INTERNET was born in 1969, when a paranoid American military had nightmares about their primary communication centers being bombed out by Russians. To prevent such an occurrence, ARPA (Advanced Research Projects Agency) set up four communication hosts, linking them in such a fashion which would ensure that even if one got bombed, communication would route around the affected area and stay viable.

This network, called ARPAnet, grew quickly. This was the first primary service using a network of computers. The Internet is also called as the Global Internet because networks from countries interface with some sort of telephone infrastructure connected to it. In practical terms, this means people can use their computers on their local networks to send and receive messages or exchange files with people using a network in another locale or in another state, geographic region, or country.

The Internet is a vast transportation system for data that connects local, regional, nation and international networks and expands daily as more networks and computers connect to it. ARPAnet was electronic mail. It was the first time that emails came into being. In a very short time, students began linking their own campus networks to ARPAnet, using a well-defined protocol, TCP-IP. This joining of networks was also called inter-networking, and soon the entire setup was called INTERNET. In 1973, ARPAnet allowed international bodies to use the net, and after that there was no turning back.

In the Internet community, people believe in sharing their ideas and opinions with others. This is so mainly because it is an open forum that generally has few, if any, governmental restrictions. This policy of openness has led 'netizens' to put up an enormous variety of hypertext documents on the web, which has led to every kind of information being available to anyone wanting it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parameshwar and Patil's (2009) paper finds that a large portion of user population in the university is aware of the internet, but does not know all its techniques and applications. Further, a few users of the university still have no knowledge about the internet and related applications. For this purpose, there is need for effective use education, to develop awareness and knowledge of the users. More efforts by librarian at Gulbarga University are needed to education users to effectively use the internet and its techniques and applications.

Agarwal and Dave (2009) studied internet use by the scientists and research fellows of Central Arid Zone Research Institute (CAZRI) in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, which was assessed on the basis of the results of a questionnaire created by CAZRI. Further, it also attempts to assess the frequency of use, location where used, search engine accessed, purpose for using the net, etc. The study revealed that respondents accessed Google search frequently (100%), followed by Yahoo (85.29%). It is also observed that 97.06% respondents use the Internet for education and research. The strong desire of respondents is that CAZRI's library expand its services to include e-portals, online information services, and abstracts retrieval.

Biradar et al. (2008) reported the results of a study exploring University students' and teachers' use of search engines for retrieving scholarly information. The main objectives were to examine the use of various search engines, factors influencing choice of search engine, use of search strategies for information retrieval, and also to learn the strategies used by students and faculties in the university environment. The results of their study show that 100% of students and 97.91% of faculty use search engines for finding information on the internet. *Google* and *Yahoo* received the highest overall ratings. The study also showed that the majority of the respondents receive help from friends and use the help features of search engines to learn search strategy.

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