



Status of Internet Users in Engineering Colleges of Jabalpur City: A Study

Dr. Ashutosh Upadhyay

Library & Information Science

Guru Ramdas Khalsa Institute of Science & Engineering
Barela, Jabalpur (M.P.) [INDIA]

Email: ashu28grkist@rediffmail.l.com

Dr. Avinash Shukla

Computer Science & Engineering

Guru Ramdas Khalsa Institute of Science & Engineering
Barela, Jabalpur (M.P.) [INDIA]

Email: avikumar2021@gmail.com

Abstract—The study presents the status of Internet users in Engineering Colleges of Jabalpur city in Madhya Pradesh. The uses of Information and communication Technology (ICT) facilitate easy & immediate access to Information. The methodology adopted for the present study is survey using a structured questionnaire and follow-up interviews with Internet users. A well structured questionnaire was distributed among 670 faculty members and students of all the engineering colleges of Jabalpur city. The responses rate was 78.4 percent. The present study demonstrates and elaborates the various aspect of Internet such as use of the Internet by teachers and students identify the different purposes for which the internet used, Frequency of Internet use, ways to brows the information from the internet, satisfaction level with the Internet based services and resources, problems faced by the respondents while using the Internet. This study also gives Information about the benefits of the Internet. It was found that the internet had become a vital instrument for teaching, research and learning process. Some suggestions have been set forth to make this service more beneficial for engineering colleges under study. Purposes for which the internet used, Frequency of Internet use, ways to brows the information from the internet, satisfaction level with the Internet based services and resources, problems faced by the respondents while using the Internet. This study also gives

Information about the benefits of the Internet. It was found that the internet had become a vital instrument for teaching, research and learning process. Some suggestions have been set forth to make this service more beneficial for engineering colleges under study.

Keywords:-Engineering colleges, Faculty members, Students, Internet, Internet use, respondents.

1. INTRODUCTION

The revolution in communication and vast field of Information available is sweeping the world. It is changing the modes and speed of communication and transforming the world in to a global village. Technology has started propelling communication and state justifying the acute need. In recent years; internet has emerged as a powerful educational and information tool. With the increasing impact of information technology on higher education, all those concerned with higher education today are attempting to grasp how information technology could help in modernizing the process of teaching, research, and learning. In this context, Internet has emerged as a formidable social and cultural institution of global proportions facilitating access to a wealth of information on the web for the academic society to support their academic and research activities. Such as engineering colleges are also doing their best to provide their users access to this vast reservoir of information. The most interesting and visible

part of the internet is the World Wide Web or WWW. The World Wide Web is nothing but a gigantic collection of information that contains several millions of pages of information. Each of these pages is called a web page. A web page can contain all types of information including text (characters), graphics (pictures and photographs), and multimedia (animation, video and audio) respectively. (Panda & Sahu 2003)

2. ROLE OF INTERNET IN ENGINEERING COLLEGES

The Internet is an inseparable part of today's engineering educational system. Engineering colleges invest a good deal of time and money in providing this facility to both the faculty members and the students. It is therefore important to find out the extent to which they are using this facility. There are numerous engineering resources on the Internet that are continuously revised and updated. There are also various tools and services that provide help in instant access, search, communication and transfer of information to and from any corner of the world. It is therefore necessary to find out what Internet resources and services, are used by the faculty members and students of the engineering colleges surveyed. Engineering colleges provide Internet facilities to both faculty members and students with the expectations that it will be used for educational purposes. It is necessary therefore to conduct a study to determine whether the Internet is used for academic activities and if so, how the Internet has influenced the academic efficiency of the target users. This study also explores the satisfaction level of users with the Internet facilities provided by the engineering colleges surveyed. The study compared the benefits of the Internet with traditional documents in an attempt to answer the question: Can the Internet replace library services (Kaura & Manhasb 2008)

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the use of the Internet by faculty members and students in engineering colleges under study.
- To identify the different purposes that the Internet is used for by the faculty members and students.
- To find out the problems faced by the respondents while using the Internet.
- To find out the satisfaction level with the Internet based services and resources.
- To suggest some measures to improve the use of Internet based services and resources.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Jagboro (2003) conducted a case study of Internet usage in Nigerian Universities. The objective of this study was to evaluate the level of utilization of the Internet for academic research at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Questionnaires were administered to postgraduate students spanning art and science based programs. Analysis of the responses showed that the respondents ranked the use of research materials on the Internet fourth (17.3%). However, respondents who used the Internet ranked research materials second (53.4%) to e-mail (69.9%). The study concluded that the use of the Internet for academic research would significantly improve through the provision of more access points at departmental and faculty levels. Panda and Sahu (2003) conducted a study of the engineering colleges of Orissa, India. The study revealed that 50% of the engineering colleges used dial-up connection. A majority of the colleges used the Internet to provide on-line demonstrations. Hanauer (2004) surveyed a diverse community college to assess the use of the Internet by students. The survey showed that although all of the students surveyed had free Internet access through their community college, only 97% of them reported having access. The survey

showed that 83% of Internet users had access to the Internet at their home and 51% of them accessed the Internet at college or the library. Eighty-one percent of the students reported to access the Internet mostly for college work and 80% for email/ chat. Asemi (2005) did a case study of Medical Sciences University of Isfahan (MUI), Iran. The results of the study showed that all of the respondents made frequent use of the Internet services and resources in engineering colleges of Punjab and Haryana 11 Internet because all faculties provided Internet connections. It was revealed that the researchers of the university were getting quality information through the Internet. Fifty-five percent of the respondents searched for scientific information through the Internet because the university library had provided access to various databases and online journals for all the students and staff. The investigator also found that the Google and the Yahoo search engines were more widely used as compared to the other search engines. The analysis of the study revealed that 54% of the Internet users always found useful information on the Internet. Thirty one percent of the respondents also indicated that quality information was available on the Internet. Mishra et al. (2005) conducted a research study to understand the Internet utilization pattern of the undergraduate students of G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pant nagar. The findings of the study indicated that a majority of the students (85.7%) used the Internet. The findings also showed that 61.5% of the males and 51.6% of the females used the Internet for preparing assignments. A majority of the respondents, i.e. 83.1% male and 61.3% female respondents indicated that they faced the problem of slow functioning Internet connections. Robinson (2005) examined the Internet use among African-American college students. The respondents were surveyed by using a 43-item questionnaire. The results of the study indicated that most of the African-American college students (76%) had used the Internet for more than 3 years. The use of the Internet for most African-American college students occurred at school or in the work place with 49% response, or at home with 47%

response, and that on average, 2 h per day was spent on-line. A small percentage of the students spent 5–6 h per day on the Internet. Forty-three percent of the students used the Internet primarily to learn and find school resources.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The survey research method has been adopted for this study.

6. SAMPLING

All the engineering colleges were taken for the study. There are 21 engineering colleges in Jabalpur city. Faculty members and students filled out questionnaires. A total sample of 380 faculty members and 290 undergraduate students was taken up for the present study. A random sampling process was followed for data collection after consulting experts on statistics.

7. DELIMITATION

The present research is confined to engineering colleges of Jabalpur city only. The study covers government & private engineering colleges both.

8. FINDINGS

- The analysis clearly indicates that on an average the majority of the respondents had more than 2 years of experience in using the Internet.
- More than 60% of the respondents used the Internet services and resources daily.
- The majority of the respondents (i.e. 65.6%) accessed the Internet from their respective colleges.
- The majority of the respondents (68%) learned Internet skills by trial and error method. Guidance from colleagues and friends followed with 15.2% response.

- More than 50% of the respondents used the Internet mainly for educational purposes, followed by research, with 55.5% response.
- The majority of the respondents used the Internet for consulting project reports (44.9%), for reading e-journals on the Internet (49%) and for consulting eBooks (56.1%).
- Of the Internet services, e-mail was the most popular Internet service with 90.9% response.
- The majority of the respondents, with 89% response, browsed the required information from the Internet by Using Internet search engines like Google.
- The majority of respondents used the Web-Browsers are Mozilla (48%), Google Chrome (44%) & Internet Explorer (8%)
- More than 70% of the respondents faced problems of slow Internet access speed.
- Above 70% of the respondents felt that the Internet was more useful, more informative, easy to use, less expensive and time saving as compared to traditional print materials.
- 62.8% of the respondents thought that due to the availability of the latest information and the instant access to information on the Internet, dependency on the Internet had increased.
- Only one-third of the respondents felt fully satisfied and 46.67% partially satisfied with the Internet facilities provided by their respective colleges.
- The majority of the respondents (i.e. 77.5%) felt that the Internet could not replace library services and that it

was only a supplement to the library service.

9. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are recommended to improve the use of the Internet among the academic community i.e. faculty members and students of engineering colleges under study:

- Some orientation training programmes should be organized by the colleges at regular intervals so that more users can improve their proficiency in Internet use for academic purposes The Internet facility should be extended to the hostels and rooms of the faculty members.
- More computers with latest specifications and multimedia kit should be installed, so that users can use Internet telephony, video-conferencing, chatting and other useful services of the Internet.
- Some printers should be installed in the Internet sections of the colleges, so that the respondents can get print outs of their study material and other important documents at nominal rates.
- More efficient technical staff should be appointed and they should be present in the Internet section for expert advice.
- Electronic version of the journals should be subscribed by the library.
- Websites providing only entertainment should be locked so that students should not unnecessarily sit on computers.
- All the engineering colleges should have their own website, so that users can easily get the academic news and college's websites should be

regularly updated.

- Allotted time of Internet service should be increased and if possible, the service should be made available round the clock so that users can make maximum use of the Internet facility.
- The Internet facilities provided in the library should also be extended to the users. Libraries should provide facilities like OPACs, SDI, etc. In addition to these facilities, some e-journals and electronic databases should also be subscribed to by the library.
- Bandwidth should be increased to overcome the problem of slow connectivity & download manager, Torrent should be restricted in college premises.
- Printing facilities should be provided in the Internet Sections of the colleges so that users can print their study materials and other important documents at nominal rates.
- All of the academic news should be provided at the college website and it should be regularly updated.
- Information regarding popular and the latest websites with their addresses should be displayed on the Notice Board in the Internet Section.
- Capacity of servers should be increased and firewalls should be installed for protection from viruses. Internet facilities should be made familiar to all.

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