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## INTERNET USAGE AMONG POST GRADUATE STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT



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**Abs tract:**-Everyone needs information about everything in day-to-day life. People, right from the organizational level to the personal level, from the highly educated and experienced person to school children, require information for taking the right decision for everything in life. Access to information is generally recognized as contributing significantly to the efficiency of any organization. In an era of networked information, 'internet', the largest worldwide network of networks, has emerged as the most powerful tool for instant access to information. Information is now just a 'finger touch' distance away from the user and it would be appropriate to say that the internet has become the global bibliothèque which provides the fastest access to the right kind of information in nano-seconds of time to the end-user at any time, and at any place in the world. Jackson, et al. (2011) remarked that internet plays an active role in education through its easy availability to everyone, everywhere, and at any time, irrespective of gender, race/ethnicity, income or other socio-demographic characteristics. Today, the internet is regarded as the central resource for knowledge and information. Thus, the Internet is a vital tool that will propel University and College education to greater heights as the world moves further into the knowledge-based society. With the sample 1151 final year post graduates have been taken for this study and stratified random sampling method was adopted. The objectives of the study were to find out the percentage of Internet Awareness and Internet Accessibility on Internet Usage among the post graduate students. Hence, the present study was aimed to study the internet usage among the post graduate students in Coimbatore District.

**Keyw ords:**Internet Usage , organizational , networked information , socio-demographic .

### INTRODUCTION

The convergence of information and communication technologies as embodied in the internet has transformed the present day society into a knowledge society. Earlier, information and knowledge was communicated by word of mouth or through manuscripts, and communication was a slow process. Today, it is passed from one individual to infinite users through a number of media and formats which enables rapid and widespread dissemination of information. New technologies bring us an unparalleled flood of information (Preeti Mahajan, 2006). The technological revolution in the last four decades has made a tremendous impact on the way information is processed, stored, retrieved, communicated and disseminated. The growth and development of 'Information Technology' is one of the most significant achievements in the present century. It is considered as one of the key factors in shaping the present societies and formulating technologies for the future.

The internet is without doubt, the fastest growing communication technology today (Dlodlo & Sithole, 2001). With such rapid speed, the education field has not been spared the onslaught of this revolution. The internet revolution has brought drastic changes to the area of education (Luan, et al. 2005). The use of communication technology is growing quickly in colleges and universities.

The Internet provides a valuable learning environment and can be a major vehicle for improvement in University/College providing students with improved access to people and information. The importance of the internet is that it has made information available in a quick and easy manner. It is publicly accessible and within easy reach. It has revolutionized communications and social networking, creating a zone which was so long considered to be international and a new law had to be designed to govern it. It would also throw open newer vistas of research in the area. It is in this context, the researcher thought to have a probe into the internet utilization of the post graduate students.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The major focus of this investigation is how the post graduate students are utilizing the internet. Hence, the investigator has stated the problem as: "INTERNET USAGE AMONG POST GRADUATE STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT".

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To find out the percentage of Internet Awareness and Internet Accessibility on Internet Usage among the post graduate students.

**OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE STUDY**

**Internet Usage**

The phrase Internet Usage has been used in this study to account for which post graduate students make use of the internet.

**Post graduate students**

The students who are undergoing 'Liberal Arts & Science courses', after graduation (10+2+3 years) in a formal educational institution are called as post graduate students.

**Coimbatore District**

Coimbatore District is one of the most affluent and industrially advanced districts in the state of Tamil Nadu in India. Coimbatore is known as the "Manchester of South India." It is one of the most industrialized towns of Tamil Nadu. There are 54 Engineering colleges, 2 Medical colleges, 18 Polytechnic colleges and more than 60 Arts and Science colleges in Coimbatore.

**METHOD ADOPTED FOR THE STUDY**

The stratified random sampling method was adopted by the investigator to select Bharathiar University and seven of its Affiliated Colleges in Coimbatore District. Colleges and University are classified by the investigator into colleges and university offering more than five post graduate courses in Coimbatore district. Considering only the colleges and university which are offering more than five post graduate courses, the investigator stratified the sample into homogeneous groups of government, government-aided and self-financing colleges and 1151 students were selected randomly.

**RESEARCH TOOL DESIGN**

Considering the objectives of the study the investigator has developed the following tools for the study. Internet Usage (Internet Awareness and Internet Accessibility) Tool developed and standardized by the investigator  
Personal Proforma.

**STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED IN THE STUDY**

After the data collection was completed, the data were scientifically scrutinized and analyzed to evaluate the usage of internet. Totally, 1151 students are answered properly and correctly. The percentage analysis statistical technique was used by the investigator to analyze the data.

**PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS**

**Internet Awareness**

**Table.1 Students who have completed basic computer courses**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Completed basic computer courses	Yes	856	74 %
	No	295	26 %

The table 1 presents the percentage of students who have completed some basic computer courses. Here 856 (74%) of the students have completed the basic courses and

295 (26%) of the students have not completed basic computer courses. Further, it predicts that studying basic computer courses definitely enables the students to use the internet for their academic activities.

**Table 2. Students' who have familiar with Computers**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Familiar with computers	Very familiar	338	30 %
	Fairly familiar	486	42 %
	Slightly familiar	327	28 %

The table 2 presents the level of students' familiarity with computer. Based on the mean value, the level of familiarity with computers of the students is categorized into three groups viz. much familiar, fairly familiar and slightly familiar. Among the three categories, 486 (42%) of students have fair familiarity, 338 (30%) of students have much familiarity and 327 (28%) of students have slight familiarity. If the students have familiarity with computers, it may help them to browse with speed and search for information in different ways.

**Table 3. Students who are aware of the internet**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Aware of the internet	Yes	1151	100 %
	No	0	0 %

The table 3 reveals that all the students have Internet awareness.

**Table 4. Students' acquired knowledge/Competency in using internet**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Acquired knowledge/Competency in using internet	Self-Instruction	456	39 %
	Friends	422	37 %
	College/university	273	24 %

The table 4 shows the acquired knowledge/competency in using the Internet. Based on the mean value, 456 (39%) of the students have acquired the knowledge/competency in using the internet by self-instruction, 422 (37%) of the students have acquired the knowledge/competency through their friends and 273 (24%) of the students have acquired the knowledge/competency in using Internet by college/university library, computer lab and internet centers.

**Internet Accessibility**

**Table 5. Students who have computer with internet access**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Have a Computer with Internet Access	Yes	469	41 %
	No	682	59 %

The table 5 presents the level of students who have a computer with Internet Access. Based on the mean value, 469 (41%) of the students have computer with Internet access and 682 (59%) of the students do not have an own computer with Internet access. Further, it is predicted that the

students who have computer with internet access have more knowledge on Internet usage.

**Table 6. Students' frequency of internet use**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Frequency of Internet use	Daily	343	30
	Two / three times a week	392	34
	Once in a week	308	27
	Once in a month	108	9

Table 6, exhibits the level of students frequently using the Internet. Based on the mean value, the level of frequent use of internet is categorized into four groups viz. Daily, 2 or 3 times a week, once in a week and once in a month. Among the four categories, 392 (34%) students are using the internet two or three times a week, 343 (30%) students are using the internet daily, 308 (27%) students are using the internet once in a week and only 108 (9%) students are using the internet once in a month. Further, the result reveals that more than fifty percent of the students are using the internet daily and two / three times in a week.

**Table 7. Students' time spent on the internet per session (on an average)**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Time spend on the internet per session (on an average)	Less than 1 hour	261	23 %
	2-3 hours	795	69 %
	More than 3 hours	95	8 %

Table 7 shows the level of students' time spent on the internet per session. Based on the mean value, the level of students' time spent on the internet per session is categorized into three groups viz. less than one hour, two to three hours and more than three hours respectively. Majority of the students i.e., 795 (69%) spend two to three hours per session, 261 (23%) students are using the internet for less than one hour per session and 95 (8%) students are using the internet for more than three hours per session. It shows that the majority of the students spend the time to use the internet two to three hours per session.

**Table 8. Students' place of using internet**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Place of using internet	At home	338	29 %
	Internet café	296	26 %
	College/University library	363	32 %
	Friend's home	154	13 %

According to table 8, it is found that 363 (32%) students are using the internet in the college/university library or information centre, 338 (29%) students are using the internet at their home, 296 (26%) students are using the internet at their internet café, and the rest 154 (13%) students are using in their home. Further, it predicts that the majority of the students are using the internet at their college / university campus.

**Table 9. Students' at home, which room is used for using the internet?**

Statement	Groups	N	%
Which room is used for internet at home?	Front room	337	29 %
	Living room	342	30 %
	Bedroom	472	41 %

It can be referred from that table 9 that 472(41%) of the students are using the internet in the bedroom, 342(30%) of the students are using the internet in the living room and 337(29%) of the students are using the internet in the front room of their home. Further, it finally states that, majority of the students are using the internet in their bedroom.

#### MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

By using the simple percentage analysis, Internet Awareness and Internet Accessibility were calculated.

i. In Internet Awareness, all the respondents i.e., (1151) 100% have knowledge on the internet and have awareness of the internet.

ii. Out of 1151 respondents, i.e., (856) 74% of the students have completed basic courses in computer. Regarding familiarity with computers, i.e., (486) 42% of the students are fairly familiar, i.e., (338) 30% are very familiar, i.e., (327) 28% are slightly familiar and it is concluded that the majority of the respondents are fairly familiar with computers.

iii. In connection with the knowledge / competency acquired in using the internet, i.e., (456) 39% of the students got self instruction, i.e., (422) 37% with the help of friends, i.e., (273) 24% of the students through their college / university and further it is concluded that the majority of the students have got the knowledge / competency in using the internet by self-instruction. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Shakeel Ahmad Khan et al. (2011), Foster (2000) and Fayaz Ahmad Loan (2011).

#### 2. Internet Accessibility

i. The results of Internet Accessibility shows that out of 1151 respondents, i.e., (469) 41% of the students have a computer with access to internet, (682) 59% of the students do not have a computer with access to internet and it is concluded that majority of the students do not have a computer with access to internet. This finding is contradictory to the finding of the study by Masoud Rezaei & Ali Shams (2011).

ii. Out of 1151 respondents, (343) 30% of the students are using the internet on daily basis, (392) 34% are using two or three times in a week, (308) 27% once in a week, (108) 9% once in a month and it is concluded that the majority of the students are using the internet two or three times in a week. This finding agrees with the findings of Parameshwar, S. & Patil, D.B (2009), Fayaz Ahmad Loan (2011), Kumar, R & Kaur, A (2005) and Nafiz Zaman Shuva & Rowson Akhter (2011).

iii. With regard to time spent on the internet, (261) 23% of the respondents spent less than one hour, (795) 69% of the respondents spent two to three hours, (95) 8% of the respondents spent more than 3 hours per session and further it is concluded that the majority of the students spend time to use the internet for two to three hours per session. This finding is in agreement with the findings of the studies by Kanaujia, S. & Satyanarayana, N. R., (2003) and

Thanuskodi, S. (2011).

iv. The place of using the Internet shows that (338) 29% of the students are using it at home, (296) 26% at Internet cafes, (363) 32% in college or university, (154) 13% are using internet at their friend's home and further it is concluded that the majority of the students prefer to use the internet in their college / university. This finding of the study is on line with the findings of the studies by Kumar, R. & Kaur, A. (2005), Mamun Mostofa (2011) and Sharma, U.C., Raman Chawla & Priya Madaan (2011).

v. Out of 1151 respondents, the room which is used for browsing the internet, at home, depicts that (472) 41% of the students are using the bed room, (342) 30% the living room, (337) 29% of the students in the front room and it is concluded that the majority of the students prefer to use the internet at home in the bed room.

#### CONCLUSION

Research is a vital and comprehensive area. The purpose of any research is to find solution for the problem related to education, society, etc. Nowadays internet is one of the most important and integral part of education. The present study investigates the positive aspects of internet usage among the post graduate students. Most of the universities and colleges have sufficient internet facility, but the accessibility to all the students is not adequate. University and College Libraries also provide standard supplementary service in the internet area. This study indicates differential level of awareness and utilization of the internet services by the students in the areas of learning, research, publication, communication, social, economical, recreational, etc. However, the overall impression is that the awareness, accessibility and utilization are inadequate.

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