

USAGE OF INTERNET BY THE STUDENTS OF GOVERNMENT FIRST GRADE COLLEGES, BAGALKOT DISTRICT, KARNATAKA: A STUDY

- *Shridevi S. Kadiwal*

Smt. Shridevi S. Kadiwal

Librarian

Government First Grade

College,

Hungund – 587 118

Dist: Bagalakot, Karnataka

State

Email:

shreevpatil@gmail.com

The Internet is an undividable part of today's educational system. The academic increasingly depends on the Internet for educational purposes. This paper presents the survey results on internet use among college students in Government First Grade Colleges, Bagalkot. It was found that the students of Commerce and Business students make use of the internet most of all followed by Science, Social Sciences, and Humanities students respectively. Students of Commerce use it mainly for study and examination purposes and students of Social Sciences and Humanities use it for education purposes compared to others. Information overload is the most common problem faced by students, while searching the relevant information. The students of Science, Social Sciences, and Humanities find internet illiteracy as the major limitation in using the internet. The students of Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, business and commerce faced institutional curbs to internet access.

Keywords: Internet Use, Use study, College students, Bagalkot, Karnataka, Survey

INTRODUCTION

The Internet has become a vital part of college life and its undividable part of today's educational system. The academic increasingly depends on the Internet for educational purposes. A majority of academic and research institutions provide Internet service to students, teachers, and researchers. The internet came to India in the early 1990s for a restricted group of users through some leading Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The Education and Research Network (ERNET), National Informatics Centre Network (NICNET) and Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) has been offering the internet services with very different charters and growth histories. ERNET was designed to provide the internet access to the Indian educational and research institutions, NICNET was designed to provide

internet access primarily to Government departments and STPI was permitted to serve only the software exporters falling under the Software Technology Park scheme of the Department of Electronics. Later on, Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL), Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) entered into the market. The Indian internet services market was opened for private sector participation in November 1984. India's first private ISP is "Satyam Online" launched by Satyam Infoway. Thereafter, Sify, Airtel, Netcom, Reliance, Jio and Hathway became the major private ISPs of India.

The internet availability in educational institutions in Bagalkot is inadequate. Most of the higher educational institutions like the colleges of Government First Grade Colleges of Bagalkot have started to provide these facilities fully to the student's community from the recent years. It established the internet access centers in the library premises separately for students, faculties, and staff in 2000 on words and named them as E-resource Centre and is available the college working days. At present we have more than 150 computers are accessible in the library for browsing online information. Besides the services in libraries of the undergraduate colleges, internet access centers are available in almost all institutions and some colleges are Wi-Fi enabled. Most of the degree colleges have also established browsing centers for their students' communities to overcome their social and academic loneliness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature available on the internet usage studies reveal that the internet is widely used by

the students' community all over the world for different purposes. Gibson and Oberg investigated a study in Alberta schools to know the perceptions of students and faculties on the value of the internet as an educational tool. Overall, students, teachers, and administrators who participated in the study concurred that the internet has a great deal of potential as learning and teaching tool. The benefits most often cited from the use of the internet in institutions included immediate access to current and relevant information, worldwide connection and ability to meet the needs of individual learners or users.

Arya and Das (2010) in their views on "Use and effectiveness of internet services and resources in the Delhi college of engineering library: A case study" required study the purpose for which the internet is used, its impact, problems faced by the Engineering college students and teachers. Sujatha (2011) emphasizes on "Analysis of internet use in undergraduate colleges of Mangalore" and analyzed the patterns of use of the internet among three hundred thirty-five teachers and students of 05 colleges in Mangalore city. The study examines the level of academic

Community's access to the internet, reasons for non-use of the internet, satisfaction with the internet facilities provided in these institutions as well as the problems faced in use of the internet. Kishore Kumar and Naik (2015) have investigated on "Usage of Wi-Fi Service among Users' of Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute Library, Bangalore". The main objectives of the study are to discover the students' awareness of IT-based resources and to

study the purpose of using Wi-Fi service. Kumar and Kaur (2010) showed that 48.3 percent of the academic community use the internet 2-3 times a week, 40 percent uses it daily and 5.6 percent 2-3 times in a month. The data analysis also depicted that majority of the respondents (69.4%) use the internet for education purpose, 51.9 percent for research, 47.4 percent for communication and 34.7 percent for entertainment. Manimekalai et al. (2006) investigated the internet use pattern among the students in Annamalai University and found that about 71 percent of the students use internet for their academic related activities and about 29 percent use it for communication purposes. Mutula (2001) studied the problems of internet access and use in East Africa and reported that legal and financial barriers are the two most common obstacles in connecting the individuals and institutions to the internet. Mishra, Yadav and Bisht (2005) depicted that 83.1 percent male and 61.3 percent female respondents indicated that they faced the problem of slow functioning of internet connections.

All these studies focus on the use of Internet by various groups of users. Most prior studies into the utilization of internet technology for learning purposes in contemporary educational settings in developing countries has largely dealt with its impact on academic performance, communication and general educational purposes. There is no specific study on the use of internet by the students of First Grade colleges in Karnataka in general and Bagalkot district in particular. Hence this study would bridge the gap.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is limited to the students of Government First Grade Colleges of Bagalkot district in Karnataka covering the students of Sciences, Social Sciences, Business Management, Humanities and Commerce. The total number of colleges in Bagalkot are 13, (Appendix A) of which maximum are in the rural area and a few in the urban area.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study considers the following objectives:

1. To determine internet resources accessibility pattern among the undergraduate students of First Grade Government Colleges in Bagalkot district of Karnataka
2. To find out the purpose of using the internet by the users of the colleges under study
3. To Demonstrate the student's perceived benefits from the use of internet for academic study
4. To understand the search engines frequently used by the students for educational inquiry
5. To realize the challenges confronting the students regarding the use of the internet for educational purpose

METHODOLOGY

At the time of the study, there were Thirteen (13) Government First Grade Colleges in Bagalkot District functioning. A total of 500 students were selected from both the urban and rural colleges. Out of which four hundred and

Table 1: Distribution of Questionnaires and the responses received

Sl. No.	Name of The College	Distribution of Questionnaires	Responsesreceived
1	Shree Rudragouda Patil Government First Grade College, Bilagi	35	31
2	Government First Grade College for Women, Jamakhandi	35	33
3	Government First Grade College, Teredal	30	28
4	Government First Grade College, Savalagi	30	28
5	Government First Grade College, Bagalkot	30	28
6	Government First Grade College, Mudhol	30	28
7	Government First Grade College, Badami	30	27
8	Government First Grade College, Hungund	100	95
9	Government First Grade College, Ilkal	50	48
10	Government First Grade College, Lokapur	35	33
11	Government First Grade College, Hunnur	35	32
12	Government First Grade College, Kaladagi	30	28
13	Government First Grade College, Banahatti.	30	28
Total		500	467

sixty-seven (467) students responded from rural and urban colleges and the response rate is 93.4 % as shown in the table 1.

DATA COLLECTION

The questionnaire-based survey method was used for data collection. The stratified random sampling was used for on-the-spot selection of students. The questionnaire was administered personally to ensure the excellent response rate as well as to avoid any misunderstanding while responding.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data has been analyzed by using SPSS software and the results were presented in the form of Tables and diagrams with percentage analysis. As seen in Table 1, about 71.35 percent

of students (467 out of 500) use the internet and more than one -fourth of the students (28.65 %) do not use it at all.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

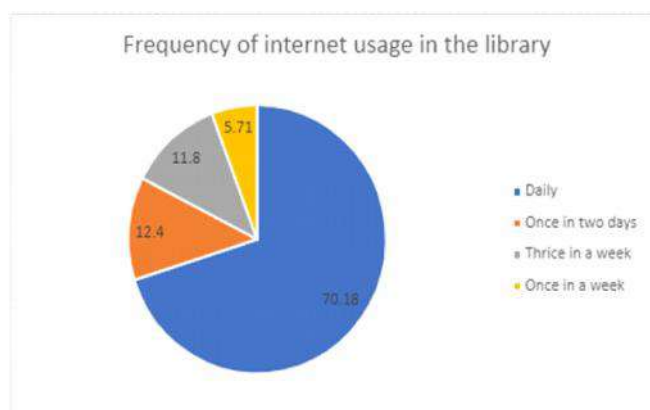
Out of the total 467 respondents' further characterization based on the demography it showed in the Table 2 that 227(48.60%) male respondents, remaining 240(51.40%) are female respondents. Most of participants comes under age19-21. They belong to final year commerce students at bachelor levels. According to students' opinion 42 (21.10 %) had computer facility at home while, 118 (59.3 %) had Internet access point at library. Only 39 (19.6 %) percent browse through internet café, from friends, from relatives etc.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Individual Variables		Frequency
Students Gender Distribution	Male	227(48.60%)
	Female	240(51.40%)
Students Age Distribution	17-19 years	154(32.99%)
	19-21 years	313(67.01%)
Students Class	I year	195(41.75%)
	II Year	162(34.33 %)
	III Year	110(23.55%)
Internet Access Point	From Home	98(21.1%)
	From Library	276(59.3 %)
	Internet Cafe etc.	93(19.6 %)

Frequency of Internet use in the Library

It is to be noted that the frequency of library visit by a user is usually influenced by the factors related to the frequency of library visit and utilization internet by the respondents are presented in Figure 1.



The figure 1 reveals that, out of 467 users, majority of the users i.e., 350(70.18%) of them visit the library every day, whereas 59(11.8%) of them visited once in two days and 62 (12.4%) of them visited thrice in a week and once in a week (5.71%). Thus, the results show that users are

frequently visiting the library to utilize the internet.

Reasons for Internet Use

The respondents were asked to mention the reasons for using Internet (Table 3). 386 users(82.65%) mentioned that they use Internet for preparing class assignments, 426 users(91.22%) use it for examination preparation, 309 users (66.16%) pointed out that they use it to enhance their knowledge, 114 users(24.41%) to download software, 187 users (40.1%) use it for assistance in their research, 431 (92.29 %) mentioned that they rely on for entertainment, 172 users (36.83%) explore Internet for communication purposes, 376 (80.5) use it for reading news, 292 users(62.52%) mentioned that they use it for purchasing items, 91 users (19.5%) use it for their specific purposes like, online job searching & application, spending leisure time etc.

Table 3: Reasons for Internet use

Sl. No.	Reasons for Use	No. of respondents N=467	% Students
1	To prepare Class Assignments	386	82.65
2	To prepare Examination	426	91.22
3	To update knowledge	309	66.16
4	To Download free software	114	24.41
5	For research projects	187	40.1
6	For entertainment	431	92.29
7	For communication	172	36.83
8	To read News	376	80.5
9	Purchase items	292	62.52
10	Other reasons	91	19.5

Note: Total sample exceeds the required size since the questions are multiple choices

SOURCES OF INTERNET TRAINING

The students were asked to mention the sources from where they acquired skills to use Internet (Table 4). 274 users (52.9%) mentioned that they learnt skills by self-study. 362 users (77.5%) revealed that they got training from their friends, 194 users (41.5%) mentioned

that they learnt it through training programs, 254 users (54.38%) mentioned that they learnt it from their teachers, 409 users (87.58%) got training from the staff of the college library, 81 users (17.34%) learnt it from other sources, i.e., family members, colleagues and through computer books.

Table 4: Sources of Internet training

Sl. No.	Users Opinion	No. of respondents N=467	Source of Internet (%)
1	Self-study	274	52.9
2	From Friends	362	77.5
3	By attending training programme	194	41.5
4	From teacher	254	54.38
5	From Library staff	409	87.58
6	From any other sources	81	17.34

Note: Total sample exceeds the required size since the questions are multiple choices

Internet Search Engines

The respondents were asked to mention which search engines they use to get required information (Table 5). 353 students (88.25%) mentioned that mostly they use Google for

searching, 284 respondents (71%) use Yahoo!, 84 respondents (21%) use Alta Vista, 65 (16.25%) mentioned that they use MSN for searching information and 48 respondents (12%) revealed that they use Info-seek. 57 (14.25%) mentioned the use of other search engines.

Table 5: Internet Search Engines

Sl. No.	Opinion	No. of respondents N=467	Percentage (%)
1	Google	353	88.25
2	Yahoo	284	71
3	Alta vista	84	21
4	MSN	65	16.25
5	Info-seek	48	12
6	Other search engines	57	14.25

Note: Total sample exceeds the required size since the questions are multiple choices

Appealing features of Internet

The students were asked to mention the appealing features of the Internet (Table 6). 187 respondents (46.75%) mentioned that 'Ease of working' was the most appealing feature of the

Internet, 152 (38%) mentioned 'Time saving' as appealing feature, 106 (26.50) pointed out 'Searching tools', 84 (21%) mentioned 'Authenticity of information', 65 (16.25%) mentioned 'Internet graphics', 42 users (10.50%) mentioned other features such as 'up to date

Table 6: Appealing features of internet

Sl. No.	Opinion	No. of respondents N=467	Percentage (%)
1	Ease to work	398	85.22
2	Time saving	152	38
3	Searching tools	106	26.50
4	Authenticity information	84	21
5	Internet graphics	65	16.25
Total		805	186.97

Note: Total sample exceeds the required size since the questions are multiple choices

Email services

The students were asked to mention which Internet based e-mail services they use (Table 7). 117 users (25.5%) mentioned 'Yahoo!' e-mail

service, 274 respondents (58.5%) use 'Gmail', 48 users (10%) use Rediff mail. 28(6%) mentioned the use of other e-mail services such as Hotmail etc.

Table 7: Email services

Sl. No.	Opinion	No. of respondents N=467	Percentage (%)
1	Yahoo	117	25.5
2	Gmail	274	58.5
3	Rediff mail	48	10
4	Other	28	6
Total		467	100

Problems in the Internet search

The students face a variety of problems while searching the internet. The generally faced problem is by internet illiteracy- lack of internet operating/searching skills (28.7%), followed by information overload, i.e. too many hits (24.6%), information pollution- too many irrelevant hits

(20.1%) and financial barrier, i.e. paid information (12.5%). The other problems faced are lack of downloading facility, restricted access, language barrier etc. The problems of Information overload, information pollution, financial barrier, and internet illiteracy the most common problems faced by the students of all disciplines (Table 8).

Table 8: Internet searching problems

Sl. No.	Opinion	No. of respondents N=467	Percentage (%)
1	Internet searching problems	134	28.7
2	Information overload	115	24.6
3	Information pollution	94	20.1
4	Financial barrier	58	12.5
5	Internet illiteracy	66	14.1
Total		467	100

Problems faced while using internet

The data in the table 9 reveals that the students face different problems while using the internet.

The biggest problem being slow speed of the internet (38.2%), followed by network problems like connectivity/electricity failure (21.8%), and

Institutional curbs (16.9%), physical discomforts (10.93%). The stream-wise data in Table 8 reveal that the top two common problems of all the students are slow speed of the internet and

network problems. However, 60% of the students of commerce and business feel problem of slow speed as compared to 25.3 % students of Science, Social Sciences and Humanities students (Table 9).

Table 9: Problems faced while using internet

Sl. No.	Opinion	No. of respondents N=467	Percentage (%)
1	Network problems	102	21.8
2	Slow speed of the internet	179	38.2
3	Institutional curbs	78	16.9
4	Lack of adequate facilities in cyber cafes	41	8.8
5	Physical discomforts	35	7.5
6	High cost of surfing charges in cyber cafes	32	6.8
Total		467	100

DISCUSSION

The study showed that the use of the Internet has created a great impact upon the students under survey. The findings of the study explain how students view the usage of the internet for their academic study and learning. It also generated useful data to build more understanding and insight into the use of the internet among students. The students who do not use internet in Government First Grade Colleges stated a number of reasons like lack of internet facility in college, home and locality, high charges at cyber cafes, lack of operating skills/lack of training, lack of awareness, lack of interest, and so on. It is seen that the maximum students of Business and Commerce make use of internet, followed by science students, Social Sciences students respectively.

The results reveal that majority of the students especially in the rural background, do not use internet due to lack of facility or access or awareness, fear and anxiety or techno stress. These problems need to be solved to promote the internet use among the students. Lack of facility is the major obstacle in internet access which needs immediate attention. The need is to take steps to establish browsing centers in libraries/colleges with full internet connectivity. The adequate facilities in terms of space, staff and technology (number of computers etc.) should be available for maximum utilization of internet sources and services. Lack of access to the internet is another major problem hindering internet use. The result of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between internet usage for academic work and students' academic

performance; there is a significant relationship between the internet access and usage and students' assignment submission; there was significant relationship between time spent on the internet and students' academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are challenges raised by the students that require attention. Thus, this study proposes the following suggestions to improve internet access and usage for educational purpose in the studied area.

Table 10: Challenges faced and recommendations

Sl. No.	Major Challenges	Recommendations
1	Slow speed of the internet and Network problems	Improving network infrastructure with support from private and public entities
2	Internet searching problems and information overload, financial barrier	Guidance to students about how to improve the search tips
3	Email services	Better to use Gmail and Yahoo services
4	Internet literacy	Guided Training to staffs

As stated in the Table 10 related to how to overcome the major challenges and respective recommendations. Slow internet connectivity could lead to major issues like students will get disturbed by slow and frequent interrupts due to infrastructural issues; to overcome this challenge we recommend to have like network and infrastructure could be maintained by private and public entities. Students will lose the interest if they face any challenges in searching the topic for which they are looking; to overcome this kind of challenges we can guide the students about how to search required content and assisting the students who are financially poor and unable to have the internet access and devices like by providing tabs, laptops and hot spot devices. To have the reliable email services one can guide the students to use email services from Google and Yahoo service providers as they are more reliable and provides free accounts for any number of

users. To improve the internet literacy; staffs who are tech savvy and interested to learn new things could be provided guided training to improve the search and internet skills to assist the students in a better way

CONCLUSION

The access to technology is increasing so the Internet addiction seems to rise in future. Overall study shows that internet users use internet for entertainment purpose and are addicted to internet. Overall, the study reveals that most of the respondents are addicted to internet and the main reason for the addiction is that the respondent feels social media as an attractive feature to use internet. Duration of using internet and the exposure to use internet plays more important role in developing internet addiction among people. The governments should take steps to develop infrastructural facilities and

communication technologies to overcome the network related problems. Moreover, the broadband connection with good bandwidth and update models of computers should be subscribed to gear up the speed of the internet. The expertise of library and information professionals and IT professionals need to be tapped to conduct training and refresher courses for students to change them into internet literates. Therefore, the need is to aware students of science, and social science about the information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to train them in using these technologies to bridge the gap. As the Internet keeps expanding during the next decade and mobile devices become accessible to all, this will have a greater impact on the college infrastructure as well as academically.

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Appendix - A

List of Colleges in Bagalkot district considered for the study

1. Shree Rudragouda Patil Government First Grade College, Bilagi
2. Government First Grade College for Women, Jamakhandi
3. Government First Grade College, Teredal
4. Government First Grade College, Savalagi
5. Government First Grade College, Bagalkot
6. Government First Grade College, Mudhol
7. Government First Grade College, Badami
8. Government First Grade College, Hunugund
9. Government First Grade College, Ilakal
10. Government First Grade College, Lokapur
11. Government First Grade College, Hunnur
12. Government First Grade College, Kaladagi
13. Government First Grade college, Banahatti

