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Internet and their impact on Information Behaviour: A case study **Remy. S**

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Abstract

Use of internet in academic arena has empowered students to sharpen their skills and communication capabilities in their pursuit of successful strategies of success. This paper describes the internet usage, factors that motivate the use of internet, preferred search engines and environment that affects Information Behaviour. A well-structured questionnaire was distributed among the 200 students of the five nursing colleges in Kollam district. Out of which 142 questionnaires were received showing overall response rate of 71%. Majority of the students expressed their interest in the use of internet and enthusiastic in improving their skills in the use of internet. Concludes that more awareness about internet resources and orientation in use of the same need to be provided.

Keyword: Internet, use pattern, Information Behaviour, user study

1. Introduction: Internet, the largest worldwide network of networks has emerged as a powerful educational tool for instant access to information. The convenience of accessing remote information through www has resulted in tremendous popularity for web has given a new dimension to the library and information centres. The concept of library and librarians is dramatically changing with the application of information and communication technologies. Internet has successfully entered all the areas and to a great extent is affecting the library and information centres. A wide range of public domain and commercial information sources are currently available on the internet such as bibliographical/full text databases, table of contents of journals, discussion forums, technical reports, preprints, biographies, directories, data archives, teaching and training material, library catalogues, softwares etc. Internet use has become a way of life for the majority of higher education students all around the world. Internet is a functional tool for most college students. They use computers to accomplish a wide range of academic tasks such as for making course assignments, study notes, process date for research projects etc .Internet has become an important component in academic institutions as it plays an important role in meeting information needs of individuals and institutions. It helps to access a wide range of

information such as journal article, papers etc from anywhere in the world. It enables students and academic institutions to disseminate information to a greater extent through websites. Thus internet has become an invaluable tool for teaching, learning and research. Use of internet has a great impact on the student's academic carrier. It is a very effective and popular tool used by the students for education as well as variety of other purposes including entertainment.

Information scientists have been studying thorough ages about how people seek and make use of information. Many disciplines like psychology, marketing, decision making etc have also was interested in studying the information habits of users. The subject information behaviour can be claimed to be as old as human race. Meho and Tibbo explained that early during the 1980s-1970s the focus was placed on the evaluation of information collections, concentrating on information services and systems and have to make them more relevant to levels. Information is retrieved from different sources depending upon the information needs of users. The process of seeking and the feeling experienced by users while seeking information is broadly called as information behaviour. It is a sub discipline in Library and Information Science. It may also be described as Information Seeking Behaviour or Human Information Behaviour. Different approaches have been adopted for the study of information behaviour of different user groups and new methodologies have been developed or adopted from other fields such as social Sciences. Fairer and Wessels refer to information seeking behaviour as the way people search for and utilize information. The need of information behaviour arises due to information need of the information seeker, who in order to satisfy it, makes demands upon formal or informal information sources or services, resulting in either success or failure. Rapid changes in information behaviour and use of internet have become the vital part of various information needs. Internet is making substantial inroads in patient care and dissemination of health care information. The present study is an attempt to study the internet use and impact on information behaviour of nursing students.

2. Review of literature: For literature review for the present study, the investigator searched the LISA Plus (Library and Information Science Abstracts) database, Pub Med, Emerald and Shodh Ganga. The reviews are as follows.

Heejung Kim and others (2014) conducted "a secondary data analysis of internet use in caregivers of persons with dementia" to investigate relationships among caregiver stress appraisal, self-related health and health related internet use. Based on Pearlin's stress process model, structured equation modelling was conducted. Results indicated that there was no relationship between self-rated health and health-related Internet use in dementia caregiver.

Vidyamavila Chathoth(2013) in her study "Internet Behaviour Pattern in undergraduate medical students in Mangalore" revealed the prevalence of internet addiction in undergraduate medical students .The study involved 90 subjects selected by random sampling from the first year undergraduate medical students population at Kasturba Medical

college Mangalore. Young's internet addiction test questionnaire was administered. The result was that the prevalence of moderate to severe internet addiction appeared to be low, a significant number of students confirm to mild addiction.

Chongtham Beda Devi and Nil Ratan Roy (2012) conducted a study "Internet use among university students: A case study of Assam University Silchar" was an attempt to study internet use among Assam University students. Purposive sampling technique was adopted. Approximately 80% the main purpose of using internet is mainly for study. The study suggested that internet should be undertaken by the Information Technology Institutions, Libraries and Information Centres of Universities.

Sakina Bashir (2011) conducted a study on Internet use among University students: A survey in University of the Punjab, Lahore. The objective of the study was to explore the internet use behaviour of students. The results showed that most of the students use internet for course related reading and research needs. They are new users of the internet. A large number of students have learnt to use the internet tool by themselves or on assistance from friends without attending any training programmes.

Becker (2010) conducted a study on internet use by 2250 teachers from public and private schools in the US. The study revealed that 90% of the teachers had internet access. A majority of the teachers (68%) used internet to find information resources for preparing their lessons.

Rajeev Kumar and Aamrit Pal Kaur(2004) studied the use of internet by teachers and students in Shaheed Bhagat Singh college of Engineering and Technology ,Punjab. They found that about 46.75% teachers and 36.7% students daily use the internet. 90% of the respondents use internet at their college .Yahoo was found as the favourite engine.31.7% of respondents were fully satisfied whereas 36.7% were partially satisfied with internet facilities.

Cavanaugh (2001) summarized some experimental and quasi experimental studies concerning effectiveness of interactive distance education using video conferencing and telecommunications for K-12 academic achievement concluded that there is a small positive effect in favour of distance education and a greater impact for interactive distance education programs that combine an individualized approach with traditional classroom instruction.

Naushad Ali,P.M.(2000) in a study revealed that more than fifty percent of population was satisfied regarding timing of Internet Service, but were not satisfied with staffs cooperation and services.

Bavakutty and Salih(1999) conducted a study at Calicut University which showed that students , research scholars and teachers used the internet for the purpose of study, research and teaching respectively.

3. Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the use of internet by students.
2. To understand the factors which motivate the use of internet by students.

3. To identify the search tools preferred by students.
4. To study the impact of internet on students.

4. Methodology: The study was conducted using a questionnaire method .The five nursing colleges in Kollam district were selected for the study. Total 200 questionnaires were distributed randomly, out of which 142 were received back with the response rate of 71%.The respondents were interviewed to fill in gaps. The analysis of the data obtained through the questionnaire provided an in-depth interpretation for fulfilling the objectives.

5. Scope: The research study is confined only to the five nursing colleges that are within the purview of Kollam district.

6 Analysis of data

6.1 Internet usage: All the students surveyed have indicated that they use internet. Among them 40 (28.1%) use internet daily while 63(44.36%) of them use internet at least once a week. There are also students 10 (7.04%) who use internet sparingly once in a fortnight.

6.2 Factors that motivate the use of internet: From Table 1 it is observed that majority of students 131 (92.2%) feels that most important factor that motivates them to use internet is that user friendly interfaces of search engines like Google. A factor like internet provides faster and reliable communication and helps to develop/maintain contacts is indicated by 124(87.3%). Availability of most updated information is indicated by 114(80.2%), expert assistance by library staff is also indicated as a factor by 82(57.7%) of students.

Table1. Factors that motivate the use of Internet

Sl. No.	Factors that motivate the use of Internet	Yes	No	Not Sure
1	Internet provides faster and reliable communication and helps to develop /maintain contacts	124(87.3 %)	6(4.22%)	30(21.12 %)
2	Search engines like Google provides user friendly interface to browse , identify and access information on web	131(92.2 %)	3(2.11%)	5(3.5%)
3	Users get most updated information	114(80.2 %)	8(5.6%)	21(14.7%)
4	To obtain reprints	33(23.2 %)	27(19.01 %)	59(41.54 %)
5	Wide range of Online databases	21(14.78 %)	42(29.57 %)	31(21.83 %)
6	Expert assistance by Library staff	82(57.7 %)	15(10.56 %)	23(16.19 %)

6.3 Preferred search engines: Students were asked about their awareness about different information search tools like OPAC, Web OPAC, search engines etc. They are not aware of all search tools available on internet.

Table2. Preferred Search Engines

Sl No:	Preferred Search Engines	No: of Students(%)
1	Google	118(83.09%)
2	Yahoo	29(20.4%)
3	MSN	4(2.81%)
4	Alta Vista	00
5	Others(Please specify)	00

Majority 118(83.09%) indicated that Google is their most preferred search engine. Yahoo was preferred by 29(20.4%).MSN 4(2.81%) is preferred by negligible number of students.

Table 3. Deciding factors for the reference of Search engines

Sl No:	Factors that decide the Popularity of Search engine	Yes	No	Not Sure
1	Easy to browse the Internet sources	137(96.4%)	2(1.40%)	3(2.11%)
2	User friendly features	133(93.6%)	7(4.92%)	2(1.40%)
3	I know the search strategy of Search engine	40(28.1%)	80(56.3%)	22(15.49%)
4	The Search engine is most popular	125(88.02%)	4(2.81%)	13(9.15%)
5	More information can be retrieved	67(47.18%)	5(3.52%)	70(49.2%)
6	Recommendations by library staff	17(11.9%)	26(18.3%)	99(69.7%)

Table 3. shows that search engine is easy to use 137(96.4%), user friendly features 133(93.6%), popularity of search engine 125(88.02%), more information can be retrieved 67(47.18%).Less significant deciding factor is library staff recommendations.

6.4 Methods used to learn information skills: Majority of the students 108(76.05%) said that they learn information skills with guidance from library staff. About 54(38.02%) students indicated that they would prefer to learn skills by trial and error method. About 52(36.61%) learn by the advice of friends, 30(21.12%) by external care, 46(32.39%) from the guidance of computer staff, technicians etc.

Table 4. Methods used to learn information skills.

Sl No:	How do you intend to learn these skills or obtain training	Students
1	By trial and error	54(38.02%)
2	With the guidance from library staff	108(76.05%)

3	By the advice of your friends	52(36.61%)
4	External courses	30(21.12%)
5	Getting the guidance from computer staff/technicians	46(32.39%)

7. Suggestions: Taking into consideration of the major findings of the study, the investigator would like to put forward the following suggestions and recommendations.

1. Internet and allied technologies should be included in the curriculum.
2. Orientation programmes should be organized so that users can improve their proficiency in the use of the internet.
3. More computers with latest specifications should be installed.
4. Information regarding the popular and latest websites with their addresses should be displayed on the notice board in the library and in the computer centre.
5. Printing facility should be provided so that the users can get printout of their study materials and other important documents.
6. The timings of the internet services should be increased and the internet facility should be familiarised to all.
7. Efforts should be made to increase the speed of the internet access.

8. Conclusion: Internet provides wealth of information. Like many other fields, Internet is also present in medical domain. The development of internet has made instantaneous access to much of the entire body of medical information an exciting one. It is assumed that students in India feel more dependent on the Internet for their class assignments and for the latest information of their subject areas than conventional resources of information. Internet has become an easy source of accessing information for students. In the electronic environment, libraries need to recognise that they are not only the one in distributing knowledge. Increased funding, introduction of computer education into existing medical and nursing curricular would enhance student's ability to acquire, appraise and use information from internet to solve their problems quickly and efficiently.

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