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GRT VARIATION IN THE POPULARITY OF SURFING ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AMONG THE HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN HOWRAH

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Abstract: This paper attempts to conduct a study on variation in the popularity of surfing academic and social networking sites among the higher secondary students in Howrah. This study determines the efficiency of using computer by students, the frequency of using the Internet, the purpose for using it, the extent of using Internet facilities for academic purposes, the major causes why the popularity of social networking sites are increasing than academic sites and finally, the acceptance of parents about the using internet by their sons and daughters. 80 students (40 boys and 40 girls) of different schools are surveyed in Howrah District and the data are analyzed by cartographic and statistical techniques like t-test and f-test. The analysis of data reveals that 65% students use social networking sites for communicating with existing friends, followed by finding old friends, making new friends, interacting with people with common interest and finding someone for sharing a relationship with. There are very few students who use the internet for school works & other academic purposes. According to them the books are enough for the school works, they do not find anything interesting in internet for school works, they do not have enough time for further referencing, and sometimes they like to use social networking sites and chatting with friends than school works. 90% students are not encouraged by their school teachers for using internet for school works.

Key words: academic purposes, statistical techniques, cartographic, networking sites.

INTRODUCTION :

Statement of the problem: The wealth of information available on the Internet can be used for example in searching for relevant materials related to one's academic works, and also in acquiring any information relevant for knowledge acquisition. In this light, this paper determines the usage of the Internet among higher secondary school students in public schools with particular emphasis on the percentage of the students that are familiar with the Internet and what they use the Internet for.

Although the efficiency of this technology, it is evaluated with use of proportion of the desired results in student achievement does not exactly come out. Since adolescents use the Internet for reasons other than educational (mainly for socialization), the effect of the Internet in education is, hence, relatively limited. They are preferred to use internet for their recreation purposes, rather than for academic purposes, and becomes addicted to this. In this connection, the paper determines the main causes for not using the academic sites by most of the higher secondary students and why the social networking sites are becoming popular among them.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To track out the efficiency of using computer by students.
To find out the use of the Internet by the students and its frequency of using it.

To find out the purpose for which the internet is being used.
To know the extent of using Internet facilities for academic purposes.

To track out the major causes why the popularity of social networking sites are increasing than academic sites among the students.

To know the acceptance of parents about the using internet by their sons and daughters.

Research questions

How well do the students understand the uses of computer?

How often do the students make use of the Internet?

For what purpose do the students make use of the Internet?

How is the internet used for academic purposes by the students and to what extent?

What are the major causes of increasing popularity of social networking sites than academic sites among the students?

Does the parents aware and accept the internet using by their sons and daughters?

Delimitation

This study is delimited to 80 higher secondary students.

The students from both Bengali and English mediums are observed for finding out the objectives of the research.

The study is delimited to the school of Howrah city.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Some journals were gone through for the completion of this study.

Oluwafemi, S.N. (2001) studied on an evaluation of internet usage among senior secondary school students in public schools in Lagos state to determine if the students appreciate the Internet as an educational tool, how often they make use of the Internet, the purpose to which they put the Internet if they ever used it and finally, how affordable is it for them to access the Internet.

Subrahmanyam. K., & Lin, G. (2007) studied on adolescents on the net: internet use and well-being to examine the relationship between adolescents' online communicative activity and loneliness and perceived social support.

Bilal, A., M Usman, M., & Sehrish, M.W. (2009) studied on impacts of internet usage on students' academic performance to explore the impact of internet usage on student's academic performance so that universities would take effective measures and invest in IT and encouraged students to use internet.

Jayadev, H.K., & Kumbar, B.D. (2010) studied on student's perspectives on internet usage in a case study in Lala Lajpat Rai College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai.

Leung, L., & Lee, P. S. N. (2010) studied on impact of internet literacy, internet addiction symptoms, and internet activities on academic performance.

Zaman, S.N., (2011) studied on internet usage by the students of faculty of arts in the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Tutkun, O.F. (2011) studied on internet access, use and sharing levels among students during the teaching-learning process to determine the awareness among students and levels regarding student access, use, and knowledge sharing during the teaching-learning process.

Gencer, Suzan, L. G., & Mustafa, K. (2012) studied on internet abuse among teenagers and its relations to internet usage patterns and demographics. This study focused on exploring Internet abuse among teenagers and its relations to some Internet usage patterns and demographic characteristics in a digitalizing country, Turkey.

METHODOLOGY

Data are collected from both secondary and primary sources. In the initial phase, the researcher explored the information available from secondary sources by reviewing the various published and internet based documents. After critical analysis of the available resources and compilation, the researcher developed a structured questionnaire to collect the required information from higher secondary students.

In-depth interviews with 80 higher secondary students (40 boys and 40 girls) of different schools in Howrah City are surveyed by using purposive sampling techniques in order to obtain richer information and to better understand this relatively recent phenomenon as described in the following section. The researcher personally went in 80 households in the Howrah City area and collected data by interacting with students.

The data which are collected by the questionnaire, firstly converted into percentages and then some cartographic techniques are used to interpret the quantitative

data. Statistical measures like the T-tests and the F-tests are also used to find out the significance between the data. Qualitative interpretations are also been done.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Timing of the study: The timing of the study is classified into five parts i.e. the morning (6 a.m. to noon), afternoon (noon to 6 PM), evening (6pm to 9pm), night (9pm to 12 am) and late night (12 a.m. to 6a.m.). Among the boys the majority (85%) study at the evening, where as the majority of girls (95%) study at night. Only 15% of the boys study at morning and only 10% of the girls study at late night.

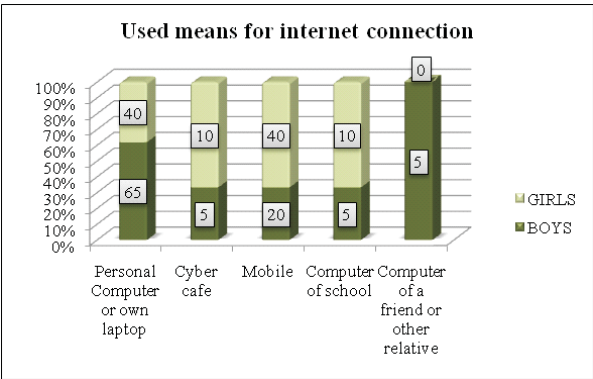
Use of study break: The option for study breaks according to both boys and girls in watching TV/ movies and listening music. The surfing of internet is the second choice for both boys (85%) and girls (70%). 50% boys and 40% girls like to hangout friends at the break time from study. But it is found that only 35% of boys and 45% girls spend their break time by reading novels.

Use of study break	Boys	Girls
Exercise/ meditation	25%	5%
Watching TV/movie/ listening music	95%	100%
Surfing the internet	85%	70%
Hanging out with friends/socialising	50%	40%
Playing video games	25%	15%
Reading novels	35%	45%
Cooking	0%	10%

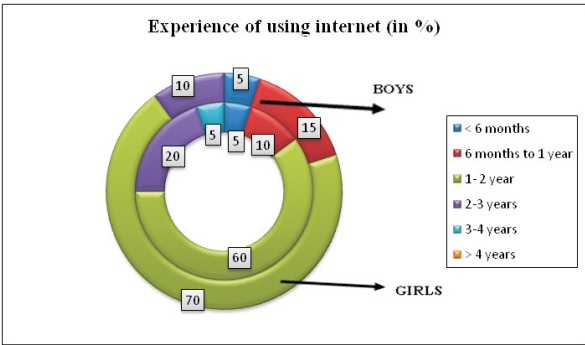
Efficiency of using computers: A T-test and an F-Test is conducted by the researcher to find out whether there are significance differences between boys and girls in case of computer application. The value of T-test (0.57415) and F-test (0.618474) suggest that there is no significant difference between the boys and girls in computer handling & application on 5% significance level.

Weightages	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
<16 (less efficient)	5	5
16-32 (moderately efficient)	40	42.5
>32 (highly efficient)	5	2.50

Sources of training for using internet: 20% boys and 10% girls mentioned that they learnt skills by themselves. 45% boys and 30% girls revealed that they got training from their friends. 15% boys and 40% girls mentioned that they got training by attending training programmes. 5% girls learnt it from school teacher. 20% boys and 15% girls acquired training from their relatives and families.



Experience of using computers: The maximum experience is up to 3-4 years of using internet. Most of boys (60%) and girls (70%) have internet experience for 1-2 years. Only 5% boys and girls had internet experience less than 6 months. There are only 5% boys and no girls who had 3-4 years of experience.



Frequency of using internet: 25% boys and 15% girls are daily user of internet 30% boys and 25% girls use internet weekly. 25% boys and 25% girls use internet once in a while and the rest 20% boys and 35% girls use internet seldom. Among daily users 95% boys and 100% girls use internet below these hours. Only 5% boys use it for three to six hours.

Places and means for internet use: 65% boys and 40% of girls use internet by means of personal computers or laptop. Mobiles are used by 25% of boys and 40% girls. 5% boys and 10% girls go to cyber cafe for using internet. Only 10% girls (not boys) use computer of school and 5% of boys use computer of friend or relative for internet.

Purposes for using internet: The students actually do one more activities on the internet. 75% boys and 60% girls chat with friends, 85% boys and 85% girls visit different websites, 75% boys and 65% girls check-email box. It has been found that only 15% boys and 10% girls use internet for academic purposes and only 35% boys and 40% girls read news about events in other parts of the world.

Purposes for using internet	Boys	Girls
Chat with friends	75%	60%
Visit any website	85%	85%
Find solution to school works	15%	10%
Read news about events in other parts of the world	35%	40%
Check e-mail box	75%	65%

Use of internet for school work: Only 15% boys and 10% girls reply that they use internet for school purposes. Internet is used by 15% boys and 10% girls for preparing study materials of school subjects for assignments, by 10% boys for gathering current data and referencing and by 5% boys for watching school websites and latest news about school.

15% boys and 10% girls reply that they are Google search for searching study materials & other important news. Only 5% boys use Wikipedia. There are no other sites which are used by the students for academic purposes.

Purposes for using internet for school work	Boys	Girls
For study materials of school subjects	15%	10%
For assignments	15%	10%
For gathering current data and referencing	10%	0%
For watching school website and latest news about school	5%	0%

Causes behind not using internet for academic purposes: 85% boys and 90% girls give a reply that they are not using internet for school work for different reasons. 65% girls and 75% boys believe that the books are enough for school work. 15% boys and 20% girls give answer that they do not find anything interesting for school work. 5% boys think that it is waste of time for finding anything on internet for school work. 10% boys and 25% girls reply that they do not have enough money to go to cafe regularly for doing school work. There is no enough extra time for school work according to 5% boys and 10% girls. 5% boys are also replying that it is better to use social networking sites and chatting with friends than school works.

	Boys	Girls
The books are enough for school work	75%	65%
Do not find anything interesting in internet for school work	15%	20%
It is waste of time	5%	0%
Don't have money to go to the café	10%	25%
Don't have enough time for further referencing	5%	10%
It is better to use social networking sites and chatting with friends than school works	5%	0%

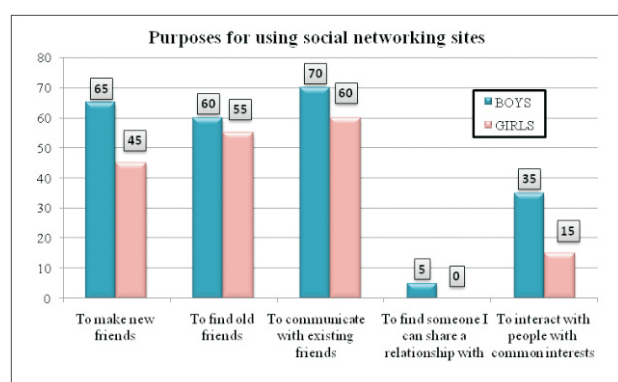
Encouragement of teachers for using internet for academic purposes: 90% boys and girls say that their teachers never encourage them for using internet for academic purposes. 5% boys and girls reply that their

teachers encourage them seldom. Teachers tell to use internet for academic purposes sometimes to 5% boys and girls. 5% girls answer that their teachers very often tell them to use it. No one reply that the teacher always encourages them.

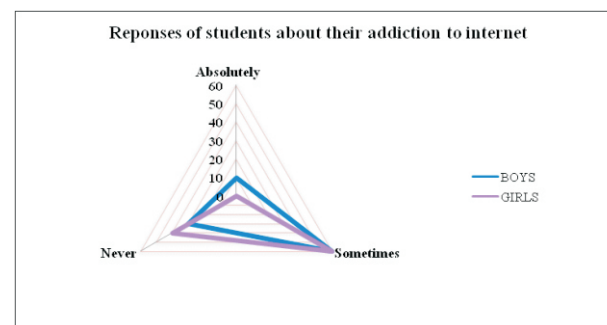
Social networking sites used by the students: 70% boys and 66% girls reply that they use social networking sites. Among them 10% boys and 15% girls are using orkut, 70% boys and 60% girls are using Facebook and only 10% boys and 5% girls are using Twitter. There is no other websites which are used by them for socialization

Purposes for using social networking sites: It was found that 65% boys and 45% girls are using social networking sites to make new friends and 60% boys and 55% girls are using it to find old friends. 70% boys and 60% girls reply that they are using it to communicate with existing friends. 5% boys want to use it for sharing a relationship with someone. 35% boys and 15% girls interact with people with common interest by using social networking sites.

Perceptions about negative impacts for using social networking sites: 55% boys and 70% girls think that there is some negative impacts of using social networking sites. They have suggested some negative impacts including loss of privacy (55% boys & 60% girls), loss of time (45% boys and 65% girls), more reliance on electronic medium (5% boys and 15% girls) less emotional bonding in relations (15% boys and 5% girls), emotional disturbance (10% boys & 5% girls).



Addiction of students to social networking sites: 10% boys have replied they are absolutely addicted to social networking sites. Both 60% boys and girls have accepted that they are sometimes addicted to it. 30% boys and 40% girls have a reply that they are never addicted to this.



Acceptance of parents about social networking sites

5% boys reply that their parents always accept their using of social networking sites. 85% boys and 75% girls mentioned that their parents never like their use of internet for socialization. 10% boys and 15% girls answered that their parents sometimes like it.

CONCLUSION

From the above study and analysis, some findings are generated and on the basis of these findings some suggestions are deliberated by the researchers, which are as follows:

FINDINGS

The analysis of data reveals the following.

Most of the students prefer to study between 6pm to midnight. They utilize their study break mainly by watching TV/ Movies and listening music. The second favourite choice of their recreation is surfing of internet. They are least interested to read novels.

Majority of the students are moderately efficient of using computer. But majority of them are quite good on using internet.

The majority of students get training for using internet from the friends. The second major source is the training classes.

Majority of students are using internet weekly.

Majority of student use internet at home on their personal computers and laptops, followed by mobiles, cyber cafe, school and friend's house.

Majority of students have one to two years of experiences of using internet, followed by two to three years, 6 months to 1 year less than six months and 3 to 4 years.

Most of the students use internet for chatting with friends, visiting different websites, downloading software, movies & music, checking e-mails accounts rather than academic purposes.

There are very few students who use the internet for school works & other academic purposes. Among them majority of students use it for referencing & preparing study materials, and for doing assignments. Gathering of current data and news and watching school websites are also done by few students. They mainly use Google search followed by Wikipedia as a search tools.

Most of the student mentions that as the books are enough for the school works, they are least interested to use internet for it. The second most popular reply that they do not find anything interesting in internet for school works, followed

by do not have money to go to the café, do not have enough time for further referencing, it is waste of time and it is better to use social networking sites and chatting with friends than school works.

90% students are not encouraged by their school teachers for using internet for school works. So there is almost no encouragement from the teachers to the students.

65% students use social networking sites like facebook, Orkut, Twitter. Among them facebook is quite popular. Majority of students use it for communicating with existing friends, followed by finding old friends, making new friends, interacting with people with common interest and finding someone for sharing a relationship with.

62.5% students accept that there are some negative impacts of using social networking sites. The major impacts are loss of privacy followed by loss of time, more reliance on electronic medium, less emotional bonding in relation and emotional disturbances.

60% students accept that they have addiction for using social networking sites for sometimes. 35% reply that they have never the addition. Only 5% reply that they are always addicted by using social networking sites.

According to 80% students, their parents never accept the uses of social networking sites. So it has been found that they use it mainly without the acceptance of parents & hide it from them.

SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are made for optimum utilization of internet for academic purposes.

The authority should take immediate steps to establish browsing centres in the school premises, libraries, reading rooms. The adequate facilities in terms of space, staffs, and technology (no. of computers) should be available for maximum utilization of internet sources and services.

The teachers, administrators should take the proper steps to make students aware about the proper use of the internet for academic purposes and make their use focussed and purposeful.

Internet source like e-journals, e-books, encyclopaedia dictionaries, wikis, blogs etc. are not highly used by the students. The students should be made aware about these sources & their impact on educational achievements through internet literacy programmes.

Library information professional of schools should make themselves aware of open access resources like repositories, digital libraries, database, directories and others using which they can access quantity information free of cost.

Teachers, administrators, libraries should be aware that the students use internet only for academic purposes, not only for any other purpose.

The parents in home should supervise their children when they use internet, encourage them to participate in other creative activities at study break, locate computer in a public area at home.

The teachers should give project works to the students and should encourage them to complete it by using internet sources.

Finally, the students, themselves should have their

self reliance and self-awareness about the negative impacts of the uses of social working sites. They should by themselves the positive sides of using internet as for academic purpose.

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