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INFOTAINMENT PERSPECTIVE OF INTERNET USAGE AMONG POST GRADUATE STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

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. Modern society incessantly produces and uses information. Information touches all human activity and is communicated in a multitude of ways, which includes speech, pictures, video, text, etc. 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). It is in this context, the researcher thought to have a probe into the internet utilization in the infotainment perspective of the post graduate students.

KEYWORDS: *Infotainment Perspective, Internet Usage, Post Graduate Students*

INTRODUCTION:

Information touches all human activity and is communicated in a multitude of ways, which includes speech, pictures, video, text, etc. 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 bibliotheque 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. 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).

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE STUDY

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 reaches. 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 in the infotainment perspective of the post graduate students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nowadays internet is being used by students not only for educational initiative but also for social, economical, political, religious, environmental, and recreational purposes. The major focus of this investigation is to study the Entertainment perspectives of Internet Usage among the students. The investigator has stated the problem as: "Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage Among Post Graduate Students in Coimbatore District".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

❖ To construct and standardize the Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage tool.
❖ To study the effect of dependent, intervening variables on the Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage among the post graduate students.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage with reference to demographic variables are used as the intervening variables for the present study. They are gender, age, branch of study, type of institution, type of college, residential status, locality, father's occupation, family income per month, father's education and mother's education.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is to study the utilization of internet by the post graduate students of Bharathiar University in Coimbatore District. Therefore, this study is restricted to Coimbatore District only. Internet Usage is a vast subject consisting of a number of dimensions. In the present study, the three most common variables that influence the usage of post graduate students such as Educational Perspectives, Socio-economic Perspectives and Infotainment Perspectives only have been taken up for this study.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Kooganurmath and Jange (1999) conducted a study on "Use of Internet by social science research scholars: A study in academic libraries in the Internet era", which revealed that a majority of the users used the internet for communication, followed by the access to information. More than 70% of the users used it for higher studies and only 30% used it for discussions with peer groups. The most used

services of internet were e-mail, the Web, discussion forums, Ftp and Telnet.

Tadasad, Maheswarapp and Alur (2003) conducted a study on "Use of internet by undergraduate students of PDA College of Engineering" at Gulbarga. Their observation was that internet use is confined to general or recreational purposes, and that its potential in supporting curricular requirements has not been realized by students.

Khare et al. (2007) surveyed the pattern of internet use, satisfaction with the search results, etc. among the research scholars of the various faculty at H.S. Gour University, Sagar, M.P. The findings showed that the research scholars used internet for research purpose, infotainment, as well as for job search.

Kaur (2008) conducted a study on "Internet use for infotainment and information". He reveals that the internet is an inseparable 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.

Malik & Mahmood (2009) conducted a study on "Students' web search behaviour". This study was based on a survey of 200 undergraduate and graduate students of different departments of the University of Punjab. The study reports that 59.5 % students used the internet to search the materials for their information needs at home, 25 % at university, 15% at both of the aforementioned places and 0.5 % at some other place. A majority of the students, i.e., 67.5% used the internet daily; 72.5% of the population used the internet for research, 76.5% for education, 68% for infotainment, 18.5% for sports and 6% for shopping purposes.

Kumar and Kaur's (2010) survey on "Internet use by teachers and students in engineering colleges of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh states of India: An analysis", shows that 48.3 percent of the academic community uses the internet 2 to 3 times a week, 40 percent use it daily and 5.6 percent 2 to 3 times in a month. The data analysis also depicted that majority of the respondents (69.4%) use the internet for educational purposes, 51.9 percent for research, 47.4 percent for communication and 34.7 percent for infotainment.

Thanuskodi, S. (2011) conducted a study on "Internet use among the faculty members and the students in the Professional Colleges at Tirunelveli Region: an analytical study". It was a random sample of 320 students and 80 faculty members from Tirunelveli region. The finding of the study is: It is clear that most of the respondents 50.83% use internet for preparing research paper. 45.27% of respondents use internet for literature search. 34.44% of respondents use internet for reading recommended course work and 21.11% respondents use it for infotainment.

Korgen et al. (2001) studied Internet use among female and male college students at institutions of higher learning in Georgia, Hawaii, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Rhode Island with sample of "843" students from eight college and Universities. They found that while the gap in use of the internet has nearly closed, there remain differences in how male and female undergraduates use the internet. Further the result of the study found that male college students were more likely than females to "research purchases (36.4% vs. 26.6%), look for news (59.5% vs. 39.7%), play games (43.6% vs. 26.6%), and listen/copy music on the Internet (49.6% vs. 26.9%).

Odero's (2003) study on "Using the Internet Café at Technikon Pretoria in South Africa: Views from students" reported the differences in the way postgraduate and undergraduate students used the internet. Postgraduate students used internet cafés mostly for educational activities, and undergraduate students used the internet for infotainment purposes such as chatting and listening to music.

METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

Surveys are conducted in case of descriptive research studies. The survey method gathers data from relatively large number of cases at particular time; it is essentially cross-sectional. For the present study, the investigator used normative survey method to gather data of final year post graduate students in Coimbatore District.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

By adopting the Stratified random sampling method, the investigator has selected 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 the subjects were selected randomly. Data for the present study was collected from the final year post graduate students from Coimbatore District in Tamilnadu. The sample size of the present study is 1151.

TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY

Considering the objectives of the study, the investigator has developed the following tools for the study.
❖ Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage Tool developed and standardized by the investigator
❖ Personal Proforma

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED IN THE STUDY

I. t-test
ii. F-test (ANOVA)

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF MEAN DIFFERENCE (t-test)

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to gender among the post graduate students.

Table 1. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to gender

Variables	N	Mean	S.Deviation	Calculated t Value	Sig
Male	561	64.25	10.219	2.301	0.022
Female	590	62.81	11.043		(S)

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

Table 1 gives the picture to identify the significant difference between male and female students with reference to Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage. Hence the hypothesis-1 is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to the type of institution among the post graduate students.

Table 2. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to type of institution.

Variables	N	Mean	S.Deviation	Calculated t value	Sig
University	258	63.09	10.399	-0.727	0.468
College	893	63.64	10.749		(NS)

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

Table 2 displays the mean score difference between university and college students with respect to Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage. Hence the Hypothesis-2 is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to residential status among the post graduate students.

Table 3. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to residential status.

Variables	N	Mean	S.Deviation	Calculated t Value	Sig
Hosteller	522	62.47	10.947	-3.038	0.002
Day Scholar	629	64.38	10.362		(S)

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

Table 3 summarizes the mean score difference between hostel and day scholars with respect to Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage. Hence the Hypothesis-3 was accepted.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to locality among the post graduate students.

Table 4. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to locality.

Variables	N	Mean	S.Deviation	Calculated t Value	Sig
Rural	607	62.32	10.902	-4.034	0.000
Urban	544	64.85	10.251		(S)

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

The table 4 presents the mean score difference between rural and urban students with respect to Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage. Hence the Hypothesis-4 is accepted.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF MEAN DIFFERENCE (ANOVA)

Hypothesis 5: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to age among post graduate students.

Table 5. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to age

Variables	Mean	SS_b	SS_w	df	Calculated F Value	Sig
19-21 years	63.15					0.000
22-24 years	64.06	1916.939	128996.575	1150	8.530	
25 yr&above	57.39					(S)

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

The data in the table 5 presents the results of ANOVA carried out to identify the significant difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with respect to the age of the students. Hence the hypothesis-5 is accepted.

Hypothesis 6: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to branch of study among post graduate students.

Table 6. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to branch of study

Variables	Mean	SS_b	SS_w	df	Calculated F Value	Sig
Arts	62.20					
Science	62.70	4271.639	126641.874	1150	12.896	0.000 (S)
Management	67.79					
Commerce	67.07					

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

Table 6 gives the picture of ANOVA carried out to identify the significant difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with respect to the branch of study of the students. Hence the hypothesis-6 is accepted.

Hypothesis 7: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to father's occupation among the post graduate students.

Table 7. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to father's occupation.

Variables	Mean	SS_b	SS_w	df	Calculated F Value	Sig
Daily Wages	62.44					
Professional	62.66	1081.228	129832.285	1150	3.184	0.023 (S)
Govt.Sector	64.74					
Private.Sector	64.10					

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

Table 7 summarizes the results of ANOVA carried out to identify the significant difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage of the students with respect to their father's occupation. Hence the hypothesis-7 is accepted.

Hypothesis 8: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to family income per month among post graduate students.

Table 8. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to family income per month

Variables	Mean	SS_b	SS_w	df	Calculated F Value	Sig
< 20,000	62.20					
21,000-49,000	64.58	2633.055	128280.458	1150	11.782	0.000 (S)
above 50,000	66.23					

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

Table 8 presents that the results of ANOVA carried out to identify the significant difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage of the students with respect to their family income per month. Hence the hypothesis-8 is accepted.

Hypothesis 9: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to father's education among post graduate students.

Table 9. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to father's education

Variables	Mean	SS_b	SS_w	df	Calculated F Value	Sig
HSC & below	62.44					
Graduate & above	65.39	2547.213	128366.300	1150	11.390	0.000 (S)
Illiterate	62.08					

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

The table 9 summarizes the results of ANOVA carried out to identify the significant difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with respect to father's education of the students. Hence the hypothesis-9 is accepted.

Hypothesis 10: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to mother's education among post graduate students.

Table 10. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to mother's education

Variables	Mean	SS_b	SS_w	df	Calculated F Value	Sig
HSC & below	63.08					
Graduate & above	65.09	1216.674	129696.839	1150	5.385	0.005 (S)
Illiterate	62.39					

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

Finally, table 10 presents the results of ANOVA carried out to identify the significant difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage of students with respect to their mother's education. Hence the hypothesis-10 is accepted.

Hypothesis 11: There will be a significant mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to type of college among post graduate students.

Table 11. Mean score difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with reference to type of college

Variables	Mean	SS_b	SS_w	df	Calculated F Value	Sig
Govt.	60.54					
Aided	62.93	2777.576	100284.870	892	12.325	0.000 (S)
Self-financing	64.98					

Note. Level of significance: 0.05 level, S: Significant, NS: Not Significant

The above table 11 presents the results of ANOVA carried out to identify the significant difference in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage with respect to the type of college of the students. Hence the hypothesis-11 is accepted.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

❍ In the Infotainment Perspectives of Internet Usage, items about the entertainment + information = infotainment aspects such as to chat with friends, to send images/pictures and videos/movies to others, to send and receive mails (i.e., e-mail), to listen to the songs, to know daily news, to read online magazines, to forward files/messages to others, to know about the social

networks (i.e., face book, orkut, twitter...), to get/download the free games & professional softwares, to wish friends on his/her birthday/wedding day anniversary, to get in touch with family and relatives, to get the free sports information (i.e., cricket, volley ball, foot ball, etc), to get updated news /flash news /current news, to get the information about the tourist places and route maps, to play free games (i.e., car, chess, etc), and to watch free movies/videos.

❍ By using the simple percentage analysis, Internet Awareness and Internet Accessibility were calculated. Out of 1151 respondents, 96% of the students are using Internet for Infotainment purposes and it is concluded that (704) 61% of the students are using the Internet for mailing application (communication purpose).

❍ There is a significant mean score difference between male and female students with respect to Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage. It is confirmed that the Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage is influenced by gender differences.

❍ There is significant mean score difference between the hostellers and day scholar students with respect Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage.

❍ There is significant mean score difference between rural and urban students with respect to Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage.

❍ There is significant mean score difference in Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage with respect to the age of the students.

❍ There is a significant mean score difference in Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage with respect to the course of the students.

❍ There is no significant mean score difference in Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage with respect to students' father's occupation, , mother's occupation, father's education, mother's education and family income per month.

❍ There is a significant mean score difference in Infotainment Perspective of Internet Usage with respect to the type of college of the students.

DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

❍ The male students are utilizing the Internet more than the female students for Infotainment purposes. This may be reasoned out on the following grounds.

❍ Male students are more likely to use the internet as a destination for recreation than the female students and they are more likely to gather material for their hobbies, read online information for pleasure and download music & videos, etc.

❍ Female students are not showing interest in entertainment activities in internet due to social insecurity & the cultural factors

❍ College students are using the internet more than the university students for Infotainment aspects. This finding is on line with the study by Jones & Madden (2002). The present study depicts that the day scholar students are using the internet more than the hostel students in Infotainment.

❍ The present study shows that urban students are using the Internet more than the rural students in Infotainment perspective of Internet Usage. This finding is on line with the finding of the study by Blaiso (2008).

❍ In the present study, the results give the picture of the students under the 22 to 24 age group who are using the Internet more for infotainment purposes than the other age groups.

❍ Among the four categories of students doing different courses Arts students are using internet more than their counter parts in the infotainment perspectives.

CONCLUSION

The internet is a major tool for communication and dissemination of information in the 21st century and it has emerged as the single most powerful vehicle for providing access to unlimited information. The dependency on the internet and its services is increasing day by day and the uses of Universities and Colleges too are depending more and more on the internet for various purposes. 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 that the 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. Thanks to the internet, every new development in every field of study is just a click away for students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

❍ This study is confined to final year post graduate students only. For the present study the investigator did not consider the first year post graduate students.
❍ The investigator could not cover the whole of Coimbatore District.
❍ Only Government, Aided and Self-financing colleges were considered for this study.
❍ The investigator could cover only seven colleges and a university in this study due to the limited time factor available for administering the tests.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

❍ The first delimitation of the study was sample size. Although a sample of 1200 Post graduate final year students were collected, only a sample of 1151 respondents could be used for research purpose.
❍ The second delimitation of the study was the sample size of the University and colleges which offers more than five post graduate courses. Only one Arts & Science University from Coimbatore District, two Government Aided Colleges from Coimbatore District and four Self-financing Arts & Science Colleges from Coimbatore District were taken to conduct the study.
❍ The sample was biased in terms of its economically developed and urban institution context.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

❍ Internet literacy should be provided to all the students from the grass root level.
❍ Universities and Colleges may set up an internet centre and provide many broad band access points to each department for students and band width should be increased in order to provide faster access.
❍ University and College authorities should take necessary initiatives to include and implement ICT in the curriculum.
❍ The timings of the internet services in the Universities and Colleges should be increased and if possible, the service should be made available round the clock so that the students can make maximum use of the Internet facility.
❍ All the academic news should be provided at the university and college website and it should be regularly updated.
❍ Information regarding popular and latest websites with their addresses should be displayed on the places where students could easily be seen.
❍ Studies on newly emerging information and telecommunication technologies should be encouraged.

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