Use Of Internet By The Students Of The Eastern Theological College Of Jorhat In India: A Survey

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Abstract: The present study aim to find out the purpose of Internet use by the students of Eastern Theological College of Jorhat in India. In today's educational environments Internet becomes the most use tool to get access to reading resources particularly by the students. The finding shows that majority of the students did not use Internet for the academic activity.

Keywords: Internet use, Internet literacy, Theological students.

I. OBJECTIVES

✓ To find out the frequency of use of Internet and purpose of Internet use by the students
✓ To suggest suitable recommendations to develop use of Internet by the students for the academic activity

II. METHODOLOGY

A Questionnaire containing various questions pertaining to the use of Internet was use for collection of data from the students pursuing Bachelor of Divinity degree batch of 2012-2016 at the Eastern Theological College. In addition to this personal interaction was also made with the students. In all, a total of 53 questionnaires were distributed, however, only 38 duly filled-up questionnaires were returned.

III. BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF EASTERN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE (ETC)

The Eastern Theological College (ETC), was established in 1903 by the American Baptist Missionary the Rev. P.H. Moore, starting in the Assam Valley Bible School at Nowgong (now Nagaon) with just three students. Later in the year 1950 it had upgraded to the Jorhat Bible College and the Rev. J. W. Cook as its first Principal. Later the name of the college was once again changed to the Eastern Theological College as it is known today. ETC is affiliated to the Senate of Serampore College, India, since 1964.

The Eastern Theological College (ETC) has eight Departments, such as Biblical Studies, Theology and Ethics, History of Christianity, Religions Studies, Christian Ministry, Communication, Social Analysis and Mission Department. Under these eight Departments ETC offers Diploma of Christian Studies (Dip.C.S.), Bachelor of Christian Studies (B.C.S.), Bachelor of Divinity (B.D), Theological Education by Extension (TEE), Master of Arts in Holistic Child Development (MA-HCD), Master of Arts in Peace Studies (MA-PS) and Master of Theology (M.Th) Degree Programs.

The total collection of ETC library is around 25,000 volumes of various theological books, and a few numbers of local and national theological journals are available for the students. A part from that ETC library holds priceless historical documents like the diaries, correspondences and records of the American Baptist Missionaries. Library provide Wi-Fi facility to the students mainly for the academic use.

IV. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that Internet has become the most use tool in our daily activities for various purposes such as finding information that we need to acquire or widen our knowledge base, communicating in and around the globe with friends, colleagues, teachers, business partners and so on. For instance, in the educational environment, students, researchers and teachers are using Internet to search their needed information resources for completion of their respective academic activities. So that use of Internet have widely practice in today's human society to achieve different goals and different purposes.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

Harmon (2007) pointed out that Internet is the first place that new generations will go for information for the rest of their lives; this may be the last and best opportunity for them to learn how to evaluate the quality of the information they find there, and Internet information literacy skills will help the students to make effective use of the Internet and classroom should be the starting point to impart Internet information literacy education, because students are accessing highly de-contextualized pieces of information, but they have not been taught how to evaluate the quality of what they find.

Another study done by Metzger, Flanagin & Zwarun (2003) revealed that college students rely heavily on the Internet for general and academic information, and in the future, use of Internet by the student will increase for various purposes. Ignoring the Internet will not teach students how to think critically about the information they find there. According to Connor-Greene and Greene (2002), the Internet provides an ideal forum for teaching students to evaluate and select useful, credible sources from a vast array of unfiltered information, because students rely so often on the Internet, it is imperative that they become educated consumers of this medium.

Anderson (2001) had done a survey among 1,302 college students in classrooms at eight academic institutions to identify how the students' use of the Internet has affected their social or academic lives. Typically students use Internet for 100 minutes per day for various purposes such as academic, meeting new people, participating in extracurricular activities and real-life relationships. Another study carried out by Gordon, Juang & Syed (2007) on Internet use and well-being among 312 college students found out that based on Internet use scale indicated that the top 5 uses for the Internet were e-mailing, preparation of school homework, chat with friends and instant messaging. The findings also suggest that Internet use is a one of the important aspect of college students' lives.

Cole (2001) pointed out that College students use the Internet more than any other age group and have been raised in a computer-oriented society. On the other hand, College students are also considered particularly vulnerable to adjustment problems because they are experiencing a great deal of developmental and life changes (Nezlek, 2002).

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Gender	Number of respondents
1	Male	29 (76%)
2	Female	9 (24%)
Total		**38 (100%)**

Table 1: Respondents by Gender Wise

In all, 38 respondents were participated for the study. Out of the total respondents, there were 29 (76%) male respondents and 9 (24%) female respondents as reflected on the above Table 1.

AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Age Group	Number of respondents
1	20-22	1(3%)
2	23-25	13(34%)
3	26-28	15(39%)
4	29-31	4(11%)
5	32-35	5(13%)
6	Above 35	-
Total		**38 (100%)**

Table 2: Respondents by Age Group

The above Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents, 15(39%) respondents were between 26 to 28 years of age group. 13(34%) respondents were 23 to 25 years of age group, and 1(3%) respondent from ETC was between 20 to 22 years age group. Another 4(11%) respondents were between 29 to 31 years of age group, and 5(13%) respondents fall between 32 to 35 years of age group. No respondent cross above 35 years of age.

Q: DO YOU USE INTERNET?

(i) Yes (√)   **(ii) No (√)**

Sl. No.	Use of Internet	Number of respondents
1	Yes	36 (95%)
2	No	2 (5%)
Total		**38 (100%)**

Table 3: Use of Internet by the respondents

As per the findings of the study majority of the respondents, i.e., 36 (95%) respondents used Internet for various purposes such as for social network, entertainments and academic activities, however, 2 (5%) respondents did not use Internet because of their lack of knowledge on the positive aspects of the Internet.

Q: HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE INTERNET?

(i) Never (√)   **(ii) 1-2 days a week (√)**
(iii) 3-4 days a week (√)   **(iv) 5-6 days a week (√)**
(v) 7 days a week (√)

Sl. No.	Frequency of Internet use	Number of respondents
1	Never	2 (5%)

2	1-2 days a week	-
3	3-4 days a week	24 (63%)
4	5-6 days a week	-
5	7 days a week	12 (32%)
	Total	**38 (100%)**

Table 4: Frequency of Internet used by the respondents

It was found that 12 (32%) respondents used Internet 7 days a week and 24 (63%) respondents used Internet 3-4 days a week. However, 2 (5%) respondents did not use Internet at all.

Q: PURPOSE/S OF INTERNET USE?

Sl. No.	Use of Internet for the Academic Purposes	Number of respondents
1	Yes	15 (39%)
2	No	23 (61%)
	Total	**38 (100%)**

Table 5: Use of Internet for the Academic Purposes (i.e., examinations, preparation of assignments, presentations in the class, etc.)

When asked about purpose of Internet use, it was found that majority of the respondents, i.e., 23 (61%) respondents were not using Internet for the academic purposes, most of the time they use for other purposes such as social networking and entertainments.

Sl. No.	Use of Internet for the entertainments	Number of respondents
1	Yes	28 (74%)
2	No	10 (26%)
	Total	**38 (100%)**

Table 6: Use of Internet for entertainments (i.e., Youtube, Facebook, Viber, WhatsApp, etc.)

The Table 6 above reflects that apart from the educational activities, the respondents used Internet for the entertainments purposes such as sports news, watching movie clips, listening to songs and instrumental music during their free time which helped them in refreshing minds, body and soul. It was also found that respondents used social networking sites such as facebook, viber, whatsapp, etc.

Sl. No.	Use of Internet for online reading	Number of respondents
1	Yes	13 (34%)
2	No	25 (66%)
	Total	**38 (100%)**

Table 7: Use of Internet for online reading

As per the findings shown in the Table 7 above, 13 (34%) respondents have used Internet for online reading, but majority of the respondents, 25 (66%) respondents did not mainly because they did not know where and how to find relevant reading resources from the Internet.

Sl. No.	Use of Internet for downloading relevant reading resources	Number of respondents
1	Yes	5 (13%)
2	No	33 (87%)
	Total	**38 (100%)**

Table 8: Use of Internet for downloading relevant reading resources

Based on the result of findings only few respondents i.e. 5 (13%) respondents had habits of downloading reading resources from the Internet for which they found relevant for their study though in a very limited extent. It was also found that the respondents did not know where and how to get access to the reading resources from the Internet for their course of study and it's affected them minimum use of Internet for downloading relevant reading resources.

Q: WHICH SEARCH ENGINE DO YOU USE THE MOST?

Sl. No.	Search engine/s	Number of respondents
1	Google	36 (95%)
2	Yahoo	-
3	Bing	-
4	Any other	-
5	Not at all	2 (5%)
	Total	**38 (100%)**

Table 9: Choice of search engine by the respondents

The Table 9 above clearly revealed that Google search engine was preferred and used by the respondents because the respondents said that Google was found more familiar and friendly for them.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

✓ It was found that a total of 38 (100%) respondents, 2 (5%) respondents did not use Internet because of their lack of knowledge on the positive aspects of the Internet.
✓ Majority of the respondents, 28 (74%) respondents use Internet for the entertainments and social networks such as facebook, youtube, viber, etc.
✓ It can be said that frequency of Internet use among the respondents was considerably good enough because out of 38 (100%) respondents, 12 (32%) respondents used Internet 7 days a week and 24 (63%) respondents used Internet 3-4 days a week respectively. However, use of Internet for the purpose of online reading was considerably low compared to frequency of Internet use among the respondents.
✓ It was found that the respondents did not know where and how to get access to the reading resources from the Internet for their course of study caused them minimum use of Internet for online reading and downloading relevant reading resources.

VII. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

✓ The College must introduce information literacy, Internet literacy course in the curriculum.
✓ The College authority needs to take up and organized the awareness program or workshop such as Internet literacy, online search systems, etc, for the benefits of the students.
✓ Library professional must initiate "learning-teaching" method to guide the students especially the availability of and accessibility to various relevant reading resources available from the Internet with the collaboration from subject experts.

VIII.   CONCLUSION

In the present day, Internet becomes more influence tool in our day to day activity, particularly to the academic activity. Various reading resources were also available in the form of non-print and accessible through the Internet. To be able to achieve successful in the academic activity, a part from printed reading resources available for the studies, the students must know where to find, how to get, how to evaluate and what to read for their course of study especially access to non-print reading resources from the Internet. The students under the present study need guidance on effective use of Internet for their academic activity. The most appropriate and suitable method to solve this problem of the students under the present study is to include the courses such as information literacy, Internet literacy and computer literacy as a core subjects in the curriculum. So that the students will know where and how to get access to reading resources from the Internet and they will also make effective use of Internet for their academic activity during their studies as well as for the benefit of their daily life.

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