

Internet Usage Habits among Students: A Comparative Study of Students from Different Faculties

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Abstract

The recent growth in internet and related technologies has impacted almost all facets of our life. In recent years, it is seen that internet has paramount importance in students' life. The modern education system cannot remain isolated from internet technologies. The delivery of study material to online classes and the growing importance of massive open online courses have changed the education system dramatically. The availability of various online courses has opened the doors of higher education for students from remote areas. The present literature shows that little attention on students' internet usage habits has been paid. Hence, the present study has been performed to study the internet usage habits of students and to explore more, a comparison has been made among the students belonging to different faculties. Questionnaire was prepared to collect the primary data. Analysis of data collected from 400 students indicates that internet usage has been helpful for students in improving their academic performance. Students belonging to technical faculties are more habitual of using internet for their studies than students pursuing non-technical courses.

Keywords: internet, usage habits, online courses, academic performance

Introduction:

Internet was once used mainly as a medium for communication but now its role has been evolved as a source of information, entertainment and e-commerce. Internet has facilitated numerous services such as e-commerce, online shopping, bill payment, sharing ideas and information, online communication, banking, distance education and many more. Moreover, internet has proved itself in modern educational system. The delivery of training materials via the internet offers tremendous potential to the students. Internet is a library with an incredible 100 million books on every topic known, easily accessible for research and study.

Development of internet has impacted all sectors of society, including the education sector. Many positive results have come from the invention of the internet. One positive that has resulted from the internet is the fact that people are always able to access information anytime of the day or night. Internet has its effects on education too. Some sites contain valuable tools and accessories to aid in the learning process. The internet has also enabled teachers to teach a class from thousands of miles away. With video conferencing, a professor in one university can teach a class in another university in close to real-time. Virtually all libraries are now connected over the internet. But in most cases little attention has been paid

to internet usage habits of students and teachers for availing valuable tools and accessories of internet for learning process.

Learning and teaching environment has been changed significantly with the advent of internet. It has become possible to make lectures not only interesting but also informative with the help of advanced electronic teaching tools such as multimedia presentations, video clippings, sound effects animation and graphics. Distance education has become reality, and with the innovative use of information technology, educational institutes have reached out to students who would otherwise never have been able to enrol with them. Students can access enrolment forms, results and other information through websites of their academic institutions. This brings into light the internet usage habits of students from different fields of education. Further, the research is expected to help parents, teachers and other academicians to get aware of the importance of internet for improving the performance of students.

Review of Literature:

Kotrlik, J. W., Harrison, B. C., & Redmann D. H. (2000)¹ feels that knowledge of computer technology and computer-based technology has become tremendously important to technical and vocational teachers in the new information age. Vocational and technical teachers have realized the value and usefulness of computer technology in their programs.

Henry C. Lucas (2001)², feels the importance of computers and networks to the managerial students. Students should be familiar with the internet for commerce and to search for information. Teachers and students must be helped to integrate into their curriculum the tools provided by technology. Teachers will spend less time in front of a class and more time working with individual students who are using the web to conduct original research.

In the study of Kubey R., Lavin J., Barrows R. (2001)³, a significant percentage of students in the academically impaired subgroup reported that their internet use had kept them up late at night, that they sometimes felt tired the next day, and that they missed class due to internet use.

The findings of Ela Goyal, Seema Purohit and Manju Bhaga (2011)⁴, suggest that in order to attain improvements in the students' performance, the decision-makers have to consider the fit between the tasks requirements and the functionalities of their internet systems. When there is a fit, this would create a positive perception among the students in terms of the usefulness and satisfaction of their internet systems and therefore, promote higher level of usage among them. This study found significant relationship between the internet usage and technology satisfaction.

In their study, Yakıncı, Z.D., Gürbüz, P & Yetiş, G. (2018)⁵ determined preferred internet sites as; social media platforms, movie sites, news sites, educational/ information sites, game sites, e-mail sites, shopping sites, sexuality sites, in order. Educational and informational content sites usage -as the first choice- (20,2%) was in the fifth place. From the above discussion the gap was found and a comparative study of students from different fields was performed.

Research Objective:

The present study has been performed to compare the internet usage habits of students pursuing professional and non-professional courses.

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Hypotheses Development

1. **H₁₀**- “Internet is more used as a source of entertainment than learning.”
2. **H₂₀** -“Students pursuing professional courses are more habitual of using internet for studies than students pursuing non-professional courses.”

Sample:

100 students from each stream viz-Management, Engineering, Medical Science and Academic U.G and P.G Courses were randomly selected.

Table: Sample Size of Students

Sample no.	Stream	Sample size		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Management student	49	51	100
2	Engineering student	50	50	100
3	Medical Science student	47	53	100
4	Graduates and P.G (Science, Commerce & Arts) students	50	50	100
Total		196	204	400

Statistical Tools and Techniques:

Z-test, T-test and bar diagrams were used to analyze the data.

Data Analysis and Discussion:

Gender Wise Distribution

Table: Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Gender

Gender	Students' belong to					
	Professional courses				Non Professional Courses	Total
	Management	Engineering	Medical	Total		
Male	49 (49%)	50 (50%)	47 (47%)	146 (48.67%)	50 (50%)	196 (49%)
Female	51 (51%)	50 (50%)	53 (53%)	154 (51.33%)	50 (50%)	204 (51%)
Total	100 (100%)	100 (100%)	100 (100%)	300 (100%)	100 (100%)	400 (100%)

Gender wise distribution of respondents shows that out of 300 respondents of professional courses 146 (48.67%) were male and 154 (51.33%) were female. Among non-professional courses, respondents were equally distributed gender wise. In total 49% respondents were male and 51% respondents were female.

Area Wise Distribution**Table: Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Residential Area**

Residential Area	Students' belong to					
	Professional courses				Non Professional Courses	Total
	Management	Engineering	Medical	Total		
Urban	71 (71%)	74 (74%)	61 (61%)	206 (68.67%)	66 (66%)	272 (68%)
Semi Urban	13 (13%)	13 (13%)	27 (27%)	53 (17.67%)	11 (11%)	64 (16%)
Rural	16 (16%)	13 (13%)	12 (12%)	41 (13.67%)	23 (23%)	64 (16%)
Total	100 (100%)	100 (100%)	100 (100%)	300 (100%)	100 (100%)	400 (100%)

Table above reveals the distribution of respondents according to area of living. It shows that maximum (68%) of respondents belonged to urban area while semi urban and rural area contributed 16% each. Contribution of respondents from rural area is higher in non-professional courses (23%) than professional courses (13.67%). Among professional courses 27%, 13% and 13% respondents of medical science, engineering and management respectively belonged to semi urban area.

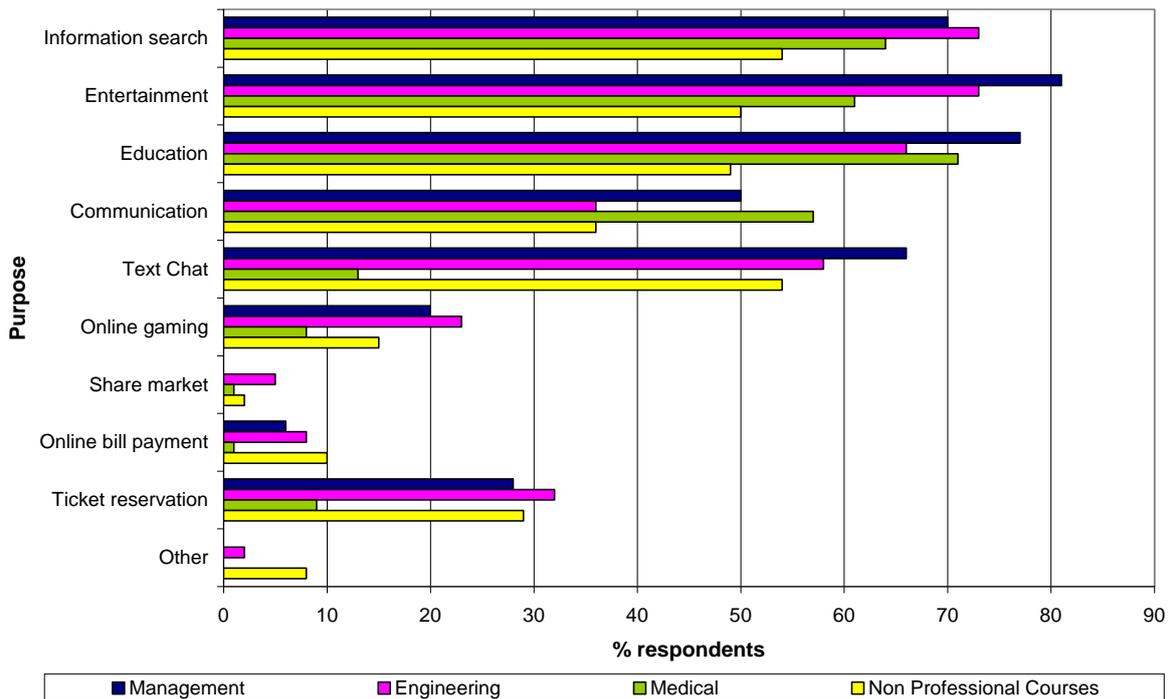
Purpose of Internet Usage**Table: Purpose of Using Internet by Students**

Purpose of Using Internet	Students belong to					
	Professional courses				Non-Professional Courses	Total
	Management	Engineering	Medical	Total		
Information search	70 (70%)	73 (73%)	64 (64%)	207 (69%)	54 (54%)	261 (65.25%)
Entertainment	81 (81%)	73 (73%)	61 (61%)	215 (71.67%)	50 (50%)	265 (66.25%)
Education	77 (77%)	66 (66%)	71 (71%)	214 (71.33%)	49 (49%)	263 (65.75%)
Communication	50 (50%)	36 (36%)	57 (57%)	143 (47.67%)	36 (36%)	179 (44.75%)
Text Chat	66 (66%)	58 (58%)	13 (13%)	137 (45.67%)	54 (54%)	191 (47.75%)
Online gaming	20 (20%)	23 (23%)	8 (8%)	51 (17%)	15 (15%)	66 (16.5%)
Share market	0	5	1	6	2	8

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	(0%)	(5%)	(1%)	(2%)	(2%)	(2%)
Online bill payment	6 (6%)	8 (8%)	1 (1%)	15 (5%)	10 (10%)	25 (6.25%)
Ticket reservation	28 (28%)	32 (32%)	9 (9%)	69 (23%)	29 (29%)	98 (24.5%)
Other	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.67%)	8 (8%)	10 (2.5%)

Graph: Purpose of Using Internet by Students



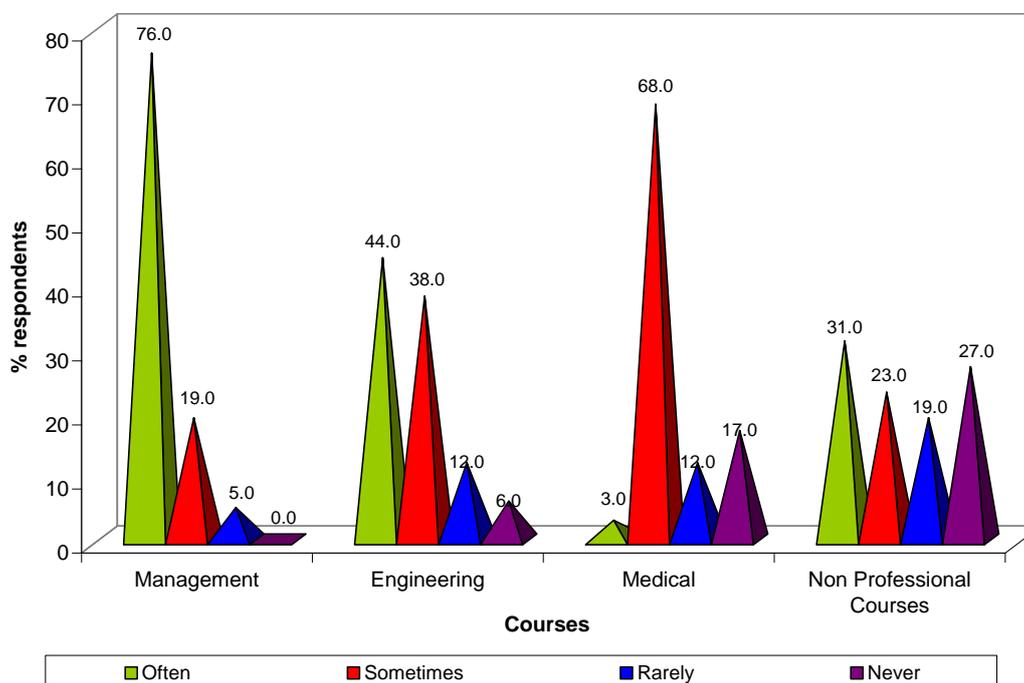
As per above graph, entertainment is prominent among various purposes of using internet by students in all. For students of professional courses, entertainment ranks first while for students from non-professional courses, information search and text chat rank first. 71.67% and 50% students from professional and non-professional courses access internet for entertainment. Among professional courses, 81% management students use internet for entertainment compared with engineering and management students which share 73% and 61% respectively. For students of professional courses, education (71.33%) is second priority followed by information search (69%) and ticket reservation (69%) second, communication (47.67%) third and text chat (45.67%) fourth. On the contrary, students from non-professional courses rank entertainment (50%) as a second priority, followed by education (49%) and communication (36%), third and fourth respectively. 17% and 15% students from professional and non-professional courses play online games. Share of students of non-professional courses (10%) in online bill payment is high than share of students of professional courses (5%). The percentage of share market is very low in this regard.

Entertainment, Information search, education and communication is priority among various purposes of using internet for students from both professional and non-professional courses.

Table: Internet Usage for Studies by Students

Usage of Internet for Studies	Students belong to					
	Professional courses				Non Professional Courses	Total
	Management	Engineering	Medical	Total		
Often	76 (76%)	44 (44%)	3 (3%)	123 (41%)	31 (31%)	154 (38.5%)
Sometimes	19 (19%)	38 (38%)	68 (68%)	125 (41.67%)	23 (23%)	148 (37%)
Rarely	5 (5%)	12 (12%)	12 (12%)	29 (9.67%)	19 (19%)	48 (12%)
Never	0 (0%)	6 (6%)	17 (17%)	23 (7.67%)	27 (27%)	50 (12.5%)
Total	100 (100%)	100 (100%)	100 (100%)	300 (100%)	100 (100%)	400 (100%)

Graph: Internet Usage for Studies by Students



41% and 31% of students from professional and non-professional courses respectively, frequently use internet for studies. While 17.34% and 46% of professional and non-professional students respectively, hardly or never use internet for their studies. Frequency of using internet for the said purpose is high among management students (76%) than engineering (44%) and medical (3%) students.

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It is clear from the table that frequency of using internet for studies is high among students of professional courses than students of non-professional courses.

Application of Z-Test

Category	N	Mean	SD	Z	Result
Professional	300	3.16	0.89	4.47	***
Non-Professional	100	2.58	1.19		

Z-test was applied to find whether there is any difference between students of professional and non-professional courses and their internet usage for studies. Two tailed test was applied for determining the rejection regions at 0.1% level of significance using normal curve area table which is $R:|Z| > 2.575$. The observed value of Z is 4.47 which fall under rejection region. Thus, it can be said that there is significant difference between students of professional and non-professional courses and their internet usage for studies.

Conclusion:

Entertainment dominated among various purposes of using internet for students in all. 71.67% and 50% students from professional and non-professional courses access internet for entertainment. Entertainment, Information search, education and communication is priority among various purposes of using internet for students from both professional and non-professional courses. 41% and 31% of students from professional and non-professional courses respectively, were frequently using internet for studies. Application of z-test revealed that there was significant difference between students of professional and non-professional courses and their internet usage for studies.

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