Accessibility Status and Use of E-Resources for Academic Purposes among the College Students of Udalguri District, Assam

Ms. Devita Boro & P.K. Acharya

Research Scholar*, Professor** Department of Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar, India, 791112

Abstract:

Internet Technology has become one of the most popular/common information searching tools in every field with no exception in the education field. It has become a learning tool for the higher learners and as such, its use in the higher education sector for the academic purpose is an emerging factor. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to know the accessibility status of e-resources or online learning resources for academic purposes among the college students of Udalguri district, Assam. The nature of the study is descriptive-cum-survey and for the purpose of collection of the data, the investigator had used a self-developed questionnaire.

Keywords: Internet Technology, Learning Tool, Accessibility Status, Online Resources, Udalguri District

1. 0. Introduction

Information searching/retrieval system has met with a sea change in the present century due to the invention of Internet Technology. It provides the fastest exchange of information in any field with no exception of the educational field. The emergence of Information Technology has drastically changed the role of libraries and it is continuously changing. It has grown immensely over the years. The demand for the use of e-resources or internet is rapidly increasing as it provides any information, anywhere and at any time. The Internet has become one of the most important sources of information in the present day making students self-reliant, self-dependent etc. With its advent, students can search and retrieve any information related to their academic issues and others. ***Dr. Vinay Jagga (2008)*** said that there are manifold changes undergone in the teaching-learning process with an advent of modern sophisticated technologies such as – multimedia, telecommunication, and internet. Recent technological developments in computers and telecommunication particularly in the use of internet and World Wide Web (www), especially in access to the storage and transfer of vast quantities of information have included many possibilities for direct application to the classroom teaching-learning situation. The internet has emerged as a powerful educational tool for an instant access to information. It has become the biggest global digital information library and made a tremendous impact on the academic activities of the teachers and students. A significant transition been seen in

the academic communities' approaches and way of seeking information and the methods employed in the teaching and learning activities. This has become possible as the internet provides a wealth of current information and delivers text, graphics, images, audio and videos at the same time. It acts as powerful supplements to the traditional ways of studying and learning ***(Sujatha, 2011)***. Therefore, use of internet technology/e-resources for the academic purpose by the students is an important area of study.

1.1. E-Resources

In the present study, e-resources refer to any resources/materials that can access with the help of Internet connection from different electronic gadgets/devices like computer, Smartphone, tablets, laptop with a web browser.

1.2. Objectives of the study

1. To find out the accessibility status and use of e-resources for academic purposes by the college students of Udalguri district, Assam.
2. To find out the differences in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for academic purposes by the male and female college students of Udalguri district, Assam.

1.3. Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for academic purposes by the male and female college students of Udalguri district, Assam.

1.4. Methodology

The investigator had used/employed the descriptive – cum – survey method for this study. The constituted populations of this study were the third-semester college students from two colleges of Udalguri district of Assam. A sample of this study comprised with 120 [80 (66.7%) male and 40 (33.3%) female] students coming under the population of this study and the selection of the sample had done randomly. A self-developed questionnaire was administered on the sample for the collection of data and the analysis and

interpretation of the data have done by the use of simple percentage (%) and x^2 – square test.

1.5. Analysis and Interpretation

Table – 1: Showing the percentage analysis of the **Use of e-resources** for Academic Purposes

Use of e-resources

	Frequency	Percentage
Always	10	8.3%
Sometimes	107	89.2%
Never	3	2.5%
Total	120	100%

In table 1 it is seen that a very high percentage i.e. 89.2% of students indicated that they 'Sometimes' make use of e-resources for their academic purposes while 8.3% of students indicated that they 'Always' use e-resources and only 2.5% indicated that they 'Never' make use of e-resources for their academic purposes.

Table – 2: Showing the percentage analysis of **Device Used to access e-resources** for Academic Purposes

Device Used to access e-resources

	Frequency	Percentage
Smartphone	100	83.3%
Tablet	10	8.4%
Laptop	4	3.3%
Desktop	3	2.5%
Don't Use	3	2.5%
Total	120	100%

In table 2, it has seen that 83.3% of students indicated the use of 'Smartphone' for accessing e-resources. While 8.4% indicated the use of 'Tablet', and similarly 3.3%, 2.5% indicated the use of 'Laptop' and 'Desktop'. It had also found that 2.5% of students do not use any device for accessing e-resources.

Table – 3: Showing the percentage analysis of **Place for Internet connection for accessing e-resources** for Academic Purposes

Place for Internet connection for accessing e-resources

	Frequency	Percentage
Library	0	0%
Cyber Cafes	14	11.6%
At Home	80	66.6%
Others	23	19.1%
Don't Access	3	2.5%
Total	120	100%

Majority of the students i.e. 66.6% reported that they access e-resources in their 'Home'. While 19.1%

access e-resources in 'Other place', 11.6% access in 'Cyber Cafes', 2.5% indicated that they don't access e-resources and it had also found that no students access the internet from the library as there is no internet facility available in the library (of course computers are available).

Table – 4: Showing the percentage analysis of **Frequency of Access of e-resources** for Academic Purposes

Frequency of Access to e-resources

	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	22	18.3%
Weekly	85	70.9%
Monthly	6	5%
Occasionally	4	3.3%
Never Access	3	2.5%
Total	100	100%

Majority of the students i.e. 70.9% reported that they access e-resources 'Weekly'. While 18.3% access e-resources 'Daily', 5% access 'Monthly', 3.3% access 'Occasionally' and it had found that 2.5% of students 'Never Access' e-resources.

Table – 5: Showing the percentage analysis of **Time/Hours spent on the access of e-resources** for Academic Purposes

Time/Hours spent on the access to e-resources

	Frequency	Percentage
0-2 hours in a day	40	33.3%
2-4 hours in a day	60	50%
4-6 hours in a day	10	8.3%
More than 6 hours in a day	7	5.9%
Don't Spent	3	2.5%
Total	100	100%

The Large proportion of the students i.e. 50% reported that they spent '2 – 4 hours' in a day for accessing e-resources. While 33.3% access e-resources '0 – 2 hours' in a day, 8.3% access '4 – 6 hours', 5.9% access 'more than 6 hours' in a day and it had found that 2.5% of students 'Don't Spend' time for accessing e-resources.

Table – 6: Showing the overall value of chi-square, df and P value of male and female students

Categories/Items	X^2	df	P Value (0.05)	Remark
Use of e-resources	2.294	2	5.991	Not Significant
Device Used to access e-resources	2.396	4	9.488	Not Significant
Preference Place for accessing e-resources	3.31	4	9.488	Not Significant
Frequency of access to e-resources	13.11	4	9.488	Significant
Time/Hours spent on the access to e-resources	11.63	4	9.488	Significant

a) It is clear from the table that there is no significant difference between male and female students on the Use of e-resources for their academic purposes.

b) Results of chi-square test also revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students on the use of device/gadget to access e-resources for academic purposes.

c) Similarly, it has also revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students in the preferred place for accessing e-resources

d) However, the table depicts that there exists a significant difference between male and female students on the frequency of access of e-resources.

e) It had also found to have a significant difference between male and female students on the time/hours spent on the access to e-resources.

1.6. Results and Discussion

In this study, it has found that large proportion of students i.e.89.3% reported that they make use of e-resources **'Sometimes'** while only 8.3% use e-resources 'Always' and 2.5% 'Never' use e-resources for their academic purpose. A large group of students i.e. 83.3% reported to use **'Smartphone'** for accessing e-resources as followed by 'tablet' (8.4%), 'Laptop' (3.3%), 'Desktop' (2.5%) respectively. Majority of the students (66.6%) reported accessing the internet or e-resources at **'Home'** while 19.1% access from 'Other place' 11.6% access from

'Cyber Cafes'. A high percentage (70.9%) of respondent indicated to access e-resources **'Weekly'** followed by 18.3% (Daily), 5% (Monthly), 3.3% (Occasionally). 50% of the respondents had found to spend **2-4 hours** in a day in accessing e-resources and 33.3% (0-2 hrs), 8.3% (4-6 hrs), and 5.9% (<6 hrs.). Beside this, it has also found that gender (male and female students) do not differ on the use of e-resources, on the use of device/gadget to access e-resources as well as on the preferred place for accessing e-resources. However, a gender divide (difference) has found on the frequency of access of e-resources and time/hours spent on the access to e-resources.

1.7. Conclusion

The recent evolution of Internet and e-resources has become one of the most powerful educational information tools in the present century. Learning through Internet and e-resources via electronic device has become one of the emerging concerns among the higher learning students. There has been a contemporary change in the students' way of learning or study habits have begun to transform/shift from manual to digital, thus they are now called as "digital – age – learners". These digital-age-students have access to resources and knowledge beyond traditional institutional structures and practices. Technological advancement has urged and signaled for changes in every field with no exception in the education system. However, the results of the present study revealed that the students of the Udalguri region are in the way of progress (starting point) towards the use of Internet and e-resources for the academic purposes. Since the majority of the students are found to use e-resources 'Sometimes', it indicates that they have started to use the Internet-based e-resources for their academic purposes, amidst the backwardness of the region.

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