IT Skills of LIS Research Scholars and Students: A Case Study of Department of Library and Information Science, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The landscape of the information environment is undergoing significant changes all across the globe. The information and management fields are facing new problems as a result of the current era of fast advancement in communication systems and recent innovations in technology. The internet is one of the most modern worldwide systems of information transfer. It is referred to as inter-network system and is described as a network. This study discusses IT Skills of LIS Research Scholars and Students in the Department of Library and Information Science, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In modern times, libraries are no longer only information repositories; instead, they are hubs of activity where professionals and non-professionals may find and utilize information resources tailored to their interests and needs. To succeed in library and information science (LIS), one must have a strong academic background and the ability to operate well in a hypertext, networked, and digital context. Training and education for new workers in the information technology sector have assumed central importance for those working in libraries and archives. Therefore, students in LIS programmes should be equipped with the knowledge and abilities that will allow them to find work after graduation and adapt to a dynamic and unpredictable environment.

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1.1 Objectives

- To study the students' and scholars' IT skills.
- To examine the frequency of utilization of e-resources
- To investigate the degree of Internet skill
- To investigate the purpose of Internet usage
- To study the barriers to using the Internet.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The current research used a questionnaire-based survey design. A total of 55 questionnaires were issued randomly to LIS Research Scholars, and Students in the Department of Library and Information Science at Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, and 49 questionnaires were returned. As a result, we only utilize data from 49 of the total surveys.

3.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Categories		No. of Respondents	Percentage	
Gender	Male	33	67.35	▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉
	Female	16	32.65	▉▉▉▉
Age Group (in years)	21-25	32	65.31	▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉
	26-30	4	8.16	▉
	31-35	8	16.33	▉▉
	Above 35	5	10.20	▉▉
Status	PG & M.Phil., Students	39	79.59	▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉
	PhD Research Scholars	10	20.41	▉▉▉

Source: Data compiled from the field

The respondents' Gender-wise classification is presented in Table 1. A majority of 67.35 percent of them are male, whereas 32.65 percent of them are female. Concerning age, a majority of 65.31 percent of the respondents' age group is below 21-25, followed by 16.33 percent of them belonging to the age group between 31-35, 10.20 percent of them above 35, and the rest accounted for 8.16 percent are between 26-30. Out of 49 respondents, a majority, 39, are doing their PG & M. Phil, while 10 are pursuing their Ph.D. (*See* Table 1).

Table 2: Place of Accessing the Internet

Place	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
Home	3	6.12	▉
University	38	77.55	▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉
Computer Centre	8	16.33	▉▉
Internet Café	0	0.00	
Others	0	0.00	

Source: Data compiled from the field

A majority of 77.55 percent of them accessed the internet from a university, followed by 16.33 percent of them accessing the internet from a computer centre and the remaining 6.12 percent of them accessing the internet from home.

Table 3: Frequency of Utilization of e-Resources

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Everyday	27	55.1
Once a week	12	24.49
2-3 times a month	2	4.08
Once a month	3	6.12
Rarely	5	10.2

Source: Data compiled from the field

Table 3 shows the frequency of utilization of e-resources. A majority of 55.10 percent of the respondents are utilizing e-resources daily, followed by 24.49 percent of them once a week, 10.20 percent of them rarely, 6.12 percent once a month, and 4.08 percent of them 2-3 times a month.

Table 4: Degree of Internet Skill

Degree of Internet Skill	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Beginner	9	18.37
Intermediate	32	65.31
Expert	8	16.32

Source: Data compiled from the field

The degree in internet skills is presented in Table 4. A majority of 65.31 percent of the respondents are intermediate in the degree of internet skill, 18.37 percent of the respondents are beginners in the degree of internet skill, and 16.32 percent are experts in the degree of internet skill.

Table 5: Purpose of Internet Usage

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Sending e-mail	18	36.73
Downloading documents	26	53.06
Education purpose	27	55.1
Competitive exams	18	36.73
Reading	8	16.33
Search for information	17	34.69
Entertainment	8	16.33

Source: Data compiled from the field

A vast majority 55.10 percent are using the Internet for educational purposes, followed by 53.06 percent using the Internet for downloading documents, and 36.73 percent are using the Internet for sending e-mail. While 36.73 percent are using the Internet for preparing for their competitive exams, 34.69 percent are using the Internet to search for information, 16.33 percent are using the Internet for reading purposes, and 16.33 percent are using the Internet for entertainment.

Table 6: Barriers to Using the Internet

Barriers	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
Slow access speed	17	34.69	▓▓▓▓▓
Difficulty in finding relevant information	16	32.65	▓▓▓▓▓
Overload of information on the internet	22	44.90	▓▓▓▓▓▓▓
It takes a long time to view/download pages	15	30.61	▓▓▓▓▓
Privacy problem	13	26.53	▓▓▓▓
Lack of IT knowledge	10	20.41	▓▓▓
Any other	9	18.36	▓▓▓

Source: Data compiled from the field

A majority, 44.90 percent of the respondents, reported that the barrier to using the internet is the overload of information, followed by 34.69 percent of the respondents, reported that the barrier to using the internet is slow access speed, 32.65 percent of the respondents are reported that the barrier in using the internet is difficulty in finding relevant information, 30.61 percent of the respondents are reported that the barrier in using the internet is taking a long time to view/download pages, 26.53 percent of the respondents are reported that the barrier in using the internet is a privacy problem, 20.41 percent of the respondents are reported that the barrier in using the internet is lack of IT knowledge and classification, at last, 18.36 percent of the respondents are facing some other issues as a barrier of using the internet.

4.0 FINDINGS

- 67.35 percent of the respondents are male.
- 65.31 percent of the respondents belong to the age group of below 21-25 years.
- More than two fourth of the respondents are accessing the internet from university.
- 55.10 percent of the respondents are utilizing e-resources daily.
- Two third of the respondent's degree in internet skills is intermediate.
- More than half of the respondents use the internet for educational purposes.
- 44.90 percent of the respondents reported that the barrier to using the internet is the overload of information.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Academic librarians and their crew play a crucial role in today's knowledge-based, technology-driven economy by meeting the complex information requirements of students, faculty, and the wider community. Those working in libraries and information science in the current day need to be aware of the growing complexity of the technical and professional problems they encounter and work to develop the complete spectrum of skills necessary to adapt to and manage these developments effectively. Let us hope that despite the many obstacles they face, librarians will keep up with the times and become even more indispensable to those searching for knowledge. According to the results, most students are at an intermediate level of IT proficiency. Therefore, the government should provide students with an IT training curriculum. The survey also confirms that the Department of Library and Information Science's students and researchers use the Internet academically.

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