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Electronic Resource Utilization among Faculty Members, Research Scholars, and Students: A Study of Don Bosco College, Yelagiri

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ABSTRACT :

The present study examines the utilization of electronic resources and internet services among faculty members, research scholars, and postgraduate students of Don Bosco College, Yelagiri, Tamil Nadu, affiliated to Thiruvalluvar University. The study adopted a survey method to collect primary data from the respondents. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect information regarding internet usage, experience in using internet services, and frequently preferred search engines. A total of **95 questionnaires** were distributed among faculty members, research scholars, and postgraduate students, of which **77 completed questionnaires** were received, resulting in an overall response rate of **81.05%**. The collected data were analyzed, tabulated, and interpreted using simple descriptive statistics.

Keywords: Electronic Resources of Don Bosco College

1. Introduction

Electronic resources have become an integral component of modern academic libraries. Traditional print resources are increasingly complemented by e-books, e-journals, online databases, institutional repositories, and other digital information resources. The rapid development of information and communication technologies has transformed the way students, faculty members, and research scholars access, evaluate, and use information.

Electronic resources provide users with quick, convenient, and extensive access to current academic and scholarly information. They support teaching, learning, research, curriculum development, and other academic activities. Through online resources, users can access scholarly information beyond the physical boundaries and operating hours of the library.

The changing information environment has also influenced the collection development policies of academic libraries. Libraries are increasingly allocating resources to electronic databases, e-journals, e-books, and other online information services to meet the diverse information requirements of their users. Ranganathan's Fifth Law of Library Science, "**The library is a growing organism**," emphasizes the continuous development and adaptation of libraries. In the present digital environment, academic libraries must continuously develop their electronic collections and services according to changing user needs. Therefore, understanding the patterns of internet and electronic resource utilization among different categories of academic users is essential for improving library services.

2. Review of Literature

Khumbar Debbarma and K. Praveena (2022) examined the access and utilization of electronic resources among research scholars of Annamalai University from a gender perspective. The study highlighted the importance of electronic resources in providing current information and examined differences in access and usage according to gender.

Liu (2006) examined users' perceptions, preferences, and use of print and electronic resources. The study highlighted the changing preferences of users towards electronic information resources and emphasized the growing importance of digital resources in academic environments.

Bakkiraj, Sathiyamurthy, and Mohamed Esmail (2012) investigated the use of electronic resources among researchers of the Faculty of Agriculture, Annamalai University, with particular attention to gender differences. The study emphasized the increasing importance of electronic resources for research activities.

The reviewed studies indicate that electronic resources have become important sources of academic and research information. However, users' patterns of utilization may differ according to gender, academic status, experience, and information-search preferences. Therefore, the present study attempts to examine internet and electronic resource utilization among faculty members, research scholars, and postgraduate students of Don Bosco College, Yelagiri.

3. Objectives of the Study

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- ❖ To assess the use of internet services among respondents with respect to gender.
- ❖ To examine the use of internet services among different categories of respondents.
- ❖ To assess the level of experience in internet usage among respondents based on gender.
- ❖ To examine the level of internet-use experience among different categories of respondents.
- ❖ To identify the search engines frequently preferred by respondents based on gender and respondent category.

4. Methodology

The study adopted a **survey method** to collect primary data from faculty members, research scholars, and postgraduate students of Don Bosco College, Yelagiri, Tamil Nadu, affiliated with Thiruvalluvar University. A structured questionnaire was prepared based on the objectives of the study and distributed to the selected respondents.

The questionnaire collected information relating to the respondents' demographic characteristics, use of internet services, experience in using the internet, and preferred search engines. The completed questionnaires were collected from the respondents and the data were systematically organized, analyzed, tabulated, and interpreted. The primary data were also supplemented through informal discussions with the respondents to obtain additional information relevant to the study.

5. Sampling

The study was conducted among the **faculty members, research scholars, and postgraduate students** of Don Bosco College, Yelagiri. A total of **95 questionnaires** were distributed among the selected respondents, and **77 completed questionnaires** were received and considered valid for analysis. Thus, the overall response rate was **81.05%**.

The respondents comprised **45 faculty members, 10 research scholars, and 22 postgraduate students**. The collected data were analyzed and presented in the form of tables, followed by appropriate interpretation. The study focused particularly on internet usage, experience in using internet services, and search-engine preferences among the respondents.

6. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1. Gender-wise Use of Internet Services

Sl. No	Gender	use of internet service		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Male	44 (57.14%)	0	44 (57.14%)
2	Female	33 (42.86%)	0	33 (42.86%)
Total		77 (100%)	0	77(100%)

Table 1 shows the gender-wise use of internet services among the respondents. Of the 77 respondents, **44 (57.14%) were male and 33 (42.86%) were female**. All the respondents reported that they used internet services. This indicates that internet access was universally utilized by the respondents included in the study.

Table – 2 Status wise use internet

Sl. No	Type of the Respondent	Use of Internet Service		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Faculty Members	45 (58.44%)	0	45 (58.44%)
2	Research Scholar	10 (12.99%)	0	10 (12.99%)
3	PG Student	22 (28.57%)	0	22 (28.57%)
Total		77	0	77 (100%)

Table 2 indicates that all categories of respondents used internet services. Faculty members constituted the largest group, with **45 respondents (58.44%)**, followed by postgraduate students with **22 respondents (28.57%)** and research scholars with **10 respondents (12.99%)**. The findings demonstrate that internet services are an essential information resource for all three categories of academic users.

Table 3. Gender-wise Experience in Using the Internet

Sl. No.	Gender	Less than 1 Year	More than 1 Year	Less than 5 Years	More than 5 Years	Total
1	Male	11 (57.9%)	5 (35.7%)	9 (64.3%)	19 (63.3%)	44
2	Female	8 (42.1%)	9 (64.3%)	5 (35.7%)	11 (36.7%)	33
Total		19 (100%)	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	30 (100%)	77

Table 3 presents the respondents' experience in using the internet according to gender. Among those with less than one year of internet-use experience, **11 (57.9%) were male and 8 (42.1%) were female**. Among respondents with more than one year of experience, **5 (35.7%) were male and 9 (64.3%) were female**. Of those with less than five years of experience, **9 (64.3%) were male and 5 (35.7%) were female**. Among respondents with more than five years of experience, **19 (63.3%) were male and 11 (36.7%) were female**. The results indicate variation in internet-use experience between male and female respondents.

Table 4. Status-wise Experience in Using the Internet

Sl. No.	Category	Less than 1 Year	More than 1 Year	Less than 5 Years	More than 5 Years	Total
1	Faculty Members	12 (63.2%)	10 (71.4%)	8 (57.1%)	15 (50.0%)	45
2	Research Scholars	1 (5.3%)	2 (14.3%)	1 (7.1%)	6 (20.0%)	10
3	PG Students	6 (31.5%)	2 (14.3%)	5 (35.7%)	9 (30.0%)	22
Total		19 (100%)	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	30 (100%)	77

Table 4 shows the experience of internet usage according to the respondents' academic status. Among respondents with less than one year of experience, faculty members accounted for **12 (63.2%)**, research scholars for **1 (5.3%)**, and postgraduate students for **6 (31.5%)**. Among those with more than one year of experience, faculty members constituted the largest group with **10 (71.4%)**.

Among respondents with less than five years of experience, **8 (57.1%) were faculty members, 1 (7.1%) was a research scholar, and 5 (35.7%) were postgraduate students**. Among those with more than five years of experience, faculty members accounted for **15 (50.0%)**, research scholars for **6 (20.0%)**, and postgraduate students for **9 (30.0%)**. Overall, faculty members represented the largest proportion in each category of internet-use experience.

Table 5. Gender-wise Frequently Preferred Search Engine

Sl. No.	Gender	Google	Other Search Engines	Total
1	Male	42 (56.0%)	2 (100%)	44
2	Female	33 (44.0%)	0 (0%)	33
Total		75 (100%)	2 (100%)	77

Table 5 presents the search engines preferred by respondents according to gender. **Google was the most frequently preferred search engine**, with 75 respondents using it. Among Google users, **42 (56.0%) were male and 33 (44.0%) were female**. Only two male respondents reported using other search engines. The findings clearly indicate that Google was the dominant search engine among the respondents.

Table 6. Status-wise Frequently Preferred Search Engine

Sl. No.	Category	Google	Other Search Engines	Total
1	Faculty Members	43 (57.3%)	2 (100%)	45
2	Research Scholars	10 (13.3%)	0	10
3	PG Students	22 (29.4%)	0	22
Total		75 (100%)	2 (100%)	77

Table 6 shows the search-engine preferences according to respondent category. Google was preferred by **43 faculty members (57.3%)**, **10 research scholars (13.3%)**, and **22 postgraduate students (29.4%)**. Two faculty members reported using other search engines. Overall, the findings show that Google was overwhelmingly the preferred search engine among all categories of respondents.

7. Features and Advantages of Electronic Resources

Electronic resources provide several advantages to academic users. They can be accessed quickly and conveniently through the internet and provide a wide range of current information. Faculty members, research scholars, and postgraduate students can use electronic resources to support teaching,

learning, research, assignments, academic development, and self-learning.

The major advantages identified from the study include:

- Quick and convenient access to information.
- Availability of current and updated information.
- Access to a wide range of scholarly resources.
- Support for teaching, learning, and research activities.
- Easy access from different locations through the internet.
- Ability to search and retrieve information efficiently.
- Support for academic and professional development.

8. Problems and Dissatisfaction

Although electronic resources provide numerous benefits, some respondents experienced difficulties in using them effectively. The major problems reported or identified during the study include:

- Slow internet connectivity.
- Difficulties in browsing and searching for relevant information.
- Limited information-search skills among some users.
- Difficulty in identifying appropriate electronic resources.
- Lack of adequate user guidance and training.
- Time required to locate relevant information from large quantities of online resources.

These problems indicate the need for academic libraries to provide appropriate user-orientation programmes, information-literacy training, and continuous assistance to improve the effective utilization of electronic resources.

9. Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. All **77 respondents (100%)** reported using internet services.
2. Male respondents constituted **57.14%**, while female respondents constituted **42.86%** of the sample.
3. Faculty members represented the largest category of respondents, accounting for **58.44%**.
4. Postgraduate students constituted **28.57%**, while research scholars represented **12.99%** of the respondents.
5. Internet-use experience varied among male and female respondents.
6. Faculty members constituted the largest proportion across the different categories of internet-use experience.
7. **Google was the most frequently preferred search engine**, used by 75 of the 77 respondents.
8. Only two respondents reported using search engines other than Google.
9. Slow internet connectivity and limited searching skills were identified as important barriers to effective utilization of electronic resources.
10. The findings emphasize the need for continuous information-literacy and user-awareness programmes in academic libraries.

10. Conclusion

The study concludes that internet services and electronic resources play an important role in supporting the academic activities of faculty members, research scholars, and postgraduate students of Don Bosco College, Yelagiri. All the respondents reported using internet services, demonstrating the importance of digital information resources in the academic environment.

The study also found that Google was the most frequently preferred search engine among the respondents. Although electronic resources provide quick and convenient access to current information, some users experience difficulties due to slow internet connectivity and limited information-search skills. Academic libraries should therefore strengthen their electronic resource services and provide regular **information-literacy programmes, user-orientation programmes, database-search training, and technical guidance**. Improving internet infrastructure and providing effective user support will help faculty members, research scholars, and students make better use of available electronic resources.

Further studies may be undertaken using a larger sample and appropriate probability-sampling techniques, such as **stratified random sampling**, to obtain more comprehensive findings regarding electronic resource utilization among different categories of academic users.

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