THE USE OF INTERNET AND ONLINE DATABASES AT NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY, KANNUR: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Adequate knowledge about information seeking behavior of users is vital for developing library services and facilities to meet their information needs effectively. This article examines the use of internet and online databases of students of National Institute of Fashion Technology, Kannur. Data was collected using questionnaire method. The present study evaluates the various aspects of use of internet, search engines and online databases etc. Suggestions have been given to make the better use of internet and online databases for the academic purpose. The result also indicated that all IT based resources and facilities are not sufficient to the users.

Key words: NIFT, Kannur, Resource Centre, Internet, Online Databases, Fashion Technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Information has become one of the basic needs of human being. It has an important role in decision making, planning, research and every developmental activity. It is an indispensible tool to students and teachers. Information professionals are always keep in finding out way and how user seek information, for enhancing their information provision.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has brought about radical changes in the way in which libraries collect, preserve and disseminate information. Libraries can build up live and balanced collections on the basis of feedback from the users. Such knowledge will help to set up effective system in coherence with user expectations. Here in this study an attempt has been made to know the use of internet and online databases of students of National Institute of Fashion Technology, Kannur.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The information seeking behaviour study named variedly as information needs studies, use-studies, information transfer studies, communication behaviour studies, dissemination and utilization studies are closely related, and are often not precisely defined. The first basic user study in the broader sense was undertaken by Menzel[1] and defined information seeking behaviour from three angles:

(i) when approached from the point of view of the scientists or technologists, these are studies of scientists' communication behaviour;

(ii) when approached from the point of view of any communication medium, they are use studies; and

(iii) when approached from the science communication system, they are studies in the flow of information among scientists and technologists.

Gopalakrishnan and Ramesh Babu[2] (2004) conducted a study on the information requirements of the faculty members of National Institutes of Fashion Technology in India. The study suggested that the resource centres of NIFT concentrate in acquiring more resources, computerizing housekeeping activities and their networking.

Singh[3] (2010) conducted a study to determine the information seeking behaviour of science faculty members of government colleges of Haryana. Data was collected by using a questionnaire. It was found that respondents used various sources for acquiring the needed information. Books 39.5 percent were ranked as the most important source, followed by internet 33.9 per cent. The results also indicate that almost all the IT based resources and facilities were not satisfactory.

Bindu Sharma, and Sangita Gupta[4] (2012) made a survey to explore the information seeking behavior of the faculty members at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agriculture Science and Technology, Jammu. Data was collected by using questionnaire from 83 faculty members. Findings reveal that internet was used daily (90.90%) by most of the faculty. Google (86.36%) and Yahoo (47.72%) were the most often used search engines by the faculty. The problems faced by them was slow speed of internet access.

Venkatesuku, Tulasi Ram and Sreenivasulu [5] (2013) conducted a survey on the use of e-resources in universities of Tirupati. Data was collected through structured questionnaire. The study found that majority of the respondents (93.24%) use e-resources for preparation of class notes and followed by one going studies (63.99%), project works (49.37%), and seminars (28.93%). It reveled that respondents access required information through e-journals (78.14%), search engines (66.98%), e-books (43.87%) and online databases (25.16%). The study suggested that all university libraries to form consortia to meet the needs of the users.

Hence, it is clear that ISB of an individual is influenced by innumerable factors, but any study has to make its own assumptions taking into consideration the respondents of the study.

3. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study was limited to the students of National Institute of Fashion Technology, Kannur. The primary objective of the study is to find out the use of internet and online databases of students of NIFT, Kannur. The following are the specific objectives of the study:

1. To know the sources used by students for getting their required information;
2. To assess the use of internet and the purpose for which it is used;
3. To examine the various search engines used by the users to reach the required information;
4. To observe and analyse the use of online databases for getting the required information; and
5. To get suggestions from the users for the improvement of the library.

4. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY

National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) was set up in 1986 under the aegis of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. It has emerged as the premier Institute of Design, Management and Technology, developing professionals for taking up leadership positions in fashion business in the emerging global scenario. NIFT has been granted statutory status under the act of Parliament of India in 2006, empowering the Institute to award degrees and other academic distinctions. The Institute is a pioneer in envisioning and evolving fashion business education in the country through a network of fifteen professionally managed domestic centres. National Institute of Fashion Technology at Kannur, Kerala was set up in the year 2008.

The NIFT, Kannur, resource centre / library which collectively support the teaching, research and extension programmes of the institute. All students, faculty members and employees of the institute are entitled to make use of the library facilities on taking membership. The library contains the collection of books on fashion technology, textiles science, clothing technology, arts and crafts and management etc. The library is providing internet facility and subscribing online databases like 'WGSN, ProQuest ABI, Style Sight.com, Just-Style.com' to students and faculty members.

5. METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire and interview techniques are used for collection of primary data. The number of students studying in NIFT, Kannur is 298. As the population is large, the investigator selected sample from 3rd year and 4th year students i.e. 112 no of students by census method. The response rate is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of questionnaires and users' response rate

S. No.	Course	No. of Questionnaires distributed	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Apparel production	51	47	92.15
2	Textile Design	61	54	88.52
	Total	112	101	90.17

The average response rate is 90.17 per cent.

5.1 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The collected data were analyzed according to the objectives and hypotheses stated. First the data was recorded on data sheets and entered into the computer. Descriptive and statistical techniques are used for the analysis of data. The calculations like percentages were done with the help of MS-Excel.

6. SOURCES OF INFORMATION CONSULTED

Information plays a key role in academic progress of students. In order to know the various sources of information consulted by students, a question has been put to them. The replies given by them are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Sources of information consulted

S. No.	Sources of Information	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Library	22	21.78
2	Faculty members of the Institute	16	15.84
3	Working professionals in the industry	4	3.96
4	Internet	51	50.50
5	Interaction with friends	8	7.92
	Total	101	100

The data in Table 2 reveal that half of the respondents are consulting Internet 51 (50.50%) for getting their required information. It is also evident from the table that 22 (21.78%) of them are using library, 16 (15.84%) of them are getting information from the faculty, 8 (7.92%) of them are getting information by interacting with friends and remaining 3.96 per cent of them are getting information by consulting working professionals. Hence, it can be inferred that due to easy accessibility and availability of up to date information of internet and library are used by most of the respondents for the required information.

6.1 Utilization of internet for information seeking

Internet is an electronic communication device. It is a network of networks spread all over the world. Online access to information became an essential service in the contemporary information environment to provide the user with real time, shared information. In order to know the utilization of internet, a question has been put to them. The replies given by them are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Use of Internet

S. No.	Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Used	101	100
2	Not used	0	0
	Total	101	100

It is obvious from Table 3 that all the respondents 100 % are using Internet for their studies.

6.2 Convenient centre for internet browsing

To know the convenient place for browsing internet, a question has been put to them. The replies given by them are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Opinions on convenient centre for internet browsing

S. No.	Convenient Centre	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Library	15	14.85
2	Computer centre	4	3.96
3	Hostel	5	4.95
4	Internet café	2	1.98
5	Personal laptop	75	74.26
	Total	101	100

The data in Table 4 reveal that most of the respondents 75 (74.26%) are browsing internet from their personal laptops. It is also obvious from the table that 15 (14.85%) of them are browsing internet from library, 5 (4.95%) from hostel, 4 (3.96%) from institute's computer centre and the remaining 2 (1.98%) are browsing internet from internet cafe.

6.3 Frequency of internet access

To know the frequency of internet access, a question has been posed to the students. The replies given by them are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Frequency of internet access

S. No.	Frequency	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Daily	96	95.05
2	Twice in a week	4	3.96
3	Once in a week	1	0.99
4	Rarely	0	0.00
	Total	101	100

Table 5 shows the frequency of internet access by the students of NIFT, Kannur. It is evident from the table that most of the respondents 96 (95.05%) are using internet daily. It is also evident from the table that 4 (3.96%) of them are using internet twice in a week, followed by once in a week 1 (0.99%).

6.4 Purpose of internet use

The respondents generally use internet for various purposes namely education, news, entertainment, health care, sports etc. In order to know the purpose of internet use, a question has been put to them. The replies given by them are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Purpose of internet use

S. No.	Purpose	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Education	90	89.11
2	News	23	22.77
3	Entertainment	74	73.27
4	Healthcare	15	14.85
5	Sports	56	55.45

(Respondents were permitted to tick more than one answer)

It can be observed from Table 6 that most of the respondents 90 (89.11%) replied that internet is used for education purpose. It is evident from the table that 74 (73.27%) replied that internet is used for entertainment. Internet is also used by the respondents for sports 56 (55.45%), news 23 (22.77%) and healthcare 15 (14.85%).

6.5 Use of search engines

Search engine is an information retrieval system designed to provide access to electronic information in networked computer system on the web. It is an interactive tool to help people to locate information available on the Internet. A question has been put to the respondents to know the search engines used for getting the required information. The replies given by them are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Frequently used search engines

S. No.	Search engines	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	www.altavista.com	3	2.97
2	www.google.com	83	82.18
3	www.go2.com	4	3.96
4	www.yahoo.com	9	8.91
5	Others	2	1.98
	Total	101	100

It is evident from Table 7 that most of respondents are using Google search engine 83 (82.18%). The secondly used search engine is Yahoo 9 (8.91%). The other search engines used by them are Go2 4 (3.96%) and Altavista 3 (2.97%).

The other search engines used by the students are 2 (1.98%) i.e. answers.com, ask.com, askjeeves.com, MSN.com and infoseek.com.

6.6 Use of online databases

The library has been subscribing 'WGSN', 'ProQuest', 'StyleSight' and 'Just-Style' online databases to students and faculty members. In order to know the use of online databases, a question has been put to them. The replies given by them are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Use of online databases

S. No.	Online Database	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	WGSN	48	47.52
2	ProQuest	15	14.85
3	StyleSight	27	26.73
4	Just-Style	11	10.89
	Total	101	100

It can be observed from Table 8 that most of the respondents 48 (47.52%) are using WGSN online databases available in the library. It is evident from the table that online databases used for StyleSight 27 (26.73%), ProQuest 15 (14.85%) and remaining 11 (10.89%) of them are using Just-Style for their studies.

7. SUGGESTIONS

The following important suggestions can be focused:
1. High speed internet connectivity is required for fast browsing of internet.
2. The number of Wi-fi systems must be increased in the campus for Internet access.
3. Electronic learning courses / classes should be arranged in the campus.
4. To have network connectivity with other libraries of NIFTs and other fashion institutions in the world.
5. The union catalogue of all the libraries of NIFT should be available on online (Web OPAC) to the users 24 X 7.

8. CONCLUSION

This study clearly reveals that majority of the students in NIFT, Kannur depends on internet 50.50 per cent and library 21.78 per cent for their information requirements. Most of the respondents are browsing internet through their personal laptops 74.26 per cent and library 21.78 per cent. It also indicates that they are using mainly internet for education 89.11 per cent and entertainment 73.26 per cent.

It is also observed that students are frequently using the search engines are google.com 82.11 per cent, and yahoo.com 8.91 percent. The results of the study advocate for the expeditious networking of all the NIFT libraries in India and to provide user orientation programmes on online databases.

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