USE OF THE INTERNET AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE BY ENGINEERING FACULTY AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS AND ITS IMPACT ON LIBRARIES OF REGIONAL ENGINEERING COLLEGES OF INDIA: A STUDY

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Abstract

An attempt has been made to study the use of the Internet as an Information Source among engineering faculty and Research Scholars and the impact of Internet technology on Libraries of National Institutes of Technology in India to enhance the optimization of rich information resources and services on the net to the academic and research pursuit of netizens. The nature of the research study, keeping in view the population to be covered, their characteristics and the technology employed, has necessitated a multi-methodological strategy to collect and analyze the data by using survey research methods which includes Questionnaire, Interview and Observation, as a means to elicit information pertaining to this study. A total of 850 questionnaires and Interview Schedules were distributed to the faculty and research scholars, 665 questionnaires were duly obtained with a response rate of 78.24%. Further, a total of 17 questionnaires were distributed to the Librarians of Regional Engineering Colleges in India, out of which 10 were duly obtained, with a feedback of 58.82%.

The most popular perception of Internet technology is ‘Wealth of huge useful current information’ and E-mail service and World Wide Web (WWW) are the most frequently used Internet services among the engineering community and opined fairly better satisfaction with the current state of Internet to support in their academic and research activities. The research study encompasses independent variables mainly Designation, Age, Qualification, Teaching and Research Experience and Formal Training of respondents. In this paper, efforts were made to examine the relationship between the variables Use of Internet (UOI) and Level of Satisfaction (LOS), as a two major dependent variables of the research study. The various dimensions included are quantification of these two variables.

To evaluate multiple effects, a set of four variables i.e. age, teaching and research experience and level of satisfaction were put to Regression Analysis to see the multiple effects on variable Use of Internet. The variable LOS has emerged as the most affecting the dependent variable that means affecting the dependent variables i.e. Use of Internet. Thus, there is very high correlation between variables, Use of Internet and Level of satisfaction. The co-efficient of correlation is also statistically significant showing high positive correlation, which implies that higher the level of satisfaction, higher will be the use of Internet. This has resulted in coming out with a mathematical – regression model in which the results of Regression analysis shows that, the four variables age, teaching and research experience and level of satisfaction put together explains 39 per cent of variance in variable Use of Internet (UOI). Further, the areas in which Internet technology has been employed in Library in-house activities and services of NITs were also discussed along with a regression model of optimum use and access. The challenges to optimize the Internet services and tools and provide user education and training has been felt, posing a challenge for Library managers to take a lead in providing Internet services.