Use of Wi-fi Internet by the Students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore

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ABSTRACT
An exploratory research was conducted involving 147 students to know the use of wi-fi internet by the students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU). The purpose of using internet, perception on present status of wi-fi, perceived problems and suggestions for improving wi-fi connection in the University were studied. For academic purpose 22.45 per cent students used daily for preparing assignments, followed by weekly (40.82%), monthly (27.89%) and rarely (8.84%). For entertainment purpose 28.57 per cent students used daily for watching video songs or movies, followed by weekly (31.29%), monthly (6.12%), rarely (21.08%) and 12.94 per cent never used. To download reading materials 17.68 per cent students used daily, followed by weekly (34.69%), monthly (29.25%), rarely (13.60%) and 4.78 per cent never used. Social networks like facebook was used daily (40.13%), followed by weekly (23.12%), monthly (6.12%), rarely (10.88%) and never (19.75%). Students used wi-fi to purchase books monthly (3.40%), rarely (65.99%) and never (30.61%). A very meager proportion of the respondents felt that the status of the wi-fi connectivity is good (3.40%), followed by average (42.86%) and poor (53.74%). Nearly two third of the students perceived the problem of slow connection (65.98%), followed by power failure (21.08%) and lack of proper maintenance (5.46%). A little more than two fifth of the respondents suggested the increase of band width/speed (41.50%), followed by increase access points (20.40%) and regular monitoring of the connection (8.16%).

Key words : wi-fi internet

Information is probably the biggest advantage internet offers. Internet is a virtual treasure trove of information. Any kind of information on any topic under the sun is available on the internet. Students are the top users who surf the internet. Among the different internet connections wi-fi is one of the newest types. Wireless internet provides an always-on connection which can be accessed from anywhere as long as you are geographically within a network coverage area. Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) is completely enabled with wi-fi internet connectivity. Students can make use of this opportunity in the departments, hostels and round the campus. At this juncture a study was conducted to know the use of wi-fi internet by the Post-Graduate (PG) students of TNAU.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) to know the use of wi-fi internet by the students. Exploratory research design was used to gain a deep insight into the topic. One hundred fourty seven (147) students were sampled for the study. The variables like purpose of using internet, perception on present status of wi-fi, perceived problems and suggestions for improving wi-fi connection in the University were studied. The purpose of using internet was divided in terms of academic, entertainment, downloading, social networking and purchasing. A pre-tested questionnaire was established among the respondents. Frequency and percentage were calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion are presented under following sub headings as given below

1. Purpose of using internet
2. Perception on present status of wi-fi in the University
3. Perceived problems with wi-fi in the University
4. Suggestions for improving wi-fi in the University

1. Purpose of using internet

The results of the purpose of using internet namely academic, entertainment, downloading, social networking and purchasing is presented in Table 1. For academic purpose 22.45 per cent students used daily for preparing assignments, followed by weekly (40.82%), monthly (27.89%) and rarely (8.84%). For reading course materials 22.44 per cent students used daily, followed by weekly (36.06%), monthly (20.40%), rarely (19.04%) and 2.06 per cent never used. To search references 25.86 per cent students used daily, followed by weekly (34.69%), monthly (12.92%), rarely (20.40%) and 6.13 per cent never used. 15.64 per cent students used daily to study general things, followed by weekly (19.72%), monthly (27.22%), rarely (28.58%) and 8.84 per cent never used.

For entertainment purpose 28.57 per cent students used daily for Watching video songs or movies, followed by weekly (31.29%), monthly (6.12%), rarely (21.08%) and 12.94 per cent never used. For playing games 7.48 per cent students used daily, followed by weekly (3.40%), monthly (5.44%), rarely (18.36%) and 65.32 per cent never used. 12.92 per cent students used wi-fi daily just like that, followed by weekly (0.68%), monthly (4.08%), rarely (29.26%) and 53.06 per cent never used. The findings are in accordance with that reported by Johnson (2007).

To download reading materials 17.68 per cent students used daily, followed by weekly (34.69%), monthly (29.25%), rarely (13.60%) and 4.78 per cent never used. For downloading music 12.24 per cent students used daily, followed by weekly (26.54%), monthly (12.24%), rarely (28.58%) and 20.40 per cent never used. 6.80 per cent students used wi-fi daily to download movies, followed by weekly (8.84%), monthly (5.44%), rarely (13.60%) and 65.32 per cent never used. This is in accordance with the findings of Hong *et. al.* (2003).

Social networks like facebook was used daily (40.13%), followed by weekly (23.12%), monthly (6.12%), rarely (10.88%) and never (19.75%). Students used orkut daily (3.40%), followed by weekly (6.12%), monthly (4.76%), rarely (17.00%) and never (68.72%). Skype was used daily (13.60%), followed by weekly (2.04%), monthly (5.44%), rarely (13.60%) and never (65.32%).

Students used wi-fi to purchase books monthly (3.40%), rarely (65.99%) and never (30.61%). Wi-fi was used monthly (2.04%) to purchase tickets, followed by rarely (86.39%) and never (11.56%). This is in accordance with that reported by Loan (2011).To purchase other than books and tickets 1.36 per cent students used wi-fi monthly, followed by rarely (35.37%) and never (63.27%). Students used internet various purposes like academic, entertainment, downloading, social networking and purchasing depending on need, necessity and time availability.

2. Perception on present status of wi-fi in the University

A very meager proportion of the respondents felt that the status of the wi-fi connectivity is good (3.40%), followed by average (42.86%) and poor (53.74%) as depicted in Table 2.

3. Perceived problems with wi-fi in the University

The problems perceived with wi-fi in the University is shown in Table 3. Nearly two third of the students perceived the problem of slow connection (65.98%), followed by power failure (21.08%), lack of proper maintenance (5.46%), limited access points (2.04%) and old systems in computer center (0.68%). The reasons why a greater proportion of the students felt the wi-fi connectivity is below average is because of the problems that they perceived. However suggestions were also asked to solve their problems.

Table 1. Distribution of respondent students according to the purpose of using internet.

n=147

Sl.No.	Purpose	Daily		Weekly		Monthly		Rarely		Never	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	**Academic**										
i	Preparing Assignments	33	22.45	60	40.82	41	27.89	13	8.84	—	—
ii	Reading course materials	33	22.44	53	36.06	30	20.40	28	19.04	3	2.06
iii	Search References	38	25.86	51	34.69	19	12.92	30	20.40	9	6.13
iv	General study	23	15.64	29	19.72	40	27.22	42	28.58	13	8.84
2	**Entertainment**										
i	Watching video songs or movies	42	28.57	46	31.29	9	6.12	31	21.08	19	12.94
ii	Playing games	11	7.48	5	3.40	8	5.44	27	18.36	96	65.32
iii	Just like that	19	12.92	1	0.68	6	4.08	43	29.26	78	53.06
3	**Downloading**										
i	Reading materials	26	17.68	51	34.69	43	29.25	20	13.60	7	4.78
ii	Music	18	12.24	39	26.54	18	12.24	42	28.58	30	20.40
iii	Movies	10	6.80	13	8.84	8	5.44	32	21.76	84	57.16
4	**Social Networking**										
i	Facebook	59	40.13	34	23.12	9	6.12	16	10.88	29	19.75
ii	Orkut	5	3.40	9	6.12	7	4.76	25	17.00	101	68.72
iii	Skype	2	13.60	3	2.04	8	5.44	20	13.60	114	65.32
5	**Purchasing**										
i	Books	—	—	—	—	5	3.40	97	65.99	45	30.61
ii	Tickets	—	—	—	—	3	2.04	127	86.39	17	11.56
iii	Others	—	—	—	—	2	1.36	52	35.37	93	63.27

Table 2. Distribution of respondents students according to their perception on present status of Wi-Fi in the University.

Sl.No.	Wi-fi status	No	%
1	Good	5	3.40
2	Average	63	42.86
3	Poor	79	53.74
	Total	147	100.00

Table 3. Distribution of respondents students based on their perceived problems with Wi-Fi connection

Sl.No.	Problem	No	%
1	Slow connection	97	65.98
2	Power failure	31	21.08
3	No proper maintenance	8	5.46
4	Lack of skills	7	4.76
5	Limited access points	3	2.04
6	Old systems in computer center	1	0.68
	Total	147	100

Table 4. Distribution of respondents students based on the suggestions given for improving internet connection in the University.

Sl.No.	Suggestion	No	%
1	Increase band width/speed	61	41.50
2	Increase access points	30	20.40
3	Regular monitoring of the connection	12	8.16
4	Give separate data cards	7	4.76
5	Replace old systems in computer center	6	4.08
6	Good connection to main college building	5	3.40
7	Block unused websites	5	3.40
8	Reduce power cuts	4	2.72
9	Ban social networks	4	2.72
10	Appoint representatives for checking net connection	3	2.04
11	Provide Uninterrupted Power Supply	3	2.04
12	Organizing awareness classes on usage	3	2.04
13	Limited usage of internet for each point	2	1.36
14	Limited hours connection	2	1.36
	Total	147	100.00

4. Suggestions for improving wi-fi in the University

A little more than two fifth of the respondents suggested the increase of band width/ speed (41.50%), followed by increase access points (20.40%), regular monitoring of the connection (8.16%), give separate data cards (4.76%), replace old systems in computer center (4.08%), good connection to main college building & block unused websites (3.40%), reduce power cuts & ban social networks (2.72%), appoint representatives for checking net connection, provide uninterrupted power supply & organizing awareness classes on usage (2.04%), limited usage of internet for each point & limited hours connection (1.36%) as presented in Table 4.

The research findings would enable the TNAU authorities to formulate strategies so as to improve and strengthen the wi-fi connectivity in the university. The reasons for just average rating of wi-fi connectivity could be rectified by taking the suggestions of the respondents into consideration.

LITERATURE CITED

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