Assessment of Basic Computer and Internet Skills among Students in Rural Areas of Prakasam District: A Study

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the information about the computer knowledge and internet skills of the rural youth in Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh. Computer knowledge and internet skills are compulsory in the present work in particularly for the rural students who are pursuing degree and post graduation. The Internet can be known as a kind of global meeting place where people from all parts of the world can come together. The government departments, private companies and nongovernmental organisations are advertising the information in their websites, blogs and job search sites. Due to lack of internet skills, communication skills, computer knowledge the rural urban poor youth are in back to get the jobs. Very les studies are available on the present issue. Based on the situation the present article has through a light on the issue. The objective is to assess the computer knowledge and internet skills among the rural students who are above Intermediate.

Prakasam district has been selected as the research setting for this study. Based on the review of literature the interview schedule has been prepared and collected data from 70 college students who represented from rural areas and small towns. The major findings in the study are 54 per cent of the respondents are males and 46 per cent of the respondents are females. 74.3 per cent of the respondents is having the computer knowledge and only 25.7 per cent of the respondents are not having the Computer knowledge. 71.4 per cent of the respondents are not having the power point presentation skills.

Government should have to organize the trainings on computers and internet in rural areas as well as small towns in Andhra Pradesh. Women participation in learning technology is very less. Government and colleges should have to focus on women to increase the learning ability among girls

Key words: rural youth, computer, internet skills, assessment

Computer knowledge and internet skills are an important to the rural students to access the information of jobs, academic, business, teaching, agriculture etc to their development. The basic skills we required in the computers are MS Word, Excel and Power point. The Internet has grown so fast and wide that there is tremendous clogging happening on the Net. The Internet can be known as a kind of global meeting place where people from all parts

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of the world can come together. The major advantages of internet are Email, accessibility of more Information, many online services like online banking, job seeking and applications, and hotel services, research, communication, entertainment, marketing buy or sell products, friend's communities, online chat, downloading software, songs and movies. The major disadvantages through internet are hijacking personal information such as name, address, bank details, pass words etc, pornography, spamming, hocking and computer virus.

India is the world's second most populous nation, with a population of over one billion. India generally respects the right to free speech and the right to publish sensitive materials. It is estimated there are forty-eight million internet users are accessing the internet. It is the fifth largest in the world. But we compare with Indian population it is just 5.4 percent of the country's population in 2006 (World Bank 2006). Access is gradually expanding from the most heavily populated urban cities to small towns. According to the IIS there are 35 per cent of the urban population are accessing the internet and it is reported that only 4.5 per cent of the rural people are accessing the Internet in the rural areas of India. Dept of telecommunication (2007) stated that it may the reason that majority 71 per cent of the people in India is living in rural areas where network facilities are not available and the human resources are also less. Department of Telecommunications (DOT, 2008) announced that it would be installing filtering mechanisms at India's international gateways. The head of the Internet Service Providers Association of India (ISPAI) stated that these new "landing stations" would be able to both engage in centralized filtering of Web sites and blocking of VoIP telephony services such as Yahoo, MSN, and Skype (and many more) that have not technically been approved to provide these services in India

Purpose of the study

Computer knowledge and internet skills are compulsory in the present work in particularly for the rural students who are pursuing degree and post graduation. The Internet can be known as a kind of global meeting place where people from all parts of the world can come together. The government departments, private companies and nongovernmental organisations are advertising the information in their websites, blogs and job search sites.
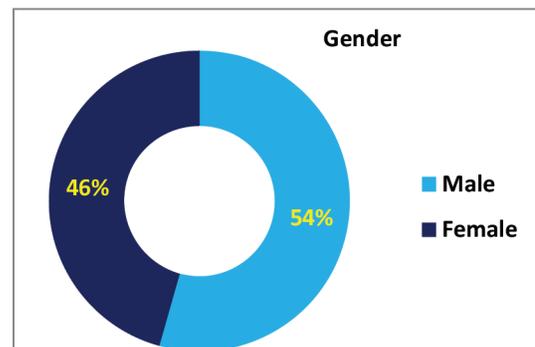
Due to lack of internet skills, communication skills, computer knowledge the rural urban poor youth are in back to get the jobs. It is one of the social issue which coated with technology. Very les studies are available on the present issue. Based on the situation the present article has through a light on the issue.

The major objectives

of the study are to assess the computer knowledge and internet skills among the rural students who are above +2. Another objective is to provide the suggestions to promote the computer and internet skills among rural youth.

Methodology

Prakasam district has been selected as the research setting for this study. It is one of the backward districts in Andhra Pradesh. Based on the review of literature the interview schedule has been prepared and collected data from 70 college students who represented from rural areas and small towns. The study used purposive sampling method to select the sample. The data analysed through SPSS 16 version and cross tables and chi square tests has been conducted to know about the association. The study conducted in small geographical area and the finding may not generalize to other areas.

Data Analysis and Findings

The data has been analysed and presented bellow in tables and graphs. Those give the information about the knowledge level of youth in rural and semi urban areas of Prakasam district. Male and female both are involved in this study and shared their views. The graph presents the information about sex of respondents. The data shows that majority 54 per cent of the respondents are males and 46 per cent of the respondents are females. The

graph shows that almost both genders are participated equally in the present study.

Table 1: Computer and Internet Skills

Sl. No	Computer and Internet Skills	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	52	74.3
2	No	18	25.7
Total		70	100.0

The below table present the information about the computer and internet skills among the students. Table no 1 presents the information about the computer knowledge among respondents. The data shows that majority 74.3 per cent of the respondents is having the computer knowledge and only 25.7 per cent of the respondents are not having the Computer knowledge. It may be the reason that due to less knowledge, lack of internet facilities in rural areas and etc. the table no 2 presents the information about the reasons to not having the computer and internet skills. The data shows that majority 55.6 per cent of the respondents have stated that they do not have the computer and internet skills. 33.3 per cent of the respondents stated that there are no internet facilities in rural villages and also small towns in Prakasam district. 11.1 per cent stated that there is a bad propaganda on internet usage. Because it has a misconceptions among the rural people that who are going to internet hey access the pornography. Due to this reasons few of the respondents are not visited the internet centers. Power point presentation is a basic method to present/communicate company information to others. The organisation checks this skill before the jobs. The below table present the information about the power point skills among respondents. The data shows that majority 71.4 per cent of the respondents are not having the power point presentation skills. Among them few are not heard about the power point. 28.6 per cent of the respondents have known about the power point presentation.

Table 2: Reasons for less computer and internet skills

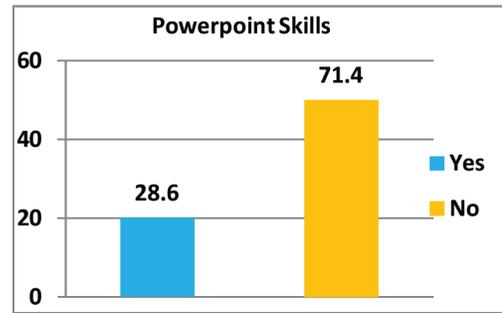| Sl. No	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
1	Internet facility is not available	6	33.3
2	Less computer skills and internet skills	10	55.6
3	Bad propaganda by other students	2	11.1
Total		18	100

Table 3: Usage of Internet

Sl. No	Use of Internet	Frequency	Percent
1	Daily	10	14.3
2	once in week	34	48.6
3	Once in a month	26	37.1
Total		70	100.0

The table no. 3 present the information about the how often the respondents usages the internet. The data shows that majority 48.6 per cent of the respondents are use internet once in a week and followed by 37.1 per cent of the respondents are use internet once in month and very less per cent (14.3) respondents are using internet daily. It is reported by the World Bank that in India the persons will be used internet 8.2 hours per month. The study is not in line with World Bank findings because majority of the respondents are visiting the internet once in a week or month.

Table 4: Sex and how often respondents use internet

Sex	Daily	Once in week	Once in a month	Total
Male	10 - (26.4)	14 - (36.8)	14 - (36.8)	38
Female	00	20 - (62.6)	12 - (37.4)	32
Total	10	34	26	70
Chi-Square	10.778	Significance		.005

The data relating to the how often of usage internet and sex of the respondents are cross tabulated and presented in the following table to know whether there is an association between two variables. The data shows that there are no girls among daily net browsers. Majority of the women browse internet once in a week. There is an association between sex and how often the respondents visit the internet centers at significance of .005.

Email

14%

86%

■ Yes
■ No

The graph presents the information about the availability of Email for the respondents. The data shows that majority 85.7 per cent of the respondents are having the email IDs and only 14.3 per cent of the respondents are not having the email IDs. The government of Andhra Pradesh has increased the usage of technology. As per the Government every students have an Email to access the information about their scholarships and some of the companies are encouraging Emails for all the communication. Based on the above background majority of the students are having the Email IDs. The data has cross tabulated with sex and it has significance at 0.021.

The communication system in the society has been increased. It is observed that before 2000 we see the cell phones very rare. But the cellular phone is a need for every person. If any person forgot to bring their cell phone from their home their mind may not work properly and they always think about phone calls and cell phone. That influence has been done mobile cellular phones in India. The below table 5 presents the information on availability of personal mobile cellular phone. The data shows that majority 97.1 per cent of the respondents are having the cell phones and remaining 2.9 per cent respondents are not having the cell phones.
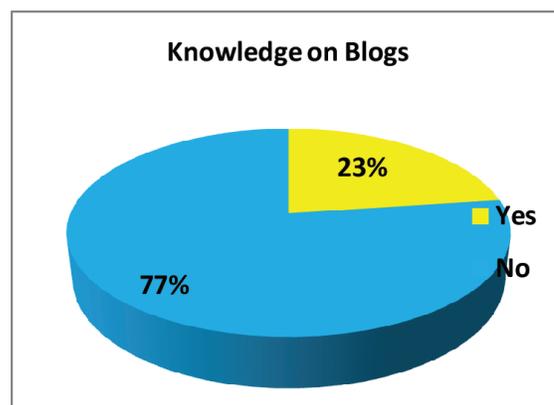
Table 5: Cell Phone

Sl. No	Cell phone	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	68	97.1
2	No	2	2.9

Table 6: Search Engine

Sl. No	search engine	Frequency	Percent
1	Google	28	40.0
2	yahoo	20	28.6
3	no idea	22	31.4
Total		70	100.0

The Internet is a huge resource with millions of websites and web pages. To search on the internet the browsers need to use a search engine. Browser searches almost anything on the internet, from recipes and local news through to photos of your favourite footballer or singer. There are lots of different search engines like Google, yahoo and live search etc. The below table 6 presents the information about the respondents status on usage of Internet. The data shows that majority 40 per cent of the respondents are using the Google search engine and 31.4 per cent of the respondents stated that they do not knowledge on the meaning of search engine and 28.6 per cent of the respondents are using the yahoo.com. It is stated that majority of the people are using the Google for searching the information.

Knowledge on Blogs

23%

77%

■ Yes
No

The below graph present the information about the status of the respondents on having the blogs. Blogs are the platforms for many professions in Internet. The professionals create a blog with their profession and invite all the persons who are in the same profession. They may have the discussions related to profession and personal problems. The data shows that majority 77.1 per cent of the respondents is not having the knowledge on blogs and 22.9 per cent of the respondents are having the knowledge on blogs. It is stated that the respondents who stated yes are not written any information in blogs. They just heard about the blogs.

The below table 7 presents the information about the respondents status on using of social media sites. The data shows majority 62.8 per cent of the respondents are having the accounts in Social Media sited and 30 per cent of the respondents are not having an account and 7.1 per cent respondents stated that they do not know about

social media sites. Many of the respondents are using the face book to share or chat with their friend.

Table 7: Usage of Social Media

Sl. No	account in Social Media	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	44	62.8
2	No	21	30
3	No Idea	5	7.1
Total		70	100.0

The below chart present the information about the status of the respondents on having the face book account. The data shows that majority 54.3 per cent of the respondents are not having the face book account and 45.7 per cent are having the face book account. It is stated majority of respondents stated that they use face book for posting photos, images, find out old friends and chatting with friends.
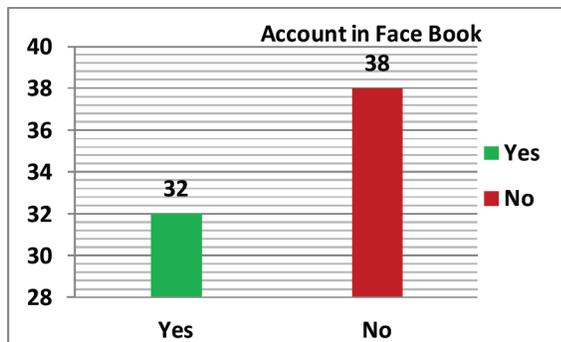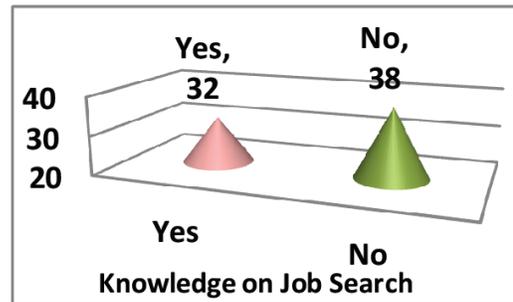

Account in Face Book

Table 8: Sex and face book

Sex	Yes	No	Total
male	24	14	38
female	8	24	32
Total	32	38	70
Chi-Square Tests	10.192	Significance	0.001

The table 8 presents the information about the relationship between the sex and having face book account. It is cross tabulated and done chi-square test to assess the relationship. The data shows that majority of the boys are having the face book account that female and it is also reported that majority of women are not having the face book account. Internet is one of the sources for using all the languages. But majority of the people do not have the knowledge on the usage of local language and struggle to use the internet in English.

Table no: 9 Usage of Telugu language

S. No	Telugu	Frequency	Percent
1	yes	10	14.3
2	no	60	85.7
Total		70	100.0

Knowledge on Job Search

The table 9 presents the information about the status of respondents on using the Telugu local language in internet. The data shows that majority 85.7 per cent of the respondents is not aware on usage of Telugu in internet and 14.3 per cent of the respondents are having the knowledge in use of Telugu in internet. The above graph present the information about the respondents knowledge on searching about Internet jobs. The data shows that majority 54.3 per cent of the respondents were not aware on searching the jobs in internet and followed by 45.7 per cent of the respondents are having the knowledge on usage of sites for their job searching. The cross table no 10 present the relationship between the sex and knowledge on job search. The data revealed that majority of the male have knowledge on job search than the girls. The table has significance at .001 and the chi-square value is 10.192. Overall observation of the activities the girls are little bit poor in Internet than the boys. The boys are accessing the internet sources whereas women are not accessing the Internet source.

Table 10: Sex and knowledge on searching jobs

sex	Yes	No	Total
male	24	14	38
female	8	24	32
Total	32	38	70
Chi-Square	10.192	Significance	.001

Major Findings of the study

The findings of the study have been taken from the data

collected from 70 students in Prakasam District, Ongole. The major findings are

◆ Majority 54 per cent of the respondents are males and 46 per cent of the respondents are females. Majority 74.3 per cent of the respondents is having the computer knowledge and only 25.7 per cent of the respondents are not having the Computer knowledge.

◆ Majority 55.6 per cent of the respondents have stated that they do not have the computer and internet skills. 33.3 per cent of the respondents stated that there are no internet facilities in rural villages and also small towns in Prakasam district. 11.1 per cent stated that there is a bad propaganda on internet usage.

◆ Majority 71.4 per cent of the respondents are not having the power point presentation skills. Among them few are not heard about the power point. 28.6 per cent of the respondents have known about the power point presentation.

◆ Majority 48.6 per cent of the respondents are use internet once in a week and followed by 37.1 per cent of the respondents are use internet once in month and very less per cent (14.3) respondents are using internet daily. It is reported by the World Bank that in India the persons will be used internet 8.2 hours per month.

◆ Majority 97.1 per cent of the respondents are having the cell phones and remaining 2.9 per cent respondents are not having the cell phones.

◆ Majority 40 per cent of the respondents are using the Google search engine and 31.4 per cent of the respondents stated that they do not knowledge on the meaning of search engine and 28.6 per cent of the respondents are using the yahoo.com.

◆ Majority 77.1 per cent of the respondents is not having the knowledge on blogs and 22.9 per cent of the respondents are having the knowledge on blogs.

◆ Majority 62.8 per cent of the respondents are having the accounts in Social Media sited and 30 per cent of the respondents are not having an account and 7.1 per cent respondents stated that they do not know about social media sites.

◆ Majority 54.3 per cent of the respondents are not having the face book account and 45.7 per cent are having the face book account.

◆ Majority 85.7 per cent of the respondents is not aware on usage of Telugu in internet and 14.3 per cent of the respondents are having the knowledge in use of Telugu in internet.

◆ Majority 54.3 per cent of the respondents were not aware on searching the jobs in internet and followed by 45.7 per cent of the respondents are having the knowledge on usage of sites for their job searching.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Internet is a weapon to the educators to access the information of jobs, academic, business, teaching, agriculture etc to their development. According to the IIS there are 35 per cent of the urban population are accessing the internet and it is only 4.5 per cent in the rural area. Participation in access Internet by students and rural youth should be increase for the better life. The following suggestion may increase the participation of rural youth in Internet

◆ Government should have to organize the trainings on computers and internet in rural areas as well as small towns in Andhra Pradesh

◆ Provide the IEC material to rural youth to know about modes of access the internet sources. Need more training on internet skills

◆ NGOs organize vocational trainings on computer education and it should reach to grassroots particularly for rural villages

◆ Donors come forward to donate the computers to rural schools and rural welfare organisations to increase the accessibility of computers and internet in rural areas

◆ Women participation in learning technology is very less. Government and colleges should have to focus on women to increase the learning ability among girls

◆ Government should run an village information centers which helps rural formers to access the information about the agriculture through internet

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