



An Investigation of the Role of the Internet in Leisure Time Activities of Razi University Students

ENQUETE SUR LE ROLE DE L'INTERNET DANS LES LOISIRS DES ACTIVITES DU TEMPS DES ETUDIANT D'UNIVERSITE DE RAZI

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Abstract

In communication age, the Internet is presently seen as the most important phenomenon, and is accordingly regarded as one of the most influential means of communication used by university students. By the advent of the Internet in the field of education and the new communicative situations emerging, social systems shall undoubtedly witness significant alterations in how the youth spend their free time. For students to effectively utilize the tools on the web, their current free time internet usage habits should first be realized. This Research familiarizes us with the quality and quantity of students' internet usage in their free time.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the role and position of information technology at Razi University students' leisure time. Statistical society of this research is the 8563 students from the five faculties that are located on the university's main campus and are internet users in the University's IT center in the second semester of 2010-2011 educational year.

Key words: Razi university; Internet; Mass Media; Information Exchange.

Résumé

En ère de la communication, l'Internet est actuellement considéré comme le phénomène le plus important, et est donc considéré comme l'un des moyens les plus influents de communication utilisés par les étudiants universitaires. Par l'avènement de l'Internet dans le domaine de l'éducation et les nouvelles situations de communication

émergents, les systèmes sociaux sont sans aucun doute assister à des modifications importantes dans la façon dont les jeunes passent leur temps libre. pour les étudiants à utiliser efficacement les outils sur le web, leurs habitudes actuelles de libre utilisation de l'Internet en temps doivent d'abord être réalisé. Cette recherche nous familiarise avec la qualité et la quantité de l'utilisation d'Internet des étudiants dans leur libre dans le temps.

Le but de cet article est d'analyser le rôle et la position de technologie de l'information au moment de loisirs Razi étudiants de l'Université ». La société de statistique de cette recherche est les 8563 étudiants des cinq facultés qui sont situés sur le campus principal de l'université et sont utilisateurs d'Internet dans le Université de TI centre au second semestre de l'année 2010-2011 éducatif.

Mots-clés: Université de Razi ; Internet ; Les médias ; Echanges d'informations

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant characteristics of human life in 20th century and also the third millennium-at the beginning of which we are- is fundamental change and revaluation in all issues and its peripheral matters.

This revaluation is related to the quick progress of communication technology rather than any other factor. Although technology progress has resulted in welfare and relaxation of today's human beings, because of its incredible rapidity, human beings can't match or adjust themselves continuously to the changing conditions. So, mental and social inconveniences caused by the quick technological progress in addition to other problems,

threatens our lives. "Another feature of a world based on technology is its complexities; the more that human knowledge increases, and the more that human life's various infrastructures are mingled with science and knowledge, complexities are increased. So, today's man must be equipped with more skills and science to overcome his problems conveniently and easily" (Malekain, 2008, p. 4).

Due to the fact that a high percentage of our population, as a young country, is made up of university students, there is no doubt that managers must pay attention to young people and their needs.

When students enter universities, In addition to learning a special profession, they are equipped with social, communicative, informative, and other knowledge; this knowledge lends to increasing their expectations, and consequently their effort to attain those goals is increased. Students need to know about their peripheral environment, a knowledge which is important in the process of social, economic, and political change. Since accessing up to date domestic and international information needs a medium, new media has an important role as a means of communication.

Mass media instruments after several social revolutions that begun in the late 16th century in Europe and expanded in 17th and 18th centuries in countries like France and UK has gained several characteristics due to the important role that Radio, TV, Internet etc. play in human societies, so this age is called the age of information and technology. One of the most important functions and features that IT provides is the indirect contact between millions and billions of people.

Conceptual definition of IT

Salehi (2004, p. 92) believes that

Internet" is predicated to a universal setting of computers that exchange the information to all parts of the world and is one of the most widespread means of communication, education and research that in the eve of the third millennium will have significant success in education spectra for the higher education.

Conceptual definition of free time

Free time is a time that a responsible and dutiful person does not have any job or duty and he has enough time to do his work willingly. "In other words, vacuity or free time is a time that remains after doing the appointed duties of the day". (Afrooz, 1992, p. 124)

Nevertheless, university students because of this issue are exposed to IT, but their using it varies quantitatively and qualitatively.

In this research we plan to investigate the amount and quality of Razi University students' Internet usage in their free time. When young people enter the university they are faced with wider environment and more flexible educational programs and according to their age they have more free time. In this time if students plan for their free time logically and based on true needs, in addition to professional terms, they will learn necessary and peripheral skills of the time.

Since free time in today's society is one of the most important and basic issues in orienting people's talents we should investigate the factors that can affect it. Taha Amini (2006) asserts that our age is called communication and information age; mass Media's especially new technologies dispatch mass and different messages to their audiences. Hence, free time is a product of culture and technology progress, and today the most emphasis of sociologists is on how to spend free time, in addition to its cultural aspects in regard to maximizing the effectiveness in job force.

Free time is one of the most considerable moments that young students possess. An expression everyone talks about, and whoever hears it, is reminded of summer holidays. Yet there is free time in all days of the year for people, depending on their job and daily duties. Students are not an exception; every one according to society's changes and development course and pattern try to make best of this free time. Internet and virtual world is one of the cases that can be used by students for filling up their free time, whose usage is different according to people's viewpoints and personalities.

Bavakhani believes that:

"New technology with a harsh change has led to the formation of a new form of society, known as information society. Information specialists and experts believe that we face a huge ocean of information and data; we have to know how to dive rather than throw ourselves into this ocean. (2010, p.2)

In the recent years, with the increasing growth of internet, we are in contact with latest technologies and latest news and information internet, for increased utilization and users much accessibility in their free time, especially students, has devoted a special position to itself Right now. So, it seems that more students access to internet, the importance of research and investigation regard to student's utilization of IT is determined, Internet utilization, if in correct and suitable method be done, id providing mechanism for information collecting familiarization and student's free time.

Due to this matter that utilization fields of internet in many universities are getting increased and student's access to this technology, investigating its using scope, its application is inevitable. The purpose of this research is analysis of student's internet utilization, on a one hand, its effect on students' free time activities, on the other hand.

In the millennium of information Exchange, all the people, especially students, for they are in charge of their home land civilization, need to learn any kind of mass communication.

In this condition, getting familiar with information technology to facing with daily life difficulties and sociability is an important issue, for with rapid growth of daily technology and its high speed people cannot adjust them with, the ever-changing conditions.

Maleki comments that:

So, today internet is applied as one of the most important tool

and method for strengthening the societies in new century and accounted as a factor for establishing the fundamental changes in life, education, in dusty and culture.”(2004, p. 21)

SAMPLE SIZE AND POPULATION

The population in this research includes 5 faculties student at Razi University, who are studying and using internet in IT center in the second semester of PG&E.

Sample size regard to 8563 persons of population is equal to $\alpha < 0.05$ equals to 354 people must be selected sampling method.

In this paper, the amount and Quality of Internet utilization according to questionnaires was investigated and determined. As you know, information is the most important source for decision making and it is also clear that questionnaires are one of the main tools for collecting information in research. Questionnaires are one of the information collecting methods in field finding researches that respondent him/herself represents the interview and answers the appointed Questions and mails them to the researcher address or deliver it to the researcher after completion research method.

In this research the method is fieldwork and questionnaires are the information collection instrument. Sampling method is relative random. This research is a kind of descriptive-surveying. “Surveying method requires the profession and programming accompanied with innovation, analysis and data exact interpretation and skillful reporting and logical from findings” (Best, 2000, p. 128)

ARGUMENT

The growth of civilization and industrialization made important shifts in people’s job and released them from hard working and gave them lesser work hours and more free time. According to Robert (1970) free time is exactly made by industrialized society before the industrial revolution the free time was not separated from working at that people were working continuously and when the nature didn’t allow them for working they gave up the working for example, farmers in a traditional society were working all the time, and when there was bad weather conditions they had free time.

Saeidi (1995) believes the working hour was defined after industrial revolution work was calculated as a one of production entries and consequently work was separated from free time. So the origin of creating the free time in new definition dated back to industrial revolution. About 1840 working hours in the factories were 75 hours per week.

These long working hours that usually associated with great exploitation for some classes of society did not remain free time for them.

But, after some challenges and continuous fighting’s finally, the working hours were limited and more limited

and gradually made a balance in people’s life and the concept of free with today’s aspects shaped in the society. Especially with the advent of second industrial revelation that that exactly is the automation the free time was developed and consequently new activities like different recreations, progress and growth of knowledge’s and talents developed.

The quick industrial changes had another social and economical consequence that had an important influence on how to spend free time. For example, mechanization of capital and making the convenience facilities made change and also changing in people lifestyle like.

Families dimension getting smaller, relation changing and people’s relation with each other had an important role on people’s free time spending, we can add them the mechanization of transportation, advent of cinema, Invention of TV in 1946. Of course industry progress was not the only factor for progress but also we have amount the social necessities and relations between current social power in investigating the free time, because social and economical environments and kind of technology has more influence on choosing the kinds of free time facilities.

The necessity of consideration toward internet

Civilization and nations whom have not adjusted themselves against invasions and time’s revaluation, have been destroyed and just have left their trace on history paper’s book However this reality is bitter and miserable but it is a part of Revolution logic.

This logic and reason has adverted in the format of unjust and very quick changes in the information technology theme, at the first of 21st century and beginning of third millenniums, but if we Do not consider it seriously, it will has significant damages and loses.

These quick revolutions follow the cultural, social, economical and political changes and have made the competition field in the world.

Nations can survive in these harsh environments that change their tasks and conditions corresponding to time revolution, otherwise they will be disappeared or (will) watch the future world as a spectator.

So, every society programmers must equip themselves with current knowledge and direct their society with on-time recommendations.

In Iran, the potential ability for correct use of this technology exists, and more soon. We start; we see its positive effects sooner. Internet information manufacturer and users can have the best opportunity and now we can anticipate that in not very far time, countries, which uses internet scientifically they’ll be more successful in development.

In the last years of 20 century, computers entered all human’s affair and as life without power, telephone, refrigerator and TV is impossible somehow in some countries, today having without computer is impossible.

Computer technology developed very quickly. But whatever is more integrating was the speed of it's a demission and acceptance between researcher's, specialists, crafts man, people ---.

In the middle of 1980's, all found that No web, solely can't provide all people's required information, so they felt that they need a new thing that can afford their information needs easily. This point led presented definition (web) or internet in 1980's more than 90000 computers in this great web linked to gather. (Salehi, 1974, p.92).

Although, internet, at first was a military project, but around 1933 it's resend and educational application, business, defending and other was 52%, 31% 10% and 7% respectively.

This arrangement changed latter. As in 1999 the percent of application has been changed, and from 60 million realized databases, internet trade has the most percent for itself.

Necessity of internet utilization

According to Jayani (2003, p.2)

Communication and information technology is a combination of information, communication and technology. It's purpose is facilitating the access to information through communication tools and techniques, and in fact it is the latest human made technology that has ability for collection, organization storage and recovery of information in the format of voice, written and number text, that by using of computer tools and using dispatching system, it will be achieved.

Information technology is made of information, computer and communications computer section is considered as hardware and required instruments and equipment provider for making technology of communication and information. Information and data foliates ad raw material writing the web and dispatch communications are responsible for making link between two parts.

One of the most important revolution in the internet technology is that growth of knowledge and technology in 21st century will reach to its climax and Bread some incredible changes meeting the new issues, coordination and adjustment with changes, how to behave the others, pressures from environmental conditions and ---- all of problems that come up in current age more than before.

So, living in these conditions need special skills, some skills that help you live letter and easier.

The most fundamental changes in the information age, is the very quick technological and scientific revolutions. Computers, have changes the human life, then with the convergence of revolution wares in the communication and information domain, computers are connected with each other by some strong technology like telephone, later the capabilities of these technologies was combined with the TV technology and made the most great human's invention, be: internet lasted universal communication and information web, that internet is it's familiar representative. (Haji Aliakbary, 2007, P.2)

Today, the formation of new world more than anything is be Holden to new communication and information

achievements.

The main emphasis of this technique is the computers and remote or telecommunication tools information technology by the aid of communication tools, Do their mission, i.e. transforming and transporting the information. In the formation age with the utilization of new technologies, world has become united and has changed to a universal village. Internet, will be the most important tool in future world regarding communicative, political, cultural, social and economic issues the form of informing changes quickly, the business trade become general and who delay are in lose internet will play a key role in education and with out that the possibility of information trans form will be that the possibility of information trans form will be limited. The societies will be electronically and internet – based – in these cities, communications, trade, recreational, education, research, banks and offices are computerized and convenience and welfare will be more. Transforming the odor and heat will be practical and the virtual world will be applicable.

All human's affair will be under control and this task will do adequate help to societies remedial. There will be new jobs and there will not be simple worker, the technical and vocational training will develop and education in life time will get the place of traditional education. The computers will be presented for the students instead of books.

The digital world will substitute the analog world in the satellite and TV senders and receivers 3 dimensional movies and images will everywhere very soon and will be accessible for all. Mutual TV, multi dimensional cinema, virtual matters will be at the service of human.

Respondent features:

This study aims is to evaluate the rate of internet use in the free time among students of five colleges at Razi University. The population of the study includes a total of 8563 students among which 354 were selected as a pilot group; including 63% women and 37% men.

34 subjects (9/6%) were employed, and 320 subjects (90/4%) were unemployed. 264 students (74/6%) were single and 90 students (25/4%) were married.

The students at the age of 21 constitute the majority, with a frequency of 75 (21/2%). According to the rankings, students at range of 19, 22, and 23 constituted respectively 8/19%, 15%, 1/14%, and 3/13% of the sample size.

The pilot group includes 345 students of the five colleges, i.e. 111 students (31/4%) of Literature and Human science Department, 99 students (28%) of Science Department, 91 students (25/7%) of Engineering Department, 35 students (9/9%) of Chemistry Department, and 18 students (5/1%) of Physical Education Department.

Among these respondents, chemical science group with the frequency of 16/4% contain the most participants and Islamic science group with the frequency of 2/3%

includes the lowest respondents. The average GPA of the majority of students is 15/56 in which the grades between 15 to 18 are most frequent (56/2%).

The sample size contained 342 BA students (96/9%), and 12 MA students (3/1%).

The students, on average, had 5-10 hour free time per week, and 32/2% of them spend 1-3 hours their free time using the internet at the university to be informed of the world news and scientific information which is free at most to 170 students (47/2%). The remaining 100 students (28/2%) should pay 20000 Rials, 45 students (12/7%) should pay 100000 Rials, 12 students (3/4%) should pay 150000 Rials to have access to the internet in their free times. 20 students (5/6%) had free access from work and 7 students(2%) have not responded to the question. As a result, concerning the fact that internet is in the second priority in their free time, most students (52/8%) do not pay for it and have free access.

Conclusion and the Review of the Result and research Hypotheses

- 1- A number of 167 students (47/2%) have access to the internet mostly at the university, thereafter they use internet at home (36/7%), in the cafe net (8/2%), with the cell phone (7/1%), and home (0/8%).

Therefore, it is concluded that the most and the least rate of internet access is from university (47/2%) and home (0/8%), respectively.

- 2- Respondents at the age of 21 equal to 75 students (21/2%) constituted the largest group. Those at the age of 19, 22, and 23 with the frequency of 19/8%, 15%, 14/1%, 13/3% respectively, are the next priorities.

Therefore, it is concluded that the group at the age of 21 equal to 75 students (21/2%), and the groups at the age of 18/5 and 27 equally have the least frequency of 1 (0/3%).

- 3- The highest rate of internet use with the frequency of 114 students (32/2%) is 1-3 hour per week. The second priority with the frequency of 88 students (24/9%) is 3-5 hour per week. Successively, next rankings are: 5-10 hour internet use per week with the frequency of 64 students (18/1%), and up to 1 hour internet use per week with the frequency of 57 (16/1%).

The results have shown that the highest rate of internet use belongs to 1-3 hour per week (32/2%) and the lowest rate belongs to 10-20 hour per week (8/8%).

- 4- Nearly 50% of the students spend 1-2 hour a day with the internet, 35% spend less than 1 hour a day, 11% spend between 2 or 3 hours a day and 4% spend more than 3 hours a day using the internet.

Therefore, 177 students of the control group (50%) have the most internet use, spending 1-2 hour per day, and 24 students of the control group (4%), have the least of internet use, spending 3 hours a day.

- 5- 155 students accessed to the internet with the rate of

43/8% per week, and 123 students accessed with the rate of 34/7% per day. 46 students used the internet with the rate of 8/5% per month, and 46 students with more than 13% had occasional access to the internet.

It is evident that weekly use of internet is more often (43/8%) and monthly internet use (8/5%) has the least frequency.

- 6- A total of 207 students use the internet to be informed of the world news, 24/6% for entertainment, 9/9% for being away from daily life and schools stresses, and 7/1% use the internet for specific purposes.

Therefore, it is concluded that they use internet to be informed of the world news, having entertainment, and being away from daily stresses of life.

- 7- A number of 202 students, with the rate over than 57/1%, are somewhat satisfied spending their free time at the internet, 20 students, with the rate of 5/6%, had a very little satisfaction, and 18 students, with the rate of 5/1% are so much satisfied using internet in their free time, 67 students which contributes to over 18/9%, are very satisfied using internet in their free time. At last, 47 students with the rate more than 13/3% expressed a little satisfaction.

Therefore, it is concluded that the degree of students satisfaction of the internet use in the free time is respectively, somewhat, much, little, very little, and so much.

- 8- A total of 149 students with over 42/1% use the internet to have access to scientific information. They expressed the following as the main reasons of using internet in their free times: surfing the internet(31/3%), reading news(10/5%), having access to their weblogs (8/5%), checking emails (7/3%), downloading music(8/7%), chatting with a friend(3/1%), playing online games(2/8%), doing business deals (1/1%).

Thus, it is concluded that having access to scientific information, surfing the internet, reading news, having access to weblogs, checking email, downloading music, chatting, playing game, doing business deals, respectively are the main reasons of students' internet use.

- 9- Among different communication devices, 135 students with the rate over than 38/1% have selected the internet as their first preference for spending the free time. Among the rest 24/9% preferred TV, 16/7% satellite, 11/9% oral communication, 2/3% newspaper, and 6/2% used other kinds of mass media in their free time.

Accordingly to the ranking, internet, television, satellite, oral communication, newspaper, and other mass media are the students' preferences for the free time.

- 10- A total of 162 students, spend their free time with

their friends (45/8%), using the internet (19/8%), watching TV (13/6%), going to the gym (12/7%), going to the park (5/4%), going to the cinema (2/8%).

So we come to the conclusion that circle of friends, internet, television, gym, park and cinema are the main preferences of the university students to spend their free time.

- 11- The largest group, containing 164 students (46/3%) had 5–10 hour free time, 124 students (35%) had 10–20 hour free time, 11% of the students had 3-5 hour free time, and the remaining 4/5% of the students had 1-3 hour free time per week.

As a result, the students have at least one hour and at most 1-10 hour free time per week.

- 12- A number of 197 students (55/6%) are somewhat familiar with the internet, 20/1% to the large extent are familiar with it, and 11% have little familiarity with the internet application. Finally, 8/8% and 4/5% of the students had respectively, very much and very little familiarity with the internet.

As a result they have respectively somewhat, high, a little, very much, and very little familiarity with the internet application.

- 13- Among 354 students, the largest group of the respondents, containing a total of 58 (16/4%), was majoring chemistry and the second largest group, containing a total of 36 (10/2%), was majoring biology. Accordingly the next rankings belong to mathematics (7/6%), geography (7/3%), theology (7/1%), and physics (6/8%) students.

The seventh to fifteenth places belong to the students of the following courses, respectively: electrical engineering (5/9%), Persian literature (5/4%), Arabic literature (5/1%), physical education (4/8%), civil engineering (4/5%), statistics and English literature (equally 4%), computer engineering (3/1%), Islamic sciences (2/3%).

The frequency distribution of the respondents among courses is: chemistry, biology, mathematics, geography, theology, physics, electrical engineering, Persian literature, Arabic literature, physical education, civil engineering, statistics and English literature (equally the same), computer engineering, Islamic sciences. Therefore, the most and the least respondents are respectively among chemistry and Islamic science students.

- 14- A total of 354 students of five colleges i.e. 111 students (31/4%) of literature department, 99 students (28%) of science department, 91 students (25/7%) of engineering department, 35 students

(9/9%) of chemistry department, and 18 students (5/1%) of physical education department took part in the survey.

Therefore, the ranking of the colleges, regarding the number of respondents, are departments of literature and human sciences, basic sciences, engineering, chemistry, and physical training.

- 15- Among 354 students, 34 students (9/6%) were employed and 320 students (90/4) were unemployed.

So mostly 10% of the students were employed and more than 90% of them were unemployed.

- 16- Among 354 respondents, 264 of them (74/6%) were single and 90 of them (25/4%) were married.

The results showed that one-thirds of the population were married and two-thirds of them were single.

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