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The University Students' Knowledge of Internet Applications and Usage Habits

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Abstract

The internet has become an indispensable part of our modern life in accordance with the information technologies that has been growing rapidly. The limitations concerning time, place, equipment and cost have been eased recently. Therefore, the frequency, purpose and quality of internet use have been greatly improved and the number of internet users has been increased tremendously. With the rise of the mobile devices, especially the students have started to use the internet more actively. This study aims to examine the level of the university students' knowledge of internet and online applications. A survey including questions about more than one online application was used to identify the knowledge of the students. The questionnaires were given to the students of a school which has five undergraduate programs and a statistics software was used to analyze the obtained data. According to the analyses done, the internet use rates and the applications they use were evaluated.

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1. Introduction

The internet has become an indispensable part of our modern life in accordance with the information technologies that has been growing rapidly. It is preferred as it is the best way to access to information in every field saving time and energy. It also includes the applications from entertainment to shopping for listening and downloading music, paying bills, reading newspaper, booking, shopping, banking and using social networks. For that reason, the frequency of internet use and the number of users have increased dramatically while the service

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quality and availability for many purposes have been improved greatly. For instance, people have certain roles on social networks. Beyond any doubt, it is not possible to see internet isolated from social psychology concepts such as socializing, shared activity, adopting a role and doing what the role requires (Dikme, 2014). Roles are compulsory behaviour patterns ascribed to people (Hogg & Vaughan, 2007). More specifically, the social networks which have the utmost popularity especially for young people has been drawing attention (Tektas, 2014).

One of the features of the internet that makes it different from other media is that it covers the entire world (Aksoy, 2012). It has evolved into a device used every day by business people, educators, students, children, civil organizations and even housewives (Mankan, 2011). The internet gives the users the opportunity to connect to others regardless of the borders of the countries. The individuals do not have to form face to face relationships for marketing their products and services and that creates a common consumption trends on the internet (Cankorkmaz, 2010). Lots of sectors ranging from cargo services to warehouse systems have stopped being a mechanical part of the trade between firms and turned into dynamic mechanism where the connection is held with multiple points (Erkan, 2012).

Recently, a large amount of empirical research has been conducted into internet use and its effects on human life as it is undeniable that the internet has become an indispensable part of human life almost in every area. Examining the attitudes of especially young people and helping them gain awareness for the effective and productive use of the internet carries great importance. Among these studies are the study of examining the internet and social media attitudes and habits of Aegean University students (Vural & Bat, 2010), the study of students' level of information technologies knowledge and the study to examine the extensivity of e-commerce titled "College Students' Levels of Information Technologies and Their Consumption Tendencies on the Internet" (Cankorkmaz, 2010). (Bashan, 2011) also researched participants' knowledge and use of certain applications and the internet for what purposes and to what extent in his paper titled "The Adoption of the Internet in Turkish Society from Various Aspects: Karaman Province Sample". Another example is conducted by (Islek, 2012) and revealed the effects of social media on consumer behaviours and attitudes while (Yılmaz, 2012) examined the use of internet by students and its effects on education in his study "The Use of the Internet in Secondary Education: Tekirdag Province Sample".

This study examines undergraduate students' levels of internet use in terms of utilization forms and the applications they use. The aim is to determine their level of internet use and what kind of activities they do on the internet together with their attitudes while helping them use internet more effectively and consciously to be more active in finding solutions they encounter on the internet.

2. Materials and Method

2.1. Problem Statement

How are the distributions of School of Applied Sciences Students' responses to the internet use level survey, age, gender, department, the types of applications used and habits of use?

2.2. Method

The study aims to reveal the seniors' internet use habits, knowledge levels of internet applications, purpose of use, ideas and feelings towards their most preferred social networks, the impact of the internet on commerce and marketing, the advantages of e-commerce, the utilization area of e-marketing. Frequency and percentage analyses were used.

2.3. Study Group

200 seniors studying at Trakya University, Kesan Yusuf Capraz School of Applied Disciplines during the academic year in 2014-2015 make up the study group of this research. There are five departments which are Computer Technologies and Information Systems (CTIS), Business Information Management (BIM), Customs Management (CM), Banking and Insurance (BI); and International Trade (IT).

2.4. Data Collection

The survey is divided into two parts which are personal information and internet use levels. The first part of the survey, which includes a total of 21 questions, aims to gather information about the age, gender and department. In the second part of the survey, there are questions about the knowledge of internet use, frequency of internet use, the place where the internet is used, the purpose of internet use, the security problems they encounter, the products and services they buy from the internet, use of e-mail accounts and social networks.

The questionnaire used in this study was taken from the master's thesis "The Adoption of the Internet in Turkish Society from Various Aspects: Karaman Province Sample" (Bashan, 2011) in order to determine the levels of social and economic adoption and certain items were altered in the light of expert opinion (Bas, 2008).

2.5. Data Analysis

SPSS 20 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used for the analysis of the data. The demographic distribution, levels of internet use, the applications the students use and the attitudes towards internet habits were determined. the knowledge levels of internet and applications, the purpose of internet use, the impact of internet on commerce and e-marketing, the advantages of e-commerce, the utilization area of e-marketing and ideas and feelings towards their most preferred social networks were also analysed.

3. Findings

3.1. Demographic Information

107 of the participants (%53,5) were female students while there are 93 male participants (%46,5) a total of 200 whose demographic information. As the participants were university students, most of the students were 20 or 21 years old. Although the participants from CTIS and BIM seem be greater in number, the numbers of participants in the departments are close to each other.

3.2. Students' Knowledge Levels of Internet Applications

Table 1 shows the analysis of students' responses to statements related to internet applications. The frequency and percentage analysis of the students' knowledge levels of internet and application responses.

Table 1. Students' Knowledge Levels of Internet and Applications

Internet Applications Knowledge Levels		Yes	No	Partly
I know how to access to the Internet.	Frequency	197	1	2
	Percentage	98,5	0,5	1,0
I know how to open and download files from the Internet.	Frequency	199	1	0
	Percentage	99,5	0,5	0
I know how to send and receive e-mails.	Frequency	199	0	1
	Percentage	99,5	0	0,5
I know how to use internet devices like search engines.	Frequency	199	1	0
	Percentage	99,5	0,5	0
I know how to create and use bookmarks.	Frequency	185	6	9
	Percentage	92,5	3,0	4,5
I know how to use live, interactive, visual and auidial communication devices on the Internet.	Frequency	190	3	7
	Percentage	95,0	1,5	3,5

Most of the students seem to have command of the six concepts examined in this subdivision. Table 2 shows the analysis of the places where the students go online.

Table 2. The Place(s) Where the Students Use the Internet

The Place Where the Internet is Most Used		Frequently	Rarely	Never
At home	Frequency	175	20	5
	Percentage	87,5	10,0	2,5
At work	Frequency	19	59	122
	Percentage	9,5	29,5	61,0
At an internet café	Frequency	11	55	134
	Percentage	5,5	27,5	67,0
At school, course, etc.	Frequency	57	107	36
	Percentage	28,5	53,5	18,0
At a friend's, relative's or others' house.	Frequency	23	136	41
	Percentage	11,5	68,0	20,5

As seen on Table 2, the place where the students go online most is their home. While 179 students (%89,5) have internet connection at home, there are 21 students (%10,5) who do not have access to the internet at home. The two main reasons for not having internet access at home are the high price of computers and the opportunities to access to internet at places other than home. In order to reveal the internet habits and tendencies of the students, the daily use of the internet in hours is determined with demographic question. According to the data, most of the student spend 3-4 hours a day on the internet. However, the number of the students who spend more than 6 hours a day going online is very close to the number of the students spending 3-4 hours a day on the internet. Besides, the main purpose of internet use was found to access to the social networks with a percentage of (%94,5) 189 students. On the other hand, it was found that most of the students do not seem to be aware of the security issues they encounter while they are online.

3.3. E-Commerce Use on the Internet

According to the analysis results related to e-commerce, 146 of the students (%73,0) have the experience of online shopping while the rest, 54 students (%27,0), have never tried it. The most popular category on the internet from which the students buy products %61,5 is Clothing and Sports Equipment. The reason for not shopping online is the students' preference of seeing, touching or trying the product before the purchase %24,5. According to the analysis results to determine the frequency of online shopping the students have done online shopping more often during the last month, which means that students often like to shop online.

3.4. E-Mail Use on the Internet

Only (%1,0), 2, of the students do not have an e-mail account while the rest %99 have been using e-mail. The number of students who check their email accounts daily is greater than the others. According to their statements, 113 of these students (%56,5) said they read emails "by sender", 62 students (%31,0) reported that they read all of the emails in their inbox while 25 students (%12,5) told that they read their emails by subject. In terms of deleting e-mails, 111 students (%55,5)said they deleted e-mails by subject while 89 students (%44,5) told they deleted e-mails by subject.

3.5. Social Network Use on the Internet

Social networks are growing more and more popular especially among the students with the developments in

technology. Most of the students (%75.5) use at least one social network a day according to Figure 5. This indicates that social networks are highly popular and used widely. These virtual platforms are thought to have the potential to provide important clues about people's emotions, thoughts and tendencies. Table 3 shows the social networks most used by the students.

Table 3. The Students' Memberships of Social Networks

Social Networks Membership		Yes	No
Facebook	Frequency	188	12
	Percentage	94,0	6,0
Twitter	Frequency	138	62
	Percentage	69,0	31,0
Myspace	Frequency	14	186
	Percentage	7,0	93,0
Buzz	Frequency	2	198
	Percentage	1,0	99,0
LinkedIn	Frequency	45	155
	Percentage	22,5	77,5

According to the table, the social network with most student accounts is Facebook with %94. Table 4 also shows the results of commenting which is an important element of social networks and the internet.

Table 4. The Commenting States of the Students on the Internet

States of Commenting on the Internet		Yes	No
Newspapers	Frequency	40	160
	Percentage	20,0	80,0
Websites	Frequency	90	110
	Percentage	45,0	55,0
Forums	Frequency	73	127
	Percentage	36,5	63,5

According to the results, 90 of the participants (%45,0) have been commenting on websites, 73 students (%36,5) have comments on forums while 40 students (%20,0) made comments on newspapers' websites.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the study show that the students know most the applications related to the internet. It is thought that it is important to inform the students about the necessity and significance of the internet. As the results indicates that most of the students spend 3-4 hours a day on the internet at home, future research can be done to prevent people from spending too much time on the internet. Another thing is that as the students grow older, the number of hours they spend online also grows. This may result in problems such as wasting time, communicative disorders, asociality and physical disorders.

It is found that the main purpose of going online is to log in Facebook and Twitter. According to the results, the students need to be informed about the security weaknesses of social networks besides the advantages and disadvantages of social network, how often and how they should be used.

It was found that most participants were able to shop online. There are numerous things to take into account including the security of e-commerce website, the privacy of personal information and credit cards. It is advantageous to shop from trusted and secured e-commerce websites.

In short, internet makes our lives easier in many areas with speed. Especially social networks have become a part of students' daily lives. They have become communication tools for people of all ages. The online shopping is also becoming widespread rapidly. However, it has also negative effects on people. For that reason, making people conscious internet users is of vital importance.

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