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E-ACCESS FOR HOME LEARNING -A LEARNER SURVEY

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Technology is Best, when it brings People Together.
Matt Mullenweg, 2018

Learners are not single-method learners.
e-Learning Guru Elliott Masie (cited in Rossett, 2002)

e-Access: A Conceptual Framework

e-Access is the access of various e-technologies of one form or another within the household. As the e-child of today is shaped by the Technology Context, it is very important to study the Technology Diffusion in the Home. Thus, the e-Environment denotes the distribution of technologies across the households. e-ecology theory centers on the principles that technology not only profoundly influences society, it also controls virtually all walks of life. To understand how technologies effect large structural changes in human outlook, McLuhan classified technologies as either hot or cool. Hot Technology refers to a high-definition communication that demands little involvement from audience whereas Cool Technology describes technology that demands active involvement from audience. McLuhan with his son Eric McLuhan expanded the theory in 1988 by developing a way to look further into the effects of technology on society.

Research Problem: Home Learning Environment of the Digital Natives of the 21st Century

Students live in a rapidly changing technological world surrounded with a society of technologies. ICT including hardware and personal digital devices, software, and systems that manage, store, process, create, produce and communicate information,

has become an important part of students' life. Students of digital society strive to enrich themselves with the 21st century skills. These 21st century skills allow students to prepare for requiring them to acquire new knowledge, learn new technologies, rapidly process information, make decisions and communicate in a global and society.

Jones and Fox (2009) in 'The Pew Report' characterizes the new generation of learners as digital natives. As a digital native, student expects the learning environment to be highly to satisfy their needs. The National policy on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in School Education (2012) given by Department of School Education and Literacy Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India has set the goal of preparing youth to participate creatively in the establishment and growth of a knowledge society leading to all round socio-economic development of the nation and to be geared for global competitiveness.

Need and Significance of the Study

Teachers often experience that most of the school going students are underperforming because of their Home Environment. The home and technology environments should be conducive for academic acheivement. Especially the technology environment is very crucial and has definite and decisive roles in the academic achievement of the students. Any flaw in the technology environment will be detrimental to the academic performance of the students. At the same time, the home and technology environments give shades and lines to students and shape their life by giving creative and innovative flair to students. Hence, the Researchers have undertaken to study the e-access for Home Learning, in the light of the academic achievement of the School students.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To study the e-Access of School Students in terms of certain select variables.
2. To map access to and uses of Media and Technologies in relation to certain select variables.
3. To offer suggestions and recommendations for policy making and implementation with regard to the Home and Technology Environments for the improvement of the Academic Achievement of School Students.

No pre-conceived hypotheses were made for this exploratory investigation, which was hypothesis-generating and not hypothesis testing.

Methodology

Research is the knowledge of consequences and dependence of one fact upon another. The present study is a Descriptive research study in which information was collected without changing the background of the sample population and without any manipulations**.** In the present study, the sample consisted of 300 Boys and Girls students of Standard XI of schools of Kumbakonam Taluk. Stratified Random Sampling Technique was used. The investigator selected the above 300 students from 6 schools in Kumbakonam Taluk, which is representative of the students population with regard to the characteristics under investigation.

e-Access Inventory, developed and validated by the investigators,was used for the present study. These primarily collected data were analyzed using Descriptive Analysis (Percentage Frequency) and presented in Table:1

Table: 1 Responses to the e-Access Inventory (EAI)

Access and use of Media and Technologies

	ACCESS	**USE**	**TIME SPENT**
	% having at home	% using	Average minutes per day spent by users
Screen Entertainment			
1. Television	100	99	
2. Satellite	40	81	120
3. Video	45	Computer	Put together
4. TV- linked Gamesmachine	60	games	
5. Home Theatre	05	64	
Music		Listening	
6 Radio	60	to music	60
7. Walk-man	70	86	Put together
		05	
Communication			
8. Telephone	30	55	30
9. Smart Phone	90	90	180
Print			
10. Books	40	56	15
11. Magazine	30	66	5
12. Newspapers	45	35	10
Information Technology			
13. Personal Computer	80	50	90
14. Internet	70	90	80

Qualitative analysis of the responses to the e-Access Inventory (EAI)

A Qualitative analysis of the responses to the E-Access Inventory reveals that television continues to dominate and retain its importance. Further, it is striking that by far the largest proportion of time is spent on watching television. Even the groups who watch least television - book lovers and low media users - watch on average for around two hours per day. Moreover those who play computer games also spend considerable amounts of time watching television. Television's dominance rests heavily on the breadth of gratifications it offers. Television is also a 'transparent' technology, one which is thought of primarily in terms of content rather than as a technology or consumer good. Indeed, the hardware of familiar technology (e.g. television or video, radio or wi-fi), are often confused: children 'see through them' to their contents and do not focus on the means of delivery. By contrast, more recent technology (Internet, Email) are often exciting, glamorous technologies but they still lack a content to which many children and young people can relate.

- Nearly all households with School students have a television, one third have a TV-linked games machine, and nearly half have satellite television.
- Screen entertainment equipment is more expensive than all other types of technology hardware with the exception of PCs, yet television sets are found in the majority.

Social class affects technology in the home

The distribution of technology in the home suggests a difference in middle-class and working-class technology preferences. Working-class families are as or more likely to own screen entertainment technology. Middle-class families are more likely to own most other technology.

- 72% of working-class, compared with only 61% of middle-class, families have a TV-linked games machine.
- The Video is only slightly more common in middle-class families, satellite is slightly more common in working-class families.
- This picture for screen entertainment technology contrasts with that for most other technologies. Middle-class families are more likely to have a telephone, a personal computer, a walkman, a mobile phone, books, a camcorder and the Internet .

Information Technology (PC, Internet, Email)

While screen entertainment technology play a key role in School students' leisure, it is computer-based technology which span home and work, education and leisure, and it is these which are now beginning to gain a significant place in School students' lives. For many students, 'computer' in everyday talk means not the PC but the games machine, making the primary association one of playing games. As the screen becomes ever more important, distinctions among technology become blurred. While

the investigators classified the TV-linked games machine above as screen entertainment - because that is how School students think of it and use it - they also think of it as a computer and this colours their reactions to PCs.

Access to and Use of IT at home

Over three fourth (80%) of School Students have a PC/Multimedia in their home and as many as 70%.of them have internet access. In families without a PC, parents are found to come under pressure to acquire one.

Access to IT does not imply use

Even the Students who have access to IT at home are found not using it, either because they do not wish to do so, or they are not allowed to do so, or because the equipment does not work.

- 80% live in households where there is a PC/Laptop, but only 50% report using a PC at/home.
- 70% have an Internet link at home, and 40% of them report they 'have never' used it.

Gender differences exist for both access and use

While gender differences are found in personal IT provision, there are also gender differences in the use of IT. It is found that the girls' ambivalence to computers is not merely a matter of availability.

- Girls also spend less time with the PC when they do use it than boys. On average they use the PC at home for 2 rather than 3 days a week, and for about 30 minutes per day less than boys.
- Video and computer games have been spectacularly successful with boys (79% play). Girls are less enthusiastic and only 49% ever play.

Print Technology

It is an unfortunate finding that a 'print culture' per se does not exist at all. The place of books in young people's lives is changing, threatened both by IT as a source of information and television as a source of narrative

Music

It is found that access to Music through Radio/Personal Stereo is near-universal, but uses and meanings are found to vary greatly. There is almost universal access reported to audio equipment of some kind in the home, the great majority who have such access make use of it, and listening to music takes up more time than any other medium except television. However, content wholly transcends the mode of delivery.

Music rivals television as one of the most popular media

In popularity, music is found second only to television. Like television but unlike all other media, music works well both in the foreground, as an intensely immersive experience, and in the background, as a pleasant backdrop for dull or routine tasks. Like television, music is also a medium where content preferences are widely used to communicate identity, and it is as widely available in bedrooms/personal spaces as television.

Although 90% of students have mobile phone for communication, only 30% of their homes have a telephone. 45 % of these students with a land telephone available in the house say they do not ever use it.

1) Qualitative analysis of the responses to the E-Access Inventory I(EAI) reveals that television continues to dominate and retain its importance. Further, it is striking that by far the largest proportion of time is spent on watching television. Even the groups who watch least television - book lovers and low technology users - watch on average for around two hours per day .Moreover those who play computer games also spend considerable amounts of time watching television. Television's dominance rests heavily on the breadth of gratifications it offers. Television is also a 'transparent' technology, one which is thought of primarily in terms of content rather than as a technology or consumer good.
2) The distribution of technology in the home suggests a difference in middle-class and working-class technology preferences. Working-class families are as or more likely to own screen entertainment technology. Middle-class families are more likely to own most other technology.
3) Over three fourth (80%) of School Students have a PC/MultiMedia in their home and as many as 70%.of them have internet access. In families without a PC, parents are found to come under pressure to acquire one.
4) It is an unfortunate finding that a 'print culture' per se does not exist at all. The place of books in young people's lives is changing, threatened both by IT as a source of information and television as a source of narrative
5) It is found that access to Music through Radio/Personal Stereo is near-universal, but uses and meanings are found to vary greatly. There is almost universal access reported to audio equipment of some kind in the home, the great majority who have such access make use of it, and listening to music takes up more time than any other medium except television. However, content wholly transcends the mode of delivery
6) Digital technology and online communication have become a pervasive part of the everyday lives of the School Students. Social network sites, online games, video-sharing sites, and gadgets such as iPods and mobile phones are now well-established fixtures of youth culture; it can be hard to believe that just a decade ago these technologies were barely present in the lives of Indian children and teens. Today's youth may be engaging in negotiations over developing knowledge

and identity, coming of age, and struggling for autonomy as did their predecessors, but they are doing this while the contexts for communication, friendship, play, and self-expression are being reconfigured through their engagement with new technology. There is a digital generation that overthrows culture and knowledge and its members' practices are radically different from older generations' new technology engagements. At the same time, the current youth adoption of digital technology production and social media, Living and Learning with New Technology are occurring in a unique historical moment, tied to long-term and systemic changes in sociability and culture. While the pace of technological change may seem dizzying, the underlying practices of sociability, learning, play, and self-expression are undergoing a slower evolution, growing out of resilient social structural conditions and cultural categories that youth inhabit in diverse ways in their everyday lives. The goal of the digital youth study was to document a point in this changing ecology by looking carefully at how both the commonalities and diversity in youth new technology practice are part of a broader social and cultural ecology.

Interactivity - ideals and reality

In the context of new technology, 'interactivity' is the Promised Land. In addition to games applications, a dynamic, constructive and educational dialogue with the new information and communication technology has been envisaged.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- Spreading awareness among the parents about the effect of home environment on the Academic Achievement is essential.
- The unbiased attitude towards the children is to be persuaded among the parents.
- Facilities in the schools are to be improved to make the students feel the school environment conducive.
- Counseling classes can be conducted for students.
- Modern technology like smart classroom with Audio visual aids can be provided for Government schools which will facilitate the learning of the students.
- Technology environment is perceived to have negative relationship with their Academic Achievement and this is to be taken care of.

In order to improve the learning conditions at home, the authorities may not be able to do much in improving the conditions at home which depend mainly on the income and occupation of the parent. Hence the following suggestions for Departmental action are made:

- Voluntary social workers or professional social workers or welfare officers may be appointed for the purpose of influencing the parents to create atleast a proper atmosphere in their homes and to take genuine interest in their children and their students.
- Sufficient number of properly supervised boarding schools or halls or residence are to be opened and pupils completely devoid of healthy home conditions should be

admitted in them. This may help greatly in eliminating many of the students problems affecting their achievement in English.

Conclusions and Implications for Policy Making

Any policy aiming to improve academic achievement cannot be limited to formal educational settings, where students spend only a small proportion of their time. On the contrary, it needs to embrace the family as a whole and include parents as partners in their children's education from the very beginning of their children's lives. It should aim to raise parents' awareness of the difference they can make and set up systems that offer constant encouragement and support according to individual requirements and needs. The present study is an earnest attempt in this direction, making a significant contribution for Policy Making and Implementation, providing research evidence on the need for enhancing the e e-Access, e-safety and e-practice among the students, in the interest of the Society and Institution.

Epilogue

eLearning is changing. And, we will see new models, new technologies and designs emerge. So, let's drop the "e" – or at least give it a new and wider definition."

Elliot Masie (cited in Rossett, 2002)

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