

---

**Internet Usage Patterns and Challenges among the Urban and Rural  
College Students in Chamrajanagar District, Karnataka, India: A  
Comparative Study**

**by**

**H. Ramesh**

Librarian (Selection Grade)

Sri Y. M Mallikarjunaswamy Government First Grade College,  
Yelandur, Chamrajanagar Dist., Karnataka

**Abstract:**

This study investigates the internet usage patterns and challenges encountered by college students in Chamrajanagar district, with a focus on rural and urban populations. Using a survey methodology, data were collected from 302 college students, representing various faculties and demographics. The findings reveal that both rural and urban students utilize the internet primarily for academic research, social media, and communication purposes. However, they face challenges such as slow internet connections, difficulty finding relevant information, and information overload. Recommendations include improving internet infrastructure, providing training on effective internet searching, enhancing website design, and promoting awareness about online information literacy. Addressing these challenges can facilitate a more conducive environment for students to maximize the benefits of internet usage for their academic and personal endeavors.

**Keywords:** Internet Usage, College Students, Chamrajanagar District, Rural, Urban, Patterns, Challenges, Academic Research, Social Media, Information Literacy.

**Introduction:**

The internet continues to be an indispensable resource for the academic community, offering a vast array of services for information, education, communication, and research. With its accessibility round the clock, it has garnered a significant global audience. According to the latest statistics from Internet World Stats, approximately 2.5 billion people worldwide, constituting about 31.7 percent of the total world population,

are internet users. Notably, the highest percentage of internet users belongs to the younger generation, who have grown up in an era of pervasive internet connectivity. Among these users, college students stand out as enthusiastic consumers of internet services and sources, leveraging modern technologies to navigate today's interconnected society. Recent data from 2022 reveals that out of the approximately 19.5 million college students in the United States, an overwhelming 98.5 percent, or roughly 19.2 million students, access the internet at least once a month (Murphy, 2021). This underscores the internet's integral role in shaping both their academic pursuits and social interactions.

### **Internet Services in Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka, India**

Internet services made their debut in Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka, India, in the early 2000s. Initially, there were a limited number of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) operating in the region. These included government-owned entities like BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) along with privately owned ISPs such as IDIA, AIRTEL, and SPICE.

As of the present day, the number of ISPs has increased, with a total of six ISPs offering services in the district. Alongside BSNL, prominent private ISPs like Airtel, JIO, Tata Indicom, Reliance, and Vodafone have established a presence in the area. Additionally, the district now boasts over 50 cyber cafés, catering to the local population's internet needs. Some notable cyber cafés in the district include names like Ethernet, Hotline, CNET, Net Surfer, and BBC Online (Naik, 2020).

To enhance accessibility, the government has also taken steps to establish community information centers across the district. These centers, numbering around 20, aim to provide internet services to the public, facilitating connectivity and digital access for residents of Chamarajanagar district.

In Chamaraanagar district, access to internet facilities within colleges remains limited. However, there has been a positive trend in recent years, with many higher educational institutions, including Government First Grade Colleges and aided colleges, gradually introducing internet services to benefit the academic community. The Government First Grade College in Chamarajanagar has been a pioneer in this initiative, setting up

internet access centers within the library premises specifically catering to students in 2021. Additionally, the college expanded its services by establishing two more browsing centers, branded as 'E-resource Centers,' making a total of over 10-20 computers available for online research and learning. These services extend beyond the college campus, with internet access centers now widely available throughout the city. Furthermore, other prominent academic institutions such as Sri.Y.M.Mallikarjunaswamy Government First Grade College in Yelandur, Government First Grade College in Gundlupet, and Government First Grade College in Hanur, Kollegal Taluk and many more institution, have been providing internet services to their academic communities for over a decade (University of Mysore, 2020). Inspired by these initiatives, many other degree colleges have followed suit by establishing browsing centers to support their students' academic endeavors. Consequently, students from both rural and urban areas are utilizing these services for various educational purposes. This study seeks to compare the internet usage patterns between rural and urban college students, shedding light on the impact of internet access on academic performance.

### **Review Literature:**

Tahir, Mahmood, & Shafique (2010) conducted a study on the utilization of electronic information resources by humanities scholars, revealing their increasing reliance on Information Technology (IT) despite maintaining a preference for printed sources, indicating a positive perception of IT's role in their research and teaching.

Thanuskodi (2011) explored user awareness and utilization of e-journals among education faculty members in Chennai, highlighting the significance of e-journals as valuable resources for learning and research, with recommendations to enhance e-journal facilities based on survey findings.

Kishore Kumar & Naik (2015) investigated library usage patterns, revealing a notable preference for Wi-Fi access among students, indicating a shift towards utilizing e-resources and online databases, reflecting the transformative impact of ICT on library services and user attitudes.

Kumar and Naik (2019) examine the level of awareness among users regarding library services and facilities in aided colleges in Bangalore, shedding light on the effectiveness

of library resources and highlighting areas for improvement in meeting user needs and expectations.

Naik and Narasappa (2020) conducted a study on the awareness, attitudes, and skills of library professionals towards information communication technology (ICT) in pharmacy colleges in southern India, revealing insights into the readiness of these professionals to adapt to technological advancements and integrate ICT into library services. The findings provide valuable implications for enhancing ICT literacy and utilization among library professionals in the pharmacy education sector.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the current study were twofold:

1. To conduct a comparative analysis of internet usage patterns between rural and urban college students. This analysis aimed to explore differences in internet access, utilization, and the purposes for which students from both backgrounds utilize the internet.
2. To identify and analyse the challenges and obstacles encountered by both rural and urban college students during their internet search activities. This investigation aimed to uncover common problems faced by students in accessing, navigating, and utilizing online resources for academic and personal purposes.

### **Methodology**

The study utilized the survey method, employing a questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. Initially, the questionnaire underwent a pre-test phase involving 30 students to refine its structure. Based on the feedback from the pre-test, modifications were made to simplify the questionnaire. Subsequently, data were gathered from a sample of 302 college students, specifically from the "Next generation," during regular academic sessions.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation from various demographic groups, including gender, region (rural/urban), and faculty. The questionnaire was personally administered to participants to ensure a high response rate and to clarify any potential misunderstandings while providing responses.

Quantitative techniques were employed to analyze the collected data, and the findings were presented using appropriate formats to facilitate comprehension and interpretation.

**Scope:**

The scope of the current study was restricted to academic college students within Chamrajanagar district. Specifically, the study encompassed students from various faculties including general science, social sciences, humanities, business and commerce, and computer science.

Chamrajanagar district hosts a total of 18 such colleges, with 11 situated in rural areas and 7 in urban areas (University of Mysore, 2020). This distribution ensured representation from both rural and urban settings, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of internet usage patterns and challenges faced by students across different academic disciplines and geographical locations within the district.

**Limitations:**

The study encountered several limitations:

1. Non-Representative Sample: The findings of the study may not be generalizable to the entire population, as the research was confined to college students within Chamrajanagar district. Therefore, caution should be exercised when extrapolating the results to broader populations.

2. Limited Sample Size: The data were collected from a relatively small sample of college students (n=302) who utilized the internet. This small sample size may restrict the generalizability of the findings and limit the ability to draw definitive conclusions about internet usage patterns among the broader population of students in the district.

Acknowledging these limitations is crucial for interpreting the findings of the study accurately and for informing future research efforts in this area.

**Data Analysis**

Table 1: Frequency of Internet Use

Frequency of Internet Use	Rural Students (n=150)	%	Urban Students (n=152)	%
Daily	95	63.33	105	69.08
2-3 times a week	30	20.00	28	18.42
Once a week	15	10.00	10	6.58
Rarely	10	6.67	9	5.92

Table 1 presents the frequency of internet use among rural and urban college students. Out of the 150 rural students surveyed, 95 reported using the internet daily, while 105 out of 152 urban students indicated daily internet usage. Moreover, 30 rural students and 28 urban students reported using the internet 2-3 times a week. Additionally, 15 rural students and 10 urban students stated that they access the internet once a week. Finally, 10 rural students and 9 urban students reported rare internet usage.

Table 2: Place of Using the Internet by Rural and Urban Students

<b>Place of Internet Usage</b>	<b>Rural Students (n=150)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Urban Students (n=152)</b>	<b>%</b>
Home	110	73.33	125	82.24
College/University	25	16.67	40	26.32
Internet Cafe	10	6.67	12	7.89
Library	5	3.33	10	6.58

Table 2 illustrates the primary locations where rural and urban college students access the internet. Among the 150 rural students surveyed, 110 reported using the internet primarily at home, while 125 out of 152 urban students indicated the same. Additionally, 25 rural students and 40 urban students stated that they access the internet primarily at their college or university. Furthermore, 10 rural students and 12 urban students reported using internet cafes as their primary location for internet usage. Finally, 5 rural students and 10 urban students mentioned the library as their primary place for accessing the internet.

Table 3: Purposes of Internet Use

<b>Purpose of Internet Use</b>	<b>Rural Students (n=150)</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Urban Students (n=152)</b>	<b>%</b>
Academic Research	90	60.00	105	69.08
Social Media	100	66.67	120	78.95
Entertainment	60	40.00	75	49.34
Communication	120	80.00	130	85.53
Online Shopping	40	26.67	50	32.89

Table 3 outlines the various purposes for which rural and urban college students use the internet. Among the 150 rural students surveyed, 90 reported using the internet for academic research, while 105 out of 152 urban students indicated the same purpose.

Moreover, 100 rural students and 120 urban students reported using the internet for social media. Additionally, 60 rural students and 75 urban students stated using the internet for entertainment purposes. Furthermore, 120 rural students and 130 urban students mentioned using the internet for communication. Finally, 40 rural students and 50 urban students reported using the internet for online shopping.

Table 4 :Use of Internet and Web Sources

Source Type	Rural Students (n=150)	%	Urban Students (n=152)	%
Search Engines	140	93.33	145	95.39
Social Media	110	73.33	120	78.95
Online Journals	70	46.67	85	55.92
Educational Websites	80	53.33	95	62.50
Online Forums	50	33.33	60	39.47

Table 4 delineates the utilization of various internet and web sources by rural and urban college students. Among the 150 rural students surveyed, 140 reported using search engines, while 145 out of 152 urban students indicated the same. Furthermore, 110 rural students and 120 urban students reported using social media platforms. Additionally, 70 rural students and 85 urban students stated using online journals. Moreover, 80 rural students and 95 urban students mentioned utilizing educational websites. Finally, 50 rural students and 60 urban students reported using online forums as a source of internet information.

Table 5: Use of Search Engines

Search Engine	Rural Students (n=150)		Urban Students (n=152)	
Google	130	86.67	140	92.11
Bing	20	13.33	15	9.87
Yahoo	10	6.67	10	6.58
DuckDuckGo	5	3.33	5	3.29
Others	5	3.33	5	3.29

Table 5 presents the distribution of the use of search engines among rural and urban college students. Out of the 150 rural students surveyed, 130 reported using Google as

their primary search engine, while 140 out of 152 urban students indicated the same. Additionally, 20 rural students and 15 urban students reported using Bing. Furthermore, 10 rural students and 10 urban students stated using Yahoo. Moreover, 5 rural students and 5 urban students mentioned using DuckDuckGo. Finally, 5 rural students and 5 urban students reported using other search engines.

Table 6: Reasons to Use Web Sources

Reasons for Using Web Sources	Rural Students (n=150)	%	Urban Students (n=152)	%
Accessibility	120	80.00	130	85.53
Variety of Information	110	73.33	120	78.95
Convenience	100	66.67	110	72.37
Timeliness	90	60.00	100	65.79
Interactivity	80	53.33	90	59.21

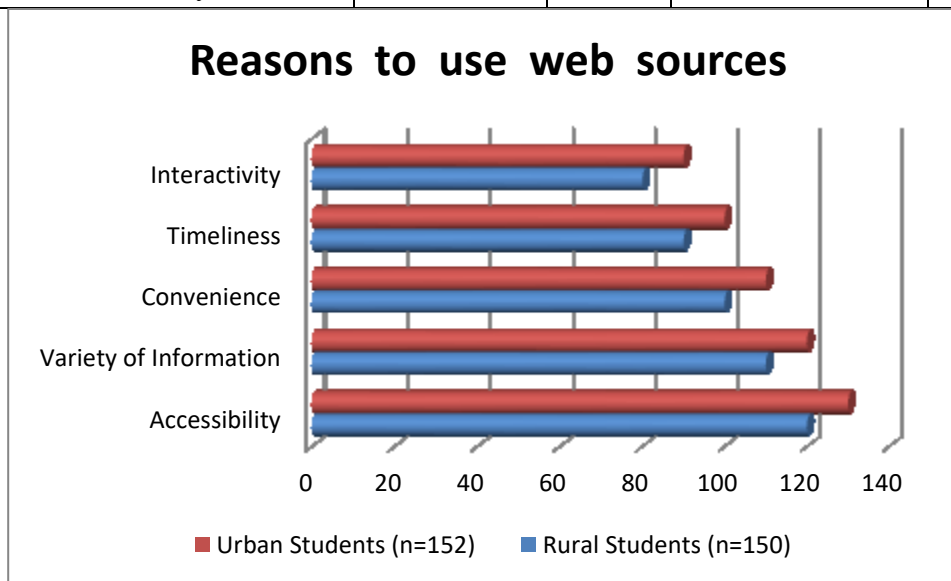


Table 6 outlines the reasons for utilizing web sources among rural and urban college students. Among the 150 rural students surveyed, 120 reported accessing web sources due to their accessibility, while 130 out of 152 urban students indicated the same reason. Additionally, 110 rural students and 120 urban students reported using web sources for the variety of information available. Moreover, 100 rural students and 110 urban students mentioned convenience as a reason for using web sources. Furthermore, 90 rural students and 100 urban students cited timeliness as a factor influencing their use of



web sources. Finally, 80 rural students and 90 urban students stated using web sources for their interactivity.

Table 7: Internet Searching Problems

Internet Searching Problems	Rural Students (n=150)	%	Urban Students (n=152)	%
Slow Internet Connection	70	46.67	60	39.47
Difficulty Finding Relevant Information	45	30.00	50	32.89
Information Overload	30	20.00	35	23.03
Poor Website Design	25	16.67	30	19.74
Lack of Access to Reliable Sources	20	13.33	25	16.45

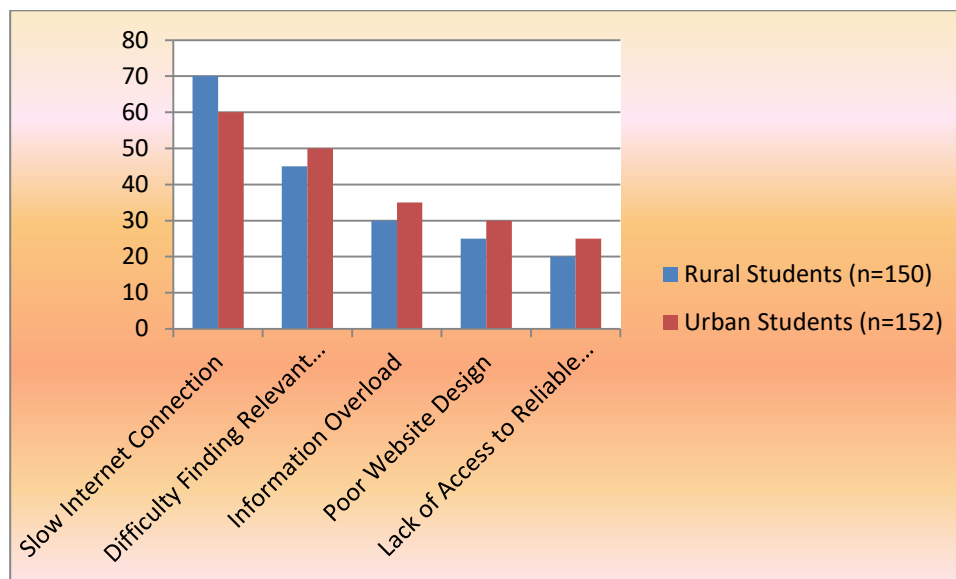


Table 7 showcases the challenges encountered by rural and urban college students during internet searching. Among the 150 rural students surveyed, 70 reported facing issues related to slow internet connection, while 60 out of 152 urban students indicated the same problem. Additionally, 45 rural students and 50 urban students reported difficulty in finding relevant information. Moreover, 30 rural students and 35 urban students mentioned experiencing information overload. Furthermore, 25 rural students and 30 urban students stated facing problems due to poor website design. Finally, 20 rural students and 25 urban students reported a lack of access to reliable sources as a challenge during internet searching.

### **Findings:**

Based on the data presented in the tables:

1. **Frequency of Internet Use:** Both rural and urban students predominantly use the internet daily, with a slightly higher proportion of urban students accessing it daily.
2. **Place of Using the Internet:** Home is the primary location for internet usage for both rural and urban students, followed by college/university for urban students and internet cafes for a small proportion of both groups.
3. **Purposes of Internet Use:** Rural and urban students utilize the internet for a variety of purposes, including academic research, social media, entertainment, communication, and online shopping, with social media being the most common purpose for both groups.
4. **Use of Internet/Web Sources:** Search engines are the most commonly used web source by both rural and urban students, followed by social media platforms and educational websites.
5. **Use of Search Engines:** Google is the preferred search engine for both rural and urban students, followed by Bing and Yahoo, although the usage of alternative search engines like DuckDuckGo is minimal.
6. **Internet Searching Problems:** The most common problems encountered by both rural and urban students during internet searching include slow internet connection, difficulty finding relevant information, and information overload.
7. **Reasons to Use Web Sources:** Both rural and urban students access web sources primarily due to their accessibility, variety of information, and convenience, with timeliness and interactivity also being important factors.

Hence, while there are some differences between the internet usage patterns and challenges faced by rural and urban college students, there are also several similarities in their behaviors and preferences. These findings provide valuable insights into the ways in which students in Chamrajanagar district utilize the internet and the associated challenges they encounter.

---

### **Suggestions:**

1. **Improved Internet Infrastructure:** Given the prevalence of issues such as slow internet connections, efforts should be made to enhance internet infrastructure in both rural and urban areas to ensure reliable and high-speed internet access for students.
2. **Training and Support:** Providing training sessions or workshops to students on effective internet searching techniques and how to discern credible sources can help mitigate challenges related to finding relevant information and dealing with information overload.
3. **Website Design Enhancement:** Addressing issues related to poor website design can improve the user experience for students, leading to more efficient internet searching and access to information.
4. **Diversification of Web Sources:** Encouraging students to explore and utilize a wider range of web sources beyond search engines and social media platforms can enhance the depth and breadth of their research and learning experiences.
5. **Awareness Campaigns:** Educating students about the importance of critical thinking and evaluating the reliability of online sources can empower them to make informed decisions and avoid misinformation.

### **Conclusion:**

The study highlights the prevalent use of the internet among college students in Chamrajanagar district, with both rural and urban students utilizing it for various purposes such as academic research, social interaction, and entertainment. While the internet offers numerous benefits, students also encounter challenges such as slow internet connections and difficulty in finding relevant information.

Addressing these challenges requires collaborative efforts from educational institutions, government authorities, and internet service providers. By improving internet infrastructure, providing training and support, enhancing website design, and promoting awareness about online information literacy, we can create a more conducive environment for students to harness the full potential of the internet for their academic and personal growth.

**References:**

- Chamrajnagar District. (n.d.). Government First Grade College. Retrieved from <https://chamrajnagar.nic.in/en/public-utility/government-first-grade-college/>
- Eduljee, N. B., Dadina, S., Crotean, K., & Murphy, L. (2021). Patterns of Internet Usage with Indian College Students: A Comparative Study. *Journal of Psychosocial Research, 16*(1).
- Kumar, K., & Naik, L. (2015). Usage of Wi-Fi Service among Users of Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute Library, Bangalore. *Indian Journal of Applied Research, 5*(6), 421-423.
- Kumar, K., & Naik, L. (2019). Users' Awareness on Library Services and Facilities with Special Reference to Aided Colleges in Bangalore: A Study. *South Indian Journal of Library and Information Science, 5*(2), 8-16.
- Naik, L. (2020). Usage of Electronic Resources, Internet, and Choices of Resources in College Libraries of India: A Study. In *Handbook of Research on Digital Content Management and Development in Modern Libraries* (pp. 76-85). IGI Global.
- Naik, L., & Narasappa, K. C. (2020). Awareness, attitudes and skills of library professionals towards information communication technology in the pharmacy colleges in southern India: A study. *Gyankosh-The Journal of Library and Information Management, 11*(1), 31-44.
- Tahir, M., Mahmood, K., & Shafique, F. (2010). Use of electronic information resources and facilities by humanities scholars. *The Electronic Library, 28*(1), 122-136.
- Thanuskodi, S. (2011). User awareness and use of e-journals among education faculty members in Chennai: A survey. *International Research: Journal of Library and Information Science, 1*(1).
- University of Mysore. (2020). Directory of affiliated colleges: Chamarajanagar. Retrieved from [https://www.uni-mysore.ac.in/english-version/sites/default/files/content/directory\\_of\\_affiliated\\_colleges-chamarajanagar-2020.pdf](https://www.uni-mysore.ac.in/english-version/sites/default/files/content/directory_of_affiliated_colleges-chamarajanagar-2020.pdf)

\*\*\*\*\*