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FAMILARITY OF ACADEMIC SOFTWARES AND ITS APPLICATIONS IN RESEARCH: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT :

Academic software's Supports and enriches teaching and learning that include commercial to teacher-made software and this academic software's enables educators to teach effectively, helps students gain critical analytical skills and supports more accurate and insightful institutional research and decision-making. This study attempts to know the extent of familiarity towards various academic supported software's in their educational activities.

KEYWORDS : *Learning Tools, MS-Office, Statistical Software's, Users Behavior.*

INTRODUCTION :

Educational software is a growing industry, creating demand for professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to develop high-quality learning software. The continuous technological development nowadays acts ancillary and supportively in student-centered learning, in both formal and informal education settings. Effective learning environments could spark the students' interest and allow them to develop programming skills and strengthen their algorithmic capabilities.

Academic software has become an integral part of today's teaching – learning process. There is a surge in the usage of various software for education worldwide. These provide effective ways of disseminating and communicating information in all areas of education. In present day education, an updated teaching would depend on how well the teachers are equipped with technical resources. Since, these resources are powerful tools for problem-solving, conceptual development and critical thinking thereby aiding to make the learning process much easier, for the clients. The demands of the 21st century information rich and knowledge based society, makes it essential for both teachers and students to utilize technology effectively. Within a sound educational setting, technology can empower and enable students to become capable analyzers, and evaluators. (Vandna Luthra and Others, 2016).

Manjari Agarwal (2014) identifies the importance of Open Source Software and its rationale in the educational institutions. It goes on to look the key differences between the two terms used in open source community. Further, it also concludes with the list of common OSS used in academics. Open and Commercial Open source software is a novice concept which has brought heralds of success in IT Industry. These have modeled a paradigm shift in technological developments by bringing new metaphors of cooperation and collaboration. The future of Open Source Software in education is filled with endless possibilities.

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OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to determine the level of acquaintance with ICT software's particularly Windows and Linux Operating systems, MS-Office Applications, Programming languages and Statistical applications

METHODOLOGY

The self-administrative questionnaire has been adopted to collect the information covering 838 respondents in which a majority proportion of the respondents, more than three-fifth (518, 61.8%), is having age between 25 to 35 years. A significant proportions of the respondents, more than one-fourth, (260, 31.0%) is having age between 36 to 45 years and a small proportion of the respondents, less than one-tenth, (60, 7.20%) is having age of 46 years and above.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETTAIONS

The Level of acquaintance with ICT software's are discussed in the following tables. The table 1 reveals about the level of familiarity among the respondents for using Windows software.

Table No.1: Familiarity in using Windows

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	89	10.6
Medium	214	25.5
High	535	63.8
Total	838	100.0

A majority proportion of the respondents, more than three-fifth (535, 63.8%) have opined that they have high level of familiarity in using Windows software. A significant proportion of the respondents more than one-fourth (214, 25.5%) and more than one-tenth (89, 10.6%) have medium and low level of familiarity in using Windows software respectively.

Table No.2: Familiarity in using Windows NT

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	409	48.8
Medium	214	25.5
High	215	25.7
Total	838	100.0

A majority proportion of the respondents, more than two-fifth (409, 48.8%) have opined that they have low level of familiarity in using Windows NT software. A significant proportions of the respondents more than one-fourth (215, 25.7%) and (214, 25.5%) have high and medium level of familiarity in using Windows NT software respectively.

Table No.3: Familiarity in using Linux

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	488	58.2
Medium	191	22.8
High	159	19.0
Total	838	100.0

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A majority proportion of the respondents, more than two-fourth (488, 58.2%) have opined that they have low level of familiarity in using Linux software. A small proportions of the respondents more than one-fifth (191, 22.8%) and less than one-fifth (159, 19%) have medium and high level of familiarity in using Linux software respectively (Table 3).

Table No.4: Familiarity in using MS-Word

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	24	2.90
Medium	147	17.5
High	667	79.6
Total	838	100.0

Table 4 depicts about the level of familiarity among the respondents for using MS-Word; it may be seen from the above table that out of 838 respondents, a majority proportion of the respondents, more than three-fourth (667, 79.6%) have opined that they have high level of familiarity in using MS-Word software. A small proportion of the respondents less than one-fifth (147, 17.5%) said they have medium level of acquaintance in using MS-Word. A very small proportion of them less than one-tenth (24, 2.9%) opined that they have low level of familiarity in using MS-Word software.

Table No.5: Familiarity in using MS-Excel

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	40	4.80
Medium	184	22.0
High	614	73.3
Total	838	100.0

A significant proportion of the respondents more than one-fifth (184, 22%) said they have medium level of acquaintance in using MS-Excel. A very small proportion of them less than one-tenth (40, 4.80%) opined that they have low level of familiarity in using MS-Excel software. Majority proportion of the respondents, less than three-fourth (614, 73.3%) have opined that they have high level of familiarity in using MS-Excel software

Table No.6: Familiarity in using MS-Power Point

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	73	8.70
Medium	151	18.0
High	614	73.3
Total	838	100.0

Less than three-fourth (614, 73.3%) have opined that they have high level of familiarity in using MS-Power Point software. A small proportion of the respondents less than one-fifth (151, 18%) said they have medium level of acquaintance in using MS-Power Point. A very small proportion of them less than one-tenth (73, 8.7%) opined that they have low level of familiarity in using MS-Power Point software (Table 6).

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Table No.7: Familiarity in using MS-Access

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	337	40.2
Medium	271	32.3
High	230	27.4
Total	838	100.0

The above table 7 reveals the level of familiarity among the respondents for using MS-Access; it may be seen from the above table that out of 838 respondents, a majority proportion of the respondents, slightly more than two-fifth (337, 40.2%) have opined that they have low level of familiarity in using MS-Access. A significant proportions of the respondents less than two-fifth (271, 32.3%) and more than one-fourth (230, 27.4%) have said they have medium and high level of acquaintance in using MS-Access respectively.

Table No.8: Familiarity in using C/C++

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	528	63.0
Medium	181	21.6
High	129	15.4
Total	838	100.0

Slightly more than three-fourth (528, 63.0%%) have opined that they have low level of familiarity in using C/C++. A small proportions of the respondents less than one-fifth (181, 21.6%) and more than one-tenth (129, 15.4%) have said they have medium and high level of acquaintance in using C/C++ respectively. Table No.9: Familiarity in using HTML, DHTML

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	510	60.9
Medium	198	23.6
High	130	15.5
Total	838	100.0

A majority proportion of the respondents, more than three-fifth (510, 60.9%) have opined that they have low level of familiarity in using HTML, DHTML. A significant proportion of the respondents less than one-fourth (198, 23.6%) said that they have medium, level of familiarity in using HTML, DHTML and a small proportion of them less than one-fifth (130, 15.5%) have said they have high level of acquaintance in using HTML, DHTML (Table 9)..

Table No.10: Familiarity in using SPSS software

Familiarity	Frequency	Percentage
Low	368	43.9
Medium	253	30.2
High	217	25.9
Total	838	100.0

Results found from table 10 indicates that slightly more than two-fifth (368, 43.9%) have opined that they have low level of familiarity in using SPSS software. A significant proportions of the respondents less

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than two-fifth (253, 30.2%) and more than one-fourth (217, 25.9%) have said they have medium and high level of acquaintance in using SPSS software respectively.

CONCLUSION

Academic Software's, for universities, schools, educational and training institutions have not only provided an opportunity but is also an important resource for the institution. There is a need to think, use, implement, innovate, moderate and develop new software platforms which can take technological intervention in teaching-learning process to great heights. Therefore, the key question now is to ponder upon as to how to spread this revolution in educational institutions across the country and use it optimally for education prospects.

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