

Prevalence of educational apps among University students in Salem district

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Abstract: *Mobile phones and app development has had its origins since the early 80's. Post the discovery of E-mail and JavaScript the programming world was introduced to a plethora of development apps which revolutionized the computing world. Mobile companies introduced devices which were revolutionizing the communication arena and had garnered millions of users across the globe cutting across geographies, age groups, ethnicity etc. Youngsters happen to be the heart and soul of the country. Youngsters happen to use mobile phones and other devices much more than other age groups. The current research study is envisioned to explore the prevalence of educational apps among the University students. The research study adopts quantitative research approaches in the form of questionnaires to elicit response from the respondents.*

Key Words: *Mobile apps, Educational apps, Youngsters, University students, Questionnaire.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 History of Smartphones:

The first smartphones had its origins in the global markets in 1994 through IBM Simon. Nokia Communicator 9000 was launched later in 1996 respectively. They had features of a personal digital assistant (PDA) for managing calendars and contacts in the mobile phones. These phones were much larger than regular phones. Sony later entered the fray through the release of Ericsson R380. Many other brands followed suit, with phones such as Palm and BlackBerry and achieved tremendous success in the markets. In 2007, Apple released the iPhone, which eschewed hardware buttons for full touchscreen control and has been the template for smartphones ever since. Fu Su and Yu (2009) in their study found out that a new form of learning called mobile learning is created due to mobile phones which have internet facilities present in them. This new concept enhances the speed of learning by helping the students to gain access to various learning resources and courses, anywhere and at any time.

1.2 Mobile Devices:

A smartphone is a mobile phone that can achieve many tasks and computations like a PC. It is slowly interchanging the old cell-phone, as it is fitted with a powerful OS (multi-tasking) along with a myriad of useful applications and highspeed data communication facility. Now on, browsing the Internet or flowing Internet-based applications is intrinsic. A smartphone is a efficient hand held computer with built in connection mobile networks (Anshari and Alas, 2015).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

2.1 Smartphones and academic achievements:

According to Librero (2007) with emphasis on particular aspects of education, utilization of android phones and its impact on student achievement can be improved in field of class participation and test output. Hwang, Chang (2011) and Wolber (2015) more indicate that there is information that student participation and student grades developed in maths and at the same time in science.

2.2 Uses of Learning apps:

Mobile apps can be used to reserve children in finishing learning tasks. A study by Kucirkova, Messer, Sheehy, & Fernández Panadero (2014) revealed that the use of applications in the iPads produced high commitment among the learners. A study organized by Chiong and Shuler (2010) found out that there were some activities that could be conducted when learners used iPhones. These actions included catching/viewing pictures, calls, listening to audio taking/watching videos.

2.3 Social media and students learning:

Clarke B., & Svanaes, S. (2014) reviewed the educational Vs non-educational app usage among college students. Findings above 58% of the college students used their mobile phones for academic purposes and freshman and seniors tended to use their mobile phones for educational use. Baker's (2012) study was positioned on the mobile phone

use and other electronic devices in the lecture room. Baker (2012) find that 45% of students reported consuming more than 4 hours a day on their mobile phone.

3. METHODOLOGY:

This study engages Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as the theoretical framework for this study. The study adopts quantitative research approaches in the form of questionnaires.

3.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To get an insight into the educational apps that the respondents prefer to use.
- To gain insight into which app that the respondents are more likely to use over the others.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION:

Table 4.1 Gender

Male	Female	Total
120	80	200
60%	40%	100%

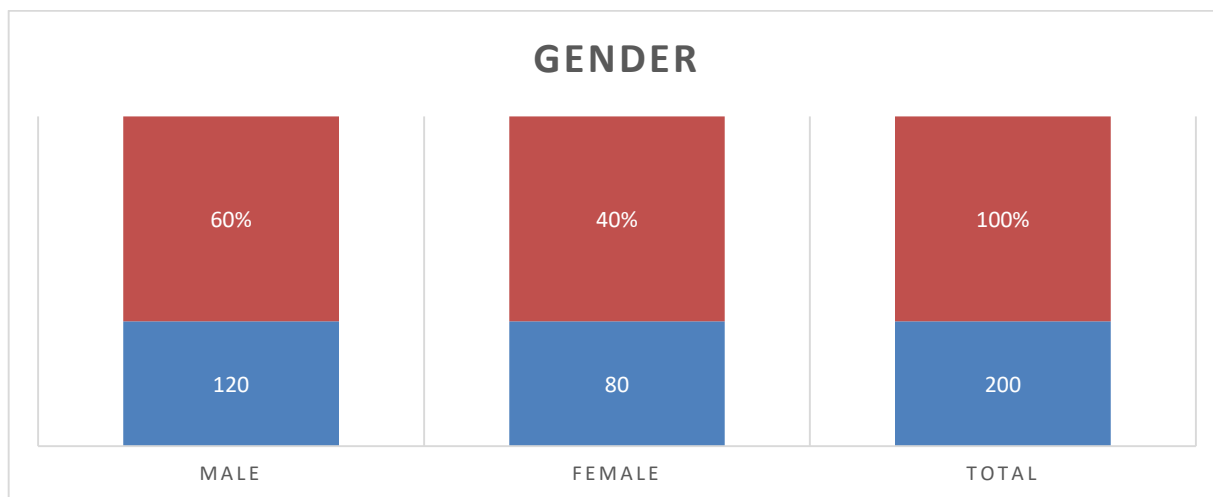


Table 4.2 Educational Qualification

Post Graduate	M. Phil	Ph. D	Total
121	54	25	100%
60.5%	29%	10.5%	200

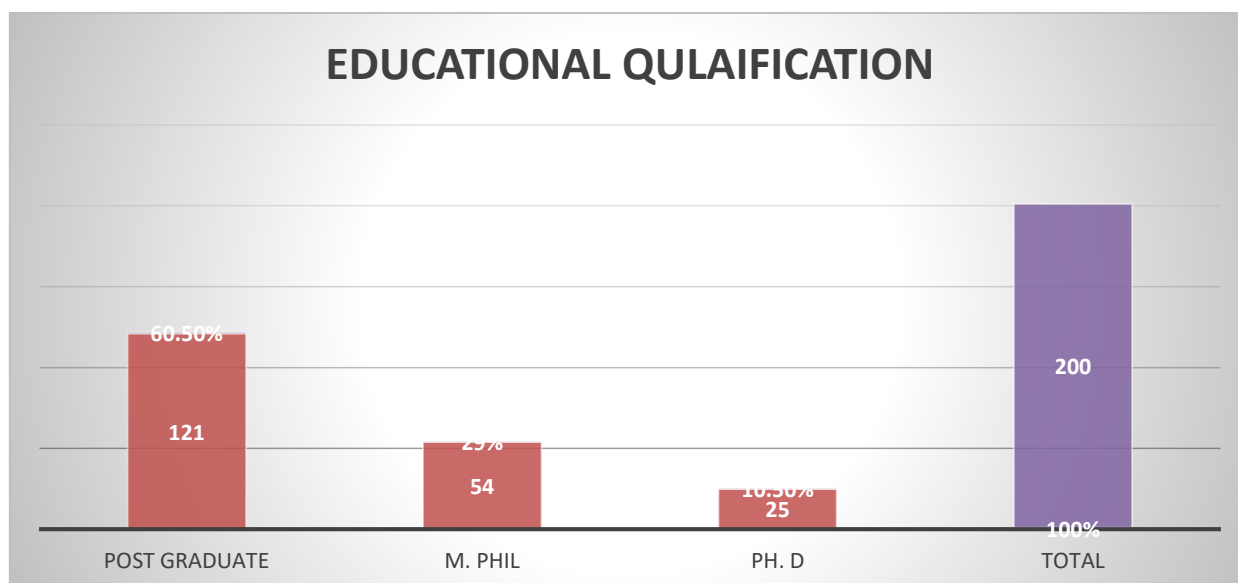


Table 4.3 Age Group

20-25	96	47.85%
25-30	79	39.6%
Above 30	25	12.55%
Total	200	100%

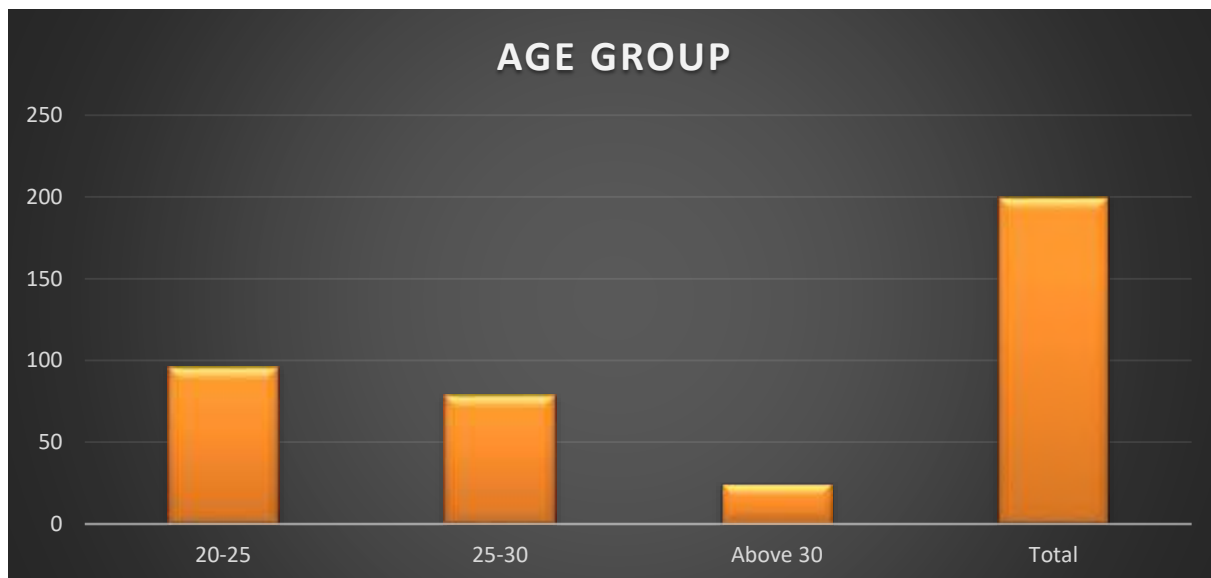


Table 4.4 Choice of Apps

Apps	Respondents	Percentage
Amazon Kindle	60	60%
Google Books	16	8%
Oxford Dictionary	62	31%
U Dictionary	44	22%
Other Apps	18	9%
Total	200	100%

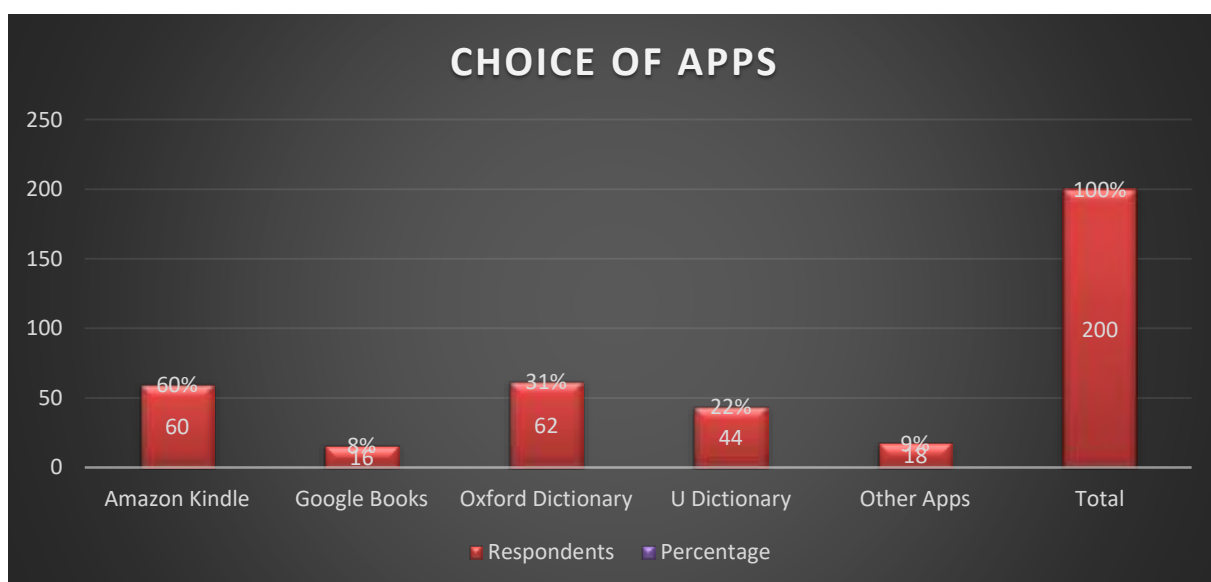
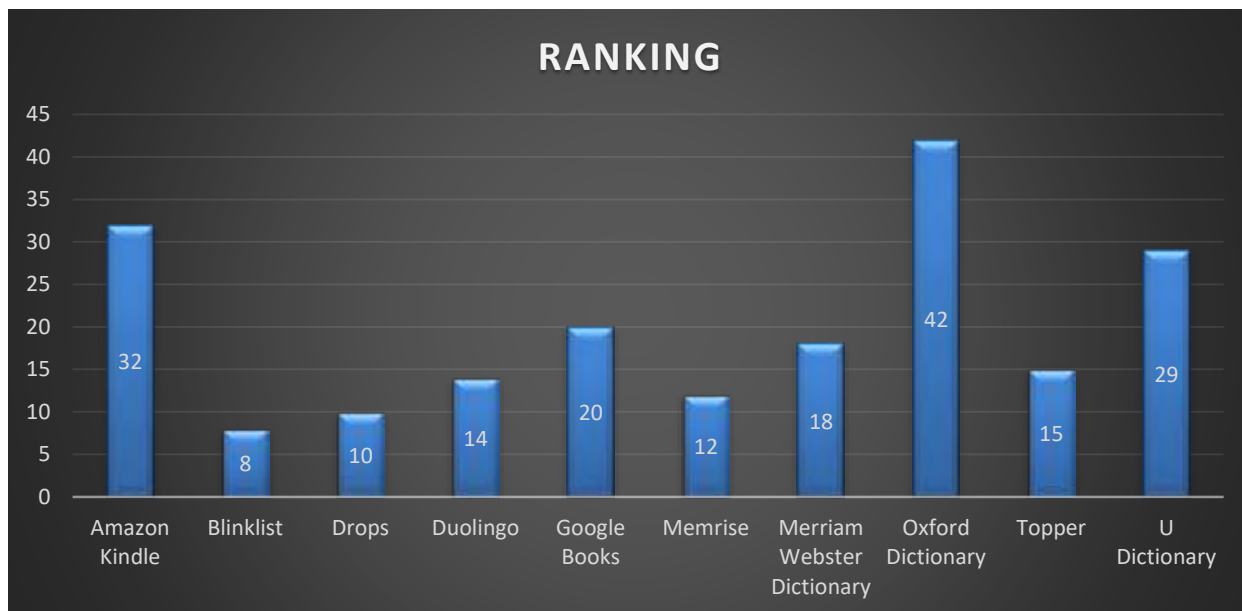


Table 4.5 Ranking of Educational Apps

Apps	Ranking
Amazon Kindle	32
Blinklist	8
Drops	10
Duolingo	14

Google Books	20
Memrise	12
Merriam Webster Dictionary	18
Oxford Dictionary	42
Topper	15
U Dictionary	29



5. FINDINGS:

- Males with an overwhelming majority used educational apps with 60% followed by Females with 40%.
- Majority of the respondents were doing their first year of study comprising of both the Post graduates with 60.5%. This again confirms that majority respondents are youngsters. 29% of the respondents were doing their M. Phil graduates. 10.5% of the respondents were doing their Ph. D.
- Majority of the respondents were from the age group 20-25 and they constituted 47.85% of the total population followed by the respondents who constituted 39.6% of the total population. 12.55% of the respondents were from the age group 25-30.
- 22% of the respondents have answered that they use U-dictionary and 31% of respondents who agreed that they use Oxford dictionary followed by 30% of respondents who agreed that they use Amazon kindle. 8% of the respondents have answered that they use Google books and 9% of the respondents have answered that they use other educational apps.
- Oxford Dictionary was ranked 1st by 42 respondents. Amazon Kindle ranks 2nd with 32 respondents giving it rank 2. U dictionary ranks 3rd with 29 respondents giving it rank 3. Google Books ranks 4th with 20 respondents giving it rank 4. Merriam Webster Dictionary ranks 5th with 18 respondents giving it rank 5. Topper 6th with 15 respondents giving it rank 6. Duolingo ranks 7th with 14 respondents giving it rank 7. Memrise ranks 8th with 12 respondents giving it rank 8. Drops ranks 9th with 10 respondents giving it rank 9. Blinklist 10th with 8 respondents giving it rank 10. It is evident that the ranking of the educational apps by the respondents throws up no big surprises. Oxford Dictionary and Amazon Kindle take the top spots followed by U dictionary, Google Books and other apps.

6. CONCLUSION:

Educational apps are not new in today's contemporary society. Educational apps are being used by users of various age groups and walks of life for a variety of purposes. However, youngsters seem to have more inclination to educational apps usage much more than other age groups. The student community particularly uses educational apps more. The current research study was envisioned to get an insight into the educational apps that the respondents prefer to use and also the app that the respondents are more likely to use over the others. The study revealed that there was more preference for Amazon Kindle, Oxford and U dictionary much more than other app categories. Oxford Dictionary and U Dictionary were the highest ranked apps followed by other apps. Future research can do done in exploring the reasons for usage of the educational apps by the students.

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