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Encouraging Factors in Students' Use of the PARSIJOO Search Engine

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Abstract

Purpose: The primary Purpose of this study is to explore the motivating factors behind students' utilization of the Iranian search engine "Parsijoo."

Methodology: Employing a qualitative approach, this research utilized the phenomenological method. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews with a sample of 16 eighth-grade female students from public schools in Tabriz city, selected using purposeful snowball sampling until theoretical saturation was achieved. Data analysis was conducted using Glaser and Straus's coding method to ensure validity and reliability through frequent review and matching.

Findings: The study revealed that students are drawn to using the "Parsijoo" search engine due to its ability to retrieve various types of documents, excellent performance in service delivery, and alignment with national culture.

Conclusion: Students identified the extensive results provided by "Parsijoo," particularly in academic matters, as a key advantage. They also appreciated the engine's capability to efficiently retrieve all file types and present relevant outcomes. Furthermore, students highlighted the unique features and services offered by "Parsijoo" as contributing positively to their user experience.

Value: Promoting education and awareness is crucial in encouraging students to engage with native search engines. To foster lasting usage among this demographic, ongoing evaluations must be conducted on these platforms based on practical experiences, case studies, and user feedback. Conducting qualitative studies like the one presented here can offer valuable insights for enhancing the effectiveness and quality of native search engines.

Key Words: *Iranian Search Engine, Parsijoo Search Engine, Students.*

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Extended Abstract

Introduction: Researchers in various countries are utilizing their expertise and a range of research tools and methods to enhance the performance of search engines. They are exploring different aspects of search engines to improve their functionality. Most of these studies, particularly those focusing on native search engines, tend to adopt a quantitative approach and delve into the technical aspects of search engines. However, there is a need for more qualitative research in this area to understand the opinions and expectations of users regarding local search engines. In Iran, research on Iranian search engines has been limited, with a predominant focus on quantitative and technical aspects, neglecting qualitative research. This qualitative study investigates the views of users of the Iranian search engine "Parsijoo."

Purpose: The primary aim of this research is to explore the factors motivating students to use the Iranian search engine "Parsijoo."

Methodology: In accordance with the research objectives, this study is classified as applied research. The approach utilized is qualitative, with phenomenology serving as the research method. The sample population under study consists of eighth-grade students from a female school located in Tabriz. It is important to note that the chosen search engine for this research was Parsijoo, commonly used by both students and teachers within the school's internal network (intranet). The sampling process was conducted in two distinct phases. Initially, teachers with a deeper understanding of the students' capabilities and interests were consulted to identify active individuals with a keen interest in utilizing the Parsijoo search engine. Subsequently, 16 students were nominated from a total of 108 eighth-grade students across three classes to partake in the research. In the second phase, participants from an educational workshop were chosen based on their willingness to engage in face-to-face interviews. All 16 seminar attendees expressed their readiness to participate in the interview sessions. Data collection involved two primary steps, with an educational workshop being the first. It was observed that students only accessed the intranet when necessary, typically during work or technology classes. Therefore, a 90-minute session was organized by the researcher to familiarize participants with the Parsijoo search engine. The workshop took place in the school's computer lab equipped with necessary resources, such as a projector, and online demonstrations were also available if needed. Subsequently, questions from participants were addressed, and instructions for the interview process were provided.

The second phase encompassed conducting face-to-face interviews two weeks post-workshop, allowing students more time to engage with the search engine. The interviews, ranging from thirty to eighty minutes in duration, continued until theoretical saturation was achieved. Data reliability was verified through two approaches: Guba and Lincoln's (1985) method, confirming the accuracy of statements with the interviewees themselves, and Morse and colleagues' (2008) method, involving simultaneous data collection and analysis. Glasser and Straus's (1967) coding method was employed for data analysis. Concepts from interview transcripts were identified, coded, and categorized into main themes based on relationships between them. Finally, data refinement and linkage with primary categories were systematically executed.



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Findings: Students have identified various motivating factors associated with the use of the Parsijoo search engine, most of which fall under one overarching component. The factors that students have highlighted as encouraging the use of the Persian search engine include: in the Recovery category, retrieving more relevant results for users' information needs, delivering strong performance in track retrieval, and achieving successful performance in video retrieval; within the Services category, offering essential mapping services, a reliable translation service function, efficient download service, appealing voice service, reliable news service, and image service features; the First-Page category, including ordering of services, display of up-to-date information, and customizable home page settings; the National Attributes category, encompassing national bias and cultural elements; and the Information category, featuring recommendations from knowledgeable individuals and guidance from coaches.

Conclusion: The ability of the Parsijoo search engine to provide results tailored to students' diverse needs across various subject areas, particularly academic topics, is crucial to student expectations from a search engine. Retrieving information pertinent to students' needs, especially academic ones, motivates students to utilize the Parsijoo search engine. Correctly meeting students' information requests not only provides them with useful results but also boosts their academic success, encouraging further searches. Parsijoo offers a range of services such as news, images, videos, audio, downloads, market information, translation, maps, weather updates, and employment resources, each with unique features and functionalities. During interviews, students praised some of these services and cited their exemplary performance as a key strength of Parsijoo. The clear organization of Parsijoo services above the search box on the first page enhances user experience. The ability to customize the first page through home page settings allows users to display or remove specific information, creating a personalized search experience. National pride plays a role in encouraging individuals to use domestic products, and the same sentiment extends to preference for native technologies.

Value: Educating and raising awareness among students about native search engines is an initial step to promote their use. However, to foster long-term usage among this demographic, further steps must be implemented. These initiatives may include evaluating native search engines based on practical experiences, case studies, and user feedback to continuously enhance efficiency and quality. Conducting qualitative research and case studies, like the present study, and utilizing the findings can offer valuable insights. The researchers found a gap in the existing research landscape in Iran, where no qualitative study had explored the motives behind eighth-grade students' use of the Iranian search engine "Parsijoo". Therefore, the primary aim of this research is to uncover the incentives driving students to use the Parsijoo search engine.

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