

Internet Use and Viability among Undergraduates of the Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study is conducted in the Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo, Nigeria with a view to identifying the rate and practicability of internet usage among undergraduates of the Faculty of Education. The population consists of all the students in the faculty. A sample of 348 students was randomly selected for the study. The instrument for data collection is the structured questionnaire. While 348 copies of the questionnaire are randomly administered on the students in their various lecture halls. Three hundred and thirty copies, which is 95% response rate are returned and used for analysis. The data are carefully analysed using frequency distribution and percentage. The findings reveal among others that majority of the students at the Faculty of Education in Lagos State University use the internet severally on daily basis for the purpose of accessing information to supplement hard copies of books at the University Library. Consequently, Information and Communication Technology facilities should be made available and accessible to the students to enable them have the opportunity of technology driven education.

Keywords: *Internet Usage, Education Students, Resources, Search Engines.*

INTRODUCTION

The internet is a vast global network that links millions of computers ranging from the smallest handheld personal device to the most powerful computer systems. The internet was developed in the 1960s and was restricted primarily to researchers and academics (Rubin, 2004). There is no doubt that the academic community have benefited from the Internet through global access and exchange of information, easy dissemination of

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research findings, enhanced collaborative research and other activities. The internet has remained one of the greatest inventions of man in recent times (Okunlaya, Emmanuel and Ajegbomogun, 2014). Rubin (2004) defines internet as a term that is applied to an electronic network that permits access to other computer networks. (Okunlaya, Emmanuel and Ajegbomogun, 2014) further opine that it has revolutionized so many things particularly, in the area of communication. The internet becomes more widely used with the development of the web (Rubin, 2004). Internet, according to Adekanye (2006), simply refers to as 'net', is a collection of computers and computer networks located all over the world, all of which share information through internet protocols. According to Rubin (2004), it is a global network that connects millions of small network, computers and other devices that exchange data using a standard protocol called Transmission Control Protocol/ Internet Protocol (TCP/IP). Computers could be connected to the internet through line cables, television systems, satellites, cellular networks, wireless hotspots and networks (Rubin, 2004).

However, the advent of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and others have changed the way people communicate and interact with one another, keeping in touch with families, friends, associates and others. The Internet is a world-wide collection of networks, gateways of servers and computers using, a common set of communications to link up large computer network linking together millions of smaller computers at numerous sites in various countries belonging to millions of business, government, educational and other organizations. It is also known as information super high way network of networks connecting a growing number or regional sites to an intercontinental electronic network which connects millions of computers.

Udende and Azeez (2010) conducts a study on the frequency of Internet access and use among students of the University of Ilorin and find that 26% of the respondents used the internet daily, 46.2% used it on weekly basis while, 27.8% used it once in a while. Ismail (2018) in a study of internet usage among University students in North East geo-political zone of Nigeria noted that, three major purposes for which respondents use the internet include education (45.11%), social networking (20.75%) and news seeking (15.44%). Igere (2018) examines the use of internet among library and information science students at Delta State University, Abraka and observes that all the respondents used the internet to seek information to supplement their course work, payment of tuition fees and to obtain information for their registration. On the purpose of use, Udende and Azeez (2010) observe that 80.8% of the respondents mostly used the Internet for academic purpose, 14% used it for e-mails, while 4.9% used it for fun. However, only 3% did not respond to the question.

Aiyebilehin and Azubiuke (2016) who examined internet use among Library

and Information Science in Edo State University indicate that the main purpose for which they used the internet was to search for materials for assignment (96.4%), chatting with colleagues (92.4%) and social networking (93.2%). Okunlaya, Emmanuel and Ajegbomogun (2014) state that 65% of the respondents obtained information for class assignment, term papers, project and tests, 11% respondents spent their time on the internet for social interaction in a study they conducted on internet resources utilisation among students of Humanities in some selected Universities in Nigeria.

Ukpebor (2011) who carried out a survey of internet use by lecturers and students in Engineering Faculties in Edo State observes that 69.5% of the respondents browse the internet for research purpose, while 20.0% used it for entertainment. Baro, Onyenania and Oni (2010), who studied the constraints of internet search engines usage by undergraduates in some universities in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, rank google, highest among the enumerated search engines with 93.3%, while Yahoo and Askjeeves are ranked 92% and 32.7% respectively. Ukpebor (2011) opines that 71% of the respondents identified slow internet access speed as a major challenge which internet users face. Anunobi (2006) in a survey on the impediments to students use of internet resources notes that slow speed of sever, power failure, restricted access to sites, poor knowledge on how to use the internet, insufficient workstation, system breakdown, are some of the impediments.

Also, Ojokoh and Asaolu (2005) who examined search engine and internet access usage by students of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, assert that 26.3% of the respondents favoured yahoo, 19.3% favoured Excite, 5.4% favoured Google, while 46.8% favoured other search engines. In line with the foregoing, this study examines internet use and viability among undergraduates of Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria. To probe further on the usage and viability of internet among the undergraduates of Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, the following questions were asked:

- i. How often do undergraduates of Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, use the internet?
- ii. For how long have undergraduates of Faculty of Education, Lagos State University been using the internet?
- iii. For what purpose do undergraduates of the Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos, use the internet?
- iv. What are the internet resources used by undergraduates of Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo?
- v. What are the problems encountered by undergraduates of Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos while using the internet?

Specifically, the study poses to:

- i. Determine the frequency on use of the internet.
- ii. Determine the background knowledge of the use of internet.
- iii. Examine the purposes of using the internet.
- iv. Determine internet resources frequently use.
- v. Examine problems encountered.

METHOD

The study adopted descriptive survey as its research method. Structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The target population is the undergraduates of the Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria. A sample of 348 out of the student population of 3481 was considered for the study. This represents 10% of the students' population. Out of the 348 copies of questionnaire distributed, 330 copies representing 95% respondents were correctly filled, completed, returned and considered good for the analysis. Data were analysed using frequency and simple percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that 47% of the respondents use the internet several times in a day, 22% use the internet twice and 8% use once in a day. This is an indication that majority of the respondents use the internet frequently. This is probably due to the ease of access to internet facilities through mobile phones and laptops. Table 2 shows that 39% of the respondents have been using the internet for more than six years. Moreover, 25% of the respondents have between 3-5 years internet experience while, 21% and 15% have internet experience of 1-2 years and less than one year respectively. The inference from the above is that majority of the students have been using the internet before their university admission. In table 3, 96% of the respondents agree that, they use the internet as a source of academic information. This is closely followed by 89% of the respondents for browsing. In the same regard, 88%, 85%, 79% of the respondents use the internet for chat and discussion, e-mailing on-line registration and cash transfer respectively. There were other minor uses of the internet by the respondents. From the table 4, 89% of the respondents admit that, they use search engine resources. Also 59% of the respondents use e-mail services, 57% of the respondents use websites resources, 51%, 47%, 26%, 15% of the other respondents agree that they use instant messaging, Vod Cast, blogs telnet respectively for their search.

On the challenges of internet usage, 52% of the respondents admits that their major problem is the slow speed of the internet network, 26% of the respondents admits that their impediment with the use of internet is difficulty in download of web pages while 11% of the respondents attributes lack of knowledge and difficulty in accessing required information respectively from the internet as their impediments in internet usage. From the study, it is found that 72% of the Faculty of Education, Undergraduates in Lagos State University, Ojo use the internet several times in a day. This study corroborates Aiyebilehin and Azubuiké (2016) who reveal that 79.2% of the undergraduate students in Library and Information Science, Edo State University use the internet on daily basis. Further findings also show that 39% of the respondents who constitute majority have been using the internet for more than six years. This is before they were admitted to pursue degree programme. The findings also show that the major purpose for which undergraduates use the internet was a source of academic information. The findings of this study corroborate those of Udende and Azeez (2010), Aiyebilehin and Azubuiké (2016) and Igere (2018) which reveal that students search the internet for the academic purpose, seek information to supplement their course work and materials for assignments. It is observed that majorly, 89% of the respondents use the internet search engines resources. This finding also corroborates that of Igere (2018) when 84.7% of the students of Library and Information science at Delta State University, Abraka majorly use the search engine resources. Many factors hinder effective use of the internet resources. Chiefly, among them includes slow internet access, longer time to download web pages and others. This finding corresponds with that of Ukpebor (2011) where 71% of respondents asserts that slow internet access speed is a major problem while using the internet.

Table 1: Frequency of using the Internet by the respondents

| Usage | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| Several times a Day | 154 | 47 |
| Twice a day | 72 | 22 |
| Once a day | 25 | 8 |
| Twice a week | 20 | 6 |
| Thrice a week | 24 | 7 |
| Once a month | 19 | 6 |
| Twice a month | 10 | 3 |
| Occasionally | 6 | 1 |
| Seldom | - | - |
| Total | 330 | 100 |

Source: Survey, 2018

Table 2: How long have Respondents been using the internet?

| Duration | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Less than one year | 50 | 15 |
| 1 – 2 years | 68 | 21 |
| 3 – 5 years | 82 | 25 |
| More than six years | 130 | 39 |
| Total | 330 | 100 |

Source: Survey, 2018

Table 3: The Respondents purposes of using the internet

| Purposes of using the Internet | Agree | | Disagree | | Undecided | |
|--|--------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| | Freq. | % | Freq. | % | Freq. | % |
| Sources for Academic Information For Electronic Commerce/ | 318 | 96 | 12 | 4 | - | - |
| Order Goods Shopping Services | 101 | 31 | 153 | 46 | 76 | 23 |
| Entertainment | 248 | 75 | 82 | 25 | - | - |
| E-mail | 280 | 85 | 32 | 10 | 18 | 5 |
| Browsing | 295 | 89 | 35 | 11 | - | - |
| News | 170 | 52 | 126 | 38 | 34 | 10 |
| Chat and Discussion | 289 | 88 | 37 | 11 | 4 | 1 |
| Search for Job/Employment | 133 | 40 | 180 | 55 | 17 | 5 |
| On-line Registration for Admission (Cash Transfer) | 260 | 79 | 42 | 13 | 28 | 8 |

Source: Survey, 2018

Table 4: Frequency of Internet Resources Use

| Internet Resources | Agree | | Disagree | | Undecided | |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Search Engines | 293 | 89 | 37 | 11 | - | - |
| E-mails | 194 | 59 | 117 | 35 | 19 | 6 |
| Instant Messaging | 168 | 51 | 97 | 29 | 65 | 20 |
| Telnet | 48 | 15 | 228 | 69 | 54 | 16 |
| Vod Cast | 155 | 47 | 150 | 45 | 25 | 8 |
| Blogs | 87 | 26 | 201 | 61 | 42 | 13 |
| Website | 188 | 57 | 142 | 43 | - | - |

Source: Survey, 2018

Table 5: Challenges of using the Internet

| Problems | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Slow speed of Internet Network | 170 | 52 |
| Lack of Knowledge on how to use the Internet | 37 | 11 |
| Cost of Printing | 0 | 0 |
| Difficulty in downloading web pages | 86 | 26 |
| Frequent Computer Breakdown | 0 | 0 |
| Difficulty in accessing required information | 37 | 11 |
| Inadequate Internet Facilities | 0 | 0 |
| Irregular power supply | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 330 | 100 |

Source: Survey, 2018

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The internet has played a pivotal role in academic development of students and others in the facets of life. The findings of this study have attested to the fact that majority of the students have knowledge on how to source information on the internet on a daily basis before they were offered admission into the university. They extensively use the internet to source academic information to what is given to them by their teachers. There are numerous internet resources that can be used to access the internet. This study reveals that majority use search engines, e-mails and website to obtain information for their academic work. In view of the findings of this study, the followings are recommended for the effective and efficient use of the internet by Faculty of Education students of Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos.

- i. The curriculum of the Faculty should be reviewed and re-designed to inculcate internet usage. This will, to a large extent, expose education students to search strategy among others.
- ii. Training, workshops and seminars should be organized for students of the Faculty on how to download, transfer, print or copy required information from the internet.
- iii. ICT facilities should be made available and accessible to the students to enable them have the opportunity of technology driven education.
- iv. The management of the Faculty of Education of the Lagos State University should as a matter of urgency ensure that the Faculty is connected to the internet, provide alternative power source for ease of use of mobile phones and laptops at the Faculty.

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