

Impact of Internet Usage on the Academic Performance of Undergraduates Students: A case study of the University of Abuja, Nigeria.

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Abstract --This research work is a study on the Impact of Internet Usage on Academic performance of undergraduate students using University of Abuja, Nigeria as a case study. The research design adopted was the survey method using questionnaires as the instrument for data collection. The population of the study was the entire students of the University of Abuja, with students randomly selected from each level making a total sample of 375 students whom were issued questionnaires. Out of the 375 questionnaires distributed, 200 were fully responded to and returned to the researcher. Data collected were analysed using inferential statistics, frequency table and percentage. The findings revealed that Internet is one of the beneficial tools in this era of IT not only for business but for academic point of view and enhances the skill and capability of students which assist them in studies and professional life. It also revealed that some of the problem encountered in the usage of Internet includes lack of computer skills, slow internet server and problem of paying for online services. The study recommends that the university should embark on Information literacy/sensitization programme for student's in order to effectively harness the various web based electronic resources it is subscribed to.

Keywords - Academic, Internet, Performance, Undergraduates.

Index Terms – Academic, Internet, Impact, Performance, Undergraduates, University, Usage.

1 INTRODUCTION

The internet can be conceived as a rich, multi-layered complex ever-changing text for information dissemination and a medium for collaborative interaction between individuals and computers without regards for geographical limitation of space [1]. The internet today is a worldwide entity whose nature cannot be easily or simply defined. To many, the internet is a large computer network linking together millions of smaller computers at numerous sites in various countries belonging to thousands of business, government, research, educational and other organisations. To the internet users, the internet is a global community-one with a very active life. The awake magazine (1997, June 22) has it that internet began as “an experiment by the US department of defence in the 1960s to help scientist and researchers from widely dispersed areas work together by sharing scarce and expensive computer and files. This goal required the creation of a set of connected networks that would act as a co-ordinated whole”. In his own view of the origin of the internet, Ibegwam [2] opines that the internet is a huge computer

network made up of many individual computers as servers’, which commenced in 1969 under a contract by the Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA). While awake (1997) has it that the internet came as a result of the generation of interest in a “bombproof” network during the era of the cold war so much that if a part of the network were destroyed, data would still travel towards its destination with help from the surviving parts. Ibegwam, posits that, “the internet was designed in parts to provide communication network that would work even if some of the sites were destroyed by nuclear attack”.

The internet is a relatively new channel for scholarly resources and contain vast quantities of information that vary a great deal regarding its content, aim, target, group, reliability. Hence, it is important that the end user is aware of the diverse information available on the internet and educated in the criteria by which the information content should be accessed [3]. The internet is one of the beneficial tools in this era of IT world not only for business but for academic point of view and enhances the skills and capabilities of student which assist them in studies and in professional life. Students use the internet as a hub for research in their various fields of study. This can be seen by the way the students consult the internet for assignments, presentations, research works and examinations.

Jagboro [1] in his own research ascertain that 45.2% of postgraduate access the internet at the cybercafé in the

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university while only 8.2% use the library internet facilities. A greater percentage (38.24%) does that only on monthly basis while 39.7% spend one hour on each visit. The internet provides several opportunities for the academia. It is a mechanism for information dissemination and a medium for collaborative interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographical limitation of space [1]. The internet is the world's largest and most widely used network. The internet appearance in tertiary education was used as tools for researchers to communicate and share project work. Today the education domain is still one of the largest contributors to the internet [1]. Since the inception of the ICT, the internet has acted as a store house of information. Students have been able to have a wide range of information round the clock and round the globe. Also effective use of the internet leads to day-to-day update of the happenings in our society and this affects the academic performance of students in various fields. This has helped to increase the information quotient of students during studying, learning and research.

Studies by Oyegun[4] revealed that the internet has many benefit to the academic cycle; these include provision of round-the-clock access to a wide variety of information sources globally and the ability to discuss and share experience with colleagues to be able to derive maximum benefits from the attributes of ICT. Ojekun [5] also confirmed as he discovered that student at University of Botswana lacked skills and this greatly impeded their meaningful exploration of the internet.

The internet now represents one of the most successful examples of the benefits of sustained investment and commitment to research and development of information infrastructure [6]. The internet is a valuable source of information used by student in projects and assignments. With over 50million websites on the net, the chances are that information on any subject however obscure can be found using appropriate search tools. It also serves as a useful tool for lecturers in helping to prepare lesson plans using a number of sites dedicated to providing educational material. There are great possibilities for higher education at all levels through the use of internet because curricula can be developed collaboratively and educational materials distributed and updated more cheaply, offering additional ways for students to interact with their study materials as well as their instructors [7]. Another importance of the internet is that it affords students (all over the world but more beneficial to those in developing countries) the opportunity to access a large pool of data which could help reduce the information gap resulting from the disadvantages of the educational opportunities [8]. The University library has a role to play through the provision

of vast amount of information sources via the mediation of internet access. Resources that the library makes available must be integrated with one another and within the library environment and library services must support learning and research behaviours of its users.

Furthermore, users want to access and use items from more than one content provider; also they ultimately interact with various user interfaces but even then, each service has a different user interface for discovery, with its unique set of "presentation services" that the user must learn and understand [9]. Walker [9] further stated that E-access opens up greater opportunities for people to find and get to an increasing corpus of knowledge. Search engines such as Google, Msn and Yahoo are now targeting the traditional library user; and libraries are under increasing pressure to develop and offer new paradigms for discovery that meet the changing expectations of end users.

With increasing impact of information and communication technologies on higher education, all those concerned with higher education are attempting to grasp how ICT could help in modernizing the process of teaching, learning and research. With the advent of the internet, the following dilemma arises in the educational system: Learner is not dependent on teacher for interaction; and teachers can give lecturers virtually to unknown learners. So in this era, teachers and students can carry forward their work on the internet in ways that are similar to and tightly intertwined with the traditional ways that they learn, teach and study in libraries, classrooms, laboratories, seminars, conferences and so on. The internet can provide access to essentially unlimited resources of information not conventionally obtainable through other means. The internet has broken down barriers of communication access from anywhere in the world. It is fast, reliable and does not have restrictions on content or format. It also has unlimited range of facilities which assist users to access almost infinite information on the net. It offers the opportunity for access to up-to-date research reports and knowledge globally. It has thus become an important component of electronic services in academic institutions. Hence the internet has become an invaluable tool for learning, teaching and research (including collaborative research).

Prior to the use of ICT for acquisition, processing and dissemination of information, university teaching, learning and research were restricted to student's dominical institutions library or by extension those materials made available through inter-lending [10]. Akintunde [11] as cited in Anunobi [10] asserts that any attempt to have meaningful academic communication can be successful only with the use of ICT which presents information in real

time and space. No wonder youngsters, especially students and researchers spend most of their time in the cybercafé. Where the latter is not available in the university community, they risk travelling a further distance to transact one business or another in the internet [10].

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The lack of funds for effective running of the universities and especially their libraries has adversely affected adequate provision of modern books, updated literate materials and journals where available, are now expensive as warranted by the economic recession, global political crises and currency devaluation compounded by the information explosion that we have witnessed in the global electronic village that the world has turned to. In view of those afore stated problems, Nigerian students have now turned their attention to the use of internet for the purpose of studying, conducting research and obtaining general information. Therefore, with more attention given to the internet as a result of its numerous benefits, students who have access to this technology may lose some level of significant interest in using the library. The study therefore is an attempt to access the effectiveness of the use of internet services and how it affects student's academic performances.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to find out the use of internet services and how it affects student's performance. Specifically, the aims of the study are to

1. Find out the frequency of internet use.
2. Find out the most preferred location of internet use.
3. Find out the purposes for browsing the internet.
4. Find out the most used internet service.
5. Find out the influence of internet use on academic performance.
6. Find out the problems faced by students during internet use.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to guide this study.

1. What is the frequency of internet use among the students?
2. What is the most preferred location of internet?
3. What are the purposes for browsing the internet?
4. Which is the most used internet service?
5. Does internet services influence student's academic performance?
6. What are the problems faced by students in using internet services?

1.5 Basic Assumptions

The following are the assumptions of the researcher.

1. It was assumed that students use the internet all weekdays except weekends.
2. It was assumed that students prefer to browse in the cybercafé than in the library.
3. It was assumed that student use the internet for social networking.
4. It was assumed that the Google search is the most used internet service by students.
5. It was assumed that the internet has affected the students positively towards their educational goal.
6. It was assumed that illiteracy is the problem faced by students most in internet use.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study could be beneficial for students as well as for the institution. The valuable feedback gotten from respondents should help students to realise the benefits of internet in their education. Institutes can invest more in internet facilities to enhance the academic performance of their student and produce better results. Note that the relevance of internet facilities is measured by how effective, sufficient and accessible it is to students and users. The research will also provide in-depth insight into the various internet facilities and how students can be able to use them to improve academic performance.

1.7 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The self-report criterion is a limitation. Future research should employ more objective measures of internet use. This study covers all regular undergraduate students in University of Abuja. These are 100 - 400 levels student including 500 levels law. The study therefore excludes centre for distance learning and continuing education (CDL and CE) students and sandwich students. Also, the study is not restricted to any gender. It includes both male and female, and undergraduates at all level of study.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Internet

The internet according to Wells [12] is a computer mediated communication tool, providing the individual with access to a broad spectrum of information and unique communication technologies. The internet is a global system for interconnected computer networks that use the standard internet protocol suite to serve billions of users worldwide. It is a network of networks that consist of millions of private, public, academic, business and government network of local to global scope that are linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless and optical networking technologies. The internet carries a vast range of information resources and services such as the inter-linked hypertext documents of the World Wide Web (WWW) and the infrastructure to support electronic

mail.Madu and Adeniran [13] noted that the internet developed from a United States Department of Defence project, during the cold war years. Precisely, the internet started in 1969 under a contract by the Advanced Research Project Agency (ARPA) whose major objective was to connect major computers at the universities in the South Western United State.

The origin of the internet dates back to research of the 1960 commissioned by the United States government in collaboration with private commercial interests to build robust, fault tolerant and distributed networks. The finding of a new U.S backbone by the National Science Foundation (N.S.F) in the 1980's as well as private funding for other commercial backbones lead to worldwide participation in the development of new network technologies and the merger of many networks. The commercialization of what was by the 1960's an international network resulted in its popularisation and incorporation into virtually every aspect of modern human life.

The internet has no centralized governance in either technological implementation or policies for access and usage, each constituent network sets its own standard, only the over-reaching definitions of the two principal name spaces in the internet, the internet protocol address, space and the domain name system, are directed by a maintainer organization i.e. the internet co-operation for assigned names and numbers (ICAN).The technical underpinning and standardization of the core protocol (IPV4) and (IPV6) is an activity of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), a non-profit organization of loosely affiliated international participation that anyone may associate with by contributing technical expertise. According to Ani [14], the internet is a network of linked computers which are located at different points all over the world that provides easy communication between persons and organizations no matter where they are located. The internet is used mostly in obtaining information. Researchers can publish and also access several publications across the nation through internet, even from their personal computers once they are connected to the internet.The major functional advantage of the internet stems from its willingness to share information with others so that everyone will benefit.

Shitta [15] posits that the internet is a communication super highway that links, hooks and focuses the entire world into a global village, where people from all races can easily get in touch, see or speak to one another and exchange information from one point of the globe to another.

2.2 Access to the Internet and Preferred Location of Internet Use

Internet access refers to the means by which users connect to the internet. Common methods of internet access include

dial-up, land-line (over coaxial cable, fibre optic or copper wires) [16]. Places of access to the internet include libraries, internet cafes and various places where computer with internet connections are available. In Africa nowadays, the rate at which people particularly the students are gaining access to the internet is progressing. However there are restrictions regarding the time of access. Participants in Jackson et al, [17] study conducted in Washington showed that people held positive attitudes towards the internet even though sometimes they were aware of the negative side of it, such as inappropriate websites for children.

Jagboro [1] conducted a study on the usage of the internet at ObafemiAwolowo University ille-ife, Nigeria. The analysis showed that 22.06 percent of the respondents accessed the internet on a daily basis, 38.24 percent weekly, 11.76 percent monthly, 11.76 percent bi monthly and 16.17 percent quarterly. In addition, 25.00 percent spent an average time of half an hour, 39.71% spent 1 hour (i.e. approximately between 5-7 hours per week), 19.12% spent 2 hours, 7.35% spent 3 hours and 2.9% spent 4 hours, while 5.88% spent more than 4 hours. A further examination of the results showed that there is a convergence of weekly users who spent only one hour on the internet. Robinson [18] examined the internet use among African-American college students in Michigan. The respondents were surveyed by using questionnaire to determine the frequency of internet use. The results of the study indicated that most of the African-American college students (76%) have been using the internet for more than 3 years. The use of the internet for most African-American college students occurred at school or at the work place, totalling with 495 of the responses. While 47% of the responses indicated that they spent an average of two hours per day on-line. A small percentage of the students spent 5-6 hours per day, i.e. 25-30 hours per week on the internet.

Hanquer [19] surveyed a diverse community college to access the use of the internet by the students. The survey showed that although all the students surveyed had free internet access through their community college, only 97% of the students reported have access to the internet. The survey showed that 83% of interest users had access to internet at their home and 51% of the respondents accessed the internet at their college or library. 81% of the students reported to access the internet most for college work and 80% for email/chart.

2.3 The Use of Internet Services

The use of the internet in education allows a wide range of international resources to be accessed. Resources can be well organised on the internet which allows for easy information access and exchange [20]. Students and teachers alike use the web because someone has already

done the work of finding the information for them. The internet allows students and teachers “to exchange greetings, exchange intellectual discourse, conduct meetings, share knowledge, offer emotional support, make plans, brainstorm ideas, learn about other cultures and otherwise broaden their mental horizon [21]”. The internet provides an activation of sight, sound and cognitive reasoning, engaging students as active learners [21]. Through the internet many different activities can be assigned to the student that will enhance their education [21]. Hicks [20] concluded that the internet is a double-edged sword, as students can access any educational database; learn about any country, they can also be subjected to perverse and deviant topics Ebersole [22] pointed out that there are four basic types of internet usage for students. These are;

- i. Website, which provides documents or collections of documents that, can be read for informational purposes. Other types of information gathering services are made available on the internet, including commercial information services about research companies. Also, thousands of libraries are connected to the internet, permitting even casual users to access their catalogues and request loans through inter-library programs. In addition to those information services, the number of online journals, newspapers and trade magazines increases each month. Much of information in these publications is free, although some are accessible only for paid subscribers
- ii. E-mail is nothing more than sending/or receiving messages through the computer. It combines the immediacy of the telephone with the world processing power of computer. Students use e-mail to keep in touch with friends and relatives and to work on a project with someone some kilometres away. E-mail is a low-cost form of communication and unlike telephone or standard postal services, there are no volume or long distance sub-charges for sending e-mail.
- iii. Chat rooms are internet facilities where students can communicate with each other on the computer at the same time, typing messages to each other
- iv. News group is an electronic bulletin board. News group is an example of the use of internet in facilitating the development of international perspective in students. He adds that this encourages team work, effective communication and ethics of social and political action.

The impact of internet usage on academic performance was studied by Osunade et al...[23]using two universities as case

study. The contact group did not have access to internet, while the experimental group had access to internet. The result showed a significant difference between the academic performances of the two groups. The perceived usefulness of the study by Akinsola et al...[24]to evaluate the information seeking behaviour of the University Of Ibadan students on the internet indicated that students use the internet for a variety of activities but need to be taught strategies on how to obtain information on the internet..

Mashra, Yadav, Bisht [25] conducted a study on internet utilization pattern of undergraduate students in College Of Agriculture and Technology Pantnagar. The findings showed that 61.5% respondents of the male and 51.6% of females used the internet for the purpose of preparing assignments. In the same vein, Kumar and kaur [26] conducted a research on internet and its use in the Engineering Colleges of Punjab, India. Questionnaire was employed to sample opinion of 474 students. It was revealed that 30.8% of the students have 2-4 years of experience in using the internet located at the college and use internet for education and research purposes, while half of them use it for communication purposes. More than half of the students use the internet for consulting technical reports. It was further indicated that the major problem faced by the users was slow access speed of the internet. In comparing internet with conventional documents, 91.6% of the respondents noted that the internet is easy to use, 89.1% agreed that it informative and 88.1% felt it is time saving.

In Jagboro [1] the use of internet was rated fourth as a source of academic information by post graduate student of the ObafemiAwolowo University, Ille-ife because of the limited number of access points available at the time, while the University’s library was rated first. Chiwepa [27] discovered a high use of internet by the staff of the University of Zambia where 35 out of 37 staff made use of internet. Their major motivation for such use is convenience (82.99%); usefulness (80.05%); free access to information and software (71.4%) and ease of use (68.6%).

2.4 Frequency of Internet Use

Ebersole [22] in his study reported that respondents reply to the computer-administered survey gave the following reasons for using the internet;

- i. Research and learning 5.2%
- ii. Communicate with other people 7%
- iii. Access to material otherwise unavailable 5%
- iv. Find something exciting/fun 8%
- v. Find something to do when bored 5%
- vi. Sports and game information 1%

In another study based on review of literature by Kumar and kaur [26], it revealed that students are the most frequent users of the internet. They used the internet mainly for educational purposes rather than entertainment. Bavakutty and Biradar et al...[28] conducted a study on internet usage by the students and faculties in Kuvempu University. The results indicated that 42.1% of students use internet twice a week and 31.25% faculties use it every day. The majority of students as well as faculties use internet for study/teaching purpose. The favourite place for using the internet is followed by commercial places. A thumping majority of respondents are satisfied in internet sources and services.

Laithe [29] surveyed 406 graduate and undergraduate students from Shippensburg University. The survey revealed that 57.6% of the undergraduate students use the internet 1-2 times per week and another 37.1% use it 1-2 times daily. 54.7% of the undergraduate students used internet 1-2 times per week and 37.7% used it 1-2 times daily. The survey showed that the most used internet service was E-mail. 100% of the graduates and undergraduates used e-mail services.

2.5 Internet Access and Academic Performance

Chiwepa [27] and Jagboro [1] specified the benefits of internet to academic community as

- i. Quick, global and convenient access and exchange of information with experienced and expert in any field;
- ii. Easy dissemination of research findings
- iii. Enhanced collaborative research and other activities
- iv. Ability to use some software and expand the capability of one's competences.

Kuh and Hu [30] suggested that using the internet has a strong relationship with an overall measure of student's engagement. In a study of "best wired campuses" (institutions that have made large investments in technology), students reported slightly more frequent contacts with faculty and participated more in active learning activities compare with their counterparts attending less wired campuses [30]. The results pointed out to a positive link between information technology and engagement in effective educational practises. Laird and Kuh [31] in their study of use of data of the National Survey of Students' Engagement (NSSE) in Indiana University Bloomington to investigate the relationship between students use of the internet and other forms of students engagement, found a strong positive relationship between using the internet for educational practises such as active and collaborative learning and student faculty interaction.

When students used the internet, their opportunities for other types of engagement increased [31].

Adegoji and Toyo [32] in their study on the impact of internet on research reported that internet contributed significantly to the ease of research through downloading materials. It is commonly believed that researchers and students in higher education institutions are battling the problem of inadequate and out-of-date materials. One of the ways to pursue knowledge is through research and the internet is having a profound impact on the research process and dissemination of information [33]. Aseni [34] showed that all respondents were using the internet frequently because all faculties were well equipped with internet services. It was revealed that the researchers of the university were getting quality information through the internet. Fifty-five percent of respondents searched for scientific information through the internet because the university library has provided access to various databases and online journals for all the students and staff.

Anasi [35] investigated the pattern of internet use by undergraduates at the University of Lagos, main campus, Akoka, Lagos. She discovered that even though the level of internet use was low among undergraduates from both the faculty of law and education, the study showed that internet use has a very high impact on the academic/career related activities of the students. Internet appearance in higher education was used as a tool for researchers to communicate and share project data [1]. The use of internet (if maximized) plays a major role in helping undergraduate researcher's access large number of materials from different parts of the world [36]. With its advent, lecturers and students can work together without physical interaction between each other and achieve the same objective with that of traditional way of studying in the higher institution. Lecturers exchange ideas and communicate effectively since teaching, learning and research is now made easy with the internet.

Internet as affirmed by Awoleye, Siyanbola and Oladapo [37] is used for information development, enhances easy communication, improves academic performances, used as a research tool, provides solution to assignments, gives information on entertainment and education and a source of scholarship. Recently, Oyedun [4] conducted a study on the level of internet use in the library of Federal University of Technology, Minna and observed that most of the respondents claim that through the internet services in the library, they have improved considerably in their academic performance.

2.6 Challenges Encountered in the Use of Internet Facilities

Ibrahim [34] in his study titled “use and user perception of electronic resources in the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU)” made an attempt to measure the use and perception of the UAEU faculty members of electronic resources. He found out that frequent use of electronic resources was low due to lack of time needed to focus on teaching; lack of awareness to electronic resources provided by library; ineffective communication channels and language barriers. Stratified random sample questionnaires were sent to the faculty. The questionnaires were self-administered. E-mail and phone calls were also made. 25% sample was drawn department-wise.

Mashra, Yadav and Bisht [25] conducted a study to know the internet utilization pattern of the undergraduate students of GB Pant University of Science and Technology, Pantnagar. A majority of the respondents that is 83.1% male and 61.3% female respondents indicated that they faced the problem of slow functioning of internet connection. The use of internet has revolutionized the way and manner the global community source and use information. Studies on the use of internet by Jagboro [1] showed that 38.24% and 22.06% of the university students use it on weekly and daily basis respectively. Also 11.76% use the internet monthly and bi-monthly basis. Many (39.7%) have 1hour as surfing time, which decreases from 25% for half an hour to 5.88% for 4hours. Though such high use was recorded, he discovered a low use of internet by students of ObafemiAwolowo University.

Ibegwam [2] discovered in his study that many students were not using the internet in the College of Medicine at the University of Lagos. There are problems associated with internet technology such as slowness of the server of its breakdown which Ibegwam [2] described as constant disconnection due to poor phone-lines. Chifwepa [27] identified lack of guidance, inability of use, inadequate internet facilities as some of the reasons for low use. Chifwepa [27] discovered that 8.6% of the respondents considered travelling a long distance to access internet services as a problem while Jagboro [1] noted that students spent a huge sum of money in cybercafé facilities.

Nwokedi [39] posits that lack of searching skills is still an obstacle to use of internet. In spite of the numerous challenges encountered in the use of internet facilities by undergraduate students, it is obvious that its use will enhance their academic performances in their various fields, therefore they are to undermine this challenges and avail themselves the numerous opportunities offered by these technological facility to enrich their intellects and free themselves from educational, intellectual and knowledge literacy.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

To ensure the desired goals and objectives, a survey type of research was carried out because the study is concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions, prevailing practises and attitudes among other things.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this research is the entire undergraduate students of the University of Abuja including 500 level law students which brings the population to fifteen thousand (15,000) students. See Table 1.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A sample size of 375 was picked using Morgan and Kaycie (1971) table for determining sample size from a given population.

3.4 Research Instruments

For the purpose of the study, questionnaire titled “use of internet services and students’ academic performance” (UISSAP) was self-administered to the respondents.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires were distributed to 375 respondents. The questionnaires were self-administered to the students at various levels. A total of 375 questionnaires were distributed and 200 representing 53% were collected back well responded to on which the analyses were based. Some of the questionnaires were returned at the spot while others were returned on the day agreed by the respondents.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The study has to do with inferential statistics. Inferential statistics is aimed at summarizing the properties of a population from the known properties of the sample of the population. Simple frequency and percentage was used for analysing the data because it will explain the phenomena under study.

4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND

DISCUSSION OF RESULT

Table 1. Population of the Study

Level of Study	Population
100	3,680
200	3,228
300	3,450
400	3,021
500	1,621
Total	15,000

Source: University of Abuja Academic Unit

Table 2. Analysis of Demographic Data of Students

Level of Study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
100 level	44	22%
200 level	45	23%
300 level	40	20%
400 level	36	18%
500 level	35	17%
Total	200	100%

Source: field Survey 2013.

Table 2, shows that out of 200 questionnaires answered and returned, 44(22%) respondents were 100 level students, 45(23%) were 200 level students, 40(20%) were 300 level students, 36(18%) were 400 level students and 35(17%) were 500 level students. Based on this analysis, it could be concluded that all levels participated in the research.

Table 3: Sex Distribution of Students

Level	Male		Female	
	frequency	percentage (%)	frequency	percentage (%)
100	25	13%	19	10%
200	21	10%	24	12%
300	23	11%	17	8%
400	18	9%	18	9%
500	13	7%	22	11%
Total	100	50%	100	50%

Source: Field Survey 2013.

From table 3, 25(13%) of the sampled students are 100 level male students and 19(10%) are females. 21(10%) are 200 level male students and 24(12%) are females. 23(11%) are 300 level male students and 17(8%) are 300 level females. 18(9%) are 400 level male students and 18(9%) are females. 13(7%) are 500 level male students and 22(11%) are females.

Table 4: Frequency of Internet Use

Frequency	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Everyday	111	55%
Once in a week	31	15%
Once in two weeks	9	5%
Once in a month	26	13%
Occasionally	20	10%
Never	3	2%
Total	200	100%

Source: Field Survey 2013.

From table 4, results gotten from the research shows that 111(55%) of respondents use the internet every day, 31(15%) use internet once a week, 9(5%) use the internet once in two weeks, 26(13%) use the internet once in a month, 20(10%) use the internet occasionally while 3(2%) do not use the internet. The findings show that majority of students use the internet every day. This result collaborates with Waldman (2003) which said that 73% of the students accessed the internet daily.

Table 5: Most Preferred Location of Internet Usage.

Location	Number of Respondents	Percentage%
Personal home	108	54
School library	19	10
Cybercafé	43	21
Others specify	30	15
Total	200	100

Source: field Survey 2013.

From table 5, 108(54%) of the respondents preferred internet usage from their personal home, 19(10%) preferred it in the school library, 43(21%) preferred it at the cybercafé and 30(15%) of the students preferred internet location at different places not stated. The findings show that a greater number of the population 108(54%) preferred location internet usage was at their personal home.

Table 6: Purpose for Browsing the Internet

Purpose	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Obtain course related information	90	45%
Communication (E-mail)	43	22%
Games and Music	16	8%
E-books and journal downloading	30	15%
Obtain non-course related information	21	10%
Total	200	100%

Source: Field Survey 2013.

From table 6, 90(45%) of the respondents use the internet to obtain course related information, 43(22%) use the internet

for communication (E-mail), 16(8%) use the internet for playing games and music, 30(15%) use the internet for E-books and journal downloading and 21(10%) use the internet to obtain non-course related information. This findings revealed that 90(45%) of the students use the internet to obtain course related information.

Table 7: Most Used Search Engine

Search Engines	Number Of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Google	143	72%
Yahoo	29	14%
Ask	18	9%
Others specify	10	5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Field Survey 2013.

From table 7, 143(72%) of the respondents use Google search engine, 29(14%) use the Yahoo, 18(9%) use the Ask, 10(5%) use other search engines. The findings revealed that more of the population i.e. 143(72%) use the Google search engine.

Table 8: Influence of Internet on Students Academic Performance

Influences Of Internet On Students Academic Performance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To aid research	117	59%
Providing access to current information sources	67	34%
To help to prepare for examinations and tests	20	10%
To help in assignments	54	27%
To aid communication between students and lecturers	10	5%

Source: Field Survey 2013.

From table 8, 117(59%) use the internet to aid research, 67(34%) accept that the internet provides access to current information sources, 20(10%) use the internet to prepare for examinations and tests, 54(27%) said the internet helps in

assignments and 10(5%) said the internet aid communication between students and lecturers. The findings revealed that a greater proportion of students use the internet to aid their research.

Table 9: Problems Encountered in the Use of Internet Services

Problems	Number Of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Slow internet speed	111	56%
Power failure	31	16%
Poor computer skills	27	14%
Paying for online services	45	23%

Source: Field Survey 2013.

From table 9, 111(56%) said they faced the problem of slow internet speed, 31(16%) said they faced the problem of power failure, 27(14%) said they had poor computer skills and 45(23%) said they had challenges in paying for online services. From the findings, we can reveal that the major problem faced by students was slow internet speed.

4.1 Major Findings

- i. From the study, one can say that undergraduate student use the internet every day of the week.
- ii. A good number of University of Abuja undergraduates have effective computer skills which results to frequent use of the internet.
- iii. The study also reveals that a greater number University of Abuja undergraduate students prefer internet usage from their personal homes.
- iv. The study also reveals that most of the students who use the internet use it to obtain course related information which helps to aid their research, prepare for assignments and get access to current information sources.
- v. The study also reveals that the Google search engine remain the most popular search engine which undergraduate students of the University of Abuja use.
- vi. The study also reveals that internet has great influence on the academic performance of undergraduate students of the University of Abuja.

The study also reveals that the major problem encountered by students in accessing the internet services is the problem of poor internet speed.

4.2 Discussion of Results

The results from table 4 revealed that majority of the participants 111(55%) access the internet every day. This is followed by 31(15%) who access the internet once in a week. Moreover, 9(5%) access the internet once in two weeks. 26(13%) access the internet once in a month and 20(10%) access the internet occasionally. Only 3(2%) indicate they never use the internet. The results generally indicate that the majority of respondents access the internet every day of the week. This result corresponds with [1] findings in a similar study that showed that the majority of users access the internet for an hour per day, i.e. between 5-7 hours per week.

The results in table 5 revealed that majority of participants 108(54%) preferred location of the internet was their personal home. This is followed by 19(10%) whose location was the school library. Also 43(21%) location was the cybercafé and 30(15%) gave different locations as their preferred place of internet use. This result corresponds with [19] finding in a similar study that 83% of internet users had access to internet at their home and 51% of the respondents accessed the internet at their college library.

The results in table 6 revealed that 90(45%) of the respondents use the internet to obtain course-related information. 43(22%) use the internet for communication (E-mail.) 16(8%) use the internet for games and music and 30(15%) use the internet for E-books and journals downloading. However, 21(10%) use the internet to obtain non course-related information. The findings show that the internet is being used by respondents mainly to obtain course related information and it is least being used by respondents for games and music. Similarly, Kumar and Kaur [26] reported that students use the internet mainly for academic purposes which included obtaining course related information and communication by E-mail.

The results in table 7 revealed that 143(72%) have Google as their most used search engine. 29(14%) use Yahoo, 18(9%) use Ask. However 10(5%) specified other search engines. This result corresponds with Wirth and Colleagues (2007) which revealed that the Google was the most popular search engine and mostly used by students.

The results in table 8 revealed that 117(59%) use the internet to aid research, 67(34%) accept that the internet provides access to current information sources, 20(10%) use the internet to prepare for examinations and tests, 54(27%) said the internet helps in assignments and 10(5%) said the internet aid communication between students and lecturers. The results in table 4.7 generally show that respondents strongly agree that it would be difficult to survive in their programme without access to the internet.

This results agree with [36] who revealed in accordance with the findings that internet has a major role in helping undergraduate researcher's access large number of materials from different parts of the world.

The results in table 9 revealed that 111(56%) showed that their major challenge was slow internet speed, 31(16%) indicated power failure, 27(14%) indicated poor computer skills and 45(23%) indicated paying for online service as their problem. From the findings, the major challenge faced by students was slow internet speed. Ibegwam [2] revealed that one of the problem faced by students was slowness of the server or its breakdown as a result of constant disconnection due to poor phone-lines. Results from the research also shows that 27(13.5%) still lack computer skills and this collaborates with [39] which revealed that lack of searching skills is still hindering good use of the internet.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Recommendations

- i. There is a need for extensive training programmes organised at regular intervals so that all categories of users can improve their efficiency in the use of the internet.
- ii. To solve the problem of slow functioning of internet connectivity, the university body should acquire high speed internet connection with maximum bandwidth.
- iii. The cost of browsing should be reviewed downward so that student's access to internet can increase.
- iv. Government should as a matter of necessity improve on the present state of power in the country.
- v. Printing facility should be provided so that users can get print out of their study materials and other important documents.

5.2 Conclusion

The fact that internet and its services play an important role on the student's academic performance cannot be over emphasized. This it does through constant exposure of students to up-to-date information and relevant information in their various fields of study. The number of hours spent on the internet will have an effect on the student's academic performance. The study shows that the use of internet for study purpose and academic achievements are directly proportional to each other. It was revealed that majority of respondents access the internet every day. Even though the access to internet services has been grossly affected by the level of poverty and degree of exposure amongst other factors, the reduction in rates charged at internet and computer education centres could

go a long way to enabling students have more access to latest and useful academic materials. If this suggestion and other recommendations in this study are taken into consideration, it is assumed that the future of the internet use and its academic influence on students is bright.

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