

ASSESSMENT OF INTERNET FACILITIES USAGE AMONG GENERAL STUDIES EDUCATION STUDENTS AND ITS IMPLICATION ON BASIC EDUCATION IN MICHAEL OTEDOLA COLLEGE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION, NOFORIJA – EPE, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

**¹Adegbuyi David GBADEBO,
Olayemi Grace ABIMBOLA**

Department of Computer Science
Faculty of Information Science and Educational Technology
Lagos State University of Education, Otto-Ijanikin, Lagos (Epe Campus)
(Formerly Michael Otedola College of Primary Education)
P.M.B. 1028, Noforija – Epe, Lagos
E-mail: ¹gbuyi2010@yaoo.com,

Idris Adebajo SALAMI

Department of General Studies Education
Faculty of Specialized Education
Lagos State University of Education, Otto-Ijanikin, Lagos (Epe Campus)
(Formerly Michael Otedola College of Primary Education)
P.M.B. 1028, Noforija – Epe, Lagos

Abstract

The study assessed the extent of internet facilities usage by students of General Studies Education and its Implication on Basic Education in Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija - Epe, Lagos. The sample comprised 396 students who were selected using stratified random sampling technique from five of the six schools in the college. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire with a reliability co-efficient of 0.89. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, simple percentages and t-test analysis. The results showed that gender difference has no significance effect in the extent to which General Studies Education students utilizes the internet facilities for private studies and that they have sufficient access to the use of Internet. It was recommended, among others, that government should provide more ICT resources for use in all teacher-training institutions in Nigeria.

Keywords: Internet facilities, gender, instruction, technology, assessment

Introduction

Western education has become one of the most important instruments for the attainment of rapid socio-economic, political, scientific and technological development. For this reason, governments all over the world had continued to place preference on the development of education (Idowu, 2021). It is however important to note that the internet had played very prominent roles in western development, education inclusive. The internet and its use had brought tremendous development in all sectors of the economy.

The internet is an integral component of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which had, within a very short time become one of the basic building blocks of modern societies. Contemporary nations now regard understanding ICT and mastering the basic skills and concepts of ICT as part of core education, alongside reading, writing and numeracy (Salawu, 2019). The rapid rate at which ICT had evolved since the mid twentieth century, its vast and unprecedented applications had given it a strong role in contemporary development and globalization (Salawu, 2019).

Ogunniyi (2018), Hontonyon, Dalmedia and Edun (2019) as well as Gbadebo and Abimbola (2021) had reported no significant difference in the extent of use of computers by male and female secondary school teachers, Bello and Oluwo (2017), Agowagah, Arua and Abugu (2019) have reported otherwise. Similarly, Abubakar and Uboh (2018) have reported significant difference in the extent of usage of computer facilities among male and female college students. However, Olonade (2018) have reported significant difference in the achievement of science and non-science secondary school students in Mathematics.

In recent times, students' academic achievement is observed to dwindle probably because many of them now spent most of their time on social media instead of concentrating such time and effort on improving their academic pursuit. Of course, recent advances on social media usage coupled with proliferation of internet-ready mobile phones, i-pads, palmtops, etc had negatively influenced students' academic achievement as many of them now devote more time

to social media usage at the expense of their studies. Since teachers, as facilitators in the instructional process occupy a very sensitive position in the school system as they are saddled with the task of implementing the school curricular, then it becomes imperative to assess the level of internet facilities usage among pre-service teachers since the internet, being a universally acknowledged tool of instruction and the skill of the teacher to meaningfully adapt the technology to this task goes a long way to determining the extent of students' achievement.

The General Studies Education, according to the National Commission for Colleges of Education (2012) is designed to expose students to a variety of knowledge across disciplines. It is aimed at enabling students appreciate the inter-relationship among disciplines in an integrated world, which is fast becoming one big village. Advances in science and technology are daily breaking down traditional boundaries in human knowledge and communication. The computer is also actively making obsolete the compartmentalization of human knowledge. In a small way, General Studies therefore, offer the potential for bridging the gaps in human knowledge, thereby preparing the students to meet the challenges of the changing world.

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (2012) reiterates that upon the completion of the teacher-training programme, students should be able to: participate meaningfully in discussions covering a wide spectrum of disciplines; appreciate and analyse Nigerian/human history and cultures, as well as articulate their relative impact on educational and socio-economic development; state, explain and critically analyse the national objectives and how to achieve them; acquire through independent research, the skills and information for appreciating the basis and nature/character of human knowledge, values and actions, and to use such knowledge/information in solving problems, among others.

The internet is an electronic communications network that connects computer networks and organizational computer facilities around the world. The internet is one of the greatest inventions and provides people with instant access to an endless supply of knowledge and entertainment. The use of internet assists students in accessing digital information efficiently and effectively. Hew (2018) states that the internet is used as a tool for students to discover learning topics, solve problems and provide solutions to the problems in the learning process.

The use of the internet makes knowledge acquisition more accessible, and concepts in learning areas are well understood. Based on learning through internet, students are more capable of using information and data from various sources, and critically assessing the quality of their learning materials. Learners can access all types of texts from beginning to advanced levels with ease through computers, laptops, personal digital assistants (PDAs), or iPads. More specifically, these e-books may come with some reading applications, which offer a reading-aloud interface, relevant vocabulary-building activities, games related to reading skills and vocabulary acquisition, and many more (Osunmakinde, 2020). With the internet, students not only acquire knowledge, but also share diverse learning experiences from one another in order to express themselves and reflect on their learning. It offers more opportunities to develop critical (higher-order) thinking skills. Below is a list of some of the advantages of the internet.

1. It contains an endless supply of knowledge and information that allows students to learn about almost any topic or question they may have. Using a search engine such as Google, students can ask virtually any question and find a webpage with an answer to and information about that question. There are also millions of videos on sites like YouTube explaining various topics.
2. In the past, it would take days and sometimes even months to receive a letter from someone else. Today, with the internet, students can send an e-mail to anyone in the world and often have it delivered in less than a minute. Other forms of communication, such as chat also students to have instant communication with anyone in the world.
3. Online forums are also places where people who share common interests can connect and talk about what they enjoy, or ask questions of other experts in the field.

Purpose of the Study

Considering the importance of General Studies Education in the overall Teacher Education programme offered in Nigerian colleges of education, it is obvious that the curriculum is enriched with skills that will enable teacher-trainees to solve emerging instructional problems via the use of computer technology. This is aimed at making a 'complete teacher' both in subject mastery and pedagogy. The specific objectives are to:

- (i) identify the sources of internet facilities used by General Studies Education students; and
- (ii) determine the extent to which General Studies Education students use the internet facilities for private studies.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- What are the sources of internet facilities used by General Studies Education students?
- To what extent do General Studies Education students use the internet facilities for private studies?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the extent of use of internet facilities by male and female

General Studies Education students.
Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the extent to which science and non-science General Studies Education students use the internet facilities.

Methodology

The population is made up of all students of Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija – Epe, Lagos State for the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 academic sessions. The sample comprised of 396 students who were selected using stratified random sampling technique from five of the six schools in the college. These schools with the number of samples are contained in table 1.

Table 1
Sample Distribution of the Study

Schools	Number of students sampled
Arts and Social Sciences	167
Early Childhood Care and Primary Education	17
Languages	56
Sciences	63
Vocational Studies	93
Total	396

The School of Education was excluded because it does not admit students but rather serve as the school offering courses in General Studies Education and Teacher Education. The variation in the number of samples is based on the percentage of the number of students that were available in each school.

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. The questionnaire was titled 'Extent of Internet Facilities Usage by General Studies Education Students' (EIFUGSES). The instrument has two sections. Section A elicits demographic information of the respondents such as school and gender while Section B covers items on frequency and sources of internet used by General Studies Education students. It was validated by a tests and measurement expert in one of the higher institutions in Osun State. A reliability co-

efficient of 0.89 was derived when it was administered on fifty-five students outside the scope of the study. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. A total of 396 copies of the instrument were distributed through the help of the various Heads of Department and students' representatives. However, only three hundred and seventy-eight questionnaires were properly completed and returned for analysis.

The demographic information of respondents were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages while t-test was used to test the hypotheses.

Results

The results from the study are presented below.

Table 2
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Gender of respondents	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Female	215	56.8
Male	163	43.2
Total	378	100.0

Source: Researchers' field study (2021)

Table 2 reveals that 215 (56.8%) of respondents were female while 163 (43.2%) were male.

Table 3**Sources of Internet Facilities used by General Studies Education Students**

Sources of Internet	Number of Respondents	Percentages (%)
Mobile internet-ready phones	274	72.5
Persona; laptops, desktops, pal tops, etc	23	6.1
College e-library	57	15.1
College I.C.T. Centre	21	5.5
Others	03	0.8
Total	378	100

Source: Researchers' field study (2021)

Table 3 reveals that 274 (72.5%) of respondents use the internet on their mobile internet-ready phones for private studies while 23(6.1) uses their personal laptops, desktops, palmtops, etc. Similarly, 57(15.1)

uses the college e-library to access the internet while 21(5.5) uses the college ICT centre. Only 3(0.8) uses other sources.

Table 4**Frequency of Level of Internet Usage by General Studies Education students**

Sources of Internet	Number of Respondents	Percentages (%)
Very rarely	06	1.6
Rarely	28	7.4
Often	103	27.2
Very Often	241	63.8
Total	378	100

Source: Researchers' field study (2021)

Table 4 reveals that 6(1.6%), 28(7.4%), 103(27.2%) and 241(63.8%) uses the Internet 'very rarely', 'rarely', 'often' and 'very often' respectively.

The two hypotheses are tested below.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the extent of use of internet facilities by male and female General Studies Education students.

Table 5**T-test Analysis of the Difference in the Extent of use of Internet Facilities by Male and Female General Studies Education Students**

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-table	Decision
Female	215	17.13	0.97	188	4.17	5.31	Ho ₁ accepted
Male	163	13.49	0.78				

Level of significance at 0.05, SD = standard deviation, df = degree of freedom

Table 5 reveals a significant difference in female (N = 215, Mean = 17.13, SD = 0.97) and male (N = 163, Mean = 13.49, SD = 0.78). The obtained t-cal value (4.17) is lesser than the table t-value (5.31) at 0.05

level of significance. Therefore, Ho₁ is accepted.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the extent to which science and non-science General Studies Education students use the internet.

Table 6**T-test Analysis of the Difference in the Extent to which Science and non - Science General Studies Education Students use the Internet**

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-table	Decision
Science based students	59	5.21	4.83	188	2.13	2.22	Ho ₂ accepted
Non-Science based students	319	8.16	5.13				

Level of significance at 0.05, SD = standard deviation, df = degree of freedom

Table 6 reveals no significant difference in the extent of use of Internet facilities by science and non-science General Studies Education students since the obtained t-cal value (2.13) is lesser than the table t-value (2.22) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, Ho₂ is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The study had revealed no significance difference in the use of internet facilities between male and female students. This is probably because of the fact that majority of the students now rely on the use of their mobile phones to access the internet, since it is more accessible to them than ever. In addition, it is more convenient taking the mobile phones from one place to another since they are very handy. This finding contradicts that of Odele (2019), Salami (2018) and Ojesanmi, et al (2013) who revealed in their various studies that male users generally have more interest in the use of computer – related resources than their female counterparts. Salawu (2019), in a related study on the extent of utilization of computer technology resources among medical and law students in three federal universities in southwest Nigeria, discovered that these resources are much more utilized by male students than their female counterparts. This finding is an indication that gender is not an important factor in the extent of use of internet by students.

The study had also showed no significant difference in the extent of internet facilities usage between General Studies Education science and non – science students. This finding is in agreement with that of Akueveso and Adeleye (2020) who in a study on the extent of access of university students towards the use of computer facilities discovered that the use of internet and its associated resources cut across all disciplines as the facilities has provision for all subject areas and all levels of education. In a related study by Gbadebo, Abimbola, Adeyemi and Odupe (2013) on the extent of teachers' awareness, gender and utilization of Information and Communication Technology tools for effective teaching of Mathematics in Epe Local Government Area of Lagos State discovered that the use of computers and related technologies cuts across all disciplines as the technology had found its place in almost all facets of human endeavour.

The study further revealed that the main source of internet facilities used by students is their mobile phones. The study finally showed that the students use the internet more often. This finding revealed the growing relevance of internet for school activities and that students are seemingly taking advantage of it. This indicates a widespread acceptability of the internet and related technologies among General Studies Education students.

The Federal Government of Nigeria first introduced the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in 1999 as a reform programme in education aimed at providing greater access to and ensuring the quality of

basic education in Nigeria. It is a free, universal, and compulsory basic education programme. It was later backed by the UBE Act 2004, which made the provision for basic education consisting of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Primary education and Junior Secondary Education. The programme is seen as a demonstration of Nigeria's commitment to global protocols and conventions on education. These include the Rights of the Child Convention (1989) and the World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs (1990). The major goal of the UBE programme is to ensure that all children, regardless of ethnicity, religion, class, or gender, have access to quality basic education.

The implications of the findings of this study on Basic Education are enormous. Some of these include:

- The use of internet facilities by teacher-trainees in General Studies Education better prepares them for challenges ahead in the teaching profession.
- The teacher – trainees, through the use of internet facilities, have access to a plethora of knowledge on content development and pedagogy which are aimed at improving their classroom performance.
- More current information and knowledge are available at the finger tips of the students.
- It is possible to share research information with their peers as geographical distance is no longer a barrier.

Conclusion

It is no doubt that internet usage have had immense attendant impact on educational practice in contemporary nations of the world, especially in the training and re-training of teachers. Consequently, teacher-training institutions should make their students appreciate the use of internet in educational practice by offering more courses on Computer Application in Education and also provide more ICT resources in schools. Of course, no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made.

- The various states' ministries of education should make acquisition of adequate computer skills as part of the conditions for recruiting of teachers in schools.
- Government should encourage local production of computers and related accessories in order to make the facilities more affordable.

- There should be continuous training for teachers in schools to improve their productivity through the use of computers.
- The federal government should make a policy compelling all teacher training institutions to provide sufficient computers and related technologies for use in the training of prospective teachers.
- There should be steady power supply in schools to facilitate the use of computer and related technologies by teachers. This will enhance the optimal usage of these facilities in schools.

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