

## AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF INTERNET FACILITIES AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT:** *The National Policy of Nigeria (2014), recognizes the important role of ICT (internet) in the modern world hence the launching of ICT driven project known as Schoolnet. The study examined availability and utilization of internet facilities among undergraduate students of the Colleges of Education, Ikere Ekiti as a case study. Descriptive design research of the survey type was used to collect data. Five research questions were raised while four hypotheses were postulated for the study. The population consisted of all the undergraduate students of College of Education, Ikere –Ekiti and the sample was made up of 180 male and female students selected through simple random sampling techniques. The instrument for the study was a questionnaire tagged availability and utilization of internet facilities among undergraduate students of colleges of education (AUIFAUS). The study revealed that the facilities were not adequately available hence the low utilization. Poor electric power supply was the major hindrance. The findings also showed that internet usage was not gender sensitive but students from high social economic background used internet more frequently than those from poor economic background. It was therefore recommended that both the government and the college authority should ensure that internet facilities and regular power supply are made available for students' use.*

**KEYWORDS:** Availability, Colleges of Education. Internet facilities, Undergraduate Students, Utilization.

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### INTRODUCTION

Internet is a montage of thousands of computer networks that cover the planet. The uses of internet are enormous ranging from academic research, receipt of global information, linkage with other institutions of the world, bridging communication gap between developed and developing countries and also assist students to be computer literates. The internet is loaded with data and information which provides students with opportunity to engage in more challenging and life time activities. The internet is a uniform, global computer network connecting millions of computers across the world. It is a voluntary network in which many computers connected have chosen to do so in order to share and exchange information in a quick and effective manner. The internet is one of the most unifying powers known to man. It is a worldwide computer network where one can find a lot of information and where you can communicate with other people all over the world. For instance you can look for articles in other libraries from your computer and communicate with friends.

The internet is a computer network made up of thousands of networks worldwide. No one knows exactly how many computers are connected to the internet. It is certain however that this number is in the millions and is increasing at a rapid rate. No one is in charge of the internet but there are organizations which develop technical aspects of this network and set standards for creating applications on it. There is no particular governing body in control of it. Private companies own the internet backbone through which internet traffic flows.

All computers on the internet communicate with one another using the Transmission Control Protocol/ Internet Protocol Suite. Computers on the internet use Client/ Server Architecture. This means that the remote server machine provides files and services to the user's local client machine. Software can be installed on a client's computer to take advantage of the latest access technology. The internet consists primarily of a variety of access protocols. Many of these protocols feature programmes that allow users to search for and retrieve materials made available by the protocol.

The importance and usefulness of internet cannot be overemphasized. The National Policy on Education [2014], recognizes the prominent role of Information Communication Technology [internet] in the modern world today hence the integration of ICT in Education in Nigeria [Adaomi and Kpangban, 2010]. To actualize this goal, the government promised to provide basic infrastructure and training at the primary school. At the junior secondary school level. Computer Education is made a pre-vocational elective and a vocational elective at the senior secondary school. The federal ministry of Education launched an ICT driven project known as Schoolnet which is intended to equip all schools in Nigeria with computers and communication techniques. To adequately provide ICT facilities to secondary schools, the Federal Government commissioned a Mobile Internet Unit [MIU] which operated by the Nigerian national informational technology development Agency [NITDA]. The MIU is a locally made bus that has been converted into a mobile training and Cyber Centre with ten workstations all networked and connected to the internet. It is also equipped with printers, photocopiers and a number of the multimedia facilities.

### **The purpose of study**

The Minister of Information Technology stated during an interview with NTA broadcasters that the importance of ICT [internet] especially in teaching learning and academic performance of students cannot be overemphasized hence the Govt's huge investments on the facilities. The availability, utilization and attitudes of students towards internet deserve investigation in that the higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. The Govt is believed to have provided ICT equipment and internet facilities for easy accessibility to the student. The ETF Net Fund is also said to have embarked on providing ETF Net Library known as e-library to some universities in the geo-political zone and this is to ensure the students' utilization. It is against this background that this study is set to examine the level of availability and extent of utilization of internet facilities by students of the Ekiti State University and college of education Ikere-Ekiti.

### **Statement of the problem**

The internet has multiple websites to assist students improve their academic performance by exchanging ideas, obtain information, data, and it also provides interactive tools for students to access feedback from other students across the globe. It is against this background the study examined the availability and utilization of interne facilities among undergraduate students of Ekiti State University and College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti.

In order to carry out this study, the following research questions were generated;

1. Will there be any difference in Availability and Utilization of internet facilities among undergraduate students of College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti.
2. Will there be any difference in the Utilization of internet facilities among students of different socio-economic background?
3. Will there be any difference in Utilization of internet facilities among male and female undergraduate students of Ekiti State University and College of Education Ikere-Ekiti undergraduate students?
4. Will there be any difference in the utilization of internet facilities among students who browse for fun and those who browse for academic purpose?

### Hypotheses

- i. There is no significant difference in availability and utilization of Internet Facilities among undergraduate students of College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti.
- ii. There is no significant difference between Utilization of internet facilities among students of different socio-economic background.
- iii. There is no significant difference in Utilization of internet facilities among male and female undergraduate students of Ekiti State University and College of Education Ikere-Ekiti undergraduate students.
- iv. There is no significant difference in the utilization of internet facilities among students who browse for fun and those who browse for academic purpose.

Information has a vital role to play in human life. The 20<sup>th</sup> c ushered in increase in information as a result of social progress and vigorous technological development information technology is therefore an important area of study on its own right and has impact across all areas of study. Increase access to ICT facilities in the home, at work and educational institutions has promoted E-learning in schools. The rapid development of technology has brought constant insistent evaluation of learning process as a result of the easy worldwide communication which provides access to huge collection of data.

Rodriguez and Wilson [2000] referred to ICT as technologies through which computers neutralists'. ICT facilities comprises of www, internet, e-mail, Computer Assisted Machine [CAI], e-library, facsimile telephone among others. However, ICTs represent a cluster of associated technologies defined by their functional usage in information accessed communication which also involve internet. Internet is as 'a worldwide network of computers, and a network of people using computers that make vast information available. The utilization of internet facilitates by students cannot be emphasized. This therefore brings about looking into other areas peculiar to internet services that could further develop the intellectual capacity of university students on the major courses offered in the universities.

The internet is a worldwide communication network linking thousands of computers to a network, through a mixture of private and public phone lines and microwave links. Its components networks are run by government agencies, universities and commercial organizations working together and loosely controlled by the internet society. These

organizations bring many millions of people onto the internet and more works in their home computer through one or any other service providers. The use of the internet can be accessed and used in a number of ways. The use of the internet has revolutionized access to information for the business world, libraries, education and individuals which include E-mail, WWW, FTP [File Transfer Protocol], Usenet and Telnet. The internet and its technology continue to have a profound effect in promoting the sharing of information especially in the academic world thereby making possible rapid transactions among business and supporting global collaboration among individuals and organizations. The most important aspects of the internet and World Wide Web, electronic mail [e-mail], news groups, tele- conferencing, personal phones, online social networks, my space, Facebook and 2go. Etc.

ICT facilities in academic libraries are for the benefits of the students in order to enhance their academic performance. The ICT facilities are available in most of the academic libraries but the degree of utilization is said to be too low in the last decades, higher institutions of learning have invested huge fund in ICT which is said to be a major impact in the teaching methods In Nigeria Universities. The question is the effective impact it makes on students achievement educational system.

### **Teaching and learning gains through the internet**

Technology has introduced new methods of conducting research through online learning for natural development. Many developed countries have exploited the potentials of technology to improve and transfer educational landscape in institutions of learning. But how effective has the students in these institutions avail themselves in the utilizations of these opportunities.

Through the awareness created by ICT, students can feel more confident with the new technologies to improve their quality of education and increase the ease of access to information worldwide. The problem is the attitude of the undergraduates towards the utilization of internet to enhance and broaden their horizon and quest for academic excellence. In some cases, students use the internet for things which are not academically profitable watching pornographic pictures for fun, and to seek new friends. For those who seek it for academic purposes, it has enhanced their academic performance.

### **The benefits of internet facilities utilization**

- It broadens ones horizon.
- It enlightens one's scope by divulging global information.
- The novelty of workers with a computer raises the students' motivation.
- Linking new learning in other institutions of the world.
- Bridging communication gap between developed and developing countries.
- Research mark made easy.
- Assist students to be computer liberates.

### **Undergraduate students' attitudes towards usage internet.**

The most worrisome of the utilization of ICT facilities by undergraduate students is their poor attitude towards the facilities. Most of the students have abused the importance of the facility to the detriment of their studies. Some students are observed to be chatting or even watching films on their phone during lectures while others connect with friends on unprofitable communication with the outside world.

### **Influence of gender on internet utilization**

It has been observed those female undergraduate students are more prone to internet utilization than their male counterparts. Dorup [2004] corroborates this observation in his report that females were found to be prone to the use of internet more than their male counterparts. Colley & Comber [2003] do not differ in their opinion. They said there was a gender difference in the frequency of internet usage by both males and females. In their research on gender difference in Information Communication Technology usage in the Midlands of the United Kingdom.

### **Influence of family social economic background on students utilization of internet services**

Family Social Economic background is said to be vital in internet utilization at home and schools. In Nigeria, findings have revealed that students from low income background are less privileged to access internet due to inadequate fund. Some people believe also that the course of study also determine the level of usage of the internet. Some students believe Law students use the internet more than those in other discipline.

This may have accounted for their brilliant performance after graduation. Lazinger Bar-Ilan and Peritz [1997] are also said to have carried out a survey of internet use by faculty members in various disciplines. They were said to have found that computer and internet use by faculty members in the humanities and social sciences was substantially lower than those in the science and engineering.

The University Libraries Mission is to provide relevant and appropriate formation resources sharing resources and online access to the World Wide Web [WWW]. ICT internet facilities in the universities enable students to access ICT. ETF has also embarked on the provision of net library for some universities in Nigeria and even the national university commission committed to providing ICT facilities in different format to the university students in order to enhance their academic performance by making information readily available through the net where they can get information resources to support the teaching, learning and research processes in the university system. It has also been observed that teachers encourage students in the utilization of ICT to source for information on the internet.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The instruments for collecting data were questionnaires tagged 'Availability and Utilization of Internet Facilities among Undergraduate Students of Ekiti State University and College of Education Ikere-Ekiti [AUIFAUSEKSUCOEIEQ]' consisting of two sections – section A on bio data while section B is on availability and utilization of internet facilities by the respondents. The population consisted of all the final year undergraduate while the sample consisted of 180 students [90 male and 90 females] of Ekiti State University and College of Education Ikere-Ekiti. The data collected were analyzed using t-test statistics.

## RESULTS

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in Availability and Utilization of Internet Facilities in Ekiti State University and College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti.

**Table1;t-test showing level of Availability and utilization of Internet Facilities in College of Education.**

INSTITUTIONS	N	MEAN	SD	Df	T-Cal	T-table
Availability of Internet Facilities	90	5.67	0.56	178	0.126	1.96
Utilization of Internet Facilities						

The result in table 1 shows that t-cal of 0.126 is less than t value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance hence the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that there is no significant difference in availability and utilization of internet facilities in College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in Utilization of Internet Facilities among College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti undergraduate Students who browse for fun and academic purpose.

**Table 2: t-test showing difference in the Utilization of Internet Facilities among College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti undergraduate Students who browse for fun and academic purpose**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-table
Students who browse for fun	90	5.67	0.57	1.78	0.126	1.96
Students who browse for academic purpose	90	5.66	0.62			

The result in table 5 shows that t-cal of 0.126 is less than critical t value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance hence the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that there is no significant difference in undergraduate Students who browse for fun and academic purpose in College of Education Ikere-Ekiti.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no difference in Utilization of internet facilities among students of different socio-economic background.

**Table 3: t-test showing difference in the Utilization of Internet Facilities among College of Education Ikere-Ekiti undergraduate students' Socio-economic background**

VARIABLES	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-table
Socio-Economic background	180	1.57	0.50	79	127.385	1.96
Internet Utilization						

The result in table 1 shows that t-cal of 0.232 is less than critical t value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance hence the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that there is no significant difference in availability of internet facilities in College of Education Ikere-Ekiti.

The result in table 1 shows that t-cal of 1.285 is less than critical t value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance hence the hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is significant difference between Utilization of internet facilities among students of different socio-economic background in College of Education Ikere-Ekiti.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference between Utilization of internet Facilities among male and female undergraduate students of College of Education Ikere-Ekiti.

**Table 4: t-test showing difference in the utilization of Internet Facilities among Male and Female undergraduate students of College of education, Ikere-Ekiti.**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>t-cal</b>	<b>t-table</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>14.57</b>	<b>1.32</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>1.056</b>	<b>1.96</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>14.79</b>	<b>1.26</b>			

Table 4 shows that t-cal of 1.056 is less than critical t value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. This implies that the null hypothesis which states that there is a difference in utilization of internet facilities among male and female undergraduate students from College of Education Ikere-Ekiti is accepted.

## **Discussion**

The outcome of this study revealed that the facilities available are mainly private owned and where they are available they are either out of bounds to students or not affordable to the students. Although internet usage is not gender sensitive but students of parents of high economic background use internet more frequently than those from low economic background. Also incessant power supply is a major hindrance to the utilization of internet facilities.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The study has shown that though internet aids students learning but lack of power supply hinders them from availing themselves the opportunity of its usage. It is therefore recommended that both the Government and the institutions authorities should provide facilities to enable the students browse easily.

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