

**INTERNET USAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS OF
UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CALABAR**

¹Joy Anthony **UKAM**, ¹Amina Peters **ADAMS** &

²Ekpenyonganwan Godwin **ANAM**

¹Department of Social Science Education²Department of Educational
Management, University of Calabar, Nigeria

Abstract

The main objective of this study was to investigate how students at the University of Calabar in Calabar used the internet and how that affected their academic performance. The null hypothesis that was developed to direct the investigation matched the research questions that were posed. This study was grounded on and supported by actual citations to pertinent and related works of literature. A correlational research design was used for the investigation. 171 first-year University of Calabar, Calabar students studying social studies made up the study's population. The researcher used an accidental sampling strategy to choose 136 first-year University of Calabar social studies students who were present in the lecture hall. The Social Studies Academic Performance Test (SSAPT) and Internet Usage and Impact on Academic Performance of Social Studies Students (IUIAPSSS) were the instruments employed in this study. The null hypothesis was examined using basic linear regression analysis as a statistical tool at the .05 level of significance. According to the study's findings, first-year social studies students at the University of Calabar performed better

academically when they used the internet less. This could be because the students spent more time chatting on the internet than using it for academic purposes. The report suggests, among other things, that instead of using the internet for amusement, relaxation, or simple conversation, students should make effective use of the resources available to them for reading and academic reasons. As a result, students' learning will be positively impacted for a long time, and their academic achievement in social studies will also increase.

Keywords: Internet, Utilization, Impact, Academic performance, Social Studies students.

Introduction

The internet is a tool for information and communication technology (ICT) that allows you to access the global information hub from anywhere in the globe. It is a global network that connects several computers worldwide, consisting of a base computer that serves as a connection or connector for smaller computers. It serves as a repository for unrestricted access to knowledge across all fields. The use of the internet has significantly altered educational systems around the globe. New topics are constantly added for educational purposes to meet the demands of the modern online learning environment. Students utilise the information they learn here to communicate, investigate the world, conduct research, develop and test hypotheses, conduct experiments, and come up with answers to new issues.

Through numerous platforms known as social media, it is also used to communicate with friends. This mode of engagement and communication has improved relationships, accelerated life in general, and reduced the size of the planet. The internet alone has changed the nature of teaching and learning from being solely teacher-centered, with the teacher acting as a knowledge custodian and transmitter, to becoming learner-centered, with the instructor acting as a guardian alone. At this point, the instructor

helps the pupils become engaged learners by guiding them and providing support. The internet is very important in the classroom, but it has also discouraged many undergraduate students from adopting good study habits. Students' insatiable drive to explore the internet exposes them to unwelcome social orientation and a fixation with internet content and usage, which presents a hurdle. The United States military first used the internet as a communication tool to provide efficient communication in case of emergency. However, the globe has completely changed internet communications with the invention of the telegraph, telephone, and radio, followed by the technologies of minicomputers, houses, and laptops. Through his efforts, J. began to take the first significant steps towards the development of current networking technology for social interactions. The "Galactic Network" concept was created by C. R. Licklider in 1962 and promoted the idea of a global computer network where users may access data and programmes from any location on the globe. He put in a great deal of effort to persuade I. Sutherland, B. Taylor, and L. G. Roberts about the significance of this idea of networking. to continue using packet switching for communication instead of circuits. Klienrock's articles inspired G. Roberts, the MIT researcher, and later in 1965, Roberts investigated T. The first wide-area computer network was created when Merrill and colleagues developed TX-2 for the Q-32 computers using a slow dial-up phone connection (Salonik, 2020).

Furthermore, the BBS (Bulletin Board System) developed by Jim Ellis and Tom Trustcott, which promoted the use of personal computers by requiring users to transfer data over phone lines with different users and connect to the internet through a host computer's modem, was discontinued in 1978 in favour of online networking. Thus, a crucial framework was established that made it possible for clients to log in and collaborate with one another right away. The primary goal of digitalization is to facilitate communication and information access, which is why new technologies are emerging that may enable these functions in different ways. The development and use of computerised devices such as laptops, desktop computers, palmtop computers,

cellphones, tablets, iPhones, tiny pads, and others allowed for simple access to information and the processing of data online for communication needs. However, because obtaining data is expensive, one of the main factors influencing internet usage remains a barrier to the successful implementation of information and communication technology (ICT) in Nigerian colleges.

The majority of Nigerian institutions still require a substantial financial investment to gain internet access, which was developed in the United States of America and distributed to the rest of the world. Tongia (2004) asserts that the majority of developing nations pay the US government enormous sums of money in dollars for the annual connection of a few megabits, demonstrating the US government's continued dominance over the world economy. Tariffs imposed by service providers—mostly foreign businesses operating in Nigeria with the intention of generating a profit—are comparatively high. Universities are especially in need of internet access for students to evaluate learning materials. For this reason, a number of academic institutions in Nigeria—including the University of Calabar—have made significant investments in ICT throughout the years by ensuring that the schools have access to functional computers and the internet. The question of whether these services even somewhat affect students' performance is one that begs to be asked, though. Are students utilising the service primarily to improve their academic performance? Even though performance is said to be relative in both definition and practise because there isn't a single standard used to measure performance everywhere or all the time, performance can still be measured to suit the purpose; for example, the labour market measures the results of studies after every university education. Even though the student has been awarded a degree, his performance is low if undergraduate students are unable to spell his name, much less create an application letter.

There is a concern associated with how students' performance is affected by internet use. Since the internet is a relatively new technology, its impacts can be either positive or

detrimental. The internet has permeated the school setting; it offers significant benefits to the institution, including streamlined teaching and learning processes and a highly useful teaching tool. Internet use facilitates easy and more personalised learning; it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to separate it from the educational setting. However, the majority of students' attitudes towards their studies have been negatively impacted by the rate of consumption. Their use of social media, online fraud, watching pornographic websites, and other offensive content has negatively impacted their academic dedication, as seen by a sharp decline in performance. Undergraduate students' scholastic achievement has significantly decreased, and this decline starts in year one of school. The majority of recently enrolled students don't take their schoolwork seriously; instead, they spend a great deal of time and energy on their mobile devices, chatting, sharing films, songs, and porn to friends, and posting images of themselves and recent events.

The University of Calabar's first-year social studies students are not immune from the social interaction system that the internet has developed. Social studies, according to Odedele and Egotanwa (2016), is a discipline that looks at how people interact with their physical and social contexts as well as how science and technology affect people and their surroundings. In contrast to most other subjects or disciplines, social studies is value-laden, uses interactive pedagogical techniques like field trips, excursions, dramatisation, and inquiry methods, among others, and necessitates additional skills from the social studies teacher in order to effectively impart its knowledge to the students, according to Edinyang and Effiom (2016) in "Social Insight." Additionally, Effiom (2020) proposed that Social Studies is a programme that, when correctly executed, will greatly aid in instilling rights and values in young people. It is for this reason that research is required.

Since the introduction of long-distance local interpersonal communication, correspondence with friends and family has been simple for anyone with an internet connection. We now have the ability to interact with people worldwide thanks to the web; social

networking sites like Myspace, Skype, 2Go, Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Messenger, LinkedIn, Telegram, and others are just a few examples of how amazing these platforms are. Individuals spend a considerable amount of time sending and receiving data for business, calls, and education. As a result, the institution is seeing a high rate of underperformance among newly enrolled undergraduates, which has raised the likelihood that Social Studies students would perform poorly in later years. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ascertain the effects of internet usage – both positive and negative – on first-year social studies students at the University of Calabar in Calabar.

Numerous effects of internet use on kids' academic performance have been documented by studies. Abraham Maslow's wants and Motivation Theory, which contends that people actively seek to meet their wants based on a hierarchy, is said to have been expanded upon by West and Turner as Use and Gratification Theory (UGT). Maslow first proposed this theory in 1954. These include the requirement to use the internet to socialise with friends, family, and other relatives (West, R. L. and Turner, L. H., 2010). Wilbur Schramm created the proportion of selection in 1954 as a method to predict the type of mass media that a person will choose. The calculation assisted in determining how much satisfaction a person would anticipate from the medium compared to the amount of work required to get satisfaction. At the time, mobile phones were considered a relatively new technology with a wide range of applications and benefits. because of their adaptability, continuous accessibility, and possibilities for adding and accessing content. Venkatesh and colleagues developed the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which is an additional theory. According to Wikipedia.com (2020), the goal is to explain users' intentions to use an information system and their subsequent usage behaviour in light of a unified perspective. Cheng-Min Chaoas conducted a study to apply UTAUT to uncover internet users' behavioural intentions. The study's findings are consistent with the UTAUT model and offer a useful guide for decision-makers and

educational institutions creating m-learning programmes for university adoption. The idea takes into account the connections among motivation, method of usage, and technology-acceptance factors. The study's conclusion is that students may accept technology provided it fulfils their demands for engagement, amusement, or learning objectives.

According to Franklina (2018), technology like the internet has permeated every aspect of peoples' daily life. Internet access has greatly improved over the past few decades and is now available everywhere, including in homes, offices, cars, and educational institutions. It was found that sources of internet for Senior High School Students include the School Information Communication Laboratory, mobile phones, household internet facilities, and public internet cafes in his study on Internet Use and Its Impact on Senior High School Students in the Wa Municipality of Ghana. The study used primary data collected randomly from 314 Senior High School Students in their third year and descriptive statistics to analyse. Additionally, it was discovered that pupils' academic performance was positively impacted by their internet access. Therefore, in order to offer internet infrastructure in schools, it is advised that Heads of Senior High School communicate with Ghana Education Service administration and policy makers. This is pertinent as one of the main tactics for boosting academic achievement in schools is the installation of internet infrastructure. Additionally, by the time the high school graduates enter university settings, their familiarity with the internet will come in useful for them in the classroom.

According to recent research by Udofia (2019), students who receive instruction using computers and the internet perform better academically. The study examined the use of ICT and the performance of senior secondary two biology students in the Calabar education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. 200 senior high school biology students were chosen by a purposive sample technique, and five research questions were posed and responses obtained. The study employed a quasi-experimental design. Data were collected utilising two research instruments, and the Kuder-

Richard (KR-20) method yielded a reliability estimate of 0.82. In order to address the study objectives and evaluate the hypotheses, the data were analysed using One-Way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) and descriptive statistics.

Similar findings were made by Asuquo, Emeribe, and Anam (2022) in Nigeria, where technological development has led to the inclusion of computer studies – also known as information and communication technology, or ICT – in the curriculum. The goal of ICT education in secondary education is to provide all students with the necessary knowledge and abilities to live productively in the rising technology-driven world of today. Thus, evaluating students' happiness with ICT instruction in secondary schools in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria, was the primary goal of their study. The study was guided by the formulation of three research hypotheses. 5245 students from Senior Secondary (SS) 2 and Senior Secondary (SS) 3 courses in public and private schools during the 2019–2020 academic year made up the study sample. For this study, a survey research design was chosen. The “Secondary School Students’ Satisfaction with Computer Studies Questionnaire (SSSSCSQ)” was the questionnaire used to gather data. The independent and population t-tests were used to examine the data that were gathered. The main conclusions showed that there was no substantial difference in secondary school students’ satisfaction with ICT education based on school ownership, gender, or region. Among other things, it was suggested that the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), NGOs, and the government at different levels step up their efforts to provide hardware and software ICT facilities in order to support blended learning in the post-Covid-19 age.

According to Emmanuel (2019), university students in Nigeria have grown more accepting of Internet technology, especially when it comes to using mobile devices. In his research, Emmanuel examined how Nigerian students use the Internet and what they get out of it, paying particular attention to two Internet access points: cybercafé and MTN Universities Connect at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria and University of Benin in Edo State. As stated by Okafor and Malizu (2019), “The emergence of mobile

phones (GSM) in Nigeria – a technological device that enhances communication – along with the millennium’s incursion into the global village has completely changed the attitudes of the people in Nigeria.” Cell phones in the classroom, according to Hong, Chiu, and Hong (2012), encourage students to be more engaged with the lecture by fostering learner-focused interest through the internet.

Internet Usage and Academic Performance of Undergraduate Students at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria is the subject of a 2015 study conducted by Bolu-Steve, Oyeyemi, and Amali. The study examined the relationship between internet use and the delivery of teaching in the classroom. Six faculties were randomly chosen among the University’s thirteen faculties using the descriptive survey approach, and 200 undergraduate students were sampled from each of these faculties using a basic random sampling procedure. Data was collected using a questionnaire created by the researchers, and it was analysed using an ANOVA, t-test, and mean rating. The results of this study showed that University of Ilorin undergraduate students’ use of the internet had a favourable impact on their academic achievement across a range of subjects. Ngoumandjoka (2012) noted that “The Internet is a technology that has become a big part of people’s daily living, through its ability to act as a support medium in the different functions for which people use it.” The study examined the relationship between internet usage and academic performance among university students.

The adoption of social media platforms in libraries has drawn in more students and researchers, but Otosi (2016) noted that there had been a shift in emphasis from reading books in print to those in non-print forms through the internet, Facebook, blogs, messaging, document sharing, collaboration, conferences, etc. Most grad students, on the other hand, rarely used the library’s resources and facilities. Teachers and students can now use computers and other electronic devices connected to networks to communicate with users across institutions worldwide, according to Idaka and Akubuiro (2013). In the same vein, Wiche (2018)

conducted a study on postgraduate students in southern Nigeria's knowledge of social media platforms and their use of library resources. The findings demonstrate the importance of knowing what resources to access online for internet use both inside and outside of libraries.

Regarding the use of social media and the academic performance of biology students in secondary schools in the Ikom education zone of Cross River State. In order to determine the value of information and communication technology (ICT) in the teaching and learning of social studies for students' academic performance, Osim (2016) conducted a study on the effectiveness of social studies teachers' instruction in the Calabar education zone, Cross River State, Nigeria. A 350-teacher ex post facto design sample was used. For each of the six (6) null hypotheses, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to assess hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. The data analysis results indicated a substantial relationship between teachers' efficacy and print, radio, television, e-mail, phone, and internet services.

The fundamental issue with this study is that web space has been utilised for cybercrimes, internet usage has been abused, and consumers' preoccupation with the internet is considered to lead to academic decadence. The majority of graduate students have been observed to give up on their coursework, research projects, assignments, and classes in favour of spending more time on the online activities of informal groups, despite the fact that the government has taken steps to monitor its usage and offers significant benefits. According to statistics, students are also the ones who use the internet the most, especially when it comes to social media sites like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Many lecturers have prepared lessons only to find that there are vacant seats, little student participation, or a full classroom full of students who are using the internet or other online distractions. Using the University of Calabar as a gateway, the researcher conducted this study on internet usage and its effects on students' academic performance.

Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to examine internet usage and its impact on the academic performance of students in the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria. Specifically, the study looked at the positive and negative impact of internet usage on the academic performance of year one students of Social Studies in the University of Calabar.

Hypothesis

The accompanying null hypotheses defined to serve as a guide to this study is: there is no significant impact of internet usage on the academic performance of year one students of Social Studies in the University of Calabar, Calabar?

Methods

Correlational survey research was the method used for this investigation. As part of the survey research design, data must be gathered in order to precisely characterise phenomena that now exist (Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim & Ekuri, 2004). This research design was deemed appropriate since the study, Internet usage and its impact on first-year social studies students' academic performance at the University of Calabar, had already taken place and involved the collection of data that accurately described the phenomena as it existed at the time of the investigation. The 171 first-year social studies students who were admitted to the university of Calabar's social science education department during the 2018–2019 academic year make up the study's participants. The study's sample, number 136, was obtained through the use of an accidental sampling technique. As of the time of this study, these were the number of students enrolled in the year one Social Studies course that was held at the lecture auditorium.

The "Internet Usage and Impact on Academic Performance of Social Studies Students" (IUIAPSSS) questionnaire instrument was utilised to gather data for the study, and an achievement exam was employed to gauge academic performance. Part A and Part B of the Internet Usage and Impact on Academic Performance of Social Studies Students (IUIAPSSS) questionnaire were

separated. The personal information of the respondents was the focus of Part A, whereas Part B assessed the extent of Internet usage and its potential benefits and drawbacks. Thirty (30) items make up the independent variable, which is scored using a Likert-type four-point scale. Two experts from the college of education's measurement/evaluation and social science departments determined the instrument's face and content validity¹. This helped to ensure that the item measured what it was supposed to measure. Items that were deemed pertinent were updated and kept, and items that were deemed unnecessary were removed and replaced with new ones. Fifty (50) first-year students from outside the research area completed the questionnaire to determine the instrument's reliability. Simple Linear Regression statistics were used to calculate and assess the results of the achievement test and questionnaire. The Spearman Brown Prophecy method was utilised to determine the proper reliability estimate of the test, which came out to be 0.84.

Results

Hypothesis: There is no significant extend to which internet usage positively or negatively impact on academic performance of year one students of Social Studies in the university of Calabar, Calabar.

The predicator variable was internetusage while the constant was academic performance. The result as showed in table 1 indicates Adj R² = -.007 which implies that the variation in academic performance of Social Studies students could be explained by -00.7% of the contribution of internet usage variables. Although the percentage contribution is small, a cursory look at the analysis of variance (ANOVA) result showed that (F=.521, p<0.05). Since p (.000) is less than p (.05), this means that there is a Significant impact of internet usage on academic performance of year one students of Social Studies in the University of Calabar. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result showed the variables that contributed most in the variation of the dependent variables. With the result internet usage impact more negatively on academic performance of year one students of Social Studies in the university of Calabar, Calabar with the highest predicator (β =.091, p<.05), while internet usage positively impact on academic performance of year one students of Social Studies in the university of Calabar, Calabar, by (β =-.067, p<.05).

Table: 1: Simple linear regression analysis of internet usage positively and negatively impacts on academic performance of year one students of Social Studies in the university of Calabar, Calabar

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.089 ^a	.008	-.0077	7.799	
Sources of variance					
	SS	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	63.397	231.698	.521	.595 ^b	
Residual	8029.018	13260.826			
Total	8092.415	13492.524			
	Unstandardized	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	111.311	7.055		15.778	.000
POSITIVEIMPACT	-.084	.119	-.067	-.705	.482
NEGATIVEIMPACT	.142	.14091	.959	.339	

R=.089, R2=.008, Adj.R2=-.007, Standard error=7.799

Discussions

The results of the hypothesis analysis indicated that the null hypothesis was disproved. This suggested that there is a considerable degree to which internet use has an impact on first-year social studies students at the University of Calabar, both favourably and unfavourably. Additionally, there was a greater detrimental influence on kids’ academic performance from internet usage than a good one. This may be the case because, despite the fact that students are frequently seen using their phones to log on to the internet and that these services are provided almost entirely at no cost to them, they still find it difficult to dedicate time to reading the abundance of online resources available on the subject of social studies. Additionally, they may not use the internet for academic purposes as much as they do for social networking. Their subpar answers on the accomplishment exam they were given were indicative of this.

The results of this study are in line with those of Ngoumandjoka (2012), who found that although the Internet is a technology that has permeated society due to its function as a support medium for a variety of uses, its impact on college campuses is debatable. The study examined the relationship

between internet usage and academic performance among university students. In conclusion, the study's findings indicate that while there is some correlation between the Internet and academic achievement among university students, there is no clear causal relationship between the two.

Recommendations

This study suggests that rather than using the internet for amusement, relaxation, or simple conversation, students should make effective use of the resources available to them for reading and academic reasons. As a result, students' learning will be positively impacted for a long time, and their academic achievement in social studies will also increase.

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