

Perception of Lecturers on the Importance of Using Internet Services for the Teaching and Learning Processes in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

The internet is a global system of interconnected computer networks that use the standard protocol suite to serve several billion users worldwide. The interconnection of the department network becomes the internet which resulted in the creation of information technology. One research question and one hypothesis were raised for this study. The questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection. The descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. Population comprises of all lecturers in colleges of education in Nigeria. Random sampling technique was used to sample 564 lecturers in colleges of education in Nigeria. Frequency percentage, means, independent t-test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical tools were used for data analysis. The result showed that, there is agreement in the perception of the lecturers about the importance of internet services in the teaching and learning processes in colleges of education. Findings of the study also indicated that, there is significance difference in the perception of lecturers on the importance of internet services based on the years of experience. In view of the findings, the researcher recommended that, lecturers should be taught on how to use internet to enhance teaching and learning processes across all levels of the Nigerian educational system.

Keywords: *Internet, Learning, Services, Process, Teaching*

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Background to the Study

The origin of internet according to Hafner (1998) reach back to research commissioned by the United States government in the 1960s to build robust, fault-tolerant communication via computer networks. While this work together with work in the United Kingdom and France lead to important precursor networks, they were not the internet. There is no consensus on the exact date when the modern internet came into being, but sometime in the early mid-1980s is considered reasonable. The funding of a new US backbone by the National Science Foundation in the 1980s, as well as private funding for other commercial backbone, led to worldwide parties' participation in the development of new networking technologies, and the merger of many networks. Though the internet according to Badger (2013) has been widely used by academia since the 1980s, the commercialization of what was by the 1990s an international network resulted in its popularization and incorporation into virtually every aspect of modern human life. As of June 2012, more than 2.4 billion people over a third of the world's human population have used the services of the internet, approximately 100 times more people than were using it in 1995 (World Stats 2012), the open Market Internet Index 2013). The internet has no centralized governance in either technological implementations or policies for access and usage; each constituent's network sets its own policies.

The interconnection of the computer started when Advanced Research Project Agency of United States of America (ARPA) Department of Defence (DOD) initiated a research project to link computer together for source sharing in 1969. The interconnection of this department network becomes the internet which resulted in the creation of information highway (Osofisan 1998). Ryberg & Larsen (2008) admitted that, four major services on the internet are: Electronic mail, News group, File Transfer Protocol and World Wide Web (WWW). Electronic mail (E-mail) enables people around the world to exchange message among themselves. It is fast, easy, inexpensive and saves time. A news group is a discussion group that allows people with common interest to communicate with each other. There are thousands of newsgroups on every subject imaginable; File Transfer Protocol (FTP) allows the users to copy files of interest. The world wide web is distributed by multimedia hypertext system. It is distributed because information in the web is stored on computer around the world. Information on the web can include text, graphics, sound and video and multimedia. It is also hypertext because access to the information available uses hypertext technique, which involves using mouse to select and highlight phrases or images (sources).

Olatoye (2007) opined that, the fluidity of information flow in the world today is very high. Information technologies have made the spread of facts, opinion, ideas, discoveries, innovation and invention across national and continental boundaries so easy. There is hyper generation of information all round the world now, and these means are necessary to adequately complement the need to diffuse this information for the use of people of the world (King, Crawford, Rosenbaum, Sawyer and Weisband 2000). There is no doubt that widespread education information technological inventions had opened up the world into areas of easy access to social, economic, political and scientific information, and by this, dynamic changes occur in value system of societies at highly short moments.

Ema and Ajayi (2004) asserted that “teaching equipment and materials have changed over the years not only to facilitate teaching-learning situation but also to address the instructional needs of individuals and groups”. Jones (2004) revealed that the concept of internet and social change have direct link with social networking. He further stressed the importance of facilitating connections between students, students and instructors and between students and social networking sites from internet, like yahoo messenger, Nimbuz, 2go, Facebook, Myspace, Mocospace, Eskimi and so on. Larsen (2008) asserted that this academic relationship creates education ties, which facilitates discovery learning, collaborative learning and innovative learning through positive academic usage of social networking sites via internet services as reflected below:

1. Downloading requires e-books, software and dictionaries from the internet for reading that can help in solving the problem of illiteracy.
2. Use of dictionary in checking words meaning, spelling errors and improve vocabulary.
3. Capturing class notes by the means of mobile camera.
4. Use of opera-mini device via internet to support, discover and acquire more knowledge on classroom topic and content after school hour.
5. Practicing word pronunciation by recording audio-materials.
6. Receiving text message from teachers with class content, home work, assignment, project and so on.
7. Using mobile games to develop problems solving and critical thinking skills.
8. Using word match games as a means of spelling practice.

All these activities reflect the positive usage of internet services that makes it a flexible instructional tool for school. It supplements the traditional classroom teaching and learning, since students can learn in and outside the classroom.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine the perception of lecturers on the importance of internet services such as use of google, e-mail, youtube, etc. in colleges of education.
2. Examine the differences between the perceptions of lecturers on the importance of internet services facilities in colleges of education due to teaching experience.

Research Question

- i. What is the perception of lecturers on the importance of internet services such as the use of google, e-mail, youtube etc. in colleges of education?

Research Hypothesis

- i. There is no significance difference in the perception of lecturers on the importance and utilization of internet services in colleges of education due to their teaching experience.

Methodology

This research is a descriptive survey which requires the gathering of information from Social Studies lecturers in College of Education in four geo-political zones in the country. For the purpose of this investigation, the total population of this study includes all the lecturers in the sixty-one (61) Federal, State and Private colleges of education in Nigeria. Simple random sampling was adopted for this study, for this purpose five hundred and sixty-four (564) lecturers were randomly selected from the three (3) categories of colleges, that is Federal, State and Private colleges of education in four (4) out of six (6) geo-political zone of Nigeria features.

The instrument for gathering data for this research was a questionnaire tagged: Availability and Utilization of Internet Services Questionnaire (AUISQ). A well-structured questionnaire consisting of (6) demographic variables and five (5) sections each of which consisted of several four Likert-scale questionnaire of Strongly Agree, Agree, disagree and Strongly Disagree were administered to each respondent. Questionnaires were distributed in accordance with the number of lecturers in the colleges of education in the four out of six geo-political zones in Nigeria. Frequency percentage, means, independent t-test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical tools were used for data analysis.

Data Presentation and Results Analysis

Research Question One: What is the perception of lecturers on the importance of internet services in Colleges of Education?

To provide answer to this question, the response to the instrument was analyzed on the table below.

Table 1: Perception of Importance of Internet Services
N=564

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Accessibility to reference materials.	361	189	7	7	3.60
2	Quick information retrieval.	238	282	21	23	3.30
3	Help the integration of information	254	247	12	51	3.25
4	Enhance teaching and learning.	245	273	19	28	3.30
5	Help group work	242	245	14	63	3.18
6	Help advance team work	200	287	19	58	3.12
7	Help in sharing of information	226	247	14	77	3.10
8	Help in learning quickly than the classroom situation when reading from the screen of mobile phone	231	256	23	54	3.18
9	Make students learn new ideas about topics outside classroom teaching and learning.	240	249	21	54	3.20
10	Help to save time and give students quick access to content through the school library	228	263	19	54	3.18
11	Help to provide conducive atmosphere for learning among students	219	252	33	61	3.12
12	Help in providing uniform access medium that prevent distorted facts.	217	280	21	47	3.18
13	Help students remedy their academic deficiencies because it caters for the shy and backward students.	240	235	28	61	3.16
14	Help enhance efficiency of workers.	249	245	19	51	3.23
15	Help lecturers and students to reach out to colleagues in other parts of the country	270	235	14	44	3.30
Sectional Mean		3.23				

Table 1 shows the perception of lecturers on the importance of internet services in Colleges of Education as perceived by lecturers. From the table, various means have been recorded which created basis for decisions on the individual items. However, the sectional mean of 3.23 provides basis for the conclusion that there is agreement in the perception of entire lecturers that internet services is important in teaching and learning process.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the perceptions of lecturers on the importance and utilization of internet services in Colleges of Education due to their teaching experience.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA for Test of Difference in Lecturers' Perception on the Importance and Utilization of Internet Services due to their Teaching Experience

Factors	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	1.362	5	.272	2.054	.072	Accepted
Within Groups	31.298	559	.133			
Total	32.659	564				

The test on Table 2 was carried out to determine whether lecturers' perception of the importance and utilization of internet services differed significantly on the basis of their teaching experience. A significant value of .072 (more than the 0.05 level of significance) shows that there is no significant difference. The hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between lecturers' perception of the importance and utilization of internet services due to their teaching experience.

In order to substantiate the finding above which stated that there is no significant difference in lecturers' perception of the importance and utilization of internet services due to their teaching experience, the mean scores are presented below.

Table 3: Means Scores for Variations in Lecturers' Perception due to Teaching Experience

Years	N	Mean
1-10 Years	220	3.25
11-15 Years	107	3.24
16-20 Years	109	3.06
21-25 Years	35	3.21
26-30 Years	54	3.20
31-35 Years	39	3.29

Table 3 shows that the highest mean is found among lecturers between 31-35 years of teaching experience while the lowest mean is found among those who had between 16-20 years of teaching experience. No definite pattern could be observed; however, the means are relatively close to each other hence no significant difference.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed from table (1) that lecturers had a perception of importance of internet services mean value of 3.23. However, the result indicated that there is agreement in the perception of lecturers that internet service is important in the teaching of Social Studies. The findings were in connection with the studies of Morahan – Martins and Schumacher (2000) that internet usage enhances the teaching and learning process. The hypothesis indicated no significant difference on the importance and utilization of internet services due to lecturers teaching experience. A significant value of .072 (more than the 0.05 level of significance) shows that there is no significant difference. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

This finding was in consonance with the study of Mark (2011) that the level of technologies in the developed countries is so high that it needs high qualified and experience personnel to handle these 21st century technologies. Internet services is essentially a device for storing and retrieval of large amounts of information and for handling this information in specified ways in extremely short period of time. In the study conducted by Edinyang (2001) that information that source from internet is like motivation when apply to the teaching and learning process. Motivations according to Sandrock (2004) involve the processes that energize, direct and sustain behaviour. From the above, it can be deduced that information sourced from the internet is a great and necessary facilitator in the teaching and learning process. It helps to improve and sustain learner's motivation to achievement.

Conclusion

The findings of the study indicated that years of teaching experience of lecturers has significant role to play in the importance and utilization of internet services in colleges of education in the four geo-political zones chosen for this study. These geo-political zones are North-central, North-West, South-West and South East of Nigeria. The lecturers were also in agreement that internet services stand to be a source of knowledge and any country that severe her people from it by failing to provide adequate facilities for easy access is unseating the country from her throne of dignity among other dignitaries. Governments of countries such as the United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom and Australia have realized this and hence have incorporated internet connectivity at all levels of education in their countries.

The major conclusion to be drawn from these findings is that gender, educational background, years of teaching experience and ages of Social Studies lecturers has nothing to do with the importance, availability and utilization of internet services in these colleges of education in the four geo-political zones of Nigeria. Despite the significant role played by the gender, educational background, years of teaching experience and ages of Social Studies lecturers on the importance, availability and utilization of internet services in teaching and learning of Social Studies education fell far short of one of the provisions of the national policy on education (2013) (94) which state that all teachers in educational institutions shall be professionally trained.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

- i. Information Technology (IT) training shall be incorporated into all teachers training programmes.
- ii. Lectures should source for rich information and instructional materials from the internet to update the content of teaching and learning curriculum.
- iii. The findings of this study discovered that, year of experience does not account for the importance and utilization of internet services. Lecturers, irrespective of their years of service should use the internet service such as Google, E-mail, Youtube etc. to give students opportunity of becoming a part of the knowledge age and skills imparted into the young people in an increasingly complex world.

- iv. Internet services should be used by both old and young lecturers to make teaching more simplified, effective and rewarding for the students.
- v. Government should provide ICT training for all practicing lecturers; they should also be taught how they can use internet technology for enhancing teaching and learning process across all levels of the Nigeria Education System.

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