

***Attitude of Secondary School Students towards the Use of Internet in Learning: A case of selected secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State***

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**Abstract**

*The internet is one technology that is fast becoming a household necessity. It is a global system that connects several computers and enables them share information from various aspects of life. This study investigated the attitude of secondary school students toward using the internet for learning. 300 respondents were selected from six public secondary schools in Ibadan using a multistage sampling procedure. The instrument “Tendency Towards Internet” was adapted and used to elicit information about the attitude of students toward using the internet for learning. Two null hypotheses were tested with the t-test statistical procedure. Findings of the study indicated that there is no significant difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of gender, and that a significant difference exists in the attitude of students towards the use of internet for learning on the basis of subject discipline. It was also established that the attitude of students toward the use of internet is positive. Based on the findings, recommendations were made which include the need for government to provide internet facilities in secondary schools in order to make it accessible to the students.*

**Keywords:** Attitude, Internet, Learning, students, Nigeria

**Introduction**

The internet is one of the twenty first century wonders that have no doubt contributed to knowledge in no small measure. It seems to have connected the world through sharing of information in various areas like academic, occupation, relationships, family, sex, cookery, health etc. As can be observed, the upsurge of social networks like Twitter, Facebook, Googletalk, Whatsapp, Yahoo messenger etc. have also made it easy to connect with friends from different continents in the world. Little wonder the entire world is sometimes referred to as a global village.

The Wikipedia Encyclopedia (2012) describes the internet as a global system of interconnected computer networks that make use of the Standard Internet Protocol

suite (TCP/IP) to serve billions of users worldwide. It is a network of networks that consists of millions of private, public, academic, business and government networks, of local to global scope, that are linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless and optical networking technologies. Olawale (2012) defined the internet as a worldwide network of networks which is made up of several computers linked together around the world in such a way that information can be sent, retrieved and processed from any connected computer. Usually, such computers are found in schools, homes, offices and business organizations.

Given the multidimensional utility of the internet, Osagie (2012) affirmed that its importance in the field of education cannot be overemphasized. Daniel (2008) explained that the use of internet in education enables, for the first time in the history of education, the mind to be liberated from having to retain an enormous amount of information. Furthermore, the internet can be useful as a support, a complement and a substitute for traditional and formal education. Siraj, Salam, Ashiquin and Hassan (2015) expressed that the internet is the most wanted information and communication technology that brought the worldwide revolutionary change in the information scenario and this has also contributed positively to the academic performance of students. Their study found that medical students in Malaysia who spend more time on internet did better in their studies than their counterparts who did not. Today, students perform various tasks on the internet both inside and outside their school environment. They make use of internet facilities to send and receive mails, chat online, send e-cards while some of them meaningfully employ internet services to foster their academic activities (Olawale, 2012).

The situation is quite different from what it used to be when internet was not so accessible to everyone. Today, internet providers in Nigeria are making a lot of profit because almost every teenager, youth, adult and even some really old persons make use of the internet especially in order to stay connected to their loved ones. The presence of internet in our everyday lives seems to have improved the quality of living within the society as individuals are able to build their social capital across different continents of the world from their bedroom. Mitra and Steffensmeier (2000) in their study concluded that a networked learning institution where students have easy access to computers and internet could foster positive attitudes toward the use of internet in teaching and learning. Singh and Rant (2013) and Jibrin, Musa and Shittu (2017) in their study found that the availability of internet creates better opportunity for qualitative research and comprehensive consultation in terms of academic information which further enhances the performance of students in their school work.

Few studies have discovered that in spite of the advantages of the internet, it could also become a major distraction and hindrance to academic success. Many students may find the opportunity to engage in many fun-filled activities more alluring and spend most of their time doing this instead of paying more attention to their studies. Puspita and Rohedi (2018) in their study found that most of their sample were always online but spend their time on online games, watching youtube channels while only 34.17% rarely used the internet for their academic work. Often times, the mobile phone is the easiest access to internet and the constant messages from various social media platforms may be intrusive as they break into one's study, thereby making it difficult to concentrate and may in turn lead to poor academic performance (Essays, 2018). Atyekins (2004) expressed that students have a positive tendency towards the use of internet for their studies while Oxford Internet Surveys (2019) found out that young people get addicted to the use of internet but this is very unlikely when the internet is used for academic work.

Irrespective of the multifunctional nature of the internet, the benefits individuals are likely to get from its usage depends on the purpose of using the internet. For students, it may become the one tool that can make the huge difference and catapult them to outstanding success but that can only happen if they are positively disposed to the use of internet for their studies.

### **Statement of the problem**

The internet is no doubt advantageous to the society; but like most technological devices, it comes with its disadvantages too. It is not uncommon to find youths, including students, using the internet to foster fraudulent acts popularly referred to as "Yahoo-Yahoo", exploring pornographic sites where they watch x-rated movies online. More recently, the use of social networks have been illicitly to lure and subsequently rape and murder girls for ritual purposes. Given the above situation, one may wonder if the internet is actually used positively to foster academic endeavours, understanding health conditions, transacting genuine business etc. This study was therefore geared towards investigating the attitude of students towards using the internet for their school work.

### **Research Questions**

Three research questions were formulated to guide the researchers in the conduct of the study. They include:

1. What is the attitude of Secondary School Students toward the use of Internet in learning?
2. Is there any difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of gender?
3. Is there any difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of subject discipline?

### **Research Hypothesis**

Two research hypotheses were generated for the study:

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of students towards the use of internet in learning on the basis of gender.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of subject discipline.

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for the study was the descriptive survey. The researchers made use of questionnaire to elicit information from respondents on their attitude towards the use of internet for learning. The multistage sampling procedure was employed in carrying out the study. The researchers purposively selected six outstanding public secondary schools in Ibadan South/West Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Using a simple random sampling method, fifty students were selected from each school, a total of 300 senior secondary school students were selected.

The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire. The choice of a questionnaire was based on the fact that the respondents are literates and could therefore respond to the items independently. A questionnaire brings about a less expensive, consistent and uniform measure without variation and can be completed at the respondents' convenience. The questionnaire employed was a survey adapted from the outlines of "Tendency Towards Internet." (Kilingcoglu et al, 2002). The questionnaire was segmented into two sections; section A was designed to collect demographic information about the respondents while section B consisted of 15 items eliciting information about the attitude towards internet learning. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a test re-test method. Copies of the questionnaire were administered twice within an interval of six weeks. The results of both

administrations were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the result obtained was 0.72 which was considered high enough to conclude that the instrument is reliable. The validity was established using the face and content validity. This was achieved by giving samples of the questionnaire to four professionals in the field of education. Their views and suggestions led to some changes and corrections before the administration of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire forms were administered to the respondents by the researchers and two trained assistants. The instrument required that students should answer either strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree to each item. The students were made to read through the questionnaire and were allowed to ask questions in areas in which they needed clarification. Copies of the questionnaire were filled and collected on the same day. Frequency counts, simple percentages and t-test were used to analyse and interpret the data.

### **Presentation of results**

This section presents the results of the data analysis taking note of the research questions and hypotheses that were generated to guide the study.

**Research Questions 1:** What is the attitude of Secondary School Students toward the use of Internet in learning?

Table 1 shows the item by item ranking of the items in the questionnaire. A careful examination of the table shows that item 12, 9, and 4 were ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively as they had the highest mean scores showing a positive attitude towards the use of internet for learning.

**Table 1:** Item by Item analysis and ranking of the mean scores of the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning

S/N	Statement of Item	Mean	S.D	Rank
1	Internet is a universal digital library	3.43	.813	8 <sup>th</sup>
2	Internet is the fastest way to reach knowledge	3.26	.945	9 <sup>th</sup>
3	Internet has the potential to be an effective training tool	3.44	.811	7 <sup>th</sup>
4	Internet cuts across knowledge from all works of life	3.56	.798	3 <sup>rd</sup>
5	Internet is a way of providing knowledge for people's research	3.00	.973	11 <sup>th</sup>
6	I use the internet for my assignment all the time	3.49	.808	6 <sup>th</sup>
7	I often use the internet to gain more understanding of my school work	3.50	.805	5 <sup>th</sup>
8	The internet has been very helpful in improving my grades at school	3.00	.973	11 <sup>th</sup>
9	I will encourage my friends to make use of the internet for their study	3.61	.774	2 <sup>nd</sup>
10	Internet contains unnecessary and non-useful knowledge	2.94	1.01	12 <sup>th</sup>
11	Internet leads to addiction and should be banned from students	2.54	1.14	14 <sup>th</sup>
12	Internet can be used for group discussion with friends	3.99	.750	1 <sup>st</sup>
13	I will rather use my textbooks for my assignment	2.68	1.19	13 <sup>th</sup>
14	I believe the internet can be used to support classroom experience	3.53	.800	4 <sup>th</sup>
15	Using the internet is laborious and not necessary for learning	2.32	1.21	15 <sup>th</sup>

**Research Questions 2:** Is there any difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of gender?

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of gender.

Table 2 indicates that the calculated t-value is lesser than the critical value of 1.96 therefore, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in the attitude

of students toward the use of internet for learning on the basis of gender was accepted. This indicates to the fact that male and female students do not differ in their attitude towards the use of internet for learning.

**Table 2:** Means, standard deviation and t-value on attitude of students towards the use of internet in learning on the basis of gender

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	df	Cal. t-value
Male	189	41.21	8.46	298	1.51*
Female	111	59.79	12.99		

$p > 0.05$  alpha level of significance

**Research Questions 3:** Is there any difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of subject discipline?

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet in learning on the basis of subject discipline.

**Table 3:** Mean, Standard deviation and t-value on attitude of students towards the use of internet in learning on the basis of subject discipline

Subject discipline	N	Mean	S.D	Df	Cal. t-value
Science	144	33.6	10.42	298	2.24*
Arts	156	66.4	14.53		

$p < 0.05$  alpha level of significance

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 2.24 is greater than the critical value of 1.96 therefore, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in the attitude of students toward the use of internet for learning on the basis of subject discipline is rejected. This means that students in different subject disciplines differ in their attitude towards the use of internet for learning.

### Discussion of findings

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the attitude of secondary school students toward the use of internet for learning. The research also examined the influence of variables such as gender and subject discipline on the attitude of students toward the use of internet for learning. As observed from table 1, the attitude of students toward the use of internet for learning is generally positive. Item 12 stating

that “Internet can be used for group discussion with friends” was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean of 3.99, while item 9 which states that “I will encourage my friends to make use of the internet for their study” with a mean of 3.61 was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> and item 4 stating that “Internet cuts across knowledge from all walks of life” with a mean of 3.56 was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>. These findings show that students are aware of the advantages of the internet and are willing to use it for their academic pursuit. This is a positive attitude towards the use of internet for learning. Item 11 which states that “Internet leads to addiction and should be banned from students” was ranked 14<sup>th</sup> while item 15 stating that “using the internet is laborious and not necessary for learning” was ranked 15<sup>th</sup>, showing a disapproval of the suggested demerits of the internet. These findings are supported by Aytakin (2004) who found out that students have a positive tendency to the usefulness of internet. He asserted that there is a consciousness about the effects and importance of internet, and that there is a high tendency to apply the trending technology style to education. The internet may in fact be addictive but this hardly happens when it is used for academic or research purposes (OxIs, 2009). Aytakin (2004) expressed that since the internet has become a part of every one’s life, people should eliminate the negative perceptions and attitude they may have about internet and improve their adaptations in order to catch up with the competitive environment.

Hypothesis one was accepted showing that male and female students do not differ in their attitude towards use of internet for learning, while hypothesis two was rejected showing that students in varying subject disciplines (Science or Arts), have different attitude towards using the internet for their school work.

### **Conclusion**

The internet is indeed a great resource for a number of things, academics inclusive. Students have a lot to gain by using the internet for their studies and while they are positively disposed to doing this, they have to be supported in order to make it easy to achieve their academic goals.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are considered relevant in encouraging the use of internet for academic endeavours among students:

a) There is a strong need to make available internet connection in government owned schools in order to make the internet accessible to the students. It is hereby recommended that the government and other major stakeholders should make provision for this as it will go a long way in improving the standard and quality of learning.

b) The teachers need to be trained to be competent in the use of the computer and internet generally. This will make it possible to create a more internet-friendly environment as teachers can give assignments online, recommend materials for the students' use and maintain a better relationship with their students, encouraging them to use the internet constructively.

c) Parents have the responsibility of providing the internet facility for their wards. They should also make sure they oversee the use of the internet and discourage using it for fraudulent activities or pornographic exposures.

d) The school administrative team and counsellors need to work together to organize workshops and seminars to teach the students how to make use of the internet for their studies and other positive aspects of their life.

e) As practiced in private schools, government established schools should include as part of their subjects, the use of computer and internet, as the present world hardly does anything without it.

### **Implications for national development**

With the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that the internet certainly plays a major role in today's world and as the world around us becomes stronger and better through the proper use of the information gotten through the internet, we should not be left out. Ignorance is no excuse, especially when information needed for development in virtually every area can be easily accessed. Students and individuals from all walks of life need to be sensitized through the media, about this opportunity right at their fingertips. With all these in place, students can gain more understanding of their school work and use the knowledge gained to bring about positive changes in their environment.

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