FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST INTERNET ACCESS AND USE AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF YOBE STATE UNIVERSITY AND FEDERAL UNIVERSITY GASHUA

By

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Abstract
The study investigated the factors hindering internet access and use among undergraduate students of Yobe State University and Federal University Gashua, Nigeria. The study aimed to identify key barriers affecting students' ability to access and utilize the internet. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, with a population of 11,273 undergraduate students. Using the Research Advisor Table, a sample size of 370 students was selected through proportionate stratified sampling. A total of 370 questionnaires were distributed, and 355 valid responses were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The findings revealed that inadequate power supply, slow internet connectivity, and insufficient computers in the universities were the major factors limiting internet access and use among students. Based on these findings, the study recommended that the government should enhance university infrastructure by ensuring a stable power supply through alternative sources such as generators and improving internet connectivity.
Keywords: Internet, Factors, Access, Students

Introduction

Internet access is the ability of individuals and organizations to connect to the Internet using computer terminals and other devices and to access services such as email and the World Wide Web. Internet access is sold by Internet service providers (ISPs) delivering connectivity at a wide range of data transfer rates via various networking technologies. Many organizations, including a growing number of municipal entities, also provide cost-free wireless access.

The introduction of information technology in Nigeria is a welcome development, and the use of the internet for educational purposes is also of immense benefit, especially in the area of education and research (Onovughe, 2018). Today, ICTs have introduced new methods of teaching, learning and a new way of conducting research independently. Its application in the education sector has greatly enhanced the quality of education and research, information and communication technology change the way of learning in the class room and students are no longer bound physically by the bricks and mortar that surround them. Instead, they have at their fingertips the opportunity to explore the world and take in the vast amounts of information along the way''

The Internet has become a major source for study, research and development. It is a vast network of computers that connect many of the world's businesses, institutions and individuals. The Internet has become a hot issue in Library and Information science. It is an efficient tool for finding the latest news, views, browsing library catalogues, indexes, abstracts, exchanging

information with colleagues and intellectuals, ideas with experts, join in lively debates or financial and business transactions instantly.

Literature review

The increased use of the Internet in academic institutions worldwide has made communication and educational media researchers recognize the significance of understanding how and why students use it.

The main purpose of university and higher institution libraries are to provide teaching, learning and research facilities by making available current and up-to-date information resources relevant to the courses offered to enable the students, teachers and researchers to conduct research independently. Kamba, (2017) stressed that, '' the advent of internet has permitted libraries, universities, institution and organisation to access programs, retrieve document information, papers and books exchange data and send mails in a short period of time''

There are a number of factors militating against the access and use of the Internet, not in Nigeria alone, but Africa as a whole, with cost being the leading factor, and lack of Internet facilities (ldowu, Ogunbodede and Idowu, 2023).This is because almost all the African countries are experiencing huge debts and foreign exchange required to purchase the facilities are lacking. Many Sub-Saharan African countries do not have National Policies for Information Technology (IT). As such there are no coordinated and enduring information communication technology development road maps to follow (Chigbu and Dim, 2012). Hence, access to connectivity to the Internet remains one of the major challenges in many developing countries like Nigeria.

A lot of studies that have been conducted both locally and internationally showed the factors hindering the access to the Internet and its use by the students in different parts of the world. The study of Ukonu, Wagu and Obayi (2022) who examined the problems and challenges facing the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, found that, too many of non-

functional systems, crowded space, slow network, and inability to access e-books were the most important problems faced by the students in their use of digital library in the university. Their findings suggested improved access to the Internet, stable power supply, increasing the size of the library and providing more and adequate professional staff assistance to students. However, Otunla (2020) in her research found undergraduate students encountered various constraints in the use of Internet and the major ones being non-availability of Internet connectivity around the campus, slow internet connectivity and downloading, constant breaking down of internet services on campus and irregular electricity supply. Poor electricity in Nigeria became one of the major problems facing the country especially in academic environment because the educational world now is experiencing digitization of information resources everywhere. As such, this will lead to the poor educational researchers because they cannot retrieve the current and up to date materials to help them in conducting their research.

Abubakar, (2017) cited Haliso (2011) investigated factors responsible for the poor use of information and communication technologies in South-western Nigeria. It is evident that, lack of commitment by institutional management, lack of ICT strategy, lack of qualified staff to manage the ICTs and low skill level of the academic librarians dominated the reasons for the poor use of the ICTs in academic libraries in South-western Nigeria. It also revealed that other factors that contributed to the under use of the ICTs were lack of adequate budget and erratic power supply. In their study, Ukonu et al (2022) also cited Folorunso, Ogunseye and Sharma (2006) who posited that, mass unawareness, low computer literacy level, and cost were the critical factors affecting the acceptability of e-learning by students and lecturers of Nigerian universities.

In the same vein, Arthur and Brafi (2023) in their study in the Sunyani Municipality, Ghana found poor Internet speed as the major constraints to use the Internet, followed by inadequate computers in computer laboratories, inadequate user-skills, non- functional

computers etc. Writer (2021) published 12 challenges facing computer education in Kenyan schools which included lack of qualified teachers to teach ICT in schools, lack of computers, lack of electricity, expensive cost of computers, broken down computers, burglary, fear by the administration, fear by the teachers, lack of Internet or slow connectivity, lack of initiative by the community leaders, obsolete computers and increased moral degradation. This claim to an extent reflects the current situation of our universities particularly in the northern part of Nigeria as some of the universities do not have adequate Internet connectivity in their school environment.

The survey of Ayatollahi etal (2019) on problems undergraduate students faced about Internet found that slow speed of Internet was mentioned by most of the students (43.7%). In India, Neeraji and Swarupa (2018) found slow speed of Internet was the primary problem faced by undergraduate and postgraduate students, followed by impolite staff among others. Furthermore, Afshari, Abu Bakar and Luan in (2019) conducted a study on factors affecting teacher's use of information and communication technology. Their findings revealed computer competence as one of the factors affecting teachers' use of information and communication technology. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) creates a powerful learning environment and it transforms knowledge in an active, self-directed and constructive way. Also, the success of educational innovations depends largely on the Internet skills and knowledge of teachers at any level of education in schools.

In Saudi Arabia, Aqil and Ahmad's (2019) study found that, the major barrier to Internet access was slow speed. It was revealed that 72 (47.68%) of research scholars and postgraduate students complained about the slow Internet speed and 28 (18.54%) users felt that there were lack of sufficient Internet connected terminals in their department and university library, which keeps them from using their time well.

On the other hand, the Internet use, access and satisfaction, especially in educational environment has been investigated some times,

and many different studies exist in literature about that subject. Udende and Azeez (2018) in their studies found that, more than 80% of respondents use the internet and same percentage of respondents used the Internet mostly for academic purpose and least of 14% used the Internet to check their e-mails. However, the findings established that the Internet helped most of the students solve their academic problems. In another study based on the literature by Kumar and Kaur in (2020) it was found that, the students were the most frequent users of the Internet and they used the Internet mainly for academic purposes rather than for entertainment.

Abubakar (2017) cited Bashir, Mahmood and Shafique (2011) noted that for most college students, the Internet is a functional tool, one that has greatly changed the way they interact with others and with information as they go about their studies. In their survey on "the Internet use among students in University of Punjab, Lahore", their findings explained students were making use of the Internet for course-related and research needs, only one-fourth of the students used it for entertainment purpose. The study found a large number of students had learnt to use the Internet tools by themselves and relied on assistance from friend; also Google was found to be the most popular search engine used by 90% of the students, followed by Yahoo and MSN. The findings also showed most students of Pakistani universities used the Internet two to three times a week as compared to daily use in advanced countries. Muniandy (2019) in his research revealed that, undergraduate students in Malaysian universities mostly used the Internet for academic activities; also Yahoo and Google were found to be the most popular search engines used by the students.

Mashiri (2018) in his findings revealed that, more than 55% of final year students of a Zimbabwean University used the Internet for academic purposes than first year students 22%. Studies of Luaran, Abdul Rom and Nadzri (2019) found that, more than 90% of the undergraduate students of faculty of education, University technology MARA used the Internet for searching information, communicating, and

getting online entertainment. The highest per cent of using the Internet was 98.3% for accessing websites. It was found that, this might be due to the fact that students preferred to use the Internet to search information as it is faster and easier, which is consistent with the study of Ukonu, Wagu and Obayi (2017). Also the findings of Mahmud (2021) revealed that, students of Private Universities in Bangladesh were more conscious about Internet. It also found they had been using Internet for studying and learning frequently and very frequently. The study of Neeraj and Swarupa (2020) observed that undergraduates in Mangalore were mainly using the Internet for c-mail/chatting with 74%, only 13% uses for getting general information. Their study also revealed 66% of postgraduate students in Mangalore were using the Internet for research purposes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Internet plays a vital role in any academic environment which cannot be over emphasized. It has become a mechanism or tool for accessing current and relevant information within seconds from anywhere within the globe. It is believed that the internet is an important part of our lives and most significantly to university students. The internet holds great promise to humanity as known for learning and universal access to quality education.

Internet availability appears to be difficult in many developing countries like Nigeria. Also even if it's made available, access to the internet mostly appears to be difficult for certain obvious reasons, prominent among which include slow access speed, high cost of access and slow bandwidth. However, Otunla (2020) in her research found undergraduate students encountered various constraints in the use of Internet and the major ones being non-availability of Internet connectivity around the campus, slow Internet connectivity and downloading, constant breaking down of Internet services on campus and irregular electricity supply. Poor electricity in Nigeria became one of the major problems facing the country especially in an academic environment because the educational world now is experiencing the digitization of information resources everywhere.

Despite the laudable efforts made by Yobe State University and Federal University Gashua in the introduction of ICT to facilitate the use of internet, Observation by the researcher shows that Yobe State University Damaturu and Federal University Gashua, internet connectivity are still at a low level of integrating in to teaching, research, library, information and managerial services. Poor internet speed, inadequate number of computer laboratories and inadequate user skills were observed as the leading constraints to internet use. Observation showed that, the universities also lack well-trained staff on the use and internet access. Hence, the broad objective of the study is to investigate the extent to which the undergraduate students have access to internet in the university, the level at which they use the internet for academic activities and the level of satisfaction derived as a result of using the internet among others. Studies on Internet use among university students are desirable as students are heavy users of the Internet compared to the general population and the use of the Internet among them is a daily routine.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research were to determine:-

1. Factors militating against use and access of internet by undergraduate students in universities in Yobe State.

2. Level of satisfaction derived from internet use and access by the undergraduate students in universities in Yobe State.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the factors militating against use and access of the internet by undergraduate students in universities in Yobe State?

2. What is the level of satisfaction derived from internet use and access by the undergraduate students in universities in Yobe State?

Scope of the Study

The study focused on internet access, use and satisfaction among undergraduate students of Yobe State University Damaturu and Federal University Gashua libraries. The study covered only undergraduate students of the 2017/2018, 2018/219 and 2020/2021 academic sessions in all the faculties of the two universities. 2019/2020 was not included because of the COVID 19 pandemic. The study focused on determining the factors militating against use and access to the internet by undergraduate students in Universities in Yobe State and the level of satisfaction derived from internet use and access by the undergraduate students in Universities in Yobe State.

Methodology

Survey research was employed. The population of the study were undergraduate students of Yobe State University and Federal University Gashua. For three academic seasons (2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2020/2021), one academic season (2019-2020) was excluded due to Covid-19 pandemic. The total population was seventy-three (11,273). The researcher used three hundred and seventy (370) as the sample size as recommended by the Research Advisor Table (2006). Proportionate stratified random sampling was used. A total of three hundred and seventy questionnaires were distributed to the students, and only three hundred and fifty-five were retrieved. The retrieved data were analysed using frequency count and percentage.

Data analysis

Demographic information of the respondents

This section presents the demographic information of the respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate their demographic characteristics in terms of gender, level of study, faculty and their age.

TABLE 1 Frequency and Percentages of Demographic information of the respondents.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	197	55.49%
Female	158	45.51%
Total	**355**	**100%**
Level of Study	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Level 100	189	53.24%
Level 200	101	28.45%
Level 300	65	18.31%
Level 400	0	0
Level 500	0	0
Total	**355**	**100%**
Faculties	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Law	6	1.69%
Art and Education	60	16.90%
Science	126	35.50%

Medical College	8	2.25%
Agriculture	24	6.76%
Art Management and Social Science	131	36.90%
Total	**355**	**100%**
Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
16 – 20 years	105	29.58%
21 – 30 years	223	62.82%
31 – 40 years	27	7.60%
41 and above	0	0
Total	**355**	**100%**

Table 1 above shows the demographic information of the respondents based on gender, The table signifies that 197 (55.5%) of the respondents were males, while 158 (45.5%) of the respondents were female. Males were the majority of the respondents. Majority of the respondents, 189 (53.2%), were 100-level students, followed by 200-level students with 101 (28.5%) and 300-level students with 65 (18.2%). Levels 400 and 500: no responses. This shows that level-100 and level-200 students were the students who frequently visited the library for Internet access and use.

Concerning the faculty of students, the findings show the majority of the respondents were students in the faculty of art, social and management science in the universities with 131 (36.9%), followed by the faculty of science with 126 (35.5%) responses. Followed by the faculty of art and education with 60 (16.7%). Faculty law has the lowest responses with 6 (1.7%) followed by medical college with 8 (2.8%) and faculty of agriculture with 24 (6.8%). This shows that there was representation from each faculty of the universities.

In terms of age of the respondents more than half of the respondents were between the ages of 21-30 which signifies 62.8%, followed by 105 (29.6%) who were between the ages of 16-20, 27 respondents which shows (7.6%) were between the ages of 31-40. 41 and above have no response.

Research question 1: What are the factors militating against the use and access of the internet by undergraduate students in Yobe State Universities

Respondents were asked to assess the factors militating against the use and access of the internet using the scale of **strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), undecided (UN), Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD)** the responses were shown in table 2.

Table 2 frequency and percentages of factors militating against use and access to internet

Statements	Frequency/Percentage %					
	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total
Inadequate computers in the Universities	293 (82.54%)	19 (5.35%)	5 (1.41%)	0 0(0%)	38 (10.70%)	355 (100%)
Non availability of internet connectivity around the campus.	108 (30.42%)	66 (18.59%)	0 (0%)	50 (14.08%)	131 (36.91%)	355 (100%)
Inadequate power supply.	299 (84.23%)	43 (12.11%)	2 (0.56%)	5 (1.41%)	6 (1.69%)	355 (100%)
Inadequate professional ICT staff to assist the students in Universities.	200 (56.34%)	81 (22.82%)	6 (1.69%)	48 (13.52%)	20 (5.63%)	355 (100%)
Slow access and speed of the internet connectivity.	300 (84.51%)	28 (7.89%)	0 (0%)	20 (5.63%)	7 (1.97%)	355 (100%)
Non functional computers in the Universities.	170 (47.89%)	11 (3.09%)	0 (0%)	100 (28.17%)	74 (20.85%)	355 (100%)
Difficulty in finding information. (100%)	260 (73.24%)	49 (13.80%)	21 (5. 92%)	23 (6.48%)	2 (0.56%)	355

Table 2 above indicates that majority of the respondents 293(82.54%) strongly agree that inadequate computers in the universities is the factor that hinders use and access to the internet in the universities, and 19(5.35%) agreed with the statement. 38(10.70%) strongly disagreed that inadequate computer is not the factor that hinders use and access to the internet and 5(1.41) were undecided with the notion. Thus, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate computers in Yobe State University and Federal University Gashua are the factors that hindered the use and access to the internet in the universities.

It can also be seen that most of the respondents 108(30.42%) and 66(18.59%) strongly agreed and agreed that non-availability of internet connectivity around campuses was the factor the militating against use and access to the internet in the universities, 50(14.08%) and 131(36.91)

srongly disagreed and agreed that non-availability of internet connectivity around the campuses is not the factors militating against use and access of internet in the universities.

Majority of the respondents 299(84.23%) and 43(12.11%) strongly agreed that inadequate power supply is the factor militating against the use and access to the internet in the universities, 11(3.10%) disagreed that inadequate power supply as the factor militating against use and access to internet and 2(0.56%) remained undecided. Thus, this indicated that Majority of the respondents show that inadequate power-supply is the factor militating against the use and access to the internet in the universities.

Data in the table shows that majority of the respondents 200(56.34%) and 81(22.82%) strongly agreed that inadequate professional ICT staff to assist the students in the universities is

the factor that hindered the use and access to the internet in the universities, 68(19.15%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement while 6(1.70%) were undecided with the opinion. This indicated that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that adequate professional ICT staff to assist the students in the universities is the factor that hindered the use and access to the internet in the universities.

Majority of the respondents 328(92.39%) strongly agreed that slow access and speed of the internet connectivity is the factors that hindered internet use and access to the internet in the universities while 27 (7.61%) of the respondents disagreed that slow access and speed of the internet as factor militating against the use and access to the internet. Majority of the respondents at Yobe State University and Federal University Gashua strongly agreed that slow access and speed of the internet connectivity are the factors that hindered internet use and access to the internet in the universities.

The responses show that almost half of the respondents 181(50.99%) agreed that non-functional computers in the universities is the factors that hindered use and access of the internet while 174(49.01%) disagreed with the statement. Thus, this show that majority of the respondents agreed that non-functional computers in the universities is the factors that hindered use and access of internet.

Data in the table shows that majority of the respondents 260(73.24%) 49(13.80%) and strongly agreed and agreed that difficulty in finding information is the factor militating against the internet use and access in the universities, 25(7.06%) respondents disagreed that difficulty in finding information as the factor militating against use and access to internet in universities while 21(5.92%) were undecided with the statement. This shows that majority of undergraduate students in Yobe State University and Federal University Gashua Strongly agreed that difficulty in finding information is the factor militating against internet use and access in the universities

Research question 2. What is the level of satisfaction derived from internet use and access by the undergraduate students in universities in Yobe State?

Table 3 Frequency and percentages of level of satisfaction with internet access and use

Level of satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage %
Very high	15	4.23%
High	45	12.68%
Average	35	9.86%
Low	144	40.56%
Very low	116	32.67%
Total	**355**	**100%**

Table 3 above indicates the distribution of responses based on the level of satisfaction with the internet access and use by undergraduate students in the universities under study, most of the respondents show that, the level of satisfaction is low with 144 (40.56%), followed by very low with 116(32.67%), 35 respondents with 9.86% signifies average satisfaction, 15 and 45 respondents indicated very high and high with 4,23% and 12,68% respectively

Discussion of findings

The findings also reveal that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate power supply, Slow access and speed of the internet connectivity and inadequate computers in the universities as the factors that hindered access and use of the internet among

undergraduate students in Yobe State Universities. This also corroborates with the study of Ukonu, Wagu and Obayi (2019) who examined the problems and challenges facing the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and found that, too many non-functional systems, crowded space, slow networks, and inability to access e-books were

the most important problems faced by the students in their use of the digital library in the university. Their findings suggested improved access to the Internet, stable power supply, increasing the size of the library and providing more and adequate professional staff assistance to students. However, Otunla (2020) in her research found undergraduate students encountered various constraints in the use of the Internet the major ones being the non-availability of Internet connectivity around the campus, slow Internet connectivity and downloading, constant breaking down of services on campus and irregular electricity supply.

Conclusion and recommendations

The study concluded that, many factors were found militating against the access and use of THE internet. The findings of the study will provide a framework of action to be used by Yobe State University and Federal University Gashua managements, in order to provide free available internet connectivity at anywhere in the university premises for easy access and use.

The finding also shows that undergraduate students believe that the internet assists students and researchers in accessing relevant information.

1. The management should collaborate with the government to provide internet connectivity to all faculties and departmental libraries and subscribe to electronic databases, such as Elsevier, Springer, Taylor and Francis, Wiley, and Emerald.

2. There is a need to provide high bandwidth to make it easy for students and researchers to access and use the internet quickly.

3. The practical use of the Internet should be included as part of undergraduate students' curriculum in the universities by taking the students to the computer laboratory for an hour or more to instruct them on the basic steps to follow when searching for information online.
4. The government should equip universities with the enabling infrastructure such as adequate

power supply; by providing alternative power supply like the generator and effective internet connectivity.

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