The Utilization of Internet Services and Computer for Student Advancement at Allover Central Polytechnic Akure Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The utilization of internet services and computer for student advancement is investigated among the students of the Allover Central polytechnic Akure, Nigeria. An open-ended questionnaire-based survey method was employed among the student and the Lecturers. The students of the Polytechnic is known to have basic skills in internet and computer usage; but it has been noticed that they lacked advanced skills, and this has affected their use of the resources. They used it mainly for communication and for social media interaction while the lesser percentage goes to study and research. It is therefore recommended that the institution provide formal internet training and adequate facilities; implementing a better basic skills in computer applications and better coordinated efforts from the Polytechnic. The free access to internet and availability of computers which was provided for the student, was also a very good encouragement to the student.

Keyword: Computer, Internet Utilization, Student, information

1. INTRODUCTION

Computers usage and the Internet services has been associated with improvements in people's education, labour market prospects, and everyday lives. The tremendous opportunity brought about by the use of technology for advancement, has the potential to improve access to information, increase productivity, and to facilitate ease of doing work [1]. The positive effect of using internet and computer will improve the standard of living has it enhances student literacy because the use rate may indicate how prepared the current generation of students will be to enter a workforce where computer literacy is in demand. Other findings suggest that computer and the internet services usage may have positive influence on student motivation, to improve their academic performance [3], [4], [5], [6], and [7].

The global increment that arise from internet and computer usage has been rapid and the larger percentages of the population will both enjoy the potential benefits especially student at the higher institution of learning to enhance their academic performance and advancement. This project work is based on the utilization of internet services and computer among the students of Allover Central Polytechnic Akure Campus. Internet is one of the major technological developments that serves as the medium for exchange of information and for collaborative interaction among individuals and their computer.

1.1 Allover Central Polytechnic

Allover Central Polytechnic, Akure Study Centre, is a private Polytechnic in Nigeria in 2015, with Permanent Campus at Sango-Ota Lagos, Nigeria and also a study centre at Akure Ondo State Nigeria. The Akure Study Centre commenced her academic activities November, 2015 with about nine departments and the student population ranging below 200. At the inception of the Akure study centre, Laptop computers were provided for all the student by the Chairman, in person of Senator (Dr.) Ayo Akinyelure, FCA, and FCTI. The Computers were meant to provide enhancement of study and also to improve their knowledge on computer in other to be technological compliant. Internet services were also provided by the school authority which is managed by the school engineer.

1.2 The specific objectives are to:
a) Evaluate the attitude of students toward the internet services and computer usage.
b) Determine the purpose of internet services and computer usage for students.
c) Determine the roles it played on the advancement of their academic works

1.3 Significance of study
This study could be beneficial for student as well as for institutions. The valuable feedback from less than 200 students should help student to realize the benefits of internet in their education. Institutes can invest more in

internet facilities to enhance the performance of their students and produce better results.

1.4 Research methodology

Local and international articles and journals were referred as secondary sources of information in the study. Data were collected from the distribution of self-administered questionnaires to about 80 students at the Allover Central Polytechnic Akure Study Centre.

1.5 Data collection procedure

The open-ended questionnaire survey method was used in collecting the primary data in this research paper. A pilot test was conducted by distributing questionnaire forms to 80 students and 20 Lecturers at the Allover Central Polytechnic Akure study centre.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chen et.al (2008), examined the relationship between university students and their academic performance in respect to interpersonal relationship, psychosocial adjustment and self-evaluation. The questionnaire method was employed and the total of 49,609 feedback was collected. The result for the comparison of heavy and non-heavy internet users shows, that the non-heavy internet users to have better relationship with administrative staff, academic grades and learning satisfaction than the heavy users. [8].

Peng et.al (2006) studied the attitudes and self-efficacy of university students' towards the Internet. The study demonstrated the relationship between internet perception and students attitude to self-efficacy. Result shows that, there are positive effect, if the student use it as a functional tool or technology. In addition, other useful studies that investigates the effects of internet on university students' self-efficacy and performance are listed. [9], [10], [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], [16].

Lazonder et.al (2000) investigated the needs in searching for information on the World Wide Web of novice users; the result shows that locating a website is important than locating the information on a website [17].

Hong et.al (2003) studied student attitude towards Internet usage for learning at the University of Malaysia Sarawak. The result revealed, students that had positive attitude towards learning via the Internet had some basic skills in using the Internet and perceived the learning environment in the university to be conducive and internet as a learning tool [18].

Rajeev et.al (2004) on the use of internet by teachers and students in Shaheed Bhagat Singh College of Engineering & Technology, Ferozepur (Panjab) perceived that 46.7% of teachers and 36.7% of student's use the internet daily. In addition, 90% respondents use the internet at their college; while 31.7% respondents were fully satisfied, and 36.7% of them were partially satisfied with internet facilities. Yahoo was found to be the favorite search engine [19].

Luambano et.al (2004), investigated internet usage at the University of Dares Salaam. Their findings revealed that, majority of the students were not using the Internet due to inadequacy of basic computer skills; Internet access; lack of skills to use Internet and slow speed of computers. The result shows that most students did not use it for academic purposes. Luambano recommended that more computers with internet connection should be provided for the students and that training should be given students on the basic skills needed [20].

Ruzgar (2005), presents the purpose of using Internet for learning. The result shows that internet has become an integral part of college life and its usage is approaching 100% among students. In addition, 36% of student spent 1 to 10 hours/per week on the internet; in terms of such activities as, sending/receiving e-mail, news and sports information, research, chat, products and services, and downloading. The student were able to have more concentrations on online activity than watching television. [21].

3. METHODOLOGY

The current population of Allover Central Polytechnic students as the period of this research is less than 200. The school basically has foundation in science &technology and business administration. To develop this study, 80 students are selected from the population using stratified sampling technique. The objective of the study is to investigate the use of Internet services and computer among the student of Allover Central Polytechnic. To achieve this goal, a questionnaire survey was conducted. A data collection instrument was developed based on the review of literature. The study population was registered student of Allover Central Polytechnic Akure, and the Lecturers. A sample of 80 questionnaires was given to the students and 20 for the lecturers.

4. ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 Student Responses

The author of the project distributed a number of questionnaires to the student and Lecturers of Allover Central Polytechnic Akure study centre. The responses were as follows: the Student that offered Computer Science had the highest response rate at 78; the student offering Banking and finance, Accountancy, etc. responses were very low. Out of the targeted sample 80 participants. The response rate is summarised in table 1.

Table 1: Student Response Rate

Department	Number of Questionnaires	Responses	Percentage
Computer Science	50	49	98%
Others	30	29	96.7%

4.2 Awareness/ knowledge of Internet Services

The respondents indicated their level of awareness of the internet services. All 80 respondents answered in the affirmative. They have been aware of the internet but the level of the awareness and the usage were not equal. The same thing applied to the usage of computer, though All over Central Polytechnic has Laptop computer given to each student of the institution in which they will use during the school hours and return afterwards, but the level of the expertise is very minimal.

4.3 Competence/skill in using the computer and internet

This section concerned students' competence in using the computer and the internet. The respondents were able to indicate their competency level on a five-point scale ranging from "very easy" to "very difficult" and "Confident" The results were summarized in table II. Competence/internet surfing skill - The respondents indicated their perceived level of internet skills on a scale ranging from "very easy" to "very difficult". The aim of the questionnaire was to measure the students' levels of network literacy. The findings were summarized in table II.

Table II: the competency in computer/internet usage

S/N	Computer/ Internet skill rating	competency	percentage
1	Very easy	52	65%
2	Very difficult	10	12.5%
3	Confident	37	42.25%
4	Everyday Usage	32	40%
5	Sometimes	9	11.25%
6	Weekly	40	50%

Figure 1: Competency Skill

4.4 Internet Access to the students

The respondents accessed the internet from different venues. The findings were summarized in table III.

Table III: Internet Access to the students

Access Point	Frequency	Percentage
Cyber Cafe	38	47.5%
Through Phone	42	52.5%

4.5 Purpose of using the internet

The respondents indicated their purpose of using the internet services. Six options were given: teaching, research, communication, recreation, learning and reading Web pages. Communication emerged as the most popular purpose, the summary of the findings is given below.

Table IV: Purpose of using the Internet

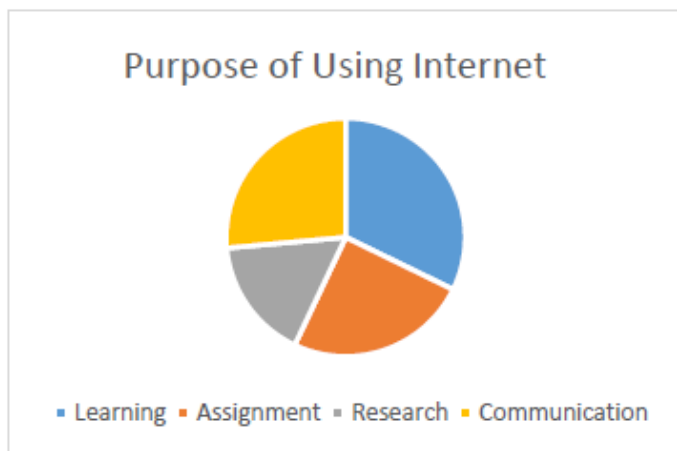| Purpose	Frequency	Percentage
Learning	39	48.75%
Assignment	30	37.5%
Research	20	25%
Communication	32	40%

Figure2: Purpose of Using Internet

4.6 Use of Search Engines

The respondents were able to indicate the type of search engines they were used to. They also had to indicate the frequency with which they used different search engines. Google was the most used search engine, respondents indicating that they always used it. This was followed by Yahoo, respondents indicating that they always used it. The frequencies of using the rest of the search engines were minimal. The findings were summarized in table V.

Table V: Usage of Search Engines

Frequency of Use	Google	Yahoo	Bing	Ask	Web
Most	75	30	0	0	10
Some	5	15	-	-	5
Very Little	2	8	-	-	3
None	1	5	-	-	8

4.7 Impact of the internet on academic work

The respondents were allowed to indicate the level in which the internet has improved their academic work. All 80 respondents answered in the affirmative. They also had to indicate the areas in which the internet had improved their academic work. Access to quality and up-to-date information had the highest rate of responses.

4.8 Lecturers part in the use Computer and Internet Services for Student Advancement

The sample of questionnaires given out was 20 to some of the lecturers and the table represent the 20 questionnaires returned and the percentage overall was based on the returned questionnaires.

Table VI: Lecturers Part

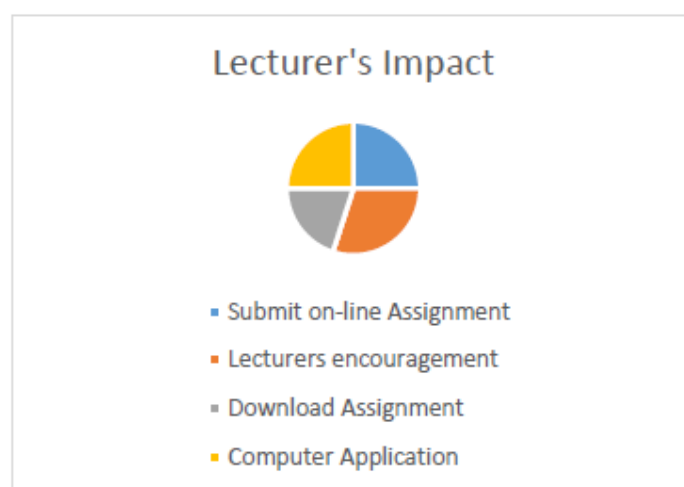| Computer & Internet	Frequency	percentage
Submit on-line Assignment	5	25%
Lecturers encouragement	6	30%
Download Assignment	4	20%
Computer Application	5	25%

Figure3: Lecturers Part

4.9 Competency in performing various computer tasks

The respondents were able to indicate their competency in handling various computer application packages. This is represented in table VII

Table VII:

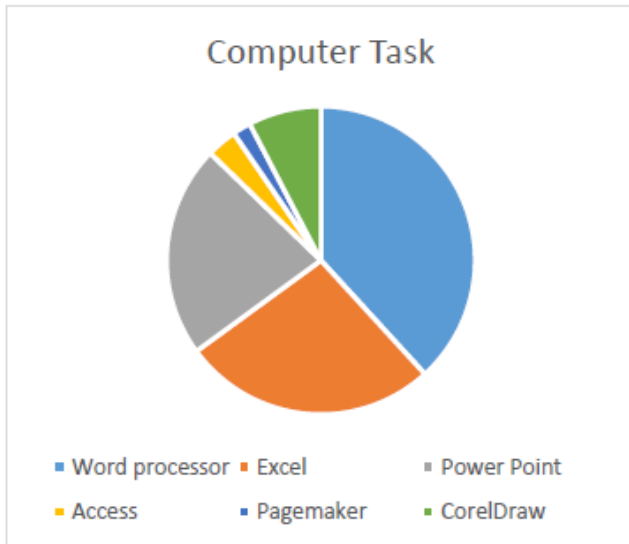| Computer application	High	Percentage
Word processor	60	75%
Excel	42	52.2%
Power Point	35	43.75%
Access	5	6.25%
Pagemaker	3	3.75%
CorelDraw	12	15%

Figure 4: Task on Computer

5. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The project has largely achieved the key objectives of the study by establishing that the level of internet awareness among the students of the Allover Central Polytechnic Akure was high and commendable. Although their basic internet and computer skills were at a low level, more training will be required to enable them to explore the internet resources at a deeper level. Furthermore, inadequate facilities militated against the full utilization of internet resources. The factors that influenced the use of computer and internet effectively, was based on the inconsistent power supply and the high cost of browsing within the Polytechnic community. The study gathered, that internet services and computer usage has impacted their academic work positively. The efforts made to encourage the internet usage among the students are commendable but more work needs to be done, especially in the areas of training, providing functional facilities and intensive publicity of existing services. This will certainly enhance student's use of the internet, which should be a way of life in an academic community.

5.1 Recommendation

The goal is to study and investigate the effective use of internet services and computer on the academic advancement of student at Allover Central Polytechnic Akure. The recommendations below were based on the outcome of the study.

5.2 Access

Student's access to internet is paramount for their effective use and should be considered a priority at the Polytechnic. This could be achieved by ensuring that there is internet facilities since there are availability of computer for each student. On the computer usage, there should be trainings that will be targeted at the computer application for the student to enhance their computer usage knowledge. The power supplied is one of the reason for the insufficient access to the computer system, there should be provision of alternative power supply in terms of functional generators for the student to be able to practice with.

5.3 Training

Skills training in the use of computer and internet services should be extended to student at all levels. The authority should cast their nets wider to reach majority of the students. However, Skills training could be embedded in the curriculum, making it compulsory to all first-year students for a set period of time (for example one semester) and assessing it as contributing towards term marks. Due to the complexity of the information available on the internet, all users should be taught evaluation skills. To ensure continued skills development, students should be encouraged to use the computer to complete and submit their assignments and projects.

5.4 Technical support

Trained personnel should be available at all times when the internet laboratories are open so that they can assist users with their computer and internet usage, and also tackle any problems that may occur while they are using the internet.

6. CONCLUSION

The study focused on the use of internet among students of Allover Central Polytechnic Akure Campus. The conclusions were guided by the research questions that the project sought to answer. Most of the students who participated in the questionnaire had taught themselves to use the internet and computer or learned from colleagues. The respondent's skill in the use of ICT tools to access the information in a networked environment were limited. Many applications like blogs, video and chat groups may be used to facilitate student's collaborative and communicative activities. The study found out that, Google and Yahoo were the most commonly used search engines. This led to the conclusion that the students were unfamiliar with more structured search engines; hence they did not use them. This study also led to the conclusion that the student use internet for various reasons that include research, academic work, communication and social interaction. The findings of this

study highlight that, information age has brought about change which has had an impact on student's use of internet services and computer.

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