Internet Usage and Its Effect on the Lifestyle of University Students

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Abstract
With the diversity of internet technology in the world today, usage has spread across every sector of the economy and business operations. Students are not left out from the use of the internet. Most people all over the world are using the internet for scholarly works. Researches on the use of the internet by students have been conducted by many scholars. This research is focused on the various uses of the internet by students in the universities in Ghana and the effects of the usage on their lifestyle. A cross-sectional survey research design was employed. Self-administered questionnaire was the primary data collection instrument. One hundred and fifty-four (154) students were selected randomly for the study. Most of them were undergraduate students and a few of them were graduate students. Students in the universities in Ghana accessed the internet for two main reasons – for academic activities and for making friends from other parts of the world. The results of the study reveal that most students access the internet daily. They spent several hours on the internet in a day and also for varying days in a week. It was found that students were addicted to the internet and they accessed social media purposely for making friends. They spent varying sums of money on buying internet bundles; even they use their last sum of money to browse the internet. However, with long hours spent on the internet some of them did not make enough time for their academic activities, including visiting the digital libraries.
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1.0 Introduction
The Internet and mobile technology have become common and being used in every corner of the world. Global enthusiasm for Internet, mobile, and digital communication has been exceptional (Katz and Aakhus, 2002). The combination of the computer and telecommunication brings about emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This technology is used by different organisations, including educational institutions, especially colleges and universities. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays significant role in all countries for many purposes, including teaching, learning, and research, which are the basic day-to-day activities of university lecturers and students across the world. With the introduction of the Internet, which came as an outcome of an experiment conducted by US military in trying to exchange information, it is presently a tool for carrying out all human and organisational activities in the world.

The usage of this technology is global, due to its contributions to human existence, because it has enhanced the socio economic and educational relations among people. Wireless technology is also becoming common and it is being used worldwide by both the old and the youth; "mobile youth culture" (Castells, Fernandez-Ardevol, Qiu, and Sey, 2007). Thus, increased popularity of cell and smart phones in recent years, especially among students in tertiary educational institutions, is used to access the Internet everywhere they are and has attracted research attention. Smart phones have been seen as assorted blessing. The young see phones as making their lives safer and more convenient; yet they also cite new tensions connected to cell phone use (Pew Research Center, 2010).

Connectivity to the Internet is becoming common among individuals, different organisations, including educational institutions; for that reason, university supervisors, managers, and workers are demanding internet connectivity to be on campuses in this country; and hence, Wi-Fi connections are made in all the universities in the country, Ghana. Telecommunication organisations are continually making internet facilities available to their customers and as a result anyone who is a customer to any of the telecommunication companies can connect to the internet, irrespective of wherever he or she may be.

Americans had used their own sources on the Internet as a way of finding out what was going on in the world. Patel (2005) stated that the Internet was considered a top source of information on election news, and used alongside broadcasting, paper-based news-media, newspapers and magazines among 20% of Americans. This is possible because the Internet has the capacity to make large libraries of electronic information and databases available to users within minutes at the click of a button; something that is not possible with the traditional information sources, such as physically located libraries (bricks and mortar libraries). Patel (2005) revealed that the search engine of Google alone contains about 4 billion web pages which could form a stack of paper more than 220 miles high if printed out.

1.2 Purpose of the study

In spite of the increase in tertiary students accessing the Internet through the use of both computers and Smart Phones, there has been limited research on the extent and the purpose of usage as well as the effect the usage has on the life styles of tertiary students, especially, in Ghana. It is often observed in the classroom that when a lecturer asks questions or gives both supervised and unsupervised assessment of any form, students are seen getting answers from the internet. However, in most cases the answers provided to questions are not correct. They do not go to the university online library to research. They rather copy and paste any related information on the Internet. After class hours, students are seen accessing different social media websites on campuses as well as at their places of habitation. The usage of social media has become everyday activity among the youth, including tertiary students. Based on these observations, it is expected that usage of the Internet would change the lifestyle of a significant number of tertiary students, irrespective of purposes for which they use it. Furthermore, social media usage was expected to be inversely proportional to the usage for academic purposes. The following research questions were used to achieve the reasons for this study:

1. On daily basis, how many hours do tertiary students spend on the Internet?
2. Is tertiary students' usage of the Internet basically for academic purposes?
3. Is the usage of the internet affected by the amount spent in accessing the Internet?
4. What relationships exist between the usage and the lifestyle exhibited by students?

Jones conducted research in 2002 and proposed three categories of Internet usage by university students, namely:

a) adoption and heavy usage behaviour,
b) enhancement of educational outcome, and
c) changes in social life, (Jones 2002)

Specifically, Internet usage for academic and social activities is equally important for university and college students, (Jones 2002). Accordingly, student's use of Internet for academic purposes, such as, online searching, accessing academic resources and services from libraries, participating in virtual classroom activities, communicating with instructors, colleagues, and friends, and for researching on academic topics, have shown that there is enhancement of educational outcomes (Jones 2002). However, Internet usage for entertainment; playing online games, watching movies, etc. can take up a considerable amount of time of university students, thus having negative effect on their academic lifestyles. For that matter, the unevenness of Internet usage, where entertainment activities supplant that of the academic activities, would lead to unfavourable effect on the learning behaviour for academic purposes.

Among the social media, Facebook is one of the most commonly used among people both old and young. Students from universities and colleges are not excluded from the use of Facebook. They make friends and discuss issues with people from different countries on Facebook. In the past decades, over two (2) billion people all over the world used the Facebook application for various purposes (Statista, 2018). University and college students or college-age adults account for seventy to ninety percent of Facebook users worldwide (Dahlstrom, de Boor, Grunwald and Vockley, 2011; Lenhart, Purcell, Smith and Zickuhr, 2010). According to Ryans and Xenos (2011), Facebook provides a wide range of features for users, like updating status, updating wall, giving comments, reading news feed, giving likes, messaging, posting photos, forming groups, playing games, managing fan pages, creating events, taking notes and chatting in groups, advertising, etc.

Deniz and Geyik (2015) conducted research on general Internet usage by undergraduate students at Istanbul University. The variables measured by them included frequency of internet usage, purpose, way of usage, social media used, addiction to the Internet, Blog makers, and satisfaction of usage. The conclusion drawn by them was that, Information Technology and Internet played vital key role in daily lives of university students, but most of the students do not use internet for course related issues and research activities. It was also found that the younger generation found internet as an easy way for accessing the relevant information and also the means for entertainment, (Deniz and Geyik 2015). This study considered the change in the lifestyle of students who use the Internet in tertiary educational institutions (universities and colleges) in Ghana.
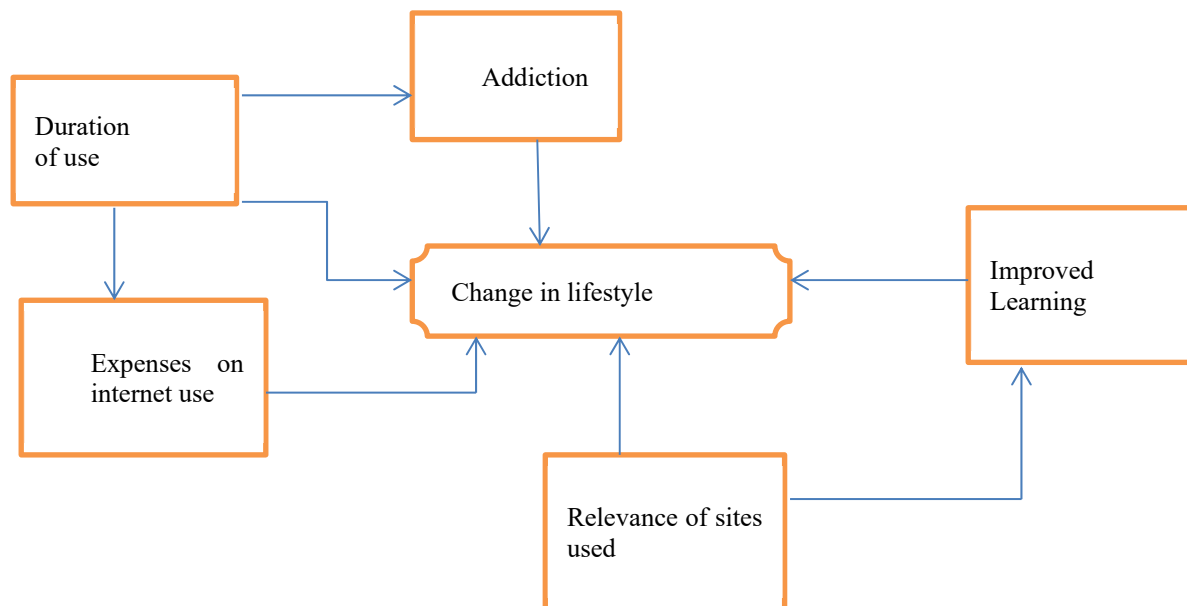
Figure 1: Internet Usage Relationship (researchers' own conceptual framework)

1.3 Related literature

The Internet, mostly referred to as the mother of all networks due to how it was developed, is basically communication networks by which people can interact, influence many others and create new trends. It can again enable people to share news and information easily across the world. Internet is one of the largest and commonest technologies that has spread to all countries and it is liked by many people and therefore being used across the world. The number of Internet users in the world is on the increase and usage is for diverse purposes. Mashhadia and Kargozari (2011) conducted research and found that digital classrooms are considered to be a vital element in promoting and improving the traditional methods of teaching and learning. Interaction among students from different parts of the world would enable students learn more and easily understand what they learn. Internet usage makes students communicate with other students irrespective of wherever they are and they share information, knowledge, experiences, etc. about their programmes and researches. According to Berson (2000), it is a universal fact that the use of internet has a great impact on students' academic carrier. Internet access in schools, colleges, and universities has increased greatly over the last twenty (20) years (Berson, 2000). Friendship can be developed among students from different universities that can bring about effective discussion and collaboration among them. According to Kirschner and Weperies (2003), ICT can make higher education more efficient and productive because the technology has provided the best tools that can enhance and facilitate users' professional activities. These tools have also made academic libraries present at every place and at all time of the day for easy and fast access to and retrieval of information by students, lecturers, as well as researchers.

Internet mobile learning among college and university students has brought about a profound and various hub of knowledge. According to Ahmed and Bukar (2016) the majority of Aadamawa State University students in Nigeria who use the Internet for educational and entertainment purposes depended on their mobile devices for internet access. Fasae and Adegbilero-Iwari (2015) discovered that science students in Nigerian private universities who regularly access Internet facilities on their smart phones, using the emails, social media, and search engines, use it for educational and communication purposes. The main drawback for inadequate use of internet facilities in developing world like Ghana and other African countries could be due to the lack of effective internet connectivity and power cuts. According to Agboola (2010), there is a high level of mobile devise dependency for internet access among agricultural science students in Nigeria and they use the internet for educational and entertainment purposes. Otunla (2013) asserted that a large number of undergraduate students in Nigeria access and use the internet through their mobile phones and laptops with the assistance of modem as routers, whereas a few access internet through the University digital centre and none access it through the University Library. Data retrieval was easier for them resulting in having positive impact on students' educational achievements.

Elkind's, (1967), theory on adolescent egocentrism pointed out the heightened self-consciousness during adolescence age of human being. The theory of adolescent egocentrism stated that it is a stage of self-absorption where the world is seen only from one's own perspective so they feel like being like adults. Thus adolescents are highly critical of authority figures, unwilling to accept criticism, and quick to find fault with others so they turn to use the internet hours upon hours. Adolescent egocentrism helps explain why teens often think they are the focus of everyone's attention. Also, adolescence period is a time of considerable physical and psychological growth and

change, which falls in line with the study of university students, on the Internet usage because most of them are within that age bracket and few of them have just passed that critical age.

Most students like to keep track ahead of their peers or to have a good balance with their peer groups in which they find themselves. At the expense of their notions, they try to live the life which is expected of them in the social settings in which they find themselves instead of the ideal life. That is the reason for most of them being seen in the various social media; thereby pushing them to the limit. Some of them could even go as far as upgrading their phone, by buying the current ones and selling the old ones, at a giveaway price, just to be abreast with the current trend.

1.4 Material and Methods

The principal aim of this research was to identify the internet usage by university students and the effects on their lifestyle in different universities in Ghana. This study employed a cross-sectional, quantitative research design. Self-designed questionnaire was the primary data collection instrument used that contained questions concerning demographic data, duration of stay on the internet, mode of accessing the internet, effect of usage on lifestyle, sites frequently used and the others. Respondents were encouraged to express the effects the use of the internet has on their lifestyle in relation to academic activities. The questions were set in simple English language so that the respondents would not find any difficulty in answering them. The questionnaire was pre-tested on ten (10) students from E.P. University College for their comment and suggestions; and the necessary corrections were effected. This contributed immensely to its validity and reliability.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was used for the analysis of data solicited from the participants. Frequency distribution and percentages were used, as well as means and standard deviations to analyse the demographic and other data. The analysis of the primary data was tailored to the objectives that the research tried to achieve.

1.5 Results and Discussions

Table 1: Demographic Data

Items	Responses	ency	itage
Sex	Male	91	59.1
	Female	63	40.9
Age	16-18	8	5.2
	19-21	44	28.6
	22-24	46	29.9
	25-27	21	13.6
	above 27	35	22.7
How long have you been a student in this University	One year	5	3.2
	Two years	12	7.8
	Three years	28	18.2
	Four years	109	70.8
What level were you admitted into the University	Level 100	94	61.1
	Level 200	35	22.7
	Level 300	8	5.2
	Level 500	17	11.0
At what age were you admitted into the University	15-20	67	43.5
	21-25	58	37.7
	26-30	14	9.1
	above 30	15	9.7
Have you received lesson on how to use the internet for academic purpose	Yes	107	69.5
	No	47	30.5

Source: Field Study (2020)

The total number of respondents was one hundred and fifty-four (154) students from selected universities (University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho Technical University, Evangelical Presbyterian University College) in Ghana; out of this number, the majority 91 (59.1%) were male and 63(40.9%) female students. Their ages ranged from 16 up to over 27 years; majority of 98 representing 63.6% were between ages of 16 and 24 years, 21(13,6%) had ages between 25 and 27 and 35 representing 22.7% were above 27 years. This showed that the participants were not very old and they would be always on the Internet as captured in the adolescent theory. For the number of years the students had been in the universities, 5 (18.2%) had been studying for one year, 12 representing 7.8% were in the universities for two years; these two groups could be graduate students who were involved in the study. In addition, 28 (18.2%) of the respondents were third year students and the majority 109 (70.8%) were in the universities for four years. These last two groups were the undergraduate students involved in the study. Majority

of the respondents were in the universities for four years, these people would be accessing the Internet for few years in the universities. With regard to the level at which respondents were admitted into in the various universities, 94 (61.1%) were admitted into level 100, 35 (22.7%) entered the universities at level 200, 8 (5.2%) were admitted into level 300 in the universities, and the remaining 17 representing 11.0% of the participants were admitted into level 500 and these were the graduate students. Majority of the participants in the study were not old since the results showed that, 67 (43.5%) of the respondents were admitted into the University between the ages of 15-20 years, 58 (37.7%) between 21-25 years, 14 (9.1%) between 26-30 years and 15 (9.7%) above 30 years. Concerning whether the respondents had received any lesson on how to use the internet for academic purposes, 107 (60.5%) agreed and 47 (30.5%) disagreed. Hence, majority of the respondents had a fair idea of internet usage. This showed that they were fully prepared for the use of the Internet in the Universities.

Table 2: Extent of Internet usage

Questions	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Have you been using the internet?	Yes	125	81.2
	No	29	18.8
Where do you access the internet?	Campus	30	24.0
	House	70	56.0
	Internet café	25	20.0
What medium (media) do you use to access the internet?	Individual laptop	8	6.4
	University computers	15	12.0
	Cell phones	100	80.0
	Others	2	1.6
On average, how many hours do you spend on the internet per day?	1-3 hours	30	24.0
	4-7 hours	55	44.0
	8-10 hours	20	16.0
	11-15 hours	15	12.0
	above 15 hours	5	4.0
How many days do you access the internet in a week?	Everyday	50	40.0
	Six days	25	20.0
	Five days	30	24.0
	Four days and below	20	16.0
Have you ever experienced any problem in accessing the internet?	Yes	90	72.0
	No	35	28.0
State the problems encountered when accessing the Internet	Problems experienced by respondents were power outages, network issues, unstable connectivity, high cost of internet bundles, in ability to purchase adequate internet bundle for browsing		

Source: Field Study

Referring to the analysis as shown in the table above, 125 (81.2%) used Internet but 29 (18.8%) did not use the Internet. This implies that majority of the respondents used the internet and it was in line with the findings of Berson, (2000) as captured in the literature. Again, 30 (24.0%) said they accessed the Internet on campus, 70 (56.0%) accessed it in their various houses, and 25 (20.0%) used the internet cafés. The internet, according to 8 respondents, representing 6.5% was accessed using their individual laptops, 15 (12.0%) accessed the intern using university computers, 100 (80.0%) used cell and or smart phones to access it, and very insignificant number of the participants 2 (1.6%) said they used other media. This implies that cell and smart phones were the popular media used by students to access internet services. This may be due to its portability thus making it possible for them to access the Internet anywhere and at any time. This finding was in line with the findings of Agboola (2010) and Otunla (2013) that most undergraduate students access the internet using mobile devices. It is noted also that in a day, 15 (12.0%) of the respondents spent between 1-3 hours on the internet, 20 (16.0%) spent 4-7 hours, 30 (24.0%) spent between 8-10 hours, 55 (44.0%) spent 11-15 hours on the internet, and 5 (4.0%), accessed the internet for more than 15 hours a day. Spending so many hours browsing the internet on daily basis as stated by the respondents may have its positive and negative sides. They may learn from different sources on the net or may perform poorly if on other hand the hours spent were not geared towards academic purposes.

On weekly basis, 50 (40.0%) used the internet every day of the week, 25 (20.0%) six days a week, and 30 (24.0%) accessed the internet five days a week and only 20 (16.0%) used the internet for four days or less in a week. This is an indication that students used the internet very much in the universities. This is in line with the findings of Jones (2002); on internet adoption and heavy usage behaviour among students. Majority did not, however, experience any problem in using the internet as indicated by 90 (72.0%) but only 35 (28.0%) stated that they had problems accessing the internet; these people may be some of those who had no lessons in accessing the Internet. The few who had problems accessing the Internet stated the problems faced to include, unexpected power

outage, lack of network in the area they stayed, unstable connectivity, high cost of internet bundles, and inability to purchase enough bundle for browsing.

Table 3 Results on Usage According to income, gender, and level of academic pursuit

Questions	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Do you pay for accessing the internet?	Yes	121	78.6
	No	33	21.4
If yes to above question: a. How much do you pay on average per month for internet use?	50-100 Ghana Cedis	97	80.2
	101-150 Ghana Cedis	13	10.7
	151-200 Ghana Cedis	7	5.8
	above 200 Ghana Cedis	4	3.3
b. How do you get money to pay for accessing the internet?	From my income	26	21.5
	From my friends	8	6.6
	From my parents	28	23.1
	From my feeding allowance	52	43.0
	From my salary	7	5.8
c. Does the payment for accessing internet affect the usage?	Yes	84	69.4
	No	37	30.6
If yes to this question how does it affect your usage of the internet?	This makes me access the internet only:		
	Once a day	47	56.0
	Once in week	30	35.7
	Once in a month	7	8.3

Source: Field Study

According to 121 representing 78.6% of the respondents, they paid for accessing internet and 33 representing 21.4% did not pay for accessing internet services. Among those who paid for accessing internet, 97 (80.2%) spent between 50 and 100 GHC per month on internet usage, 13 representing 10.7% spent between 101 and 150 GHC, 7 (5.8%) spent between 151-200 GHC, and only 4 (3.3%) spent above GHC 200. Finding out how they got money to pay for the internet usage, 26 (21.5%) of those who paid to access the internet said that they paid from their personal income, 8 (6.6%) got money from friends, 28 (23.1%) got money from their parents, 52 (43.0%) spent money from feeding allowance given to them by their sentinels, and 7 (5.8%) spent money on the internet usage from their salaries. This meant that some of the students were workers and some engaged themselves in other forms of employment from which they derived some income. However, a large number of the students relied on others including parents, friends, and colleagues to pay for the usage of internet services. Finding out if the payment affected their usage of the Internet, 84 representing 69.4% of those who paid to use the Internet gave a positive response and 37 (30.6) gave a negative response. The data analysis showed further that 47, representing those who said that payment for the usage of the internet affected their usage, browsed the net only once a day, 30 representing 35.7% browsed the internet once a week and only 7 (8.3%) browsed the internet once a month.

Table 4 Results on Internet Usage and Lifestyle exhibit

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Internet is good; every student in tertiary educational institution must use it for academic purposes	132 (85.7%)	15 (9.7%)	4 (2.6%)	2 (1.3%)	1 (0.6%)	1.318	1.68307
Internet is good; every student in tertiary educational institution must use it to establish social relationship	53 (34.4%)	61 (39.6%)	21 (13.6%)	10 (6.5%)	9 (5.8%)	2.097	1.12470
I am very happy whenever I am on the internet	58 (37.7%)	65 (42.2%)	24 (15.6%)	5 (3.2%)	2 (1.3%)	2.260	1.99281
I always access the internet for all my academic activities	57 (37.0%)	49 (31.8%)	29 (18.8%)	6 (3.9%)	13 (8.4%)	2.247	1.04982

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
I always access electronic libraries on the internet	36 (23.4%)	69 (44.8%)	33 (21.4%)	7 (4.5%)	9 (5.8%)	2.188	1.11302
I always read electronic books and journals on the internet	46 (29.9%)	60 (39.0%)	31 (20.1%)	7 (4.5%)	10 (6.5%)	2.643	1.28174
I make friends on social media	32 (20.8%)	44 (28.6%)	48 (31.2%)	7 (4.5%)	23 (14.9%)	2.792	1.51522
I often spent money meant for food in accessing the internet	31 (20.1%)	45 (29.2%)	23 (14.9%)	25 (16.2%)	30 (19.5%)	2.481	1.42058
I am highly addicted to the internet use	30 (19.5%)	49 (31.8%)	42 (27.3%)	17 (11.0%)	16 (10.4%)	2.688	1.24838
I am addicted to using social media on the internet	35 (22.7%)	58 (37.7%)	30 (19.5%)	14 (9.1%)	17 (11.0%)	2.792	1.46649
Many hours spent on social media really affected my academic activities negatively: I do not make time for learning	34 (22.1%)	46 (29.9%)	35 (22.7%)	18 (11.7%)	21 (13.6%)	2.195	1.38939

Source: Field Study

The last part of the questionnaire concerned the effects of internet usage on the lifestyle of the respondents; 132 (85.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed, and 15 (9.7) also agreed to the statement that, Internet is good and every student in tertiary educational institution must use it for academic purposes, 4 (2.6%) remained neutral but 2 (1.3%) and 1 (0.6%) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively to the statement. The statement was significant with a mean value of 1.3182 and standard deviation of 1.68307 which implied that, almost all respondents saw the need of the internet and could be used for various purposes in their academic activities.

With regard to the statement that Internet is good; every student in tertiary educational institutions must use it to establish social relationship, 53 of the respondents representing 34.4% strongly agreed, 61 (39.6%) agreed but 21 (13.6) were neutral and 10 representing 6.5% strongly disagreed and also 9 (5.8%) disagreed with the statement. Majority of the students sampled for this research were of the view that Internet should be used by students to make friends with those who are in other countries. This result showed its significance with a mean value of 2.0974 and standard deviation of 1.12470 meaning that, internet was not used for academic purposes only by students but also enabled them establish and build social relationship on the social media. In addition, 58 (37.7%) strongly agreed to the statement that they were very happy whenever on the internet and 65 (42.2%) agreed with the statement while 24 representing 15.6% remained neutral but 5 (3.2%) strongly disagreed and 2 representing 1.3% disagreed. The significance of this was shown with the calculated mean value of 2.260 and standard deviation of 1.99281

Further analysis showed 57 (37%) and 49 (31.8%) strongly agreeing and agreeing respectively that they accessed internet for all their academic activities, however 29 representing 18.8% remaining neutral to the statement but 6 (3.9%) and 13 representing 8.4% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively to the statement. The statement was significant with a mean value of 2.2597 and standard deviation of 1.99281 which implied that, almost all respondents agree they do need internet in various aspects of their academic activities. Again, 36 representing 23.4% of the respondents and 69 representing 44.8% agreed with the statement that they accessed electronic (digital) libraries on the internet for study, 33 (21.4%) however remained neutral but 7 (4.5% and 9 (5.8%) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that they accessed electronic (digital) libraries for study showing mean= 2.247, standard deviation 1.04982) which meant that internet in real sense, was used for carrying out major academic activities by students in every tertiary institution in Ghana.

Concerning reading electronic books and journals always on the internet, majority of the respondents 46 (29.9%) and 60 (39.0%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively, but 31 representing 20.1% of the respondents remained neutral to the statement while 7 (4.5%) and 10 (6.5%) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively to the statement. With the mean value of 2.643 and standard deviation value of 1.28174, the responses given by the participants were very significant.

With regard to the statement of making friends on the social media, majority of the respondents, 32 (20.8%) and 44 (28.6%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively to the statement, however, 48 representing 31.2% were

neutral to the statement but 7 (4.5%) and 23 (14.9%) strongly disagreed and agreed respectively to the statement that they make friends on social media. This finding was in support of Berson (2000) as captured in the literature. This was significant with the mean and standard deviation values of 2.792 and 1.51522 respectively as shown in the table above.

On the other hand, 31 (20.1%) and 45 (29.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they spent money meant for food for accessing the internet, however, 23 representing 14.3% of the respondents were neutral to the statement but 25 (16.2%) and 30 (19.5%) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively to the statement. This was significant since the calculated mean value was 2.481 and the standard deviation was 1.42058. This implied that majority of the students sampled for the study sacrificed their meals for accessing the internet. This was an indication that they saw the internet as being very important to them.

Concerning addiction to the use of internet 30 participants representing 19.5% strongly agreed and 49 representing 31.8% agreed to the statement that they were highly addicted to the use of the internet, 42 (27.3%) did not know if they were addicted to the internet or not, but 17 (11.0%) strongly disagreed and 16 (10.4%) said that they were not addicted to the internet. This was significant with mean value of 2.688 and standard deviation of 1.24838. Furthermore, 35 respondents representing 22.7% strongly agreed and 58 representing 37.7% agreed to the statement that they were addicted to the use of social media, 30 (19.5%) of the respondents did not know whether they were addicted to the use of the social media or not, however 14 (9.0%) were neutral but 17 (11.1%) and 17 (11%) strongly disagree and disagreed respectively that they were addicted to the use of the social media.

This was significant with calculated mean of 2.792 and standard deviation of 1.46649. As captured in the literature, Jones (2002) said that addiction can take up a considerable amount of time of university students thus having effect on their academic lifestyles.

Concerning real effect on students' academic activities, majority of the participants 34 (22.1%) and 46 (29.9%) strongly agreed and agreed that spending many hours on the social media had negative effect on performing their academic activities correctly, but a good number of respondents, 35 (22.7%) were neutral to the statement, however, 18 (11.7) strongly disagreed to the statement while 21 (13.6%) disagreed. This was affirmed by Deniz & Geyik (2015) that Internet played vital role in daily lives of university students, but most of the students do not use internet for courses related issues and research activities. This finding was significant due to the calculated mean value of 2.195 and standard deviation of 1.38939.

1.6 Conclusion

Male students were more than the female students and this informed the researchers that male students showed much interest than the female students in the study. It was not however clear if the male students access the internet more than their female counterparts. Most of the respondents were young for their ages ranged from 16 to 27 years. This implied that more young people go to the universities than the old people for it was only 35 respondents whose ages were more than twenty-seven years and most of them were admitted into the universities at level 100. Most of the respondents were in the universities for approximately four years, this means that majority of the respondents were undergraduates and having stayed in the universities for more than three year they would be accessing the internet for longer period of time and they could easily and happily provide the accurate data for the study. Most of the respondents received lesson on how to use the internet for academic purposes. This showed that they were fully prepared for the use of the Internet in the Universities

Majority of the participants used the Internet in the universities. This meant that students knew the importance of the internet and the various benefits they would derive from its use. They accessed the internet at various places like houses, university campuses and internet cafes. Different media were used to access the internet; some of them used their own laptop computers, a few also used the computers in their universities but majority of them used cell phones to access the internet. This made it possible for them to access the internet at any place and at any time of the day. This compelled them to buy android powered phones or phones that can be used in accessing the internet. The results again showed that students spent different duration using the internet. Some spent between 1 and 3 hours, between 4 and 7 hours, between 8-10 hours, between 11-15 hours, and very few of them spent more than 15 hours on the internet in one day. Spending so many hours browsing the internet on daily basis as stated by the respondents may have its positive and negative sides on their lifestyle as well as their academic activities. They could learn from different sources on the net or can also perform poorly if on other hand the hours spent are not geared towards academic purposes.

On weekly basis, some used the internet every day of the week, some also used it six days a week, five days a week and also a few of the respondents used the internet for four days in a week. This was an indication that students used the internet very much in the universities. Majority did not however experience problems using the internet as indicated but however, very few of them had various problems in the course of using the internet; these people may be some of those who had no lessons in accessing the net.

When the researchers wanted to know if the students paid to use the internet, overwhelming majority paid to use the internet. They spent varying amounts ranging from 50 Ghana Cedis to 200 Ghana Cedis and only very few

people spent over 200 Ghana Cedis to access the internet. This seemed to be somehow expensive to the students but they have to do that simply because all of them could not stay on campus for longer hours to access the Internet using the WIFI connectivity on campus. Few of them paid this amount from their personal income implying that they were engaged in some extra income generating activities. Some of them got the money from friends, parents, and colleagues to pay for using the internet. Some even use part of their feeding money given to them by their guardians. The payment for the use of the internet was basically buying bundles from the telecommunication companies to enable they connect to the internet through their networks. The payment for the use of the internet is so enormous that it had effect on their usage of the Internet. The effect was that some of them browse only once a day, some browse it once a week and a few of them browse the internet once a month. With this, they spent many hours on the internet.

With regard to the last objective of this study, the use of the internet had varying effect on their lifestyle; they first of all agreed that the internet was good to be used by university students. This implied that they derived a lot of benefits from the use of the internet and even during the locked down period of the Covid-19, they had lessons on the Internet and accessed the electronic library. They however expressed mixed feeling that it was good to be used by tertiary students for academic activities as well as for establishing friendship with people in other countries. The students felt very happy whenever they were on the internet and that was the reason why some of them access the Internet many hours in a day and also every day of the week. They accessed the internet for all their academic related activities. The various documents accessed by the students for their academic activities include online classes, conferences, electronic libraries, electronic journals, as well as electronic books for their academic work. It was not only for academic activities but they also made friends on the Internet. This implied that apart from accessing the sites for academic activities, they accessed the social media as well. That was the reason for their establishment of friendships on the internet. The participants confirmed that they spent their monies meant for food on buying bundles for accessing the internet. This showed how daring they were to access the internet. It could be said that majority of the students who participated in the research sacrificed their meals for accessing the internet. This was an indication that they saw the internet to be very important to them. The way they accessed the internet continuously, made most of them to be addicted to the usage of the internet. That was very necessary for some of them to sacrifice even their meals for browsing the internet. Their addiction to internet usage made them spent more hours on the internet every day. For the addiction to the use of the internet, majority of them were addicted to accessing the social media and not academic libraries, books, journals, or any other academic site. This implied that they spent more hours on the social media and this had some adverse effect on their academic work. Jones (2002) also found this in his research; enhancement of educational outcome, and changes in social life. Jones concluded that Internet usage for academic and social activities is of equal importance to university and college students.

With this result ascertained from this research, students were willing to access the internet and for that reason management of the universities must do everything possible to limit students' access to the social media. Lecturers and Academic Librarians must give them some tutorial as to how to access the internet and the sites they must access for academic purposes. Lecturers can give assignments and refer them to the libraries or academic sites from which they can get materials for their assignments. This research concentrated on the usage of the internet by students, the sites mostly accessed and the effects on their lifestyle. Another research could be conducted to ascertain the effects the usage of internet have on their academic performance.

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