

The Impact of Internet on Students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This research work was carried out to determine The Impact of Internet on Students of National Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria. The population of the study was the students of National Teachers' Institute, Zaria Centre, Nigeria. Survey method of the research and stratified random sampling was used for the study to select 120 postgraduate students for the study. However, 100 respondents responded to the questionnaires distributed. The data was presented and analyzed in tables and percentages. The research discovered that majority of the students spend about 2 hours on daily basis to browse on internet. The research reveals that majority of the students are computer and internet literate. The research further reveals that most of students joy using e-mail and Web browsing as their favourite internet services. It also reveals that online activities has positive impact on the students and also has influenced the accessibility of online information usage of students in National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria. This implies that most of the students are internet users.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, the personal computer has played a significant role in our everyday lives. With the growth in popularity and networking of computers, intercommunication between different computers became easier, which led to the phenomenon called Internet. It is the most talked about computer technology. The Internet has irrevocably invaded many aspects of daily life. What was once an obscure scientific research tool has blossomed into a communication plat form used by hundreds of millions of people, Telecom providers use the internet to carry critical voice communications. Banking institutions use it to provide access to account services and market trading. Airline tickets, hotel reservations and car rentals can all be booked with a click of the mouse. More users than ever depend on the internet to connect with family and colleagues using email, instant messaging, voice over IP, photo and video sharing services and online journals. The new technology and communication tools that are available today are much more powerful than those available even a few years ago. According to Abbottabad (2008) the channel for access and distribution of information and knowledge are much more diverse, they collapse the waiting time and provide more tools directly to the users. However, the internet as the world's largest network on information communication and services has changed the way we live and work. The advent if this technology has fundamentally transformed our lives the way the invention of automobile changed how our lives and cities looked and worked before. The maxim that "half the world does not know how the other lives" longer true.

As a result the internet is in transition, perhaps the greatest in its history. Originally the internet was concerned with text-based interfaces and keyboard control of remote computers, because of the limited informational capability of the network. It has evolved into a robust and sophisticated system with an informational capacity and computational power that its originator could have scarcely dreamed of. As a result, the internet components are increasingly becoming graphical in nature. High resolution graphics, formatted text, hyper-links, and mouse-driven interfaces are rapidly becoming the standard in much of the community. One interesting medium of today's communication in the world today is the invention of the internet. The internet is also an ideal environment that permits the effective integration of distributed and heterogeneous components, ensuring overall integrity in terms of functional and information inter-working. The popularization and accessibility of internet is changing the way students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria search for information. The impact of internet on the students varied from institute to institute, but it is in constant evolution from a tool to connect people to information, to a social networking vehicle that is changing the way people in all countries communicate with each other.

The internet is a term applied to an electric network that permits access to thousands of computer network globally this is because it allows communication with millions of computer used for connection to the internet, a virtually limitless wealth of resources is available for everyday gender, education, occupation, income and even geographical region, with some of the generals conclusions being that males students are more likely

to use the net than their female counter part, people higher socio-economic status are more likely to use the last few years and is available in over one hundred countries(World Almanac 1997). It also provides opportunities for inquiry (lectures) can network, study and collaborate with others around the world. There were approximately 64 million users in 1998(Mediamark, 1999) According to data reported from the emerging Technologies Research Group nearly three quarters of internet users consider the internet indispensable and 60 percent of those who use the internet for business purpose daily(Emerging Technologies Research Group 1997) there is an additional 55 million adults who indicates either that they intend to begin using the internet in the next year or that they would like to learn more about it. This suggest the number of users likely to grow substantially in the future(Emerging Technology Research Group 1997) The real importance of the internet is also available I languages apart from English and many list news group cater to non- English speakers

1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NATIONAL TEACHERS' INSTITUTE NIGERIA

The National Teachers' Institute was mandated by the Act of 1978 (then Decree 7 of 1978) to organize programmes for training, development, upgrading and certification of teachers at all levels, a task which it has been engaged in for the past twenty-six years.

In its avowed desire to fulfill its mandate, the Institute decided to put in place programmes that aim at upgrading the quality of teachers especially at the basic education level. My Ministry is specially appreciative of the institute's grassroots approach to teachers education through its widely acknowledge and commendable Distance Learning system. The turnover of over a million TC II certificated teachers who were hitherto unqualified through its TC II DLS, another batch of 28,542 on PTTP and yet another set of 64,367 through its NCE(DLS) is a testimony to its capacity to satisfy the nation's yearnings for the production of qualified and competent for our school system.

In its characteristic nature as a reputable Institute with the singular goal of promoting teacher education nation-wide, the NTI has now introduced Advance and Postgraduate Diploma programmes specially designed to further equip the trained, serving teachers and offer pedagogical training to the army of untrained graduate teachers that abound in our school system today. This onerous task would not have come at a better time than now when governments and teachers alike are agitating for the professionalization of teaching. The students of NTI's Diploma programmes have the rare chance to benefit from its rich course modules that are written by seasoned educationists and education administrators that are drawn from our Universities and Colleges of Education nation-wide. I will, at this juncture, urge all teachers throughout the federation to avail themselves of the opportunity offered by the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) to receive In-Service training for enhancing their knowledge and upgrading their professional status as practicing teachers.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Internet has grown very high for a new lease of live for our students and educational system courtesy of internet. Internet is specifically valuable to students, lecturers and those who are interested in using it. Internet allow greater flexibility while communicating because they do not need to remain at a fixed location, such as home, classroom or office, the internet is also useful in communication in remote locations, students can benefit from using the internet on research findings in any field of human endeavors.

However, the internet can serve people in educational sector in many ways but presented. The vast educational materials on the internet in terms of research and project finding can be easily tapped and students can use the devices to improve the quality of information that is used in research work. If students have access to the communication media particularly the internet component like e-mail and World Wide Web, they can use it to educate themselves and be current in there are of specialization.

But contrary to the aforementioned advantages that can be tapped from the internet by National Teacher' Institute students, it is important that most of the students do not know how to use the internet.

The research intends to investigate the level at which N.T.I students use the internet for the purpose of learning and communication.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is aimed at unveiling the variables that are most inherent at achieving the following.

- To find out the time used when communication on internet by students of National Teachers' Institute.
- To determine the computer and internet literacy of students of National teacher' Institute.
- To identify the favourite internet services used by Students of National Teachers' Institute in their academic programme.
- To examine the online activities desired by Students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria.
- To identify the problems encountered by students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria when using the internet.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the five research questions and they are as follows:

- What is the time used by students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre when communicating on the internet?
- What is the literacy level of the students on computer and internet?
- How favourable is the internet services to their academic programmes?
- How frequent do these students usually accomplish their desire while online activities?
- What are the problems encountered in the process of using the internet?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Internet is very useful in obtaining information for research. Adegboji and Toyo (2006) in their study on the impact of the Internet on research reported that the Internet contributed significantly to the ease of research through downloading materials. It is commonly believed that researchers and students in Nigerian higher education institutions are battling the problem of inadequate and out-of-date materials. The only way to pursue knowledge is through research and the Internet is having a profound impact on the research process and dissemination of information (Kamba, 2008)

Tiamiyu (2000:126) indicate that the internet is a computer networks interconnected by the various telecommunication systems of various countries globally that store, transfer, or deliver messages and computer files inform of electronic signals twenty four hours daily. Gould(2004:par 13-14), regards the internet as the convergence of all channels which due to its "packet nature" does not differentiate between any channels in transferring data.

Brown (2000) sees Internet as the two edge sword of that leading the process of globalization having the potentials of wounding those who don't quickly enough grasp how to use it by leaving them ever further behind, but providing unprecedented benefits for those, with the courage and willingness to grasp its potentials to drive change.

Payne further expands on the influence of internet and technologies on our age and world when he opines that:

"New communication technologies such as the internet, voicemail

Cellular telephones, pagers faxes and two-way video have changed

the way we live, learn and work. Each of the new technologies permit

us to communicate with more people regardless of where we are.

While technology has made the word smaller, communication more

rapid access easier. It has also created a new set of problems and

New issues concerning the use of the gadgets available to us'

Payne (2001:181)."

Audu (2006) quoting Ojedekun (2001) reveal that the Internet has many benefits in the academic cycle as it provides a round the clock access to global sources of information. It also gives researchers the ability to discuss and share experience with colleagues. Oketunji (2001) identified areas in which Internet could be used to include education, agriculture, office automation, security, entertainment, politics, construction, banking, commerce, health, etc.

Numerous scholars have attested to the seemingly limitless powers and influence of the internet. According to Roberts, Wanta, and Tzong (2002:452), "the Internet has drastically changed the ways in which some individuals receive news and information." And according to Baran (2002:163,) "the Internet and the World Wide Web provide readers with more information and more depth and with greater speed, than the traditional newspapers".

Baran (2002:68) further sees internet as a global network of inter-connected computers that communicate freely and share and exchange information.

According to Irvine of Georgetown University cited in Fleur and/Denin (2002:219) argued that the Internet is more than a network of computers. He further extended the meaning of Internet earlier given that: the internet has three components:

a. worldwide computer system using a common means of linking hardware and transmitting digital information.

b. a community of people using a common communication technology, a globally distributed system system of information.

Morris and Ogan (1996) both researchers from Indiana University argued that "Internet as a whole should be considered as a mass medium." They maintained that the communication theorist must disregard the researchers' potential of the internet, as this could render their communication theories less useful. It is quite evident that communication has changed television, newspapers and radio. It is therefore expected that the new technology of internet would also pose the same change and problems.

However, he Internet, an international network of computers has introduced new dimension into

communication. As a means of communicating through the atmosphere, the Internet has succeeded in actualizing Marshall McLuhan's ideas of a global village has turned the world into a sitting room. The Internet is comprised of a bunch of interconnected networks that allow communication with Millions of Library users and access to resources from around the world. Internet is increasingly dominating the world and many activities have benefitted education and broaden range of other human activities. The Internet is also called or referred to as virtual library. It does not only offer access to many libraries but it gives access topics of special internet using website.

Over the years, the use of the Internet has become widespread. **Internet component** are:

- **Electronic mail:** Electronic mail, or e-mail, is used to communicate with other Internet users, regardless of where they are on the Internet. E-mail is fast and has amazing flexibility. With e-mail, it is possible not only to send messages, but also to execute programs and analyses on remote computers, retrieve data and files, and subscribe to news and informational services.
- **World Wide Web:** The Web is the newest of the internet components and is rapidly becoming the most popular. Resources and Information displayed on graphical-based Web browsers appear much like a newspaper or magazine page. Text, images, video, and sound can be presented. Information is linked together, much like a web (hence the name). This web-like linkage of information makes it possible to browse through vast amounts of information without specifying a starting point or a destination.
- **Telnet:** Telnet is based on UNIX, a multi-user/multitasking operating system often used on computer workstations. Through Telnet, a remote computer can be used to operate a distant computer almost transparent, as if the distant computer and the remote computer were one and one and the same. This allows the user of the remote computer to interactively control the distant computer to perform analyses data or images or to execute programs.
- **Internet Relay Chat:** Internet Relay Chat or IRC is simply an interactive (and live), online discussion group. When using IRC, real-time conferencing is possible. IRC is broken down by channels that have specific topics for discussion. As IRC is a component of internet, it is possible to create specific topics channels flexible for focused discussions on a topic, or to create broader, more open channel.
- **File Transfer Protocol (FTP):** is used to download files from an Internet site to a user's computer. The FTP application is often automatically invoked when a user downloads an updated version of a piece of software. Applications such as FTP have been integrated with the World Wide Web, making them transparent so that they run automatically without requiring users to open them. When a Web browser encounters a URL that begins with ftp: // it automatically uses FTP to access the item.
- **Network News discussion groups (newsgroups):** originally part of the Usenet network, is another form of online discussion. Thousands of newsgroups exist, on an extremely wide range of subjects. Messages to a newsgroup are not sent directly to each user. Instead, an ordered list is disseminated to computers around the world that run news server software. Newsgroup application software allows a user to obtain a copy of selected articles from a local news server or to use e-mail to post a new message to the newsgroup. The system makes newsgroup discussions available worldwide.
- **Voice over IP (VoIP)** allows individuals and businesses to make phone calls over the Internet. Low-cost services (some of them free) often transfer calls via personal computers (PCs) equipped with microphones and speakers instead of the traditional telephone handset. But a growing number of services operate outside the PC, making calls via a special adapter that connects to a traditional telephone handset. The calls still travel over the Internet, but the person using the special adapter never has to turn on his or her computer. Thousands now use such VoIP services in lieu of traditional phone service. VoIP services are not subject to the same government regulation as traditional phone service. Thus, they are often less expensive.
- **Chat and Instant Messaging:** Chat program allow users on the internet to communicate with each other by typing in real time. They are sometimes included as features of a website where user can log into the chat room to exchange comments and information about the topics address on the site. Chat may take other more wide range for example the American online is well known for sponsoring a number of topics chat room. The internet can also perform the following functions such as:
 - **Research and Information:** This function of internet helps to provide information in any subjects, using browsers and search tools.
 - **News:** It also helps a researcher or individual to stay current on politics, weather, entertainment, sport and financial news.
 - **Download files:** The internet helps to get software, music and documents such as e-books
 - **E-shopping:** It enable individual to price anything from plane tickets to cars, order anything from books to sofas.
 - **Financial Investment:** It enables an individual to the following services such as investing, banking and bill paying online.

- *Auctions:* The internet can be used to sell old stuff, acquire more stuff with online auctions
- *Distance learning:* Attend online lectures, have discussions, write research papers and earn degree.
- *E-bank:* It helps to connect with coworkers, buy supplies, support customers, and conduct negotiations.
- *Carrier Advancement:* The internet helps to search for jobs listings, post discussions, write research papers and earn degree. Briank.K Williams and Stacey.C. Sawyer(2011)

3. METHODOLOGY

The design adopted for this study was survey research method. The data was collected from the N.T.I Zaria Centre, Nigeria. The researcher decided to use survey research because of the large population of research that is been studied and detailed collection of data on the Impact of Internet on students of National Institute Zaria, Nigeria. The instrument used for the data collection is questionnaire. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents by the researcher. A total of 120 copies of questionnaire was distributed by the researcher and 100 copies were completed and returned. The data generated for the study was analyzed using frequency tables and percentages.

3.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the study are presented under the following sub-sections in the same manner the researcher questions were phrased, namely: Time used communicating on the internet, Response to computer and internet literacy, Favourite internet services, Online activities, Problems encountered and Discussions on the way forward.

Table 1. Time used on the Internet

Time used on the Internet	No. of Respondent	Percentage
30 Minutes	24	20%
1 Hours	40	33.3%
2 Hours	44	36.7%
None of the above	12	10%
Total	120	100%

From the tabular representation in table 1, the above table shows that 24(20%) of the respondents spent just 30 minutes on internet. 44(36.7%) of the respondents spend 2 hours communicating on the internet, 40(33.3%) spend an hour on the internet. 12(10%) don't spend any time communicating on the internet. This implies that most student of National Teachers' Teachers Institute, Zaria Centre spent more of their time when using the internet.

Table 2. Response to Computer and Internet literacy

Computer and Internet literacy	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	116	96%
No	4	3.3%
Total	120	100%

From the researcher's investigation, table 2 shows the response of the respondents to computer and internet literacy. The results shows that 116 questionnaire representing 96.7% of the respondents are computer and internet literate, while 4(3.3%) of the respondents are not computer and internet literacy. This implies that majority of the students of National Teachers Institute Zaria Centre can operate a computer and effectively use the internet without any obstacle.

Table 3. Favourite Internet Services

Favourite Internet Services	No. of Respondents	Percentage
E-mail	68	56.7%
Telnet(Chat Services)	16	13.3%
Website Browsing	28	23.3%
File Transfer Protocol	8	6.7%
None of the above	0	0%
Total	120	100%

From our findings, the above table 3 shows that 68(56.7%) and 28(23.3%) indicated that E-mail and Website Browsing are their favorites internet services while 16(13.3%) and 8(6.7%) indicated that they prefer using Telnet and File Transfer Protocol. 0% indicated they do not use any at all. This therefore implies that, N.T.I students while on internet enjoy sending e-mails and browsing for materials for their academic programme despite the provision of manuals by the management

Table 4. Online Activities

Desired accomplished	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	76	63.3%
No	44	36.7%
Total	120	100%

Findings on the above table shows that table 4, representing 76(63.3%) of the respondents usually accomplish their desire while communicating on internet. 44(36.7 %) of the respondents shows that they do not accomplish their desire while using the internet. This implies that over half of the students do accomplish their desire while online.

Table 5. Problems encountered in the use of internet

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Slow response	84	70%
Inability to locate information	8	6.7%
Poor browsing time rate	4	3.3%
Inadequate power supply	24	20%
Total	120	100%

Table 5 reveals that the respondents accepted all the items as internet problems. The four most accepted problems are slow response rate 84(70%) and Poor browsing time rate 4(3.3%) and 24(20%) inadequate power supply which is a very great problem in Nigeria. Respondents also complained of the inability to locate or find what they want. While 8(6.7%) of the respondents indicated that they neither experience any of the problems. This implies that the majority of the students do encounter problems when using the internet.

3.2 DISCUSSIONS

The findings from this study are quite revealing. From the study, it was discovered that majority of the students represented by 44(36.7%) access the net everyday for a period of 2 hours. 33.3 %(40) access the net just for an hour daily and 30 minutes respectively.

It was discovered that majority of the N.T.I students represented by 96% (116) of the respondents are computer/internet literate. This implies majority of the students can make use of the internet effectively without any difficulty.

It was also discovered that majority of the students make use of the internet services particularly the E-mail and Website browsing more often than any other internet services for research purposes etc. The type of information resources mostly consulted online by the students are e-journals, e-books etc.

The study also shows that the students of National Teachers' Institute, Zaria Centre constituting 63.3%(76) accomplish their desire while communicating on the internet. Personal observations reveal that the internet has contributed to the internet explosion, where everyone with the required internet facility can create and upload any information or webpage on the internet. Therefore, information from the net should be evaluated and authenticated before use.

However, the study also reveals some of the problems encountered by the students of National teachers' Institute, Zaria Centre when using the internet as;

- a. Slow response
- b. Inability to locate information
- c. Poor browsing time rate
- d. Inadequate power supply

3.3 CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident from the study that the researcher was able to have an insight on The Impact of Internet on students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria centre, Nigeria. However, the study reveals that the time used while communicating on internet has a significant impact on students of National Teacher' Institute Zaria centre, Nigeria. This implies that majority of the students take their time to communicate on internet at least 2 hours on a daily basis. However, the findings also affirm that students enjoy using the e-mail than any other internet services. This implies that their desires are always accomplished whenever they make use of the internet.

However, majority of the students reveal that vast availability and up to date information on the internet has aided their academic and research work. This shows that majority of the students are acquainted to online information on the internet.

The research also shows that most problems encountered by the students are slow response, inability to locate up to date information, poor browsing rate and inadequate power supply. Therefore, in view of this study, the researcher concluded that the Impact of internet on students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria is good.

3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations have been put forward to improve on The Impact of Internet on Students of National Teachers' Institute Zaria Centre, Nigeria.

1. The National Teachers' institute Zaria, Nigeria should take all the necessary steps in ensuring that the problem of slow response rate, inability to locate information and poor browsing rate are addressed.
2. The National Teachers' Institute should encourage their students to personally purchase internet modems and mobile phones with internet facilities and services to enhance their access to variety of online services so as to improve the quality of their research and not depend solely on fibre optics connections.
3. As a training Institute, The National Teachers' Institute should train their students to be literate either through organizing workshops on Information Technology and internet use.
4. The National Teachers' Institute should also encourage their students to fully utilize the internet facilities found in our classes, offices, lecture theatres and our libraries.
5. The management of N.T.I should provide each centre with computers fully equipped with internet facilities to assist the students in their research work.

It is expected that if these suggestions and recommendations are adopted by the National Teacher' Institute Nigeria. The Impact of the internet will serve as a major strategy for developing and improving the students of National Teacher' Institute, Zaria.

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