

AN EXPLORATION STUDY ON AVAILABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF INTERNET RESOURCE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION IN AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA

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ABSTRACT

The study explores the availability, accessibility and utilization of Internet resource among the Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. The study has five objectives and as a guide five null hypotheses were raised and tested. The researchers adopted descriptive survey design method for the study. Four rating scale structured questionnaire titled "Availability, Accessibility and Usage" (AAU) was employed to generate data from 50 Postgraduate students in Business Education. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed to test null hypothesis one, two, three and four while t-test was used to test null hypothesis five. All the hypotheses were tested at significance level of 0.05. The results of the study reveals, among other that postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bell University Zaria have access to internet resources. As a result one of the recommendations postulated is that the section should encourage reforms in education that will ensure integration computers and Internet technologies by aligning them with curriculum. This will help to provide students with skill and proficiencies on how to computer for browsing.

Keywords: Internet resource, business education, academic achievement

INTRODUCTION

Technological achievements have been at the center of educational revolution in developed and developing countries in the 21st century. The applications of the innovation greatly facilitate and revolutionize all aspects of human endeavour including education in the present day. As a result, Fuchs and Woessman (2005), who observed that the invention and use of technology dramatically transformations the educational system in the world. In consequence, ministries of education and school authorities have designed programs and policies to increase availability and accessibility of the modern technology in schools. In Nigeria, scholars and students make use of electronic device to make inquiries and to keep abreast with latest developments. Technological device provides students with information both at internal and international levels. As a result, Internet service is rapidly blurring the contours of old system and brings forth the news faster means of research as it contained ocean of information covering all areas.

Through Internet service, students from any part of the world can gain knowledge on different subjects. Musa (2011) discovers that students use internet services to download materials that could impact on them, participate in collaborative exercise and for online learning as they can take up short-term courses with the course material available online. Hence internet service has bulldozed the barriers affecting educational research and

development in Nigeria as it contains an endless source of knowledge. Buttressing this view, Mohammed (2011) earlier maintained Internet service has reduces stress, facility access to information and promote creativity among learners. With these points, Madhura (2010) argued that every student should be given access to the Internet for deeper understanding and research. Considering the importance of internet service in education as the world is general turning into a global village, higher institutions in Nigeria are striving to cope with its challenges.

To fit into the mainstream of modern Education system obtainable in developed countries and other part of the world, the Ahmadu Bello University authority strives and connects all the faculties with internet service. This development is in line with one of the statutory duty of the Nigerian higher education to groom the required human capital through relevant manpower training, abilities, attitudes, skills and knowledge (Babalola, 2007). Considering the roles of internet service in education, it is fundamental to investigate its availability, access and usage among Postgraduates students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The invention of internet service is accelerating the academic achievement of students in higher institutions in Nigeria. Through Internet service, students gain access to direct forms of communication and access to sharable resources, hence the service support quality learning among the students. Continual advancements of Internet service such as virtual reality speed and access to online resources provides for different ways students learn. According to Riel (1998), Internet service helps to support collaborative and cooperative learning among students. Strengthening this view, Committee on Developments in the Science of Learning, (2000) opined that Internet service provides students with the opportunity for a wide range of interesting learning experiences.

Despite that Internet service provides powerful tools that allow learners to make discoveries on their own, it was observed that contributions of factors such as inadequate facilities for the students, overloaded time-table that leave little time for other things and computer derisory skills effect the use of internet service among students. Cuban (1986) explained that many educational technologies failed to be adopted meaningfully by students because the designer failed to properly address the adequacy, students good fit, classroom culture and how innovations are adopted in local context. The scenario prompted the researcher to investigate the Availability, Accessibility and Utilization of Internet Resource of Postgraduate students in Business education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research work is based on the most influential theory associated with this process is the cognitive theory of multimedia learning proposed by Mayer (1997). The advocates of the theory postulates that using multiple modalities when presenting information leads to more learning transfer. Importantly, it also focuses on cognitive load, or the amount of information that can be processed and held in the working memory before loss of information occurs. Supporting this theory, Pedro, Enrique, Ernesto and Lucio (2004) opined that important role of internet service inside a school is that of providing a new framework that can foster a revision and an improvement of teaching and learning practices. This theory believed that schools connected to the internet service can foster communication in and outside Nigeria. The theory emphasized that students and teachers gain access to higher bandwidths, more direct forms of communication and access to sharable resources and has the capability to support quality learning (Oliver 2002). In Nigeria, the theory was recognised by Philip,

Oluwatolani and Adeniran (2010) who opined that internet has the ability to increase learners' motivation and engagement, by facilitating the acquisition of basic skills, and enhancing learning. The theory highly influenced the school authorities in Nigerian universities including Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria among others who declare the standard of excellence in their mission by connecting the entire university with internet service.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researchers intended to determine the:-

1. Extent to which Business Education section in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria is connected with internet resources.
2. Extent to which Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria have access to internet resources.
3. Extent to which Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria have skills on computer operation to access information from internet resources.
4. Extent to which Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University utilized internet resources to access information from website.
5. Difference between the mean perception of M.Ed and PhD students on the extent they utilized internet resources to access information from website.

NULL HYPOTHESIS

As a guide to the researchers, the following null hypotheses were raised and tested at significance level of 0.05.

Ho1: Business Education section in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria is not connected to internet service

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between Postgraduate students in Business Education and accessibility to internet resources in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Ho3: There is no significant association between Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and computer skills needed to access information from internet resources

Ho4: Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria do not associate with utilization internet resources to access information from website.

Ho5: There is no significant difference between the mean perceptions of M.Ed and PhD students on the utilization of internet resources to access information from website

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

This study was conducted using descriptive survey design. 46 M.Ed and 4 PhD students admitted during 2011/2012 academic year in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria were used for the study. Four rating structured questionnaire titled Availability Accessibility and Utilization (AAU) were used to generate data from the students. Validity of the instrument was determined by experts in ICT and research methodology in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. The survey instrument was pre-tested on a group of postgraduate students in Business Administration that were not part of the study as a pilot test. The instrument gave reliability coefficient of 0.77. However some corrections were made in the instrument for better clarity and readability. The survey instrument was shared during the meeting of Postgraduate

students in Business education held on 20th November 2011. Students were informed in a cover letter accompanying the survey instrument and also verbally, during their meetings, that participation in the survey was voluntary and that their anonymity was guaranteed. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 19 to run Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to test null hypotheses one, two, three and four while t-test was used to test null hypothesis five. All the hypotheses were tested significance level of 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of data used to test the null hypotheses is as presented in Table 1 to 5.

Ho1: Business Education Section in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria is not connected to internet service.

Analysis of test of Null hypothesis one is as presented in Table 1

Table 1. Test of Connectivity of Business Education Section and Internet service

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>r-cal</i>	<i>r-crit</i>	<i>Sig_ (2-tailed)</i>
Business Education Section	3.22	.68	81	48	2.83*	1.96	0.000
Internet Connectivity	3.08	.63					

The result of test of null hypothesis one presented in Table 1 shows the mean score of, 3.22 and 3.08 for Business Education section and internet connectivity. The standard deviation values were .68 and .63 respectively. The calculated value was $2.83 > 1.96$ critical value. The result shows there is association between Business Education Section and internet connectivity in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Hence the null hypothesis is not retained.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between Postgraduate students in Business Education and accessibility to internet resources in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Test of null hypothesis two is as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Test of Relationship between Postgraduates students and accessibility of Internet resources

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>r-cal</i>	<i>r-crit</i>	<i>Sig_ (2-tailed)</i>
Business Education Section	3.22	.68	50	48	2.11	1.96	0.001
Internet Accessibility	3.45	.81					

Analysis of test of null hypothesis two revealed mean score of 3.22 with the standard deviation of value of .68 for Business Education Section. On the other hand accessibility to internet resources had mean score of 3.45 with standard deviation of .81. The calculated r-value was 2.11 found to be greater than critical value of 1.96. The result shows that postgraduate students in Ahmadu Bell University Zaria have access to internet resources. Hence the null hypothesis was not retained.

Ho3: There is no significant association between Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and computer skills needed to access information from internet resources

Analysis of test of Null hypothesis three is as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Test of Relationship between Postgraduate students in Business Education and Computer skills

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>r-cal</i>	<i>r-crit</i>	<i>Sig_ (2-tailed)</i>
PG students in Business Education	3.22	.68	50	48	0.89**	1.96	0.0607
Computer Skills	1.98	.033					

Analysis of data presented in Table 3 shows mean scores of 3.22 and 1.98 for postgraduate students in Business Education and computer skills. The standard deviation stood at .68 and .63 respectively. The calculated value was 0.033 which was found to be less than critical value of significant level of 1.96 at $P > 0.05$. The analysis therefore shows that Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria have no computer skills needed to access information from internet resources. Hence the null hypothesis was retained.

Ho4: Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria do not utilize internet resources to access information from website.

Test of null hypothesis two is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Test of Relationship between PG students and Utilization of Internet resources in A.B.U. Zaria

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>r-cal</i>	<i>r-crit</i>	<i>Sig_ (2-tailed)</i>
PG students in Business Education	3.22	.68	50	48	2.33	1.96	0.002
PG students in Business Education	3.22	.68	50				

Test of null hypothesis four shows the mean score of, 3.22 and 3.00 with standard deviation of .68 and .89 for PG students in Business Education and that of utilization of internet resources. The calculated r value was 2.33 found to be greater than the critical value of 1.96. The analysis shows that PG students in Business Education in A.B.U. Zaria utilized internet resources to access information from website. Hence the null hypothesis is therefore not retained.

Ho5: There is no significant difference between the mean perceptions of M.Ed and PhD students on the utilized internet resources to access information from website

T-test analysis used to test the null hypothesis is as presented in Table 5.

Table 5. T-test Analysis of M.Ed and PhD students on the utilized internet resources to access information

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t-cal</i>	<i>t-crit</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
M.Ed	2.98	0.62	46	48	0.081	1.53	1.65	0.061
P.hD	2.64	0.51	4					

Analysis of difference in null hypothesis five shows that M.Ed had mean score of 2.98 and standard deviation value of 0.62. The PhD students had 0.51 with standard deviation of .51.

The t-cal value is greater t-critical value (i.e $1.53 < 1.65$), this implies that there is no significant difference in the mean perceptions of M.Ed and PhD students on their utilization of internet resources to access information from website. Hence the null hypothesis was retained.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

One of the findings of the study shows that there is association between Business Education and internet connectivity in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. This finding is in line with Kang et al., (2008) who opined that school and classroom settings, teachers and school administrators are attempting to find the best ways to harness ICT technology to support their teaching and students' success. However, accomplishments that are convincingly the result of the direct causal impact of ICT use are not always easily identifiable. Adamu (2010) maintained that no institutions will afford to ignore, delay, bypass or underestimate the importance of internet connectivity. Adamu and Musa (2012) further affirmed that organizations are striving to cope with the challenges of internet and schools are not left out because they produce labour for the world of work. They stressed that higher institutions of learning are now connected to internet service as the world is generally turning into a global village where application of internet knowledge has taken daily every activities as such internet knowledge has become an instrument that enhance teaching and learning.

The study further revealed that postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria have no computer skills needed to access information from internet resources. This concurred with the finding of Pedro, Enrique, Ernesto, and Lucio (2004) opined that the major barrier that affects the use of internet service among teachers and students is technical support and skills. He stressed that student skills mediate their interest and usage of internet resources in schools, and that students capability to use internet service at a given level, is based on the level of skill possessed and on judgments about how it can be done. Ahmed (2006) further added that lack of computer knowledge and skills are the major challenges of achieving significant uses of technology in schools.

The result also shows that postgraduate students have access to internet resources in the section for their academic work. The finding of the present research work is in agreement with HM Inspectorate of Education (2004) who observed that schools recognize the need to provide all learners with the skills to use ICT independently to promote their lifelong learning. Jhurree (2005) argues that education reform is occurring throughout the world and one of its tenets is the introduction and integration of ICTs in the education system. Shalini (2007) added that ministries of education and higher institutions around the world have made the commitment to computerize schools and provide it as pedagogical tools in the classroom. He emphasized that institutions have understand the needed to be connected to internet service and to allow students to have access to it has made learning real and faster.

The study further revealed that Postgraduate students in Business Education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria do use internet resources to access information from website. The finding of Saiful (2011) earlier shows that students use the internet as a replacement of textbooks and reference books as it contains an endless source of knowledge. He added that Students use internet service to check the latest scientific knowledge and research.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of data the following conclusions are made:-

1. That school authority invest heavily to connect the section with internet service in order to improve and update the education they provide their students and that, student use internet service to expanding access of valuable information, promoting research and publication efficiency and improving the quality of their do their registration.
2. That there are massive benefits that students derive from effective usage of Internet service, but intervention of issues such as inadequate computers and insufficient computer skills effects the use of computer among the Postgraduate students. The problems do compel most Postgraduates students to seek for assistance of their colleagues or go to business centers for their research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby made as ways forward:

1. It is essential for all Postgraduate students should strive to be computer drive. This will enable them to develop skills for browsing and searching for information from internet.
2. The federal government should reduce tariff, tax and others charges levied on computer and laptop importation, by reducing the price, students will be able to afford personal computer/laptop for their research work.
3. The institution should encourage reforms in education that will ensure integrate computers and Internet technologies into their schools by aligning it with curriculums. This will to provide students with skill and proficiencies on how to use internet service.

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