

INTERNET ADDICTION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF ALVAN IKOKU FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (AIFCE) OWERRI

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Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between internet addiction and academic performance of undergraduate students of AIFCE Owerri. Correlation research design was adopted for the study. One research guided the study and two hypothesis were tested. The population of the study comprised all degree students in AIFCE giving a total of (3,256), while only total of 500 participants purposively selected from six schools in A.I.F.C.E constituted the sample for the study. Two instruments were use for data collection namely: an adapted Internet Addiction Questionnaire (IAQ) developed by Young (1998) and modified by Pee and Shafeq (2009). Its reliability index was 0.79. and an Educational Psychology Performance Test (EPPT) was used to collect students' results. Data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage for students demographic data, Mean, for the research question. Person's Product Moment Correlation Statistics and t-test analysis were used to test the two hypotheses respectively. It was found that undergraduate students of AIFCE Owerri were occasionally addicted to internet use. The study also revealed a high positive correlation between internet addiction and academic performance. There was no significant difference in the internet addiction between male and female AIFCE Students. Based on the above findings, the researchers recommended among others that government, educators, parents, counselors, lecturers, and portals should help redirect the internet use toward academics to ensure greater academic outcome.

Keywords: Internet Addiction, Internet Addiction, Academic Performance, Undergraduate Students

Introduction

The use of internet has become so npart among undergraduate students of higher institutions. This has become excessively uncontrolled that it is affecting all aspects of life. Nowadays, students engage deeply in computer usage that there is just little or no time to study and make it

academically. Internet usage has become so problematic that it tends to disrupt their academic works. It is common knowledge that both girls and boys are highly indulged in the internet use. Students communicate effectively on social media such as facebook, youtube, intagram, whatsapp yet they do not achieve in academics.

In most cases, students have good intentions opening the internet to search for academic information but in the process they end up chatting with friends, families and engaging in other things that are not useful academically. The issue is that before they could know it, they have exhausted their precious time on nothing tangible. Researchers have shown that students spend more time in social communication than in search for academic information. They spend more time online chatting friends, massaging, e-mailing, and whatsapping (Jones, 2001; Rohani and Tari, 2012). Jones (2001) noted that college students have been associated with more frequent communication with friends and family members. Rohani and Tari (2012) found that the main use of the internet for students is interpersonal communication through e-mail, instant messaging and chat programs.

Researchers have outlined the benefits of internet use as: keeping in touch with friends, making vacation plans, managing finance, assisting with educational needs (Noreen, 2013). Chou and Hsiao (2000) noted that despite the positive influence of internet there is a growing literature on the negative effects of its excessive use. They also indicated that university students are at high risk growth for internet addiction.

Internet addiction can be described as over use of internet and inability to engage in daily life activities. Chao and Hsiao (2000) defines internet addiction as “an individual’s inability to control his or her use of internet, which eventually causes psychological, social, school, and work difficulties in a person’s life. Studies have found that internet addiction has effect on academic success of students (Mishra, Draus, Goreva, Leone and Caputo, 2014,1; Bolhi and Kaur, 2017)). Suhail and Bargees (2006) indicated that internet usage has positive impact on the academic performance of students because it increases communication between classmates and teachers as well as improving study hours and study habits. The problem is that, despite positive influence of internet use, researchers like (Na and Kim, 2004) maintained that college students are particularly at high risk for developing internet addiction. Najini, Masoumeh & Syed (2014) found a negative relationship between internet addiction and academic performance.

Nigeria is one of the populous countries worldwide. Recent studies found that Nigeria has almost 50 million mobile internet users and mobile phone internet usage is particularly popular (Clement, 2019). In 2015, the

International Telecommunication Union estimated about 3.2 billion people, or almost half of the world population would be online by the end of the year of them, about 2 billion would be from developed countries including 89 million from last developed countries. In 2018, Nigeria had 92.3million internet users. This figure is projected to grow to 187.8 million internet users in 2023. The internet penetration amounted to 47.1 percent of the population in 2018 and is set to reach 84.5 percent in 2023 (Clement, 2019). According to Internet World Statistics (2014) the estimated number of internet users were found to be 2,212,239,573 world wide as a result of which it is seen as the world's largest technology podium (Internet user, internet live statistics 2014). Binita, Lena, Varakashmi and Ashma (2018) in their study reported that 44% of their respondents were vulnerable to internet addiction.

Also in the most recent report by the World Internet Usage and Population Statistics (2020) it was noted that between 2000 and 2020 there is 1,167% of growth in internet use.

Miao, Jiang, Wang, Li, Wang and Zeng (2018) found that internet addiction was higher among males than females - 30.6% and 21.2% respectively. Also, the finding of Yeong and Won (2014) found that 3.6% and 1.9% girls were addicted users of internet. Another study carried out by Shao, Zheng and Wang (2018) found that internet exposure rate was higher in male student (16%) than female students (8%). Another study proved that males are more sensitive to internet than female (Luo, Guo, Hu Zhuang, Wang, 2014). Na (2004); Kim (2004) submitted that internet usage has negative impact on students' academic performance. Jeong (2005) also found a negative impact of internet addiction on students' academic performance. Equally, Akhter (2013) found that more males than females use internet across the world. Ha and Hwang (2014) indicated that internet addiction was found higher in boys than in girls. Findings by the US National Library of Medicine (2016) showed that boys spent significantly more time on the internet than did girls and that boys spent more on internet and use different applications than the girls. Another study found that male students had higher internet addiction than female ones (Weiser, 2000). Males were also found to be more likely to be pathological internet users than females and that males tend to be more familiar with the computers and internet as compared to females (Morahan-Martin and Schumacher, 2000).

Since internet addiction is increasing at an alarming rate among the younger generation, laying a significant impact on their mental health, it appears to be a major public health concern for the nation. It is against this background that the researchers found the prevalence of internet addiction among undergraduate student of AIFCE as an important area of investigate.

As a result of explosion in communication and technology world-wide, internet has become the most vital part of human life. Overuse of internet among students seems to be the reason for impairment in both mental and emotional state of students as well as scholastic, occupational and social activities. There is no doubt that internet has brought a lot of benefits. For instance, it provides young people with good conditions for learning and strengthens the communication between them. When internet tools are properly and effectively applied in education, especially in the areas of lectures, assignments real-time procedure, demonstration, class discussion and interaction with teachers, there will be positive change in academics through internet. Learning can be shared through internet and that has changed people's way of life. It has also become a medium for disease prevention and health promotion.

However, the effects of internet on students' academic performance cannot be ignored because internet addiction brings a lot of risks to the society. Students now spend more time on internet games and this can reduce their normal social activities.

Its symptoms generally include pre-occupation, loss of control, high tolerance, withdrawal, craving, impairment of function and a reduction in the ability to make decision. This can as well lead to poor academic achievement among the undergraduate students.

A lot of work has been done on internet usage and addiction but none has been carried out among the undergraduate students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education (AIFCE) Owerri, Imo State. This is the gap this study tried to fill by investigating the relationship between internet addiction and academic performance of undergraduate students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri.

One research question guided the study and two hypothesis were tested they include;

- What is the prevalent rate of internet addiction among AIFCE undergraduate students?
- There is no significant relationship between internet addiction and education psychology performances of students.
- There is no significant difference in the relationship between internet addiction and academic performance of male and female students of AIFCE, Owerri.

Method

This study adopted a correlation design which aimed at investigating the internet addiction and its relationship with students' academic performance

of degree students in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education. Nkwocha (2001) described this type of design as that which enables its researcher to obtain the opinion of the representative sample of the target population on the major variables internet addiction and academic performance, so as to infer the perception of the entire population.

The population for this study comprised all degree students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri (3256) from ICT Department, AIFCE. While only a total of 500 participants constituted the sample for the study. Purposive sampling techniques was used to select the students from their various schools (1) School of General Education (70) (2) Arts & Social Sciences (100) (3) Natural Sciences (100) (4) General Studies (80) (5) School of Early Childhood Education (50) (6) Vocational and Technical Education (100). The selection was also based on gender (male and female) in all 195 male students and 305 female students were used for the study.

The instrument used for data collection was an internet addiction test (IAT) developed by Young (1998) and modified by Pee and Shafeq (2009). IAT is a 20 item questionnaire designed to identify people who are mildly, moderately, and severely addicted to internet. It is scored on 4 point rating scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The total score ranges from 20 – 100 score of 49 was considered normal, 50-79 was considered problematic and 80-100 was considered significantly problematic.

The questionnaires were distributed to the participants from the different schools on agreed date. The five schools were given the questionnaire on a separate day. The researchers collected the filled questionnaires on the spot and none was missing. The students' ED 31 and ED 411 results were collected from the HODs using a proforma. Students' academic performance was measured using their grade point on ED 311 and ED 411 of 2019. The use of the courses was justified because ED 311 and ED 411 are courses generally offered by degree students of AIFCE.

Frequency counts and percentage were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents as illustrated in table 1. Mean was used to answer the research question raised. To arrive at the mean, there are 20 statements/items in the questionnaire that addressed prevalent rate of internet addition with 4-point Likert scale of 1 (Never), 2 (Occasionally), 3 (Often) and 4 (Very Often). The minimum score is 20 while the maximum score is 80. All the responses were summed up and divided by the 4-point Likert scale to get the mean score for each item. Any mean score that fall within the range of 1.0 to 1.5 is regarded as Never having internet addicted, 1.6 to 2.5 as Occasionally addicted, 2.6 to 3.5 as Often addicted and 3.6 to 4.0 as Very Often addicted to internet.

Two hypotheses were postulated based on the identified variables. Scores obtained from prevalent rate of internet addiction and students' performance in EDU 311 EDU 411 were used to test hypothesis one using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic. Also, degree of association of internet addiction on 4-point Likert scale on the basis on gender was used to test hypothesis two using Fisher exact statistic. The two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Information of the Students Sampled

Status	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	195	39.0%
	Female	305	61.0%
	Total	500	100.0
Age	16 -20 Years	371	74.20%
	21 Years and Above	129	25.80%
	Total	500	
NCE Level	NCE I	100	20.0%
	NCE II	200	40.0%
	CNE III	200	40.0%

Out of 500 students' sample, 195 (39.0%) were male while 305 (61.0%) were females. In the same vein, 371 (74.20%) were within the age bracket of 16 to 20 years and 129 (25.80%) were within the age range of 21 years and above. Lastly, 100 (20.0%) students were sampled from NCE 1, 200 (40.0%) were sampled from NEC II and III respectively.

In order to answer the research question that states “what is the prevalent rate of internet addition among AlvanIkoku College of Education Student?”, responses of the student to statements that addressed internet addiction were collated and subjected to mean and output is reported in table 2.

Table 2: Mean of Prevalent Rate of Internet Addition among Alvan Ikoku College of Education Students

S/N	STATEMENTS	MEAN	DECISION
1	I spent up to 8 hours daily on the internet.	2.2	Occasionally
2	I spent up to 2 hours browsing daily.	2.4	Occasionally
3	Internet always make me lonely.	2.9	Often
4	All my school work was done using internet	3.0	Often

5	I find it easier to get academic information from the internet.	2.8	Often
6	I watch U tube daily.	2.7	Often
7	I hardly ask for food while on the internet.	2.4	Occasionally
8	I have many friends on the social network.	3.5	Very Often
9	I stay on the internet till day break.	2.7	Often
10	I can hardly stay without my Laptop	1.3	Never
11	I have no friend in the social media.	1.4	Never
12	I used a lot of megabits daily to browse.	3.0	Often
13	I miss my lesson most of the time because I can get better information from the internet.	2.2	Never
14	I have three Handsets used to browse.	1.1	Never
15	I stay back in the town because there is no network in the village	1.2	Never
16	I spent a lot of time browsing in the internet.	2.8	Often
17	I have developed back arch because of the position I used to stay while browsing.	1.4	Never
18	I spent much to maintain my phone to avoid being cut off from the internet.	2.9	Often
19	I watch and chat in Facebook.	3.6	Very Often
20	I used internet service every day of the week.	3.8	Very Often
Cumulative Mean = 2.04 (Occasionally)			

Table 2 indicates the prevalent rate of internet addiction among Alvan Ikoku College of Education students. The result reveals mean of prevalent rate to be 2.04 which can be interpreted, ranked and concluded that the students are occasionally addicted to internet.

In order to test hypothesis 1, which states “there is no significant relationship between internet addiction and academic performance in educational psychology”. The scores obtained in EDU 311 and EDU 411 were summed, averaged and used as index of academic performance. Therefore, the two sets of data were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic at 0.05 level of significance and the output is illustrated in table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between Internet Addiction and Academic Performance in Educational Psychology Tests

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	Cal. γ	Sig.	Remarks
Internet Addiction	2.04	0.58	498	.752	0.000	S
Academic Performance	3.11	0.42				

Sig. (2-tails) 0.05

Table 3 reveals the result of relationship between internet addiction and academic performance of students in two educational psychology tests. The result shows r of 0.752 \hat{a} $P = 0.000$. This result implies that there is high and positive correlation between internet addiction and academic performance of Alvan Ikoku College of Education students. This can be written symbolically as $r = 0.752, P < 0.05$

In order to test hypothesis 2, which stays “there is no significant association between internet addiction and students’ gender. Students’ responses were subjected to Fisher’s exact statistical test at 0.05 level of significance and output is illustrated in table 4.

Table 4: Degree of Association of Internet Addiction and Academic Performance of Male and Female Students of AIFCE, Owerri

Internet Addiction		Gender			Fisher's Exact Test	Sig.	Remarks
		Male	Female	Total			
Never	Count	70	60	130	9.206	.027	NS
	Expected	65.0	65.0	130.0			
Occasionally	Count	100	120	220			
	Expected	110.0	110.0	220.0			
Often	Count	70	50	120			
	Expected	60.0	60.0	120.0			
Very Often	Count	10	20	30			
	Expected	15.0	15.0	30.0			
Total	Count	250	250	500			
	Expected	250.0	250.0	500.0			

Table 4 shows that the calculated Fisher's Exact Test is 9.206 computed at level of significance 0.05. Since the calculated sig. (0.027) is greater than the chosen sig. (0.05), it implies that there is no significant association between the internet addiction of male and female students of Alvan Ikoku College of Education.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that students were occasionally addicted to internet. A plausible reason for this is that almost all degree students in AIFCE have android phones. Most of these students leave in the hostels some leave off campus on their own while some leave with their parents where nobody monitor them on how they use their phones.

Thus the little time they have for reading, they use it for whatsapping and facebooking, chatting both responsible and irresponsible people. They over-use the internet because they are not checked. This is in line with Jones

(2001) who observed that college students do associate with friends and family members on internet. It is also in accordance with the World Internet Usage and Population Statistic (2020) report that between 2000 and 2020 there is a growth rate of 1.167% in internet use. Also the findings of the study corroborate with another by Binita, Lena, Varalakshmi and Ashma (2018) in which they found that 44% of their respondents were vulnerable to the internet addiction. Also, Clement (2019) submits that Nigeria has over 50 million mobile internet users and predicted that by 2023 it will rise from 47.1% - 84.5%.

The finding of the study also revealed a high and positive relationship between internet addiction and academic performance of AIFCE students. The reason for this is not far fetch because in most cases students open the internet to search for academic information but before they know it, they end up facebooking and whatsapping their families and friends, thereby leaving unattended their main purpose of opening the net. This most of the time affect their academic performance. That finding agrees with Na (2004) and Kim (2004)'s reports that internet usage has positive impact on students' academic performance. Contrarily, Bolhi and Kaur (2017) found a negative correlation between internet addiction and academic performance.

Furthermore, the study found no significant association between the internet addiction of male and female students of Alvan Ikoku College of Education. The reason being that almost all Alvan students have android phones and both male and female students are indulged with internet usage which includes twitting, whatsapping and facebooking. This finding is in contrast with the finding from the study by Weiser (2000) which found that male students had higher internet addiction than female students. Also, the finding of this study also disagrees with that of Morahan – Martin and Schumachor (2000) which found that more male than female tend to be more familiar with the computer and internet usage.

The implication of this study is that if internet usage among students is not properly monitored now, there is every tendency that academic activities and performance of college students will suffer a huge set back. Students, teachers, parents and educators who will be opportune to come across this study, are expected to take necessary steps to forestall future effects of internet addictions among college students.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to study Internet addiction and academic performance of students in AIFCE, Owerri and among others found a high and positive relationship between internet addiction and academic performance of

students. This underscores the need to redirect the internet use toward academics. If students should really use internet wisely, the negative effects of its use on academic performance will surely be minimized. Thus all hands must be on deck to see that college students' use of internet and its associates are properly monitored. The researchers therefore call upon government, educators, parents, counselors, lecturers, and portals to help minimize internet addiction among college students to ensure greater academic outcome.

Recommendations

Discussed below are some of the recommendations derived from this study:

1. Since it has been established that internet addiction has high and positive relationship with academic performance. Therefore, government, educators, parents, counselors, lecturers, and portals should help redirect the internet use toward academics to ensure greater academic outcome.
2. It was also found that both genders are occasionally involved in internet addiction. Hence, guidance counselors should assist in counseling students on the danger of internet addiction especially on their academic performance.
3. Also workshops, seminars, symposiums, conferences and programmes on the negative effects of internet addiction should be organized for students and lecturers in the college.

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