

The Influence of Internet Use on the Reading Habit of Undergraduate Nursing Students in College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi, Anambra State

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Abstract

The internet has become a veritable tool in 21st century education. This study investigated the influence of internet use on the reading habit of undergraduate nursing students in College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi. A descriptive survey was conducted using the entire students' population of 200. Three research questions guided this study. The data were collected using a self administered questionnaire titled "Influence of Internet Use on Students Reading Habit Questionnaire" (IIUSRHQ). Data collection was through online survey. Mean scores were used for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that there was high extent of internet use amongst nursing students (grand mean of 3.44), there was a significant influence of internet use on the reading habits of the respondents (grand mean of 3.12) and group discussion played a major role as a strategy in improving the reading habits of the respondents (3.49). From the result, the following conclusions were drawn- student nurses use internet to a high extent; the internet had a significant negative impact on the reading habits of nursing students as they spent most of their time on non-academic activities and that group discussion was the best strategy for improving reading habits among students.

Keywords: influence, internet, reading habit, nursing students

Introduction

The reading habit of nursing students is considered an important predictor of reading achievement. Nursing students from their first day in college are made to engage in rigorous academic studies in order to be qualified to sit for numerous pre-professional and professional examinations. Excelling in these examinations qualifies them to practice. More so, due to the diverse nature of the nursing profession, the student nurses engage in assignments, case studies, research studies, private and group studies to enable them to cover their extensive curriculum. In order to achieve these educational goals, the internet has become an inevitable learning tool in the 21st century education.

The internet has impacted greatly on students' attitude and reading habits (Bamidele, 2006) and has massively cut down the workload of teachers and students by making planning and resources available (SampathKumar & Basavaraj, 2016). It has also increased access to information ([Verma & Malviya](#), 2010), use of foreign sources, contacts with worldwide readers (Loan, 2011; Gabby & Catane, 2015); and helpful in developing social skills among students (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2014). The internet has made learning self-paced and self-directed thereby allowing students to choose context and tools appropriate to their differing interests, needs and skill levels (Enemuo & Anyaduba, 2016).

It is interesting to note that a significant proportion of college students use the internet and is potentially the largest group of the internet users (Loan, 2011). Williamson (2008) reports that out of 18.0 million college students 17.1 million (95.0%) go online at least once in a month during 2007 and out of 18.2 million, 17.4 million (95.7%) use Internet once in a month during 2008 in United States of America (USA). This heavy use of Internet by the students is supposed to positively influence their reading culture. However, some studies argue on the contrary as internet services like online games and social media are considered distractions to achieving academic goals. In College of Nursing, Amichi, it has been observed that the students have access to computers and other internet enabled devices. However, it seems that some of the students spend the better part of their time on social medias, reading dailies and seeking information unrelated to their academic work which can lead them to stay up late at night thereby substituting good reading competences for pleasure and this has become a cause for concern as it may cause failure and poor reading habit in the students.

The aim of this study was to examine the extent of internet usage among undergraduate students of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi; ascertain the influence of internet usage on their study habits and determine ways of improving the reading habits of these students. There is also paucity of research on influence of internet use on the reading habits of student nurses in Anambra state; hence, the need for this study.

Method

Research Design- Descriptive survey

Area of the Study- College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi, Anambra State

Population of the Study

The population of the study was 200 students of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi, Anambra State (entire students' population from 1st year to 3rd year)

Sampling Techniques- Total population sampling

Instrument for Data Collection- self administered questionnaire titled "Influence of Internet Use on Students Reading Habit Questionnaire (IIUSRHQ). The questionnaire was structured in a way as to elicit relevant information required for the study. The instrument had a total of 30 items;

Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot study was carried out in order to test the instrument and ensure its reliability. The instrument was pre-tested on twenty (20) students of Our Lady of Lourdes College of Nursing and Midwifery, Ihiala, a community not included in the study, which shares similar characteristics with the study area. To ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, the Cronbach Alpha’s statistics was used which yielded 0.81 reliability index.

Method of data collection

Due to the current closure of school in the country as result of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the researchers utilized online self-administered questionnaire to obtain data from the respondents. A link was sent to the respondents through their various groups’ online platforms which enabled them submit their responses to the principal investigator’s email. The respondents were intimated on the purpose of the study and their consent obtained.

Method of data analysis

In analyzing the data, the researchers used mean scores in answering the research questions. The degree of high extent and low extent was determined by finding the mean of the values assigned to the options. A reference mean of 2.50 was used in rating the computed mean scores. Values from 2.50 and above were interpreted as high extent while items that fall below it were regarded as having low extent. Also, the same reference was interpreted as agreed and disagreed respectively in answering research questions 2 and 3.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do students use internet in College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi?

Table 1: Mean score of students internet usage in College of Nursing Sciences Amichi
N= 194

S/N	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	N	M	D
1.	Students visit websites more often?	120	60	12	2	194	3.54	HE
2.	Students are always on facebook?	132	49	13	0	194	3.61	HE
3.	Students visit Whatsapp daily?	153	40	1	0	194	3.78	HE
4.	Students go to Instagram page often?	80	90	10	14	194	3.22	HE
5.	Students visit Telegram page always?	70	60	44	20	194	2.93	HE
6.	Students are always on Youtube?	134	55	3	2	194	3.65	HE
7.	Students access the internet frequently for academic purposes?	150	43	1	0	194	3.77	HE
8.	Students use the internet more often for online learning?	80	69	21	24	194	3.06	HE
Grand Mean		3.44						

Table 1 shows high extent of internet use by respondents as indicated by how frequently they visit websites (mean of 3.54); Facebook page (mean of 3.61); Whatsapp (mean of 3.78) and Youtube (mean of 3.65). They also access the internet often for academic purposes (mean of 3.77); they visit Instagram and Telegram pages often, mean of 3.22 and 2.93 respectively. It is also obvious from the data that the students frequently use the internet for online learning (mean of 3.06). This result implies that there was high extent of internet use among the respondents as shown by a grand mean of 3.44.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of internet usage on the reading habits of undergraduate nursing students of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi?

Table 2: Mean score on influence of internet usage on the reading habit of respondents

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Decision
9.	Makes students lousy in reading their books?	97	48	39	10	194	3.19	Agreed
10.	They spend most of their time on pornographic sites?	85	75	10	24	194	3.14	Agreed
11.	They play online games instead of reading?	99	71	13	11	194	3.33	Agreed
12.	It reduces their time of perfect reading?	89	85	18	2	194	2.87	Agreed
13.	It makes them lazy in reading and writing?	99	81	9	5	194	3.41	Agreed
14.	It makes them up to date with current trends in their course of study?	80	79	25	10	194	3.18	Agreed
15.	It increases time spent on non-academic activities such as gambling and game?	55	58	73	8	194	2.82	Agreed
16.	It complements their study materials?	95	87	10	2	194	3.42	Agreed
17.	It makes them to read on the go?	90	89	12	3	194	3.37	Agreed
18.	It discourages analytical reading skills?	48	39	56	51	194	2.43	Disagreed
Grand Mean		3.12						

Data presented in **Table 2** show that the greatest influence of internet use on students' reading habits is that it complements their study materials (mean of 3.42), makes them lazy in reading and writing (mean of 3.41) and lousy in reading their books (mean of 3.19). They also spend most of their time on pornographic sites (mean of 3.14); play online games instead of reading (mean of 3.33); read on the go (mean of 3.37) and to be up to date with current trends in their course of study (mean of 3.18). It is also obvious from the data that internet usage reduces their time of perfect reading (mean of 2.87) and increases the time they spend on non-academic activities such as gambling and game (mean of 2.82). However, it does not appear to impact on the students' analytical reading skills (mean of 2.43). It can be deduced from the table that

internet usage has significant influence on the reading habits of the respondents as shown by a grand mean of 3.12.

Research Question 3: What are the strategies for improving the reading habits of undergraduate nursing students of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi?

Table 3: Mean scores on the strategies for improving the reading habits of respondents.

S/N	Items	SA	AD	SD	N	Mean	Decision	
19.	Administering frequent quizzes?	45	50	85	14	194	2.65	Agreed
20.	Giving assignments?	80	90	15	9	194	3.24	Agreed
21.	Giving students new lecture topics to discuss?	95	79	13	7	194	3.35	Agreed
22.	Encourage seminar presentations?	59	47	55	33	194	2.68	Agreed
23.	Encouraging group discussions?	100	89	5	0	194	3.49	Agreed
24.	Engaging students in frequent practical sessions?	14	78	82	20	194	2.44	Disagreed
25.	Use of simulations and models?	97	81	9	7	194	3.38	Agreed
Grand Mean	3.03							

Table 3 shows the strategies for improving the reading habits of the respondents. It can be gathered from the result that the best strategy is encouraging group discussions (mean of 3.49). Other important strategies include use of simulations and models, giving students new lecture topics to discuss prior to the actual lecture and giving them assignments with means of 3.38, 3.35 and 3.24, respectively; in addition to encouraging seminar presentation (mean of 2.68) and administering frequent quizzes (mean of 2.65). The respondent high ratings of the items are indicated further by the cluster mean of 3.03 in a four point rating scale.

Summary of the Findings

- Respondents used the internet to a great extent as indicated by the high rating of their online activities on a four point scale with a grand mean of 3.44.
- The internet had a significant influence on the reading habits of the students as indicated by a grand mean of 3.12.
- The best strategy for improving reading habits of respondents was encouraging group discussion with a mean of 3.49.

Discussion

Extent of internet usage among undergraduate students of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi

The findings from the study showed that student nurses used internet to a high extent as evidenced by the various activities they did online and how often they visited various websites. This finding agreed with the study done by Salubi and Muchaonyerwa (2018) indicating that 72.3%, attested to making use of the Internet daily for an average of six hours with

entertainment, communication and social networking being the main activities undergraduate students spent their time on. Furthermore, Tayo et al. (2019) asserted that the social media platforms mostly used by undergraduates include WhatsApp (97%), Facebook (85%), Instagram (65%), YouTube (62%), Twitter (25%), LinkedIn (21%), Google Plus (15%), Snapchat (10%), and Skype (7%). Additionally, undergraduates spent an average of 2-3 hours daily on social media, and their perceived purposes of social media usage included: socialization (83%), information (74%), academic (73%), business (68%), and entertainment (61%).

Influence of internet usage on the study habits of undergraduate student nurses of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi

The current study indicated that the internet significantly influenced on the reading habit of nursing students, both negatively and positively. It is obvious from the result that the internet has numerous negative influence on the reading habit of the respondents as majority agreed to the fact that it made them lousy in reading, spent most of their time on pornographic sites and increased time spent on other non academic activities such as gambling and game. This implies that the amount of time spent on internet by undergraduates does not translate to effective use. This result agreed with Ogungbeni et al. (2016) who found that internet had negative influence on the students as 72.1% of respondents engage in plagiarism while 13.4% visit pornographic websites. Similarly, Akande and Oyedepo (2018) reported that students spent more time on the use of social media such as facebook (51.5%), whatsapp (59.7%), yahoo mail (10.7%), youtube (41.3%), 2go(20.9%) and others (26.5%) rather than on academic activities, thereby causing an uncultured lifestyle of reading. In addition, Verma and Malviya (2010) found that individuals no longer read long informational articles and messages but simply scan through not paying attention to details.

However, result from the study revealed that the major positive influence of internet on students' reading habit were that it complimented their reading materials and made them read on the go. In support of research finding, the works of Ajanaku (2019) and Ugwulebo and Okoro (2019) revealed that academic work, research and information search were the main influence of internet on reading habits of undergraduate students. Furthermore, Ellore et al.(2014) opined that internet connectivity has improved tremendously and is available everywhere such as home, offices travels and schools and can be accessed through mobile internet devices on the go.

Ways of improving the reading habits of undergraduate student nurses of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi.

Findings from this study revealed strategies for improving the reading habits of nursing students. It can be deduced from the result that the best strategy was encouraging group discussions. Others were use of simulations and models, giving students new lecture topic to discuss prior to the lecture, giving assignments, encouraging seminar presentations and administering frequent quizzes. The implication of this finding is that when students are actively engaged in the learning process, they tend to become active learners taking responsibility in achieving set learning goals. This in turn significantly helps to improve their reading habits.

Interestingly, finding revealed that engaging students in frequent practical sessions does not appear to improve their reading habit as shown by the result.

The finding of this research lays credence to the findings of Hatteberg and Steffy (2013) and Hoeft (2012) who found that daily essay quizzes resulted in a huge jump in reading compliance of College students and that reading compliance tripled when random quizzes were given due to anticipated frequent unannounced quizzes. However, research result disagreed with the study of Huang (2019) who found that engaging students in frequent practical sections helped improved their reading habits.

Conclusion

The research study examined the influence of internet on the reading habits of Nursing Students of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- That student nurses used internet to a high extent
- The internet had a significant negative influence on the reading habits of nursing students as they spent most of their time on non-academic activities. This implies that the amount of time spent on internet by undergraduates does not translate to effective use.
- The consensus opinion of the respondents shows some strategies for improving reading habits among which group discussions ranked highest.

Educational Implications of the Study

The internet has become an indispensable tool in education. Based on the findings of this study, the educational implications are as follows:

- Since there is a high extent of internet use amongst nursing students, clinical instructors and tutors should develop instructional strategies that will help motivate students to read widely and more frequently
- Educators and lecturers should be trained to become computer literates to enable them become versatile in using the internet as a teaching tool and also modify their learning strategies to meet the learning demands of students in the 21st century
- Since group discussion was found to be a good way to improve reading habits, students should therefore be encouraged to participate actively
- The nursing curriculum should be improved in such a way as to keep the students vigorously engaged in academic activities which will compel them to use the internet positively such as research, seminar presentations, assignments etc. this will thereby reduce the time wasted on non-academic activities such as gaming.

Limitations of the study

Since, this study only focused on student nurses of College of Nursing Sciences, Amichi, this seems to be a limitation as regards to the wider transferability and generalizability of this study findings.

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