

Socio-Demographic Factors and Internet Utilisation Among Adolescents in Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract

Internet utilization among adolescents is purposeful and the rate is alarming. Most past studies focused on internet utilization of adolescents in overseas and urban areas. The present study investigated socio-demographic factors on internet utilization of adolescents in Aroro Community Community in Akinyele Local Government Area, Ibadan. Purposive Sampling technique was adopted for the study. Internet Utilization Scale containing demographic variables such as age, gender and education level of adolescents was used for data collection with reliability coefficient of .89. T-test statistic was used for data analysis. The findings show no significant difference in the internet utilization of male and female adolescents (Crit-t = 1.96, Cal.t = 1.917, DF = 120, p (0.058)>.05 and adolescents in Junior Secondary School and those in Senior Secondary School classes (Crit-t = 1.96, Cal.t = .781, DF = 120, p(0.437)>.05 but there is a significant difference in the internet utilization of adolescents below 15 years, and those above 15 years (Crit-t = 1.96, Cal.t = 2.587, DF = 120, p (0.011)<.05 level of significance). Hence, adolescents above 15 years of age ($\bar{x} = 31.72$), had more internet usage than those below 15 years of age ($\bar{x} = 27.89$). it is recommended that school counselors, teachers and librarians should encourage adolescents to use internet to promote academic performance.

Key words: Adolescents; Aroro community; Demographic Factors; Internet Utilization.

1. Introduction

Internet utilization of adolescents is not a new concept and many researchers have been able to come out with interesting topics and findings on internet utilization among adolescents. Internet is the most significant technological advancement of the 21st century that is very useful in all facets of life.

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Internet is a network of computers interconnected for the purpose of sharing information verbally, visually and audio-visually [18]. Adolescents are young ones who are developing cognitively with inquisitive, investigative and intellectual curiosity, ready to exploit every available opportunity to imitate behaviour from the media. Internet a multi-media which gives opportunities to adolescents to read, learn from others and communicate with others within and around the world. Over the last decade, internet connectivity and utilization have developed tremendously in homes, schools, offices and others social environments [14]. It is not an exaggeration that internet has brought a lot of people of different cultures, religious and socio-economic status together. It is an accepted fact that internet increases academic knowledge, research and assignments accomplishment of adolescents through the information available and accessed on the internet [13]. The use of internet is increasingly high in research, communication and social networks with students and their peers [19,20]. The adolescents in school use of Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and other resources on the internet for different purposes. [1,3], presented adolescents as developing individuals who utilize internet for socialization through chat room use, email, instant messaging, social network site among others. Also, they play games with internet either a game with monetary or non monetary gains. Moreover, they are found to be downloading software, movies, music, and games on the internet and most importantly they visit sites by engage in purchasing goods. Others include doing home works or research, watching video, accessing sexual and medical information, violent contents, political and religious issues, pornography, and suicidal material or ideation. It is not a mere say that internet utilization is both a blessing and danger to the adolescents as a result of the fact that internet has socialized adolescents into societal acceptable and anti-social behaviours. As a matter of fact, this study investigated socio-demographic factors on internet utilization of adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School in Akinyele Local Government Area, Ibadan, Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

Demographical factors have been investigated on media related concepts such as media resources [22], internet utilization [2,4,5], phone usage [8] among others. Demographic variables such as age, gender, education level or grade level, minority status of adolescents have been found to be significant to their internet utilization [17]. But the present study is limited to age, gender and educational factors. Age is a contributing factor to internet utilization. Adolescents of ages 16-19 years are reported to have more uncontrollable interaction with internet more than younger adolescents within ages 13-15 years [7]. Furthermore, interaction on internet using social media increases with age for both male and female. It was reported at age 13, half of female were chatting on internet compared to one third of male and at 15 years, 59% of females and 46% of males are chatting for one hour or more hours per day [11]. Gender is a common factor for internet utilization among adolescents. [2] submitted that 62.6% of female students utilized internet for social networking compared to male students of 33.5% and female students usage of internet was more functional than that of male in the study of [6]. Similarly, teenage girls addiction to internet is on increase [10]. In contrast to this, [9,15,12] found that male are much more often engaged in internet and computer activities such as playing games, watching films, listen to music among others than female. In another study, gender differences did not exist between male and female utilization of internet [8]. Educational attainment or grade level or class in school has its effect on internet utilization. Educational level is significantly and positively related to internet utilization of children over years and school grades (class) have positive relationship with hours which students utilize internet [16] and higher

school grade promoted increase in frequent internet use for searching for information [1,2], showed that grade level 9th, 10th-11th female students used the internet to execute home works but grade level 12, mostly used internet more and significant difference occurred in internet utilization for social networking of students between grade 12 and those of grade 10th -11th. Students in senior secondary school showed more commitment to internet utilization compared to students in Junior Secondary School [7].

3. Statement of Problem

Internet utilization among adolescents in Nigeria is now more tailored towards anti-social behaviours. Many adolescents use the internet to perpetuate fraud otherwise known as cyber crime, watching pornography which stimulates them into rape and other sexual risky behaviour. It is however noted that internet utilization for academic and other productive purposes are low among adolescents in Aroro community grammar School. Therefore, this study was carried out.

4. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate socio-demographic factors on internet utilization of adolescents in Aroro community Grammar School in Akinyele local Government, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Find out the purposes of internet utilization of adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School,
2. Examine the significant difference between internet utilization of adolescents below 15 years and above 15 years in Aroro Community Grammar School,
3. Determine the significant difference in the internet utilization of male and female adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School and,
4. Find out the significant difference in the internet utilization of Junior Secondary School and Senior Secondary School adolescents.

5. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in the study. They are:

1. What are the purposes of internet utilization of adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School?,
2. Is there any significant difference between in the internet utilization of adolescents below 15 years and above 15 years in Aroro Community Grammar School?,
3. Is there any significant difference in the internet utilization of male and female adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School?
4. Is there any significant difference in the internet utilization of Junior Secondary School and Senior Secondary School adolescents of Aroro Community Grammar School?.

6. Methods

6.1 Research Design

This study adopts the descriptive survey research design.

6.2 Sample

The population of this study comprises of 800 adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School and purposive sampling technique was adopted to select 150 adolescents from internet centers and those with browsing phones in Aroro Community Grammar School within age range between 13- 17 years and average age of 13.7 years.

6.3 Research Instruments

The instrument for data collection of this study is a structured questionnaire which is divided into two sections: The demographic and internet utilization sections: Demographical section contains age, gender and educational level and second section contains Internet Utilization Scale. This scale was adapted from [21]. Initially, it was 10- item scale with a high reliability coefficient using Cronbach alpha but modified by the researcher and 2 additional items were generated to make a total of 12 items with four -point Likert format ranging from always apply to me (4), apply to me (3), not apply to me (2) and not always apply to me (1), with reliability coefficient 0.89 using Cronbach Alpha.

6.4 Procedure for Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered randomly to the adolescents with the help of the school authority and teachers of the adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School. The responses of the adolescents were elicited easily because the researcher is a member of the community. OUT OF 150 questionnaire administered only 122 questionnaires were retrieved back and were found valid for analysis.

6.5 Methods of Data Analysis

T-test statistics was adopted for data analysis of the three hypotheses formed for the purpose of the study.

7. Results

Research Question One: What are the purposes of internet utilization of adolescents?

Table1: Purpose of Utilization of Internet by Adolescents in Aroro Community

Sn	Activity	Frequency/Percentage (%)
1	Instant messaging	60 (49.18)
2	Sharing E-mailing	36(29.51)
3	Playing games	110 (90.16)
4	Downloading soft ware	45 (36.89)
5	Purchasing good	6 (4.92)
6	Doing assignments/ home works	120 (98.36)
7	Watching video/films	121(99.18)
8	News	112(91.80)
9	sexual information/pornography	90(73.77)
10.	Getting medical information	60((49.18)
11	Sport information/activities	60(49.18)
12	Religious information/ activities	80(65.57)
13	Music	23(18.85)
14	Political Issues	10(8.20)

As observed in table 1, The major purposes of using the internet by the adolescents are for watching video/films (99.18%) followed by assignment/ home works (98.36%), news (91.80%), playing games (90.16%),sexual information/pornography (73.77 %) among others while the least was purchasing goods (4.92%) followed by political issues(8.20%), music(18.85%) among others.

Research Question Two: Is there any significant difference between in the internet utilization of adolescents below 15 years and above 15 years?

Table 2:Independent t-test showing the difference in the internet utilisation of adolescents below 15 years and those above 15 years of age

Below 15 years	46	27.8913	8.04219				
15 years and above	76	31.7237	7.85977	1.96	2.587	120	.011

Table 2 shows that there is a significant difference in the internet utilisation of adolescents below 15 years, and those above 15 years (Crit-t = 1.96, Cal.t = 2.587, DF = 120, p (0.011)<.05 level of significance). Hence, adolescent above 15 years of age (\bar{x} = 31.72), had more internet usage than those below 15 years of age (\bar{x} = 27.89) in the study. Therefore, there is a difference in the internet utilization of adolescents below 15 years

and above 15 years in the study.

Research Question Three: Is there any significant difference in the internet utilization of male and female adolescent?

Table 3: Independent t-test showing the difference in the internet utilization of male and female adolescents

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Crit-t	Cal-t.	DF	p value
Male	53	31.8679	8.53959	1.96	1.917	120	.058
Female	69	29.0580	7.60782				

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in the internet utilization of male and female adolescents (Crit-t = 1.96, Cal.t = 1.917, DF = 120, p (0.058) > .05 level of significance). Therefore, internet utilization among adolescent males and females are similar.

Research Question Four: Is there any significant difference in the internet utilization of adolescents in Junior Secondary School and Senior Secondary School

Table 4: Independent t-test showing the difference in the internet utilization of adolescents in Junior Secondary School (JSS) and those in Senior Secondary School (SSS) classes.

Educational Level	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Crit-t	Cal-t.	DF	p value
JSS	73	29.8082	8.3743	1.96	.781	120	.437
SSS	49	30.9796	7.7392				

Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference in the internet utilisation of adolescents in JSS and those in SSS classes (Crit-t = 1.96, Cal.t = .781, DF = 120, p (0.437) > .05 level of significance). Therefore, internet utilization among adolescent based on their educational level is the same in the study.

8. Discussion

The purposes of using the internet by the adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School are for watching video/films followed by assignment/ home works, news, playing games, sexual information/pornography among others while the least was purchasing goods followed by political issues and music. This outcomes contradicts [1] who submitted that the tree most activities used on the internet by adolescents were watching of video/films, social networks and music but the present study findings showed watching video/movie ranked highest followed by social network sites and music were purpose of utilizing internet by adolescents.

Furthermore, internet utilization of male and female was similar based on their exposure to internet utilization. This finding is contrary to [2,6,10,11] that females utilized internet more than males and [9,15,12] found that males were much more often engaged in internet and computers activities than their female mates such as playing games, watching films, listen to music among others. But in line with [8] that gender differences did not exist between male and female utilization. Therefore, there was a significant difference in the internet utilisation of adolescents below 15 years and above 15 years in the study. It was revealed from the mean score that adolescent above 15 years were more utilizers of internet more than that of adolescents below 15 years. It could be explained that the adolescents above 15 years are more matured, exposed and more informed because they are in higher secondary school or higher institutions of learning. This is in line with [7] that adolescents of ages 16-19 years are reported to have more uncontrollable interaction with internet more than younger adolescents within ages 13-15 years. Furthermore, interaction on internet using social media increases with age [11] and at age 13, half of female were chatting on internet compared to one third of male and at 15 years [11]. Internet utilization among adolescent based on their educational level is the similar because there was no significant differences between them in the study. It means whether adolescent is of junior secondary school certificate (JSS) or senior secondary school c (SSS), utilization of internet was in similar way. Similar studies have shown that educational level is significantly and positively related to internet utilization of children over years and school grades (class) have positive relationship with hours which students utilize internet [16] but higher school grade promoted increase in frequent internet use for searching for information [1,2) and students in senior secondary school showed more commitment to internet utilization compared to students in junior secondary school [7].

9. Conclusion

Adolescents in Aroro Community Grammar School utilized internet widely for different purposes such as watching video/films, assignment/ home works, news, playing games, sexual information/pornography, among others but they rarely utilized it for purchasing goods, political issues, music, among others. Furthermore, it was concluded that no significant difference in the internet utilization of male and female adolescents and adolescents in JSS and those in SSS but there is a significant difference in the internet utilization of adolescents below 15 years, and those above 15 years. Hence, adolescents above 15 years of age had more internet usage than those below 15 years of age.

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10. Recommendations

Based on the outcomes of the study, it is recommended that school counselors should encourage the school adolescents to concentrate on the use of internet for educational purposes to promote better academic performance. It is also expected that teachers should monitor the use of internet by the adolescents during school

hours not to hinder school works and the school librarians is expected to organize interactive discussion with the adolescents on the use of internet for academic effectiveness and efficiency.

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