

A Survey of the Influence of Internet Utilization on the Reading Habits of Undergraduate Students in Anambra State

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Abstract

This work surveys the influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in Anambra State. The population for this study was fourth year undergraduate students of the two public universities in Anambra State, representing urban and rural locations. Two hundred randomly selected male and female respondents form the sample. A well-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Four research questions and two hypotheses were raised to guide the study. Research questions were answered with simple percentages while hypotheses were tested with chi-square. The study revealed that the most prevalent positive influence of the Internet on the reading habits of the respondents in the urban area was reading to locate information (98%) while the respondents in the rural area indicated that the two negative influences of the Internet on their reading habits

were distractions from online social activities (97%) and exposure to illicit acts (58%). The study further revealed that there was no significant difference in the views of urban and rural undergraduate students on the positive influence of internet utilization on reading habits. This was shown as 3 out of 5 items had p-value greater than the stipulated 0.05 level significance. Also there was no significant difference in the negative influence as all the 4 items had p-value greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. The study therefore recommends among others the need for students to balance their internet utilization between social and academic uses, which will enable them to be self-directed, self-paced and life-long readers.

Key words: Influence, Internet Utilization, Reading Habit, Undergraduate Students

Introduction

Reading according to Holte (16-21) adds quality to life and provides access to culture and cultural heritage. He asserts that reading empowers and emancipates citizens and brings people together. Okeke (102) reaffirms that the act of reading is a priceless instrument for everyone. It is one of the most important activities of life through which we enter into the life and experiences of others and extend our knowledge, scope of experience and enjoyment. It has critical role to play in the overall development of an individual and the nation at large.

It is principally through reading that people obtain knowledge. People who can neither read nor

write are described as illiterates and such people are often limited to the knowledge gained from oral communication means. Many activities of ordinary life require the ability to read. Moreover reading enriches one's understanding of how language is used, thereby improving one's spoken and written language. Additionally, in-depth reading helps to develop the mind and personality of a person. It enriches intellectual abilities, provides insights into human problems and influences attitudes and behaviour. This, of course, depends on reading the right type of books, books that entertain and at the same time educate. Reading fires the imagination of the person. It adds new wisdom to the minds. As Satija rightly opines, reading loads the mind with new software (55). The individual who reads well has a means for widening mental horizons and for multiplying opportunities of success. Reading is a vital factor affecting intellectual and emotional growth. Sir Richard Steele has logically stated that "Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body (cited in Igwe 28).

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The emergence of the Internet has created an extra-ordinary change in the reading habits of students. Presently, reading is no longer confined to the print reading. The scope of reading sources according to Loan (11-12) has changed drastically in the internet revolution to include websites, web pages, e-mail, discussion boards, chatrooms, instant messaging, blogs, wikis and other multimedia documents. Now the potential reader can access and browse the online information from the whole web while using his/her terminal at home.

The hypertext and hypermedia technologies allow the e-readers to go from one page to another by selecting links in various directions popularly known as surfing. The internet surfing enables students to navigate a world full of inter-connected information, discover new sites read up-to-date information and download things of interest. In the past, students relied heavily on print materials such as newspaper for information because they help to a great extent to create and improve reading habits, knowledge and awareness.

The emergence of the new digital environment has also captured the interest of many researchers. With the growing amount of digital information available, people particularly young adults are found spending more time reading electronic materials (Liu 700-712; Ramirez 61). A growing amount of reading time is spent more on skimming and browsing for information on the Internet. On the other hand, the nature and purpose of reading seems to deviate as well from the traditional reading methods, which are brief, linear and lack the ability to read deeply and to sustain a prolonged engagement in reading (Liu 700-712). Others would argue that people still prefer printed documents when it comes to reading. Both Liu (700-712) and Ramirez (60) provide evidence that people would print from the Internet in order to engage further reading. Liu also provides the evidence that the age factor contributes to reading behaviours on the Internet. In addition, younger people can tolerate more time reading the screen-based materials. The Internet has completely changed our reading habits. People are not buying many newspapers or magazines any more. Why should we buy a book, newspaper or magazine when we can get it for free on the Internet? And we can get the information we

want faster on the Internet than scouring through a magazine for several hours. Magazines and newspapers are going out of business, all because people have turned to one source to get their thirst quenched for knowledge, the internet.

Undergraduate students use the Internet for various reasons. Some use it to exchange ideas, feelings, personal information, pictures and videos (Loving and Ochoa 121-130). It is used for the purpose of retrieving information, connecting with friends and family (regardless of location), keeping up with the latest events and happening and for academic purposes. Online communities can afford students academic assistance and support. The Internet provides easy access to virtual space which students can explore with friends having similar academic needs. Students who may be reluctant to speak up in class find blogs and other interactive internet tools rewarding.

The increase use of the Internet among undergraduate students has no doubt influenced their reading habits and reading comprehension. Reading habit is a deliberate effort towards understanding and acquiring knowledge. It is also a systematic conscious task of acquiring specific knowledge geared toward a set of standards. Reading habits are behaviours that are easily manifested without conscious exertion on the part of the learner.

The introduction of Information and Communication Technology in Nigeria is a welcome development, while its use for education purposes is also of immense benefit, especially in the area of being globally relevant and current. Researches conducted by different research organizations in different countries have shown that the greater percentages of the internet users are mostly undergraduate students. They are well versed in this new technology and are commonly referred to as net generation students. This preponderance of the use of the Internet is supposed to greatly influence their reading habits. Despite the increasing interest of researchers in internet usage by undergraduate students, the number of studies regarding internet use and its influence on undergraduate students reading habits is still limited. Many questions such as gender differences, positive and negative influences of internet use still deserve to be studied. The answers

to these questions therefore, were the subject matter of the present study.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the positive influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in the urban and rural areas?
2. What is the positive influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of male and female undergraduate student?
3. What is the negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in the urban and rural areas?
4. What is the negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of male and female undergraduate students?

Null Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the positive influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas.
2. There is no significant difference in the negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored in the New Literacies Theory.

The term "new literacies" itself is relatively new within the field of literacy studies. The first documented mention of it in an academic article according to Leu (310-336) dates to 1993 in a text by David Buckingham. Its definition remains open, with new Literacies being conceptualized in different ways by different groups of scholars. For example, one group of scholars argues that literacy is now deictic and sees it as continually and rapidly changing as new technologies appear and new social practices for literacy emerge (Leu 310-336). This orientation towards new literacies is largely psycholinguistic in nature.

Commonly recognized examples of new literacies include such practices as instant

messaging, blogging, maintaining a website, participating in online social networking spaces, creating and showing music, videos, pod casting and video casting, photo shopping images and photo sharing, emailing, shopping online, digital storytelling, participating in online discussion lists, emailing and using online chat, conducting and collating online searches, reading, writing and commenting on far fiction, processing and evaluating online information, creating and sharing digital mashups, etc. (Kist 43).

One aspect of new literacies that has attracted researchers' attention is school-age children's online research and comprehension. Donald Leu, Julie Coiro, Jill Casket, Laurie Henry and others attempt to understand how students become adept at reading online to learn and how students acquire the necessary skills, strategies and dispositions required to do so. It includes the skills, strategies, disposition and social practices that take place as students read online information to learn and is based around five practices: Reading to identify important questions; Reading to locate information; Reading to evaluate information critically; Reading to synthesize information; and Reading to communicate information.

Within these five practices reside the skills, strategies and dispositions that are distinctive to online reading habits as well as to others that are also important for offline reading comprehension.

Today's youths may be spending less time using traditional methods for reading. However, they are still reading as they utilize the wide varieties of new technologies especially the Internet for communication, friendship, play and self-expression. The Internet is of great importance in the lives of the youth even though they are in direct competition with traditional activities such as reading (Johnson 18). Young people especially undergraduates have a great desire to own an ipad, cell phone, various gaming systems and other technology gadgets (Thomson and Laing 491). Instead of hanging out at local parks, youths choose to hang out online.

However, in order to frame a basic concept of New Literacies for the purpose of this study, the following definition is used: The new literacies of the Internet include the skills, strategies, and dispositions necessary to successfully use and adapt

to the rapidly changing information and communication technologies and contexts that continuously emerge in our world and influence all areas of our personal and professional lives. These new literacies allow us to use the Internet to identify important questions, locate information, critically evaluate the usefulness of that information, synthesize information to answer those questions, and then communicate the answers to others, (Banks and Banks 390-400).

It is important to understand that these literacies and technologies do not replace the time honored notion of literacy as the rudimentary ability to decode, comprehend and produce written language. They instead accommodate the availability of new tools and forms through which youths communicate. They also give us insights into the interaction of today's youth with technology.

Empirical Review

The Internet is a global system of inter-connected computer networks that use the Standard Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP) to serve billion users worldwide. It is an information carriage using different computer networks. In the light of this, Adegoke (76-92) affirms that "Indeed the internet is also a virtual library which is seen as virtual space containing a vast amount of information and document including books, pictures, video, graphs and musical sounds that can be consulted". However, the growing use of the Internet by students is causing some concerns as a result of conflicting findings in some researches conducted by various researchers. Some are of the view that the Internet has a great influence on student's reading habits, social life and academic performance while some concluded that there was no significant influence of the Internet on the reading habits of undergraduate students.

Ramirez (13) and Liu (700) revealed that with the growing amount of digital information available, people particularly young adults are found spending more time reading electronic materials. Bjork and Turk (22-26) conducted a study to identify how the Internet is overtaking the print media and concluded that the average respondent use print and the Internet equally (50-50). However, heavy use of the Internet drops with age and the population from 35-45 use Internet slightly

more than young and older colleagues. Li-Bi-Shen (559) notes that college students reading habits change from paper-based to internet-based reading. He observed that 83% of students read online information everyday whereas 31.4% of them read newspapers and 33.1% read magazines daily.

Gill (65) opined that while the Internet is a text-saturated world, reading online screens tends to be significantly different from reading printed text. In his study, he reviewed literature from a variety of disciplines on the technological, social, behavioral, and neuro-scientific impacts that the Internet is having on the practice of reading. A particular focus was given to the reading behavior of emerging University students, especially within Canada and the United States. A brief overview was provided of the recent transformation of academic libraries into providers of online digital text in addition to printed books and other materials. On the other hand, it seems it has had some negative effects on their reading habits. Instead of people reading books, they now listen to people talk on YouTube, Face book, etc. So, they do not feel the need to read any longer.

According to the studies carried out by Suhail and Bargees (297-307) and Khalid (203) on University students from Pakistan, it was discovered that majority of the respondents noted that positive usage of the Internet improved students' grades, expanded reading habits as well as information processing skills. To these students, the Internet has proved a helpful tool in their studies. Indeed a proper use of the Internet by students can be of tremendous benefit to them. To Ivwighrehwela and Igare (47-60) the Internet has become the latest source of learning materials as it has a wealth of current study materials which no single library can claim to have. Also, in the studies carried out by Ojedolelun (97-107) and Osunade (20) it was observed that the Internet had become a valuable source of information for students searching for ideas on their assignments or more literature to make their projects more robust. Thus, the Internet has transformed higher education into student-centered rather than institution-centered as there are enough free academic learning resources on the Internet to fill many academic gaps.

Loan (431) conducted a comparative study of the use of Internet by the rural and urban college

students and to identify the problems faced while searching the Internet. The stratified random sampling technique was employed to select students and data collected through a questionnaire. The results revealed that a majority of the students are frequent users of the Internet using it from daily to weekly basis in which use by urban students is more than their rural counterparts. The findings further reveal that rural students mainly use Internet at home whereas urban students highly use it at commercial cyber cafes. A majority of the urban students use Internet primarily for specific information whereas rural students mostly use it for education. A majority of students, irrespective of regional differences, don't use Internet sources like e-magazines, e-journals, e-books, wikis and blogs up to the expected usage. The findings also indicated that both rural and urban students face the same problems with slight variation like information overload (too many hits), followed by Internet illiteracy (lack of internet operating/ searching skills), financial barrier (paid information) and information pollution (too many irrelevant hits).

Loan also conducted a study using college students of Kashmir Valley in India. He discovered that the Internet has led to increased access to information, use of foreign sources, contacts with worldwide readers and time spent on reading. On the other hand, the Internet has led to decreased dependence on print sources, contacts with print source, reading in local languages and reading of books. He, however, concluded that the Internet is a mixed blessing for traditional reading habits.

Research Methodology

The targeted population for this study is the fourth year undergraduate of two universities in Anambra State namely:

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and Anambra State University, Uli. The choice of the two universities was considered appropriately because one is a federal university located at an urban area while the other is a state university located at a rural area. The reason for the choice of 400L undergraduate students was that most of them have spent four years in the university and some are in their final year of study in the university. They have become accustomed with the rigors of academic work and are also conversant with the use of the Internet. Two hundred male and female students were randomly selected using stratified random sampling technique. 100 structured questionnaires were randomly distributed and extracted from 100 undergraduate students of each of the two institutions. The data collected from the questionnaire was analysed using simple percentages, while hypotheses were tested with Chi-Square.

Research Question One: What is the positive influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in the urban and rural areas?

Table 1: Frequency and percentage on the positive influence of the internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students

	Urban (n=100)				Rural (n=100)			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1. Internet utilization helps me to read and locate information	98	98	2	2	98	98%	2	2%
2. It helps me to read and communicate information to others.	27	27	73	73	8	8%	92	92%
3. It helps me to read and evaluate information critically	57	57	43	43	58	58%	42	42%
4. It helps me to read and identify important questions	30	30.7	70	70	33	33%	67	67%
5. Internet utilization helps me to read and synthesize information	12	12	88	88	4	4%	96	96%

The analysis in table 7 indicates that the respondents in urban and rural areas agree that reading to locate information (urban 98%) and (rural 98%), and reading to evaluate information critically (urban 57% and rural 58%) are the positive influence of internet utilization. The percentage responses for the two items are above 50% cut off point.

Research Question Two: what is the positive influence of the internet utilization among male and female undergraduate students?

Table 2: Frequency and percentage on the positive influence of the internet utilization among male and female undergraduate students.

	Male(n=110)				Female (n=90)			
	Yes Freq.	%	No Freq.	%	Yes Freq.	%	No Freq.	%
1. Internet utilization helps me to read and locate information	107	97.3%	3	2.7%	98	98.9%	1	1.1%
2. It helps me to read and communicate information to others.	25	22.7%	85	77.3%	10	11.1%	80	88.9%
3. It helps me to read and evaluate information critically	64	58.2%	46	41.8%	51	56.7%	39	43.3%
4. It helps me to read and identify important questions	31	28.2%	79	71.8%	32	35.6%	58	64.4%
5. Internet utilization helps me to read and synthesize information	51	13.6%	95	86.4%	1	1.1%	89	98.9%

The analysis in table 8 indicates that the male undergraduates agree that reading to locate information (97.3%), reading to evaluate information critically (58.2%) and reading to identify important questions (28.2%) are the positive influence of internet utilization. On the other hand the female undergraduates agree that reading to locate information (98%) and reading to evaluate information critically (56%) are the two positive influence of internet utilization on their reading habits.

Research Question Three: What is the negative influence of the internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in the urban and rural areas?

Table 3: Frequency and percentage on the negative influence of the internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students

	Urban (n=100)				Rural (n=100)			
	Yes Freq.	%	No Freq.	%	Yes Freq.	%	No Freq.	%
1. Online social activities cause distraction while using the internet	97	97%	3	3%	98	98%	2	2%
2. Socialization contact with friends causes distractions while reading on the internet.	43	43%	57	57%	8	8%	92	92%
3. Internet utilization causes exposure to illicit acts	21	21%	79	79%	58	58%	42	42%
4. Internet utilization makes one late to class or miss lectures	18	18%	82	82%	33	33%	67	67%

The analysis in table 9 indicates that the respondents in urban area agree that distractions from online social activities (97%) is the negative influence of the internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students. However, in the rural area the respondents indicated that two items, distractions from online social activities (98%) and exposure to illicit acts (58%), are the negative influence of the internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students.

Research Question Four: What is the negative influence of the internet utilization among male and female undergraduate students?

The analysis in table 10 shows that male and female undergraduate students indicated online social activities (male 95.5%, female 97.8%) as the only negative influence of internet utilization.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the positive influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas.

The analysis in table 15 shows that there was no significant difference in the views of urban and rural undergraduate students on the positive influence of internet utilization on reading habits. This was shown as 3 out of 5 items had p-value greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the groups was not rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage on the negative influence of the internet utilization among male and female undergraduate students

	Male (n=110)				Female (n=90)			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1. Online social activities cause distraction while using the internet	105	95.5%	5	4.5%	88	97.8%	2	2.2%
2. Socialization contact with friends causes distractions while reading on the internet.	52	47.3%	58	52.7%	44	48.9%	46	51.1%
3. Internet utilization causes exposure to illicit acts	22	20%	88	80%	15	16.7%	75	83.3%
4. Internet utilization makes one late to class or miss lectures	23	20.9%	87	79.1%	13	14.4%	77	85.6%

Table 5: Chi-square analysis of the views on positive influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas

	Urban n=(100)		Rural n=(100)		df	χ^2	p-value	Decision
	NO	YES	NO	YES				
1. Internet utilization helps me to read and locate information	2(2%)	98(98%)	2(2%)	98(98%)	1	.00	1.00	NS
2. It helps me to read and communicate information to others.	73(73.)	27(27%)	92(92%)	8(8%)	1	12.50	.00	S
3. It helps me to read and evaluate information critically	43(43%)	57(57%)	42(42%)	58(58%)	1	.02	.88	NS
4. It helps me to read and identify important questions	70(70%)	30(30%)	67(67%)	33(33 %)	1	.21	.65	NS
5. Internet utilization helps me to read and synthesize information	88(88%)	12(12%)	96(96%)	4(4%)	1	4.35	.04	S

The analysis in table 16 indicates that there was no significant difference in the views of urban and rural undergraduate students on the negative influence of internet utilization on reading habits. This was shown by the fact that all the 4 items had p-value greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the groups was not rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Positive Influence of the Internet

Research Question One: What is the positive influence of internet utilization among undergraduate students in the urban and rural areas? The analysis in table 7 outlined the positive influence of

internet as follows: 1. Internet utilization helps me to read and locate information (urban 98%) rural (98%). 2. It helps me to read and communicate information to others (urban 27%) (rural 8%). 3. It helps me to read and evaluate information critically (urban 57%) (rural 58%). 4. It helps me to read and identify important questions (urban 30.7%) (rural 33%). 5. It helps me to read and synthesize information (urban 12%) (rural 4%). The analysis in Table 7 further indicates that the respondents in the urban area agree that the most prevalent positive influences of the internet is reading to locate information (98%). The same applies to their rural counterparts (98%) followed by reading to evaluate information critically (urban 57%, rural 58%). The percentage responses for the two items are above 50% cut off point. Reading to locate information which is the highest positive influence of the internet as indicated by the study is in conformity with the New Literacies Theory adopted by the study. The New literacies theory believes that the Internet enables us to use the internet to read and locate information and to critically evaluate the usefulness of that information. Certainly, the Internet increases access to information sources and bridges the traditional gaps between user and information. Thus there is a need to open more internet access points like cyber cafes, community information centers and information kiosks at needy places to convert non-users into users and give them unrestricted access to information.

Table 6: Chi-square analysis of the views on negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas

	Urban n=(100)		Rural n=(100)		df	χ^2	p-value	Decision
	NO	YES	NO	YES				
1. Online social activities cause distraction while using the internet	3(3%)	97(97%)	4(4%)	96(96%)	1	.15	.70	NS
2. Socialization contact with friends causes distractions while reading on the internet.	57(57%)	43(43%)	47(47%)	53(53%)	1	2.00	.16	NS
3. Internet utilization causes exposure to illicit acts	79(79%)	21(21%)	84(84%)	16(16%)	1	.83	.36	NS
4. Internet utilization makes one late to class or miss lectures	82(82%)	18(18%)	82(82%)	18(18%)	1	.00	1.00	NS

Moreover, the Internet not only provides access to online information sources but increases access to traditional sources as well. It is worthy to note that improved access to relevant information through the Internet leads to increased time spent on reading. The students retrieve with a single click many hits related to their field of interest easily and each hit seems to be more useful and interesting than another. The reading of the relevant hits, one after the other, definitely increases time spent on reading and access to information sources as well. The analysis in table 5 shows there was no significant difference in the views of urban and rural undergraduate students on the positive influence of internet utilization on reading habits. This was shown as 3 out of 5 items had p. value greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the groups was not rejected.

The analysis in table 4 indicates that the male undergraduate students agree that the most prevalent positive influence of the Internet is reading to locate information (97.3%); 58.2% reported that the Internet helps them to read and evaluate information critically, while 51% opined that the Internet helps them to read and synthesize information. On the part of the female undergraduate students, 98% agrees that the Internet helps them to read and locate information while 56% opined that the Internet helps them to read and evaluate information critically. The Internet

provides access to a wide range of online sources available in any part of the globe related to various branches of knowledge which students can easily read, download or print out. It is worthy to note that the new generation students depend on online as well as print sources. Therefore, libraries need to build a hybrid collection to satisfy the reading needs of all.

The Internet may be teaching students to read, research and interact with texts. As a result the study maintains that analysts should not be too fast to label the Internet as a detriment. For example, doing research on the Internet requires higher level reasoning and critical thinking skills than research strategies of the past; students must not only look for appropriate information, but consider factors such as genres and author credibility.

Negative Influence of the Internet

Research Question Three: What is the negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas?

Table 3 indicates that the respondents in urban area agree that the most prevalent negative influence of the Internet is distraction from online social activities (97%). However, in the rural area the respondents indicated two negative influences: distractions from online social activities (98%) and exposure to illicit acts (58%). In as much as the Internet provides useful sources of information, it is

also possible that students may be doing other things during surfing the Internet like online chatting, playing games and watching videos. All these may be responsible for the decreased time spent on reading and hinder positive reading habits. There is an indication that students may easily get distracted when friends communicate with them while they are reading. This clearly shows that despite the positive advantages of the Internet many students use it negatively. Table 3 depicted that most students are distracted while in class or reading because of their involvement in using the social networking sites in the internet.

The analysis in table 4 shows that the most prevalent negative influence of the Internet among male and female undergraduate students is distraction from online social activities (male 95.5%, female 97.8%), followed by increased socialization contact with friends (male 47.3%, female 48.9%). This agrees with the New Literacies theory adopted in this study. According to Johnson (18), today's youths may be spending less time using traditional methods for reading; however, they are still reading as they utilize the wide varieties of new technologies especially the Internet for communication, friendship, play and self-expression. Young people especially undergraduate students have a great desire to own an Ipad, cell phone, various gaming systems. Instead of hanging out at local parks, they choose to hang out with friends online.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban and rural areas.

Using chi-square analysis, table 6 indicates that there is no significant difference in the views of urban and rural undergraduate students on the negative influence of internet utilization on reading habits. This was shown by the fact that all the 4 items namely online social activity, increased socialization contact with friends, exposure to illicit acts and lateness to class or lectures had P. value greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the groups was not rejected.

The findings of the study could be summarized as follows:- the respondents agreed that the positive

influence of internet utilization on the reading habit of undergraduates students in urban and rural areas is reading to locate information; the negative influence of internet utilization on the reading habits of undergraduate students in urban areas is distraction from online social activities; distractions from online social activities and exposure to illicit acts are the reading habits of undergraduate students in the rural areas.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study therefore concludes that internet utilization has more positive influence on the reading habits of undergraduate students irrespective of gender and location. The study therefore advocates the use of positive reading habits among undergraduate students. The researcher recommends that more studies should be carried out on the influence of the Internet on the reading habits of the undergraduate students using tertiary institutions, larger sample size from other states of the Federation. Students should also take the advantage of the ability to use information from the Internet for reading and learning activities. Although students use the Internet extensively, they need to balance the nature of their usage between social and academic use. By learning to use the academic-related resources from the Internet, students will be able to complement the information found with the resources from their school learning. This will enable them to be self-directed, self-paced and life-long readers. There is also the need to create awareness about book repositories, online libraries and book projects, to create a separate search in all famous search engines to digitize the best books from old collection and make them available for users, to have the electronic edition of every new publications available on the web. These will help to increase reading of books while internet surfing. Lecturers should endeavor to give the students reading assignments on the Internet. This should be evaluated by asking questions randomly to students in the class to know whether they have done the assignment or not.

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