

Availability and Use of Smartphone Services by Students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State.

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Abstract

The study examined the availability and use of smart phone services by students of higher institutions in Kaduna State with its main focus on Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The specific objectives are to; find out the services available on smart phones used by students; discover which sites the student visit regularly. The study used primary data and selected a sample of 320. The study use questionnaire and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics using SPSS version 16.0. The findings of the study revealed that the service mostly used by the students is web browser. The study recommended; that the students should create a balance between mobile use and academics. It is concluded that wrong use of smart phone could result to negative consequences that would affect the academic performance of the students.

Keywords: Smart Phones Services, Students, Higher Institutions, and Kaduna State

Introduction

Smart phones are the new generation of mobile phones; they have emerged over the last few years and already have conquered the market. Smart phones with their mini keyboards are not just phones, but have computer functions as email, calendar and address book, and office programs for reading and editing. The multimedia phone features such as camera, video, sound recordings or podcasting is advanced and can compete with specialized equipment. Smart phones can be customized with new software, and the variety of these programs is increasing. The social communication platforms (like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc.), GPS functions and games are especially popular.

Woodcock (2012) claimed that with the increasing number of students who have smart phones, various aspects of their lives change, they begin to operate this gadget for expanding their learning experience. The use of smart phones in learning can lead students to become more aware of the advantages and benefits, such as the ease of learning anywhere and anytime, as well as can motivate students in learning activities. This explains the potential of the technology in opening and expanding students' horizon, especially by the students themselves academically.

Smart phones are advancing at a very quick pace and some have the ability to talk to you, answer questions, turn off your lights when you are not there, open doors, and even watch movies. A Smartphone is a cell phone that allows you to do more than

just make phone calls and send text messages. Smart phones can browse the Internet and run basic software programs like a computer and the user often interacts with the Smartphone by using their finger on the [touch screen](#). There are thousands of Smartphone apps (software programs); including games, personal-use programs, and business-use programs that can all be executed from the phone like a computer, a Smartphone has an operating system on it, like Windows or Mac OS. The four most common are [IOS](#) (created by [Apple](#)), [Android](#) (created by [Google](#)), [BlackBerry](#) (created by Research In Motion), and [Windows Phone](#) (created by [Microsoft](#)).

Problem Statement

The use of phones among the youths especially the students in the higher institutions of learning is growing almost at geometrical level. Many users of the Smart phones seem to be engrossed in the euphoria of the social connectivity enabled by the phones with little or no awareness of the implications. This looming ignorance, no doubt, negatively pounds on the academics of the students of higher institutions. Regrettably, this is happening in the era of the clamour for youth empowerment, which incidentally cannot be actualized without a landmark of academic attainment towards human and societal development.

This informed the imperativeness to examine the smart phone services available and use by students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Kaduna State. In line with this, the researcher intent to bring out smart phone services available and use by students in order to strike a balance between Smartphone usages in the social fields and the academics, thereby impeding the former from encroaching into the sphere of the latter.

Objectives

1. To determine the types of services available on smart phones used by students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State
2. To examine the service sites students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State visit regularly

Literature Review

According to the report titled: “How I Use My Phone” by Dotun (2014) the author explained some of the key findings:

- Students use their Mobile Phones mainly for Social Networking with WhatsApp, Blackberry Messenger and Facebook being the top 3 most used applications (28.4%, 19.4%, and 13.4% respectively). Social Networking is a major reason (89.6%) why students subscribe to internet bundles regularly.
- 49.1% identified browsing on the web as the most common use of their internet data.
- There are high percentages of multiple mobile phone users within the student demographic. This is reflected through the results of the survey, where 44% of mobile phone users own two or more mobile phones. Network issues, multiple

SIM cards and extra battery life were identified as top three reasons for multiple mobile phone ownerships.

- The average monthly allowance of students between the age of 17 and 24 is N5000-10,000 and 79% of students spend at least 10% of their monthly allowance on internet data

Some social networking sites commonly used by students include:

I. **Facebook:** With Facebook you can browse and join networks, pull contacts from a web-based e-mail account, find friends in several ways, upload pictures and video clips etc. Facebook has recently crossed 500 million users and is the most popular social networking site of the world (Cecconi, 2007; www.computerhope.com/jargon/s/smartphone.htm).

II. **WhatsApp:** Is a proprietary cross-platform instant messaging clients for smartphones that operate under a subscription business model. It uses the internet to send text messages, images, videos, user location and audio media messages to other users using standard cellular mobile numbers (<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/whatsapp>).

III. **MySpace:** When you join Myspace, the first step is to create a profile. You then, invite friends to join there and search for your friends already profiled on Myspace (Cecconi, 2007).

IV. **Twitter:** Twitter is a very simple service that is rapidly becoming one of the much talked-about social networking service providers. When you have a Twitter account, you can use the service to post and receive messages to a network of contacts, as opposed to send bulk email messages (Cecconi, 2007).

V. **Blog:** A blog (short for [weblog](#)) is a personal online journal that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption. Blogs are defined by their format: a series of entries posted to a single page in reverse-chronological order. Blogs generally represent the personality of the author or reflect the purpose of the [Web site](#) that hosts the blog. Topics sometimes include brief philosophical musings, commentary on Internet and other social issues, and links to other sites the author favors, especially those that support a point being made on a post.

VI. **Instagram:** is an online [mobilephoto-sharing](#), [video-sharing](#) and [social networking](#) service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them on a variety of social networking platforms, such as [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Tumblr](#) and [Flickr](#). Originally, a distinctive feature was that it confined photos to a square shape, similar to Kodak Instamatic and Polaroid images, in contrast to the 4:3 aspect ratio typically used by mobile device cameras. In August 2015, version 7.5 was released, allowing users to post photos captured in any aspect ratio. Users can also apply digital [filters](#) to their images. The maximum duration for Instagram videos is 15 seconds (<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/instagram>).

Other social networks include; 2go, Bebo, Friendster, Ning, Classmates, Tagged, My Yearbook etc. (Cecconi, 2007).

Methodology

Survey research method was adopted for the study. Surveys represent one of the most common types of quantitative, social science research. The population of the study comprised of students from all the faculties in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for 2014/2015 academic session. The population size of the entire students (undergraduate) of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for 2014/2015 academic session is 33,691. The study used primary data and selected a sample of 320 (Krejcie & Morgan 1970). The study employed questionnaire and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics using SPSS version 16.0.

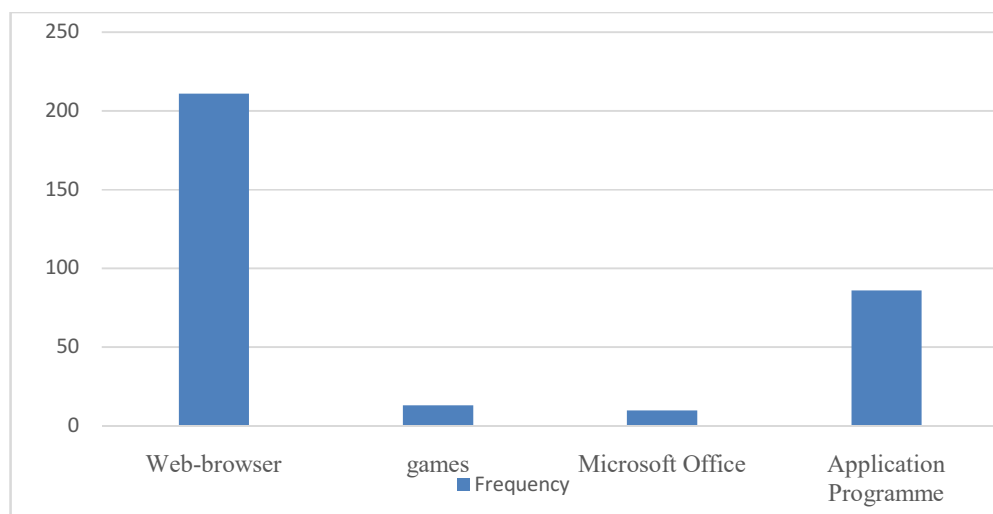
Findings and Discussion

Types of Services Use by Students on the Smartphone

Table 1: Types of services Used Student's on SmathPhones

Types of Services	Frequency	Percentage
Web-browser	211	65.9
Game	13	4.1
Microsoft	10	3.1
Application Programme	86	26.9
Total	320	100.0

Sources: Field Survey, 2016



Source: Field Survey 2016

It is observed that many students use their smart phone for different services. Therefore, one of the objectives of the study is to examine the different types of services used by the students on the smart phones in A.B.U, Zaria. Table 1 shows that 211 students or 65.9% are using web browser. This is followed by application

programme with 86 or 26.9% of the students. However, the result shows that the least service used by the students on smart phone is Microsoft Office which has only 10 or 3.1% of the students. This finding can be supported by figure 4.1 which shows that the type of services mostly used by the students is web browser followed by application programme. The figure also suggests that the least services used by the student are Microsoft word.

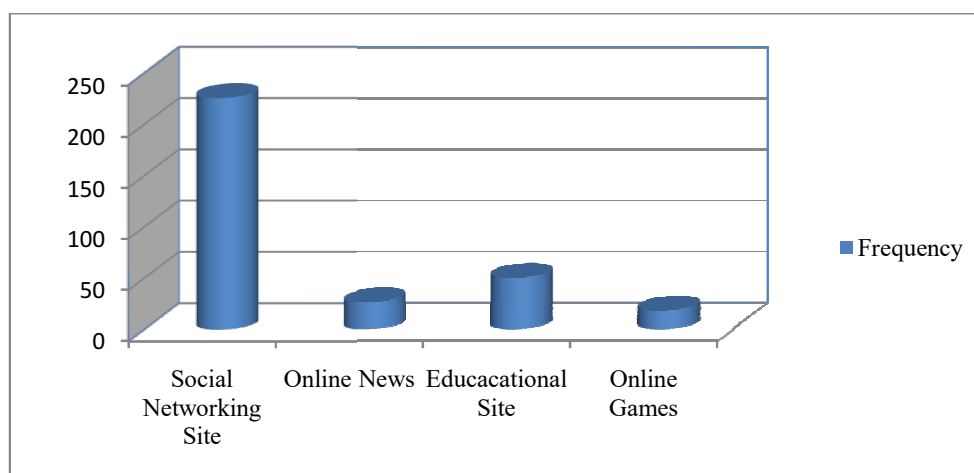
The implication of these findings is that students of higher institution of learning in the study area use their smart phones less for Microsoft office which is the main services used for preparation of lecture notes, assignment, individual or group presentation and academic research. Furthermore, students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria use their smart phones more for the web-browser services which is often linked to social media services and these may likely result to poor academic performance among the students. These findings agree with the position of Enikoumehin (2011), Olubiyi (2012), Olowu (2012) and Kathrn (2014) whose previous study revealed that students of higher institution of learning use their smart phones more for the web-browser services which is often linked social to media services and result to poor academic performance among students.

Sites that Students Visit Regularly with Smart phones

Table 2: Sites that Students Visits Regularly with Smart phones

Sites	Frequency	Percentage
Social Networking	226	70.6
Online News	26	8.1
Educational	50	15.6
Online Games	18	5.6
Total	320	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016



Source: Field Survey, 2016

There are various sites on the internet which can be used by the students. Table 2 shows various options available to the students. The results show that, the sites that students visit most is the social networking site with the frequency of 226 or 70.6%. This is followed by educational site with the frequency of 50 or 15.6%. The sites with the lowest frequency are online games which has only 18 or 5.6% of the students. This finding can be supported by figure 2 which shows that social networking sites has the highest frequency followed by educational site. Nevertheless, the figure suggests that an online game has the lowest frequency of 18 or 5.6%.

The implication of these findings is that majority of the students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria(70.6%.) in Kaduna State use their smart phones to regularly visit social networking sites instead of visiting educational websites that would enhance their learning in school especially as regards to helping them source for materials in journal articles, textbooks, official reports among others which can be used for preparation of lecture notes, assignment, individual or group presentation and academic research. Furthermore, students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria use their smart phones more for the web-browser services which is often linked to social media sites distract students of higher institutions from learning and subsequently result to poor academic performance among the students. These findings agree with the position of Moon (2011), Kadala (2011), David (2012), Olubiyi (2012), Olowe (2012) Jwaifell (2013), and Kathrn (2014) whose previously conducted study revealed that students of higher institution of learning uses their smart phones more for the web-browser services which is often linked social media services and result to poor academic performance among students.

Major Findings

1. Findings from the study revealed that students of A.B.U, Zaria use less Microsoft on their smart phones which is the main tool used for preparation of lecture notes, assignment, individual or group presentation and academic research. Furthermore, students of A.B.U, Zaria use their smart phones more for the web-browser services which is often linked to social media services and these may likely result to poor academic performance among the students.
2. Findings from the study revealed that majority of the students of A.B.U, Zaria Kaduna State use their smart phones no social networks instead of visiting educational websites that would enhance their learning in school especially as regards to helping them source for materials in journal articles, textbooks, official reports among others which can be used for preparation of lecture notes, assignment, individual or group presentation and academic research. Furthermore, students of A.B.U, Zaria use their smart phones more for social networking which distract them from learning and subsequently result in poor academic performance.

Conclusion

In as much as smart phone is a desirable and needed technological instrument which is appropriately suited for teaching and learning process, it could be concluded that students visit social networking sites instead of educational sites, which result to negative consequences that would affect the academics of the students.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Students of A.B.U, Zaria Kaduna State should use services on smart phone such as Microsoft office which is the main tool used for preparation of lecture notes, assignment, individual or group presentation and academic research instead of using more of the web-browser services which is often linked to social media services and these may likely result to poor academic performance among them.
2. Students of A.B.U, Zaria Kaduna State should visit educational websites that would enhance their learning in school especially with regards to helping them source for materials in journal articles, textbooks, official reports among others which can be used for preparation of lecture notes, assignment, individual or group presentation and academic research instead of social networking sites

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