THE INTERNET AND ITS IMPACT ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

The internet has since its inception contributed to the societal development of today's society. Today, it has become indispensible to the day-to-day activities of millions of individuals and organizations. The internet offers information to practically every aspect of human life and this portend danger for the adolescents in today's society. Scholars have highlighted the fragile mind adolescents have and the impact their environment and social media have on their behaviour, religion and educational performance. As such, the relationship between the internet and morality cannot be overlooked. This study therefore seeks to critically investigate the impact of the internet and moral development of secondary school students. Three objectives and research questions guided the study. The study employed a descriptive survey design and selected a sample population of 349 students in secondary schools in Rivers State using simple random sample method. Instrument for this research was a self-structured questionnaire titled Internet and its Impact on Moral Development of Secondary School Students in Rivers State Questionnaire (IIMDSSSQ). In answering the research questions and testing the hypothesis, mean and z-test were employed respectively. The findings from this research established that internet services have a negative correlation on moral and social development, sexual behaviour and pattern of dressing. The study amongst other recommendations highlighted that; State Ministry of Education and other stakeholders in the education sector should as a matter urgent importance introduce moral education as one of the compulsory subjects in secondary schools in Rivers State to enable the students to be guided on the use of internet services in today's digital world where learning are more facilitated electronically.

Keywords: Internet and moral development

Introduction

The internet from its inception as an idea during the 1950s has developed into a global system of interlinked networks of company which employ technologies to link devices across the globe. Its ease and speed has seen its employment become globally accepted. In Africa, and Nigeria in particular, the internet has proven to be an innovational technology that has continued to promote the virtues of globalization. Today its application and usage can be seen in every aspect of the economy including education of secondary students. This has seen the interest of students in the use of the internet grow as a result of the assurance that any information they desire can be obtained from the internet. However, the global increase in the use of the internet comes with its disadvantages which include cyber bullying, cybercrimes, pornography to mention but a few. Studies have shown that these most disadvantages are potentially related to teenagers especially secondary (Karacic, 2017). Man has always been faced with challenges with regards to communication in that as man migrated far from each other, the challenge on how to reach one another was posed.

According to Okunna and Omenugha (2012:5) communication can be described as an "integration process through which individuals or groups relate to each other and share information, experiences and culture". Hence, it is as a result of these interactions that the distance or misunderstandings can be bridged and education passed from one person to another. It is the procedure that involves the transmission or information and common understanding from one individual to another (Lunenburg, 2010). Education on its part can be defined as the practice through which the society seeks to intentionally transfer its accrued knowledge, beliefs, values, practices and customs from one generation to another (Obineaju, 2014). Scholars have highlighted the impact education has on societal, technological and national advancement (Ozturk, 2001; Maekae, 2013). Hence, the level of technological development of a country is an index of economic strength and standard of living of a country.

Statement of the Problem

The means through which man communicates has continued to evolve over generations till its present state in today's digital society. The adaptation and implementation of the internet in education has continued to rise and most developing countries are left behind in the application of technological/IT facilities in education. However, in as much as these developing

countries need to continuously integrate technological advancement into all areas of their educational system with regards to internet services, there is growing concern regarding the increase in moral decay being experienced across the globe that has been influenced by internet usage. This moral decadence crisis is therefore constitutes a societal developmental challenge that urgently needs to addressed if any country is to experience genuine societal and national development.

Objectives of the Study

Three specific objectives provided focus for the study:

1. Determine the effect of computer and internet services on the moral and social development of secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. Examine the effects of internet services on the sexual behaviour of secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. Determine the effect of internet on value development of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research question guided the research;

1. How does the use of internet services impact the moral and social development of secondary school students in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does the use of internet services affect the sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students in Rivers State?
3. What are the effects of the use of internet services on social value development of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

In line with the objectives of the research, the following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between the use of internet services on sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students
2. There is no significant relationship between the use of internet services on the value development of secondary school students in rivers state.
3. There is no significant relationship between internet services on the pattern of dressing of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Methodology

This study strictly focuses on examining the impact of internet services on moral and social development of senior

secondary pupils in Rivers State, Nigeria. This study will be concentrated in Rivers State. The state has twenty-three local government areas and is and one of the states that constitute the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The capital of Rivers State is Port Harcourt. It has three Senatorial Districts. The population consists of all secondary school students in Rivers State numbering about three thousand, four hundred and ninety six (3,496) students' drawn from the three senatorial districts that make up Rivers State, namely Rivers West senatorial district. The sample for this study consists of 349 students, which represents 10% of the total population for the study drawn from the schools in the three senatorial districts that make up Rivers State. The selection of the sample was based on simple random sampling technique. The Instrument employed for data collection was a [15] Questioned self-developed questionnaire titled "Internet and its Impact on Moral Development of Secondary School Students in Rivers State Questionnaire (IIMDSSSQ)" which was divided into two parts: Part A containing the background or demographic information of the students (respondents) while part B contained the 15 structured questions that covered the areas the study. These 15 questions were structured using a modified 4-point likert scale thus:

Strongly Agree	(SA)	4 Points
Agree	(A)	3 Points
Disagree	(D)	2 Points
Strongly Disagree	(SD)	1 Point

(I)   Validation

The study was validated through face and content validity and reliability coefficient established to be 0.70 employing the tested employing the Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient (r).

(II)   Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypothesis.

Result Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: To what extent does the use of internet services affect the moral and social development of secondary school students in Rivers State?
Table 1.0: Mean score analysis of the use of internet services on the moral and social development of secondary school students in Rivers State?

S/No	STATEMENTS OR ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	TOTAL	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1.	I like socializing with friends on internet for fun.	214	87	4	44	349		
		(856)	(261)	(8)	(44)	(1163)	3.33	1.39
2.	I use internet for reading to enhance academic performance	126	98	69	56	349		
		(504)	(294)	(138)	(56)	(992)	2.84	1.06
3.	I use internet to watch porn pictures and videos	71	26	101	152	349		
		(284)	(78)	(202)	(152)	(716)	2.05	0.99
4.	I like using internet to read moral tips	60	40	109	160	349		
		(240)	(120)	(178)	(160)	(698)	2.00	0.98
5.	Internet has corrupt my sense of morality	171	82	54	42	349		
		(684)	(246)	(108)	(42)	(1080)	3.10	1.28

Data on Table 1.0 showed that items 1, 2 & 3 had weighted mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were all adjudged on the use of internet services on the moral and social development of secondary school students in Rivers State. In summary, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.66 above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that the I like socializing with friends on internet for fun, I use internet for reading to enhance academic, I use internet to watch porn pictures and videos, I like using internet to read moral tips and Internet has corrupt my sense of morality.

Research Question 2: How does the use of internet services affect the sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Table 2.0: Mean ($\overline{X}$) score analysis of the use of internet services affectthe sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students in Rivers State.

S/No	STATEMENTS OR ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	TOTAL	$\overline{X}$	S.D
6.	I like internet because it has made me develop immoral sexy behaviour.	174 (696)	78 (234)	38 (76)	59 (59)	349 (1065)	3.05	1.23
7.	Since I started using internet my attitude towards sex has increased.	201 (804)	68 (204)	29 (59)	51 (51)	349 (1118)	3.20	1.30
8.	I get sexually aroused easily due to my exposure to internet.	184 (736)	93 (279)	49 (98)	23 (23)	349 (1136)	3.25	1.34
9.	My exposure to internet has made me develop positive sexual behaviour.	88 (352)	244 (732)	12 (24)	5 (5)	349 (1113)	3.19	1.31
10.	I don't like internet because it exposure to risk sexual life.	54 (216)	43 (129)	201 (402)	51 (51)	349 (888)	2.28	1.00

Based on the data presented on Table 2.0, it showed that item (6-9) had weighted mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were all adjudged on the use of internet services on the sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students inRivers State. In summary, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.99 above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that I like internet because it has made me develop immoral sexy behaviour, since I started using internet my attitude towards sex has increased, I get sexually aroused easily due to my exposure to internet and My exposure to internet has made me develop positive sexual behaviour.

Research Question 3: What are the effects of the use of internet services on social value development of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Table 3.0: Mean score analysis of use of internet services on social value development of secondary school students in Rivers State.

S/No	STATEMENTS OR ITEMS	SA	A	SD	D	TOTAL	$\overline{X}$	S.D
11.	Internet has taught me how to respect my elders	55	10	84	200	349		
		(220)	(30)	(1680	(200)	(618)	1.77	0.96
12.	I learnt how to show brotherly love on internet	173	88	22	66	349		
		(692)	(264)	(44)	(200)	(1066)	3.05	1.23
13.	Internet has expose me to cyber crime	182	91	50	26	349		
		(728)	(274)	(100)	(26)	(1128)	3.23	1.33
14.	Internet has made me understand that greeting your elders is not important	94	181	41	33	349		
		(376)	(543)	(84)	(33)	(1036)	2.97	1.14
15.	I learnt how to listen to good advice from internet.	213	67	38	31	349		
		(852)	(201)	(76)	(31)	(1160)	3.32	1.37

Based on the data presented on Table 4.3, it showed that item (12-15) had weighted mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were all adjudged on the use of internet services on social value development of secondary school students inRivers State. In summary, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.86 above

Testing of Hypotheses

The hypotheses stated in this study were tested statistically in this section using Z-test. The null hypotheses were formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the use of internet

the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that I learnt how to show brotherly love on internet, Internet has expose me to cyber-crime, Internet has made me understand that greeting your elders is not important and I learnt how to listen to good advice from internet.

services and the sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Z - Test of significant Relationship between the use of Internet Services and the Sexual Behaviour and Development of Secondary Schools Students in Rivers State

Using the formula $Z = \frac{\bar{x}-u}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}}$

Where n = number of sample size or observations made when collecting data

U = True mean or cumulative mean

σ = Level of significance

$\bar{x}$ = Mean of the sample

$\therefore$ Substituting into the equation above

Where n = 349, u = 2.664, σ = 0.05, $\bar{x}$ = 69.8

$\therefore Z = \frac{69.8-2.664}{0.05/\sqrt{349}}$

$= \frac{67.136}{0.05/18.68}$

$= \frac{67.136}{2.676}$

$= 25.07$

Since the Zcal = 25.07 and the z critical are 2.060 at 0.05 significance level, the researcher reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the use of internet services and the sexual behaviour and development of secondary schools students inRivers State. Therefore internet services had a significant relationship on the sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the uses of internet services and the social value development of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Z – test of Significant Relationship between the uses of Internet Services and the Social Value Development of Secondary school Students in Rivers State

Using the formula $Z = \frac{\bar{x}-u}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}}$

Where n = number of sample size or observations made when collecting data

U = True mean or cumulative mean

σ = Level of significance

$\bar{x}$ = Mean of the sample

Where n = 349, u = 2.994, σ = 0.05, $\bar{x}$ = 69.8

Substituting into the equation above

$\therefore Z = \frac{\bar{x}-u}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}}$

$= \frac{69.8-2.994}{0.05/\sqrt{349}}$

$= \frac{66.806}{0.05/18.68}$

$= \frac{66.806}{2.676}$

$= 24.96$

Since the Z-calculated = 24.96 and the z critical are 2.064 at 0.05 significance level, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis

that there is no significant relationship between the uses of internet services and the social value development of secondary school students inRivers State. Therefore, internet services had a significant relationship on the social value development of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between internet services and the pattern of dressing of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Z- test of Significant Relationship between Internet Services and the Pattern of Dressing of Secondary School Students in Rivers State

Using the formula $Z = \frac{\bar{x}-u}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}}$

Where n = number of sample size or observations made when collecting data

U = True mean or cumulative mean

σ = Level of significance

$\bar{x}$ = Mean of the sample

$\therefore$ Substituting into the equation above

Where n = 349, u = 2.868, σ = 0.05, $\bar{x}$ = 69.8

$\therefore Z = \frac{\bar{x}-u}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}}$

$$= \frac{69.8 - 2.868}{0.05/\sqrt{349}}$$

$$= \frac{66.932}{0.05/18.68}$$

$$= \frac{66.932}{2.677}$$

$$= 25.00$$

Since the Z-calculated is 25.00 and the z critical are 2.060 at 0.05 significance level, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between internet services and the pattern of dressing of secondary school students inRivers State. Therefore, internet services had a significant relationship on the pattern of dressing of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Discussion of findings

The study reveals that internet services had a negative correlation on the moral and social development of secondary school students inRivers State. The respondents agreed that I like socializing with friends on internet for fun, I use internet for reading to enhance academic, I use internet to watch porn pictures and videos, I like using internet to read moral tips and internet has corrupt my sense of morality. This is supported with the view of Weilenmann and Larsson (2001) conducted field studies of public use of mobile phones among teenagers in

Sweden. Their study shed light on how the mobile phone has come to be used as a tool for local social interaction, rather than merely as a device for communication with dislocated others. Their observations pointed towards the collaborative nature of mobile phone use. The researchers examined how phones were shared and how their field data could be of use when designing new mobile technology and services for the youth. Furthermore, the study also revealed that the use of internet services had a negative correlation on sexual behaviour and development of secondary school students inRivers State. This work is in line with the view of Byron (2008:51), who explains that 'there is a growing body of evidence on the effects of sexually explicit material on attitudes, values and beliefs'. According to Peter & Valkenburg (2006) found correlations between exposure to sexually explicit online content and attitudes towards sex, such as respect for women, and understanding of sex as related to love and compassion for others. Anegative correlation between internet services and social value development of secondary school students inRivers State was also identified. The respondents agreed that I learnt how to show brotherly love on internet, Internet has expose me to cyber-crime, Internet has made me understand that greeting your elders is not important

and I learnt how to listen to good advice from internet. However, this is contrary to the view of some teachers and pupils stated that the motivational impact of internet services positively affected school attendance. Some teachers and adults associated with education believed that internet services could have some negative effects on attendance and behaviour, but little evidence was found to support these beliefs (Passey, Rogers, Machell and McHugh, 2004).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study revealed that all these independent variables: moral and social development, sexual behaviour, value development, was affected by the internet services as a result internet services have a negative correlation social and moral development. Much as the developing nations need to integrate internet services into all of their education system there is need to marry it with social and moral development because of the eminent looming crisis in moral decadence experience in developed nations of the world which have been partially attributed to internet services.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

1. The State Ministry of Education and other Stakeholders in the Education Sector should as a matter of urgency introduce moral education as one of the compulsory subjects in secondary schools in Rivers State to enable the students to be guided on the use of internet services in today digital world where learning are more facilitated electronically.

2. The parents and teachers of the students should institute a proper checking mechanism to control the excesses of these students towards sexually related sites on internets services.

3. The stakeholders in education and parents should expose and inculcate moral education into the students based on the values of the society to ensure that they are not misled by the expose to internet services.

4. Moral education should be inculcated into internet services to checks the moral excesses of the internet services and build positive social and moral value among secondary school students in Rivers State.

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