

**ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF INTERNET USE ON TEACHING AND  
RESEARCH ACTIVITIES OF ACADEMIC STAFF OF FACULTY OF LAW,  
UNIVERSITY OF JOS**

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**Abstract**

The study was carried out to evaluate the impact of internet use on teaching and research activities of the academic staff of the faculty of law, University of Jos. It sought to find out the available resources for use in teaching and research, the extent of internet services rendered by the law faculty, the benefit of using the internet for teaching and research, the level of usage of the internet, problems and strategies for enhancing the use of the internet by the academic staff in law faculty. A descriptive survey design was used for the study with a population of 66 staff. The sample size is also 66, since the population is manageable the entire population was used. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire with 43 questions items which were appropriately validated by three research experts. Percentages, mean scores and frequency tables were used in analyzing the data to answer the research questions mapped out for the study. The findings revealed that CD-Rom database, online catalogue, e-journal, internet web, e-mail, e-books, online databases, e-thesis, and digital archives are available for teaching and research. The findings also show that the internet provides a lot of information resources which could be used to improve teaching and research. The findings of the study revealed that the extent of internet service in the faculty of law is great. The study also discovered that the provision of current information, the ability to access global information collaboration among colleagues, an avenue for researchers and exposure among others are some of the perceived benefits of the internet. It was found that lack of governmental and institutional support for training, unstable power supply, unstable internet connectivity, and system breakdown are some of the problems affecting internet use. The study recommends adequate governmental and institutional funding for training and ICT facilities, stable internet connectivity, provision of stable power supply, use of train the trainer techniques and training and retraining of academic staff on internet usage for easy and effective utilization of the internet services are some of the strategies for enhancing the use of the internet.

**Keywords:** Internet usage, Research, Teaching, Faculty of Law, University of Jos

## Introduction

The internet has been increasingly involved in human affairs to the extent that every government, institution, industrialist, international and national organization as well as individual is duly establishing its presence on the internet for effective information dissemination and service delivery. Reitz (2004) noted that the internet was developed from a United States Department of Defense Project, during the cold war years. The internet at its early stage was also to ensure that there was no break in communication during the critical period of the cold war even if some of the sites were destroyed by the nuclear attack (Ibegwam, 2002). Internet today has increased to a level that every enlightened mind desires to have at least an e-mail address.

Today, new development brought about by information and communication technology is increasing; it provides users with the privilege of exploring the world from their office, library, or even at home in search of information. Where an internet service is available, the acquisition of knowledge does not pose any form of difficulty. Information and communication technologies offer unique and exciting opportunities for teaching, teaming and research. Selinger (2000), observed that all forms of learning are enhanced by ICT (Information Communication Technology), especially problem-solving situations, which readily lend themselves to ICT, and lecturers and students can learn to develop skills such as being systematic, logical and deductive through engaging themselves with carefully selected computer-based tasks. According to Onwuozo (2005), the internet is designed to allow an arbitrarily large number of networks to be interconnected and to be operated independently. A few of the most popular ones include e-mail, www (World Wide Web), FTP (File Transfer Protocol), Usenet and Telnet. He further stated that the internet and its technology continue to have a profound impact in promoting the sharing of

information, especially in the academic world.

It is generally believed that the new information and communication technologies can extend knowledge and education to the poor and marginalized people, and more so as the internet increasingly gains prominence as a tool to deliver better education outcomes more effectively. There is no doubt that the impact of the internet on the university education sector has been particularly revolutionary and it has facilitated efficient and effective learning and research environment.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The explosive development of the internet in recent years has changed the way we create, analyze and share knowledge. The academic staff needs varied information in order to carry out the basic academic functions assigned to them in the institution. The internet is of tremendous importance in improving the service provided by the academic staff as it ensures speed, efficiency, provision of up-to-date information, access to endless sources of information, collaboration and development of knowledge. The academic staff without internet literacy skills is shortsighted, limited and somehow localized which results in to decrease in access to information, poor performance and low productivity.

Literature reveals that some of the academic staff especially in developing countries do not make equitable use of the internet. Notwithstanding the benefits attached to the acquisition of internet literacy skills of the academic, it appears that very little progress has been made as a result of some problems. These perceived problems could be attributed to some challenges. The knowledge of these challenges is essential for any academic staff to be aware of in the course of acquiring internet literacy skills for teaching, learning and research activities. This shows that there is still a gap which needs to be filled to achieve effective internet skills amongst this,

academic staff. Hence, the need for the study is designed to assess the impact of internet use on teaching and research activities of the academic staff of the faculty of law, University of Jos.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objective of the study is to appraise the impact of internet use on the teaching and research activities of the academic staff of the faculty of law, University of Jos.

The specific objectives of the study include the following:

- i. To determine the resources employed for the provision of internet services by the faculty of law, the University of Jos.
- ii. To determine the extent of the internet services rendered by the Faculty of Law, University of Jos;
- iii. To also determine the level of adequacy of the resources for internet services provided by the Faculty of Law, University of Jos.
- iv. To identify the constraints/problems encountered in the use of the internet by the Faculty of Law, University of Jos.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- i. What are the resources employed for the provision of internet services by the faculty of law, university of Jos?
- ii. What is the extent of the internet services rendered by the Faculty of Law, University of Jos?
- iii. What is the level of adequacy of the resources for internet services provided by the Faculty of Law, University of Jos?
- iv. What are the constraints/problems encountered in the use of the internet by the Faculty of Law, University of Jos?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **An overview of the Internet Resources**

Internet means international Telecommunication Network, Aina (2004). It is defined as a network that connects thousands of other computer networks. The internet evolved from a 960s US Defense Department experiment in computer

networking called ARPANET. Its purpose was to provide efficient communication between different types of computers over a large geographical area. The goal was to allow a large community of users to share resources that were available on these computers.

The internet is accessible to all kinds of people, academics, the military, business, students, school children, etc. Through the internet one can access bibliographic and full-text databases, library catalogues on OPAC, electronic mail, newspapers, magazines, constitutions of various countries, electronic commerce, etc. One of these most important facilities on the internet is the World Wide Web which consists of a series of various compositions that are linked to the internet through the use of hypertext transfer protocol (Http). People create information on the web and there is no central organization that controls the web. Websites can be created through a browser and each website has its universal resources locator (ULR)- website address Aina (2004).

Igun (2010) also state that the internet provides services in retrieving and disseminating information to and from computers on the network. Integrating information technology in the library will help in the automation of library materials and sharing resources with other libraries locally or internationally, especially with the introduction of the internet, libraries can receive information from any part of the world that belongs to the system.

#### **Services on the internet**

There are thousands of internet 'home pages' which serve as information sources for institutions and organizations. Most universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education throughout the world have established their presence on the internet, thereby making it possible for researchers to access past and current research publications. Prospective students can also access information on courses being offered by institutions as well as their admission

requirements. There are also numerous individual home pages, where people construct a site either as a means of expressing their creativity or for a very limited range of potential visitors. The World Wide Web also provides very easy access to some government documents and legislative materials (Ehikhamenor, 2003). The internet has been recognized as a medium for information dissemination and a vehicle for collaborative interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographical limitations of the space (Singh 2002).

The internet according to Luambano and Nawe (2004) has made it possible for scholars at different locations on the globe to exchange ideas on various fields of study and also allows students and lecturers to communicate both within and across international borders. The history of internet accessibility and use in Nigeria started in 1991 when a few pioneering groups began to offer limited e-mail services (Eshkels, 2001). In July 1995, the regional information network for Africa (RINAF) commenced.

### **Internet Connectivity in Nigerian Universities**

Network connectivity is a means of empowerment and development for society' especially in an academic community because of the need to study, research, publish and communicate with the outside world. (Adaomi, 2005). Networking is the communication of data and information. Aina (2004) defines network as a collection of computers and devices connected by communication channels that facilitate communications among users and allows users to share resources with other users.

There are different types of networks but the prominent ones are the local area network and the Wide Area Network. The Local Area Network (LAN) is a collection of computers that share hardware, software and data. All the computers are hooked together through communication media so that each can

benefit from the resources of the network. They generally cover limited distances such as home, school, computer laboratory office building, or closely positioned groups of buildings. The wide area' network (WAN) is a network over wide geographical distances that are within a province, country or the globe etc. using a communications channel that combines many types of media such as telephone lines, cables and airwaves. Networks can be used for so many purposes but the following according to Barry (2002) are the major reasons why universities go into network connection:

- To end the intellectual isolation of Nigerian students, lecturers and researchers.
- To expand internet access to higher education with minimal capital costs
- To improve standards of education and currency of knowledge.
- To optimize utilization of academic resources regardless of the physical location.
- To encourage local and worldwide academic and research collaboration.

Lancaster & Sandore (1997) described the network concisely as an electronic source that is now having the most significant impact on the education system, operation and professional activities of all aspects of life. This strength of impact is due to its multifaceted nature. Some of the applications of the network include fax messages, e-mail messages, voice mail, video conferencing, internet/intranet, virtual office etc. The explosive growth of mobile computing and wireless networks has helped educational institutions to be at the forefront of this changing world (Khali, 2004). Alibi cited in Agboola, (2000) observed that there is a serious application of information communication technology in Nigerian universities, and many educational institutions have been labouring to achieve connectivity to enhance their productivity and objectivities, He also stated that few universities in Africa have achieved satisfactory internet connectivity, some through dial-up and others through wireless

options. Presently, access to the internet within the university networks is regulated and prospective users are expected to subscribe through the management information system (MIS) unit of the university. Challenges to Effective Internet Implementation in Universities include; Choice of software, Insufficient power supply, Poor bandwidth, financial constraint, Lack of internet skills etc.

### **METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE**

This study adopted a descriptive survey, according to Ugodulunwa, (2008) descriptive

survey is used when investigating existing conduction concerning a population. The study population consists of staff of the faculty of Law, University of Jos which are 66 in number. Due to the manageable number of the study population (66), the entire study population will be sampled. The instrument for data collection is the structured questionnaire which had gone through the face and content evaluation as well as reliability tests. The questionnaire was administered using face-to-face contact. The data will be analysed using frequency tables and mean scores with the mean score being.

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the result of the study about the research questions and the questionnaires.

**Table 1: Distribution and return of the questionnaires**

<b>Population</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>No. Distributed</b>	<b>No. Returned</b>	<b>% Returned</b>
Faculty of law	66	66	60	90

From the population of 66 academic and non-academic staff in the faculty of law, a sample of 66 respondents which represents the total population was used. Out of the 66 questionnaires administered, 6 were wrongly completed and 60 were correctly completed and returned which represents 90%.

#### **Section A: Bio data**

**Table 2: Age of the Respondents**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
5-29	3	5
30-34	5	25
35 and above	42	70
Total	60	100

Table 2 reveals that 3(5%) respondents are from 25-29 years, 5(25%) respondents are from 30-34 years and 42 (70%) respondents are from 35 years and above. This shows that most of the respondents are from 35 years and above.

**Table 3: Sex of the respondent**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Male	30	50
Female	30	50
Total	60	100

Table 3 reveals that 30(45%) of the respondents are male and 30(45%) of the respondents are female.

**Table 4: Respondents Rank**

Items	Frequency	Percentage %
Professor	3	5
Senior lecturer	9	15
Lecturer 1 & II	6	10
Assistant lecturer	12	20
Graduate assistant	3	5
Others	27	45
Total	60	100

Table 4 indicates that 3(5%) respondents are Professors/Associate, 9(15%) respondents are senior lecturers, 6(10%) respondents are lecturers I&II, 12(20%) respondents are Assistant lecturers, 3(5%) respondents are Graduate assistant, while 27(45%) respondents constitute others.

## SECTION B: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### Research Question One: What are the available e-resources for teaching and research?

Table 5: Response on E-resources available for teaching and research

s/n	Items	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	Mean	Decision
1	CD-Rom database	9	21	18	12	2.5	Accepted
2	Online Catalogue	24	30	6	-	3.3	Accepted
3.	E-journals	24	24	9	3	3.2	Accepted
4	Internet/Web	27	18	9	6	3	Accepted
5	E-mails	21	24	9	6	3	Accepted
6	E-books	24	18	9	9	2.9	Accepted
7	Online data bases	21	12	9	6	2.4	Rejected
8	E-thesis	12	18	21	6	2.5	Accepted
9	Digital archives	9	15	24	12	2.8	Rejected
	Total					2.8	Accepted

Table 5 above shows the number of e-resources available for teaching and research. from the table above, CD-Rom database and E-Thesis has a mean value of 2.5, Online catalogue has a mean value of 3.3 each, E-journal has a mean value of 3.2, internet/web and E-mail has a mean value of 3 each, E-books has a mean value of 2.9,

online databases and Digital archives has a mean value of 2.4 each. It is seen also that CD-Rom, Online catalogue, E-journals, Internet/Web, Email, E-books and E-thesis have a mean value greater than or equal to 2.5 which is accepted while databases and Digital archives have a mean value less than 2.5 which shows rejected.

### Research question two: What is the extent of the internet services rendered by the law faculty at, the University of Jos?

Table 6: Responses on the extent of services rendered by the law faculty, University of Jos

S/N	Item	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Very Great Extent	39	65
2	Great Extent	12	20
3	Little Extent	9	15
4	Very little Extent	-	-
	Total	60	100

From table 6 above, 39(65%) respondents stated that internet services rendered by the Law faculty, University of Jos are to a very great extent, 12(20%) respondents stated that it is to a great extent and 9(15%) respondents stated that it is to a little extent. While there is no response to a very little extent. This is an indication that the extent of services rendered by Law Faculty, at the University of Jos is great.

### Research Question three: what is the level of adequacy of the resources for internet services provided by the law faculty library?

Table 7: Responses on the level of adequacy of the resources for internet services provided by law faculty

S/N	Item	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Very Great Extent	21	35
2	Great Extent	24	40
3	Little Extent	15	25
4	Very little Extent	-	-
	Total	60	100

Table 7 above is the respondents' level of adequacy of the resources for internet service provided by Law faculty. 2 (35%) respondents stated that is to a very great extent, 24(40%) respondents stated it is to a great extent, while 15(25%) respondents stated that it is to a little extent. This clearly showed that the level of adequacy of resources for internet services provided by law faculty is to a great extent.

### Research question four: What are the perceived benefits of using the internet for teaching and research?

Table 8: Respondents perceived benefits of using the internet for teaching and research.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Ability to access global information for teaching and research quickly	39	21	-	-	3.7	Accepted
2	Very convenient for sourcing academic material	33	27	-	-	3.6	Accepted
3	Makes collaboration amongst colleagues easier	36	9	9	6	3.3	Accepted
4	Provides current information for teaching and research on one topic of interest	48	12	-	-	3	Accepted
5	Time-saving in giving assignments and managing academic instructions	18	33	6	3	3.1	Accepted
6	It is an avenue for researcher's exposure	24	30	3	3	3.3	Accepted
7	The resources are highly available for teaching and research	36	24	-	-	3.6	Accepted
	Total					3.4	Accepted

The data analyzed in table 8 above shows that the following are some of the perceived benefits of the internet for teaching and research. The ability to access global information for teaching and research quickly has a mean value of (3.7), and very convenient for sourcing academic material also has a mean value of (3.6). make collaboration amongst colleagues easier has a mean of (3.3) provision of current

information for teaching and research in one topic of interest has (3.0), time-saving in giving assignments and managing academic instructions has a mean value of (3.1), it is an avenue for researcher's exposure has a mean value of (3.3) and the resources are highly available for teaching and research has a mean value of (3.6). The total mean value is 3.4 which is greater than the criterion value of 2.5. This implies that it is accepted.

### Research Question Five: How often do you use the internet?

Table 9: Responses on how often they use the internet?

S/N	Item	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Daily	33	55
2	2-3 times a week	15	25
3	2-4 times a month	3	5
4	Rarely	9	15
5	Never	-	-
		60	100

Table 9 above reveals that 33(55%) respondents make use of the internet daily while 15(25%) make use of it 2 to 3 times a week. 3(5%) of the respondents make use of the internet 2 to 4 times a month while 9 (15%) respondents rarely make use of it. None of the respondents indicated not having made of the internet. It could be observed from the table above that the internet is being used on daily, weekly and monthly bases.

### Research Question Six: What are the constraints/problems encountered in the use of the internet by the academic staff in the law faculty at the University of Jos?

Table 10: Responses on the constraint/problems encountered in the use of the internet by the academic staff in law faculty, University of Jos?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Unstable power supply	27	24	3	6	3.2	Accepted
2	Breakdown of computer system	18	18	15	6	2.7	Accepted
3	Lack of personal computer	30	15	6	9	3.1	Accepted
4	Unstable internet connectivity	18	27	12	3	3	Accepted
5	Institutional funding for ICT	36	15	9	-	3.5	Accepted
6	Time constraint	15	18	18	9	2.4	Accepted
7	Total					3.0	Accepted

Table 10 shows the constraints/problems that hinder the use of the internet by the academic staff in the Faculty of Law. The table revealed that unstable power supply (3.1), breakdown of computers (2.7), lack of personal computers (3.1), unstable internet connectivity (3.0), Institutional funding for ICT (3.5) and time constraints (2.4) are some of the problems faced by the academic staff in the use of internet in the law library. The table shows that only the time constraint has a mean value less than (2.5) but the rest of the items have values greater than (2.5) which means acceptance.

### Research Question seven: In what ways can such problems be overcome?

Table 11: Responses on ways can such problems be overcome.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Collective advocacy for government and institutional funding for ICT and training	45	12	3	-	3.7	Accepted
2	Provision of stable power supply	45	12	3	-	3.7	Accepted
3	Use of Train-the-trainer techniques	30	24	3	3	3.4	Accepted
4	Stable internet connectivity	45	15	-	-	3.8	Accepted
5	Creating more training programmes	39	18	3	-	3.8	Accepted
6	Encouraging self-learning	39	18	3	-	3.6	Accepted
7	Training collaboration with institutions abroad	45	15	-	-	3.8	Accepted
8	Learning through group influence provides ICT facilities to the academic staff	48	9	-	3	3.7	Accepted
	Total					3.7	Accepted

Table 11 above shows that all items listed as ways or strategies for enhancing the use of the internet amongst the academic staff are necessary for effective use of the internet. This is because the total mean value of responses is (3.7) greater than the criterion value which is 2.5

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

There is no doubt that the availability and utilization of e-resources in teaching and research is of enormous benefit to the academic staff of Universities. Findings revealed that these e-resources: CD-ROM databases, online catalogue, e-journal, internet/web, e-mail, e-books, online databases, e-thesis, and digital archives are available for teaching and research. This result is in agreement with what Mharana, Sethi and Behera, (2010) found out in their study of "use of internet and e-resources by students of business management: A survey of P.G students of Business Administration, Sambalpur University, India" that these resources are -available for teaching and research. Also, Luban (2000) has in his study that the internet provides a lot of information

resources which could be used to improve teaching and research. Barry (2002) equally posits that there are many databases on recent publications and ongoing research available on the internet. Collaborating with the authors above, Jagboro (2003) wrote that there are now many internet home pages which serve as information sources for institutions and organizations.

Benefits accruing from internet usage amongst the academic staff vary widely. Table 8 shows a positive response to all the options. Findings of the study reveal that availability to access global information for teaching and research quickly, making collaboration amongst colleagues easier, very convenient for sourcing academic materials, and an avenue for researcher's exposure are

some of the benefits of internet usage. This is in consonant with Eshet & Amichai (2004) who submitted that internet usage ensures speedy, efficient and easier access to information while Adegboji & Toyo, (2006) reported in their study that people use the internet in information sourcing and retrieval because they provide access and quick retrieval of information anywhere in the world in minutes. This collaborates with Mani's (2007) view that the internet has assisted in facilitating education at length and that the use of the internet not only facilitates research and data management but also helps in monitoring achievement through learning outcomes. He further explained that the internet disseminates information twenty-four hours a day on current works of world events, discoveries and developments in all areas of knowledge. Reference could be drawn from Singh (2002) who described the internet as a sea of information as it has made more information available to people today and at other times in history. In line with the above findings, Jagboro (2003) also wrote that the internet is a rich, multi-faced, complex, ever-changing textual environment accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days per week and 365 days per annum that provides several information and opportunities for the researcher.

Findings revealed that the majority of the academic staff make use of the internet on a daily and weekly basis as they rated highest amongst others with percentages of 55 and 25 respectively. This corresponds with Olalude's (2007) view said that the browsing pattern of the academic staff shows that a greater part of them used the internet on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. There is therefore an urgent need for effective internet connection in Universities as cyber cafes are highly consulted by academic staff on a daily and weekly basis.

The findings revealed that collective advocacy for governmental and institutional support for ICT funding, use of train-the trainers' techniques, stable internet

connectivity, creating of more internet programmes, encouraging self-learning, training collaboration with institutions, provision of stable power supply and providing ICT facilities to the academic staff are some of the measures that should be taken to enhance the effective use of the internet. Olayiwola and Akintola (2005) wrote that in the digital age, the internet has become the ideal means to disseminate and acquire knowledge. They explained that a network must be actively and continuously sustained to be effective. This implies that infrastructure such as electricity must be constant which is a major Nigerian factor rendering the internet effective. In line with the above findings, Adam & Wood (1999) and Akintunde (2006) in their different works emphasized the suggested strategies for effective use of the internet.

## CONCLUSION

Information is the pivot on which the survival of any society rests and it is vital to the overall efficiency of the academic staff. The internet no doubt can be a major source of sharing knowledge and information, and their availability and adoption in teaching and research have increasingly improved academic staff information seeking and sourcing of materials. The researcher used seven (7) research questions and a descriptive survey to guide the study. Data were analyzed using mean scores, frequency tables and percentages. The findings of the study revealed that there are available e-resources for teaching and research by the academic staff in the faculty of the law University of Jos and these include CD-ROM databases, an Online catalogue, E-journal, and digital archives. It is also discovered that the majority of the academic staff acquire internet skills through friends and colleagues and institutional training and a greater per cent of the respondents make use of the internet on a daily and weekly basis. It is also shown that the extent of services rendered by the law library, and faculty of law is to very great extent.

However, several problems inhabit the use of the internet among the academic staff. These factors include among others: unstable power supply, lack of funds, system breakdown, lack of personal computers, unstable internet connectivity, and lack of government and institutional support for training and ICT facilities. To proffer a solution to the aforementioned problems, the study suggested the following remedies as measures; collective advocacy for governmental and institutional funding for training and ICT facilities, use of train-the-trainer techniques, stable internet connectivity, encouraging self-learning, teaching via ICT compulsory, learning through group influence and providing ICT facilities to the staff.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this study to improve the situation.

1. Government and other authorities should demonstrate political will towards internet culture by ensuring adequate funding of ICT projects in Universities nationwide to actualize effective internet connectivity.
2. The academic staff should be more conscious of the technological revolution around the world and try catching up with it to follow the trend and enhance their case of using the internet in their academic activities.
3. The University should pursue aggressively the acquisition and provision of ICT and its resources for use. The training and re-training of the academic staff in internet literacy skills for teaching and research should be approached with greater zeal and commitment.
4. Considering that most ICT and their accessories are electricity driven, there is a need for improvement in the supply of electricity through the national grid. This will help reduce the huge amount incurred on installation and maintenance

of alternative sources of power which is a huge relief for Universities.

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