

## Internet Surfing and Television Viewing Habits among Senior Secondary School Students in Ikorodu, Lagos Nigeria

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the internet surfing and television viewing habits of senior secondary school students in Ikorodu, Lagos, Nigeria. It aims to identify patterns, preferred content, time spent, and the impact on academic performance, social interactions, and lifestyle. Survey method was adopted to generate data and Cultivation Theory was employed in the study to address the subject under investigation. While these platforms provide valuable learning and entertainment opportunities, balanced use is crucial to mitigate potential negative effects on academic performance and health. The study revealed that students are fairly exposed to the usage of internet and television for information seeking usefulness contributes significantly to the relationship between students' involvement with salient issues as news and use of surfing as a relevant source as students were mostly motivated to read from the internet and television as part of daily news consumption. The patterns of internet surfing and television viewing habits vary significantly across different demographics, reflecting the influence of age, socioeconomic status, technological advancements, and cultural preferences. The findings highlight the influence of digital and television media on this demographic and provide recommendations for balanced media consumption. This study highlights the significant role of internet and television media in the lives of senior secondary school students. The habits surrounding internet surfing and television viewing reflect the growing integration of technology and media in daily life. While these platforms offer opportunities for learning, connectivity, and entertainment, it is essential to adopt strategies that mitigate their potential drawbacks. A collaborative approach involving individuals, families, educators, and policymakers can foster a balanced and healthy media consumption culture.*

### Keywords

Habits, Internet, Surfing, Television, and Viewing



## I. Introduction

The ease of communication through the internet and television has become a major attraction to the youths, especially secondary school students in Nigeria. Added to this is the low cost to acquire any of the gadgets, especially an internet-enabled cell phone. Thus, they end up spending the valuable time they should have spent on their studies on internet browsing and television viewing. The challenge is the need to wean them from these two addictions. What can be done to reduce the level of addictions of senior secondary school students to television viewing and internet browsing and get them to focus on their academic interest? There is a need to motivate them for better academic performance.

The internet and television have become integral parts of daily life in Nigeria, shaping communication, entertainment, education, and cultural identity. With increasing access to affordable smartphones, improved broadband penetration, and diverse television

programming, the patterns of media consumption have evolved significantly. This appraisal examines internet surfing and television viewing trends in Nigeria, exploring their impacts on various sectors, including education, youth culture, social interaction, and economic development (Maikaba & Msughter, 2019).

The appraisal of internet surfing and television viewing in Nigeria underscores the dual role of these media as tools for empowerment and sources of challenges (Idris & Msughter, 2022). While they offer opportunities for learning, connectivity, and entertainment, stakeholders must collaborate to maximize benefits while minimizing negative impacts (Maradun et al., 2021). Sustainable policies and user awareness are key to fostering a media landscape that supports national development.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

The Objectives of this study are:

- a. To identify what factors, motivate internet surfing and TV viewing.
- b. To identify the preference between internet surfing and TV viewing.
- c. To evaluate the relationship between internet surfing/TV viewing and academic performance.

## II. Review of Literatures

A recent study done in Iowa by a nationally recognized consulting firm specializing in higher education (Noel-Levitz in Aondover et al., 2022), indicated that first-year females bring stronger study habits to college, whereas first-year males bring more confidence to their mathematics and science classes. The Internet provides access to a vast amount of information for college students, as well as a wealth of activities not related to college study. When used as a tool for content study, it is a powerful resource that has faster, easier, and broader access to interdisciplinary information than traditional libraries; However, the free, unlimited access to the Internet has become problematic for a growing number of college students (Aondover et al., 2022).

New terms like "Internet addiction", Internet dependence", and "pathological computer use "have Computer Lab Usage by Gender 3 researchers doing a number of studies (Anderson, Keith in Vitalis et al., 2024). "Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD) is characterized by seven basic diagnostic criteria, among them increasing tolerance of long online hours, withdrawal, and unsuccessful efforts to control Internet use" (Aondover et al., 2025). Out of all Internet users, 28% are full-time college students (Young, as cited by Aondover et al., 2025). Ten percent of college students surveyed in one extensive study (1,078 college students were surveyed) fit the criteria for Internet dependence. Of the 106 that fit the criteria for Internet dependence, 93 were male. One reason college students are highly susceptible to excessive Internet use, and particularly males, is because the anonymity of the Internet provides a sense of security, and a person can make up personas and have virtual relationships without taking risks associated with actual human relationships.

The EVC (Educational Technology Centre) campus has more than six computer labs open for students at many different times of the day, seven days per week, even Sundays. The problem is that students often use these labs for purposes other than for studying, doing research, writing papers, or doing homework assignments. Even during classes that are held in computer labs, students are chatting, surfing, emailing, or playing games. Both male and female students engage in these activities.

One study was done at UNC-Chapel Hill College to discover if the students primarily used the computer labs for academic or non-academic use. The results showed that students used their personal computers for non-academic, social, or recreational purposes, but they used the computer labs primarily for academic study. However, another study showed that 48% of college student computer gamers said that their time spent gaming kept them from studying some or a lot, and an additional 9% said they played games to avoid studying. The gamers may or may not have been using college-provided computers to play games.

This observation was done to see if gender played a role in whether students in the computer lab were using their time to do legitimate college work or for recreational purposes. The null hypothesis is that both male and female students will have equal participation using computers for doing college work and for recreation, will possess equal levels of study skills, and will have equal risk levels for Internet dependence (Airaoje et al., 2025; Uchendu et al., 2025). An alternative hypothesis is that females will have a higher incidence of using computers for college work than males, and, therefore, have better study skills and be less at risk for Internet dependence.

Audience members seek information for various purposes such as comfort, empowerment, to learn, and the knowledge to act (Mojaye & Aondover, 2022). In a quantitative survey of New Zealand-based students by Petra and Christopher (2007), respondents generally had strongly agreed that the Internet was a source of information, and thus indirectly a source of knowledge creation; with half of the respondents limiting their time on the Internet to an average of one hour per day (Msughter, 2023; Onyejelem et al., 2024).

However, not all information or media can, all at once, prove useful or credible to users. Several studies suggest a relationship between an individual's involvement with salient issues as news and distrust or trust of a medium as a relevant source. For instance, when people consider a subject as an important subject in a medium, they are just likely, if not more likely, to be persuaded by argument on the issue and are not inclined to perceive a medium as biased (Gunther in Msughter et al., 2023; Owens-Ibie & Aondover, 2024). When one looks at different media news, usually, media tends to start with the most important issues. On the other hand, readers also look for what they suppose as important issue, so if readership finds what they want in a medium, they may judge it as a credible medium. Credibility is one of the criteria used to filter unbelievable information (Oreoluwa et al., 2024; Onyejelem et al., 2025). Credibility defines as judgments made by a perceiver (e.g., a message recipient) concerning the believability of a communicator. But others believe that this definition should also include institutions as well as persons as communicators.

## **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The study employed the Cultivation Theory, which according to (Gerbner, 1990, p. 225), cultivation is a cultural process relating to 'coherent framework or knowledge and to underlying general concepts cultivated by exposure to the total and organically related world of television rather than exposure to individual programmes and selection. In response to the criticism from Paul Hirsch and others, Gerbner and associates revised the Cultivation Theory (Msughter et al., 2023; Gerbner et al., in Saint et al., 2024). They added two additional concepts-mainstreaming and resonance. These concepts take account of the fact that heavy television viewing has different outcomes for different social groups.

Mainstreaming is said to occur when heavy viewing leads to a convergence of outlooks across groups. Resonance occurs when the cultivation effect is boosted for a

certain group of the population. The addition of mainstreaming and resonance to the cultivation theory is a substantial modification of the theory. Teenagers' ideas about how the world works come from the experiences they have and the attitudes and behaviours they see around them. Anaeto et al in Usman et al., (2022) suggest that much learning takes place through observing the behaviour of others. However, weighing the problems, Internet surfing and television viewing has its positive and negative influence on the teenagers (Vitalis et al., 2023).

In this contestation, cultivation theory suggests that mass communication, especially television, cultivates certain beliefs about reality that are held in common by mass communication consumers. As Gerbner in 1990 observes, 'most of what we know, or think we know, we have never personally experienced'. We know these things because of the stories we see and hear in the media.

## **2.2 Research Design**

Research design is the frame work or plan for a study that guides the collection and analyzing of data. According to Asika (2008, p. 27), research design is the structuring of investigation aimed at identifying variables and their relationships with another one. For a purpose of this study the research design adopted is the survey research method. Survey research is an approach which involves drawing up a set of questions on various aspects of a subject to which selected members of a population are requested to react (Adewale et al., 2025). John James in Vitalis et al., (2024) described population as any group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common and that are of interest to the researcher. To the researcher, the groups of individuals that are of interest are students of two selected schools in Ikorodu Local Government area of Lagos state. A sample size of 400 respondents was used to represent the total population of about 5,000 in the schools.

The sampling technique that was used for this study is the purposive sampling method. This technique was chosen by the researcher to reach the sample with ease and to fulfill the purpose for which the scope of the study was chosen. Data for this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data would be collected by the use of a questionnaire which would be distributed to students of the two selected secondary school. Interviews may be used to supplement the responses to the questionnaire, where necessary. Secondary data will be obtained from the internet, academic journals and books.

According to Davies in Vitalis et al., (2025), a questionnaire is intended to facilitate communication, usually brief but always driven by the researchers own agenda to accomplish this work. The major data collection instrument that was used for the intending research project is the questionnaire which was completed by respondents. The questionnaire was supplemented with interviews, where necessary. The questionnaire is divided into 2 sections. The first section focused on acquiring demographic data about the respondents while the other one focused on gathering appropriate data for answering the research questions.

According to Neumann in Aondover et al., (2025) validity suggests truthfulness and refers to the match between a construct or the way researcher conceptualizes the idea in a conceptual definition and measures. Appropriate data validation techniques were used to ensure that the data are genuine and support the objectives of the study. The data collected through primary sources have a very high probability to be reliable as they were obtained directly by the researcher. In addition, the questionnaire was more suitable to the research work as it was designed to bring out data that is relevant to the research. This help to reduce the errors of measurement to a minimum.

Simple percentage and tables will be employed by the researcher for the analysis of data collected. The method involves the division of the actual response for a question by the total sample size and multiplying the answer by 100.

### III. Results and Discussion

**Table 1.** Respondents 'Access to the internet

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	323	96.4%
No	12	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table shows that out of 335 respondents, 323 respondents representing 96.4% agree that they usually have access to the use of internet, while 12 respondents representing 3.6% do not have access to the internet.

**Table 2.** Respondents' Medium in Collecting Information

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Internet	222	66.3%
Television	82	24.5%
Magazine	5	1.5%
Newspaper	14	4.2%
Radio	12	3.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table shows that 222 (66.3%) of the respondents use internet for information, while 82 (24.5%) use television to derive information. 5 (1.5%) of the respondents use magazine for information, 14(4.2%) of the respondents use newspaper for information while the remaining 12(3.5%) use radio to get their information. This table however explains the fact that internet has been the major source and medium in collecting vital information for students/respondents.

**Table 3.** Respondents Reason Behind the Choice of Answer

REASONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
It is faster	175	52.6%
It is cheap and reliable	76	22.8%
It opens multiple pages at the same time	45	13.5%
It as good reception	29	8.7%
Others	8	2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table shows that 175(52.6%) of the respondents use the internet because it is faster, while 76 (22.8%) use it because it is cheap and reliable. 45(13.5%) of the respondents use it because it opens multiple pages at the same time, 29(8.7%) because it as a good reception while other respondents representing 8(2.4%) do not really have a specific reason why they use it. Therefore, with the aid of the table above, it clearly shows that most respondents adopt and make use of the internet because it is a faster means in collecting vital information.

**Table 4.** Respondents Who Do Not Have a Specific Reason

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Time consuming	-	
It is expensive		
Its addictive nature	2	-
I just don't like it	-	-
None	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table shows that just two (2) of the respondents do not have a specific reason for the use of internet, but both insist that it is addictive in nature because of the questions asked in table 8.

**Table 5.** Respondents Use of the Internet

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Often	157	46.9%
Once in a while	116	34.6%
Rarely	62	18.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table above shows that out of the total number of respondents which consist of 335, 157(46.9%) of the respondent use the internet often, while 116(34.6%) use it once in a while and 62(18.5%) rarely use the internet.

**Table 6.** Respondents Who Have Enough Satisfaction Surfing the Internet Watching Television

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Information	223	66.6%
Chatting	28	8.4%
Entertainment	84	25.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 6, 223 (66.6%) do usually use internet to get information while 28(8.4%) for chatting, 84(25.0%) for entertainment. This implies that most respondents derive satisfaction surfing the internet because they get more information, while they however make use of it less to chat and for entertainment.

**Table 7.** Respondents Who Spend Average Time on Using the Blog

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1-15 min	111	33.2%
30min-1hr	113	33.6%
1hr and above	111	33.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 7, 111(33.2%) respondents spend 1 – 15 minutes reading the blog, 113(33.5%) 30 min to one hour, and 111(33.2%) 1 hour and above.

**Table 8.** How Often Do You Found out that You Stay Online than You Intended



VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	29	8.6%
Rarely	109	32.5%
Occasionally	118	35.3%
Always	79	23.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 8, 29 (8.6%) of the respondents Never stay online than intended while 109(32.5) rarely stay online than intended, 118(35.3%) occasionally stays online than intended and 79(23.6%) always stay online than intended.

**Table 9.** How Often do you Neglect House Hold Chores to Spend more Time Online?

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	124	37.1%
Rarely	125	37.3%
Occasionally	60	17.9%
Always	26	7.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 9 shows that 124(37.1%) respondents Never neglects household chores to spend more time online, while 125(37.3%) rarely spend more time online, 60(17.9%) occasionally spend more time than intended and 26(7.7%) always spend more time than intended.

**Table 10.** How Often Do You Form New Relationship with Fellow Online Users

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	64	19.1%
Rarely	135	40.3%
Occasionally	71	21.2%
Always	65	19.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 10, 64 (19.1%) do form relationships with fellow online users, while 135(40.3%) rarely form new relationships online, 71(21.2%) occasionally do form relationships with fellow online users and 65(19.4%) always form new relationships online.

**Table 11.** How Often Do Your Grades in School Suffer Because of the Amount of Time You Spend Surfing the Internet and TV Viewing

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	147	43.9%
Rarely	112	33.4%
Occasionally	63	18.8%
Always	13	3.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 11, 147(43.9%) respondents never allow their grades in school suffer because of the amount of time spent surfing the internet, while 112(33.4%) rarely allow their school works to suffer, 63(18.8%) occasionally allow their school works to suffer and 13(3.9%) always allow their school works to suffer.

**Table 12.** How Often Do You Use the Television/ Surf the Internet

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	24	7.2%
Rarely	69	20.6%
Occasionally	112	33.4%
Always	130	38.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 12, 24 (7) Never use the television/surf the internet, 112(33.4%) occasionally use the television/surf the internet and 130(38.8%) always use the television/surf the internet.

**Table 13.** How Often Do You Neglect Household Chores to Spend More Time with Television/Surf the Internet?

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	86	25.7%
Rarely	92	27.5%
Occasionally	89	26.6%
Always	68	20.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 13, 86 (25.7%) respondents never neglect house hold chores to spend more time with television/surf the internet, 92(27.5%) rarely neglects house hold chores to spend more time with television/surf the internet, while 89(26.6%) occasionally neglects house hold chores to spend more time with television/surf the internet and 68(20.2%) always neglects house hold chores to spend more time with television/surf the internet.

**Table 14.** How Often Do You Have More Opportunity While Watching Television/Surfing the Internet?

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	29	8.6%
Rarely	86	25.8%
Occasionally	120	35.8%
Always	100	29.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 14 shows that, 29(8.6%) never have opportunity while watching television/surfing the internet, 86(25.8%) rarely have opportunity, 120(35.8%) occasionally have opportunity and 100(29.8%) always have more opportunity while watching television/surfing the internet.

**Table 15.** Internet/TV, Represent a Personal Way to Communicate Information

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	18	5.4%
Rarely	37	11.1%
Occasionally	33	9.8%
Always	247	73.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 15 shows that 18(5.4%) never says Internet/TV represent a personal way to communicate information, 37(11.1%) rarely says internet/TV represents a personal way to communicate information, 33.3(9.8%) occasionally says internet/TV represents a personal



way to communicate information and 247(73.7%) always says internet/TV represents a personal way to communicate information.

**Table 16.** Do You Believe That Internet Surfing and TV Viewing Can Affect Your School Work

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	222	66.3%
No	113	33.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 16 shows that 222 (66.3%) said yes that internet surfing and TV viewing affects their school work, while 113(33.7%) said no it does not affect their school work.

**Table 17.** Has it Affected You Positively or Negatively

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	227	67.7%
No	108	32.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 17 shows that 227(67.7%) said yes it as affected them positively, while 108(32.3) aid no it as affected them negatively.

## Discussion

In this study, internet, are a familiar way of getting information, the results here are consistent with the findings of Awolaye et al (2008) where the Internet and social media, asides for messaging and chatting, are found to be a popular source of information for students. Contrary to popular belief, these respondents did not spend their whole days surfing the internet or watching television, 33.2% limited their time on internet to 1-15 minutes and a Prevalent 33.6% averagely spent from 30 minutes up to 1 hour reading blogs on these days and few of 33.2% spend 1hour and above. This, particularly, is in agreement with the study of Petra and Christopher in 2007.

It also appears that some of the respondents sometimes abandon their household chores in other to surf the internet and watch television, 25.7% never allows it affects their house hold chores, 27.5% says its rarely affects their house hold chores, 26.6% says, it affects it occasionally while 20.2% says it always affects their household chores. Also, most of the student allows surfing the internet to affect their grades in school. 63.3% of the students said it does not affect their school grades and 33.7% said it does not affect their school work. However, the percentage of students that internet surfing and TV viewing affects is lesser than those that it did not affect. Which is just 30%?

The internet surfing came into being as a form of getting information which makes its aim and objectives to both educate and entertain. 40% of the students use it to get information, while the remaining students use it as a source of entertainment. Internet and television as a medium of collecting information. 66.3% of the students use internet as a medium of getting their one information and it has been very useful, 24.5% of the students has been using Television as a means of getting their own information, 1.5 of the students uses magazines to get information, 4.2 of the students uses newspaper as a means of getting information while 3.5 of the students use radio as a means of getting information. Most of the students with different means and it has helped in disseminating information easily. Thus, the findings here shows that students are most likely to depend on internet and television as significant sources of news information, as a highest 34.4% perceived

internet as useful in crisis situations, 35.0% believed that sometimes it doesn't add up well when it comes to their education and 30.6% that internet surfing and television viewing are very dependable.

#### IV. Conclusion

The study revealed that students are fairly exposed to the usage of internet and television for information seeking usefulness contributes significantly to the relationship between students' involvement with salient issues as news and use of surfing as a relevant source as students were mostly motivated to read from the internet and television as part of daily news consumption. The patterns of internet surfing and television viewing habits vary significantly across different demographics, reflecting the influence of age, socioeconomic status, technological advancements, and cultural preferences. This discussion highlights these habits, with an emphasis on their impacts, trends, and recommendations for balanced media consumption. The habits surrounding internet surfing and television viewing reflect the growing integration of technology and media in daily life. While these platforms offer opportunities for learning, connectivity, and entertainment, it is essential to adopt strategies that mitigate their potential drawbacks. A collaborative approach involving individuals, families, educators, and policymakers can foster a balanced and healthy media consumption culture.

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