

Private Internet Services Patronage: Households Experience in Delta State

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Abstract:- Internet services provide important public services. It provides access to a wide range of information through the internet through hardware, the computer. The study is centered on the patronage of Private internet service providers popularly also known as cyber cafes by households in Delta State. Services provided by the cyber café were identified. The study revealed that Households with children under eighteen years patronized these private internet providers more than households with children under eighteen years old. All the Households indicated using the services of the cybercafés. The study also revealed that most households do not have access to the internet in their homes and this is why there is high usage of private internet providers (cybercafes) by different Households.

Keywords:- Private Internet Services, Cyber Café, Households, Nigeria.

I. INTRODUCTION

Access to internet services was first invented Wayne Gregori in 1991 in San Francisco (<https://artsemerson.org/212/3/23>)The word Cyber cafés was developed three years later by Ivan Pope in 1994 (Oduwale 2004) which he commissioned to develop an internet event for an arts weekend at the institute of contemporary Arts in London. Pope wrote a proposal outlining the concept of a café with internet access from the tables. In June 1994, an establishment called compucafe operated in Helsinki Finland, featuring both internet access and a robotic beer seller. Inspire partly by the ICA event a commercial establishment of this type called Cyberia was opened on September 1st,1994 in London. The first American internet café was named Internet café opened in early 1995 in the East Village neighborhood of New York City. (Obuh 2008)

Gradually, an individual started private internet services which are called cyber cafés which spread to developing countries. In Nigeria, the intervention of cyber café's emerged in early 2000 (Adomi, Okiy and Ruteyan 2003) in 2008 there most of the cyber café were located in Lagos (Otokunefor and Kari 2008). In the year 2003, there were about 18 private cybercafes in Nigeria,(Adomi, Okiy Ruteyan 2003). This has been reduced drastically due to the high maintenance cost of maintenance. (Okoh 2007)

II. WHAT IS CYBER CAFÉ'S

In the developing world, Cyber Café is the public access point for getting to the internet. In Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) and most of the developing world, the most visible ICT trend is the increasing number of telecentres to combat information poverty. Telecentres is the term used to describe a variety of methods for providing an access to ICT, which ranges from cyber café to libraries to various service points. Cyber cafés are meant to help in reducing the digital divide through their provision of public access computers to members of society who cannot afford the facilities in their homes. (Geberemichael and Jackson, 2006)

Cyber cafes are places where the internet and other electronic information services are provided for public access by entrepreneurs for a fee for those who are traveling, to have access to the internet or instant messages, read news explore other resources of the net (Wikipedia, 2007)

The advent of cyber café's in Delta State which can be traced to the late 20th century as stated by (Adomi 2005) had made changes in almost all aspects of life as it plays a role mostly in the dissemination and retrieval of information. Cyber café's is the most popular places for people to access the internet in Nigeria as stated by (Akpoido 2005, Obuh 2008).

Presently, there are about 12 functional in Delta at the time of this study as against 18 cyber café's in 2003 (Adomi, Okiy & Ruteyan 2003). These cyber café's are only located in a few urban and suburban areas of the state. In the Delta State cyber café's are significant means to access the internet for many, especially in the urban and Sub-Urban areas.

The internet services of cyber café's connectivity are one of the major services through which people access and send e-mails, news, and website access. The advent of this private internet access helped to break down barriers in communication that permit access to information from anywhere in the world. It is a mechanism for information dissemination and a medium for collation interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic limitation of space. (Mohammed 2008). Content created on the internet ranges from simple E-mail messages to sophisticated documents incorporating sounds, images, and words (Mutala 2008).

The importance of the internet cannot be overemphasized. Adomi (2005) succinctly stated social, political, economic, educational, scientific, technological, and other aspects of the lives of the people. The internet can enable the user to have access to information on a diverse and specific area that can meet his needs. According to Toyo (2006) who stated that the internet which began in the 1960s as a project of a few researchers has become a commercially successful billion of dollars of annual investment. It has developed within three decades into a medium that influences most of all domains of life, from education to recreation, from business to medicine, and from academia to politics. He notes further that today's mega trend and vision of the global village and globalization are based on and influenced by this technology. The influence of the internet permeates all aspects of life in developing as well as developed countries.

The cybercafés also provide E-mail computer connectivity between the nations has allowed a new form of correspondence to evolve and this, though seldom noticed has changed people's daily lives the world over. People now send more words to others more often than ever before. Kafoworola (2005), states that E-mail has become a seemingly indispensable part of people's lives. Other services provided by cyber cafés include telephone services (Local and International) public relations, publishing bookbinding, secretarial services, typing, lamination, printing, computer training, and photocopying.

A. *The Boom of Private Internet services (Cybercafé)*

In Nigeria, communication technology development is inhibited by Nigeria Telecommunication Technology Limited (NITEL) the communication sole distributor of telecommunication services as well as frequent electricity interruption from the national grid. Ayo (2001) noted that there was no constant electric power supply to major computers and printers, the cost of connecting to the internet is high and most individuals cannot afford it. Without these, information networking definitely cannot work. He cited the situation at the National Library of Nigeria, where disruption in the telephone system from NITEL frequency interrupts internet use, Fax machines, and website. The Private use of telecommunication in Africa as a whole has recently been largely confined to the small proportion that actually can afford their telephone. Adomi (2005) stated that the cost of renting a connection average almost twenty-nine (29%) percent of the Gross Domestic Product (G.D.P.) per capital and only one percent in high-income countries can afford it. All these contributed to the spring of private cyber cafes where people who can not afford ICT at home patronized the cyber cafes.

B. *Private Internet Services (cyber café's) Study*

While the information was collected from services provided by cybercafes by students, academics, businessmen, and individuals there were no studies available on the use of cyber café's services by different households in the community. Igun (2006) stated that about 95% of students used cyber cafés, which collaborates with Akporido (2005). Adogbeji & Toyo 2006 and Adomi et al 2003 also stated that different categories of users range from students, businessmen, lecturers, teachers applicants, etc using Cyber cafés. In a related development, Mutulla (2008) also carried out a study on children's use of cybercafes. These sources however present only single or dual items on cyber café's usage. A more comprehensive population based information on the use of cyber cafes has not been studied.

The study tends to give information on the use of cyber café by households in 10 Cyber cafés in Delta State.

The towns and cyber cafés chosen were based on the former study of cyber café in Delta State by Adomi et al (2003). At the time of that study, there were 18 cyber cafes in delta state located in Abraka, Agbor, Sapele, Effurun, Oleh, Sapele, Ughelli, and Bomadi these are urban and Sub-urban towns of the state. At the time of this study, there were fourteen functioning cyber café's as also stated by Okoh (2007). From these 10 cyber cafes' where purposively chosen.

The study is significant in that its findings give information on households' of Cyber café's services in the state as against use by students, academics, businessmen etc. that had been previously studied.

Though the study setting is in Delta State, its findings could be generated in other parts of Nigeria and other developing countries in the same state in cyber café's business.

III. METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The main instrument used in collecting data for this survey was the questionnaire which was designed to obtain data on the use of cyber café services, (WUCS) which is based on services mostly used, and frequency of usage by households. Copies of the questionnaire were filled out and returned. Observation techniques were also employed to obtain additional information.

IV. SCOPE OF STUDY

The study covers Cyber café in Abraka, Agbor, Sapele Effurun, Oleh and Bomadi.

Table 1: Cyber Café and Number of Household

Location	No. of Cyber Café's	No. of Households
Abraka	2	20
Agbor	1	10
Asaba	2	20
Effurun	2	20
Oleh	1	10
Ughelli	1	10
Warri	2	30
Total:	11	110

Table 1 shows the number of cybercafes and households that were surveyed. Abraka two cafés with 20 households, Agbor 1 cyber café, Asaba 2 cyber café, Effurun 1 cyber café with 20 households, Oleh 1 cybercafés with 10 households, Ughelli 1 Cyber Café with 10 households, and Warri with 2 Cybercafés with 30 households surveyed. The households were selected based on the National Bureau Statistics General Household Survey Report of 1995-2005 (2007).

Table 2: Service Patronized

	No. of Household	Households with Children Under 18%	%	Households without Children Under 18%	
Telephone Services	110	20	18	5	5
Public Relations	110	50	45	20	28
Publishing	110	5	5	25	23
Book Binding	110	60	55	25	23
Secretarial Services	110	50	45	10	9
Typing	110	27	25	50	45
Laminating	110	30	27	7	6
Printing	110	45	41	10	9
Computer Training	110	70	64	3	3
Photocopying	110	90	82	20	18
Browsing	110	89	81	16	15
E-mail Services	110	98	89	15	14

Table 2 shows services patronized by Households with children fewer than 18 and households without children fewer than 18. The table revealed that households with children under 18, patronize the services rendered by cybercafé's than households without children under 18.

Table 3: Frequency of Cyber Café's Usage.

Frequency	No. of Household	Households with Children Under 18%	%	Households without Children Under 18%	
Daily	110	81	91	20	18
Twice a week	110	70	64	50	45
Once a week	110	20	18	60	55
Once a month	110	55	50	75	68
Once in three months	110	30	27	54	49
Occasionally	110	76	69	52	57

➤ Multiple Choices

Table 3 shows the frequency of cyber café's by households with children under 18 and households with children under 18. The table revealed that 81 89% of households with children under 18 use cyber café's. Daily while households without children under 18 who use the cyber café's daily recorded 20 (18%). The highest number of households visiting cyber café's with children under 18 accounted for 70(64%) while families without children under 18 accounted for 50 (45%). For once visit to the cyber café's households

without children under 18 years, rated 55 (50%) of the total respondents. Households who visit cyber cafe's once a month and families without children under 18 also related highest with 54 (49%) of the households without children who visit cyber cafe's with children under 18 years rated 62(56%).

This study corresponds to Mutula (2008) that out of about 10 million children between the ages of 5 to 19 years old, over 6 million of them accessed the internet through cyber café's once a week while 4 million accessed the internet on daily basis from their schools.

Table 4: Purpose of using Private Internet Services(Cyber Café)

Purpose	No. of Household	Households with Children Under 18%	%	Households without Children Under 18%	
Checking/Sending Mail	110	79	71	31	28
Researching Purpose	110	50	46	60	57
Browsing	110	84	76	26	23
Seeking for employment	110	26	24	84	70
Checking Result	110	97	88	13	19
Watching Religion Programme	110	64	58	46	11
Sport	110	76	69	34	31
Reading Newspaper	110	37	33	73	66
Visiting Pornographic Sites	110	34	31	4	7

The table (table 4) indicates the purpose for which the number of households using the cyber cafés. For checking and sending mail households with children under 18 rated highest with 79 (71%) while households with children under 18 rated 31 (28%). For research purposes, households without children under 18 years rated 50 (46%). For browsing, households with children under 18 rated highest with 84(76%) while households without children under 18 ranked 26(23%). To seek employment, households without children under 18 ranked highest with 84(76%). Households who indicated the highest under-checking results were households with children under 18 which rated 97 (88%) while households without children 18 rated 13 (19%). To watch religious households with children under 18 ranked 64 (58%) while households with children under 18 rated highest in

This study corresponds to Collins (1997) in the use of Public Library Services 1997. Collins study revealed that households with children under 18 sorts more information in the public library service than households with children under 18. The study revealed a majority of households use the cyber café because they do not have access to the internet at home. This is because the majority of the homes do not have internet connectivity. Out of the 550, only 10 (9%) have access to the internet at home. This confirms the poor state of information technology in Nigeria and Africa as a whole as stated (Adomi, 2005). "That the cost of information technology is high that many cannot afford internet in their homes"

From the findings of this study, it can be deduced that the majority of cyber café users are children and teenagers. This had led to a lot of fraud and other cyber café crimes as noted by Mutula (2008). With this cyber café, operators should be on alert so that children and teenagers are exposed to only information relevant to them.

watching sports cyber café's with 76(69%) while households with children under 18 rated 34 (31%). To read newspapers, households without children under 18 ranked highest with 73 (66%). Both households indicated low usage of visiting pornographic sites. Households with children still ranked highest with 34 (31%) while households without children rated 4 (71%).

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the households surveyed both used the cyber café's to obtain one information or the other. It could be seen from the study that households with children under 18 use the cyber café in most cases than households without children under 18 years.

The connectivity rate of the internet should be reduced to enable the majority of people to have personal internet connections in their homes.

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