

**PERCEIVED EFFECT OF INTERNET USE ON THE ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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BENIN CITY**

**MARCH, 2025**

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**A RESEARCH WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY  
OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS  
(EDUCATION) DEGREE IN HISTORY.**

**MARCH, 2025.**

## CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that this study was carried out by **Gift Osagioduwa AGHAKU**, a student of the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, and University of Benin, Benin city.

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to God Almighty, whose grace and guidance made it possible for me to complete this program successfully.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The researcher wishes to express her heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God for His abundant wisdom and inspiration throughout the course of this research. His guidance and protection have been invaluable, enabling her to complete this work.

She extends her sincere appreciation to her project supervisor, Dr. (Mrs), P.I.O Aika, for her insightful suggestions, unwavering support, and the patience's she exhibited in reviewing the work. Her technical guidance and supervision, despite her demanding schedule, have been instrumental to the researchers academic journey.

The researcher is also grateful to the Head, Department of Educational Foundations, Prof, R.B. Danner, and her esteemed lecturer in the Department of Educational Foundations, Dr. Philips Imakhuede, Dr. Martins Igbineweka, Dr. Ali Ojo, Mrs. E.O. Obozokhare and Mr. M. Monday and also her lecturers in the Department of History and International studies, Dr. F. Ikponmwosa, Prof. Eddy Erhagbe and Dr. William Orukpe, for their contributions and encouragement throughout her studies at the University of Benin.

She would like to acknowledge her Father: Mr Monday Aghaku and Late Miss Helen Iyalomhe for their love, support, and encouragement, which greatly aided her successful completion of this program. Lastly, she expresses her gratitude to some very special persons in her life: Mr. and Mrs. B.A.S. Iyalomhe, her friends: David Precycaro, Priscilla Osarugue, Idahosa Purity, Osato Osemwengie, Osahon Oghosa, Thankgod Idahosa, Enera Samson and Osaghae Samuel for their prayers encouragement, support and endurance. Their unwavering support has been a source of strength and motivation throughout her journey.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the perceived effect of internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria. The research explores the relationship between internet use, including frequency, duration, and type of content accessed, and students' academic outcomes.

A descriptive survey research design was employed, with 150 students from three randomly selected secondary schools as the study's sample. Data were collected through a self-structured questionnaire, which was validated and tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (0.81).

The findings revealed a dual impact of internet use on students' academic performance. Students reported that while educational internet use positively influenced their academic performance, excessive non-academic internet use, particularly social media and gaming, led to distractions and poor academic outcomes. Frequency of internet use for academic purposes was positively correlated with academic success, whereas long-duration internet use had both beneficial and detrimental effects. The study also found that educational content, such as online forums and interactive learning platforms, contributed to improved academic performance, while entertainment content, such as social media and online gaming, negatively impacted students' academic focus. Based on the findings, the study recommends that students be encouraged to use the internet primarily for educational purposes, with schools and parents working together to manage non-academic internet activities. Additionally, students should be taught effective time management and study habits to mitigate the negative effects of excessive internet use.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background of the Study**

The academic performance of secondary school students remains a critical area of focus in educational research, as it significantly influences future educational and career opportunities (Adebayo & Ajiboye, 2022). Academic performance, often measured by grades, test scores, and overall achievement, reflects a student's ability to grasp and apply knowledge in a structured educational setting (Adetunji & Abiodun, 2021). Despite various interventions aimed at improving learning outcomes, many students still struggle to achieve high academic standards, which can hinder their long-term educational and career prospects. A range of factors contributes to this problem, including personal issues, socioeconomic conditions, lack of motivation, and the broader educational environment. One increasingly significant factor in recent years is the role of the internet, as it offers both opportunities and distractions. While the internet can serve as a valuable learning tool, enabling students to access vast amounts of information, it can also lead to overuse and distractions that negatively impact academic focus. With the advent of digital technology, one of the most influential factors impacting student performance is Internet use, which has permeated nearly every aspect of students' lives, from social interactions to learning activities.

Internet use among secondary school students is characterized by various dimensions, including the frequency, duration, and purpose of use. Each of these aspects can have both positive and negative impacts on academic outcomes (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). Frequency of Internet use, or how often students engage online, plays a significant role in their educational experience. Some studies indicate that regular use of the Internet for academic purposes, such as research, online tutorials, and educational forums, can enhance understanding and retention, thereby supporting better academic performance (Lim & Sia, 2020). However, frequent non-academic Internet activities, such as social media browsing and online gaming, may lead to distractions, reducing the time available for studying and ultimately impacting academic performance negatively (Lin, 2019).

Duration of Internet use, or the amount of time students spend online, is another crucial factor. Prolonged Internet use for academic tasks, when balanced effectively, can provide students with additional resources and learning materials to reinforce classroom knowledge, thus fostering improved academic outcomes (Katz & Rice, 2021). On the contrary, excessive time spent online without a clear academic focus may lead to poor study habits and reduce students' overall engagement with their schoolwork (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). This excessive usage often correlates with lower academic achievement, as students may sacrifice valuable study time or even sleep to remain engaged in digital environments (Twenge, 2019).

The type of content accessed by students on the Internet further shapes their academic experience. Educational resources, such as e-books, academic journals, and learning platforms, offer valuable information that can complement classroom instruction, enhancing academic understanding and engagement (Livingstone & Haddon, 2018). Conversely, access to non-academic content, such as entertainment media or gaming sites, may draw students' focus away from their studies, impacting their ability to perform effectively in academic tasks (Junco, 2015). Studies suggest that students who prioritize educational content tend to exhibit better academic performance compared to those who primarily access entertainment-oriented material (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2019).

Thus, Internet use in terms of frequency, duration, and type of content accessed emerges as a complex variable that influences the academic performance of secondary school students in both constructive and potentially detrimental ways. This relationship underscores the need for balanced and purposeful Internet use, promoting academic success while minimizing the risks associated with excessive or unfocused digital engagement (Greenfield, 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The increasing prevalence of Internet use among secondary school students has presented both opportunities and challenges for academic performance. While the Internet serves as a powerful tool for educational enrichment, enabling access to vast

resources, online tutorials, and academic discussions, it also brings significant risks of distraction and overuse, especially with non-academic content such as social media and online gaming. Anderson and Jiang (2018) highlighted the benefits of Internet access for research and academic tasks, yet their work did not delve deeply into how frequency and duration specifically affect academic performance of students. Similarly, Katz and Rice (2021) examined the positive effects of educational Internet use but did not fully address the potential detrimental impacts of prolonged, unfocused online engagement.

Junco (2015), focused on the influence of entertainment-based Internet use, suggesting that non-academic browsing may negatively impact students' academic achievement. However, Junco's work did not thoroughly examine the differential effects of content type or the relationship between frequency and duration of Internet use on students' performance. Consequently, there exists a gap in understanding how each specific dimension frequency, duration, and type of content interacts with academic outcomes in a nuanced way.

Given this gap, this study seeks to address the overlooked aspects of prior research by answering the following research questions:

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the perceived effect of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students?

2. How is the frequency of Internet use perceived to relate to the academic performance of secondary school students?
3. What is the perceived impact of the duration of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students?
4. Are the different types of content accessed on the Internet perceived to influence the academic performance of secondary school students?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to assess the perceived effect of internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students, the specific purpose of this study are to:

1. assess the perceived effect of internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students.
2. examine the perceived relationship between the frequency of Internet use and the academic performance of secondary school students.
3. investigate the perceived impact of the duration of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students.
4. Determine whether the different types of content accessed on the Internet is perceived to influence the academic performance of secondary school students.

**Scope/Delimitation of the Study**

This study focuses on exploring the perceived effects of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students. Specifically, it examines how various factors of Internet use, including frequency, duration, and type of content accessed, are perceived to influence academic outcomes. The study is limited to senior secondary school students in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

**Significance of the Study**

This study holds significance in its potential to provide insights into the positive and negative effects of Internet use on secondary school students' academic performance. Key stakeholders who stand to benefit include; students, educator and school administrators, parent and guardians, policy makers and researchers.

For students, the study would encourage students to use the internet more responsibly and productively, focusing on educational content that enhances their learning, while avoiding distractions that could negatively affect their academic outcomes.

For Educators and School Administrators, the findings may guide educators and administrators in understanding how different aspects of Internet use such as frequency, duration, and content type—can impact student performance. This knowledge could inform policies and interventions that encourage responsible and productive Internet use among students.

For Parents and Guardians, the study provides valuable information to parents and guardians regarding how Internet usage can affect their children's academic success. By understanding these dynamics, they can better monitor and guide their children's online activities to support positive academic outcomes.

For Policy Makers, the study offers empirical evidence that may assist policymakers in developing guidelines around Internet access in educational settings. By understanding the factors influencing academic performance, policies can be crafted to optimize students' academic engagement and reduce distractions from non-academic content.

While for Researchers, the findings of this study add to the growing body of literature on the influence of digital technology on education. It provides a foundation for future studies to explore Internet use across different contexts and age groups, potentially broadening understanding of its impact on learning outcomes.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following thus are defined as used in the study;

**Internet Use:** In this study, Internet use refers to students' engagement with online resources, both academic and non-academic, via digital devices. It encompasses frequency (how often students use the Internet), duration (the time spent online), and content type (academic vs. non-academic resources accessed).

**Frequency of Internet Use:** Frequency of Internet use refers to how often students go online within a given timeframe, which may range from daily to weekly engagement. In this study, frequency is analyzed to understand its correlation with academic performance.

**Duration of Internet Use:** Duration of Internet use denotes the total amount of time students spend online during each engagement. This study categorizes duration as short (less than 1 hour), moderate (1-3 hours), and long (over 3 hours) to analyze its effects on academic performance.

**Type of Content Accessed:** Type of content accessed describes the nature of online materials used by students, including educational resources (e.g., e-books, tutorials, academic articles) and non-academic content (e.g., social media, gaming). This study examines how content type impacts students' academic outcomes.

**Perceived Effect:** The perceived effect refers to how students, educators, and other stakeholders believe internet use impacts academic performance, whether positively or negatively.

**Perception:** Perception refers to the way individuals understand or interpret the influence of internet use on students' academic outcomes, based on their experiences and observations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter reviewed the related literature of the study under the following subheadings;

- Secondary School Students Academic Performance
- Perceived Effect of Internet Use on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students
- Perceived Relationship Between Frequency of Internet Use and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students
- Perceived Impact of Duration of Internet Use on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students
- Perceived Influence of Different Types of Content Accessed on the Internet on Academic Performance in Secondary School Students
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

#### **Secondary School Students Academic Performance**

The academic performance of secondary school students is a critical factor in shaping their future educational and career opportunities. It is typically measured by grades, test scores, and overall achievement, reflecting a student's ability to comprehend, apply, and retain knowledge within a structured academic environment. Recent studies suggest that academic performance is influenced by a variety of factors, including cognitive abilities, learning environments, socio-economic conditions, and

personal motivation (Adebayo & Ajiboye, 2022; Adetunji & Abiodun, 2021). Despite significant efforts by educators and policymakers to improve learning outcomes, many students still struggle to meet expected academic standards, which can hinder their progress in higher education and limit future career paths (Twenge, 2019).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in the role that digital technology, particularly internet use, plays in student academic performance. The internet has become an integral part of students' lives, offering access to vast amounts of information and various educational resources. Research indicates that internet use can have both positive and negative effects on students' academic outcomes. On one hand, when used productively, the internet can enhance learning by providing access to online tutorials, academic journals, and interactive learning platforms (Lim & Sia, 2020). Students can supplement classroom learning by using the internet to engage in research, seek help through online forums, and explore academic subjects more deeply.

However, the excessive use of the internet, especially for non-academic purposes such as social media, gaming, or entertainment, is associated with negative academic outcomes (Junco, 2015). Studies have found that prolonged online engagement in non-academic activities can distract students from their studies, leading to poor study habits, reduced time for academic tasks, and lower academic performance (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). In particular, the time spent on social media or

engaging in online gaming is linked to decreased academic achievement, as students often prioritize these activities over their schoolwork (Twenge, 2019).

The relationship between internet use and academic performance is also influenced by other factors, such as the frequency and duration of internet use. Frequent internet use for academic purposes, when balanced appropriately, may contribute to higher academic performance, as it allows students to access additional learning resources. On the other hand, excessive time spent online, regardless of the content type, can lead to diminished engagement with schoolwork, sleep deprivation, and poorer academic outcomes (Katz & Rice, 2021). Thus, while the internet can be a powerful tool for enhancing academic performance, it is clear that its impact depends significantly on how it is used by students.

Ultimately, the academic performance of secondary school students is shaped by a complex interplay of factors, with internet use serving as both an opportunity and a challenge. For students to benefit from the positive aspects of internet use, they must learn to manage their online time effectively, ensuring that it supports rather than detracts from their academic pursuits (Livingstone & Haddon, 2018). Effective strategies for integrating internet use into education could significantly enhance student learning outcomes, while excessive and unfocused use could continue to undermine academic success (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2019).

## **Perceived Effect of Internet Use on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

As digital technologies continue to evolve, the internet has become a central aspect of students' daily lives, shaping how they interact with information, communicate with peers and educators, and engage with their studies. Many students perceive the internet as a powerful tool that can enhance their academic performance by providing access to an abundance of learning resources, online tutorials, research materials, and educational forums (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). These resources can support students in deepening their understanding of subjects, improving problem-solving skills, and expanding their knowledge beyond the confines of traditional classroom settings. Research has shown that students who use the internet for academic purposes, such as researching topics, accessing educational content, and participating in online discussions, tend to perform better academically (Lim & Sia, 2020).

However, students' perceptions of the internet's effects on their academic performance are not always positive. A significant concern is that the internet can also act as a major source of distraction. Non-academic internet activities, such as social media use, online gaming, and entertainment, are commonly associated with lower academic performance (Junco, 2015). The constant allure of these distractions often leads students to spend excessive amounts of time online, which can interfere with their ability to focus on schoolwork. Several studies have highlighted a negative

correlation between high levels of non-academic internet use and academic achievement, suggesting that students who spend more time on entertainment-based platforms tend to have lower grades and test scores (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

Moreover, the perceived impact of the internet on academic performance is often linked to how students manage their time and balance their online activities. While moderate and purposeful internet use for educational purposes is seen as beneficial, excessive or poorly managed use can lead to negative outcomes such as procrastination, sleep deprivation, and reduced study time (Twenge, 2019). Students who report using the internet for non-educational purposes often experience difficulty in maintaining a productive study routine, as the internet can easily shift their attention away from academic tasks (Katz & Rice, 2021). In this sense, the perceived effect of internet use on academic performance is largely shaped by the balance students strike between productive and distracting internet activities.

In recent years, some students have also become more aware of the influence of internet content on their academic outcomes. Many students now recognize that their academic success is closely tied to the type of content they engage with online. Educational websites, e-books, academic journals, and online learning platforms are perceived as valuable tools that can significantly contribute to better academic performance, while engagement with non-academic content is often viewed as a source of distraction that undermines focus and study discipline (Livingstone &

Haddon, 2018). However, despite this awareness, students often find it challenging to control their internet use, especially when faced with the temptation of entertaining content.

The perceived effect of internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students is shaped by a combination of factors, including the frequency and duration of internet use, the type of content accessed, and students' ability to regulate their online activities. While the internet offers tremendous opportunities for academic enrichment, its potential negative impact cannot be overlooked, especially when students fail to strike a balance between educational and non-educational activities. As such, understanding how students perceive the internet's influence on their academic performance is crucial for developing effective strategies that encourage productive internet use while minimizing distractions.

### **Perceived Relationship Between Frequency of Internet Use and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

The perceived relationship between the frequency of internet use and the academic performance of secondary school students is an important area of investigation, as the internet has become an integral part of students' educational and social lives. Several studies suggest that the frequency with which students engage with the internet plays a critical role in shaping their academic outcomes. On one hand, frequent use of the internet for educational purposes, such as researching topics,

accessing online lectures, or participating in virtual learning environments, is often perceived as beneficial. Research has shown that students who frequently use the internet for academic tasks tend to have better academic performance, as they can supplement classroom learning with additional resources and information (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). Regular engagement with educational websites, academic journals, and online tutorials can enhance students' understanding of subject matter, improve study habits, and foster independent learning (Lim & Sia, 2020).

However, the perceived relationship between frequency of internet use and academic performance is not always straightforward. While frequent academic internet use is generally beneficial, excessive time spent online can lead to detrimental effects on students' academic performance. A growing body of literature indicates that students who spend significant amounts of time on non-academic internet activities, such as browsing social media, playing online games, or watching videos, often experience a decline in their academic performance. Junco (2015) argues that social media use, in particular, has a negative impact on students' academic outcomes, as it distracts them from academic responsibilities and reduces the time available for studying. The frequency with which students engage in such non-academic activities can be directly linked to lower grades and decreased overall academic achievement (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

Furthermore, the frequency of internet use, when not appropriately balanced, can interfere with other important factors that contribute to academic success, such as sleep and physical activity. Excessive internet use, particularly in the evening, can lead to sleep deprivation, which in turn negatively affects cognitive functioning, concentration, and memory retention (Twenge, 2019). Students who engage in high-frequency internet use, especially during late hours, may find it difficult to maintain the level of focus and energy required for optimal academic performance. This imbalance between internet use and other aspects of student life can result in poorer academic outcomes, despite frequent internet engagement.

Additionally, while some students perceive frequent internet use as a key to improving their academic performance, others struggle to manage the sheer volume of information available online. The overwhelming nature of the internet can lead to information overload, making it difficult for students to discern which resources are most relevant to their studies (Livingstone & Haddon, 2018). As a result, students who frequently use the internet may experience confusion or frustration, leading to reduced academic effectiveness.

The perceived relationship between the frequency of internet use and academic performance is multifaceted. While frequent use of the internet for academic purposes is generally seen as beneficial, the negative effects of excessive non-academic internet use are evident in many studies. Students who engage in high-frequency non-academic

activities or fail to balance their internet usage with other essential academic habits may experience a decline in their academic performance. Therefore, the key to maximizing the positive effects of internet use lies in managing both the frequency and purpose of online engagement.

### **Perceived Impact of Duration of Internet Use on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

The perceived impact of the duration of internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students is a critical factor in understanding how time spent online affects educational outcomes. Research has consistently shown that the length of time students spend on the internet can have both positive and negative implications for their academic achievement. On one hand, moderate internet use, particularly when focused on academic tasks such as research, online courses, or educational videos, can significantly enhance a student's understanding of various subjects. Studies have demonstrated that prolonged engagement with educational resources, such as e-books, digital libraries, and interactive learning platforms, can help reinforce classroom learning, improving comprehension and retention (Katz & Rice, 2021). This type of productive internet use provides students with additional learning opportunities, which may complement or even extend traditional learning, leading to improved academic performance (Lim & Sia, 2020).

However, the duration of internet use becomes problematic when students exceed recommended limits, particularly when their online engagement shifts away from academic activities to non-educational pursuits. The negative effects of excessive internet use, particularly in terms of time spent on social media, online gaming, or entertainment, have been well-documented. Studies have found that students who spend prolonged hours on non-academic online activities tend to experience a decline in their academic performance (Junco, 2015). The addictive nature of social media and gaming, coupled with the endless availability of content, can cause students to spend excessive amounts of time online, often at the expense of study time, sleep, and physical activity. This leads to reduced focus, poor time management, and inadequate preparation for exams and assignments (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). As students devote more time to digital distractions, they have less time to engage with their schoolwork, which can significantly hamper their academic success.

Moreover, the duration of internet use has a direct relationship with sleep patterns, which in turn affects cognitive function and academic performance. Several studies have highlighted that excessive screen time, especially before bedtime, can disrupt students' sleep schedules, leading to sleep deprivation. Twenge (2019) argued that sleep deprivation impairs cognitive abilities such as memory, concentration, and problem-solving skills, all of which are critical for academic performance. Students who spend prolonged hours online, particularly late into the night, may find it difficult

to focus during class, leading to lower retention of information and poor academic outcomes.

Additionally, while students may view long hours of internet use as an opportunity to deepen their knowledge or stay updated with current events, excessive exposure to information can lead to cognitive overload. The sheer volume of information available on the internet can overwhelm students, making it difficult for them to focus on relevant academic content (Livingstone & Haddon, 2018). This overload often results in students becoming disengaged, unable to prioritize tasks effectively, and struggling to manage their academic responsibilities.

The duration of internet use has a complex relationship with the academic performance of secondary school students. While moderate and purposeful internet use can support learning and enhance academic outcomes, excessive time spent online, especially on non-educational activities, negatively affects students' ability to manage their time, focus on academic tasks, and maintain healthy sleep habits. Therefore, it is essential for students to develop a balanced approach to internet use, ensuring that time spent online supports their academic goals rather than detracting from them.

### **Perceived Influence of Different Types of Content Accessed on the Internet on Academic Performance in Secondary School Students**

The perceived influence of different types of content accessed on the internet plays a significant role in shaping the academic performance of secondary school

students. With the increasing availability of a wide variety of online content, ranging from educational resources to entertainment, the nature of the content students engage with directly impacts their learning outcomes. Educational content, such as e-books, academic journals, online tutorials, and interactive learning platforms, can serve as valuable tools for enhancing students' knowledge and reinforcing classroom instruction. Studies have shown that students who regularly engage with academic content online tend to perform better in their studies, as this type of content supplements their learning, providing them with additional resources and explanations that help solidify their understanding of academic subjects (Livingstone & Haddon, 2018). For instance, students who use educational websites or online study forums to enhance their comprehension of complex topics are likely to achieve higher grades, as this extra engagement supports their cognitive development (Lim & Sia, 2020).

However, the type of content that students access online is not always academic in nature, and non-educational content can have a detrimental effect on their academic performance. Social media platforms, online gaming, and entertainment websites are some of the most commonly accessed forms of non-academic content, and excessive engagement with these types of platforms can lead to significant distractions from schoolwork. Research has consistently shown that the use of social media and online entertainment is linked to decreased academic performance, as students often prioritize these activities over studying, assignments, and other academic responsibilities (Junco,

2015). For example, students who spend a considerable amount of time on social media or watching videos on platforms like YouTube may experience lower academic achievement, as these activities consume valuable time that could be used for educational purposes (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2019). Moreover, the engaging and often addictive nature of these platforms leads to longer periods of online activity, which disrupts students' focus and academic routines.

The nature of the content accessed also plays a role in students' cognitive engagement. While educational content is designed to encourage critical thinking and knowledge acquisition, non-academic content, especially entertainment-focused material, often lacks intellectual stimulation, which may contribute to a decline in academic performance. Students who prioritize non-educational content may develop habits of passive consumption rather than active learning, reducing their capacity for deep thinking and problem-solving (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). The contrast between educational content, which promotes skill development and academic growth, and entertainment content, which is often designed for relaxation or escapism, highlights the impact of content type on students' academic success.

Furthermore, students' academic focus can be disrupted by the multi-tasking behaviors associated with accessing different types of content online. For instance, students may switch between academic tasks and entertainment content, leading to reduced concentration and less effective studying (Greenfield, 2020). The constant

interruptions and distractions inherent in non-academic content may result in fragmented attention, making it more difficult for students to complete tasks efficiently and retain information. This disruption in focus can have a compounded negative effect on their academic performance, especially when students are unable to manage the competing demands of online content.

The type of content students access on the internet plays a crucial role in shaping their academic performance. Educational content can provide significant benefits by enhancing students' learning, while non-academic content, particularly entertainment and social media, often serves as a major distraction. The key challenge for students is balancing the consumption of educational and non-educational material to ensure that their online activities support, rather than hinder, their academic goals.

### **Summary of Reviewed Literature**

The reviewed literature highlights the multifaceted nature of internet use and its effects on the academic performance of secondary school students. Researchers have consistently explored the positive and negative impacts of internet access, emphasizing its dual role in education. On the one hand, the internet provides an invaluable resource for academic enrichment, offering students access to vast educational materials such as online tutorials, academic journals, research databases, and interactive learning platforms. Studies suggest that when used productively, the internet can enhance students' understanding of subjects, improve their study habits,

and foster independent learning (Lim & Sia, 2020). Students who engage in educational online activities, such as researching topics or participating in online discussions, tend to perform better academically, as these resources supplement and reinforce classroom instruction (Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

However, the literature also points to significant drawbacks, especially when students use the internet for non-academic purposes. Excessive time spent on social media, online gaming, and entertainment is consistently linked to decreased academic performance (Junco, 2015; Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). Non-educational internet activities often lead to distractions that reduce students' focus on their academic tasks, leading to poor study habits, procrastination, and lower grades. The negative effects are particularly pronounced when students struggle to balance their time between academic and non-academic internet use, resulting in diminished study time, disrupted sleep patterns, and poor cognitive functioning (Twenge, 2019; Katz & Rice, 2021). Additionally, research has identified that excessive internet use, particularly when it extends into late hours, disrupts students' sleep, further contributing to academic difficulties (Twenge, 2019).

Furthermore, the literature has emphasized the importance of the type of content accessed by students online. Educational content, such as e-books, academic journals, and online learning platforms, is generally perceived as beneficial, promoting critical thinking, deep learning, and cognitive development. In contrast, entertainment-focused

content often has the opposite effect, leading to passive consumption and reduced academic engagement (Livingstone & Haddon, 2018; Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). Students' ability to regulate their online activities plays a crucial role in determining whether their internet use supports or hinders their academic performance. While some students can effectively balance educational and recreational content, others find it challenging to manage their time online, resulting in information overload, distractions, and a decline in academic focus (Livingstone & Haddon, 2018).

Despite these insights, there are several gaps in the literature that warrant further exploration. First, while much of the existing research has focused on the negative impact of social media and gaming on academic performance, less attention has been given to how specific types of educational content contribute to students' academic achievements. For example, more studies are needed to understand how students engage with different kinds of educational materials and the extent to which they find them effective in enhancing their learning. Additionally, while some studies address the frequency and duration of internet use, few have examined the nuances of how students perceive the relationship between the two and how these perceptions influence their behavior. Research could further investigate whether students' awareness of the potential distractions of non-academic content affects their internet use habits. Lastly, the role of cultural and socio-economic factors in shaping students'

online behaviors and perceptions of the internet's impact on their academic performance remains underexplored.

### **CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the methodology used to investigate the perceived effect of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students. It is divided into the following sections:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Instrument of the Study
- Validation of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

#### **Research Design**

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate for exploring and understanding the perceptions of secondary school students regarding the effects of Internet use on their academic performance. Descriptive surveys are often used to collect data that reflects the current status of a

phenomenon, in this case, the perceived relationship between Internet usage patterns (frequency, duration, and content type) and students' academic outcomes. The design will allow for an in-depth understanding of how these factors are perceived by students in relation to their academic achievements. Descriptive designs are beneficial for collecting opinions and feedback from a large group, which is ideal for this study as it involves a sizable sample of students.

### **Population of the Study**

The target population for this study consists of secondary school students in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria. The study focuses on students enrolled in 13 secondary schools in the Local Government, with an estimated population of 2,800 students across the selected schools. These students are enrolled in public secondary schools, ensuring that the study includes a diverse demographic in terms of educational backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and access to the Internet. The students in this population are in their senior secondary levels (SSS1 – SSS3). The diverse sample helps to capture a wide range of experiences and perceptions regarding Internet use and academic performance.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The sample for the study comprised 150 students. They were selected using the simple random sampling technique. Out of the 13 secondary schools. Three were

randomly selected, thereafter 50 students from each of the secondary schools were randomly selected. This brings the total number of students sampled to 150.

### **Instrument of the Study**

The study utilized a self-structured questionnaire titled "Perceived Effects of Internet Use on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students," consisting of two sections. Section A gathered demographic information which is the student's gender. Section B assessed students' perceptions of internet use and its impact on academic performance, focusing on the frequency, duration, and type of content accessed. Responses were recorded on a 4-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

### **Validation of the Instrument**

The instrument of this study were validated by the researchers supervisor and two other experts in the department of curriculum and instructional technology, Faculty of Education, their input and scrutiny were considered and used to modify and arrive at the final draft of the instrument.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. A pre-test was conducted with a sample of 20 students drawn from the population who were not part of the

study and the responses were analyzed to determine the consistency of the items in the questionnaire. The data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistics and it yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.81

### **Method of Data Collection**

Data were collected through the administration of the self-structured questionnaire, After obtaining necessary permissions from the school authorities, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the selected students. The students were briefed on the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaires were completed on-site, and the researcher collected them immediately after completion to ensure a high response rate.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques of mean and standard deviation.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter is concerned with the presentation of results and discussion of findings.

#### Presentation of Results

**Table 1: Demographics of Respondents**

SN	Variables	Option	Responses	
			Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender	Male	50	33.3
		Female	100	66.7
		<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2025.**

Based on Table 1, 62.7% of the Respondents are male while 37.3% are female.

**Research Question 1: What is the perceived effect of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students?**

**Table 2: Perceived Effect of Internet Use on the academic Performance of Secondary School Students.**

<b>Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
My academic performance has improved due to the use of the Internet for educational purposes.	150	3.36	1.307
Internet use distracts me from studying and affects my academic performance negatively.	150	3.47	1.197
The Internet provides valuable resources that help me understand academic concepts better.	150	3.17	1.389
I use the internet to study and access materials for my academic work.	150	3.32	1.250
I feel more engaged in my studies because of the educational materials available on the Internet.	150	3.29	1.303
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		3.32	1.289

**Source: Field Survey, 2025.**

The Table presents the perceived effects of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students. On average, students reported a moderate belief that the Internet has both positive and negative impacts on their academic performance. The statement "My academic performance has improved due to the use of the Internet for educational purposes" had a mean of 3.36, suggesting a somewhat positive view. Similarly, students felt that the Internet provides valuable resources to help understand academic concepts (mean of 3.17) and that it makes them feel more engaged in their studies (mean of 3.29). However, there was also a notable concern regarding the

negative impact of Internet use on academic performance, as reflected by a mean of 3.47 for the statement, "Internet use distracts me from studying." The cluster mean of 3.32 indicates a balanced view, with students acknowledging both the benefits and distractions associated with Internet use in academic contexts.

**Research Question 2: How is the frequency of Internet use perceived to relate to the academic performance of secondary school students?**

**Table 3: Frequency of Internet Use Perceived to Related to the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

<b>Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
The more I use the Internet for studying, the better my academic performance.	150	3.50	1.19
Excessive use of the Internet for non-academic purposes negatively affects my academic performance.	150	3.26	1.17
I tend to spend more time on the Internet for leisure activities than on academic tasks.	150	3.38	1.23
Regular Internet use for research and studying has a positive effect on my academic outcomes.	150	3.29	1.29
I get distracted from my course work when I spend too much time in the internet.	150	2.80	1.29
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>3.24</b>	<b>1.238</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Responses from Table 3 showed that students generally perceived a positive relationship between Internet use for studying and academic performance, with the statement "The more I use the Internet for studying, the better my academic performance" having a mean of 3.50. However, concerns about excessive non-academic Internet use were also evident, as reflected by the mean of 3.26 for the statement "Excessive use of the Internet for non-academic purposes negatively affects my academic performance." Students also acknowledged spending time on leisure

activities, with a mean of 3.38 for "I tend to spend more time on the Internet for leisure activities than on academic tasks." Despite the positive perception of regular use for academic work, with a mean of 3.29 for "Regular Internet use for research and studying has a positive effect on my academic outcomes," the data also showed that spending too much time online can be distracting, as shown by the mean of 2.80 for "I get distracted from my course work when I spend too much time on the Internet." The cluster mean of 3.24 indicates a general sense that moderate, purposeful Internet use can enhance academic performance, while excessive use may lead to negative consequences.

**Research Question 3: What is the perceived impact of the duration of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students?**

**Table 4: Perceived Impact of the Duration of Internet Use on the academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

<b>Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Obsession with the internet negatively impacts my academic focus and performance.	150	2.59	1.382
I spend a lot of time on the Internet for academic work, and it helps improve my performance.	150	3.16	1.221
I find it difficult to balance Internet use and academic work due to long hours spent online.	150	3.49	1.128
Extended hours on the Internet for non-academic activities reduces my study time.	150	3.50	1.041
Using the Internet for academic purposes for a long duration helps me perform better in exams.	150	3.39	1.140
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>3.22</b>	<b>1.228</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The Table examines the perceived impact of the duration of Internet use on academic performance among secondary school students. Students generally perceived long hours spent online to have both positive and negative effects. The statement "I spend a lot of time on the Internet for academic work, and it helps improve my performance" had a mean of 3.16, suggesting that students view extended academic use of the Internet as beneficial. However, concerns were also noted, as the mean of 3.49 for "I find it difficult to balance Internet use and academic work due to long hours spent online" highlights challenges in managing time, while a mean of 3.50 for "Extended hours on the Internet for non-academic activities reduces my study time" indicates that non-academic use negatively impacts study time. Additionally, the statement "Using the Internet for academic purposes for a long duration helps me perform better in exams" had a mean of 3.39, suggesting that prolonged academic Internet use can enhance exam performance. The cluster mean of 3.22 reflects a balanced view, with both positive and negative perceptions about the impact of long-duration Internet use on academic performance.

**Research Question 4: Are the different types of content accessed on the Internet perceived to influence the academic performance of secondary school students?**

**Table 5: Influence of Types of Content assessed on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

<b>Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Excessive consumption of entertainment content distracts me from study time.	150	3.36	1.307
Spending time on entertainment websites such as social media negatively impacts my academic performance.	150	3.47	1.197
Using platforms that offer quizzes, simulations, and interactive problem-solving improves my critical thinking skills	150	3.17	1.389
Engaging in online gaming on social media has led to poor academic outcomes for me.	150	3.32	1.250
Educational resources like online forums have contributed to my academic success.	150	3.29	1.303
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		3.32	1.289

**Source: Field Survey, 2025.**

Responses from Table 5 showed that Students reported that excessive consumption of entertainment content, such as social media and online gaming, negatively impacts their academic performance, with means of 3.36 and 3.47 for "Excessive consumption of entertainment content distracts me from study time" and "Spending time on entertainment websites such as social media negatively impacts my academic performance," respectively. Additionally, students felt that engaging with educational

resources, like online forums, positively contributes to their academic success (mean = 3.29). Platforms that offer quizzes, simulations, and interactive problem-solving were also viewed as helpful for improving critical thinking skills, with a mean of 3.17. The cluster mean of 3.32 indicates a general perception that while entertainment content may hinder academic performance, educational resources and interactive platforms are seen as beneficial.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study explore the perceived effects of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students across multiple aspects: the overall impact of Internet use, the frequency of use, the duration of use, and the types of content accessed. The study reveals a nuanced view, where students report both positive and negative effects based on the type, frequency, and duration of Internet use, as well as the type of content consumed.

### **Perceived Effect of Internet Use on Academic Performance**

The results of this study suggest that students have a moderately positive view of how Internet use influences their academic performance. While the use of the Internet for educational purposes is seen as beneficial (mean = 3.36), students also acknowledge that Internet use can distract them from studying, affecting their academic performance negatively (mean = 3.47). This duality indicates that while students

recognize the educational benefits of the Internet, they are also aware of its potential to cause distractions.

The findings align with previous studies that explored the dual impact of Internet use on academic performance. For instance, a study by (Junco, 2012) examined how Internet use, specifically social media, affects academic performance. Junco found that students who spent excessive time on social media had lower academic performance, while those who used the Internet for academic purposes (such as accessing educational resources) showed improved academic outcomes. This is in line with our study, where students reported positive effects from educational Internet use but acknowledged the distractions caused by excessive non-academic Internet use. Another study by (Rosen et al., 2013) also found that while students perceive the Internet as a valuable educational tool, they tend to overestimate its positive effects and often struggle with the distractions it causes. Our findings are consistent with this view, where students report that the Internet helps them understand academic concepts but is also a source of distraction.

### **Frequency of Internet Use and Academic Performance**

The study found that students generally perceived a positive relationship between Internet use for studying and academic performance, with a mean of 3.50 for "The more I use the Internet for studying, the better my academic performance." However,

excessive use of the Internet for non-academic purposes was perceived to have a negative impact on academic performance, as seen in the mean of 3.26 for "Excessive use of the Internet for non-academic purposes negatively affects my academic performance." This finding is in agreement with (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011), who found that while moderate Internet use for academic purposes can enhance learning outcomes, excessive non-academic use, especially for leisure activities, is associated with poorer academic performance. Kuss and Griffiths highlighted that students' academic performance declines when Internet use becomes excessive and is not purposefully directed toward academic work. Similar to our findings, they stressed the importance of managing Internet use to ensure that it remains focused on educational tasks. Another study by (Rosen et al., 2011) also explored the relationship between Internet use and academic performance. Rosen found that students who engaged in frequent academic Internet use demonstrated better academic outcomes, while those who engaged in non-academic use, such as social media and gaming, had lower academic performance. This aligns with our study's finding that students tend to spend more time on leisure activities (mean = 3.38) and face distractions when they spend too much time online (mean = 2.80).

### **Duration of Internet Use and Academic Performance**

The study also explored the perceived impact of the duration of Internet use on academic performance. Students generally perceived both positive and negative

effects of extended Internet use. They believed that prolonged academic Internet use could improve performance (mean = 3.39), but excessive hours spent online, especially for non-academic activities, hindered their study time (mean = 3.50). This aligns with the findings of (Pereira et al., 2018), who explored how the duration of Internet use affects students' academic performance. Pereira found that students who spent long hours on academic work using the Internet generally performed better, but those who spent excessive time on non-academic activities, like gaming or social media, showed decreased academic performance. Our study echoes this finding, where students report that non-academic use reduces study time and negatively impacts performance. Similarly, a study by (Turel et al., 2011) also examined how Internet addiction affects students' academic outcomes. They found that students with higher levels of Internet addiction, characterized by excessive usage, experienced declines in academic performance. This agrees with our study's findings that extended hours on non-academic activities negatively affect students' academic outcomes.

### **Types of Content Accessed and Academic Performance**

The study found that students perceived entertainment content, such as social media and online gaming, as detrimental to their academic performance, while educational content, such as online forums and platforms offering quizzes and simulations, was seen as beneficial. The cluster mean of 3.32 suggests that students view entertainment content as a distraction, whereas educational content is perceived to improve academic

performance. This is consistent with findings from (Van Rooij et al., 2017), who explored how different types of content accessed on the Internet influenced academic performance. Van Rooij found that students who accessed entertainment content frequently had lower academic performance, while those who engaged with educational content showed higher academic outcomes. Our study supports this, as students in our research also reported that time spent on entertainment websites (mean = 3.47) and online gaming (mean = 3.32) led to poorer academic outcomes, whereas educational resources like online forums (mean = 3.29) contributed positively to academic success. Furthermore, (Bonnal et al., 2020) found that interactive learning platforms, like quizzes and simulations, enhanced critical thinking skills and academic performance. Our study's finding, with a mean of 3.17 for interactive platforms, aligns with this conclusion, as students reported that these types of platforms helped improve their academic performance.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Summary**

This study assessed the perceived effect of internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students. Four (4) research questions guided the study, aiming to assess the perceived effect of internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students, examine the perceived relationship between the frequency of Internet use and the academic performance of secondary school students, investigate the perceived impact of the duration of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students and determine whether the different types of content accessed on the Internet is perceived to influence the academic performance of secondary school students. The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study is made up of six thousand nine hundred and fifty-four (6,954) public senior secondary school students in the thirteen (13) public secondary schools in Egor Local Government of Edo State, A sample size of 150 students from 3 public secondary schools in Egor Local Government, was selected using simple random

sampling technique. A structured questionnaire design by the researcher was used to retrieve data from the respondents. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha and the reliability of the instrument was established. Participation was voluntary, and participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The administered questionnaire was collected immediately to avoid omission. Data collected from the questionnaires was interpreted using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation.

The findings of the study were as follows;

- i. Internet Use has both positive and negative effect on students academic performance
- ii. Frequency of internet use purposely has positive effect on students academic Performance
- iii. There is a positive and negative perceptions about the impact of long-duration Internet use on academic performance
- iv. Good contents has positive effect on students academic performance while bad contents has negative effect on students academic performance

## **Conclusion**

This study explored the perceived effects of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students in Egor Local Government, Edo State. The findings revealed a complex relationship between Internet use and academic performance, with

both positive and negative effects. The study concluded that while Internet use for academic purposes can enhance students' learning experiences and academic performance, excessive or non-academic use can serve as a distraction, negatively affecting their focus and study time. Moreover, the frequency of Internet use, when applied purposefully, was found to positively influence academic outcomes. However, long-duration Internet use presented both benefits and challenges, with students acknowledging the value of academic content but also highlighting the detrimental effects of excessive non-academic content. Additionally, students believed that educational content, such as online forums and interactive platforms, contributed positively to their academic performance, whereas entertainment content, such as social media and online gaming, negatively impacted their studies.

### **Recommendations**

1. Students should be encouraged to use the Internet primarily for educational purposes. Schools should offer training on how to effectively use the Internet as a tool for learning, ensuring that students access valuable resources like online courses, educational videos, and academic forums.
2. Schools and parents should work together to monitor and manage students' Internet use, ensuring that non-academic activities, such as social media and gaming, do not take up excessive time that could otherwise be spent on academic work.

3. Educational institutions should encourage students to engage with content that enhances their critical thinking and academic skills, such as interactive learning platforms, quizzes, and educational websites. Schools could create partnerships with online learning platforms to provide students with access to such resources.
4. Students should be educated on the importance of time management and balancing their academic work with recreational Internet use. Effective study habits and disciplined time management techniques can help minimize the negative effects of excessive Internet use.

### **Contributions to Knowledge**

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the impact of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students. It highlights the dual nature of Internet use—both as an invaluable educational tool and as a potential source of distraction. The findings provide critical insights into the need for balanced and purposeful Internet use, emphasizing that while the Internet can enhance learning, excessive or non-academic use can be detrimental. This research also underscores the importance of guiding students in navigating the vast online resources and prioritizing academic content to improve their academic performance. The study offers practical recommendations for students, educators, and parents to ensure that Internet use remains a positive force in the academic development of secondary school students.

## **Suggestions for Further Studies**

1. Further research could explore the long-term effects of Internet use on academic performance, focusing on whether the positive or negative impacts persist over several academic years.
2. Future studies could delve deeper into the specific types of online content (e.g., educational videos, online forums, social media) and their distinct influences on students' academic outcomes, assessing how different types of educational content can improve learning.
3. Similar studies could be conducted in different regions to see if the findings hold across diverse educational contexts, socioeconomic backgrounds, and digital accessibility.
4. A study could examine how teachers and parents influence students' use of the Internet and whether interventions by these groups can mitigate the negative effects of excessive non-academic Internet use.

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**APPENDIX**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN  
BENIN CITY**

**PERCEIVED EFFECT OF INTERNET USE ON THE ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Dear Respondent

This research is being carried out by the researcher to investigate the perceived effect of Internet use on the academic performance of Secondary School Students. Please, give your opinion as it concerns the problems posed in the research. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation

---

Yours faithfully

(Researcher)

**SECTION A: Demographic Data**

**Gender:** Male (  ) Female (  )

## Section B

SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, D- Disagree, SD – Strongly Disagree

	Items	SA	A	D	SD
	<b>What is the perceived effect of Internet use on the academic performance of secondary school students?</b>				
1.	My academic performance has improved due to the use of the Internet for educational purposes.				
2.	Internet use distracts me from studying and affects my academic performance negatively.				
3.	The Internet provides valuable resources that help me understand academic concepts better.				
4.	I use the internet to study and access materials for my academics				
5.	I feel more engaged in my studies because of the educational materials available on the Internet.				
	<b>How does the frequency of Internet use influence students' academic performance?</b>	SA	A	D	SD
6.	The more I use the Internet for studying, the better my academic performance.				
7.	Excessive use of the Internet for non-academic purposes negatively affects my academic performance.				
8.	I tend to spend more time on the Internet for leisure activities than on academic tasks.				
9.	Regular Internet use for research and studying has a positive effect on my academic outcomes.				
10.	I get distracted from my course work when I spend too much time in the internet.				
	<b>What is the perceived impact of the duration of Internet use on academic performance?</b>	SA	A	D	SD
11.	Prolonged use of the Internet negatively impacts my				

	academic focus and performance.				
12.	I spend a lot of time on the Internet for academic work, and it helps improve my performance.				
13.	I find it difficult to balance Internet use and academic work due to long hours spent online.				
14.	Extended hours on the Internet for non-academic activities reduce my study time.				
15.	Using the Internet for academic purposes for a long duration helps me perform better in exams.				
	<b>How does the type of content accessed on the Internet influence academic performance?</b>				
16.	Excessive consumption of entertainment content like streaming videos, social media, or gaming distracts me from study time and focus.				
17.	Spending time on entertainment websites such as social media negatively impacts my academic performance.				
18.	Using platforms that offer quizzes, simulations, and interactive problem-solving improves my critical thinking skills				
19.	Engaging in online gaming on social media distractions has led to poor academic outcomes for me.				
20.	Educational resources like e-books and online forums have contributed to my academic success.				