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PREFERENCE FOR MOBILE PHONE USAGE IN LEARNING AMONG STUDENTS IN SOME SELECTED HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Questionnaires were used as instrument for data collection. The population of the study consists of 206 students. This was randomly picked from some selected higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. A total of the 206 questionnaires were distributed only 188 were retrieved. Descriptive statistics, (mean and percentage) were used for analysis. A mean score of 2.5 and above and a percentage score of 50% were considered for decision making. The study revealed that that the prospect of using mobile telephone in learning in some selected higher institutions of learning in Nigeria as it increases academic, it enhances learning, durability, ease communication, and high-quality camera features. Also, the study shows the challenges affecting student's preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria in the following order: Price, design, technological problem, regulatory issues and display cracks. The study recommends that the university management should organize seminar on the importance of mobile phones in students learning and also the Federal Government of Nigeria should regulate the price and to make provision for student's loans for those that cannot afford the acquisition of mobile phones in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria.

Keywords: Preference, Mobile phone, Learning, Students, Higher institutions, Nigeria

Background to the Study

A higher education institution encompasses various types of education delivered in postsecondary institutions of learning and usually awarding, at the end of a course of study, a named degree, diploma, or certificate of higher studies. The purpose of higher education institutions across the world is to conduct teaching, research, and community service. While teachers are expected to fulfill these three (3) fundamental duties (teaching, research, and community service). Students are also expected to learn from lectures and conduct their own research as well as complete assignments, conferences, workshops, seminars, projects, and term paper writing and presentations.

Learning is the process of acquiring new understanding, knowledge, behaviors,

skills, values, attitudes, and preferences. Learning involves strengthening correct responses and weakening incorrect responses. Learning involves adding new information to your memory. Learning involves making sense of the presented material by attending to relevant information, mentally reorganizing it, and connecting it with what you already know. In other words, Learning is the progression in knowledge, technics, understanding, skills, general behavior of an organism, improvement in actions due to experience, training and also as growth occurs. For learning to be effective, the use of mobile phone among students in institutions of higher learning is critical.

A mobile phone is a wireless handheld device that allows users to make and receive calls. While the earliest generation of mobile phones could only make and receive calls, today's mobile phones do a lot more, accommodating web browsers, games, cameras, video players and navigational systems. A mobile phone typically operates on a cellular network, which is composed of cell sites scattered throughout cities, countryside's and even mountainous regions. If a user happens to be located in an area where there is no signal from any cell site belonging to the cellular network provider he or she is subscribed to, calls cannot be placed or received in that location. Students and researchers just don't by phones rather go for preference.

Preference refers to an order by which students in search of an optimal choice, ranks alternatives based on their respective utility. If a student has a **preference for** something, he/she would like to have it rather than something else. Nowadays, the majority of tertiary students prefer a particular brand of mobile phone for learning. (Nwachukwu & Onyenankeya, 2017). This is due to the fact that smartphones are increasingly offering venues for students and other scholars throughout the world to conduct academic activities more successfully. In a research on the utility of smartphones among library and information science students in Hong Kong and Japan, Dukic et al. (2015) discovered that students use their preferred mobile phones to interact, collaborate, socialize, entertain, share, and receive information to suit their academic demands. Students also access course materials, look up library catalogs, chat with classmates about homework assignments, and take notes on their cellphones. According to studies by Nwachukwu and Onyenankeya (2017), students in Nigeria use their preferred mobile phones to stay in touch with friends, family, teachers, and other students. The majority of studies on smartphones in Nigeria examined how they were used, which smartphones people preferred, how satisfied users were with their smartphones, and whether they planned to buy another smartphone, among other things. It is in light of these unique benefits that prompted the researcher to embark on this titled preference for mobile phone usage in promoting knowledge sharing and collaborative learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The preference of the phone is what most students choose; brand preference is a

reflection of students' willingness to utilize a certain good or service from a business despite the presence of other options Brand preference is the decision of students to purchase one brand above others for learning, is a gauge of brand loyalty. When a student picks a brand above other ones that are accessible because it has the dominating projected value, this is known as brand preference. The distinctive features of smartphones include wireless access and connectivity, hardware sensors, the ability to install programs, big display screens, high resolution, and download and storage capabilities. A long-lasting battery, warp-speed computing, a clear display, a superb camera, many windows, large storage space, infrared remote control, and a fingerprint sensor, among other characteristics, are essential for smartphones. Despite the fact that smartphones are extremely important to students learning, particularly those in higher institutions, there aren't many empirical researches in Nigeria on students' preference for smartphones and how such devices might be used most effectively for academic reasons. Hence the need for this study.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. find out the reasons for the preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria
2. find out the challenges affecting student's preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria

Review of Related Literature

The degree to which a person adopts new technology relies on their educational background. Smartphone users with lower levels of education have reportedly noted that their lack of understanding has prevented them from using technologies like the Internet. These people experience more anxiety and have less complicated thought processes (Rogers et al.). According to Mohammad and Singh (2015), the chance that a person would use technology like cellphones, the internet, and computers increases with their degree of education. According to research, the perceived ease of using technology increases with higher levels of knowledge (Rashid et al., 2020).

Additionally, Kotler and Armstrong (2007) define product design/features as a product's qualities that contribute to meeting the requirements and wants of students and raising their level of pleasure with the product via ownership and use. Smartphones from manufacturers like Samsung, Apple, Tecno, iTel, Nokia, Gionee, Oppo, Huawei, Xiaomi, and Infinix are made to be lightweight and simple to use. Most models provide displays with greater size and resolution, internal storage, long-lasting batteries, infrared remote controls, and other features. Unusual features that smartphones give consumers include audio and video playback, a high-quality camera, GPS, games, photo and video editing, e-

mail and instant messaging, program installation, and more. Android dominates the operating system market globally.

Students' preferences for items are significantly influenced by product design and characteristics, according to study by Osman et al. (2012). Aesthetics is a term used to describe appearance, attractiveness, or beauty. Tractiasky (2004) and Schenkman and Jonssson (2000) have thoroughly examined how aesthetics play a key impact in how people perceive and value technical developments. Toufani (2015) states that rather than conveying ideas via words, "aesthetics is grasped by the sensory impressions of appearance and touch causing emotions in the individual. To improve information processing and functioning, the aesthetic value of items like cellphones should be assessed on the device. According to Thorsteinsson and Page (2014), existing smartphone users would rather purchase a new phone from an established brand than one that had just been announced. According to Wu et al. (2015), students who are loyal to a brand are more likely to purchase from tried-and-true companies. According to Alshare et al. (2020), cellular brands that offer premium products at competitive costs draw and retain customers. According to Lau et al. (2016), the desire to buy a smartphone is substantially influenced by how helpful, simple, and enjoyable it is thought to be. Additionally, Riyath and Musthafa (2014) and Twenefour (2017) found that brand choice is influenced by perceived smartphone quality, while Garga, Maiyaki and Sagagi (2019) highlighted product quality as the reason why consumers switch cellular companies.

Student's awareness of a certain brand is measured by its brand popularity, which is boosted via word-of-mouth. The more students are exposed to a brand, the more well-liked that brand becomes. Students frequently seek out and buy well-known brands. According to Perrault et al. (2010), brand popularity refers to how effectively students can identify certain brands. According to Hult et al. (2012), brand popularity may be utilized as an external indicator of the caliber of items that buyers can choose from. When evaluating product attributes is challenging, brand recognition can provide customers confidence. Popular brands are favorably perceived by image-related features, according to Ramesh's (2013) research. The physical characteristics of items are referred to as character-related qualities. Inyang (2020), in his study on students' brand preferences for mobile phones at tertiary institutions, found that product qualities had a big impact on brand preferences for mobile phones. According to Riyath and Musthafa (2014), brand selection for mobile phones among university students is significantly influenced by product qualities including quality and a fashionable look.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey using questionnaire to collect data. The population of the study consist of 206 students which were randomly picked from some selected higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. A total of the 206 questionnaires were distributed only 188 were retrieved. Descriptive statistics, (mean and percentage) were

used for analysis. A mean score of 2.5 and above and a percentage score of 50% were considered for decision making.

Population of the Study
Table 1

S/N	Higher institution in Nigeria	Population of Students
1	Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka	64
2	Abia State University Uturu	45
3	Ahmadu Bello Universiy, Kano	41
4	University of Benin, Edo State	**38**
	Total	**188**

Table 1 depicts the population of the study in following order; Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka (64), Abia State University Uturu (45), Ahmadu Bello Universiy, Kano (41), and University of Benin, Edo State (38) respectively.

Results
Table 2
The reasons for the preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria

S/N	Items Statement	A	SA	D	SD	X
1	It increases academic performance	75	65	23	25	3.0
2	It enhances learning	56	57	35	40	2.6
3	Durability	68	69	21	30	2.9
4	Ease communication	79	74	14	21	3.1
5	High quality camera features	45	55	34	54	2.4

Table 2 depicts the prospect of using mobile telephone in learning in some selected higher institutions of learning in Nigeria as it increases academic (3.0), it enhances learning (2.6), Durability (2.9), ease communication, (3.1) and high quality camera features (2.4) respectively.

Table 3 Challenges affecting student's preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria

S/N	Items Statement	A	SA	D	SD	X
1	Price	67	83	12	26	3.0
2	Design	64	55	32	37	2.7
3	Technological problem	68	82	11	27	3.0
4	Regulatory issues	56	74	14	44	2.7
5	Display cracks	56	79	11	42	2.7

Table 3 affirmed the challenges affecting student's preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria in the following order: Price (3.0), design (2.7), technological problem (3.0), regulatory issues (2.7) and display cracks (2.7) respectively.

Discussion of Findings

The study is on preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study revealed that the prospect of using mobile telephone in learning in some selected higher institutions of learning in Nigeria as it increases academic, it enhances learning, durability, ease communication, and high-quality camera features. This implies that mobile phone usage is critical for learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria. Also, the study shows the challenges affecting student's preference for mobile phone usage in learning among students in some selected higher institutions in Nigeria in the following order: Price, design, technological problem, regulatory issues and display cracks.

Conclusion

Mobile learning allows for various interactive media that can be tailored based on personal preferences. This mobile learning aspect will enable students to take control of their knowledge and develop a sense of belonging. It has a strong relationship with student in higher institutions of learning by engaging them in their research and other academic works. Mobile phone users would rather purchase a new phone from an established brand than one that had just been announced. Students who are loyal to a brand are more likely to purchase from tried-and-true companies. Mobile phones preference or brand that offer premium products at competitive costs draw and retain customers. The desire to buy a smartphone is substantially influenced by how helpful, simple, and enjoyable it is thought to students in higher education.

Recommendations

1. The university management should disseminate information on the awareness and the importance of mobile phones usage in students learning.

2. The Federal Government of Nigeria should regulate the price and to make provision for students loans for those that cannot afford the acquisition of mobile phones in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria.

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