

# FREQUENCY OF UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION IN PROMOTING HEALTH AWARENESS AMONG STUDENTS OF SCHOOL OF HEALTH TECHNOLOGY, PANKSHIN

**Audu Andrew Jatau, Joseph Philip Dangbin and Yakubu Gorah Kajang**

Dept. of Health and Physical Education, F.C.E., P. M B. 27, Pankshin, Plateau state.

## **Abstract**

*This study determined the frequency of utilization of information technology in promoting health awareness among students of school of health technology, Pankshin. A 12 items of questionnaire was used to collect data from randomly selected samples of 211. The findings of the study revealed that the modern information technology education such as satellite, Internet, World Wide Web, and electronic mail had never been utilized to promote health knowledge. Gender has significant influence in the frequency of utilization of satellite in promoting health awareness of students.*

## **Introduction**

In the history of mankind, information has been very important in promoting knowledge. Over the years as Afolabi (2001) observed, man has been making efforts to improve the means of communication. The major advance made in this era so far is information technology (IT). The advent of IT fulfilled one of man's long-time dreams. Today, the advent of IT has created and provides users of computer networks with a simple and consistent means to access the collective knowledge electronically available on earth.

Utilization of information technology in this technological age, can give rise to matured and efficient record keeping practices, possession of knowledge and skills. An environment that encourages the use of IT according to Adamu (2001) fosters what might be termed high information maturity on the part of the populace. Equitable access to IT by all citizenry-rich and poor, privileged and disadvantaged, students and non-students is one of the poignant societal issues facing mankind in this 21st century.

Information technology is defined by Alhassan (2001) as a broad-based technology (including its methods, management and applications) that supports the creation, storage, and manipulation of information. Gushen (2001) defines information technology education as the application of microcomputers (smallest personal computers) and telecommunication technologies to improve learning process. In this context, information technology education (ITE) is defined to mean the management and application of created and stored information for the purpose of promoting learning process.

Information technology education is useful if delivered to the right person, at the right time in the right manner and in the right place. In the academic and health sectors, efficient and quick information dissemination is becoming critical in the face of cost of traveling (especially abroad) a situation that is hampering the natural exchange of skills, knowledge and research results in the field of education and health.

Recently, teachers saw ITE as an ideal vehicle for conveying programmed instructions. Information technology promise much greater adaptability and flexibility. Information technology education is tailored towards the learner's preference and performance as a tool for individualization of instruction, improving the learner and management of instructional process. There are different types of ITE. Gushen (2001) listed the following: mail, telephone, internet, books, electronic mail (e-mail), radio, television, satellite, world wide web (WWW), bulletin board system, computer, and library. These IT's can undoubtedly promote health awareness.

The purpose of this paper was to examine the frequency of utilizations of various information

technologies in promoting health awareness among students of school of health technology, Pankshin, in this technological age.

### **Research Question**

In order to give direction to the study, one research question was formulated.

1. What is the frequency of utilization of information technology education in promoting health awareness of students?

### **Hypotheses**

In this study it is assumed that:

1. There is no significant difference in the frequency of utilization of Internet and World Wide Web among students.
2. Gender has no significant influence in the frequency of utilization of satellite between male and female students.

### **Methodology**

This study was designed to find out the Frequency of use of Information Technology Education in Promoting Health Awareness among students of School of Health Technology, Pankshin. The population for the study comprised all the 640 students of the school. The researchers used the simple random sampling technique to select the 211 students that represented the sample for the study.

The questionnaire entitled the Information Technology Types Questionnaire (ITTQ) was the research instrument used for collecting data for the study. The questionnaire was composed of two sections (A&B), section A sought information about the respondent's sex and religion: section B had 12 items. The researchers developed the questionnaire items. A four-point scale rating of Always, Occasionally, Rarely and Never were used for the respondents to respond to the questionnaire items.

Four experts in F.C.E., Pankshin, validated the instrument-two in the department of P.H.E., and two others from the Department of Educational Technology.

The researchers administered the questionnaire personally with the help of research assistants. The return rate was 100% (211).

To establish the reliability of instrument, the test- retest technique was used and a reliability of 0.78 was obtained. Percentage and frequency were used to answer the research question, while the inferential chi- square statistics was used in testing the hypotheses at  $P < 0.05$  level of significance.

### **Results**

The findings are hereby presented in the table below according to the research question and hypotheses posed in the study.

**Table 1: Frequency of utilization of information technology education in promoting health awareness of students**

Types of Information Technology	N = 211							
	Never		Always		Occasionally		Rarely	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Internet	16	7.58	55	26.06	28	13.27	112	53.08
Television	142	67.30	52	24.64	10	4.74	07	3.31
Electronic mail (e-mail)	18	8.53	47	22.27	36	17.06	110	52.13
Books	147	69.67	51	24.17	09	4.26	04	1.90
World Wide Web (www)	24	11.37	43	20.36	35	16.58	109	51.66
Radio	179	84.83	25	11.84	06	2.84	01	0.47
Computer	19	9.00	43	20.38	50	23.69	99	46.92
Telephone	13	6.16	90	42.65	45	21.33	63	29.86
Satellite	16	7.58	34	16.11	38	18.00	123	58.29
Periodicals	16	7.58	47	22.27	51	24.17	97	45.97
Network	71	33.65	79	37.44	31	14.69	30	14.22
Library	72	34.12	63	29.86	37	17.54	39	18.48

Table 1 above indicates that the respondents had never utilized Internet 112(53.08%), electronic mail 110 (52.13%), WWW 109 (51.66%), computer 99 (46.92%), satellite 123 (58.29%) and periodicals 97 (45.97%) as means of promoting their health awareness. The table further reveals that respondents always promote their health awareness through radio 179(84.83%), books 147 (69.67%), and television 142 (67.30%).

**Table 2: Chi square difference in the frequency of utilization of Internet and WWW among students.**

Variable	Cal. X <sup>2</sup>	Table X <sup>2</sup>	Level of significance	df	Decision
Utilization of internet & WWW	3.86	7.815	0.05	3	Ho Accepted

Since the calculated chi-square value is less than the table chi-square value, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted. Therefore there was no significant difference in the frequency of utilization of Internet and WWW in promoting the health awareness of students.

**Table 3: Chi – square difference of the influence of gender in the utilization of satellite in promoting health awareness of students.**

Variable	Cal. X <sup>2</sup>	Table X <sup>2</sup>	Level of significance	df	Decision
Gender	14.69	7.815	0.05	3	Ho Rejected

Since the calculated chi-square value was more than the table chi square value, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. Therefore gender has significant influence in the frequency of utilization of satellite in promoting health awareness among students.

**Discussion**

From the analysis in table 1, the students had never utilized any of the modern ITE such as electronic mail, WWW, Internet, computer and satellite to promote their health awareness as far as school of health technology, Pankshin is concerned. Lack of utilizing ITE by students may not be unconnected to their unavailability or inaccessibility. This finding lends credence to the study of Bukachi (2000) who found that availability and accessibility of appropriate information is a major barrier to health care delivery in Africa. Ask health care workers what obstacles they face and invariably they will focus on lack of access to IT.

A particular important problem in the area of health care delivery as observed by Bukachi (2000), is the unavailability of journals and other professional publications. Over the last two decades virtually all-African countries including Nigeria have reduced spending on education, and subscriptions to international journals have been cut back. Some medical school libraries rely on donated journals. This is one area where accessibility to IT could fill the gap. The analysis in table 2 reveals that there was no significant difference in the frequency of use of Internet and WWW in promoting health awareness of students. Again, the lack of significant difference may be due to unavailability or inaccessibility. This finding corroborates the view of Liverpool (2001), who asserts that while ITE has already invaded and dominated higher institutions in the developed world, it’s invasion into higher institutions in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular have been painfully slow. The finding is also in line with the study of Afolabi (2001) who found that Nigeria ranks lowest among five prominent African countries, namely, South Africa, Egypt, Libya and Gambia in the use of information technology.

The finding in table 3 reveals that gender has significant influence in the frequency of use of satellite in promoting health awareness. The difference may be due to female’s inability to explore the environment and access information technology as the male counterparts. More so, the society expects females to operate in home bound, home-related activities thereby reducing their accessibility to IT. This finding corresponds with Hynes (1994) assertion that women argue that although they never lived without technology (shelter, food, clothing for their families), they have been robbed of the history of female technical initiative, imagination, invention and access to IT. It is often said that when you educate a woman, you educate a nation. In this wise, this authors have the feeling that if a man gains access to IT, only an individual gain access to health

knowledge, but when a woman gains access to IT, the whole nation has gain access to health knowledge.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that there is under utilization of modern IT in the promotion of health knowledge and gender has significant influence in the frequency of use of satellite in promoting health awareness.

Since we are now in technological age, it is recommended that:

1. Modern ITE should be made available, affordable and accessible to students of school of health technology, medical schools, secondary and tertiary institutions so as to promote knowledge.
2. All tiers of the government should remove factors that constitute barriers to female's accessibility to ITE.

### **References**

- Adamu, A. U. (2001). Information management and college administration. In: Isyaku, C. M., Anikweze, A. A.; & Olokun, M. .M. (eds.) *Teacher Education in the Information Technology Age*. Abuja: NCCE.
- Afolabi, M. (2001). Internet and Internet connectivity library services and research potentialities. In Isyaku, C. M., Anikweze, A. A. & Olokun, M. M. (eds.) *Teacher Education in the Information Technology Age*. Abuja: NCCE.
- Alhasan, M.H. (2001). Current hardware and software trends in information technology In: Isyaku, C. M., Anikweze, A. A. & Olokun, M.M. (eds.). *Teacher Education in the Information Technology Age*. Abuja: NCCE.
- Bukachi, F. (2000). The Internet and health care in Africa. *African Health Incorporating Medicine Digest*. Vol.22, No. 2, Jan.
- Gushen, J. (2001). The information technology Education in Nigeria: A challenge for the classroom teacher. *COEASU Journal, FCE Pankshin Chapter*. Vol. 1. No. 1, 2001.
- Hynes, H. P. (1994). Gender and the teaching and learning of technology. In: Layton, A. (ed.), *Innovations in Science Technology Education*. UNESCO.
- Liverpool, L. S. O. (2001). Organizing and managing campus information and communication technologies. In: Isyaku, C. M., Anikweze, A.A.& Olokun, M. M. (eds). *Teacher Education in the Information Technology Age*. Abuja: NCCE.