UNDERSTANDING INTERNET USE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES OF NIGER

1. Problem statement

Because of the crucial position of information technologies in modern life, the introduction of informatics in general, and of the internet in particular is one of the priorities figuring at the core agenda at the global level.

Indeed, the internet constitutes a new and performing support for the diffusion of the information. One of these advantages is the possibility that it offers to search the web which is very rich in information pertaining university education. However, it also has some down sides such as distracting the learner which can influence his concentration.

In 2016, only 4.3 %[1] of the population in Niger have access to the internet.

From the above, a number of questions arise:

What are the various uses of internet within public universities in Niger?

What are the obstacles to the use of the internet by university students?

What is the proportions by sex of internet users within public universities in Niger?

2. Introduction

The use of the mobile internet in public universities of Niger is mainly motivated by research and social networks purposes. However, this use of the Internet has negative impacts on the quality of learning, that is to say, to make the student completely dependent on the Internet. On the other hand, the use of this new technology is a wealth of information and a way to broaden its research space.

Our study is based on a survey conducted in one of the public universities of Niger.

3. Hypotheses

❖ We have a gender inequality in the access and use of mobile internet
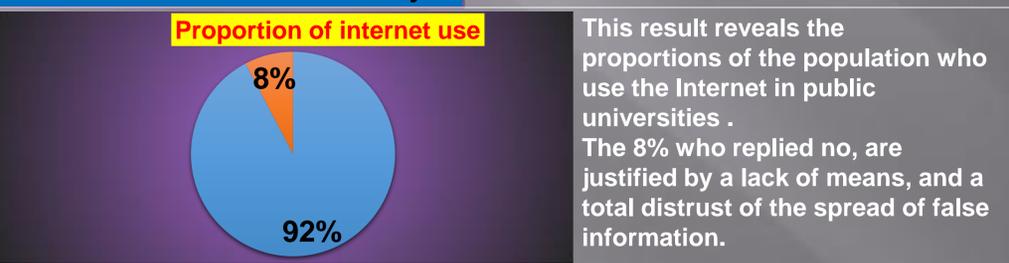❖ Students prefer evening time for using social medias

4. Data collection

❖ The survey was conducted at university level
❖ The times defined in the survey are detailed as follows:
❖ Morning: 06 AM to 11 AM
❖ Noon 11 AM to 4 PM
❖ Evening: 4 PM to 6AM
❖ The choice of respondents is made in a random way.
❖ Four mobile operators are used in order to compare the Internet service they offer.
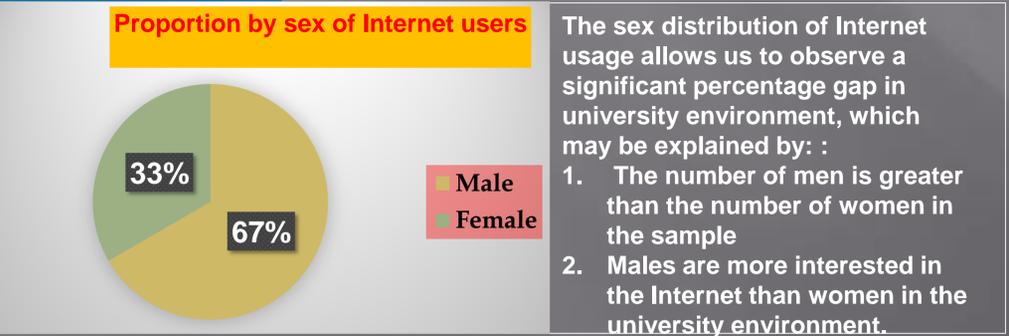❖ 78 students were surveyed including 53 men and 25 women

5. Data analysis

❖ Data from hard copy surveys has been incorporated and analyzed with Microsoft Office Excel 2010.

6. First result of the survey

Proportion of internet use

8%
92%

This result reveals the proportions of the population who use the Internet in public universities .

The 8% who replied no, are justified by a lack of means, and a total distrust of the spread of false information.

7. Second result

Proportion by sex of Internet users

33%
67%

■ Male
■ Female

The sex distribution of Internet usage allows us to observe a significant percentage gap in university environment, which may be explained by: :
1. The number of men is greater than the number of women in the sample
2. Males are more interested in the Internet than women in the university environment.

8. Third result

phone brands

9 22 4 22 8 12

Gionee Itel Nokia Tecno Samsung Others

The investigation revealed that the techno and itel brands are the most used at the University level due to the following reasons:
❖ Availability on the market
❖ Lower cost
❖ simple and easy to manipulate
❖ Battery life duration

9 .Synthesis of the first part

The Internet is unavoidable in universities activities and missions. The first part can be synthesized by the fact that the use of the Internet in universities has a high rate. This rate is influenced by the male sex. Two brands of mobile phones are more used as a means of connecting to the internet..

10. Fourth result

Connection Methods

62 60

D-MOBILE WI-FI
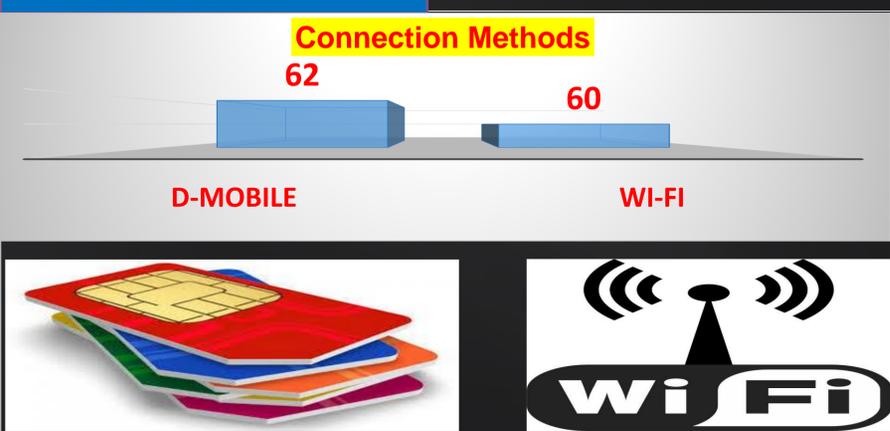
The second part is introduced by a study on the means of connection: mobile data and wifi. The data in this section reveal the most popular connection method in the university environment.

It can be deduced in this context that university students use mobile data than the wifi.

11. Fifth result

Proportion of Internet use by mobile operator
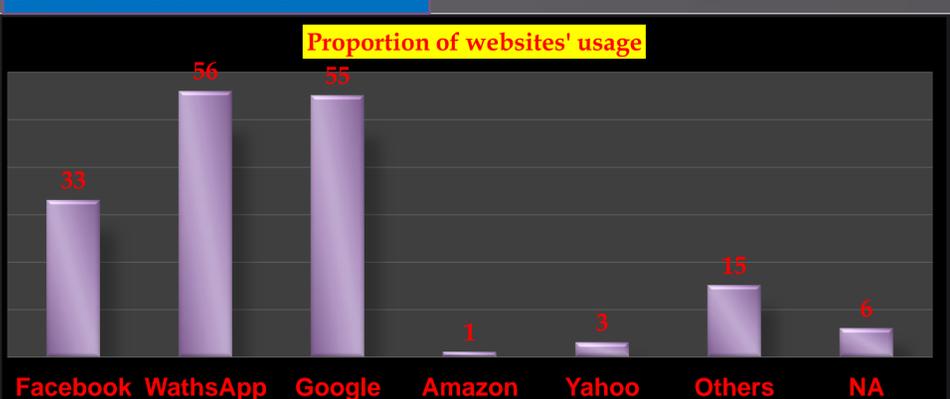
44 20 11 20

O1 O2 O3 O4
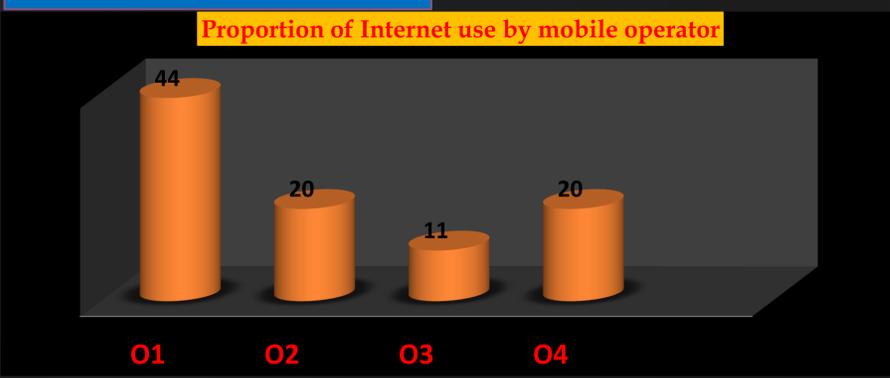
Result 5 reflects the proportion of the users of different mobile operators in the university environment where O1 is more used than others. This choice is explained by the reliability of the connection and the discount on the fare. It also offers a student fare option.

12. Sixth result

Connection Time

4% 21% 47% 28%

■ Morning
■ Noon
■ Evening
■ NA
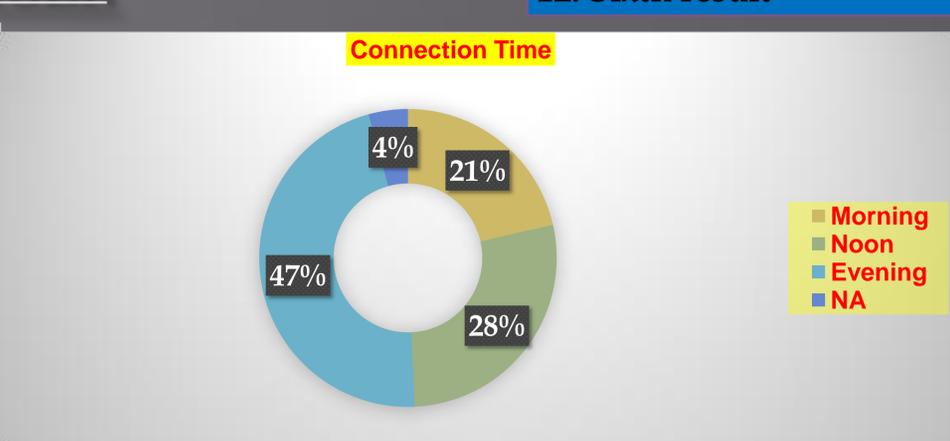
The result of this part requires a special attention: In each defined moment we notice a fairly high percentage of internet usage in these moments but all dominated by the percentage of the evening. This result shows that university students do not have a specific moment for connection to the Internet. The choice of the evening is justified by the speed of the connection, and also the calm to carry out the research.

13. Seventh result

Proportion of websites' usage

33 56 55 1 3 15 6

Facebook WathsApp Google Amazon Yahoo Others NA

According to these results, Google, WhatsApp and Facebook are the most used sites in the university environment. This can be explained by the fact that Google is the search engine linked to the studies and WhatsApp, and Facebook are the sites of distractions.

14. Conclusion and perspectives

The study of our survey on the use of Internet in public universities of Niger, revealed to us that university students are not sufficiently informed or trained about the pedagogical and methodological use of the Internet and its various services.

Several obstacles have caused the unexploitation of the Internet in public universities in general and by the female students in particular.

We cite the problem of time management, the financial problem and the non-availability of internet services within the public universities of Niger.

The survey also reveals that students connect less to research sites, or do not know the resources related to their training, so they just log in to distract themselves on social medias.

We also found that students in public universities of Niger do not have a specific time to connect to the Internet, fact that creates a regular distraction which contributes to low academic performance.

In terms of perspectives we are planning to increase the sample size as well as conducting the survey in the remaining seven public universities in Niger.

This approach will validate our results and will contribute to quality of education through evidence based decision making.

15. References

[1] CIA the world fact book, last access on 20/03/2019