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GLO Data Packages and their influence on University of Africa, Toru-Orua (UAT), Bayelsa State, Nigeria, Students' Access to Information for Academic Purpose

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This study examined the influence of Glo data packages on University of Africa, Toru-Orua (UAT), Bayelsa State, Nigeria, students' access to academic information. Affordable Internet access is crucial for students' learning, research, and collaboration in higher education. Globacom (Glo), as a major telecommunication provider in Nigeria, has historically offered student-friendly bundles that supported academic engagement. The study sought to examine the accessibility, affordability, and academic utilisation of Glo data services, while also assessing how the tariff hike has impacted students' ability to engage with digital learning resources. The study adopted Social Cognitive theory as the theoretical framework. However, the recent 50% increase in data tariffs approved by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has raised concerns about affordability and equity in digital access. The study adopted a survey research design with 343 respondents drawn from various faculties of UAT. Findings revealed that Glo data were widely used for accessing e-books, online journals, virtual classes, and academic collaboration. Prior to the tariff hike, most students considered Glo data affordable, but the increase significantly limited their ability to maintain subscriptions, especially among low-income students. This has deepened the digital divide and hindered full participation in academic activities. The study concluded that while Glo data packages remain vital for academic access, affordability challenges threaten students' learning outcomes. It recommended subsidised student-data plans, enhanced university ICT infrastructure, and partnerships between telecom providers and educational institutions to ensure equitable and sustainable access to academic information.

Keywords: Data, E-Learning, GLO, Students, Tariff, Information resources.

Introduction

Particularly in today's increasingly digital environment, the availability, usability, and efficient use of information resources in the academic sector are vital services that are vital to promoting educational growth. Similar to conventional libraries, the Internet has developed into an essential resource for learning, providing a wealth of information to help students, researchers, and faculty at all levels of higher education in their academic endeavours.

The digital era has changed how educational communities engage with knowledge, highlighting the necessity of easy access to trustworthy and varied online resources (Idime, Benson, Christian, & Tovieye, 2024). By facilitating remote study, collaborative research, and timely access to scholarly content, these tools not only supplement physical collections but also broaden the scope of education, increasing academic output and innovation.

According to Ajiboye, Bosede, Arowolo, and Olorunleke (2021), information-bearing materials in both printed and electronic formats, including textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspaper and magazine reports, CD-ROM, databases, the Internet (e-mail, video, tapes/cassettes, diskettes, magnetic disk, computers, microforms, and many more, are considered information resources. According to the definition, information resources are essentially any materials, whether digital or printed, that contain or store information.

By improving academic learning results and processes, the Internet has drastically changed tertiary educational practices. Its incorporation into higher education has led to more efficient and interactive learning experiences, enabling

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students to access, share, and interact with academic content more effectively (Apuke & Iyendo, 2017; Manasijević, Živković, Arsić & Milošević, 2016; Iyendo & Halil, 2015). The outcomes of a study by Guanah, Njemanze and Isa-Derefaka (2023) revealed that the level of social media (derivatives of the Internet) utilisation for academic purposes among university students at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua was high, and that the social media platform most frequently used by the students for academic purposes was the YouTube, followed by WhatsApp. The study also found that social media use impacts the academic performance of the students to a very great extent.

By lowering the barriers to information, this convenient access enables students to work with peers and teachers around the world, study at their own speed, and investigate subjects outside of the school curriculum. Furthermore, through platforms like email, discussion boards, and cloud-based technologies, the Internet makes it easier to communicate and share information effectively, improving the caliber and adaptability of the educational process.

In addition to improving teaching strategies, the use of these technology innovations has made it easier to create flexible learning settings, such as online and blended learning models. The potential for additional innovation in the educational sector is growing as digital tools continue to advance, suggesting that this technology will become even more practical and significant in the future. For instance, Guanah, Edike and Ezekwelu (2023) attest that digital technology is being used in the development of art and the entertainment sector globally, and that universities like Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) are combining their strengths in the arts and sciences by creating and utilising the most cutting-edge technologies. With its art-tech, HKBU is using technology to rethink what is possible in the artistic world.

With the Internet's quick growth and accessibility, e-learning driven by reasonably priced data has become a popular educational approach that successfully closes the knowledge gap between people who live far away. However, recent events have caused major changes in Nigeria's e-learning scene, especially the Nigerian Communications Commission's (NCC) adoption of a 50% pricing hike (Punch, 2025).

In addition to sparking a national dialogue, this policy change has marked the beginning of a revolutionary era for digital education in the nation. Although it presents certain difficulties for students and teachers who depend on reasonably priced data access, it also emphasizes the pressing need for creative solutions and laws that might support the expansion of e-learning and provide equal educational opportunities for all Nigerians.

The Bayelsa State Government founded the University of Africa, Toru-Orua (UAT) in 2016 as a public-private university. In 2017, the university began accepting undergraduate students. It wants to be a top institution that is dedicated to producing knowledge for innovation and service, as well as to teaching and research excellence. Among

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other sources, the undergraduate students at this university depend on Internet resources for virtual learning, research, and assignments. A data package, sometimes known as a data bundle, data plan, or prepaid service, is a subscription service offered by a mobile network operator that provides a set quantity of Internet data for consumption within a given time period at a predetermined fee. Data plans have had a significant impact on e-learning, revolutionising instruction at the University of Africa in Toru-Orua.

Remote undergraduates now have more educational options thanks to it. Due to a lack of resources and infrastructure, traditional education frequently has difficulty spreading to rural areas. This gap has been closed by data plans, giving children access to high-quality instruction.

In August 2003, Glo Mobile made its debut in Nigeria. Lower prices, pay-per-second pricing, and other value-added services were launched by Glo Mobile. Despite this, Glo Mobile was Nigeria's fourth GSM provider to debut. The company now has over 224 million subscribers. Its ambition to become the largest and greatest telecommunications network in Africa, with millions of users in Ghana and Nigeria, has skyrocketed. They suggest and encourage individuals to join Globacom, share in their vision and passion to providing telecoms solutions that make life easier and better.

Undergraduate students at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua have had their access to online resources impacted by Glo data bundles. After a 50% tariff rise was implemented, as instructed by the NCC, this telecom company became the preferred option. Despite persistent disadvantages including speed problems and data limits, UAT, Bayelsa State undergraduates have taken advantage of Glo's benefits in terms of data affordability, availability, and reliability. For university students who largely rely on online resources for research, assignments, and virtual learning, having access to reasonably priced Internet data is essential for academic achievement in an increasingly digital world. Many Nigerian students, notably those at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, have chosen Glo because of its comparatively inexpensive data packages.

Numerous researchers have examined how students can access, use, and access library resources (Ajiboye, Bosede, Arowolo, & Olorunleke, 2021; Guanah, Njemanze and Isa-Derefaka, 2023); how university students use the Internet (Sahin, Balta, & Ercan, 2010); and numerous other related works on the use of telecommunication network services in the academic setting. The results of previous research are restricted to the people, environment, telecommunications networks such as MTN and Airtel service providers, and the impact of the Internet in changing the educational landscape.

However, the affordability of Glo data packages has been greatly impacted by the recent 50% pricing hike on data services, which was put into effect in response to an order from the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC). Students' access to academic material is threatened by this abrupt increase, which could impede their academic development and deepen the digital gap. The

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difficulties experienced by students, particularly those from low-income families, are made worse by the lack of affordable Internet data connection, even while the expense of school keeps rising. It's unclear how much this tariff hike affects students' ability to obtain academic knowledge.

Thus, this study aimd to examine how Glo data packages affect students' access to information for academic purposes at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, especially in light of the recent rate hike. In order to improve digital access and academic equity for students, policies and actions must take this influence into account.

Objectives of the Study

1.To evaluate the accessibility and affordability of Glo data packages among students.

2.To ascertain the level UAT students leverage GlO data packages for academic research

3.To determine the extent to which tariff increase influence students' access to academic performance

Internet Resources in Academic settings

Considered the best tools for communication, computers and the Internet have become a part of our everyday lives and are essential to contemporary schooling. These digital tools are essential in academic settings because they have revolutionised the way people access, distribute, and use knowledge. The Internet is positioned as a potent and dynamic information system since it makes it easy for information to move between different locations. People from a wide range of age groups and occupations choose it because of its affordability, quickness, and ease of use. Since it provides a quick and easy way to find current and pertinent information, students, researchers, and academics often use the Internet to prepare academic projects and perform scientific study (Cloud, 1989).

Although students find the Internet to be a valuable and essential source of knowledge, questions have been raised concerning the reliability and validity of the sources cited. A systematic system of editorial oversight or peer review is lacking in a large portion of the content available on the Web, in contrast to scientific and professional publications published by respectable institutions, academic bodies, or recognized organizations (Yasar, Tuncay & Sabah, 2010). As of this lack of oversight, almost anybody can post information online, regardless of its veracity or correctness.

Finding reliable information is made more difficult by the fact that many commercial publications, such as books and journals, do not follow a standardised review procedure with editors or reviewers. Even though some websites are well known for their dependability, access to them is frequently restricted because of IP-based security controls, membership requirements, or commercial restrictions. Students may find it more difficult to obtain reliable and well-supported information for their studies as a result of these restrictions, which limit their access to high-quality academic content (Chen & Peng, 2008).

Mohammed and Al-Karaki (2008) assert that the effectiveness of academic

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journal databases is mostly reliant on the range of periodicals they include and the techniques used to assess these works, with the ultimate goal of creating an all-inclusive and global academic index. These databases are an invaluable source of specialized knowledge, which makes them essential for scholars and students working on scholarly projects. Their importance stems from their function as essential reference materials that provide in-depth analysis in a range of topic areas. Moreover, these databases' academic publications are methodically arranged by discipline, which improves their usability and accessibility for in-depth research in a variety of subject areas.

According to Selwyn (2007), search engines are among the most often used resources by students for academic assignments because they are open access platforms. While some, like "Copernic," offer customizable interfaces that connect various search engines, many are easily accessible through browsers like Internet Explorer. With the quality and type of content collected frequently shifting depending on the student's academic level and the importance of the project, these tools are essential for assisting students in gathering pertinent information.

Students can increase the accuracy and relevancy of their search results by using sophisticated search filters to narrow down their queries and return particular file types, such as Word documents, PowerPoint presentations, or PDFs. Notwithstanding these benefits, Selwyn (2007) pointed out that pop-up or trap websites have the ability to distract pupils by directing them to irrelevant content. To increase the efficiency of open access search engines and enhance student academic performance, he recommends that future studies look into the prevalence and effects of these distractions as well as potential mitigation techniques.

Chen and Peng (2008) claim that electronic libraries, which are often divided into two categories, closed and open access, offer a substantial benefit by allowing users to obtain material from a variety of relevant sources. Usually located at universities, closed access libraries offer academic books and subscription-based journals, which makes them extremely dependable and perfect for scholars, researchers, and students.

On the other hand, open access libraries that are publicly accessible online lack the same degree of trust because their dependability frequently reflects that of the outside authors who create the information. Despite being free access, websites such as Wikipedia have become more and more recognized as research resources since they frequently cite both public and private libraries. Proper citation is necessary for such articles to be reliable, and well-documented references make the content more reliable and thorough.

According to Selwyn (2007), a lot of students use search engines to find the material they need for their project assignments. However, blogs and online forums are usually the source of a large portion of the content that search engines extract. Students typically take the material at face value without questioning it further because they are frequently the most easily accessible sources.

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Since the data offered is usually based on subjective interpretations or unofficial research done by people who might not have legitimate academic credentials, this technique might be problematic. As a result, Selwyn (2007) emphasised the significance of evaluating various sources and confirming the accuracy of data by cross-referencing with publications written by acknowledged authorities or other qualified people in the subject. This ensures that the information used in academic work is both accurate and reliable.

Modern technological developments have drastically changed education by allowing students to learn remotely at any time and from any location, as Mohammed and Al-Karaki (2008) point out. Without requiring physical presence, this learning approach enables simultaneous or asynchronous student-teacher interaction. Web-based training platforms, which are the main means of delivering content, are the cornerstone of remote education. However, the effectiveness and legitimacy of the organization's information management greatly influence the worth and dependability of the data offered in these systems. Such systems need to be adaptable, dynamic, user-friendly, and simple to administer in order to be successful. Moreover, they should be supported by a learning-oriented culture and be appreciated by users, ensuring that the educational content remains relevant, accessible, and of high quality.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Social Cognitive Theory. Social Cognitive Theory is a psychological model that explains how people acquire and maintain certain behavioural patterns while also considering the social environment in which they perform those behaviours.

Albert Bandura postulated the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) in the 1980s. It is a psychological model that describes how people learn and sustain particular behavioural patterns while also taking into account the social context in which they are performed. Reciprocal determinism, the dynamic interplay between individual factors, behaviour, and environment, is the focus of SCT, which was initially an extension of Social Learning Theory (Aleksandra & Ralf, 2015).

Building on the fundamental concepts of Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT), McCormick and Martinko (2004) presented important presumptions that emphasize the cognitive aspects of learning. One fundamental premise of their research is that people can learn by only watching others; they don't have to do the behaviour themselves. This highlights the fact that learning can happen vicariously and is not exclusively reliant on firsthand experience. They also claimed that since learning is an internal cognitive activity, it may occur without showing up as an obvious behavioural shift right away.

Razieh and Mohammad (2012) state that the Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT) is a useful paradigm for studying human behaviour and learning since it has a number of noteworthy advantages. Its strong and well-documented research base, which

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displays the theory's legitimacy and empirical backing across time, is one of its main advantages. Furthermore, SCLT discusses important facets of human social behaviour, highlighting its applicability to interactions and development in the actual world.

According to Razieh and Mohammad (2012), social cognitive theory has impacted a wide range of fields of study, including social policy, education, health sciences, and psychotherapy. It describes how students learn in educational settings by observing peers and teachers in addition to receiving direct teaching. SCT is the foundation of strategies like goal-setting, peer modeling, and feedback. These foregoing facts make the theory relevant for this study.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population of this study consists of all students of the University of Africa Toru-Orua, totalling 2,522, as provided by the office of the UAT Academic Affairs. The population was selected for the study because they depend heavily on online resources among others for research, assignments, and virtual learning. Using Taro Yamane calculation at 0.05 margin of error the sample size for the study is 345 respondents. The researchers adopted multi-stage sampling technique. In the first stage, University of Africa, Toru-Orua undergraduate were divided into Faculties; they are: Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Arts, and Education, Faculty of Basic and Applied Sciences, and Faculty of Social and Management Sciences.

In the second stage, the 4 Faculties were further divided into departments, which yielded 24 departments. The departments are listed below:

Faculties and Departments of the University

Faculty of Basic and Applied Sciences	Faculty of Arts and Education	Faculty of Social and Management Sciences	Faculty of Agriculture
Biochemistry	English	Accounting	Agriculture
Biology	History and International Studies	Banking and Finance	Fisheries and Aquaculture
Computer Science	Linguistic/Nigeria Language	Economics	Hotel Management and Tourism
Mathematics	Theatre and Film Studies	Business Administration	
Chemistry	Education Management	Industrial Relations and Personnel Management	
Microbiology	Guidance and Counselling	Mass Communication	
Physics		Public Administration	
		Political Science	

Source: The Office of Academic Affairs, University of Africa, Toru-Orua, 2025

To ensure a representative sample across disciplines, the study selected seven departments from the University of Africa, Toru-Orua using stratified sampling. These departments (Computer Science, English Language, Political Science, Business Administration, Educational Management, Mass Communication, and Agriculture) were chosen to reflect students from Basic and Applied Sciences, Arts and Education, Social and Management Sciences, Education, Management, and Communication-related fields. At the final stage, from these departments, 345 respondents were chosen, using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was also adopted to select based on participants who are Glo users. The administration of the questionnaire was conducted by the researcher and research Assistants. The presentation and

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analysis of the data collected with the questionnaire were done with the aid of frequency distribution tables and simple percentages.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Information

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Basic and Applied Sciences	45	13
Arts and Education	117	34
Social and Management Sciences	175	51
Agriculture	6	2
Total	**343**	**100**
Gender		
Male	168	49
Female	175	51
Total	**343**	**100**
Academic Level of the Respondents		
100	188	55
200	34	10
300	69	20
400	48	14
500	4	1
Total	**343**	**100**
Departments of the Respondents		
Computer Science	39	11
English	25	7
Political Science	75	22
Business Administration	56	16
Education Management	44	13
Mass Communication	100	29
Agriculture	4	1
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 shows that Social Sciences students dominated the sample, followed by Arts and Education, Science with 13%, and Agriculture. It reveals a fairly balanced representation, females and males.

Table 2: Usage of Internet access devices like smartphone or laptop.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	200	58
Agree	136	40
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	7	2
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 shows that the majority of students at the University of Africa are equipped with devices such as smartphones, laptops, or tablets, which are essential for utilising Glo data packages and accessing academic information.

Table 3: Usage of Glo network

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	99	29
Agree	158	46
Strongly Disagree	42	12
Disagree	44	13
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The data in Table 3 indicate that Glo has a strong presence among students in the UAT, making it a significant provider of Internet services for academic purposes within the institution.

Table 4: Academic Level of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
100	188	55
200	34	10
300	69	20
400	48	14
500	4	1
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The data in Table 4 show that the study is dominated by the perspectives of first-year students, while still reflecting contributions from other academic levels, though at varying proportions.

Table 5: Departments of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Computer Science	39	11
English	25	7
Political Science	75	22
Business Administration	56	16
Education Management	44	13
Mass Communication	100	29
Agriculture	4	1
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

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Table 5 indicates that the study is largely shaped by the views of Mass Communication and Political Science students, while departments such as Agriculture contributed minimally due to their smaller representation.

Table 6: Internet access devices like smartphone or laptop.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	200	58
Agree	136	40
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Disagree	7	2
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 6 shows that the majority of students at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, are equipped with devices such as smartphones, laptops, or tablets, which are essential for utilising Glo data packages and accessing academic information.

Table 7: Usage of Glo network.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	99	29
Agree	158	46
Strongly Disagree	42	12
Disagree	44	13
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The data in Table 7 indicate that Glo has a strong presence among students in the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, making it a significant provider of Internet services for academic purposes within the institution.

Table 8: Surfing of the Internet.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	197	57
Agree	129	38
Strongly Disagree	7	2
Disagree	10	3
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The findings in Table 8 imply that most students at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, rely on Internet access for various activities, including academic purposes, thereby underscoring the relevance of Glo data packages in supporting their learning needs.

Table 9: Extent of surfing of the Internet

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Often	137	40
Very Often	120	35
Little	69	20
Not at all	17	5
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The analysis in Table 9 suggests that the majority of students at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua (UAT) are frequent Internet users, which highlights the importance of Glo data packages in meeting their academic information needs.

Table 10: Extent search for academic materials on the Internet is done

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Often	103	30
Very Often	137	40
Little	86	25
Not at all	17	5
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The findings in Table 10 indicate that a significant majority of students actively utilise the Internet for academic purposes, reinforcing the relevance of Glo data packages in facilitating access to scholarly information.

Table 11: Frequency of purchase of Glo data packages.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	26	8
Weekly	64	19
Monthly	77	22
Rarely	90	26
Never	86	25
Total	**343**	**100**

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Source: Field Survey, 2025

The data in Table 11 suggest that, although a considerable number of students rely on Glo for Internet access, a significant proportion either use it infrequently, or not at all, possibly due to cost, network quality, or preference for alternative service providers.

Table 12: Rating of the affordability of Glo data packages on a scale of 1 to 5

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very Affordable	111	32
Affordable	146	43
Highly Unaffordable	51	15
Lowly Affordable	35	10
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Data in Table 12 indicate that while many students find Glo data relatively manageable in cost, a significant proportion still perceive it as costly, which could affect their level of patronage and usage for academic purposes.

Table 13: Glo data package usually subscribed to

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	58	17
Weekly	62	18
Monthly	137	40
None	86	25
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The data in Table 13 suggest that monthly plans are the most popular among students, likely due to their relative affordability and longer validity, while the high number of non-subscribers indicates that a quarter of the students either rely on other providers or do not use Glo at all.

Table 14: Ease to find Glo data packages available for purchase

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Very Easy	58	17
Easy	113	33
Difficult	103	30
Very Difficult	69	20
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The findings in Table 14 indicate that although half of the respondents find Glo data packages fairly accessible, a significant proportion still encounter challenges, which may affect their consistency in subscribing and using the network for academic purposes.

Table 15: Agreement with changes in Glo data tariffs

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	117	34
Agree	113	33
Strongly Disagree	27	8
Disagree	86	25
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 15`s findings show that most students are sensitive to fluctuations in Glo's data pricing, which could influence their subscription patterns, perceptions of affordability, and overall reliance on the network for academic purposes.

Table 16: Extent these changes affect the ability to purchase data packages

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Significantly decreased	137	40
Somewhat decreased	75	22
No change	113	33
Increased capability	18	5
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The data in Table 16 show suggest that tariff changes negatively affect a majority of students, reducing their capacity to consistently subscribe to Glo data packages,

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which in turn may limit their academic Internet usage.

Table 17: Increase in data tariffs influenced the amount of time spent on academic activities

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	113	33
Agree	155	45
Strongly Disagree	25	7
Disagree	50	15
Total	**343**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The findings in table 17 indicate that higher data costs have reduced academic Internet usage for a majority of students, highlighting the direct impact of tariff changes on their ability to access information and engage in online learning.

Discussion of Findings

The first findings of this study revealed that Glo data packages are relatively accessible to students of the University of Africa, Toru-Orua (UAT), though affordability remains a significant concern. Table 2 shows that nearly all respondents (98%) own Internet-enabled devices such as smart phones, laptops, or tablets, which makes them well-equipped to use Glo data services. Similarly, Table 3 indicates that a large proportion of the students (75%) are Glo users, confirming Glo's strong presence on campus as a primary Internet provider. Furthermore, Table 4 demonstrates that most respondents (95%) actively surf the Internet, with Tables 5 and 6 showing that a majority use it very often or often. These results suggest that access to Glo data packages is not hindered by lack of devices or Internet engagement.

However, affordability emerges as a limiting factor. Table 7 shows that while some students purchase data daily (8%), weekly (19%), or monthly (22%), a significant proportion rarely (26%), or never (25%) buy Glo data. This uneven pattern reflects challenges tied to cost and accessibility. Table 8 further reinforces this by showing that while 43% of respondents rated Glo data as affordable and 32 % found it very affordable, (15%) rated them highly unaffordable another 10% rated it lowly affordable. Thus, while accessibility to Glo data is high, affordability issues constrain its consistent use for academic purposes.

The social cognitive theory offers a useful framework for interpreting these results. According to the notion, audiences are active agents who choose media and communication channels on purpose in order to meet particular requirements. In this situation, students actively use Glo data services to fulfill their academic requirements, including gaining access to communication platforms, e-books, and research materials. Their intentional usage of the service to meet their academic information demands is demonstrated by their reliance on Glo data. However, affordability influences how well these demands are satisfied. High data prices (Tables 9–10) prevent students from meeting all of their academic requirements, which results in inconsistent or decreased use.

The results align with the theory's argument that media consumption is influenced not only by the availability of technology, but also by the audience's social and economic context. While Glo data is accessible, affordability challenges restrict some students from maximizing its use for learning. Thus, the gratifications students seek

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such as academic research and access to educational resources are either fully or partially met depending on their ability to afford consistent subscriptions.

The second findings of this study revealed that while Glo data packages are leveraged by UAT students for academic purposes, the extent of usage is varied, and sometimes limited by challenges such as affordability, accessibility, and network quality. Table 7 shows that most respondents (40%) subscribe to monthly Glo data plans, while smaller proportions use weekly (18%) and daily (17%) subscriptions. However, 25% of the students reported not subscribing at all, suggesting that a significant number either rely on alternative providers or do not use Glo data. This reflects both the popularity of longer-validity subscriptions and the affordability barriers that discourage consistent usage.

Accessibility also plays a role in students' ability to leverage Glo data. Table 8 indicates that while 50% of respondents find it fairly easy to purchase Glo data, 30% find it difficult and 20% very difficult. This shows that despite digital payment options (Table 8), where 54% use USSD or bank accounts for convenience, accessibility challenges persist for a considerable number of students. These barriers affect how consistently Glo data can be relied upon for academic tasks.

In terms of academic usage, Table 10 reveals that only 10% of students use Glo data very frequently for research, 25% frequently, while 40% use it occasionally. Strikingly, another 25% do not use Glo for academic research at all. This indicates that although Glo supports research to some degree, it is not a consistent academic resource for the majority. Further evidence in Table 13 shows that Glo data plays a crucial role in specific academic activities: 55% use it for online research, 50% for communication with lecturers and peers, 43% for accessing e-books, and 30% for attending online classes. Still, 25% of respondents reported not using Glo data for any academic activity, highlighting a significant gap in adoption.

Challenges remain central to this limited utilisation. Table 14 reveals that 70% of respondents face connection problem as limitations while using Glo data, (25%) experience power shortage, while 7 students (2%) indicated that they encountered low battery and (3%) encountered low data. These constraints directly hinder the extent to which students can rely on Glo for consistent academic engagement.

The relevance of these findings can be situated within the empirical review of Ifafesobi (2020), who studied the influence of Glo's "Oga Sim" advertisements on student subscriptions at Elizade University. That study found that students were shifting from traditional voice services to data bundles due to increased demand for Internet access. Similarly, in the current study, students' adoption of monthly and weekly Glo subscriptions (Table 13) reflects this transition. However, while Ifafesobi (2020) emphasized how advertising campaigns drive subscriptions, this study shows that affordability, accessibility, and usability ultimately determine whether those subscriptions are translated into academic benefits.

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The overlap between the two studies lies in their focus on university students as a key consumer group of Glo's services. Ifafesobi (2020) findings on the importance of subscriber retention rather than temporary promotional influence are particularly relevant here. The present study shows that a quarter of students (25%) never subscribes or use Glo for academics, and 70% report limitations. This underlines the importance of Glo addressing not just promotional strategies but also long-term service quality, affordability, and accessibility, which are crucial in supporting students' academic use of data services.

The third finding of this study, as seen in results in Tables 15–18, reveal the significant impact of rising Glo data tariffs on students' academic engagement. Specifically, 67% of respondents noticed tariff changes (Table 19), 62% (Tables 16) reported that such increases reduced their purchasing power and (Table 17) 78% of the respondents reduced their time spent on academic activities. Moreover, 60% (Table 22) admitted skipping or delaying academic tasks due to high costs. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that environmental factors, such as tariff hikes, strongly influence students' behaviours and academic participation.

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) provides a useful framework for interpreting these patterns through its principle of reciprocal determinism, which posits a dynamic interaction between personal factors, behaviour, and the environment. In this case, tariff increase (environment) limit students' ability to afford data, which then constrains their academic engagement (behaviour) and shapes their perceptions of affordability and resource accessibility (personal/cognitive factors). This cyclical process reflects how changes in external conditions can alter students' internal motivation and learning outcomes.

Additionally, the focus that SCT places on observational learning is crucial. Due to high data prices, students may witness their friends having trouble accessing academic materials. This can exacerbate their own sense of difficulty and cause them to modify or postpone their academic behaviours. On the other hand, people may be inspired to use comparable coping mechanisms, like resource pooling or usage restriction, if they observe peers effectively managing data resources in spite of high tariffs. This is consistent with the elements of observational learning, attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation identified by Bandura (1986), since pupils analyze observed behaviours cognitively before determining whether to duplicate them. Furthermore, the findings resonate with SCT's notions of response facilitation and inhibition effects (Green & Piel, 2009). For instance, when students see peers unable to afford data and missing academic activities, they may internalize a sense of helplessness (response inhibition), further reducing their academic engagement. On the other hand, students who adapt effectively may serve as models that facilitate behavioural adjustments in others, fostering resilience and resourcefulness.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study establishes that Glo data packages play a vital role in

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enhancing students' access to academic information at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, Bayelsa State, Nigeria by providing relatively affordable and accessible Internet services that support research, virtual learning, and collaborative academic activities. However, the recent 50% tariff increase has posed a significant challenge, limiting students' ability to consistently afford adequate data for their academic needs and thereby creating the risk of widening the digital divide among undergraduates. While Glo remains a preferred network for many students, the findings highlight the pressing need for more sustainable data policies, institutional support for e-learning, and innovative solutions from service providers to ensure that affordable Internet access continues to drive academic growth and equity.

Recommendations

Based on findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Based on the findings that accessibility to Glo data is high, affordability issues constrain its consistent use for academic purposes. Glo and other telecom providers should collaborate with universities to introduce student-friendly data packages at discounted rates. This would help cushion the effect of the recent tariff increase and ensure that undergraduates can continue to access online academic resources without financial strain. Also, Lecturers and the university management should adopt and promote the use of Open Educational Resources (OER), which are freely accessible learning materials. This will reduce students' dependence on paid platforms and the need for high data consumption.

2. The study found that Glo data packages are leveraged by UAT students for academic purposes, the extent of usage is varied, and sometimes limited by challenges such as affordability, accessibility, and network quality. Globacom should explore partnerships with UAT to provide institution-specific bundles that give students access to educational websites, e-journals, and e-learning platforms at reduced costs. This approach has proven effective in other educational contexts worldwide. Also, University of Africa, Toru-Orua, Bayelsa state, Nigeria should strengthen its ICT infrastructure by providing campus-wide free or subsidized Wi-Fi hotspots, e-libraries, and online learning portals. This will reduce students' heavy reliance on personal data plans and ensure consistent access to academic content.

3. The findings revealed that tariff increase limit students' ability to afford data, which then constrains their academic engagement and shapes their perceptions of affordability and resource accessibility. The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and government agencies should implement regulatory measures that encourage affordability of Internet services, especially for educational purposes. Policies such as tax incentives for telecoms offering student-centered data packages can promote equitable access to digital learning.

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