

**Addressing the challenges facing access of informative course notes
in campuses by providing Online Academic Notes (camponotes.org)**

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Abstract

Because of the increase in technology, portable gadgets which has the ability to display every kind of document formats including portable document format (pdf), electronic publication (epub) and other types of document formats have been widely used in learning. This project will be able to provide alternative online notes which will increase the ease of access of academic notes to university students in helping them gain more information. This project will make all academic notes available to students resulting the ease of access of education. The researcher will be able to come up with an interactive website that every student can use to get updated notes or even upload some notes by a specific topic which can be later categorized by the system for quick and easy retrieval. Students especially in Kenya have embraced technology and this can be a great tool to use to administer academic information to those who can be able to access it at any time they want. Failing an examination can sometimes be as a result of minimal research, lack of notes, and lack of understanding of some topics during their course of study, missing lectures among others. With this in place, many of the students in this bracket will be able to access the website and get good and understandable notes. Lecturers tend to give about 40% of the course understanding to students and the students themselves are required to find the other percentage by themselves, hence they are required to do research from libraries and the internet to boost their understanding. This will make research even easier and better because everyone can easily know where to get useful information.

Keywords: Academic, Information, Documents, Research, Topic, Lectures, Notes

INTRODUCTION

Students especially in the higher education stages have always been in pursuit of quality, simple and understandable course notes making them have more options in getting notes be it in libraries, or other places. Nowadays the internet has become one of the major option in getting every kind of informative notes and this has made the students be part of googles' visitors every time they encounter any kind of problem or doing any kind of research. But this does not mean that the internet (google) has always the correct information all through. Google comprises of informative websites that people have written and hence students may find themselves thinking that they have done their assignments differently only to find out that they googled and found the same notes and copied it all.

Availability of online notes in a specific website will help the students know a specific website that provides informative course notes rather than wasting time trying to browse all through the many search results in google hence saving a lot of time. Sometimes the internet can even provide something close to the searched words hence the student can think that he or she has found the correct information ending up doing research of what is not necessary.

Technology has always been an option in trying to solve some of the issues in the society and we should try our best to embrace it and make it part of our lives due to the simple and cheap gadgets that have come up to help people be able to use this technology effectively. Education is expensive especially in Kenya and people should try their best to get information that could help them in their studies at a cheap price which will involve use of the internet instead of buying books unless the book can only be available in a hard copy version.

Electronic gadgets have always been of great help especially in storage capacities of documents. It has really helped instead of carrying many books which can be impossible or even bulky to carry only in one gadget hence helps one to choose the kind of book he/she is interested in reading at a particular time of the day instead of having fewer options of hard copies.

Statement of the problem

Technology has provided humans with the power of searching and retrieving information in a faster way. Old ways of manually searching a book among thousands of hardcopy books is slowly being ruled out although sometimes there is no options instead one has to find a particular book manually. Because books are arranged manually in the library for retrieval, one can retrieve the wrong book hence ending up with wrong information after using a lot of time in searching. Automatic search and retrieval can be of great help because of a fast way of retrieving correct information with the push of a button.

Information technology has always been there and will always grow in terms of users and complexity, this study will help university students to use this kind of technology effectively in trying to find important information online in terms of simplicity and direct course notes. The problem of some of the campus students has always been the issue of course notes some students have been required to use photocopies to copy huge bunches of notes per course they study hence this has been a problem to many students in terms of using a lot of money to get notes that will eventually be useless after a semester or so unless otherwise. There has also been a problem of a semester being too short in school making the lecture not to finish all the course in time hence being overloaded during the last days to examination which can affect the results of some of the students. This can be as a result of the lecturer having other problems other than finishing the course with the students. Some students can also be very busy with some other things other than class work hence having no or less time to attend classes, this can be as a results of a student having much more unavoidable responsibilities like being a parent or so. Some may need some backup notes they can read to make them understand more about a particular topic in the course hence there has to be ways he/she can get notes other than the ones being given in class to boost their understanding. All these problems can be solved by coming up with a specific online website where students can get simplified course notes any time anywhere they are. The website could also provide the students with other options of which they can upload online course notes they think was the best and the system will be able to categorize the uploaded notes to its correct place where others who need it can retrieve it faster and easier.

Aim of the study

I intend to come up with a website which will include notes of every department course studied in universities and colleges and be in a position to build up the site with time to include even more information including the mathematics and even to include animated diagrams and videos that can be of great help to the students.

The experience of being a student has led me to realize some major reasons which can bring about one to fail an examination paper, it has also helped me to interrogate my fellow students on the best way possible to involve them in being interested in academics.

Sometimes it is very hard for a lecturer to make every student in a class understand what is being taught in class, this is because not every student in a class finds the lecturer teaching the appropriate way, some will like how the course is being taught and some will not even understand and they may have their reasons as to why they can't understand that particular subject, this may force this kind of students to find other ways of understanding that particular topic.

Research objectives

The main objective of this research was to find out what could be the cause of some of the students not to pass their examinations.

Specific objectives

1. To provide reliable notes online which students can access anytime anywhere
2. To make good use of the electronic gadgets available nowadays
3. To provide a cheap alternative of accessing topic notes rather than buying books
4. To establish possible solution in regards to the availability of informative course notes

Research questions

1. Can a student be positively sure of where to get academic notes online and how?
2. Can the electronic gadgets be used in e learning in universities and colleges?
3. Will online notes decrease the cost of studying in colleges and universities?
4. Are there other alternatives that can be used in acquiring informative course notes in higher education?

Assumptions of the study

I assumed that missing of lectures, lack of understanding of a topic, and unavailability of informative course notes have always been the course of failure in higher education studies among students in Kenya and generally the whole world. This study will only be able to help Kenyan colleges and university students because it will majorly involve Kenyan education in the undergraduate programmers and may also help other students in other nations if they find the information in the website to be relevant.

Literature review

Fear of technology

Technology has always been fearful especially if it grows as fast as it has been growing. The rate to which is growing can be a great problem to the society because no one is actually sure of what next will be introduced in our environment. The more the technology grows the more expensive it becomes but it helps because the older technology becomes cheaper even at a faster rate enabling many people to follow latest technologies at a slower pace than others.

Resistance of change

The society especially in the under developed countries have a big problem of change especially if it includes technology. It takes a lot of convincing of these kind of societies to fully accept technology as part of their everyday lives. Some of them have no belief that technology can last long or can be able to solve all the problems faced at a particular section in the society. Some of

these people always think that technology is dependent on factors that will at one point in life fail to support hence failure of the technology.

Education

It is clear that education is liberation, it has the power to determine one's own destiny by breaking the oppressive patriarchal power dynamics that are larger than life. This is a challenge to women, to handle their own lives and shape their destinies. Men have mismanaged the lives of women for long through oppressive structures that have the force of law, culture, religion, institutions or otherwise. It is impressive that the Kenyan society idolizes education for all its children, this is indicative of the intelligent foresight necessary for a true form of liberation for all in due course.

METHODOLOGY

Targeted population

The researcher's main target was the Kenyan university and college students. Other higher education studies in Kenya can even be included because the notes will be available and very informative. Notes updates will also be available making the project dynamic hence be of great help even the days to come. The researcher was able to interview a lot of students in Moi University and some few in the universities of Maseno, Masinde Muliro and Mount Kenya all located in Kenya.

Research Design

The researchers used people's opinion to explain why students tend to fail in their examination despite the fact that in higher education one only has to read different topics and courses each semester, once that is done, it won't be repeated again. This has been believed to be an easy way to use to pass the examination but the fact is that everything cannot be served on a silver plate, everything has to be earned meaning that even in the universities one has to read even

harder. The research design adopted was the cross-sectional survey design which used people's opinion. This survey was chosen because it allowed the researchers to do collection of the required data within a very short time and also get people's opinion. The researchers employed personal survey which entails interviewing and asking the respondents questions face to face.

Sampling Techniques/Procedures

The researcher used random sampling. This means the researcher asked any person as long as the ones being sampled were students in either of the campuses and universities in Kenya. The purpose of this method was to collect focused information that can be used to help a wider variety of students in campuses and universities. This was rather an easy way of getting information because it is not hard at all for a student to identify best way for notes to be administered to them.

This method was employed because it is not selective and it also saves time and money. This is because the researcher had little time for data collection and it was a self-sponsored research which was expensive.

In-Depth Interviewing

To collect data, the research will adopt in-depth interviews. This is because this kind of interview was conducted face to face because this was the only way correct information could be found that was directly affecting each individual student in these institutions. Also the interviews will vary in length and will either be highly structured or unstructured. The purpose of interviews is to attempt to uncover underlying motivations, prejudices and attitudes that might not be uncovered in other primary data collection techniques (Durge, 1986). The challenge of using interviews is that the participants may use different terms or expressions to explain the same thing.

Secondary Data

The study also involved secondary data which was majorly found on the internet and the electronic media. Most of the data collected was from Moi University. Other information was

also obtained from non-students who really supported the study and had a positive thinking about the project.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Technology has nowadays becoming more and more unavoidable due to its rapid growth with even much cheaper and powerful gadgets being made every day in many parts of the world, it is somehow stressful to move with technology but we kind of have no choice but to fall victims like every other person and move on. This rapid growth in technology does not only involve the gadgets but also the dissemination of information among people in the society. Just few years back, most things that were done manually is transformed to be done electronically because technology is effective and has been proved that it really works in many places.

Education is one of the main keys in the making of Kenya's vision 2030, hence it is very important to ease the way education is being administered in Kenya in order to achieve this vision. It has been very hard to find correct information online and it takes one to have internet skills to get rather correct information about a particular topic or subject.

This method will be able to serve all the university and campus students including those who have their classes in the evening due to their own reasons. Education is supposed to be made available anytime anywhere and at a cheap cost possible.

Students can be made to know specific website they can get online notes rather than googling for pieces of information that can be wrong or misunderstood. Google has always been widely used and it has grown fast in a short time hence the term google is nearly replacing the word search and students tend to ignore other search engines such as Bing, Yandex and others. But this is not the way to go, some students may have no time to look for information online because it takes a lot of time hence a direct website may be of great help.

Electronic gadgets are slowly replacing books in institutions because they have been found economical and also environmental friendly. E learning is slowly been put into use especially in universities but the problems still remains the number of students who can acquire the correct

kind of gadgets and also the availability of specific softcopy materials available to be used in teaching accompanied with the gadget itself.

Without these gadgets, we would still be forced to get hardcopies of materials which eventually bulks up to many papers that can be hectic to retrieve what can be needed at a time which will bring up a lot of stress travelling or moving with the hardcopy materials from one place to another. Soon, notes will also be written electronically by use of stylus pen and the touchscreens hence will decrease the cost of purchasing most of the stationeries used in filing and storage of papers.

This can also be a great way in involving the lecturers to use it as a tool in forming good notes and uploading them on the same sites which will later be used by the students when they need it hence making the notes in the website very informative and simplified as possible to make the students understand more. This will make a huge variety of the notes hence giving the student options in finding the notes he or she can understand easily rather than depending on class work and group works.

Research found that students take much time to find correct information online and many end up getting less or not information at all online. Some may get the information but they still doubt if the correct one or one gets a lot of information which is similar hence one finds it hard to decide what to include or not. It was found out that students rather prefer to have direct access of information they can use in coming up with their own articles after they read the information they found and use it later.

CONCLUSION

Plagiarism in higher education has increased because students use google which they know it contains a lot of information hence one will most likely think that the information they got on google cannot be the same as any other colleague of his or hers. This has also been one of the major reasons in failure because the internet is there and will always be there hence one cannot be denied using it. Camponotes.org will always resemble class notes and no students can just

copy the contents of that website unless one will have to read and understand hence be helpful to both the student and the lecturer hence addressing challenges facing humanity.

RECOMMENDATION

Students should try their best to use every available resource that can help them increase their understanding at a particular course. This will make the society be included more with learned people and thus the society will always be at a safe place. Students who cannot afford educations should also be provided with cheaper and convenient options like provision of notes online which they will only have to pay for the net to visit its content. This is almost free option in acquiring quality education among students in Kenya.

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