# THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON LEARNING STYLE OF STUDENTS' IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** Social media is a platform which enables users to connect, create account profile, share files and interact with other users on the same platform. There have been reports that interaction of people with the social media has resulted to change in their behavior. However, it is not known whether or not this social media platform has capacity to influence learners' behavior particularly their learning style. This research examined the influence of social media on Colleges of Education students' learning style in Kwara State. Simple random sampling technique was employed to drawn 220 students (114 male and 106 female) from the selected Colleges of Education in Ilorin, Kwara State. Four (4) research questions were raised and answered using frequency count and percentage while *t*-test was used to analyze the only hypothesis. The findings showed that social media had influence on Colleges of Education students' learning style with 36.4 and there was no significant difference in the influence of social media on learning style based on gender with 0.592 P. (0.253). Based on the findings, it was recommended that the use of social media for teaching in Colleges of Education be encouraged for interaction between instructors and student teachers to foster learning under close monitoring.
**Keywords:** *colleges of education influence; learning style; social media; students.*

## INTRODUCTION

Social media is a technology tool that offers new educational possibilities. It is a medium through which information is passed from one person to another. Bryer and Zavatarro (2011) defined social media as technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. Kenelechi, Yonlonfoun and Omotere (2014) asserted that social media comprises of online applications for social networking site, social book marking and sharing tools, blogging and micro blogging tools, virtual worlds, e-conferencing presentation sharing tools, audio and video tools, as well as e-project management tools primarily developed to foster user centered interaction. Social media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Social media tools can be used for learning at Colleges of Education to train intending teachers to be efficient in the use of innovative tools to impart knowledge to learners, disseminate information on new teaching strategies and professional standard of teaching. The way learners take in and process information differs based on individual differences and media use to appeal to their senses. Instructors learning strategy is important in the way they teach. This in turn determines how students assimilate. Use of social media to train teachers in 21st century is necessary, but this is dependent on the topic

learner's needs, the interest and the capability of media used to appeal to the senses of the learners. The type of media employed will enable learner to actively participate and collaborate with other peers. Awareness refers to having the knowledge and understanding of the meaning of the concept of social media. Students' level of awareness of social media platform and its integration into teaching and learning process could influence their academic performance.

Some students become bored and restless with the use of textbooks but learn better with the use of devious tools. Social media is one of the tools that may provide intrinsic motivation for students to interact, collaborate and brainstorm. Literature has also revealed that students learn better through interaction and exchange of information with one another on social media (Bryer & Zavatarro, 2011). Similarly, social media has been reported to influence and change learners' behavior as well as their interaction with peers and teachers. Social media platform supports the democratization of knowledge and information and transform people from content consumers to content producers (Joes 2009).

However, the influence of social media on learning style of college of Education students is yet to be determined. Most studies on social media in Nigeria seem to focus on its usefulness in sharing information, the types of social media used, problems encountered with the use of social media among others, but ignoring the aspect of social media influence on learning style especially among the college of education students. This study therefore examined the influence of Social Media on Colleges of Education students' learning style in Ilorin, Kwara State.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of Social Media on Colleges of Education students' learning style in Ilorin, Kwara State. Specifically this study:

1. examined awareness of social media for learning by Colleges of Education Students';
2. ascertain use of social media for learning, among Colleges of Education Students';
3. identified the influence of social media on College of Education Students' learning style;
4. examined social media influence on College of Education Students' learning style based on gender.

The research questions of this study:

1. Are colleges of education Students' aware of Social Media use for learning?
2. How often do Colleges of Education Students' use Social Media for learning?
3. What is the influence on Colleges of Education Students' learning style?
4. Do social media influence Colleges of Education Students' learning style based on gender?

The research hypothesis is:

$H_{01}$: There is no significant difference in the Students learning style use of social media based on gender.

Social media is a form of electronic communication which facilitates interaction based on certain interests and characteristics. Social media are media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media use web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues into social dialogues (Paul, 2017). They support the democratization of knowledge and information and transform people from content consumers to content producers (Joes 2009). The greatness of any nation depends on the genius, qualities, attitudes and aspirations of her people (Awoniyo, 2001). It should not be expected to be ignorant and free at the same time most especially at this time when all form of teaching has been taken over by the social media in schools. Social media technology is a tool that offers new educational possibilities, but it also generates new perils.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), classified social media into six different categories which are; Collaborative projects such as (Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs like (Twitter), content communities (e.g. Youtube), social networking sites which include (Facebook), virtual game-world such as (World of Warcraft) and lastly, virtual social worlds like second life. Individual preference to acquire knowledge based on recognition of the leaner ability (slow or fast) how to learn, what to learn, and under which condition learning can take place could be catered for with the use of social media for learning. Cain and Policastr, (2011) posited that, if social media is used as a teaching tool, it may offer distinct advantages for teaching 21stC students leaning to positive psychological performance, because it has greatly influenced the way students communicate and share ideas online.

Tufekci, (2008) expressed that there is significant difference between male and female on the utilization of social media where males were found to have used certain social media platform such as Facebook and LinkedIn than their female counterpart. Regardless of the gender

utilization of social media, groups of bodies and individuals use social media for building personal and professional relationship with others in the name of business, academics, entertainment and the like.

Learning styles could also be referred to as personal characteristics and preferred ways through which information can be gathered, interpreted and organized. Omnia (2012) asserted that due to the influence of the environment or past experience, different individual do things differently. This may also influence the way decision is made and how information is being processed. Kolb (1974) expressed that Learning Style Inventory (LSI) is intended to help employees or students understand how their learning style affect problem solving, teamwork, handling conflict, communication and career choice to develop more learning flexibility, find out why teams work well-or-badly-together; strengthen their overall learning as students.

College of Education (COE) is a tertiary institution where teachers for Basic education are trained with innovative technology to meet the needs of present day learners. The college of education award Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) at the completion of three years course. Pedagogy, subject matter content various disciplines are impacted to teachers in training, this students go through teaching practice exercises as part of their experience using various media. At this stage, what is taught in the classroom is practicalized on students for success. This will serve as a way of preparing them for the teaching job.

Gender theory implies that an effective teacher should be aware of different learning styles, that teacher training students be equipped with the different ways to impact knowledge taking into consideration differences in strengths, interest and capabilities. Assignment and class work are posted to student teachers in trainees. In essence, student teacher's male and female should be vast in the use of these technologies to be able to impact the required knowledge using appropriate tools for this 21C learners.

Learning style in an individual is not what can be achieved in a day it is a gradual process which can be built. Growth and maturity could also lead to the development of some learning styles in an individual (Harrison & Garner-O'Neale, 2013). Being conscious of one's learning style helps one to maximize the amount of knowledge that can be possibly acquired within a given period of time (Kazu, 2009). When a student is aware of his or her capability as a result of exposure, time management, ability to do the right thing at the right time relating to when to read how to read and when to submit assignments using social media can improve conscious learning style, and such a student can excel academically using chosen social media. The important thing is to consider the learning style of the students with the teaching strategy of the instructor and the instructional technology to employ teaching.

## METHOD

This study was a descriptive research of the survey type. It focuses on student's perception on the influence of social media on College of Education learning style in selected colleges of education in Kwara State.

The population for this study comprised students in Kwara State College of Education, Muhyideen College of Education and Kinsey College of Education Ilorin, Kwara State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 250 respondents from the three selected Colleges of Education.

The research instrument was researcher's designed questionnaire on Influence of Social Media on College of Education learning style. The questionnaire contained Sections A and B. Section A consist of demographic data of the respondents while Section B sought information on the variables selected from the study. The variables are awareness, Utilization and influence on learning style. Two items on awareness, 2 items on utilization and 5 items on influence on learning style. A 4 points likert type scale with response options of SA=Strongly Agree, A= Agree, SD= Strongly Disagree, D= disagree was adopted. The research instrument was validated by three lecturers in the department of educational technology for face and content validity. Their suggestions, comments and corrections were used to produce a final draft of the instrument. To ascertain the internal consistencies of the instrument, it was trial tested on fifteen students of federal college of Education, Osiele, Abeokuta, Ogun state. The data collected were subjected to crombach Alpha statistical tool and the result was 0.71 for awareness, 0.73 for utilization and 0.88 for influence, this made the research instrument highly reliable. Two hundred and fifty copies of the questionnaire were administered and 220 were properly filled and returned amounting to 88% return rate.

The data obtained from this study was subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics of percentage was used to analyse the research questions and *t*-test was used at test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The data collected were coded and analyzed using statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showed the percentage distribution of the respondents by the institutions. It revealed that respondents of Kwara State College of Education (36.4%), Muhyideen College of Education (31.8%) and Kinsey College of Education (31.8%).

Table 1. *Percentage of distribution of respondents by institution*

| Institution | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Kwara State College of Education | 80 | 36.4 |
| Muhyideen College of Education | 70 | 31.8 |
| Kinsey College of Education | 70 | 31.8 |
| **Total** | **220** | **100** |

Table 2. *Percentage distribution of respondents by gender*

| Level | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 114 | 51.8 |
| Female | 106 | 48.2 |
| **Total** | **220** | **100** |

Table 2 revealed the percentage distribution of respondents by Gender. 114 (51.8%) of the respondents were male while the female respondents were 106 (48.2%).

*Research question 1*
Are Colleges of Education Undergraduates aware of Social Media for learning?

Table 3. *COE undergraduates awareness of social media for learning?*

| No | Item | Strongly Agreed (%) | Agreed (%) | Disagreed (%) | Strongly Disagreed (%) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I am aware that social media exist | 128(58.2) | 87(39.5) | 4(1.8) | 1(0.5) | 220(100) |
| 2 | I am aware that social media can be used for learning | 116(52.7) | 99(45.0) | 2(0.9) | 3(1.4) | 220(100) |

Table 3 showed that out of the 220 (100%) respondents, 128 (58.2%) strongly agreed that they are aware that social media can be used for learning, 87 (39.5%) respondents agreed, 4 (1.8%) respondents disagreed while 1 (0.5%) respondents strongly disagree. This shows that the majority of the respondents are aware that social media exist. On the other hand, 116 (52.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that social media can be used for learning, 99(45.0%) agreed that

social media can be used for learning, 2(0.9%) disagreed that social media can be used for learning while 3(1.4%) strongly disagreed that social media can be used for learning. This indicates that majority of the believed that social media can be used for learning.

*Research question 2*
How often do COE undergraduates use Social Media for learning?

Table 4. *Percentage distribution of how often COE undergraduate use social media for learning*

| No | Item | Strongly Agreed (%) | Agreed (%) | Disagreed (%) | Strongly Disagreed (%) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I often made use of social media for learning | 79(35.9) | 119(54.1) | 21(9.5) | 1(0.5) | 220(100) |
| 2 | I always visit social media sites in order to acquire academic materials for learning purpose | 87(39.5) | 107(48.6) | 18(8.2) | 8(3.6) | 220(100) |

Table 4 reveals that out of 220 (100%) respondents, 79 (35.9%) strongly agreed that they often make use of social media for learning. 119 (54.1%) agreed that they often make use of social media for learning. 21 (9.5%) disagreed that they often make use of social media for learning, while 1 (0.5%) strongly disagreed that they often make use of social media for learning. This shows that majority of the respondents often made use of social media for learning. On the other hand, 87 (39.5%) respondents strongly agreed that they always visit social media sites in order to acquire academic materials for learning purpose, 107 (48.6%) respondents agreed, 18 (8.2%) respondents disagreed while 8 (3.6%) strongly disagreed. This shows that majority of the respondents always visit social media sites in order to acquire academic materials for learning purpose.

### Research question 3
Does Social Media have influence on COE Undergraduate learning style?

Table 5. *What is the influence of social media on COE learning style?*

| S/No | Item | Strongly Agreed (%) | Agreed (%) | Strongly Disagreed (%) | Disagreed (%) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Use of social media for learning influences my learning style | 80(36.4 | 117(53.2) | 18(8.2) | 5(2.3) | 220(100) |
| 2 | I understand more when I learn with social media | 80(36.4) | 116(52.7) | 22(10.0) | 2(0.9) | 220(100) |
| 3 | I assimilate faster when I learn on social media | 73(33.2) | 108(49.1) | 31(14.1) | 8(3.6) | 220(100) |
| 4 | I remember easily when I learn from social media | 70(31.8) | 118(53.6) | 30(13.6) | 2(0.9) | 220(100) |
| 5 | I understand and learn better when I log on to social media for learning | 85(38.6) | 107(48.6) | 22(10.0) | 6(2.7) | 220(100) |
| 6 | Social media is the best medium through which I can learn | 70(31.8) | 91(41.4) | 46(20.9) | 13(5.9) | 220(100) |
| 7 | When I spend more time on social media, it affects my learning style | 49(22.3) | 64(29.1) | 65(29.5) | 42(19.1) | 220(100) |
| 8 | I am always distracted when I use social media for learning | 48(21.8) | 70(31.8) | 67(30.5) | 35(15.9) | 220(100) |

Table 5 confirms that out of the 220 (100%) respondents, 80 (36.4%) strongly agreed that the use of social media for learning influence their learning style while 117 (53.2%) of the respondents agreed that the use of social media for learning influence their learning style, 18 respondents (8.2% ) disagreed that the use of social media for learning influence their learning style while 5 respondents (2.3%) strongly disagreed that the use of social media for learning influence their learning style. This affirms that majority of the students believe that the use of social media for learning influences their learning style. Also, 80 (36.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 116 (52.7%) of the respondents agreed that they understand more when they learn with social media while 22 respondents (10.0%) disagreed and 2 respondents (0.9%) strongly disagreed that they understand more when they learn with social media. This indicated that majority of the respondents understand more when they learn with social media. On the other hand, 73 (33.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 108 (49.1%) respondents agreed that they assimilate faster when they learn on social media while 31 (14.1%) respondents disagreed and 8 (3.6%) respondent strongly disagreed that they assimilate faster when they learn on social media. This established that majority of the respondents assimilate faster when they learn on social media. In addition, 70 (31.8%) respondents strongly agreed and 118 (53.6%) respondents agreed that they remember easily when they learn from social media while 30 (13.6%) respondents disagreed and 2 (0.9%) respondents strongly disagreed that they remember easily when they learn from social media. This reveals that majority of the respondents remember easily when they learn

from social media. Others followed suit as shown in table 5.

*Hypothesis one*

**H$_{01}$:** The use of social media does not significantly influence students' learning style based on gender.

Table 6. *t-Test analysis on influence of social media on COE undergraduates' learning style based on gender*

| Variable | N | X | SD | Df | T | Sig | remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 114 | 1.74 | 0.66 | | | | |
| | | | | 218 | 0.592 | 0.653 | Accepted |
| Female | 106 | 1.79 | 0.73 | | | | |
| Total | 220 | | | | | | |

Table 6 showed that df = 218, t = 0.592, p = 0.653. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that the use of social media does not significantly influence students learning style based on gender was accepted. This decision was as a result of t-value of 0.592 resulting in 0.653 p-value which is greater than 0.05 significant alpha level. It is evident from the tested hypothesis that social media does not influence students learning style based on gender.

The findings of this study established that colleges of education Students are aware of Social Media use for learning. Also, Colleges of Education Students use Social Media for learning. Social media have positive influence on Colleges of Education Students' learning style. In support of the findings, Kazu (2009) stated that being conscious of one's learning style helps one to maximize the amount of knowledge that can be possibly acquired within a given period of time. On the other hand, it was deduced that the use of social media does not significantly influence students' learning style based on gender. Tufekci, (2008) expressed that there is significant difference between male and female on the utilization of social media where males were found to have used certain social media platform such as Facebook and LinkedIn than their female counterpart.

**CONCLUSION**

The findings of this study could serve as a prediction on the use of social media for learning. Social media can be a source of information for academics, administrators, researchers and decision-makers involved in planning, designing, implementation and promotion of e-learning tools.

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

1. Social Media should be integrated into teaching and learning processes for the benefit of students and instructors

2. Teacher should consider learning styles of learners before the students are exposed to technology tools

3. Collage of Education instructor, should make learning facilitating and appealing by making use of social media to teach.

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