

## **ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

### **Perceived Self-Efficacy in English Use on Social Media of Tertiary Institutions' Students in Kwara State, Nigeria**

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#### **Abstract**

*English language is gradually becoming the world's lingua franca, and the social media has broken all barriers to human connections and divides. The world has indeed become an e-village with social media as the platform and English language as the medium. This study examined the use of perceived self-efficacy in the conscious effort to keep to correctness in the use of English language by students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria. 1500 participants were drawn from seven tertiary institutions in the State consisting of two Universities, two Polytechnics, two Colleges of Education and one School of Nursing. Questionnaire was used to collate data that was analyzed using standard deviation, Mean, t-test and ANOVA statistical instruments. The study found that students generally deplore self-efficacy in their communication in English language on social media, and significance difference doesn't occur on the basis of gender, differences in institutions of learning and at the level of different courses students study. The study recommends the inclusion of English use on social media in the course outline of the General Use of English programmes of tertiary institutions and an inclusion of language proficiency evaluation on social media to instill consciousness on students.*

**Key Words:** *English language, Self-efficacy, Social media, Use of English, Correctness*

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**INTRODUCTION**

A ubiquitous medium, a bridge among diverse tongues, a symbol of national cohesion and the main ticket to education are a few attributes which describe the English language in Nigeria. For a long time, the English language has been a determinant of relevance and prospective participation in all formal domains of the country prior to her political independence from colonialism in 1960. As a result, significant interest has been given to not just attaining western education but to proficiency in the English language. However, emerging global phenomenon which has not excluded Nigeria is the astronomical development of internet as a communication medium. The internet is assuming such unprecedented wider use even in the developing country side by side as access and ownership of mobile phones get across quite a reasonable number of the citizenry. Also, the use of the social media like the social network sites, weblog, micro-blogging, etc have become so wide spread in which the English language has been the most widely used medium to attract a wider readership. Kwara is one of the 36 federating States and the Federal Capital Territory that make up the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The State was created as one of the pioneer States in 1967 with its capital in Ilorin. It is located in the North Central region sharing boundaries with Oyo State in the north and central, Ekiti, Osun and Kogi States in the south, Niger State and Benin Republic in the North. There are up to six different languages spoken in Kwara State including Yoruba, Nupe, Batonum, Hausa, Bokobaru and Fulani. The English language, however, is generally used as language of official communication, medium of instruction in schools from primary four across all other levels of education, and as medium of inter-personal communication

among the different tribe components of the State (Omopupa, 2016). Ogundele and Etejere (2013) investigated the relationship between computer literacy and secondary schools teacher's job effectiveness in Kwara State, Nigeria. They adopted a stratified random sampling technique on selected 1800 respondents across the three senatorial districts of Kwara State. The study revealed that teachers in Kwara State secondary schools make use of computers and social media during their teaching to arouse students' interest in teachings for effective students' academic performance in the medium of English Language.

**Literature Review**

The English language is a providential colonial legacy bequeathed to Nigerian by the British supremacist. The language has assumed central position in almost all spheres of the country's developmental attempts that almost every human pursuit beyond the self requires the use of English in a sense. Iliyas, Lawal & Sheriff (2011) submitted that the place of English language is more poignant in the field of education and especially on the field of social discourse. They justify the dominant roles English language has assumed to have found its roots way back in the 1882 Education ordinance which made English mastery a basis for colonial grants to school: a position later affirmed in the country's National Policy of Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) when it stated that from the fourth year English would progressively be a subject in the curriculum and a medium of teaching nearly all the school subjects. Adegbija (1994) remarked that Nigerian parents feel eager to see their children becoming professionally qualified citizens by their early exposure to the English

language. He added that proficiency in English language has been a major reason for enlisting children in schools, its delay would be considered as conspiracy by Government to hold back their children from deserved advance in civilization. English language is described by Lawal (2004) as an end in itself and a means to several ends.

Adeoye and Emeke (2010) concluded that the performance of students in especially English language in the two main Nigeria's examination body, West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) in the final examination for the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) have been abysmally poor in the last one decade. The declining performance of students create worry considering the 'a must pass' status of English language. A credit pass in English is compulsory among other requirements for admission to study in any tertiary institution in Nigeria. A more disturbing phenomenon among supposedly users of English is the almost gibberish use of the English language among graduates of different educational levels. The problem of confusingly meaningless communication in English language seems to have largely made even most university graduates unemployable. The regrettable trend, Ibode (2004) submitted, requires practicable steps that must be taken to remediate the situation. Scholars in the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) have carried out several studies on the most effective procedures in facilitating proficiency in the all-important English language (Lawal, 1995, Adegbija, 2000, Ibode, 2004, Ahmed & Emeke, 2010). A common trend in the emerging studies is that there seem to be unanimity of conclusion that there is a form of transition from 'teacher-centered to more learner-centered strategy' (Riazi,

2007). The shift in focus has inspired applied linguists to research into influence of socio-cultural, psychological, cognitive affective and e-based variables on learning, particularly of ESL (Nosratina, Saveiy & Zanker, 2014). Dörnyei (2009) pointed out that ESL educators hold that these variables are the source of differences in L2 learning. He added that studies' focused on these variables reveal individual language learning styles and they are closely linked to success in L2 learning since mastery of L2 is like forming a new habit.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as a group of internet-based applications that replicated the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content where millions of users actively engage in social networking, text messaging, blogging, content sharing, online learning, and much more (Wang, Chen & Liang 2011). Sylvia, Moonhee & Sangwon (2013) explained that social media types include a diversity of applications with different core functions and structures with the most popular and high profile social media as Social Network Sites (*Face book, Whattshap. MySpace, Bebo, and Linked In*); Weblog or blog; Micro-blogging (such as Twitter). Others include wiki and Forums or online message boards among others.

Nosratina *et. al.* (2014) remarked that study on language learning style serves (a) to identify and compare styles used by very and less accomplished learners; and (b) to generate instructional clues for unaccomplished learners which can inspire them to become accomplished language learners. Wharton (2000) stated that every language learner device a style consciously or otherwise which are deliberate thought or behavior which help her to attain

competence in the target language. Without doubt, a significant and impactful self-awareness strategy, which instills confidence in learners to be independent and effective masters, is self-efficacy (Nosratina *et. al.*, 2014). Self-efficacy is a motivational approach that dwells on judgment of self on ability to get tasks well done and to achieve a variety of determined goals (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy is a brain child of Bandura (1986) that Nosratina *et.al* (2014) submitted ‘...deals with cognitively perceived ability of the self’ (p. 1082). It focuses on individual mental conception or belief in their capability of getting a task well done. It is more of the ‘I can do it spirit’. This explains when learners have a positive self-efficacy he performs better in second language mastery and use, and individuals with low self-efficacy feel they do not have the ability and power so, use the English language in incoherence meaningless form and admit failure from the beginning (Bernhardt, 1997). Iliyas (2014) submitted that critical thinking offers an effective English user on the social media discriminatory choice of words rather than gullibly. Critical thinking equips the individual with the skills to discern what is meant by the words used, determine the objective of the structure, and what has been left out in the writing. Critical thinking also includes such fundamental preoccupations as interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation (Facione, 2006).

Bandura (2000) identifies three types of self-efficacy as self-regulatory self-efficacy (resisting peer influence and guiding against high risk activities), social self-efficacy (ability to evolve and sustain relationships, being assertive and to embark on leisure time learning activities), and academic self-efficacy (ability to learn formally, plan learning and meet goals).

These three forms the attention of this study which seeks to research individual student’s confidence, disposition, e-friendship as manifested in social media English language use as instrument of ESL learning and mastery. Perceived self-efficacy captures people’s belief on their abilities to create effects. A highly efficacious person recovers immediately from failure, which she associates to insufficient preparation, she is less vulnerable to stress and depression; and she sets challenging goals that she sustains commitment to (Bandura, 1994).

### **Theoretical Base of the Study**

The common sources of self-efficacy as highlighted by Bandura (1994) are (a) mastery experiences (relating to inspiration derived from previous activities, especially successful ones); (b) vicarious experiences (sourced from social models like what other people have, or are doing); (c) social persuasion (clear words of encouragements that strengthen confidence and spurs action); (d) inferences drawn from physiological states (impressions made of mood, pain, stress and emotion about a specified task). Bandura (1986) added that

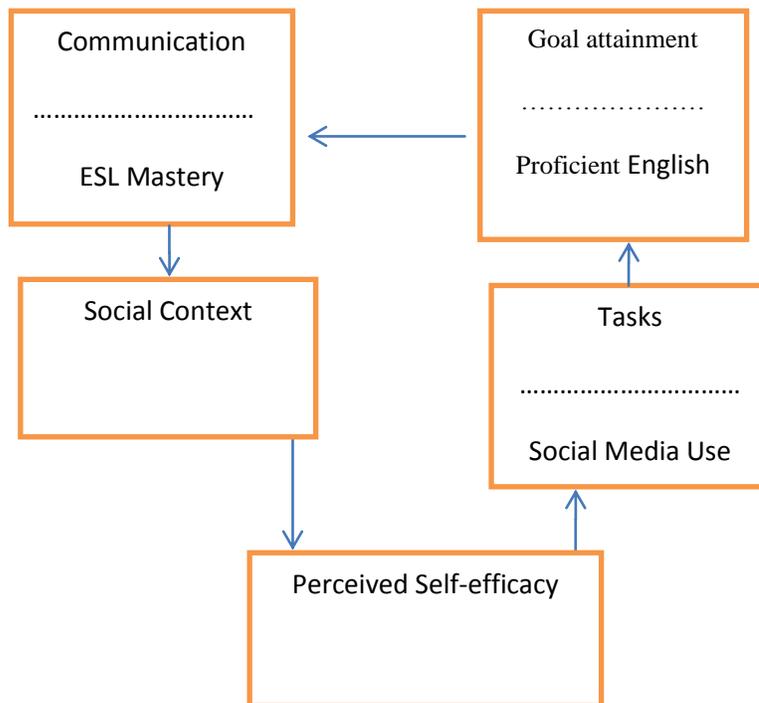
Students’ difficulties in many academic skills are often directly related to their beliefs that they cannot learn-when such things are not objectively true. In fact, many students have difficulty in school not because they are incapable of believing that they can perform successfully, but because they are incapable of believing that they can perform successfully, that they have learned to see themselves as incapable of

handling academic skills (p. 393)

Closely related to perceived self-efficacy is the social learning theory on which Bandura (1977) posited that learning is an outcome of cognition, environment, behaviour and motivation which occur in a social context. Social learning theory draws relatedness in the Chomsky's (1959) treatise that learning a language goes beyond just the stimulus-response assertion of the behaviourists, notably Skinner's verbal Behaviour. As theoretical basis for this study, learning theory according to

Bandura (1994) rests mostly on modeling that includes online modeling (as progressively carried out by a person), instruction, and symbolic (found in media, achievers, recorded effect).

The conceptual framework for this study given in Figure 1 is a juxtaposition of social learning theory and self-efficacy tenets, which describes the inculcation of perceived self-efficacy on attempt at correctness in the English language use on the social media of participants:



**Figure 1:** Researchers' designed conceptual framework for the study

In this study, attempt is made to juxtapose the realities of the social context with tenets of perceived self-efficacy, using the English language use on the social media to examine its effect on students' competence in the medium of instruction in almost all the other courses and a vehicle of self-actualization that English language is. The dotted lines separating communication and ESL mastery, tasks and social media use, and goal attainment with proficient English language use are indicative of the relativity and peculiarity in their attainment.

**Research Questions**

The study found answer to the research question:

1. Do students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State use perceived self-efficacy in ensuring grammaticalness in their written English language on the social media?

**Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

- HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language use on the social media of students of tertiary institutions on the basis of gender as male or female in Kwara State, Nigeria.
- HO<sub>2</sub>: Different courses of study of Arts and Humanities, Sciences and Technology, and Management, Business and Social Sciences have no significant difference in the employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language use on the social media of students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria.
- HO<sub>3</sub>: Significant difference does not exist in the employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language

use on the social media of students based on the differences in the tertiary institutions they attend in Kwara State, Nigeria.

**Procedures**

The study is a survey type, which examined pattern of employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language use on the social media of students of different tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria. Population for the study consisted of all students in their 200 level of study on admission in the tertiary institutions in the State. 7 tertiary institutions were chosen for the study: 2 Universities; 2 Polytechnics; 2 Colleges of Education; and 1 School of Nursing and 1 College of Health Technology. Quota sampling technique was used in selecting 1500 participants for the study spread across all the different courses broadly grouped into three as Sciences and Technology; Arts and Humanities; Management, Business and Social Sciences.

Instrument for the study was a researchers' designed questionnaire structured in likert scale 4-1 rating to generate response from the participants. The instrument was trial tested in a split-half pilot at Kwara State University Malete and College of Education (Technical), Lafiagi both in Kwara State. The two institutions were not involved in the main study and the data obtained was subjected to Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient with 0.82 index, which showed the instrument was reliable. Collated data was analyzed using standard deviation, Mean, t-test and ANOVA statistical instruments.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** Do students of tertiary institutions in Kwara state use

perceived self-efficacy in ensuring language on the social media? grammaticalness in their written English

**Table 1:** Mean responses of students of tertiary institution perceived self-efficacy of English use on social media

ITEM	X	SD	DECISION
I make posts on social media using English language mostly.	3.68	0.60	Okay
I am always after correctness in my usage of English on the social media.	3.44	0.68	Okay
I try to edit and correct my English on social media.	3.47	0.83	Okay
I am conscious of other people’s correct English usage in their posts on social media.	2.05	1.02	Not Okay
The social media have been a veritable platform for me to practice my knowledge of English.	2.44	1.06	Not okay
I regret inaccuracies in my English discovered later on posts on social media.	3.46	0.70	Okay
I get inspired by the fluency of other people’s English in their posts on social media which I try to emulate.	3.00	0.85	Okay
I discover new words and structures as I surf social media.	3.26	0.73	Okay
Social media constitute a platform for learning Eng. language.	2.58	1.06	Okay
I have been gaining tremendous confidence in my usage of correct English since my debut on social media.	2.86	0.67	Okay
The fear of inappropriate use of English sometimes prevents me from posting on social media.	2.65	1.02	Okay
The belief that others will correct mistakes in my use of English motivates me to post on social media.	2.14	1.12	Not Okay
Postings on social media do not require correct usage of English language, it is a free world.	2.78	0.81	Okay
Admonitions to ensure grammaticalness in English usage on postings on social media have influenced my effort in that direction.	3.06	0.78	Okay
The most effective way to enhance further self-mastery of English language is constant posts on social media in English with a determination to ensure correctness.	2.98	0.67	Okay
<b>Weighted Average</b>			<b>2.93</b>

Table 1 indicates the students’ use of perceived self-efficacy in ensuring grammaticalness in their written English language on the social media platforms.

From the analysis, the sampled students express positive use of perceived self-efficacy in ensuring grammaticalness. This is indicated by the weighted mean of 2.93, in spite that means for items 4, 5 and 12 fall below the fixed average of 2.50. It is equally worthy of note, however, that item

No 11 was negatively stated hence, the scoring of responses was reversal.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language use on the social media of students of tertiary institutions on the basis of gender as male or female in Kwara state, Nigeria.

**Table 2:** T-test analysis of gender influence on perceived self-efficacy of English use on social media among students of tertiary institutions

Gender	N	X	SD	SD Error	t	Sig.	Decision
Male	660	43.70	5.80	1.011			
Female	840	42.79	7.04	1.087			

df = 1498; P > 0.05

Analysis of data in Table 2 indicates that gender is not a significant factor on the employment of perceived self-efficacy in English language use on social media of students of tertiary institutions. P > 0.05; on this premise null hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> is not accepted.

**Hypothesis 2:** Different courses of study have no significant difference in the employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language use on social media students of tertiary institutions in Kwara state, Nigeria.

**Table 3:** One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of students' courses of study influence on perceived self-efficacy of English use on social media among students of tertiary institutions

Source	SS	dif	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	3.335	2	1.667			
				.038	.962	Not Rejected
Within Groups	3124.052	1497	43.390			
<b>Total</b>	<b>3127.387</b>	<b>1499</b>				

P < 0.05

Data analyzed in Table 3 indicates that students’ course of study is not a significant factor on the employment of perceived self-efficacy in English language use on social media of students of tertiary institutions.  $P > 0.05$  (i. e.  $p = .962$ ); on this premise null hypothesis  $H_02$  is not rejected.

**Hypothesis 3:** Significant difference does not exist in the employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language use on the social media of students based on the differences in the tertiary institutions they attend in Kwara state, Nigeria.

**Table 4:** One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of type of institutions students attend as it influence perceived self-efficacy of English use on social media among students of tertiary institutions.

Source	SS	dif	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	108.027	3			36.009	
				.847	.473	Not Rejected
Within Groups	3019.360	1496			42.526	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3127.387</b>	<b>1499</b>				

$P > 0.05$

The analysis in Table 4 indicate that types of institution attended is not a significant factor on the employment of perceived self-efficacy in the English language use on social media of students of tertiary institutions.  $P > 0.05$ ; on this premise null hypothesis  $H_{03}$  is not rejected.

## **DISCUSSION**

Analysis of items on the research questions revealed that students of tertiary institutions in Kwara state observed the use of perceived self-efficacy in ensuring grammaticalness in their written English language on the social media platforms. This study corroborates the findings of Aimee, Steven & Richard (2014) that students use self-efficacy to minimize errors in their communication on virtual learning; same way scholars (Henderson, Huang, Grant, & Henderson, 2009; Xu, Park, & Baek, 2011) found self-efficacy consciousness in social media use beneficial for second language mastery and writing respectively. However, Madge, Meek, Wellens, and Hooley's (2009) submit that social media platforms are mostly useful for informal interaction than formal.

On gender equivalent finding on use of self-efficacy in the use of English on social media, the study of Topkaya (2010) found significant difference in favour of male in pre-service English and computer self-efficacy in Turkey, while Cassidy and Eachus, (2002) found no significance difference in gender use of computer for learning. Since findings on gender difference in learning remains inconclusive, the finding of this study could be justified for the fact that both male and female have similar exposures in and outside the class on English language learning and social media interaction.

Absence of significant difference in perceived self-efficacy in English language use on social media of students of tertiary institutions students on the basis of differences in institution and course of study could be because the practice is more of a habit formed long before entrance into the different programmes and institutions, which Noel-Levitz (2007) posited starts from age 15; Riazi (2007) contended rests on the students independence on social media use and in confirmation of social learning theory orientation (Bandura, 1986).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommends as follows based on its findings:

- I. Aspects of English use on social media should be included and taught in the course outline of General Use of English and Communication Skills programme offered by all students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
- II. Teachers of the General English programme should engender communicative English teaching practice on social media and ensure evaluation of the course at the semester end also take place same way to move evaluation beyond computer based test to usage based. This is important for social media no-time-bound use and widespread among the students.
- III. Students at the higher institution level should be made to be conscious social media users through teacher/ students interaction on social media platform and pair assessment strategy which should be

part of the continuous grading system.

- IV. Further studies are required on level of students' usage and extent of appropriate use of English language on social media platforms.

## CONCLUSION

This study found students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State generally deplore self-efficacy strategy in their use of English to write on social media; and significant difference doesn't occur in their usage of the strategy on the basis of gender, differences in course of study and institutions attended. Getting these sets of higher levels students engaged meaningfully for learning on social media can be a most worthy initiative to curb quite too many immoral time wasting and distraction from useful path that its use has become among the youth. In the same vein, with the increasing use of computer based tests to evaluate students' learning across tertiary institutions in Nigeria, it is expedient to get teaching use of English language on social media so that the current practice of abuse of grammar, vocabulary and general contempt for correctness online can be minimized. When social media becomes a conscious learning platform, a culture of appropriateness could be inculcated through teacher's facilitated interaction, since, as put by Solis (2008), "Participation is no longer an option as Social Media isn't a spectator sport".

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