

Effects of University Students' Use of Social Media Technologies on their Academic Writing

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ABSTRACT

The advent of social media technologies has constantly revolutionised our way of communication, the language we use, our basic skills of reading and writing, the way we think, interact and conduct business. Such technological innovations are also revolutionizing the conditions of their users' literacy experiences as well developing new practices in both teaching and learning. Almost all university students in Kenya today have access to a number of social media platforms and they spend a number of hours daily interacting through their handheld devices such as phones and tablets. This study will explore how college students' use of social networking sites in their daily life affects their writing for academic purposes. The study also seeks to establish students' and their instructors' perceptions on the influence. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected from students and instructors in Daystar University and United States International University. A questionnaire will be used to collect data from students who are taking writing classes and structured interview questions for instructors. This paper argues that students who use social media platforms to write and express their opinions in forms of status updates, texting and blog articles find academic writing inspiring. On the other hand, there are some students who draw upon their social media style of writing for their sentence patterns, grammar, punctuation and word choice thus comprising the expected standards of academic writing at university level. The study suggests strategies of preventing the use of social media and texting writing style in academic writing as well as tips for incorporating the use of social media technologies in teaching and learning academic writing.

Keywords: Social Media, Academic Writing, Texting, Social Media Technologies, Learning, Teaching

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