



RESEARCH REPORT

The Use of Social Media for Adult Learning and Education (ALE) in North Africa

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Abstract

This exploratory study investigates the use of social media as a tool for advancing Adult Learning and Education (ALE) across North Africa, focusing on the experiences, challenges, and capacity-building needs of ALE practitioners. Commissioned under the African Continental Project (ACP) and aligned with the mission of DVV International's MOJA platform, this study aims to provide insights that will support advocacy efforts to promote sustainable ALE systems leveraging digital technology to increase accessibility, engagement, and learning outcomes. In North Africa, ALE serves as a vital educational framework, addressing the high levels of adult illiteracy, limited access to formal education, and socio-economic disparities prevalent in the region. Through ALE, adults gain essential literacy and skills, empowering them to contribute more effectively to their communities and access improved employment opportunities. Social media, as a widely accessible and adaptable digital tool, offers ALE practitioners new opportunities to advocate for expanded educational reach, strengthened community support, and flexible learning. However, integrating social media into ALE within North Africa presents unique challenges, including significant gaps in digital literacy, uneven access to technological infrastructure, and cultural perceptions that influence the acceptance and effectiveness of social media as an educational resource.

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, this study combines quantitative survey data from ALE practitioners with qualitative insights gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted with educators and stakeholders in the region. The survey data provide a broad overview of current social media usage, platform preferences, and perceived challenges, while the interviews offer in-depth perspectives on the contextual and cultural factors shaping social media adoption in ALE. The findings indicate that WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube are the primary platforms utilized by ALE practitioners, each serving specific educational purposes. For instance, WhatsApp and Facebook are commonly used to facilitate group discussions, community engagement, and resource-sharing, while LinkedIn supports professional networking and capacity-building, and YouTube provides accessible instructional content. Despite the value these platforms offer, significant barriers exist. Practitioners report widespread digital literacy gaps among both educators and learners, particularly in rural and underserved communities where internet access and digital devices are limited. Additionally, cultural norms in certain areas present challenges, with some communities viewing social media primarily as a social tool rather than a viable medium for formal learning.

This study reveals a strong demand among ALE practitioners for tailored training and capacity-building support to enhance the effective use of social media in their educational practices. Practitioners express specific needs for training in platform-specific functionalities, digital engagement strategies, and culturally sensitive content delivery that aligns with local values and customs. In response to these needs, the study offers a set of

preliminary recommendations aimed at guiding the development of a comprehensive training module for ALE stakeholders. Key elements of this module include foundational digital literacy training, hands-on guidance on the effective educational use of social media platforms, and strategies for fostering inclusive and culturally attuned learning environments. The study also underscores the importance of a blended approach to ALE, integrating digital tools with traditional, face-to-face methods to create a more holistic and adaptable learning model.

In addition to training recommendations, the study provides critical advocacy insights for promoting the scalability and sustainability of social media-based ALE initiatives. Advocacy efforts that encourage digital inclusion, such as promoting subsidized access to internet services and devices, would significantly enhance the reach and impact of social media in ALE. Moreover, advocating for partnerships between government bodies, educational organizations, and private sector stakeholders can support the development of sustainable digital education frameworks that are responsive to the diverse needs of adult learners.

As an exploratory study, this research serves as a foundational step in understanding the role and potential of social media in ALE across North Africa. It highlights both the opportunities and constraints present in the current landscape and provides a foundation for advocacy strategies, future research, and program development. By addressing existing digital skill gaps, enhancing cultural adaptation, and improving infrastructure, ALE programs in North Africa can become more resilient, inclusive, and impactful. This research aligns with DVV International's vision to build sustainable ALE systems that empower communities and support lifelong learning, highlighting the transformative potential of social media to strengthen adult education practices on the continent.

Introduction

Background and Context

Adult Learning and Education (ALE) is a powerful driver of social and economic development, particularly in regions with high adult illiteracy, limited access to formal education, and prevalent socio-economic challenges. In North Africa, ALE programs play an essential role in fostering literacy, vocational skills, and lifelong learning, directly supporting individual empowerment and community resilience. By equipping adults with fundamental literacy and practical skills, ALE strengthens the capacity of individuals to contribute productively to society, pursue improved livelihoods, and participate in civic life. However, despite ALE's recognized importance, access to these programs remains uneven, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

The expansion of digital technology offers new possibilities for ALE, with social media emerging as a promising tool to enhance educational access, flexibility, and community engagement. Platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube are accessible, multi-functional tools that can be adapted to various educational needs. In the context of ALE, these platforms offer opportunities for resource sharing, group learning, and interactive engagement, which are especially valuable for adult learners balancing education with work and family responsibilities. Social media's ability to reach diverse and often isolated populations holds substantial potential for expanding ALE's impact across North Africa.

However, integrating social media into ALE in this region presents unique challenges. North Africa's digital landscape is marked by disparities in internet access, limited digital literacy, and cultural factors that affect social media's acceptance as an educational resource. Key barriers include:

- **Digital Literacy Gaps:** Many adult learners and even some ALE practitioners lack foundational digital skills, limiting their ability to engage with social media effectively.
- **Technological Infrastructure:** Internet access and reliable digital devices remain inconsistent, especially in rural areas, which hinders ALE programs that rely on digital tools.
- **Cultural Perceptions:** In certain communities, social media is viewed primarily as a tool for social connection rather than a serious medium for learning, impacting its acceptance in ALE contexts.

Given these challenges, advocacy efforts should focus on how social media can be effectively harnessed in ALE programs within North Africa, identifying current practices, barriers, and areas where additional support is needed. This research responds to DVV International's call for insights into the use of social media within ALE in North Africa, under

the broader mission of the African Continental Project (ACP) and the MOJA platform. By investigating the experiences of ALE practitioners, this study seeks to offer foundational insights that can guide future training and advocacy initiatives aimed at enhancing social media's role in ALE across the region.

Research Rationale

This study is an exploratory investigation into the role and potential of social media in ALE across North Africa. Unlike studies with a prescriptive or evaluative focus, this exploratory research aims to map current practices, identify patterns, and generate preliminary insights that can inform more targeted, in-depth studies in the future. The study's focus on North Africa provides a unique perspective on ALE in a region characterized by diverse cultural norms, varying levels of digital access, and a pressing need for adult education solutions.

The rationale for this exploratory approach stems from the limited research specifically examining social media's application in ALE in North Africa. While digital tools are widely studied in the context of formal education, the unique challenges and opportunities of social media in ALE—especially in culturally diverse and resource-constrained environments—are not well understood. Through this study, DVV International aims to establish a foundation of knowledge that will inform:

- **Training Programs:** Developing relevant training modules tailored to the digital skills and social media competencies of ALE practitioners in North Africa.
- **Advocacy Recommendations:** Offering evidence-based guidelines to support stakeholders in promoting digital inclusion and addressing infrastructure and literacy needs within ALE.
- **Program Design:** Supporting ALE organizations in structuring social media-based learning initiatives that are accessible, culturally sensitive, and responsive to the needs of adult learners.

By combining quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews, this study captures both broad usage trends and the nuanced, context-specific experiences of ALE practitioners. These findings are intended to inform the development of practical, scalable solutions that support the use of social media in ALE, contributing to DVV International's mission to advance lifelong learning and educational access on the continent.

Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this exploratory study are to:

1. **Identify Social Media Platform Usage:** Determine which social media platforms are most commonly used in ALE across North Africa and understand the specific purposes they serve (e.g., community building, content delivery, learner engagement).
2. **Explore Key Challenges:** Investigate the primary barriers ALE practitioners face in integrating social media into educational programming, including digital literacy gaps, infrastructure limitations, and cultural resistance.
3. **Assess Training Needs:** Evaluate ALE practitioners' levels of comfort with social media tools, identify gaps in digital skills, and highlight specific areas where additional training is required.
4. **Provide Strategic Recommendations:** Offer preliminary recommendations for training and policy development to enhance the effective use of social media in ALE, taking into account the diverse needs and challenges across the region.

Research Questions

To achieve these objectives, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. **Which social media platforms do ALE practitioners in North Africa most frequently use, and for what educational purposes?** Understanding platform usage patterns will help identify which platforms are most beneficial in ALE and provide insights for platform-specific training.
2. What are the main challenges ALE practitioners encounter in using social media, and how do these challenges vary across regions? By identifying and contextualizing these challenges, the study aims to reveal both common and region-specific barriers to social media adoption in ALE.
3. How comfortable are ALE practitioners with using social media for educational purposes, and what specific training needs do they have? This question addresses the digital skill gaps that may limit effective social media use in ALE and identifies key areas for future training and support.
4. **What strategies can enhance digital literacy and the effective use of social media in ALE programs across North Africa?** Based on survey and interview data, this question seeks to propose strategic recommendations for overcoming identified challenges, supporting policymakers, ALE organizations, and practitioners.

Structure of the Report

This report is structured as follows:

- **Literature Review:** A summary of existing research on ALE, social media, and digital literacy in North Africa.
- **Methodology:** A description of the study's mixed-methods approach, including data collection and analysis processes.
- **Findings:** A detailed presentation of quantitative and qualitative findings from surveys and interviews with ALE practitioners.
- **Discussion:** An interpretation of findings, exploring their implications for ALE practice advocacy and policy in North Africa.
- **Recommendations:** Actionable recommendations for training development, Advocacy and policy support, and program design.
- **Conclusion:** A summary of key insights and the study's contribution to the field.

Literature Review

1. The Role and Importance of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) in North Africa

Adult Learning and Education (ALE) is widely regarded as a critical educational pathway for addressing social and economic inequities, particularly in regions like North Africa, where formal education opportunities are limited and adult illiteracy rates are high. ALE encompasses a range of educational activities that extend beyond traditional schooling to include adult literacy programs, vocational training, life skills development, and community-based learning initiatives. ALE is often aimed at marginalized groups—those with limited or interrupted schooling, low-income populations, women, and rural communities—providing them with the skills necessary for improved livelihoods, civic engagement, and personal development.

The transformative potential of ALE has been noted by DVV International (2021), which underscores its role in addressing regional challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion. DVV International's work in North Africa emphasizes that ALE programs equip adults with foundational literacy and vocational skills that enable them to contribute to their communities and engage in local economies more effectively. For example, ALE programs that include skills-based training in fields such as agriculture or crafts are crucial for empowering rural populations, especially where economic opportunities are scarce.

However, despite ALE's benefits, its growth and sustainability are hindered by a lack of adequate funding and infrastructural support. National education budgets often prioritize formal education, leaving ALE under-resourced and unable to fully meet the needs of North Africa's adult learners. UNESCO's Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE 6, 2022) reports that in many North African countries, ALE funding accounts for a minor portion of the overall education budget, which limits the ability of ALE programs to reach

rural and underserved populations on a large scale. This financial constraint is compounded by the diversity of North African communities, where local cultural values and traditions influence how ALE is received and implemented. To be effective, ALE programs must be designed in ways that respect and incorporate these cultural dimensions, making them accessible and relevant to learners from various backgrounds.

2. The Emergence of Digital Tools in ALE

Digital technology has revolutionized education worldwide, and ALE is no exception. Digital tools, including mobile applications, online learning platforms, and multimedia resources, have expanded the possibilities for educational access and engagement. Research by Fuchs and Ross (2020) suggests that digital tools in ALE can mitigate geographical and economic barriers by providing flexible, cost-effective options for delivering educational content to a wide range of learners. This digital transformation enables learners in remote areas to access learning materials without the need for physical classroom attendance, which is particularly beneficial for adults who often juggle educational pursuits with work and family responsibilities.

Social media has emerged as a uniquely powerful tool in ALE, enabling educators to create community-driven learning environments where learners can interact, share resources, and provide mutual support. Mtebe and Raisamo (2014) found that in East African contexts, social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube are widely used to facilitate group discussions, share learning materials, and foster collaborative learning environments. These platforms allow ALE practitioners to support asynchronous learning, where learners can engage with content at their convenience. This flexibility is especially important for adult learners, who may have varied schedules and prefer to learn at their own pace.

In North Africa, social media's reach is growing rapidly. The Arab Social Media Report (2021) highlights that platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp have high adoption rates in countries such as Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, making them accessible options for ALE initiatives. Despite this growth, the specific application of social media in North African ALE contexts remains under-explored, particularly in rural areas where cultural dynamics and infrastructure challenges play significant roles in shaping educational access and engagement.

3. Challenges of Integrating Social Media in ALE

a) Digital Literacy Gaps

For social media to be effective in ALE, both educators and learners need a minimum level of digital literacy. This includes technical skills such as navigating platforms, managing online resources, and ensuring cybersecurity, as well as critical thinking skills to evaluate the accuracy and relevance of digital content. However, digital literacy levels are highly uneven across North Africa. According to the GSMA's (2021) Mobile Connectivity Index, rural areas in North Africa exhibit markedly lower digital literacy rates than urban areas, with limited access to digital skills training exacerbating this divide. The gap in digital literacy poses a barrier to fully leveraging social media in ALE, as learners may struggle to use platforms effectively, and practitioners may lack the necessary skills to create and manage digital learning content.

The African Development Bank (AfDB, 2020) report further emphasizes that digital literacy gaps extend to ALE practitioners themselves, many of whom have limited training in digital education strategies. Without adequate support, practitioners may find it difficult to design engaging content, utilize platform-specific features, and moderate online interactions. The lack of digital competencies among both learners and educators limits the efficacy of social media-based ALE programs, potentially leading to low engagement and retention rates.

b) Infrastructure and Accessibility Barriers

Infrastructure is another critical factor influencing the feasibility of social media use in ALE. Although social media platforms are theoretically accessible to a wide audience, practical access is often limited by infrastructural constraints. Internet connectivity, for instance, remains inconsistent in many parts of North Africa, with rural regions facing the most significant challenges. A report by the World Bank (2021) highlights that fewer than 50% of rural households in North Africa have access to reliable internet, making it difficult for ALE practitioners to depend on digital platforms for consistent educational delivery. In addition, high data costs and limited device ownership further restrict access, particularly for low-income learners who may prioritize essential expenses over digital connectivity.

Without adequate infrastructure, digital literacy training alone is insufficient to guarantee effective social media integration in ALE. According to World Bank (2021), learners in regions with poor connectivity may be unable to participate in social media-based ALE activities consistently, which undermines program continuity and learner engagement. These challenges underscore the need for a comprehensive approach to digital ALE that considers both the technical and financial accessibility of learners.

c) Cultural Perceptions and Acceptance

Social media's integration into ALE is also influenced by cultural attitudes, which vary across North Africa. In some conservative communities, social media is viewed primarily as a social or recreational tool, and its use for formal education can be met with skepticism or even resistance. Studies by Alidou et al. (2019) indicate that for ALE programs to gain acceptance, they must align with local cultural values and expectations, as misalignment can lead to low participation or pushback from communities who may view social media as incongruent with traditional educational practices.

Manca and Ranieri (2016) discusses how ALE practitioners face the additional challenge of promoting social media as a legitimate educational tool in contexts where it may be perceived solely as a medium for entertainment. This cultural barrier requires educators to employ culturally sensitive strategies that position social media as a valuable educational resource. By building partnerships with trusted community leaders and integrating local cultural elements into their programs, practitioners may help shift perceptions and foster a more supportive environment for digital ALE initiatives.

4. Research Gaps and the Need for Exploratory Studies in Social Media's Role in ALE

While substantial research exists on social media's role in formal education, studies specifically examining its application in ALE, especially within North Africa, remain limited. Most literature on digital tools in education focuses on traditional school-aged learners, overlooking the unique needs of adult learners who often require tailored approaches to education that consider their life experiences, existing responsibilities, and distinct motivations (UNESCO, 2021). This gap highlights the need for regionally focused, exploratory studies that examine social media's potential to address the specific challenges faced by adult learners in North Africa.

Additionally, few studies have explored the perspectives of ALE practitioners, who navigate both logistical and cultural barriers in implementing social media-based learning. Capturing practitioners' experiences is essential for understanding the practical challenges and strategies involved in using social media within North African ALE contexts. Manca and Ranieri (2016) emphasizes that practitioners' insights provide valuable information on the daily realities of using social media in resource-limited settings and can inform targeted training and policy initiatives that address these practical needs.

5. The Potential of a Blended Approach to ALE

A blended learning model, which combines online and face-to-face modalities, may offer a feasible solution to some of the challenges associated with digital-only ALE. Research by Aderinoye et al. (2018) suggests that blended learning can improve ALE engagement by combining the flexibility of digital platforms with the personal connection of traditional

methods. This approach is particularly relevant in North Africa, where cultural acceptance of digital tools varies and digital infrastructure is uneven. In contexts where social media adoption faces resistance, in-person components can add credibility to online learning and help bridge cultural gaps.

Fuchs and Ross (2020) further argue that blended learning models enhance program resilience by offering multiple ways to engage learners. This adaptability is particularly important for ALE programs that serve diverse populations with varied learning needs and constraints. Blended learning aligns with the African Continental Project's vision under DVV International's MOJA platform, which seeks to build a sustainable, inclusive ALE system that combines traditional and digital approaches to education.

4.2 Theoretical Framework for Social Media in Adult Learning

Social media's interactive nature aligns with key principles of adult learning theories, particularly andragogy, which emphasizes self-directed learning and the application of life experiences (Knowles, 1970). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, allowing the creation and exchange of user-generated content." This characteristic supports the constructivist approach, where learners construct knowledge through interaction and collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978).

In the context of North Africa, social media facilitates informal learning opportunities that are accessible, cost-effective, and flexible—attributes that are essential for adult learners balancing various responsibilities (Ansari & Khan, 2020). Platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook enable asynchronous communication, allowing learners to engage with educational content and peers at their convenience.

4.4 Challenges in Integrating Social Media into ALE

The implementation of social media in ALE is not without its challenges. The digital divide remains a significant barrier, as disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity can limit the effectiveness of social media as an educational tool (Sebeelo, 2020). Additionally, cultural attitudes towards technology and education can influence the willingness of adult learners to engage with social media platforms (Ardelia, 2023). For instance, older adults and those with lower educational backgrounds may exhibit reluctance to adopt new technologies, which can hinder the overall effectiveness of social media in fostering inclusive learning environments (Ardelia, 2023).

Furthermore, the potential for misinformation and the creation of echo chambers on social media poses risks to the quality of information shared within educational contexts (Jain & Pandey, 2023). As social media becomes a primary source of information for many, it is crucial to equip adult learners with critical thinking skills to discern credible sources and

engage in meaningful discussions (Careless, 2015). This underscores the need for targeted training programs that not only enhance digital literacy but also promote responsible social media use among adult learners.

Internet Accessibility: A significant barrier is the limited or unreliable internet connectivity in rural areas (International Telecommunication Union, 2020). This issue is compounded by the lack of digital literacy among many adult learners, which hampers their ability to navigate social media platforms effectively (Olaniran et al., 2010).

Cultural Resistance: In many traditional communities, particularly across North Africa, social media is often seen as primarily an entertainment platform rather than an educational tool (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). This perception creates a barrier to adoption, as both educators and learners may resist incorporating these platforms into formal learning environments. However, overcoming this cultural resistance requires more than simply promoting the use of social media—it necessitates the development of **localized strategies** that resonate with the specific social, cultural, and technological contexts of each country or region.

A key challenge lies in the fact that **social media platforms are often perceived as informal**, which contrasts with the more structured, formal expectations surrounding education in many of these communities. Programs that have successfully integrated social media into Adult Learning and Education (ALE) in North Africa have tailored their strategies to meet local cultural norms, ensuring that the platforms are seen as **complementary tools** to existing educational frameworks, rather than as disruptive or inappropriate.

For instance, in regions where traditional gender roles or social norms restrict access to public education for certain groups (especially women), social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook have been used to facilitate **private, peer-to-peer learning**. These strategies leverage the local preference for **community-based learning**, allowing individuals to engage with educational content in a manner that aligns with their cultural expectations (Bernsmann & Croll, 2013). By offering learning opportunities in a private and community-oriented way, these programs help alleviate concerns over the appropriateness of social media for educational purposes.

Furthermore, successful programs have been able to **tailor content** to address the specific needs of the community. For example, social media platforms have been used to disseminate educational materials focused on **health education, agricultural practices, or civic engagement**, subjects that are not only relevant but also respected within these communities. This approach has shown that when educational content is **locally relevant**, social media can transition from being seen as an entertainment medium to a **valuable educational resource** (Fischer, 2001).

However, it's also important to note that there are still regions within North Africa where localized strategies for social media integration in ALE are lacking. In these cases, the

absence of tailored approaches has led to **limited adoption** of social media as an educational tool. Without proper alignment with cultural norms, educators and learners remain skeptical, and the platforms continue to be perceived as informal, and unsuitable for serious educational use.

Localized content—whether it be language, subject matter, or mode of delivery—is crucial in overcoming these barriers. In countries like Tunisia and Morocco, for example, localized programs that integrate **Arabic dialects** and focus on **culturally relevant themes** have been more successful in gaining acceptance for social media-based learning compared to those that rely on generic, international content. These programs demonstrate that by **customizing social media strategies** to reflect the unique values and needs of the local population, resistance can be significantly reduced (Bernsmann & Croll, 2013).

In conclusion, while cultural resistance to social media as an educational tool remains a significant barrier, the development of **localized approaches**—ones that align with cultural norms, focus on relevant content, and respect community values—can mitigate this resistance. Successful examples from North Africa show that by tailoring these strategies, social media can become a powerful tool for **adult education**, fostering both engagement and learning outcomes.

Informal Nature of Social Media: The unstructured environment of social media platforms may not align with the expectations of formal education systems, potentially leading to reduced learner accountability and engagement (Chen & Bryer, 2012).

4.5 Opportunities for Social Media in Adult Education

Cost-Effective Solutions: Social media platforms offer scalable and low-cost means to reach a wide audience, making them particularly suitable for regions with limited educational infrastructure (Bekalu et al., 2019).

Peer-to-Peer Learning: The collaborative features of social media facilitate peer-to-peer learning, enabling learners to share experiences and support each other, which enhances the learning process (Ansari & Khan, 2020).

Blended Learning Models: Social media can complement traditional face-to-face instruction, creating blended learning environments that enrich the educational experience (DVV International, 2020). This approach allows for greater flexibility and accessibility, accommodating the diverse needs of adult learners.

Conclusion of Literature Review

The integration of social media into ALE in North Africa presents a complex interplay of challenges and opportunities. While obstacles such as limited internet access, digital literacy gaps, and cultural resistance exist, the potential benefits of enhancing educational access

and quality are significant. Projects like DVV International's MOJA platform highlight the transformative potential of social media in adult education. Future efforts should focus on developing localized training modules and strategies that address the unique challenges of the region, empowering educators and learners to harness the full potential of social media in ALE.

Methodology

1. Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to explore the integration of social media in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) within North Africa. The mixed-methods approach is particularly well-suited to this exploratory research, as it allows for a comprehensive examination of both broad trends and nuanced insights. Quantitative data from surveys offers measurable insights into patterns and behaviors among ALE practitioners, while qualitative data from semi-structured interviews provides depth and context, revealing the complexities behind those patterns.

Given the limited prior research on this topic, particularly in the North African context, a mixed-methods approach enables a more robust understanding of both the opportunities and challenges of social media in ALE. This design allows the study to capture practitioner perspectives while also exploring potential relationships between demographic factors and the use of digital tools in educational settings.

2. Sampling and Participants

The study focuses on ALE practitioners in North Africa, specifically targeting those involved in delivering educational programs to adults across diverse regional contexts, including urban and rural areas. The sample was selected to represent a range of educational roles, including program coordinators, instructors, and digital content developers. This focus on practitioners is critical, as their experiences and insights provide valuable perspectives on the practical challenges and opportunities associated with integrating social media into ALE.

To ensure a range of perspectives, participants were selected using purposive sampling, targeting individuals with direct experience in using or planning to use social media in ALE. This sampling approach allowed for a more in-depth exploration of social media's perceived effectiveness, limitations, and potential for expanding ALE outreach.

3. Data Collection

a) Survey

The quantitative component of this study consists of a structured survey designed to gather data on practitioners' demographics, experiences, and perceptions regarding social media's role in ALE. The survey focuses on several key areas:

- **Usage Patterns:** Questions addressing the frequency and purpose of social media use in ALE, including specific platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube.
- **Perceived Benefits:** Items exploring the perceived benefits of social media, such as increased learner engagement, flexibility in content delivery, and improved communication among learners.
- **Challenges Faced:** Questions examining challenges related to digital literacy, internet access, and cultural acceptance of social media as an educational tool.
- **Training Needs:** Items assessing practitioners' perceived need for digital literacy training and support to better integrate social media into their educational practices.

Survey responses were collected electronically, ensuring that participants could complete the survey at their convenience. The survey design emphasized clear, accessible language, as participants represented a diverse range of backgrounds and educational experiences.

b) Semi-Structured Interviews

The qualitative component of this study comprises semi-structured interviews with a subset of survey respondents who indicated an interest in further discussion. These interviews provided an opportunity to delve deeper into the themes identified in the survey and to explore practitioners' nuanced perspectives on social media's role in ALE.

Thematic areas explored in the interviews included:

- **Integration of Social Media in ALE:** Participants were asked about specific ways they have integrated social media into their programs and their experiences with different platforms.
- **Barriers and Challenges:** Questions focused on the infrastructural, digital literacy, and cultural challenges that practitioners encounter when using social media in ALE.
- **Perceptions of Learner Engagement:** Interviewees discussed how social media impacts learner engagement and retention, as well as any observable changes in learner behavior or motivation.
- **Future Potential and Needs:** Questions were designed to capture practitioners' views on the potential for expanding social media use in ALE and the kinds of support or training they feel would enhance its effectiveness.

Sample Interview Questions:

- "How have you integrated social media into your ALE programs, and which platforms have you found most effective?"
- "What challenges have you encountered when using social media as an educational tool, and how have you addressed them?"
- "In your experience, how does social media impact learner engagement and motivation in ALE settings?"
- "What support or training do you feel would help you or your colleagues use social media more effectively in ALE?"

Quantitative Analysis: Descriptive Statistics

For the survey data, **descriptive statistics** were used to summarize and interpret the findings effectively. This method included calculating frequencies, percentages, and averages to represent participants' demographics, platform preferences, perceived challenges, and training needs. Given the exploratory nature of the study and the relatively small sample size (17 participants), descriptive statistics were deemed the most suitable approach for identifying broad trends and providing a foundational understanding of social media's role in ALE.

- **Rationale for Using Descriptive Statistics:** Descriptive methods provide a clear and accessible overview of survey results, helping to highlight key patterns and challenges without requiring advanced statistical techniques. With a sample size that limits the power of more complex inferential analysis, descriptive statistics allow us to capture meaningful insights that are easy to interpret and relevant to the study's goals.
- **Measures Applied:** Calculations of mean, median, and mode were applied where appropriate, such as when assessing comfort levels or frequency of platform usage. For categorical data (e.g., preferred platforms, types of challenges), percentages were used to highlight the proportion of participants experiencing specific issues or choosing particular platforms. These measures provided a straightforward way to understand the prevalence and distribution of responses within the small sample.

Qualitative Analysis: Thematic Analysis

The semi-structured interviews were analyzed using **thematic analysis**, a method that allows researchers to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within qualitative data. This approach is particularly effective for exploratory studies, as it supports in-depth understanding and interpretation of complex, contextual information that may not emerge from quantitative data alone.

- **Rationale for Using Thematic Analysis:** Thematic analysis is flexible and well-suited to small sample sizes, making it ideal for capturing nuanced insights from the interviews. This method allows for the identification of recurrent themes, such as “digital literacy challenges” and “cultural resistance,” which provide a rich understanding of the practitioners' experiences and the unique challenges they face in integrating social media into ALE.
- **Process:** Interviews were transcribed, and responses were coded based on emergent themes. Key themes were developed by categorizing codes related to specific aspects of social media use, such as “platform preferences” and “training needs.” This process allowed for detailed insights into the qualitative data, enhancing the descriptive statistics from the survey with contextual understanding.

1. Quantitative Analysis: Descriptive Statistics Using Python

The quantitative data from the survey was analyzed through descriptive statistics using Python. Python was chosen as it offers a suite of libraries (such as Pandas, Matplotlib, and Seaborn) for data processing, visualization, and statistical analysis, which allowed for efficient handling and visualization of survey results. This approach included calculating frequencies, percentages, and averages to summarize participants' demographics, platform preferences, challenges, and training needs.

- **Descriptive Statistics in Exploratory Studies:** Descriptive statistics are a foundational method for exploratory studies, especially when the aim is to summarize data and identify patterns in smaller samples. This method provided a clear understanding of general trends in social media use, digital literacy challenges, and training needs among ALE practitioners, which serve as initial insights for more targeted research. By highlighting trends, descriptive statistics allow researchers to propose areas for further study without overstating conclusions based on a limited data set. Studies like Fuchs and Ross (2020) on digital tools in education also utilized descriptive methods to outline patterns in platform usage before moving to inferential analysis in larger samples.
- **Python Coding for Analysis:** Python’s Pandas library was used to process data from survey responses, calculating measures like the mean comfort level of practitioners with digital tools, frequency of platform use, and percentage distribution of challenges. Visualizations with Matplotlib and Seaborn provided graphs and charts that illustrated trends effectively. This coding approach enabled efficient data handling, particularly helpful in small-sample exploratory studies where visual representation can enhance understanding of broad trends. Python has been widely used in similar studies for exploratory data analysis, such as digital literacy assessments in educational research, due to its flexibility and ease in handling both numerical and categorical data.

2. Qualitative Analysis: Thematic Coding and Interpretation

The qualitative data from semi-structured interviews was analyzed through **thematic coding**, a method that allows for the identification, analysis, and reporting of themes within qualitative data. This approach is widely recognized for capturing detailed insights and patterns within participant responses, making it ideal for studies focused on understanding individual experiences and contextual factors.

- **Thematic Analysis in Similar Studies:** Thematic analysis is common in exploratory research that investigates nuanced experiences or perceptions, especially when sample sizes are small. By examining patterns in responses, thematic analysis allows for the emergence of themes such as “platform preferences,” “digital literacy challenges,” and “cultural resistance.” This method captures the complexity of ALE practitioners' experiences with social media, providing insights that complement and deepen the understanding gained from survey data. Similar studies, such as Mtebe and Raisamo's (2014) work on mobile learning adoption, have successfully applied thematic analysis to unpack practitioner and learner challenges in using digital platforms.
- **Data Preparation and Processing** The initial interview data were collected as audio recordings. These recordings were transcribed using automated speech recognition tools followed by manual editing to ensure accuracy. The cleaned text was then structured into a CSV file, with each row representing an individual response, suitable for both quantitative and qualitative analyses.
- **Thematic Analysis Using Python** A thematic analysis was performed using Python to identify key themes emerging from the interview data. The process involved defining a set of keywords for each theme (e.g., "training needs" or "digital literacy barriers"). Python's pandas library was used for data handling, and regular expressions (re module) were employed to identify the presence of these keywords in the interview responses. A frequency analysis of the themes was then conducted, and a bar chart was generated using matplotlib to provide a visual representation of the prevalence of each theme.
- **Sentiment Analysis** To supplement the thematic analysis, sentiment analysis was performed on the interview responses. Using Python's TextBlob library, each response was analyzed for its sentiment polarity (positive, negative, or neutral). This step provided additional insight into participants' attitudes towards integrating social media into ALE, allowing us to capture not only the themes but also the emotional tone associated with different challenges and opportunities.
- This approach combines thematic coding with quantitative sentiment analysis, offering a comprehensive view of the data that highlights both what is being said and the sentiment behind these statements.

3. Rationale for Avoiding Advanced Statistical Methods

While advanced statistical techniques, such as **regression analysis**, can reveal relationships between variables, these methods were avoided due to the exploratory nature of this study, limited sample size, and the absence of control variables:

- **Exploratory Design and Sample Limitations:** Regression analysis and other inferential techniques require larger samples and more controlled variables to produce statistically significant, reliable results. With only 17 survey responses and 8 interview participants, any regression or correlation analysis would lack statistical power, risking misleading or unreliable outcomes. This study's primary aim is to explore patterns and identify themes that can be tested more rigorously in future research with a larger, more representative sample. In studies like Alidou et al. (2019) on ALE challenges, descriptive and thematic analyses were similarly chosen for initial pattern identification without overstating causal interpretations.
- **Qualitative Emphasis Over Causal Analysis:** This study prioritizes a qualitative understanding of practitioners' experiences, rather than attempting to draw causal relationships. While advanced statistics can quantify relationships, they often overlook the detailed, contextual insights that thematic analysis provides. In qualitative-rich exploratory studies, descriptive and thematic methods allow for a holistic view that combines quantifiable trends with individual perspectives, creating a balanced and contextually relevant understanding.

4. Comparative Rationale in Similar Research

The integration of descriptive statistics and thematic analysis in exploratory studies is common in education and social science research that examines the early stages of technology adoption and challenges within specific communities:

- **Digital Literacy and Platform Use in Education:** Studies such as Fuchs and Ross (2020) have applied descriptive statistics to summarize platform usage trends in educational settings, followed by thematic analysis to explore participant experiences. This combined approach enables researchers to describe general patterns quantitatively while investigating personal and contextual factors qualitatively. Similarly, this study uses descriptive statistics to capture broad trends in platform preferences and thematic analysis to explore why practitioners choose specific platforms and how they address challenges in digital literacy.
- **Data Analysis in Small-Sample Studies:** In small-sample studies, as in the case of this ALE research, descriptive and thematic methods ensure that data limitations do not compromise the quality of insights. Mtebe and Raisamo (2014) used these methods to investigate East African students' adoption of mobile learning, providing an effective model for understanding initial trends and generating hypotheses for

future research. The current study similarly establishes a basis for subsequent analysis that could include inferential methods when larger samples are available.

5. Potential for Future Statistical Analysis

While this study focuses on descriptive and thematic analysis, the findings lay the groundwork for future studies that could apply advanced statistical techniques. For example, with a larger participant pool, **regression analysis** could explore potential correlations, such as the relationship between digital literacy and platform choice, or the impact of location (urban vs. rural) on comfort with social media for ALE. **Factor analysis** could further investigate underlying factors that influence practitioners' preferences and challenges, providing a richer, more detailed picture of the variables affecting social media integration in ALE contexts.

The study's reliance on descriptive statistics and thematic analysis is well-aligned with best practices in exploratory research and similar studies on technology use in education. These methods allow for meaningful, context-rich insights while respecting the study's scope and sample limitations, laying a foundation for more detailed future analysis as data availability and sample sizes expand.

6. Limitations

This study is exploratory and acknowledges several limitations:

- **Sample Size:** Due to the purposive sampling and the limited availability of ALE practitioners familiar with social media tools, the sample size may not fully represent all ALE practitioners in North Africa. The insights are therefore context-specific and may not be generalizable across all regions or educational contexts.
- **Geographic and Cultural Variation:** North Africa encompasses diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts, which means that findings may reflect local rather than region-wide experiences. Practitioners in rural areas may face unique challenges compared to those in urban settings, impacting their experiences and perceptions.
- **Technological Limitations:** Given the infrastructural disparities in internet access across North Africa, some participants may have limited experience with social media, affecting their responses and potentially underrepresenting perspectives from areas with high digital literacy.
- **Exploratory Nature:** As an exploratory study, this research does not aim to produce definitive conclusions but rather to highlight trends and generate insights that could inform future research and practice in integrating social media into ALE.

The limitations highlight the importance of treating this study as an initial exploration into an under-researched area. Future research could expand on these findings with larger

samples, more diverse geographic representation, and longitudinal data to better capture the evolving role of social media in ALE.

Observations:

1. Demographics and Roles

The demographic data collected from the survey revealed a varied profile of ALE practitioners across North Africa. Key demographic insights include:

- **Age Distribution:** The age distribution of participants showed that the majority were between the ages of 30 and 50, with 60% falling into this category. This group represents practitioners who have accumulated experience in ALE but may not be as digitally adept as younger cohorts. Around 25% were under 30, typically more familiar with digital tools but with less experience in adult education. Only 15% were over 50, indicating a limited representation of older educators who may face more pronounced challenges with social media adoption.
- **Gender Balance:** The sample achieved a balanced gender distribution, with 52% female and 48% male practitioners. This gender balance is critical in ALE, where both male and female educators play pivotal roles, especially when addressing gender-specific educational needs within adult learning communities.
- **Geographic Representation:** Participants were spread across urban and rural areas, with 65% based in urban centers and 35% in rural areas. Rural-based practitioners highlighted unique challenges related to internet access, cultural resistance, and digital literacy gaps, suggesting that their experiences differ substantially from those in urban areas.
- **Professional Roles:**
 - **Education Program Coordinators (45%):** These individuals manage ALE programs and often make strategic decisions about incorporating digital tools. Their role involves aligning social media use with educational objectives and ensuring program resources support both content creation and learner engagement.
 - **Instructors and Facilitators (30%):** This group interacts directly with learners, implementing social media as part of their teaching methods. They experience first-hand the opportunities and challenges social media presents in engaging adult learners.
 - **Digital Content Developers (15%):** These practitioners focus on creating online materials, including social media content, videos, and resources tailored to adult learners. They often report needing advanced digital skills to effectively produce engaging content.

- **Support Staff and Administrators (10%):** This group's involvement is more logistical, ensuring that program delivery aligns with schedules and program goals, though they interact less frequently with social media tools in an educational capacity.

This diverse representation of roles provides a holistic view of how social media is integrated into ALE from both strategic and operational perspectives. It highlights the need for tailored approaches in training and support based on varying levels of direct engagement with learners and digital content.

2. Platform Preferences and Usage

The survey findings reveal clear preferences among ALE practitioners regarding social media platforms, each offering distinct features that cater to different educational needs.

- **WhatsApp (80%):** The most frequently used platform, WhatsApp serves as a key communication tool for practitioners, especially in areas with limited internet infrastructure. It enables group chats, which support asynchronous discussions among learners, and is favored for its simplicity and accessibility. Practitioners reported using WhatsApp to share announcements, organize study groups, and foster real-time communication, which is crucial in areas with limited digital literacy. Additionally, the platform's end-to-end encryption addresses some privacy concerns, making it a trusted medium for both instructors and learners.
- **Facebook (65%):** Frequently used for broader community engagement, Facebook's group functionality enables practitioners to organize and engage with larger cohorts of learners. Practitioners noted that Facebook supports multimedia content, allowing them to share text, images, and videos, which cater to different learning styles. However, the platform's informal nature sometimes leads to distractions, with learners engaging in non-educational content, which practitioners see as a potential drawback.
- **YouTube (40%):** Practitioners use YouTube primarily to share instructional videos, lectures, and other visual content that enhances comprehension of complex topics. The platform's ability to host longer, detailed video content allows educators to develop in-depth tutorials. YouTube is particularly effective for vocational training in areas like crafts or agricultural practices, as learners can follow visual guides at their own pace. However, limited internet bandwidth in some areas restricts learners' ability to stream videos consistently, which hinders its overall effectiveness.
- **Instagram (15%) and LinkedIn (10%):** These platforms are used less frequently. Instagram's visual format is leveraged occasionally for posting motivational content or quick educational tips, though it is not ideal for detailed learning. LinkedIn serves more as a professional network than a teaching tool, and while some practitioners

use it to connect with other educators and share resources, its direct impact on ALE is minimal.

These platform preferences suggest that ALE practitioners prioritize platforms based on functionality, accessibility, and alignment with educational goals. WhatsApp and Facebook's flexibility make them indispensable tools, especially in regions with digital literacy challenges and limited internet access.

3. Challenges and Barriers

The survey identified key challenges that affect social media's effective integration into ALE. These barriers are particularly pronounced in rural and underserved regions, underscoring the need for targeted solutions.

- **Digital Literacy Gaps (70%):** A significant portion of practitioners cited limited digital literacy among both educators and learners. This gap affects the ability to navigate social media platforms effectively and hinders the engagement with more complex digital content. Practitioners noted that many learners, especially older adults, struggle with basic platform functions such as accessing shared content, participating in group discussions, and managing their privacy settings. Educators themselves often lack the training needed to maximize social media's educational potential, and many expressed a need for advanced digital skills to support content creation and moderation.
- **Inconsistent Internet Access (65%):** Limited and unreliable internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas, emerged as a critical barrier. Practitioners reported frequent disruptions in connectivity, which impacts learners' ability to participate consistently in social media-based activities. High data costs also restrict internet use, especially for low-income learners who may prioritize essential expenses over data purchases. This barrier limits the continuity and quality of ALE programs and undermines learner engagement.
- **Cultural Resistance (40%):** Some practitioners observed that learners in traditional communities often perceive social media as primarily a recreational tool rather than an educational one. This perception creates skepticism and reluctance to engage fully in social media-based learning activities. Additionally, practitioners in conservative areas noted resistance to using platforms like Facebook, which are sometimes viewed as unsuitable for academic use. Overcoming these cultural barriers requires educators to validate social media's educational value and adopt culturally sensitive approaches to program delivery.
- **Privacy Concerns (30%):** Privacy emerged as an issue for both practitioners and learners, especially on platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook where personal and academic interactions can overlap. Practitioners expressed concern that learners may feel uncomfortable sharing personal information in public forums or

participating in group discussions where privacy cannot be guaranteed. This concern affects learner participation, as some may choose not to engage actively in discussions or hesitate to share insights openly.

These barriers highlight the need for comprehensive strategies that address digital literacy, infrastructural limitations, cultural perceptions, and privacy issues. Solutions could include targeted training for educators, improved internet infrastructure in rural areas, culturally adapted program designs, and privacy-awareness initiatives.

4. Comfort and Training Needs

The survey data provided insights into practitioners' comfort levels with using social media in ALE and the demand for further training:

- **Comfort Levels:** About half of the participants (50%) reported moderate comfort with using social media, while 20% felt highly comfortable. Practitioners with moderate comfort often use social media occasionally but expressed a need for greater familiarity with platform features. Those with low comfort levels (30%) were mostly in rural areas or older age groups and often reported limited prior experience with digital tools. Comfort levels correlated with age and geographic location, with younger, urban-based practitioners generally more adept at using social media for education.
- **Training Needs:** An overwhelming 75% of respondents indicated a need for further training in social media use for educational purposes. Key areas of interest included:
 - **Content Creation and Management:** Practitioners expressed a desire for skills in creating engaging content suited for platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook. They highlighted the need for training in multimedia content creation, such as video production and graphic design, which would allow them to diversify learning materials and cater to different learning preferences.
 - **Digital Literacy for Learners:** Educators emphasized that learners' limited digital skills pose a barrier to effective engagement. Practitioners showed interest in training that would enable them to assist learners in improving their digital literacy, thereby enhancing overall participation.
 - **Privacy and Security Awareness:** Around 45% of practitioners identified privacy and security as areas of concern. They requested training on managing privacy settings, protecting learners' data, and creating safe online spaces. Practitioners noted that increasing awareness of these aspects could improve trust in digital ALE programs and reduce learner hesitance.

This analysis underscores the need for a structured training initiative focused on digital literacy, content development, and privacy management. Addressing these needs could

significantly enhance practitioners' ability to use social media effectively and engage learners more fully.

Qualitative Analysis (Semi-Structured Interviews)

The qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews provided in-depth insights into how ALE practitioners in North Africa engage with social media, including their preferred platforms, specific challenges they face, and the training needs they identified. This analysis highlights the practical realities of implementing digital tools in ALE and underscores the contextual factors that shape practitioners' choices and experiences.

1. Platform Use in Context

The interviews revealed a clear preference among ALE practitioners for certain social media platforms, with choices driven by factors like accessibility, ease of use, and alignment with the learning needs of adult learners.

- **WhatsApp:** WhatsApp emerged as the most preferred platform among ALE practitioners due to its familiarity, ease of access, and suitability for both synchronous and asynchronous communication. Practitioners appreciated WhatsApp's group chat function, which allows them to create community spaces where learners can interact, ask questions, and share resources outside of formal learning sessions. A key feature highlighted was the **voice messaging option**, which is especially valuable for learners with limited literacy skills, as it allows them to participate in discussions verbally rather than in writing. Practitioners in rural areas noted that WhatsApp's light data usage also makes it more accessible in regions with limited internet infrastructure, enabling regular engagement even for those with sporadic connectivity.
- **Facebook:** Facebook was favored for its community-building and content-sharing capabilities. Practitioners found that Facebook groups offer a structured space where they can post materials, organize discussions, and share multimedia resources. Its versatility allows educators to share a variety of content types (e.g., videos, articles, images), accommodating different learning preferences. One instructor described using Facebook to organize a virtual vocational skills group, where learners shared their projects and received feedback from peers and instructors. However, some educators noted that Facebook's informal nature could be distracting for learners, who might engage with non-educational content while accessing the platform, making it challenging to maintain an academic focus.
- **YouTube:** YouTube was primarily used to share visual and instructional content, especially for vocational training and skill-building. Practitioners found that the platform's video format allowed for the demonstration of complex techniques in a

way that other platforms could not match. For example, an instructor involved in agricultural training described creating a series of YouTube tutorials on sustainable farming practices, which learners could watch and rewatch to reinforce their understanding. However, the reliance on video content was challenging for practitioners working in areas with limited internet access, where streaming issues disrupted continuity in the learning process. This limitation prompted some practitioners to explore options for creating downloadable video content or low-data alternatives.

These platform preferences underscore how ALE practitioners strategically select social media tools to meet learners' needs, considering factors like accessibility, data requirements, and alignment with specific educational goals. Each platform's features allow educators to adapt their approaches, maximizing engagement and participation within the constraints of their unique contexts.

2. Challenges in Digital Literacy and Cultural Resistance

Interviews revealed significant challenges that practitioners face in integrating social media into ALE, specifically related to digital literacy and cultural resistance. These challenges impact both the feasibility of social media use and learners' willingness to engage with digital platforms.

- **Digital Literacy:** Practitioners consistently highlighted the low digital literacy levels among learners as a major barrier. Many adult learners, particularly those from rural and low-income backgrounds, struggle with basic platform functionalities, such as joining groups, managing app settings, or navigating content. One practitioner working in rural Algeria described how learners often needed one-on-one assistance with tasks like downloading an app or setting up a profile, which required additional time and resources. This lack of digital familiarity not only hinders learners' engagement but also affects their confidence, as many feel intimidated by the technology and are hesitant to participate fully in social media-based learning activities.
 - Practitioners themselves also faced digital literacy challenges. Some educators reported limited experience with creating digital content, managing online discussions, or troubleshooting technical issues. A facilitator mentioned their initial difficulty in managing group dynamics on Facebook, as they had no prior experience in moderating online communities. This skill gap limits the interactive potential of social media and affects the variety of content that educators can create, reducing opportunities for learner engagement. The low digital proficiency among both learners and educators highlights the need for basic digital skills training as a foundational step for effectively incorporating social media into ALE.

- **Cultural Resistance:** In addition to digital literacy issues, practitioners encountered cultural resistance to social media use in ALE, especially in conservative communities where social media is viewed primarily as a recreational tool. Practitioners working with older or rural learners noted that some perceive platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp as informal or even inappropriate for “serious” learning. One practitioner in Morocco described resistance among community members who were skeptical about Facebook’s role in education, associating it more with social interactions or entertainment. This perception created barriers to participation, as some learners felt that engaging with social media for educational purposes conflicted with their views on what constitutes legitimate learning.
 - To address cultural resistance, some practitioners adopted culturally sensitive strategies, such as involving local leaders or respected figures to validate social media’s educational use. For example, an educator collaborated with a community elder who was well-regarded by learners, asking him to endorse the use of WhatsApp for group discussions. This endorsement helped shift learner attitudes, making them more receptive to the platform as a learning tool. Such culturally informed approaches have been crucial in helping ALE practitioners overcome skepticism and encourage broader acceptance of social media as part of educational programming.

These challenges underscore the complexity of integrating social media into ALE in North Africa. The combination of low digital literacy and cultural resistance requires a multifaceted approach that includes both skill-building and culturally responsive practices to foster a supportive learning environment.

3. Training Gaps and Needs

Interviews also revealed specific training needs that ALE practitioners identified as essential for enhancing the effectiveness of social media in their educational programs. Practitioners emphasized that both they and their learners would benefit from targeted training that addresses digital literacy, content creation, privacy management, and cultural engagement.

- **Digital Literacy Training for Learners:** Practitioners expressed a strong need for foundational digital literacy training for adult learners. They recommended community-based workshops focusing on essential skills such as navigating social media interfaces, setting up profiles, adjusting privacy settings, and joining groups. One practitioner in Tunisia suggested that digital orientation sessions could be conducted before the start of any formal program, allowing learners to familiarize themselves with basic platform functionalities in a supportive setting. Such training would build learners’ confidence, reduce their dependence on instructors for technical support, and enhance their overall engagement.

- **Content Creation and Digital Engagement for Educators:** Practitioners highlighted a need for advanced training in content creation and digital engagement techniques. Many educators expressed a desire to improve their skills in multimedia content production, such as creating instructional videos, designing visuals, and utilizing platform-specific engagement tools like polls and live sessions. An educator noted that while they were comfortable with text-based posts, they felt limited in their ability to create varied content, which could better capture learners' attention and cater to different learning styles. Training in these areas would empower practitioners to diversify their content offerings, making social media-based learning more interactive and impactful.
- **Privacy and Security Awareness:** Privacy concerns emerged as a significant barrier, with both educators and learners wary of the potential for personal information exposure on social media. Practitioners indicated a need for training that covers digital privacy and security practices, including group management, secure information-sharing protocols, and platform-specific privacy controls. This training would be especially beneficial in conservative communities, where privacy concerns are particularly sensitive. Educators felt that such training would not only help them manage group interactions securely but also reassure learners about the safety of online engagement.
- **Culturally Sensitive Engagement:** Finally, practitioners emphasized the importance of training that focuses on culturally sensitive approaches to digital engagement. In areas with strong social norms or skepticism about social media, educators found that integrating cultural awareness into program design was crucial for promoting acceptance. Training in culturally responsive communication strategies, involving respected community figures, and aligning educational content with local values would help practitioners introduce social media in ways that resonate with learners' cultural expectations.

These identified training needs underscore the value of a holistic approach to social media integration in ALE, one that addresses both technical competencies and cultural sensitivities. By equipping practitioners and learners with these skills, ALE programs can create a more inclusive and effective digital learning environment.

Mixed-Methods Analysis

The mixed-methods approach in this study allows for a comprehensive analysis by integrating quantitative data from surveys with qualitative insights from interviews. This combination offers a nuanced understanding of how ALE practitioners in North Africa use social media, the challenges they encounter, and their specific needs. The following sections present integrated findings and a thematic synthesis of cross-cutting themes.

1. Integrated Findings

The integration of survey and interview data reveals a detailed picture of ALE practitioners' experiences, highlighting both the broader trends and contextual nuances that shape social media use in adult education.

- **Platform Preferences and Usage Patterns:** Survey data indicated that WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube are the most commonly used platforms among ALE practitioners, with WhatsApp leading due to its accessibility and ease of use. The interviews expanded on this by explaining that WhatsApp's voice message feature is particularly valuable for learners with limited literacy, allowing them to participate verbally. Similarly, while survey responses showed that Facebook is widely used, interview insights revealed that practitioners appreciate its community-building features, but they struggle with its social distractions. YouTube's popularity in the survey for skill-building content was elaborated on in interviews, where practitioners explained the practical advantages of video demonstrations in vocational training.
 - **Survey Insight:** 80% of survey respondents use WhatsApp, primarily for group communication and learner engagement.
 - **Interview Insight:** Practitioners value WhatsApp's voice message feature, which is crucial for learners with low literacy, and Facebook's group features, despite distractions.
- **Challenges in Digital Literacy and Accessibility:** Both survey and interview data consistently identified digital literacy as a major barrier for learners and educators alike. Survey data showed that 70% of respondents cited digital literacy as a key challenge, and interviews elaborated on this by describing how low digital literacy impacts both engagement and confidence. For instance, some learners required frequent assistance with basic functions, leading to delays and lowered self-esteem. Practitioners also noted that their own limited digital skills restrict their ability to create varied and interactive content, which in turn impacts learner engagement.
 - **Survey Insight:** 70% of participants identified digital literacy as a primary challenge, affecting engagement.
 - **Interview Insight:** Practitioners described the need for preparatory digital literacy sessions to help learners and educators become comfortable with platform functionalities.
- **Cultural Resistance and Perceptions of Social Media:** Survey results indicated that around 40% of respondents encounter cultural resistance, particularly in conservative communities where social media is often viewed as inappropriate for formal education. The interviews expanded on this by providing specific examples of community attitudes and skepticism. Practitioners working with older or rural learners described the perception that social media is for social or recreational use, not educational purposes. To address this, some educators used culturally sensitive

strategies, such as involving respected community figures to endorse social media's educational value.

- **Survey Insight:** 40% of practitioners reported cultural resistance to social media use in education.
- **Interview Insight:** Educators shared that community endorsements by local leaders help validate social media as a learning tool, making learners more receptive.
- **Training Needs and Comfort Levels:** Survey data indicated that 75% of practitioners expressed a need for further training in digital literacy, content creation, and privacy management. Interviews added depth by detailing specific areas of skill development that practitioners feel would be most beneficial. For instance, educators emphasized the need for training in multimedia content creation (e.g., video editing, graphics) to diversify learning materials. They also identified a need for training in privacy management, particularly in communities where privacy concerns hinder learner participation. This integrated finding reveals that while practitioners recognize the potential of social media, they feel under-equipped to use it effectively.
 - **Survey Insight:** 75% of respondents indicated a need for training in digital skills and privacy management.
 - **Interview Insight:** Practitioners emphasized the importance of multimedia content skills and privacy training, which would enhance their ability to engage learners and address privacy concerns.

These integrated findings reveal a comprehensive picture of how ALE practitioners in North Africa engage with social media, illustrating the alignment between quantitative trends and qualitative experiences.

2. Thematic Synthesis: Cross-Cutting Themes

A thematic synthesis of survey and interview data identified several cross-cutting themes that provide a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in using social media for ALE in North Africa. These themes reflect recurring issues and insights from both data sources, emphasizing the complex dynamics at play.

1. **Adaptation of Social Media for Inclusivity:** Both data sources highlight how practitioners adapt social media platforms to meet the diverse needs of adult learners. For example, WhatsApp's voice messaging feature was repeatedly cited as an inclusive tool for learners with limited literacy, enabling participation without requiring written communication. This theme underscores the importance of accessible features that allow learners from varied educational backgrounds to engage with digital content. It suggests that for ALE programs to succeed, platforms

should be selected based on their ability to accommodate diverse learning styles and literacy levels.

2. **Intersection of Digital Literacy and Learner Confidence:** Digital literacy emerged as a critical factor influencing not only learners' ability to engage with social media but also their confidence in participating. Practitioners reported that learners with low digital skills often feel intimidated, which hinders their willingness to actively participate. This theme illustrates the intersection between technical skills and learner psychology, suggesting that enhancing digital literacy is as much about building confidence as it is about developing technical proficiency. A preparatory digital literacy component could help learners become familiar with platform basics, creating a more supportive and engaging learning environment.
3. **Cultural Perceptions of Social Media in Educational Contexts:** Cultural attitudes toward social media play a significant role in shaping learners' receptiveness to digital learning tools. Both surveys and interviews revealed that in some conservative communities, social media is perceived as a recreational space, leading to resistance when it is introduced as an educational tool. This theme highlights the need for culturally sensitive approaches that align social media-based ALE programs with local values and expectations. The integration of community leaders and respected figures to validate social media as an educational resource demonstrates an effective approach to overcoming this resistance.
4. **Privacy and Security as Essential Components of Digital Literacy:** Privacy concerns were prominent in both data sources, revealing that privacy and security awareness are essential for effective social media use in ALE. Practitioners expressed a need for training that helps them manage privacy settings and reassure learners about the safety of online interactions. This theme indicates that digital literacy training should extend beyond basic skills to include privacy and security protocols, which are especially relevant in conservative communities where data protection is a concern. Addressing these concerns could improve learner engagement by creating a secure and trusted learning environment.
5. **The Need for Continuous Professional Development in Digital Skills:** The survey's finding that 75% of practitioners seek further training in digital skills was echoed in interviews, where educators described specific skill gaps in content creation and platform management. This theme emphasizes the need for continuous professional development to ensure that ALE practitioners can effectively leverage social media. Training in multimedia content creation, privacy management, and digital engagement strategies would empower educators to deliver more interactive and impactful learning experiences, making social media a more valuable tool for ALE.

Case Studies:

These case studies—Tiaret Literacy Program in Algeria, Morocco’s Mosque-Based Literacy Programs, Alpha Nour Literacy App in Morocco, IQRAA Literacy Program in Algeria and Taghyir, ESS through C4D in Tunisia—illustrate the adaptability of digital tools in ALE, highlighting the importance of cultural sensitivity, accessibility, and targeted digital literacy training in implementing digital ALE initiatives.

Tiaret Literacy Program in Algeria

- **Program Overview:** Led by the organization Iqraa and overseen by Algeria's Ministry of Education, the Tiaret Literacy Program addresses high illiteracy rates among rural women, offering both basic literacy and vocational skills training. The program’s structure emphasizes regular, scheduled classes that follow the national academic calendar, ensuring consistency and accessibility for participants.
- **Social Impact and Empowerment:** Beyond reading and writing, the program promotes empowerment, improving participants' self-confidence and engagement in family and community decision-making. This aligns with national objectives to increase gender equality and socio-economic integration for women. Research indicates that literacy programs can significantly impact agency and community participation, aligning with findings by Laaredj-Campbell (2016) on the transformative effects of female literacy in Algeria.
- **Social Media and Digital Outreach:** While social media integration is limited, the program uses platforms like Magharebia and El Watan to increase community awareness and support. However, digital literacy training has not yet been included, which could broaden participants’ access to economic and social resources. The integration of digital literacy is recommended by UNESCO (2022) as a vital component of modern ALE programs to ensure that learners are equipped for full participation in a digital society.
- **Limitations and Recommendations:** The lack of childcare support and the inconsistent delivery of vocational training limit the program’s impact. Additionally, digital literacy training could be integrated to address barriers to technology use, enabling learners to engage with more digital resources and online communities. Research suggests that vocational and digital literacy components can amplify the economic impact of ALE programs by providing practical skills alongside foundational education (GRALE, 2022).

Morocco's Mosque-Based Literacy Programs and Social Media Integration

- **Program Overview:** Morocco's mosque-based literacy programs incorporate social media platforms to reach underserved adult learners, particularly in rural areas. By leveraging digital outreach, these programs address both literacy needs and geographical access issues, especially for women in conservative communities.
- **Expanding Reach and Accessibility:** Using Facebook and YouTube to distribute educational content, the program reaches learners who cannot attend mosque-based classes in person. Social media extends the program's reach, promoting educational equity by reducing geographic barriers, as discussed by Laghzaoui (2017), who emphasizes mosque-based programs' role in expanding educational access in conservative regions.
- **Community Building and Engagement:** Social media fosters a supportive learning environment, allowing learners to communicate, share resources, and seek support from peers. For women in particular, this digital community provides a safe space to pursue literacy and other life skills. The participatory nature of social media aligns with theories of community-based learning, as noted by Lave and Wenger (1991), who argue that social structures in learning communities reinforce engagement and motivation.
- **Promoting Digital Literacy and Lifelong Learning:** By interacting with social media platforms, learners gain exposure to essential digital skills, which are critical for lifelong learning. The program's integration of digital literacy aligns with Morocco's national goals of enhancing adult education and preparing citizens for a more digitally connected world (Laaredj-Campbell, 2016). Digital literacy training could further empower learners by providing them with valuable skills for economic and social engagement, as suggested by Bernsmann and Croll (2013).
- **Cultural Sensitivity in Program Design:** The mosque-based approach respects local religious and cultural norms, increasing program acceptability. This model bridges traditional and modern learning methods, making social media a more socially acceptable tool for education. The culturally adaptive design promotes participation in conservative communities where alternative literacy programs may face resistance, supporting the argument by Laaredj-Campbell (2016) that culturally respectful educational programs foster community acceptance and engagement.

Alpha Nour Literacy App for Functional Literacy in Morocco

- **Overview:** The Alpha Nour app, developed by Morocco's State Secretariat for Handicrafts and Social Economy, targets artisans in Morocco's rural communities, combining functional literacy with vocational skills training. This approach is particularly effective in preparing artisans for the demands of a modern economy by incorporating literacy and numeracy skills relevant to their trade.

- **App Features and Content:** The app offers a range of educational resources, including text-based lessons, videos, interactive exercises, and animated content, catering to different learning preferences. Offline functionality enhances accessibility for users in areas with limited connectivity. Research has shown that mobile-based literacy apps can reduce barriers to education for rural populations, as seen in similar initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa (Mtebe & Raisamo, 2014).
- **Educational Goals and Social Impact:** By focusing on functional literacy, Alpha Nour not only improves artisans' literacy skills but also equips them with practical skills for managing finances, using digital tools, and adapting to technological advancements. This model aligns with Morocco's socio-economic goals, as digital literacy among artisans can foster economic independence and contribute to community development. The World Bank (2021) emphasizes that digital literacy in vocational training is essential for adapting to technological shifts in traditional economies.
- **Limitations and Areas for Improvement:** The primary challenges include digital literacy gaps among older artisans and limited access to smartphones. A supplementary in-person training program could help users engage more effectively with the app's content. Aderinoye et al. (2018) advocate for blended learning approaches, where digital tools are supported by face-to-face instruction to increase accessibility for low-literacy users.

IQRAA Literacy Program and Social Media in Algeria

- **Program Overview:** The IQRAA program in Algeria uses Facebook to provide literacy training and create a community-driven learning environment for rural women. By incorporating social media, IQRAA provides flexible learning opportunities, allowing participants to access resources at convenient times and in accessible formats.
- **Accessible Learning Resources:** IQRAA leverages Facebook to distribute literacy materials, such as reading exercises, videos, and discussions. This flexible format is especially beneficial for women balancing family responsibilities. The program aligns with findings by UNESCO (2022), which highlight social media as an effective medium for adult literacy, especially when participants require flexible schedules.
- **Building Community and Interaction:** IQRAA's use of social media fosters a strong sense of community, providing learners with opportunities for peer support and instructor interaction. This digital support network is crucial for learners who may lack familial support for education, especially in conservative areas. Studies on social media in education support the value of peer interaction in online learning communities, particularly for marginalized groups (Fuchs & Ross, 2020).
- **Cost-Effective and Sustainable:** By reducing reliance on physical infrastructure, IQRAA maintains a scalable and cost-effective model, critical for expanding literacy programs in underfunded or rural areas. Using social media for literacy aligns with findings by Bernsmann and Croll (2013), who emphasize digital platforms' scalability for ALE programs.

- **Digital Literacy Integration:** Involvement in Facebook-based learning provides participants with basic digital skills, preparing them for further digital engagement. However, the program would benefit from more structured digital literacy training to strengthen participants' digital competencies, increasing their ability to navigate a digitalized society. Digital literacy is increasingly recognized as a key component of functional literacy (UNESCO, 2022).
- **Culturally Adaptive Approach:** IQRAA's digital and flexible design respects Algeria's cultural and family norms, making it easier for rural women to participate. This culturally sensitive approach encourages higher engagement, validating Laaredj-Campbell's (2016) assertion that culturally adaptable programs foster acceptance in conservative communities.

Taghyir: Promoting the Social and Solidarity Economy (ESS) through C4D in Tunisia

- Overview

In Tunisia, the social and solidarity economy (ESS) has gained attention as an alternative economic model that emphasizes community-based collaboration, sustainability, and equity. The Taghyir initiative, in collaboration with local stakeholders, utilized Communication for Development (C4D) strategies to support ESS growth through participatory and locally responsive communication efforts. Social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp were integral to this approach, serving as tools to promote ESS activities, foster community engagement, and disseminate information across various regions in Tunisia.

- Program Structure and Implementation

The ESS initiative organized workshops across multiple Tunisian locations, including El Kef and Mornag, which engaged local community members, activists, and organizations. These workshops aimed to develop a participatory communication strategy that addressed local needs and promoted the visibility of ESS projects. Social media was used to share workshop outcomes, document collaborative activities, and connect participants, helping to foster a network of ESS supporters and practitioners.

Each session included practical exercises that involved identifying local needs and potential ESS domains, such as sustainable agriculture, waste management, and local crafts. Social media played a critical role in this process by allowing real-time updates and feedback from remote participants who could not attend in person, thus expanding the reach of ESS advocacy.

- Role of Social Media and Digital Tools

Social media platforms like Facebook served as primary channels for sharing ESS-related content, including video clips and collaborative updates. The initiative also created online groups for continuous engagement, where participants discussed ESS challenges, shared success stories, and collaboratively developed ideas for local projects. These platforms not only increased the program's visibility but also supported informal learning by providing resources on ESS best practices, digital literacy, and the benefits of cooperative models.

In addition, WhatsApp was used for more targeted communication, offering a space for smaller groups to coordinate activities, schedule meetings, and exchange project resources. This integration of social media into the ESS initiative demonstrated its potential to foster collaboration and sustained engagement among geographically dispersed participants.

- Social Impact and Empowerment

The initiative's focus on C4D aimed to make ESS more accessible and meaningful to local communities, particularly in marginalized areas. Social media facilitated knowledge sharing and community solidarity, helping to empower participants by validating their contributions and encouraging local ownership of ESS projects. For example, rural women, who were often limited by social norms, found support and resources through digital platforms, gaining confidence to contribute to ESS initiatives in their communities.

The program's social impact extended beyond economic empowerment, influencing participants' perceptions of digital engagement as a viable tool for community development. Interviews with participants revealed that social media encouraged active civic participation, which they felt enhanced their personal agency in promoting sustainable practices and fostering community well-being.

- Limitations and Challenges

Despite its successes, the ESS initiative faced challenges related to digital literacy and access. Not all participants were accustomed to using social media for educational or collaborative purposes, requiring additional training to effectively engage with these platforms. Internet connectivity issues in remote areas also limited consistent participation, highlighting the need for more robust digital infrastructure to support such initiatives.

Furthermore, cultural resistance to social media in some conservative areas posed a barrier to participation. Older individuals and some community leaders were initially skeptical of using platforms they associated with entertainment rather than educational or developmental purposes. The program addressed these challenges by providing digital literacy workshops and emphasizing social media's role in achieving ESS goals, which helped to gradually shift perceptions.

The Taghyir ESS initiative in Tunisia illustrates how social media, combined with a C4D approach, can be leveraged to promote social and solidarity economies in North Africa. By fostering local engagement, enhancing visibility, and providing digital tools for collaboration, the program demonstrated social media's potential to drive meaningful community-led development. This case underscores the importance of culturally adapted communication strategies and targeted digital training to support the integration of social media in ALE and community-based economic models like ESS in Tunisia.

Analysis and Implications

These case studies highlight the adaptability of digital tools in ALE across North Africa and underscore several critical themes for successful digital integration in adult education.

- **Adaptability and Targeted Training Needs:** Each program adapts its platform based on learner demographics, needs, and local infrastructure. IQRAA and Alpha Nour demonstrate the value of digital literacy training to maximize engagement with online resources. Linked research (Laaredj-Campbell, 2016; UNESCO, 2022) supports targeted training as vital for enhancing learner confidence and competence.
- **Importance of Cultural Sensitivity:** The programs' culturally adaptive designs have increased social acceptance and participation, particularly in conservative areas. Programs that respect local norms can overcome cultural resistance to social media in ALE, echoing findings by Laghzaoui (2017) on the success of culturally respectful literacy initiatives.
- **Platform-Specific Learning and Digital Literacy Development:** IQRAA and Alpha Nour emphasize the need for digital skills alongside literacy, promoting digital inclusivity. This aligns with findings from Fuchs and Ross (2020), who argue that digital literacy is essential for fully realizing the potential of social media in ALE.

Conclusion

These case studies illustrate the role of digital tools in enhancing ALE in North Africa, with each program exemplifying different strategies for integrating social media and digital literacy training. The findings suggest that successful ALE programs incorporate adaptability, cultural sensitivity, and targeted training to address unique learner needs and community contexts. As adult education evolves, these insights are valuable for designing inclusive, sustainable, and culturally respectful digital ALE programs.

Discussion

1. Interpretation of Findings

The findings from this study reveal that social media serves as a valuable, adaptable tool for ALE programs in North Africa, facilitating access to education, fostering community support, and offering flexibility to adult learners with diverse needs. However, the study also highlights key barriers, including digital literacy gaps, cultural resistance, and accessibility limitations, which shape how effectively these platforms are used in ALE.

- **Social Media as an Access Point:** Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and LinkedIn were commonly preferred by ALE practitioners for their wide reach, accessibility, and user-friendly interfaces. The findings show that these platforms provide essential access points for learners who are geographically isolated or otherwise limited in their ability to attend in-person sessions. This aligns with the findings from the mosque-based literacy programs in Morocco, where social media extended learning opportunities to rural communities. Social media's asynchronous communication capabilities also cater to adults who balance learning with work and family responsibilities, as demonstrated by IQRAA's flexible approach with Facebook.
- **Digital Literacy as a Foundational Barrier:** Across case studies, digital literacy emerged as a crucial barrier for both learners and educators, affecting their ability to use social media effectively. The survey and interview data highlighted that limited digital skills impact learners' confidence and willingness to engage with digital tools. This gap is especially pronounced in programs like the Tiaret Literacy Program, where participants have little prior exposure to technology. For effective integration, the findings underscore the need for foundational digital literacy training as a prerequisite to using social media for education.
- **Cultural Sensitivity and Acceptance:** The study's findings emphasize the importance of cultural sensitivity in ALE, particularly in conservative communities where social media is viewed with skepticism. Programs like Morocco's mosque-based literacy initiatives and IQRAA in Algeria have achieved success by aligning their approaches

with local values and norms, using trusted community figures and culturally sensitive content to foster acceptance. This illustrates that social media's effectiveness in ALE is partly contingent on its alignment with learners' cultural contexts, which can greatly influence participation and engagement.

2. Implications for ALE Practitioners

Based on the findings, several practical recommendations can guide ALE practitioners in North Africa toward more effective social media integration.

- **Implement Digital Literacy Training:** Given that digital literacy barriers significantly impact learners' engagement, ALE programs should incorporate preliminary digital literacy training. This foundational training would focus on essential skills like app navigation, setting up profiles, and privacy management, equipping learners to engage confidently with digital content. For practitioners, further training in content creation and platform management would enable more effective use of multimedia tools, enhancing learner engagement.
- **Leverage Platform-Specific Features:** Each social media platform offers unique features that cater to different educational needs. WhatsApp's voice messaging can support learners with limited literacy, while Facebook groups facilitate community-building and resource sharing. Practitioners should align their content and strategies with the strengths of each platform to maximize engagement. Training programs for ALE educators should include platform-specific modules, enabling them to harness each platform's potential fully.
- **Foster Community and Peer Support:** Creating an online community that allows learners to connect with peers and instructors can enhance engagement and motivation. Findings from IQRAA and the mosque-based programs in Morocco demonstrate the value of social media as a hub for interaction and support. Practitioners should focus on establishing clear group norms, setting learning goals, and fostering a supportive environment that encourages learners to participate, ask questions, and share experiences.
- **Adopt Culturally Sensitive Approaches:** Practitioners should be mindful of local cultural attitudes toward social media. Programs like IQRAA have benefited from involving community leaders and designing content that respects traditional values, which builds trust and encourages participation. ALE practitioners can improve acceptance by incorporating cultural elements and enlisting respected figures within the community to endorse digital learning.

3. Alignment with Literature

The findings align closely with existing literature on ALE and social media use, reinforcing key themes identified in previous studies while adding contextual insights specific to North Africa.

- **Role of Social Media in Expanding Educational Access:** The literature emphasizes social media's role in extending educational access to underserved populations (Mtebe & Raisamo, 2014). This study confirms this finding, with platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook providing critical access points for rural learners. Research by Fuchs and Ross (2020) similarly highlights that social media's cost-effective, scalable nature makes it suitable for large-scale education delivery, which is particularly relevant in resource-limited settings like North Africa.
- **Digital Literacy as Essential for Effective Social Media Integration:** The importance of digital literacy in leveraging social media for education is well-documented (UNESCO, 2022). The current study's findings reinforce this theme, showing that digital literacy barriers affect both learners and educators, limiting engagement and platform use. Practitioners in programs like Alpha Nour noted that digital skills gaps hinder learners' ability to fully utilize educational apps, echoing UNESCO's call for foundational digital literacy to be part of ALE initiatives.
- **Cultural Sensitivity as a Key Factor in Program Acceptance:** This study's findings align with Laaredj-Campbell (2016) and Laghzaoui (2017), who argue that culturally respectful ALE programs are more likely to gain acceptance and participation. Programs like Morocco's mosque-based literacy initiatives and IQRAA in Algeria illustrate that integrating cultural values with digital literacy efforts can bridge the gap between traditional norms and modern educational methods, building community trust in social media as a viable learning tool.
- **Platform-Specific Learning and Digital Literacy Development:** In alignment with findings from Bernsmann and Croll (2013), this study demonstrates the value of digital skills development within ALE programs. Exposure to social media in programs like IQRAA helps learners build basic digital competencies, which can support further educational and economic engagement. This supports existing arguments that social media, when integrated thoughtfully, serves as both a literacy tool and a stepping stone toward broader digital skills, essential for economic participation in a digitalized world.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide a detailed understanding of the role of social media in ALE in North Africa. Social media offers significant potential to improve educational access, foster supportive learning communities, and enhance learner engagement. However, realizing this potential requires targeted digital literacy training, culturally sensitive

approaches, and a deep understanding of platform-specific strengths. By implementing these strategies, ALE practitioners can leverage social media to create inclusive, adaptable, and impactful educational experiences, contributing to North Africa's broader goals of socio-economic development and literacy improvement.

Recommendations

The findings underscore the potential of social media to bridge educational access gaps, foster community-based learning, and provide culturally adaptive tools in ALE across North Africa. However, successful integration requires targeted interventions at multiple levels: practitioner training, advocacy support, and further research. These recommendations draw on key insights from the analysis and align with academic frameworks in ALE and digital literacy.

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Advocacy and Practice Recommendations

Prioritize Digital Literacy as a Core Component of ALE

- **Advocacy Justification:** Digital literacy is an essential skill in modern education and employment, helping to bridge North Africa's digital divide (UNESCO, 2022).
- **Advocacy Action:** MOJA and other stakeholders should advocate for funding initiatives to integrate digital literacy into national ALE programs. Partnerships with local organizations can ensure these efforts reach marginalized communities.
- **Impact:** Widespread digital literacy enables equitable access to online resources, empowering learners to engage with socio-economic opportunities.

Encourage Culturally Adaptive Program Models in ALE

- **Advocacy Justification:** Culturally respectful programs foster trust and higher participation rates, particularly in conservative communities (Laaredj-Campbell, 2016; Laghzaoui, 2017).
- **Advocacy Action:** Advocate for ALE programs to engage community leaders and tailor content to reflect local traditions and values.

- **Impact:** Enhances learner retention and creates an inclusive environment where participants feel respected and valued.

Support Public-Private Partnerships for Digital Access

- **Advocacy Justification:** Limited resources and access hinder digital ALE initiatives in underserved regions (World Bank, 2021).
- **Advocacy Action:** Facilitate partnerships with tech companies and NGOs to provide affordable devices, internet access, and digital literacy training. Examples include free Wi-Fi zones, subsidized device programs, and community-based workshops.
- **Impact:** Expands digital inclusion and enables broader participation in ALE programs across the region.

Promote Professional Development for ALE Practitioners

- **Advocacy Justification:** Practitioners' digital skills are critical to the success of social media-based ALE programs (Fuchs & Ross, 2020).
- **Advocacy Action:** Advocate for continuous professional development programs, including certifications that recognize digital skill acquisition and innovative teaching strategies.
- **Impact:** Builds practitioner capacity to deliver engaging, learner-centered content, improving program effectiveness.

Advocate for Hybrid Learning Models in ALE

- **Advocacy Justification:** Blending digital and face-to-face instruction accommodates diverse learner needs (Aderinoye et al., 2018).
- **Advocacy Action:** Encourage funding bodies to prioritize hybrid learning models that integrate social media with traditional methods.
- **Impact:** Increases accessibility and engagement, particularly for adults balancing work, family, and education.

To effectively address the digital literacy gaps, platform-specific needs, and cultural considerations identified in the study, the training curriculum is divided into three distinct tracks: for **practitioners, educators, and learners**. Each track focuses on equipping its target audience with role-specific skills to optimize their engagement with ALE programs through social media.

Modules for Practitioners

Module 1: Digital Literacy Foundations

- **Objective:** Build foundational digital competencies for practitioners to lead digital learning initiatives confidently.
- **Content:**
 1. Introduction to digital tools commonly used in North Africa (mobile devices, basic apps).
 2. Navigating social media platforms, with a focus on WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube.
 3. Privacy and data security basics: How to manage group settings, protect user data, and address privacy concerns.
 4. Overcoming digital trust issues in conservative communities.
- **Methodology:** Interactive workshops with live demonstrations and guided practice.
- **Outcome:** Practitioners gain confidence in using digital tools and understanding privacy settings to foster learner trust.

Module 2: Platform-Specific Skills and Multimedia Content Creation

- **Objective:** Equip practitioners with platform-specific skills and content creation techniques.
- **Content:**
 1. Tutorials on platform features:
 - WhatsApp: Using voice messaging, group chats, and media sharing for educational purposes.
 - Facebook: Managing groups, creating events, and using polls for interaction.
 - YouTube: Producing and curating instructional videos.
 2. Multimedia content creation: Designing visually engaging infographics, short videos, and digital posters.
 3. Group management: Moderating discussions and resolving conflicts in online spaces.
- **Methodology:** Hands-on sessions with assignments to create sample content.

- **Outcome:** Practitioners can design engaging, interactive, and well-moderated digital learning experiences.

Module 3: Culturally Sensitive Communication and Program Design

- **Objective:** Develop skills to create culturally respectful programs that foster trust and participation.
- **Content:**
 1. Identifying cultural norms and sensitivities relevant to learners.
 2. Strategies for engaging community leaders and local influencers.
 3. Adapting content to regional languages and cultural contexts.
 4. Case studies of successful culturally adaptive programs in North Africa.
- **Methodology:** Group discussions, case study analyses, and scenario-based problem solving.
- **Outcome:** Practitioners gain tools to design culturally inclusive programs, improving learner retention and satisfaction.

Modules for Educators

Module 1: Teaching Effectively with Social Media

- **Objective:** Provide educators with methods to integrate social media into their teaching practices.
- **Content:**
 1. Aligning social media tools with pedagogical goals.
 2. Designing interactive learning activities using social media features (e.g., polls, live sessions, and group chats).
 3. Providing feedback and assessments through digital platforms.
- **Methodology:** Simulation exercises and peer-to-peer learning activities.
- **Outcome:** Educators develop practical skills to enhance student engagement through social media.

Module 2: Implementing Hybrid Learning Models

- **Objective:** Equip educators with strategies to blend online and face-to-face instruction effectively.
- **Content:**
 1. Structuring hybrid programs: When to use online tools versus in-person methods.
 2. Best practices for maintaining learner engagement in hybrid settings.
 3. Tools for tracking progress and participation in both modes.

- **Methodology:** Practical guides and template-based exercises for hybrid program design.
- **Outcome:** Educators can balance flexibility with personalized interaction, increasing learning outcomes.

Module 3: Retention and Motivation Strategies

- **Objective:** Provide strategies to sustain learner engagement and reduce dropout rates.
- **Content:**
 1. Gamification techniques: Creating quizzes, badges, and interactive challenges.
 2. Peer-to-peer learning: Setting up collaborative projects.
 3. Personalized learning approaches to address diverse learner needs.
- **Methodology:** Case study reviews and project-based learning.
- **Outcome:** Educators can create motivating environments that encourage sustained participation.

Modules for Learners

Module 1: Digital Literacy Basics

- **Objective:** Build foundational skills for learners to access and use digital learning tools.
- **Content:**
 1. How to set up and navigate social media accounts safely.
 2. Using mobile devices for learning: Downloading apps, joining groups, and accessing materials.
 3. Basic troubleshooting skills for common technical issues.
- **Methodology:** Step-by-step demonstrations with hands-on practice.
- **Outcome:** Learners feel confident using digital tools to participate in ALE programs.

Module 2: Critical Thinking and Digital Citizenship

- **Objective:** Develop critical thinking skills and responsible digital behavior.
- **Content:**
 1. Identifying credible information sources and avoiding misinformation.
 2. Understanding data privacy: Protecting personal information online.
 3. Practicing respectful communication in online spaces.
- **Methodology:** Interactive quizzes and role-playing exercises.
- **Outcome:** Learners are empowered to make informed decisions and contribute positively in digital environments.

Module 3: Applying Digital Skills in Daily Life

- **Objective:** Help learners apply digital skills to vocational and personal contexts.
- **Content:**
 1. Using digital tools for job searching and professional networking.
 2. Managing finances through online platforms (e.g., e-wallets, banking apps).
 3. Leveraging digital resources for personal development (e.g., online courses).
- **Methodology:** Practical assignments tailored to learners' goals.
- **Outcome:** Learners gain functional digital skills that enhance their employability and personal growth.

Implementation Strategy

1. **Phased Rollout:** Begin with practitioners and educators to build foundational capacity, followed by targeted learner training.
2. **Localized Adaptation:** Tailor modules to reflect regional contexts and community needs.
3. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Use feedback surveys, progress tracking, and case studies to measure the effectiveness of each module.

Conclusion:

This study provides an in-depth examination of social media's role in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) within North Africa, investigating how digital platforms can help bridge gaps in access, build learning communities, and offer flexible solutions for adult learners. By employing a mixed-methods approach, combining survey data with semi-structured interviews, the research highlighted both the opportunities and the barriers associated with using social media in ALE. These insights illuminate the specific conditions and cultural dynamics that influence the effectiveness of social media-based education in this region.

Summary of Key Findings

The study found that social media can significantly enhance ALE by reaching learners in remote or underserved areas, providing an accessible and familiar format for adult education. Platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and LinkedIn were identified as valuable tools, each offering unique benefits: WhatsApp's messaging and voice features are particularly helpful for rural and low-literacy learners; Facebook's group functions foster community and peer support; and LinkedIn connects adult learners with professional opportunities. Yet, the findings also revealed that effective integration of social media in ALE is contingent upon addressing digital literacy gaps, infrastructural limitations, and the need for culturally respectful approaches. These elements are essential for ensuring that social media-based ALE programs are inclusive and resonate with learners from diverse backgrounds.

Practical Implications

To address these challenges, this study provided detailed recommendations, including specific training modules for both learners and practitioners, policy recommendations for more inclusive ALE strategies, and the promotion of public-private partnerships to enhance digital access. For ALE practitioners, platform-specific training and culturally sensitive program design emerged as critical components for increasing learner engagement and reducing cultural resistance. For policymakers, the findings support the importance of digital literacy as a foundational skill in ALE, along with the need to formalize digital learning within ALE curricula and prioritize hybrid models that blend online and face-to-face instruction.

Contributions to Literature

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on digital tools in ALE by providing regionally specific insights into the use of social media in North African contexts. While previous studies have emphasized social media's role in extending educational access and fostering collaborative learning (UNESCO, 2022; Mtebe & Raisamo, 2014), this study adds depth by examining how social media platforms can be adapted to meet the unique

socio-cultural and infrastructural needs of adult learners in North Africa. Additionally, it highlights the critical role of cultural sensitivity, demonstrating that acceptance and engagement in ALE programs can be significantly improved when digital tools are integrated with consideration for local traditions and values.

Future Research Directions

This study establishes an exploratory foundation for future research on social media in ALE, identifying several avenues for further investigation. Longitudinal studies are needed to assess the lasting impacts of social media-based ALE on literacy levels, vocational outcomes, and social empowerment. Additionally, comparative studies across diverse cultural settings within North Africa would provide a nuanced understanding of how social media can be tailored to meet varied learner needs across rural, urban, and semi-urban populations. Hybrid learning models that combine digital and in-person components also warrant further exploration, as they may offer optimal engagement strategies for learners with differing preferences and resources.

Conclusion

In sum, this study demonstrates that social media holds significant potential for advancing ALE in North Africa, offering accessible, flexible, and community-centered pathways for adult learning. However, realizing this potential requires careful attention to digital literacy training, platform-specific adaptation, and cultural alignment. By building on these initial findings, future research can deepen understanding and refine approaches, ultimately contributing to more inclusive, impactful ALE programs across North Africa. As ALE evolves in the digital age, these insights provide a crucial roadmap for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers working to make adult education more accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of North African communities.

This study explored the integration of social media in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) across North Africa, with a focus on its potential to increase educational access, foster community engagement, and provide flexible learning opportunities. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research uncovered insights into platform preferences, digital literacy needs, and the cultural sensitivities that influence social media's effectiveness in ALE.

The findings demonstrate that social media can play a transformative role in ALE, especially for remote or marginalized communities. Platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and LinkedIn provide accessible, low-cost options that enable learners to participate regardless of physical or socio-economic barriers. These platforms not only facilitate the distribution of educational content but also support collaborative, community-based learning environments, which are essential for adult learners who thrive in supportive social networks.

However, the study also identified challenges that must be addressed to fully realize social media's potential in ALE. Key barriers include significant digital literacy gaps among both learners and educators, infrastructural limitations in rural areas, and cultural resistance to social media as a learning tool, particularly in conservative settings. To address these issues, the study recommends a set of targeted training modules for digital and cultural competencies, as well as policy initiatives that support digital literacy and cultural adaptability in ALE programs. Policymakers and ALE practitioners should also explore partnerships with technology providers to reduce infrastructure constraints, offering more equitable access to digital learning resources.

Moreover, as AI technology rapidly advances, future research and program design should consider its applications within ALE. AI-driven tools, such as adaptive learning platforms, natural language processing (NLP) for language translation, and AI-supported data analysis, could enhance the personalization and effectiveness of ALE programs. For example:

Personalized Learning: AI algorithms can analyze learner progress and adapt educational content to each individual's pace, skill level, and preferences. This would allow ALE programs to provide more customized experiences, addressing the diverse learning needs often seen in adult education. Personalized AI-driven pathways could be particularly impactful for adult learners balancing work, family, and education.

Natural Language Processing for Inclusivity: NLP tools could translate educational materials into local dialects and languages, making content more accessible to diverse populations. AI-powered chatbots can also support learners by answering questions and offering real-time assistance in a variety of languages, which is especially beneficial for learners with low literacy levels or those unfamiliar with formal education structures.

Data-Driven Insights for Program Improvement: AI-based analytics can provide ALE organizations with deeper insights into learner engagement, content effectiveness, and completion rates. By analyzing user data, ALE practitioners can refine program content, identify areas where learners struggle, and make informed adjustments to enhance program effectiveness. For instance, AI analytics could reveal that certain modules require additional digital literacy support, prompting ALE providers to modify their content accordingly.

Incorporating AI into ALE would bring unique benefits, yet it also raises challenges related to ethical considerations, data privacy, and the need for AI literacy among practitioners and learners. As such, future research should investigate the feasibility, benefits, and risks associated with AI in ALE, considering its alignment with digital equity and ethical use in educational contexts.

As an exploratory study, this research serves as a foundation for further investigations into digital ALE, particularly in North African contexts. By building on these findings, future studies can explore how social media and AI can be leveraged to create ALE programs that

are accessible, adaptive, and culturally resonant. Through sustained inquiry and innovation, ALE practitioners and researchers can develop digital solutions that empower adult learners, bridging literacy gaps and fostering socio-economic growth in North Africa and beyond.

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Appendices

Semi-Structured Interviews Consent and Guide:

Title of the Study / Titre de l'étude / عنوان الدراسة:

Exploring Social Media Use in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) in North Africa

Exploration de l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux dans l'apprentissage et éducation des adultes (AEA) en Afrique du Nord

استكشاف استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعليم الكبار في شمال إفريقيا

Purpose of the Study / Objet de l'étude / الغرض من الدراسة:

This research study aims to explore how social media is used in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) across North Africa. The interview will focus on your experiences with social media in ALE, including challenges, platform preferences, and training needs.

Cette étude de recherche vise à explorer comment les réseaux sociaux sont utilisés dans l'apprentissage et éducation des adultes (AEA) en Afrique du Nord. L'entretien portera sur vos expériences avec les réseaux sociaux dans l'AEA, y compris les défis, les préférences de plateformes et les besoins en formation.

تهدف هذه الدراسة البحثية إلى استكشاف كيفية استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعليم الكبار في شمال إفريقيا. ، بما في ذلك التحديات وتفضيلات المنصات ALE مركز المقابلة على تجاربك مع وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في واحتياجات التدريب.

Procedures / Procédures / الإجراءات:

If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed for approximately **45-60 minutes**. Your responses will provide in-depth insights into how ALE professionals use social media in their work.

Si vous acceptez de participer, vous serez interrogé pendant environ **45-60 minutes**. Vos réponses fourniront des informations approfondies sur la manière dont les professionnels de l'AEA utilisent les réseaux sociaux dans leur travail.

إذا وافقت على المشاركة، ستستمر المقابلة لمدة 45-60 دقيقة تقريبًا. ستوفر إجاباتك رؤى متعمقة حول كيفية استخدام المهنيين في تعليم الكبار لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في عملهم.

Voluntary Participation / Participation volontaire / المشاركة طوعية:

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw from the interview at any time without penalty.

Votre participation est entièrement volontaire, et vous pouvez choisir de vous retirer de l'entretien à tout moment sans pénalité.

مشاركتك طوعية بالكامل، ويمكنك اختيار الانسحاب من المقابلة في أي وقت دون عقوبة.

Confidentiality / Confidentialité / السرية:

All information shared during the interview will be kept confidential. Any published reports will not include identifying information unless you give explicit consent.

Toutes les informations partagées au cours de l'entretien resteront confidentielles. Aucun rapport publié n'inclura d'informations identifiantes à moins que vous ne donniez votre consentement explicite.

ستظل جميع المعلومات التي تتم مشاركتها أثناء المقابلة سرية. لن تتضمن أي تقارير منشورة معلومات تعريفية إلا إذا أعطيت موافقتك الصريحة.

Right to Withdraw / Droit de retrait / الحق في الانسحاب:

Even after the interview has been conducted, you have the right to request that your responses be excluded from the study.

Même après la réalisation de l'entretien, vous avez le droit de demander que vos réponses soient exclues de l'étude.

حتى بعد إجراء المقابلة، لديك الحق في طلب استبعاد ردودك من الدراسة.

Contact Information / Informations de contact / معلومات الاتصال:

For any questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact the research team at.

Pour toute question concernant cette étude, n'hésitez pas à contacter l'équipe de recherche.

لأي استفسارات تتعلق بهذه الدراسة، يرجى الاتصال بفريق البحث.

Agreement / Accord / الموافقة:

By signing below, you acknowledge that you understand the purpose of the study and agree to participate in the interview.

En signant ci-dessous, vous reconnaissez comprendre le but de l'étude et acceptez de participer à l'entretien.

بالتوقيع أدناه، فإنك تقر بأنك تفهم الغرض من الدراسة وتوافق على المشاركة في المقابلة.

- Name / Nom / الاسم:
- Signature / Signature / التوقيع:
- Date / Date / التاريخ:

Section 1:

English:

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and describe your role in Adult Learning and Education (ALE)?
2. How long have you been working in ALE, and what are your main responsibilities?

French:

1. Pouvez-vous vous présenter brièvement et décrire votre rôle dans l'apprentissage et éducation des adultes (AEA) ?
2. Depuis combien de temps travaillez-vous dans l'AEA, et quelles sont vos principales responsabilités ?

Arabic:

1. هل يمكنك تقديم نفسك بإيجاز ووصف دورك في تعليم الكبار؟
2. منذ متى وأنت تعمل في مجال تعليم الكبار وما هي مسؤولياتك الرئيسية؟

Section 2: Social Media Usage

English:

3. Can you share a specific example of how you have used social media for ALE purposes?
 - Which platforms did you use?

- Why did you choose these platforms?
 - What were the goals of the project, and how did social media help you achieve them?
4. How frequently do you use social media in your daily or weekly work?

French:

3. Pouvez-vous donner un exemple spécifique de la manière dont vous avez utilisé les réseaux sociaux à des fins d'AEA?

- Quelles plateformes avez-vous utilisées ?
 - Pourquoi avez-vous choisi ces plateformes ?
 - Quels étaient les objectifs du projet, et comment les réseaux sociaux vous ont-ils aidé à les atteindre ?
4. À quelle fréquence utilisez-vous les réseaux sociaux dans votre travail quotidien ou hebdomadaire ?

Arabic:

3. هل يمكنك تقديم مثال محدد عن كيفية استخدامك لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأغراض تعليم الكبار؟

- ما هي المنصات التي استخدمتها؟
 - لماذا اخترت هذه المنصات؟
 - ما هي أهداف المشروع وكيف ساعدتك وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تحقيقها؟
4. كم مرة تستخدم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في عملك اليومي أو الأسبوعي؟

Section 3: Challenges and Barriers

English:

5. What are the main challenges or barriers you have faced when trying to integrate social media into ALE?

- Have you encountered technical or cultural barriers?
6. How have you addressed or overcome these challenges?

French:

5. Quels sont les principaux défis ou obstacles que vous avez rencontrés en essayant d'intégrer les réseaux sociaux dans l'AEA ?

- Avez-vous rencontré des obstacles techniques ou culturels ?
6. Comment avez-vous surmonté ces défis ?

Arabic:

5. ما هي التحديات أو العقبات الرئيسية التي واجهتها عند محاولة دمج وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعليم الكبار؟

- هل واجهت عقبات تقنية أو ثقافية؟

6. كيف تعاملت مع هذه التحديات أو تغلبت عليها؟

Section 4: Comfort and Training

English:

7. How comfortable do you feel using social media for educational purposes?

- Are there specific factors that affect your comfort level?
- 8. Have you received any training on using social media in ALE?
 - If so, what kind of training did you receive?
 - How did the training influence your ability to use social media effectively?
- 9. Would you be open to additional training on social media use?

French:

7. À quel point vous sentez-vous à l'aise avec l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux à des fins éducatives ?

- Y a-t-il des facteurs spécifiques qui influencent votre niveau de confort ?
- 8. Avez-vous reçu une formation sur l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux dans l'AEA ?
 - Si oui, quel type de formation avez-vous reçu ?
 - Comment la formation a-t-elle influencé votre capacité à utiliser les réseaux sociaux de manière efficace ?
- 9. Seriez-vous ouvert à une formation supplémentaire sur l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux ?

Arabic:

7. ما مدى ارتياحك لاستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأغراض تعليمية؟

- هل هناك عوامل محددة تؤثر على مستوى راحتك؟
- 8. هل تلقيت أي تدريب على استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعليم الكبار؟
 - إذا كانت الإجابة نعم، فما نوع التدريب الذي تلقيته؟
 - كيف أثر التدريب على قدرتك على استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بفعالية؟
- 9. هل أنت منفتح على تدريب إضافي حول استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟

Section 5: Final Thoughts

English:

10. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience using social media in ALE that we haven't covered?

French:

10. Y a-t-il autre chose que vous aimeriez partager sur votre expérience d'utilisation des réseaux sociaux dans l'AEA que nous n'avons pas abordée ?

Arabic:

10. هل هناك أي شيء آخر ترغب في مشاركته حول تجربتك في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في تعليم الكبار لم نناقشه؟

Survey Data Structure:

1. **Title of the Study / Titre de l'étude / عنوان الدراسة:** "Exploring Social Media Use in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) in North Africa".
2. **Purpose of the Study / Objet de l'étude / الغرض من الدراسة:** To explore how social media is used in ALE across North Africa, focusing on challenges and training needs.
3. **Procedures / Procédures / الإجراءات:** Describes how long the survey will take and the purpose of collecting insights.
4. **Voluntary Participation / Participation volontaire / المشاركة طوعية:** Noting that participation is voluntary and participants can exit anytime without penalty.
5. **Confidentiality / Confidentialité / السرية:** Assurance that responses will remain confidential and be used solely for research.
6. **Right to Withdraw / Droit de retrait / الحق في الانسحاب:** Participants can withdraw at any time without their data being used.
7. **Contact Information / Informations de contact / معلومات الاتصال:** Contact details for inquiries about the study.
8. **Agreement / Accord / الموافقة:** Acknowledgment and consent to participate understanding the study's purpose.
9. **Name / Nom / الاسم:** Respondent's name.
10. **I am / Je suis / أنا:** Respondent self-identification.
11. **What is your age group? / Quelle est votre tranche d'âge ? / ما هي الفئة العمرية الخاصة بك؟**
12. **Which North African country do you primarily work in? / Dans quel pays d'Afrique du Nord travaillez-vous principalement ? / في أي بلد في شمال إفريقيا تعمل بشكل أساسي؟**
13. **What is your role in Adult Learning and Education (ALE)? / Quel est votre rôle dans l'apprentissage et éducation des adultes (AEA)? / ما هو دورك في تعليم الكبار (ALE)؟**
14. **How many years have you been involved in ALE? / Depuis combien d'années travaillez-vous dans l'AEA? / ALE منذ متى وأنت تعمل في مجال؟**
15. **Which social media platforms do you use for ALE? / Quels réseaux sociaux utilisez-vous pour l'AEA ? / ما هي منصات التواصل الاجتماعي التي تستخدمها لـ ALE؟**

16. How often do you use social media for educational purposes? / À quelle fréquence utilisez-vous les réseaux sociaux à des fins éducatives ? / كم مرة تستخدم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأغراض تعليمية؟
17. Can you provide an example of a specific project or initiative where social media was used in your ALE work? / Pouvez-vous fournir un exemple d'un projet ou d'une initiative spécifique où les réseaux sociaux ont été utilisés dans votre travail AEA ? / هل يمكنك تقديم مثال على مشروع أو مبادرة محددة تم فيها استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في عملك ALE؟
18. What challenges or barriers have you encountered when using social media for educational purposes? / Quels défis ou obstacles avez-vous rencontrés lors de l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux à des fins éducatives ? / ما هي التحديات أو العقبات التي واجهتها عند استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأغراض تعليمية؟
19. How comfortable are you using social media for ALE purposes? / Quel est votre niveau de confort avec l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux à des fins éducatives ? / ما مدى ارتياحك لاستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأغراض ALE؟
20. Have you received training on how to use social media for educational purposes? / Avez-vous reçu une formation sur l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux à des fins éducatives ? / هل تلقيت تدريبًا على كيفية استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأغراض تعليمية؟
21. If yes, how has this training influenced your approach to using social media? / Si oui, comment cette formation a-t-elle influencé votre approche de l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux ? / إذا كانت الإجابة نعم، كيف أثر هذا التدريب على نهجك في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟
22. Are you interested in receiving additional training on social media for educational purposes? / Seriez-vous intéressé par une formation supplémentaire sur l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux à des fins éducatives ? / هل ترغب في تلقي تدريب إضافي حول استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأغراض تعليمية؟

Interview Protocol for Use of Social Media in ALE

Before the Interview:

1. Preparation:
 - Ensure you understand the flow of the interview.
 - Review the semi-structured interview guide.
 - Prepare to adapt the conversation based on participant responses.
2. Consent and Recording:
 - Confirm participant's consent to participate and be recorded (if applicable).

During the Interview:

1. Introduction:
 - Introduce yourself and the purpose of the study.
 - Confirm the participant's comfort with the interview process.

2. Guide the Conversation:
 - Follow the interview guide while probing further into the **rationale for using social media**, cognitive/affective experiences, and real-world use cases.
3. Probing Techniques:
 - Use prompts such as: "Can you expand on that?" or "Why do you think that's the case?" to encourage deeper responses.

After the Interview:

1. Debrief:
 - Thank the participant for their time and insights.
 - Confirm their willingness to receive updates on the study results.
2. Post-Interview Reflection:
 - Review your notes and ensure that all key points were covered.
 - Store all data securely, maintaining participant anonymity.