

Media Technology and Adult Learning

Evelyn Olusanya, PhD*

Department of Age Grade and Family Education, Faculty of Religious Education, Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho

Received: 12/08/2026

Accepted: 14/09/2026

Published: 28/09/2026

Abstract: This work examines the relationship between media technology and adult learning, arguing that the growing population of adult learners in higher education requires instructors to rethink traditional, instructor-centered teaching methods. It defines adult learning as a voluntary, self-directed process and describes adult learners as diverse, experienced, goal-oriented individuals with unique socio-economic and developmental characteristics. The chapter conceptualizes media technology as digital and internet-enabled communication tools, such as social networking sites, mobile devices, blogs, wikis, and video streaming, and examines three platforms for integrating it into adult education: onsite, blended, and online. It further discusses synchronous and asynchronous online delivery and the use of print and multimedia materials. The benefits identified include improved learning outcomes, greater flexibility and access regardless of time or location, enhanced collaboration and interaction, and stronger support for self-directed and andragogical learning. The work concludes that effective integration of media technology extends learning beyond formal programmes and creates more flexible, collaborative, and learner-centered opportunities for adult learners.

Keywords: adult learning, media technology, andragogy, blended learning, online learning, instructional technology

Cite this article: Olusanya, E. (2026). Media Technology and Adult Learning. *MRS Journal of Arts, Humanities and Literature*, 3(9), 72-75.

Introduction

It has been observed that the population of adult learners in various institutions of higher education is on the increase. Often, these adult learners bring with them experiences and expectations that has significant effect on their educational needs, progress and activity to the classroom. It has also been observed from various review of literature that instructors in higher educational contexts need to review their current teaching methodologies in light of the increase in enrollment of these types of learners. The instructor centered approaches that is more common in many higher institutions of learning tend to be little or less effective in meeting the needs of adult learners. Additionally, there is need for educators to change their perceptions about the presence and utilization of instructional technologies in meeting the needs of students, particularly those of adult learners. Instructors must consider how effective technology integration can influence the development and application of andragogy in the classroom to assist adult learners, which is the crux of this paper.

This paper therefore provides a nexus between adult learning and media technology. It provides a discourse on the various platforms that is used for integrating media technology in adult learning, and the benefit of the integration of media technology in adult learning as well as providing a definition for the concept of adult learner.

Concept of Adult Learning

Adult learning is a voluntary learning which involves both formal, non-formal and informal activities for the purpose of personal growth or to respond to a need. Knowles affirms that adult learning is self-directed. By self-directed it means it is a process

through which the learning needs of the people are identified, goals are set, selection of how and what they want to learn, gathering of materials and evaluation of progress. Further, adult learning is considered to be practical and experiential in nature. These means individuals in these categories are vast in experiences and uses these experiences in the learning situation (Knowles 1980, 53).

In the context of this work adult learners are made up of different groups of individuals who belongs different genders, caste, class, religion, culture, region, majority or minority groups, creed, and race amongst many others. These categories of people vary in their needs, problems, requirement, attitudes and outlooks towards life issues. They are people who have goals and objectives which they want to achieve in life and it is for this reason that they are motivated and enroll in school to achieve their dreams. They are individual who are vast in wealth of experience and knowledge which they have acquired from their environment and life's experience. They bring to learning situation their opinions, views, values and beliefs which defines exactly who they are. Take for instance, when adults discover that possessing knowledge in the skills of computer will help them to carry out their task effectively, they will enroll in a computer literacy class to possess all adequate skills and ability.

Hence, adult learners have the target to be fulfilled and to derive personal satisfaction in what they are pursuing. Adult learners are individual who are unique in nature. What make them different from children and youths is their socio-economic roles and developmental stages. Gravett (2001, 6-7) opines that all adults do not have the attributes or abilities that are ascribed to adulthood. However, there are certain general qualities that are common to all adult. These are: age, social status, and educational background.

Copyright © 2026 The Author(s): This open-access article is distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting non-commercial use, sharing, and reproduction with proper credit to the author(s) and source.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that each adult is a unique being and each has different characteristics to learning situation that makes them different from the other.

Nnamani (2014, 933) explains that there are certain characteristics that can be used to describe who an adult is. These include maturation, measuring in terms of the socio-economic status of the individual and locally by the opportunity to be involved within an age grade masquerade cult, puberty rites and initiation into manhood/womanhood. Therefore, in the context of this paper, this writer defines adult learner as individuals who engage in educational activities beyond traditional school ages, typically over the age of 18. These individuals can be described as self-directed, goal-oriented, and often have specific reasons for pursuing further education, such as career advancement, personal growth, or intellectual curiosity.

Overview of Media Technology

Divergent authors have made several attempts to define the concept of media technology, but it has generated different opinions among scholars in the past. The concept of media is viewed as a means of communication from the sender down to the receiver to raise the learners' curiosity and inspire them to desire to learn (Sukmahidayanti 2015, 92). Also, Cosmas, Cuthbert and Chindedza (2020, 126) views media as a channel through which information is passed from the teacher to the students to improve the learner's learning ability. Hence, media can be defined as a channel of communication through which messages are transmitted with the instructional purpose of learning and teaching. Any educational experiences that must involve the active participation of the learners and maintain a more extended concrete experience in a classroom setting rather than abstract experiences involve the use of media technology tools.

In defining the concept of media technology, Abbaszadh, Aggdam and Leila (2019, 4), state that media technology is understood as a new digital communication technology that makes use of the Internet and broadband networks that are fast and have high-capacity data services; involves the use of advanced telecommunications networks (offering services such as caller ID, digital mobile phones, third-generation mobile telecommunications, video telephones), and also the use of digital broadcasting such as digital television. Similarly, Igyuve, Inobemhe, Udeh, and Ugberthe (2020, 255) believe that media technologies are often referred to as new technologies; they are platforms powered by the use of the internet. Media technologies include social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, 2go, WeChat, mobile/cell phones, Learning Management System, blogs, online newspapers, webcasts, and video streaming, among many others. According to Olley (2009, 25), media technologies are called 'new media' because they are separation from the "old media" forms of media to the "new media". Thus, media technology in the context of this paper is defined as a tool either hard or software, mainly used to compose, create, produce, deliver and manage any form of media.

Platforms for Media Technology Integration for Effective Adult Learning

Several platforms exist through which media technology can be integrated into adult learning. Akinsanya and Oludeyi, (2015, 254) opine that basically, there are several methods and processes by which teaching and learning takes place and there are various platforms that enable these methods and process to function. Moore (2009, 1) provides a comprehensive analysis of

these platforms, which are basically categorized into three platforms: onsite, blended, and online. However, this researcher warns that this categorization is solely provided as example as their inclusion is not intended as a product endorsement, though other scholars have seen this categorization as more apt.

Onsite platforms: This platform is the first of this method of application. It uses technology involve learning that takes place in either the classroom or computer lab led by the teacher or whole-group setting (Moore 2009, 1). Instruction is delivered by voice in this platform where interactive media technologies such as telephone, micro phone, and audio-conferencing and short-wave radio, amongst others are utilized (Akinsanya & Oludeyi, 2015, 631). These tech-supported activities are carried out within normal course meeting times and it serve as supplements to core curriculum which gives adult learners the ample opportunities to participate in the design and evaluation of instructional objectives. There are other onsite media technological application which uses the computer as a self-contained teaching machine to present individual lessons and uses the computer to organize instruction and track student records and progress. This instruction itself needs not to be delivered via a computer. They include computer-assisted instruction (CAI) and computer-managed instruction (CMI).

Blended platforms: the second platform for integrating media technology in adult learning process is blended platform (Moore, 2009, 2). This platform is the combination of e-learning technology with the traditional instructor-led training, where, for example, a teacher lecture or demonstration is supplemented by the use of electronic gadgets or an online tutorial. The use of blended platforms provides a more dynamic learning environment and allows for different options and expressions of educational materials (Alsaadat, 2009, 7). Also, description of this method is captured in collaboration with adult learners, develops a course syllabus, develops goals and objective, selects quality textbooks, search online or offline for journal article readings, creates learning exercises and develops quiz and examinations Oludeyi, Adekalu, and Shittu (2015, 132).

In this method, an instructor can stand in the class to discuss concepts and issues with students by using projectors as aids; afterwards, the course materials or curricula instructions are sent to students via email, google class, WhatsApp or other interactive online learning platforms, likewise, feedback is expected from the student using the same route. Adult learners and their instructors may also decide to interact online using group chat on, zoom, telegram, podcast, His Moodle, Edmodo, Schoology for example, and may wish to meet once a week via an audio conference for the purpose of discussing the last assignment together. Also, the instructor may desire to use a videoconference to combine multiple media: texts and graphics can be transmitted with a document camera; computer graphics, web sites, and videotapes which can be transmitted and viewed by all adult learners.

Online platforms: online platform is the third platform of applying media technology in adult learning process. This platform is completely Internet-based (Moore, 2009, 3). Sometimes, this platform is often referred to as open and distance education. According to Akinsanya & Oludeyi, (2015, 630), this platform is also known as correspondence education, home study, independent study, off campus study, and open learning. Some scholars use other nomenclatures to call this area as e-learning, web-based education, and distributed learning while the classes are known as

web-only classes or electronic classes. In this kind of education, the mode of giving instruction (teaching) is separated or distanced from the way in which it is delivered (learning) but it is connected by means of electronic resources. Online approach is an easy way by which instructors of adult learners can effectively transmit curricular instructions to adult learners cheaply and in a more effective way, particularly for those who are unreached or denied access on the basis of one social consideration or the other.

Undoubtedly, this system of education affords adult learners, particularly those who find it difficult to combine both work and studies due to tight office schedules and busy domestic or family commitments, the opportunity to pursue the gift of knowledge without contradicting any societal or workplace dictates. Alsaadat, (2009, 8) opine that this method of instructional delivery in online platforms also include the use of print materials which is a foundational element of distance education programs and the basis from which all other delivery systems have evolved. These print materials can be in any kind of formats such as: textbooks, study guides, workbooks, course syllabi and case studies. Modern media technologies and other video tools are not also exempted. They include images such as slides, pre-produced moving images (for example, film, videotape), and real-time moving images combined with audio conferencing.

According to Moore (2009, 3) as communication and the transmission of course content take place online, both teachers and students rarely meet onsite. Adegbiya, Fakomogbon, & Adebayo, (2013, 283) observes that in this kind of approach, synchronous and asynchronous online technologies are popularly used. Synchronous technology is a type of online delivery where all participants are present physically or virtually at the same time requiring a timetable to be organized. An example of Synchronous technology includes Web conferencing which allows collaboration to occur in real time and prevents delays of communication. Another type of online delivery is the asynchronous technology which allows participants to have access to course materials based on their own schedule and this does not require them to be together at the same time. Examples of asynchronous technology includes message board forums, e-mail, recorded video, email, blogs, and threaded discussions. This type of instructional delivery is useful when the need arises for parties to communicate and share information together because in between the interaction sessions, it is important for reflection and discovery to take place.

According to Akinsanya & Oludeyi, (2015, 632), asynchronous interaction is also beneficial when learners are geographically dispersed and are not together therefore making it difficult for them to assemble at the same time. These have increased the flexibility in learning and has brought transformation into the traditional campus classroom-instructor system through experiencing variety of innovative forms of instructional dissemination.

Benefits of Media Technology for Adult Education

Media technology as a tool has positively affected educational institutions and transformed the process of higher education teaching and learning. It's integration into classroom instruction is gaining much ground in developed and developing countries. Media technology is considered a vital mechanism in adult teaching and learning success. It has gained the interest of many researchers who have explored how media technology integration into adult learning can be effective. The crucial role of media technology in education and human empowerment continues

to re-emphasize itself in a more intensified manner. Media technology is a significant tool for adult learners to learn and advance continually. The use of media technology in adult education provides benefits such as:

1. Improving adult learning outcomes and academic accomplishment. Increasingly, media technology has proven to be beneficial in adult learning and has a huge potential for adult education.
2. The expansion of media technology tools has given professors, educators, trainers, instructors, among many alternatives towards the implementation of technology supported learning. The use of media technology presupposes a new way of approaching effective teaching, which requires educators on all educational levels and disciplines to display with competence many advanced skills and abilities. Lenouse, Hall, and Eighmy (2011, 1) also observe that the advent of media technology tools has created new opportunities for adult learners through digitally-mediated education programs. Instructors may now have access to media technology tools that allow both students and faculty to engage in cooperative and collaborative learning despite being separated in space and time.
3. Media technology offers educators more ways to engage adult learners working in fully online, blended, or face-to-face learning contexts by supporting the use of interactive methods and multi-media materials.
4. Media technology also empowers curriculum designers to effectively accommodate the core principles of adult learning that was impossible with earlier e-learning technologies.

However, it is important to note that for effective integration of media technology into adult learning, there is the need for adult educators to be dedicated and talented, facilitate broadening the educational process from curriculum and textbook-centered material up to real-world Internet applications and services, combining communication techniques, likewise taking into account the adult learners' profile. Similarly, Akinsanya & Oludeyi, (2015, 627) also affirm that the effectiveness of media technology in adult learning lies both on the teacher and learners' awareness of its uses and ability to cope with this new method of teaching, new learning materials, new learning interaction, and most especially, financing education, which is electronic-based.

Research has shown that many educators have already begun integrating technology into classroom learning, and they are reaping the benefits (Gonzales, Castillo, Pauca & Chavez, 2022, 146). Several of them are now replacing old technologies with new ones, completely excluding the possibility that media technologies can revolutionize learning. Media technology can profoundly affect the connections and interactions between students and teachers, students and students, likewise affect student learning outcomes. Further, according to literature, colleges and universities are ideally positioned to examine the influence and value of andragogy on adult learning. Importantly, adult learners prefer self-direction, relevance, and the potential to form a community of like-minded learners, thus, online learning can help foster these aspects of learning.

Furthermore, Alsaadat (2018, 3747) considering the importance of media technology of adult learning argue that due to the rapid growth of the Internet and the World Wide Web, online

learning is becoming an increasingly important mode of education, which allows adult learners to participate regardless of their geographic location, independent of time and place. This means that adult learners can now have access to education from their comfort zones and at a convenient time thus, making education easy for them. Further, it also provides educators with an opportunity of engaging adult learners in online classroom, as well as to support development of the learners' skills and competencies. Thus, it is sufficed to say that media technology is a natural extension of the lives of adult learners in this digital generation. It can be used to create a learning environment that is more social and collaborative than traditional learning methods. Adult learners may now connect and cooperate with other learners, instructors, or even professionals and leverage these communities' collective intellect and mentoring potentials.

Undoubtedly, the application of media technology in adult learning instruction offers the flexibility to extend learning beyond that which is available in a formal programme, opening new opportunities for adults to self-direct their learning activities and embrace other learning platforms that can aid learning. Such applications also offer learners the ability to understand basic computer operations and other learning/educational technologies. Hence, application of media technology in adult learning brings ample opportunities for flexibility and fosters instructor-learner interactions that facilitate their collaboration in planning, and executing learning exercise, even at distance.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to show the benefits of the integration of media technology in adult learning. The integration of media technology in adult learning instruction provides fluidity for extending learning beyond that which is available in a regular programme. The paper establishes that the integration of media technology in adult learning affords adult learners the opportunity to engage in self-directed learning activities and embrace other learning platforms that can aid more efficient adult learning.

References

1. Addae, D. 2016. "Methods of Teaching Adult Learner: A Comprehensive Study of Education Programme in Ghana and South Africa" PhD Dissertation, University of South Africa.
2. Abbaszadeh, M., Aghdam, B.A., Leila, R. H, & Vosta, N. 2019. "Technology Media and Development: A Systematic Mapping Study and Research Agenda." *Information Technology and people*, Vol. 32(3), 478-515.
3. Akinsanya, A. O. & Oludeyi, O. S. April 2015. Knowledge is not power, but a start; what female workers know about distance learning and empowerment. Proceedings of the 1st Interdisciplinary Conference of UCC-TASUED held between 27th April and 1st May, 2015 at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, pp. 625-642. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Olukunle_Oludeyi2/publication/275769309
4. Alsaadat, K. 2018. "Impact of Social Media Technologies on Adult Learning". *Journal of Electrical and Computer Engineering (IJECE)*, 8(5).
5. Alsaadat, K. 2009. Methods of Distance Learning. Paper Presented at the International Conference of

- Education Research and Innovation (ICERI) between 16th and 18th of November in Madrid, Spain. Accessed on 10-02-2017 from [http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search) search.
6. Adegbiya, M.V. Fakomogbom., M.A and Adebayo, M.S. 2013. "Role of Broadcast Media for Instructional Delivery in Open and Distance Learning; Nigeria as a Case study." *European Scientific Journal*, 9(23).
7. Olley, O.W. "New Media Technologies and their challenges to Broadcasting in Nigeria." M.A. Thesis, Nkusuka University of Nigeria, 2009.
8. Mukandi Cosmas & Pisirai Cuthbert & Winnet Chindedza, 2020. "The Role of Instructional Media and Technology in the Zimbabwean Primary School Curriculum," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS), vol. 4(6), 126-133.
9. Gonzalels, J., Alfaro, B., Pauca, Vasque, M.J & Rosario, M Del. "Educational Technology applied to Adult Education". *International Journal of health Science*, 6(51).
10. Gravett, S. 2001. *Adult Learning, Designing and Implementing Learning Events: A Dialogic Approach*. Pretoria: Van Schaic
11. Knowles, M.S. 1980. *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*. Chicago: Foilet.
12. Igyuve, A., Inogemhe, K., Udeh, N & Ugber, F. 2020. "A Discourse on the use of New Media Technologies in Nigerian Television Newsroom". *International Journal of Social Science and Management Review*, 3(6).
13. Lenouse, M., Hall, T., Myron, A., and Eighmy, M. 2011. "Adult Education and the Social Media Revolution". *Adult Learning*, 22 (2), 4-12.
14. Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. 2011. *Distance education: A systems view of online Learning*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
15. Nnamani, S.N. 2014. Adult and Non- Formal Education in Nigeria: A Means of Empowering the Adult Learner in A Democratic Economy, 8-10 September 2014- Istanbul, Turkey Proceedings of Socioint14- International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities.
16. Oludeji, O.S., Adekalu S.O and Shittu, A.K. 2010. "Application of e-Devices in Teaching and Effectiveness in State Universities in Ogun State, Nig". *African Journal of Education, Science and Technology*, 2(2), 1-5.
17. Sukumahidatanti, T. 2015. "The Utilization of Instructional Media in Teaching English to Young Learners (A Case study of an Elementary School Teacher in Bandung." *Journal of Education*, 3(2), 90-100.