



## Exploring the Effect of Media Used for Promoting the English Language Programs at Education Centers in Myanmar among Adult Students

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of social media in promoting English language programs at education centers in Myanmar. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument, and data were collected from 384 adult students in Yangon and Mandalay, Myanmar. Descriptive statistics, correlation, multiple regression, and independent samples t-tests were employed to analyze the data and evaluate the hypotheses. The findings revealed that accessibility and engagement of social media platforms, social networks and peer recommendations, trust in social media promotional content, and perceived usefulness and relevance of social media content had significant positive effects on enrollment decisions. In contrast, degree of social media reliance for information and media content did not have significant effects. Additionally, age was found to significantly influence enrollment decisions among adult learners.

**Keywords:** Adult Students, Education Centers, Social Media, Enrollment Decisions, English Language Programs

### Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, the ability to use the English language has developed into an essential talent for career innovation and individual growth. The English language holds a significant role in Myanmar's educational landscape, due to its status as a global lingua franca. As Myanmar continues to open to the international community, ability in English has become increasingly vital for accessing opportunities in higher education, employment, and international collaboration (Akpan & Chayanuvat, 2022). Many English language centers face challenges in converting online followers into paying students, indicating a gap between digital exposure and behavioral response. But many education centers continue to invest in social media advertising without evidence-based strategies tailored to the behavioral patterns of adult learners. Media has



appeared as a useful tool for promoting English language programs by providing accessible information and motivation adult learners to achieve their educational goal. Media plays a transformative role in this endeavor by acting as a bridge between education providers and learners. In today's environment, English has become more than just a language; it has turned into an effective tool for communication and advancing achievements. Although earlier studies have examined the role of social media in education and marketing, limited research has focused on how specific social media factors influence enrollment decisions in English language centers in Myanmar, particularly among adult learners. Existing studies address general higher education contexts in other countries, leaving a gap in understanding how trust, peer influence, and perceived usefulness of content affect actual enrollment behavior in this setting.

This study examined the effect of social media practices on the enrollment rates of English language centers in Myanmar, with an emphasis on adult students. The study intended to find the role that social media plays in influencing students' choices to enroll in learning centers, as well as whether it affects their motivation to seek information about these programs. Furthermore, the study explored the social media strategies used by learning centers to promote English language programs. This study raises awareness of the factors that support enrollment in such programs, which is particularly important in Myanmar, where platforms are integrated into daily life and provide effective tools for educational advertising. In conclusion, this study can provide important insights for education providers and marketers by finding the most influential social media factors that drive enrollment decisions. The findings can support the development of more targeted, credible, and effective promotional strategies, improving access to English language education and supporting workforce development in Myanmar.

## Objectives

1. To examine the factors that influence adult students in their decision to enroll in English language programs at education centers in Myanmar.
2. To evaluate the relationship between social media use and the enrollment behavior of adult students in English language programs.
3. To explore how age influence the feelings and motivations of adult students toward enrolling in English language programs.
4. To investigate the role of media in shaping the decision-making process of adult students when choosing English language programs.



## Literature Review

Education centers increasingly rely on social media platforms as primary marketing and communication tools, offering immediate and accessible information such as course details and enrollment procedures. Existing literature recognized the strategic importance of digital media in education marketing; however, the focus of these studies varied, especially in relation to adult learners and specific contexts.

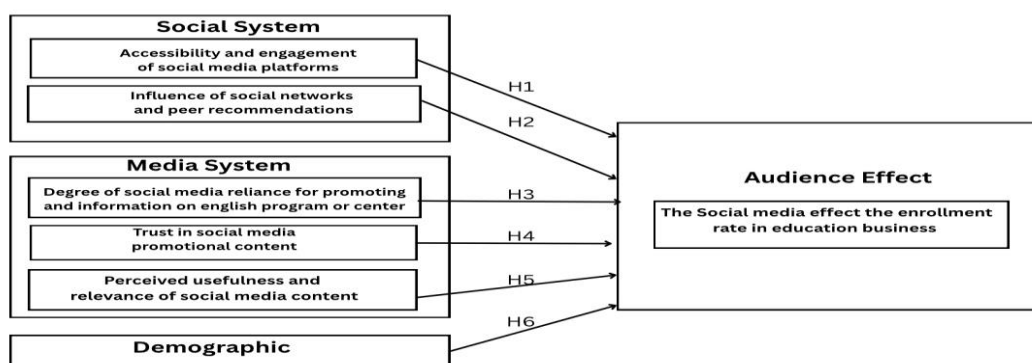
Many studies agreed that social media played a significant role in influencing enrollment decisions. Peruta and Shields (2018) showed that targeted digital advertising motivated prospective students' enrollment, while Constantinides and Stagno (2012) emphasized the interactive nature of social media in engaging students. Alduaij (2019) and Garcia and Silva (2017) highlighted the usefulness and relevance of social media content, suggesting that learners engaged more with content that matched their goals. These findings suggested that accessibility, relevance, and interaction influenced decision-making.

However, differences appeared across age groups. Zula, Yarrish, and Pawelzik (2011) found that younger users relied heavily on social networking platforms, while older learners combined online and traditional sources. This indicated that social media influenced adult learners differently and required a more complex approach. Many studies did not fully address the needs of adult learners, such as career goals, time flexibility, and financial concerns. The role of social influence and trust was also important. Kijkuit and Van den Ende (2007) and Zhao and Li (2016) found that peer-generated content shaped students' perceptions and was often seen as more trustworthy than institutional content. Li, Jiang, and Wu (2014) and Chaudhari and Bhornya (2022) emphasized that trust in online content influenced engagement and decision-making. These studies showed that social networks spread information and built credibility, but limited research examined this in smaller education markets like English language centers.

Media Dependency Theory explained these patterns by suggesting that individuals depend on media for information, especially in uncertain situations. Adult learners often relied on social media to reduce uncertainty by accessing reviews, experiences, and program information. This dependency increased when other information sources were limited, especially in developing contexts. However, many studies did not clearly apply this theory to educational decision-making. Earlier research focused on higher education in developed countries, with limited attention to Myanmar or similar contexts. Hein (2025) noted the growing role of social media in promoting English language centers, but evidence on adult learners in Myanmar remained limited. Many studies also examined factors separately rather than combining them.

Therefore, a clear research gap existed in understanding how social media reliance, content trust, peer influence, usefulness, and accessibility influenced enrollment decisions among adult learners in Myanmar. So, this research explores the following factors, social media reliance, Social Media content trust, Influence of social networks, Usefulness and relevance of social media content and Accessibility and engagement influence Enrollment impact from social media on the English language programs at education centers in Myanmar among adult students.

### Concept theory framework



**Figure1:** The theoretical framework developed by Media Dependency Theory, Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, (1976)

### Materials and Methods

A quantitative research approach was employed to examine the influence of social media factors on enrollment in English language programs in Myanmar. Data was collected through an online survey distributed via social media platforms and educational networks. The target population consisted of young adults and adult learners in Myanmar who actively use social media and are potential enrollees in English language programs. Respondents were recruited from universities, private education centers, and online learning communities in urban and suburban areas. A combination of stratified random sampling and convenience sampling was applied. The population was stratified based on key characteristics such as age group, gender, educational background, and geographic location. Participants were then recruited through online platforms including Facebook, Telegram, and educational group networks.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts: Part 1 included screening questions, Part 2 collected demographic and behavioral information, and Part 3 comprised 30 items measuring independent and dependent variables using a five-point Likert scale. The measurement items were developed based on prior literature to ensure alignment with



the research framework. Content validity was supported with established constructs, and a pilot test with 40 respondents was conducted to refine the instrument.

Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, with all constructs exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to analyze demographic characteristics. Mean values and standard deviations were calculated to describe respondents' perceptions. Pearson correlation analysis was applied to examine relationships between variables, while multiple regression analysis was used to identify the influence of social media factors on enrollment decisions. In addition, independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine differences across demographic groups.

## Results

This section presents the findings derived from quantitative data collected from 384 adult students in Myanmar. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and Independent samples T-tests were employed to examine the influence of social media factors on enrollment decisions. The results were interpreted through the lens of Media Dependency Theory (MDT) to understand how reliance on and trust in social media shape students' enrollment behavior. The findings shown that the total sample (N = 384) reflected a diverse distribution across age and gender categories. Most respondents were undergraduate students (52.08%). Facebook was identified as the most-used social media platform, and most participants reported daily social media usage (91.15%). Most respondents spent more than 60 minutes per session on social media. In terms of enrollment influence, "yourself" was reported as the most influential factor (34.9%), followed by friends (24.5%) and peers or influencers on social media (19.5%). The results showed that respondents perceived all social media factors at a moderate level. The total mean score for degree of social media reliance was 3.14. Trust in social media promotional content recorded a total mean score of 2.88. Social networks and peer recommendations showed a total mean of 2.91. Perceived usefulness and relevance of social media content recorded a total mean of 3.02, while accessibility and engagement of social media platforms showed a total mean of 2.93. Overall, the total mean score for social media affecting enrollment rate was 2.93, reflecting a moderate perceived influence.

The regression analysis showed that trust in social media content ( $\beta = .230, p \leq 0.01$ ) was positively and significantly related to enrollment decisions. The correlation analysis also indicated a moderate positive relationship ( $r = .370, p \leq 0.01$ ). This variable was the strongest predictor of enrollment decisions. This means that students are more likely to enroll when they perceive social media content as credible and reliable.



Social networks and peer effects ( $\beta = .134, p \leq 0.01$ ) were positively and significantly related to enrollment decisions. The correlation coefficient ( $r = .341, p \leq 0.01$ ) said a moderate positive relationship. This suggests that students are influenced by recommendations and opinions from friends and their social circles when making enrollment decisions.

Perceived usefulness and relevance ( $\beta = .126, p \leq 0.01$ ) were significantly associated with enrollment decisions. The correlation analysis supported this relationship ( $r = .323, p \leq 0.01$ ). This means that students are more likely to enroll when the information provided through social media is useful and directly relevant to their needs.

Accessibility and engagement of social media platforms ( $\beta = .119, p \leq 0.05$ ) also showed a positive and significant effect on enrollment decisions ( $r = .337, p \leq 0.01$ ). This shows that easier access to social media platforms and higher engagement levels encourage students to consider enrollment more seriously.

However, degree of social media reliance ( $\beta = .038, p > 0.05$ ) did not prove a significant relationship with enrollment decisions, showing that general reliance alone does not directly influence enrollment behavior. This suggests that simply depending on social media is not enough to affect students' enrollment decisions unless specific content factors are involved.

The regression model explained 17.8% of the variance in enrollment decisions ( $R^2 = .178, p < .001$ ), suggesting that specific social media factors play a meaningful role in shaping students' enrollment intentions. This implies that while social media is influential, other external factors such as personal interest or university reputation are also contributed significantly to enrollment decisions.

The independent samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between age groups ( $t = 4.391, p < .001$ ). The younger group (18–25 years old) reported a higher level of agreement toward enrollment decisions (Mean = 3.52) compared to participants above 25 years old (Mean = 3.02). These findings suggest that age significantly influences enrollment decisions, with younger respondents proving stronger enrollment intentions.

## Conclusions and Discussion

The summary of the hypotheses results based on Correlation, Regression and T-test, H1, H2, H4, H5, and H6 accepted, while H3 rejected by the following table.



**Table1:** Results of Hypotheses Testing for H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6

Hypothesis		Results
H1	Accessibility and engagement of social media platforms have a significant effect on the audience's decision to enroll in educational programs.	Accepted
H2	Influence of social networks and peer recommendations has a significant effect on the audience's decision to enroll in educational programs.	Accepted
H3	Degree of social media reliance for information and promotion has a significant effect on the audience's decision to enroll in educational programs.	Rejected
H4	Trust in social media promotional content has a significant effect on the audience's decision to enroll in educational programs.	Accepted
H5	Perceived usefulness and relevance of social media content have a significant effect on the audience's decision to enroll in education programs.	Accepted
H6	Age has a different effect on the audience's decision to enroll in education program.	Accepted

The regression and correlation analyses showed that trust in social media promotional content, social networks and peer recommendations, perceived usefulness and relevance of social media content, and accessibility and engagement of social media platforms were positively associated with enrollment decisions among adult learners in Myanmar. These results are consistent with earlier studies emphasizing that credible, informative, and interactive social media content significantly influences educational decision-making and strengthens learners' confidence in educational institutions. Peer recommendations and online reviews were perceived as more trustworthy and influential than traditional advertising, highlighting the growing importance of electronic word-of-mouth in shaping enrollment behavior. However, the degree of social media reliance did not significantly influence enrollment decisions, suggesting that dependency on social media alone may not directly affect behavior unless the content is perceived as trustworthy, relevant, and engaging.



This finding showed that content quality and credibility may play a more significant role than mere media exposure. Furthermore, the independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference between younger and older participants, with younger learners appearing more responsive to social media influences due to their greater familiarity with digital technologies. These findings strongly support Media Dependency Theory, which explains that individuals rely on media platforms for information and guidance that may influence attitudes and behaviors, including educational choices.

The study contributes theoretically by extending Media Dependency Theory to the context of adult education and enrollment decisions in Myanmar, where limited empirical research has been conducted. Practically, the findings suggest that educational institutions should develop transparent, informative, and interactive social media strategies, encourage peer testimonials and online engagement, and tailor promotional approaches to different age groups to improve recruitment effectiveness. Nevertheless, the study was limited to adult learners in Yangon and Mandalay then, employed only a quantitative research approach, which may restrict the generalizability and depth of the findings. Future research should therefore include broader geographic coverage across Myanmar, adopt mixed-method approaches combining quantitative and qualitative techniques, and examine more factors such as institutional reputation, financial considerations, program flexibility, and cultural influences to provide a more comprehensive understanding of enrollment decisions among adult learners.

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