

# Chapter 7

## A Methodological Framework for Investigating Social Participation in Mobile Social Media Learning A Social Network Analysis

Ayse Kok  
Cambridge, UK

### ABSTRACT

*Social media is increasingly becoming an essential platform for social connectivity in our daily lives. The availability of mobile technology has further fueled its importance – making it a ubiquitous tool for social interaction. However, limited studies have been conducted to investigate roles of social participation in this field. Thus, the study proposes a methodological framework to identify the roles of social participation in mobile social media learning using the “ladder of participation and mastering.” It suggests ways for data analysis using a social network analysis tool, such as NodeXL. The following framework of analysis for various roles of social participation in mobile social media is offered: (i) lurkers; (ii) gradually mastering members/passive members; (iii) recognized members; and (iv) coaches. This paper draws attention to the fact that learners can inter-change roles of social participation – becoming more central or less central in learning discussions.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social media is becoming a ubiquitous platform for social interaction in our daily lives (Siemens & Weller, 2011; Chin & Zhang, 2014). The explosion of social media has led to numerous research by educators to tap and seek into the potential of social media for learning (Aadal, Kirkevold, & Borg, 2013; Ally & Samaka, 2013; Norman, Din, Nordin, & Ryberg, 2014). Although learners are constantly on the move, social media allows them to stay connected to their peers in digital social interaction spaces via mobile

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-2182-2.ch007

devices (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012; Chin & Zhang, 2014). The connectivity of mobile learners that learn using social media on mobile devices is termed “mobile social media learning” (Lewis, Pea, & Rosen, 2010; Multisilta, 2012; Chin & Zhang, 2014). Mobile social media learning is changing the way we understand the term “participation” in a learning community (Lewis et al., 2010; Chin & Zhang, 2014). Although much work has been done in understanding participation in social media, fewer studies have focused on investigating participation of learning in mobile social media where learners are mobile and use social media on mobile devices (Lewis et al., 2010; Gikas & Grant, 2013). This presents an opportunity to explore social participation learning in the area of mobile social media learning. Thus, the study investigates a methodological framework with regard to the analysis of roles of social participation in mobile social media learning.

The paper is organized as follows. First, the concepts applied in this study such as “mobile social media learning,” “roles of social participation,” and “ladder of participation and mastering” are introduced. These concepts are then linked with recent literature to illustrate the research gap identified. It is followed by a discussion on the suggested research approach and methods used to capture and analyze the data via social network analysis. This paper concludes with a discussion on the findings as well as implication and future directions in the area of mobile social media learning.

## **MOBILE SOCIAL MEDIA LEARNING AND ROLES OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

The terms “mobile social media learning” originates from the terms “mobile learning” and “social media” and illustrates a situation where learners are involved with the process of learning using social media on mobile devices (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012; Chin & Zhang, 2014). Social media is associated with online social platforms such as social network sites, blogs, microblogs, photo/video sharing sites, and location-based services. These platforms allow for interaction and communication between users and allow them to create and share content with each other via digital devices (Bechmann and Lomborg, 2013).

The definition of mobile learning can be viewed from the following two perspectives:

- The mobile learner perspective
- The mobile learning tools perspective

This study defines mobile learning based on the first perspective where the “mobile” aspect is investigated as the “mobile” state of the learner rather than the “mobile” learning tools. This is line with the views of Sharples, Taylor, & Vavoula (2010), Kukulska-Hulme (2010), and Wong (2012) that define mobile learning in relation to the “mobility” state of learners in which they can access their personalized learning environment as they physically move (Kukulska-Hulme 2010; Wong, 2012). Moreover, scholars also suggest that as learners are on the move, they experience diverse learning situations in which their learning changes from one context to another, for instance from formal to informal learning (Jeng, Wu, Huang, Tan, & Yang 2010; Wong, 2012). In contrast, some scholars view mobile learning as learning that occurs on mobile technologies or mobile devices, which could affect learning due to small screen sizes of the tools (Cochrane & Bateman 2010; Liu, Lin, Tsai, & Paas, 2012). However, in this study, emphasis is more on the learning state of the mobile learner rather than the “learning tool” or “learning device” aspect of mobile learning. As such, it is worth to note that the term “mobile device”

16 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

[www.igi-global.com/chapter/a-methodological-framework-for-investigating-social-participation-in-mobile-social-media-learning/174809](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/a-methodological-framework-for-investigating-social-participation-in-mobile-social-media-learning/174809)

## Related Content

---

### Ubiquitous Learning for New Generation Learners' Expectations

Tark Kilaand Bahar Karaolan (2020). *Managing and Designing Online Courses in Ubiquitous Learning Environments* (pp. 176-200).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/ubiquitous-learning-for-new-generation-learners-expectations/236752](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/ubiquitous-learning-for-new-generation-learners-expectations/236752)

### Intelligent Development of College Physical Education Teaching Mode Based on "Internet+"

Xiaoming Zhangand Chenjie Ma (2024). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies* (pp. 1-13).

[www.irma-international.org/article/intelligent-development-of-college-physical-education-teaching-mode-based-on-internet/340724](http://www.irma-international.org/article/intelligent-development-of-college-physical-education-teaching-mode-based-on-internet/340724)

### Instructor Presence in Online Distance Classes

Janet Lear (2010). *Web-Based Education: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools and Applications* (pp. 1422-1427).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/instructor-presence-online-distance-classes/41422](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/instructor-presence-online-distance-classes/41422)

### Using an Eclectic Approach to Design Curriculum Instruction in an Online Environment

William Chakabwata (2023). *Dynamic Curriculum Development and Design Strategies for Effective Online Learning in Higher Education* (pp. 96-115).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/using-an-eclectic-approach-to-design-curriculum-instruction-in-an-online-environment/331577](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/using-an-eclectic-approach-to-design-curriculum-instruction-in-an-online-environment/331577)

### Design of a Smart Teaching English Translation System Based on Big Data Machine Learning

Chunye Zhang, Tianyue Yu, Yingqi Gaoand Mau Luen Tham (2023). *International Journal of Web-Based Learning and Teaching Technologies* (pp. 1-14).

[www.irma-international.org/article/design-of-a-smart-teaching-english-translation-system-based-on-big-data-machine-learning/330144](http://www.irma-international.org/article/design-of-a-smart-teaching-english-translation-system-based-on-big-data-machine-learning/330144)