

## IMPACT OF INFORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ON ACTIVE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Learning can be broadly characterised in two major forms, thus formal and informal learning. Formal learning defines education offered in conventional classroom setting which is delivered by a trained teacher. On the other hand, informal learning relates to learning that occurs outside of the classroom setting. These informal learning environments can include libraries, clubs, sports facilities, students' accommodations, online communities and other external engagements in other organizations. Formal learning is curriculum-driven to meet predetermined learning objectives, in contrast, the main aims in relatively informal learning environments (if any are set) are identified by the individual learner and others in a space where learning takes place through some form of social influence. From the social influence theory perspective, this study develops a framework that suggests the students learn from their social interactions constructively based on their experiences outside of a structured classroom setting. Informal learning provides additional opportunities for learners to explore topics of interest using an array of resources (both digital and non-digital). Drawing on the above, this paper presents pedagogical implications of learning that takes place in informal settings on active learning strategies in formal educational settings in higher education.

**Keywords:** Active learning, formal learning, informal learning, social influence theory