Perceived Effectiveness of Social Media as an English Language Learning Tool

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Abstract
Little is known about the potential effects of social media usage on the learning performance of undergraduates, especially female students in some Arab/Islamic cultures, where sex-segregated education is the norm, and the freedom of expression of women may be suppressed. The purpose of the current study was to test the correlation between the independent variables (including, level of social media use, interactivity with peers, interactivity with teachers, active cooperative learning, engagement) and the dependent variable (i.e., learning performance) of female Saudi students in a sex-segregated educational system. A cross-sectional survey was administered to 283 participants, representing 15.8% of the target population of female Saudi students enrolled on a distance learning course at King Abdulaziz University. The data were analyzed by partial least squares structural equation modeling, to generate and validate the Social Media-Learning Performance (SM-LP) model. The SM-LP model predicted with a substantial effect size ($R^2 =$ 67.7%) that female Saudi students perceived that they could potentially improve their learning performance, in a sex-segregated education system, through high levels of social media use, stimulating inter activity with peers and teachers, as well as active collaborative learning, and engagement. All the path coefficients were statistically significant ($p < .05$) reflecting a strong endorsement of the use of social media as an effective learning tool. The findings have important implications for sex-segregated educational context.
Keywords: Computer-mediated communication, English language learning, language learning tool interactive learning environments, perceived effectiveness, Social media