Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of Flipped Learning in a Saudi University: An Exploratory Investigation

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore Saudi female undergraduate students' perceptions of advantages, challenges, and the future of flipped learning from their experiences as participants in a flipped learning course at a Saudi university. To accomplish this aim, I designed and carried out an intervention case study in two classes in the same course at a Saudi university in Riyadh City, Saudi Arabia. I applied an exploratory qualitative case study design to gain descriptive data to explore the phenomena. I used a social constructivist approach and employed Pintrich's framework of self-regulated learning theory (2000) as well as Mayer's principles of multimedia design (2009). I collected the data through observation, an open-ended questionnaire, and focus group interviews. I used inductive and deductive thematic analysis.

This study shows how participant students reacted to this innovation in education and how it affected the quality of their learning experience. Deducing from the students' perceptions, I found the main advantages of flipped learning included enhancing their engagement and making them more active learners, encouraging more peer-assisted learning through classroom activities, benefiting from technological affordances, and enhancing their personal responsibility. The profile of education in the home became more pronounced and visible. In addition, students' perceptions showed that the key challenges of flipped learning were related to problems with technology, including: the digital divide; learning-management system (Blackboard) glitches; and poorly designed videos. Other challenges can be poorly designed class activities, learners who have less ability to regulate their learning, change resistance, and Saudi female students' circumstances as wives or mothers. Furthermore, regarding the future of flipped learning in Saudi Arabia, students' perceptions can be typified as: Firstly, participants who feel motivated and enthusiastic about the future adoption of flipped learning for some motivations; secondly, participants who are not enthusiastic about flipped learning and report some limitations; and thirdly, participants who see the potential of flipped learning, but with adaptations. Additionally, the study findings revealed that flipped learning could help participants to develop some habits that related to self-regulated learning. Recommendations for future research and practices are provided, as well as some suggestions to address possible challenges.