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# The Impact of Social Media on ESL Students' Learning Performance

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**Abstract**

In recent years, social media has become a common technology-supported learning tool for public and academic use.  Students can use social networks to supplement their learning through the discussion and sharing of academic materials.  The purpose of this study was to identify the English as a Second Language (ESL) students' experience in the classroom facilitated by using a social media platform.  Specifically, a quasi-experimental quantitative research design was used to determine the impact of social media on ESL students' learning performance.  Participants consisted of ESL students' at an adult school in Central California aged 18 and older ($n = 37$).  In order to assess the learning performance of ESL students, a Student Perception Toward Social Media in Education survey (SPSME) was used to measure students' feelings about the impact of using social media on academic performance.  Independent and paired samples t-tests were conducted to determine if there were statistically significant differences between the means of both groups on the SPSME. Data analysis revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores on the post-tests between the two groups (i.e., treatment and control).  Meaning that the students in the treatment group demonstrated greater perception of engagement and improved upon their learning performance more than the students who did not receive the social media intervention.

*Keywords:* technology, social media, blogs, ESL, students' engagement, students' academic performance.

**Table of Contents**

The Impact of Social Media on ESL Students' Learning Performance

**Literature Review**

Social media is an Internet based technology that is used to create and share

online information, which helps facilitate media and information sharing, collaboration,

and participation (Evans, 2014).  Furthermore, social media enables two or more people

to interact and communicate with each other.  Social media platforms such as Google,

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube hold a great potential of being an online

channel to facilitate student learning by providing a vast opportunity for learners to

access and gather information to build, modify, and share their knowledge (Gaytan,

2013).  With the rapid growth of technologies and the presence of social media, the

potential to support learning and motivate students is abundant (Gikas & Grant, 2013).

Many students use social media in their daily lives to communicate with others.  It

has become a common technology-supported learning tool for public and academic use.

According to Regan (2015), 1.93 billion people utilize mobile technology for social

media platforms.  The number of social media users has risen by 176 million in the last

year and has reached over 2,206 billion active users in 2015, which resulted in 30% of

global penetration.  Since social media usage continues to rise, there is an opportunity for

schools to integrate social media tools into students' organizational learning process

which allows individuals to observe, gain, and share knowledge within their

communities.

**Social Media in Education**

In recent years, social technologies have been widely used by students on a daily

basis.  Although it was perceived as a type of technology used mainly for social and

entertainment purposes, it has gradually been adapted for use in education (Top, 2012).

There are many free and inexpensive applications available in app stores that provide

potential opportunities to the academic world.  The use of these applications helps to

create social-media-focused culture that is influencing how people communicate, teach,

and learn (Mao, 2014).  Lau (2012) reported that online social networks help initiate

learning activities among students.  Students who use online social networks can develop

their knowledge based on extensive communications and knowledge sharing from the

social network sites.  Mao (2014) investigated high school students' affordances for

social media, their attitudes and beliefs about these new technologies, and related

obstacles and issues in using social media.  Findings indicated that students show positive

attitudes and beliefs about social media use in education.  Specifically, students believed

they could improve their learning when using social media and also enjoy using social

media for an assignment or their own learning after school.  However, some students

thought that social media created a distraction and was time consuming.  The study

results also suggest that scaffolding is necessary for social media to be used as effective

learning tools (Mao, 2014).

     **Social media and student engagement.**  Social networks have been found to be a

tool to facilitate interactions and support active participation (Junco, Heibergert, &

Loken, 2011).  A number of studies have found a relationship between technology use

and engagement (Chen, Lambert, & Guidry, 2010; Faizi, El Afia, & Chiheb, 2013; Junco

et al., 2011; Yu, Tian, Vogel, & Kwok, 2010).  In a study using a set of items developed

by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Chen and colleagues (2010)

investigated the impact of Web-based learning technology on student engagement and

learning outcomes in a traditional classroom and online learning environments. A positive relationship was found between the use of Web-based learning technology and student engagement.

Students who utilize social networking technologies in their learning were not only found to be active and highly engaged, they are also reported to have higher gains in general education. Moreover, Junco and colleagues (2011) conducted an experimental study using Twitter as a social networking platform for various types of academic and co-curricular discussions. Results indicated that Twitter can be used as an educational tool to support active participation and collaboration. Additionally, using Twitter as a microblogging tool can extend communication among students as it helps students increase a sense of connection. Further, the Twitter assignments promoted active learning and allowed instructors to provide prompt feedback. By effectively incorporating social networks as learning tools in the classes, instructors can expect to reach higher levels of learning as well as effective classroom management (Revere & Kovach, 2011).

Given the importance of collaboration in the learning process, social media tools function as platforms for learners to access, collect, and share information. Further, online social networking helps students to (a) develop satisfying relationships with peers (Yu et al., 2010), (b) improve engagement and communication with peers and teachers (Faizi et al., 2013), and (c) collaborate to achieve common goals (Faizi et al., 2013). It is also possible that some students may feel more comfortable expressing themselves and sharing their thoughts through online channels rather than through traditional face-to-face classes. Moreover, as opposed to classical instructional models that focus on individual

learning processes, online social networks allow students to bring their ideas together, examine them with peers, and publish them in such a way that allows for revisiting and revising (Faizi et al., 2013). Finally, Additional research has demonstrated that students who work as a group learn more and retain information longer, especially when they are able to be actively involved in the process; and, social media may be a way for students to engage in those activities (Faizi et al., 2013, Junco et al., 2011).

**Social media and student learning achievements.** The use of social media in an academic course can connect students and encourage them to create a virtual community that leads to better content learning. Social media provides an opportunity for students to expand their learning environment, explore the new resources, and be used as a tool to facilitate the learning communities by encouraging collaboration and communication. Al-Rahmi and Othman (2013a) conducted a study regarding the impact of social media use on academic performance among university students. The results revealed that social media integration facilitates students' academic experience, which relates to students' academic performance. Further, social media integration was found to increase the interaction within the class among students and teacher, which increase students' participation and enhance collaborative learning. Similarly, a study by Olaleke, Iroju, and Olajide (2015) revealed that social media can be used to enhance students' learning abilities through interactions among learners and teachers. Specifically, online social media can facilitate students' academic experience by supporting environment for academic discussions, which helps improve learning motivation. Further, by allowing students to discuss the same content at the same time within a virtual community, students can build on conversations and make connections across multiple sources (Frye,

Trathen, & Koppenhaver, 2010).  This increases a chance of student learning outside the traditional classroom situation.

**Social media and ESL students.**  The relevance of social media to educational success has been an issue of interest.  It is no doubt that language and communication play an important role in exchanging data and sharing information on the use of technology in education (Reinhardt & Zander, 2011).  Social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter enhance communication and can potentially be exploited for language learning (Thurairaj, Roy, & Subaramaniam, 2012).  It has been incorporated in academic course content to encourage students' participation, which allows students to interact, learn and share information with others.  There is research to suggest using social media in English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom helps facilitate language learning (Reinhardt & Zander, 2011).  For example, Boonmoh (2010) found that using blogs in ESL writing class can encourage students to write and practice self-expression.  Similarly, Puthikanon (2009) found that using WebQuests in ESL reading class can increase critical thinking.  Furthermore, Bakar, Latif, and Ya'acob (2010) carried out a study on how to integrate the blog as an educational tool in the ESL classroom.  The results revealed positive responses from the students about using the blog in learning the second language.  They perceived that the use of blog had generally enhanced their reading and writing skills, established their self-confidence, enhanced their communication skills and reduced their anxiety (Bakar et al., 2010).  It has become a productive learning tool, especially for the language learning students.

**Challenges for Social Media Use.**  Many studies have demonstrated the benefits of using online networks in education (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013a; Chen et al., 2010;

Faizi et al., 2013; Junco et al., 2011).  According to Gurcan (2015), social networks can

be used in academic settings to improve communication skills between students and

teachers, promote students' engagement, facilitate collaborative learning, and enhance

academic relationship among peers.  Thus, social media plays a significant role in the

exchange of information, which provides an opportunity for learners to continually

connect and learn within academic environments.  Conceptually, the use of social media

tools in the classroom has gained popularity, as it helps increased social communication

and collaboration, as well as enhanced knowledge sharing (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013b).

However, the adoption of these tools in the classroom is creating a challenge whether

students can manage between personal and professional lives.

As mentioned in the study by Al-Rahmi and Othman (2013a), there is a need to

control and manage students' time on the use of social media, as it would have a negative

effect on the academic performance of students.  An example of this concern is the study

from researchers at Baylor University, who found that students spent more time visiting

social networking for entertainment purposes such as follow sports figures or catch up on

the news (Wood, 2014).  Moreover, some students found social media to be a helpful

learning tool but mentioned some difficulties, which included the weakness of the

Internet at home (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013b).  Given this evidence, researchers

continue to question the role of social media in education and whether or not it supports

interaction within the classroom or just creates a distraction.  Additional evidence is

needed in order to determine the usefulness of social media as a tool to enhance the

process of learning.

**Methods**

Many researchers indicated that social media can be used as learning tools to enhance the process of learning (Evans, 2014; Kolokytha, Loutrouki, Valsamidis, & Florou, 2015; George, Dreibelbis, & Aumiller, 2013).  It would be interesting to know if the ESL students are able to improve their language learning through the online communication.  Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the ESL students' experience in the classroom facilitated by using a social media platform and how it uses supports their academic achievement.  The research aims to uncover whether social media channels can increase ESL students' participation and improve their academic performance.

**Research Question**

Can social networking impact ESL students' learning performance in an adult school?

**Hypothesis**

 The research indicated that the use of social media created opportunities for interaction and collaboration, as well as allowed students to engage in communication (Gikas & Grant, 2013).  Much of the research in this field indicated that using social media as an educational tool can lead to increased student engagement and increased students' learning performance (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013a; Chen et al., 2010; Faizi et al., 2013; Junco et al., 2011).  Based upon the research available in this topic the students exposed to teacher integrated online social networking in class were predicted to increase their participation and improve upon their learning performance.

**Research Design**

An experimental quantitative research design was used to determine the impact of social networks on ESL students' learning performance. The study was comprised of one control group and one treatment group. The control group was one class of ESL students; this classroom did not receive any intervention or treatment. The treatment group was another class of ESL students in the same grade level; the students in this class participated in a 4-week online blogging discussion. Both treatment and control groups took a pre-test survey to measure the students' feeling about the impact of using social media on academic performance. Then, the students in both groups took the same survey after the completion of the four weeks intervention as a post-test.

**Independent variable.** The independent variable in this study was a four-week online blogging discussion facilitated by the classroom teacher and the researcher. According to Bakar and Ismail (2009), blogs are best described as the websites that allow people to communicate with each other by leaving the comments on the content of the blogs or by discussing new ideas. To replicate the previous study, in-class assignments were provided through the social network platform with the ESL students.

**Dependent variable.** The dependent variable in this study was the students' learning performance. Students' learning performance can be defined as a students' engagement and students' academic performance (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010). For the purpose of this study, students' learning performance was evaluated through the pre-test and post-test survey questions (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013a). The survey questions examined the students' opinions about the use of social media on academic performance.

In this study, this pre-post test survey was called "Student Perception Toward Social Media in Education survey" (SPSME; see Appendix A).

**Setting & Participants**

This research was conducted at an adult ESL school in Central California. The school serves an international community in the English as a Second Language course. The students in the school are from 28 countries. The students were placed in levels of language fluency ranging from 1$^{st}$ to 4$^{th}$ grade. Two classrooms were purposefully selected as a sample to make sure that they were in the same grade level. The total participants were 37 students, consisted of 12 males and 25 females. 32% of the students identified as Southeast Asia, 22% identified as Latino, 27% identified as East Asia, 11% identified as South Asia, 3% identified as Middle East, and 5% identified as Europeans. The age-range of the participants in both treatment and control groups were between 18-55. The SPSME was used as a pre-test and post-test to collect the information about students' experiences and impact of using social media on their academic performance.

**Treatment group.** The treatment group was one class of the ESL students in an adult school comprised of twenty students; all aged 18 to 55 years. Six students were male (30%) and fourteen students were females (70%). They were international students from various countries, who had fair to moderate English speaking abilities. The students were taking the classes from 9 AM to 12 PM Monday through Thursday. The everyday classes mainly consisted of reading, writing, and listening.

**Control group.** The control group was also the ESL students from the same grade level in an adult school comprised of seventeen students; all aged 18 to 55 years. Six students were Male (35%) and eleven students were females (65%). They were

international students from various countries, who had fair to moderate English speaking abilities.  The students were taking the classes from 9 AM to 12 PM Monday through Thursday.  The everyday classes mainly consisted of reading, writing, and listening.

**Measures**

The measure used in this study was the Student Perception toward Social Media in Education survey (SPSME).  It consisted of twenty questions on a five-point Likert scale  (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).  The SPSME survey asked students to respond on the Likert scale to demonstrate their level of agreement with a list of statements.  The survey was designed by Al-Rahmi and Othman (2013a) to examine the students' opinions about the use of social media and its' effectiveness.  The questions were divided into five sections with the subscales of: interactivity with peers, interactivity with teachers, engagement, perceived usefulness, and students' academic performance (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013a).  Both the control and treatment groups were given the SPSME survey as a pre-test in class prior to the implementation of the social media integration.  The same survey was given as a post-test to both experimental and control groups to make the data comparison.

**Validity.**  The SPSME survey internal validity has been established in multiple studies (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013a; Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013b) as it was modified with reference to a pilot study and tested before-hand to examine the students' opinions about the use of social media on academic performance.

**Reliability.**  Al-Rahmi and Othman (2013a) analyzed the final questionnaire for the effectiveness of the research using Cronbach's alpha value to ensure stability coefficient alpha from the total amount of the questionnaires was established.  The result

implied that all of the variables had high reliability with the Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85.

**Intervention**

Students in the treatment group participated in a 4-week online blogging project. The project featured two components, which were online blogging discussion and in class face-to-face discussion about the information posted on the blog. The teachers first provided some basic instruction on how to use online blogging platform. The students were assigned the topic and questions weekly to discuss on the blog, then used the information on the blog for group discussion in class.

The study by Al-Rahmi and Othman (2013a) provided strong support that social media facilitates interactivity with peers, interactivity with teachers, and engagement, which helps improve students' academic performance. Bakar and Ismail (2009) conducted a study incorporating blogs as part of an English project assignment and found that the students were able to write longer online compared to write on paper. The result shows that the students had a positive attitude about blogging and perceived blogging as an interesting and motivating learning environment (Bakar & Ismail, 2009). However, the limitation in the study was that the participants needed to have some basic knowledge of computer skills.

**Procedures**

Based on the study of Baker and Ismail (2009), the blogging integration was used in this study. The students in both groups were given the SPSME survey as a pre-test prior to the intervention to measure the students' feelings about the impact of using social media on academic performance. Then, the teacher incorporated the blog into the

treatment group's class as an online writing platform for four weeks. The teacher also set up expectations and norms for communication and participation for both face-to-face and virtual interactions. Everyone in the treatment group learned some basic knowledge how to use blog online.

Each week, the treatment group was given a discussion topic on the blog, while the control group did not participate in the online blog project. The control group was provided the normal class instruction and paper assignment. The students in the treatment group were asked to write their own response on the blog and also reply to at least one of their classmates. A notification was created so that the class was automatically notified about each new posting, and students posted their response directly to the blog using their mobile devices. The face-to-face discussion about the information posted on the blog was arranged in class to help the student learn how to construct their learning while blogging. They were encouraged to ask the questions from the teacher and discuss with peers during the class time, then completed the blog as a weekly assignment at home.

After the completion of the intervention, the SPSME survey was given to both treatment and control group as a post-test. There were no measurements taken during the intervention.

**Fidelity.** To ensure that the online blogging was implemented as intended by every student in the treatment group, the researcher was a second observer who monitors the process closely. The researcher and classroom teachers worked together to ensure that the online blogging intervention was only administered to the treatment group. The ESL students in both treatment and control group were not informed about the purpose of

the study.  The classroom teachers were instructed not to share their opinion about the

project in any other classes.  They were asked to provide a constant instruction and make

sure that the students know how to participate in the online blogs.  The researcher visited

the school sixteen times throughout the study to ensure 100% fidelity (see Appendix B).

**Ethical Considerations**

On agreeing to participate in a research project, the students were provided all of

the information that they needed to make the decision about participating in the research.

The student's name was not given in the final report to protect his/her confidentiality.

There was no perceived harm or physical injured expected during the intervention.  The

students attended the regular class hour with no extra class work, as the regular

assignment was transferred to the online writing platform.  For those students who

needed extra support in basic computer skills, the teacher was available after the class or

by appointment.

The study required students to participate online and complete the assignments in

a variety of formats, which caused the students to lose their focus on studying.  This

concern had a potential downside since it gave the students a chance to move their

attention back and forth between studying and various forms of technology.  To avoid

distraction, the researcher set up expectations and discipline for online participation.  The

teacher and researcher worked together to make sure that the students in the treatment

group did not easily get distracted and had good study habits to complete assignments

and make good use of online networks.

**Validity threats.**  Since the blogging intervention was provided online, there was

a possibility that the students in the treatment group would discuss the intervention with

the students of the control group.  There was also a likelihood that the students in the

treatment group were not participating in the blog discussion.  To address these validity

threats, the students in the treatment group were informed not to discuss their class

project or share their opinion with the students in other classes.  The teachers included the

second observer in the study process to monitor, encourage, and ensure that the students

participated in the online blogging.  The participation in the online blogging was counted

as extra points for student's final grade.

**Data Analyses**

All data were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences®

(SPSS®) for Windows, version 24.0.0 (SPSS, 2016).  No names or identifying

information were included in the data analysis.  Before analyses were conducted all data

were cleaned to ensure no outliers were present (Dimitrov, 2012).  After cleaning the

data, the final sample size was 20 participants for the treatment group and 17 participants

for the control group.  Independent (control and treatment groups) and paired (pre-test

and post-test) sample t-tests were conducted to determine the significant difference in

student perceptions between the mean scores on SPSME survey.  Further, before

interpreting the analytical output, Levene's Homogeneity of Variance was examined to

see if the assumption of equivalence had been violated (Levene, 1960).  If Levene's

Homogeneity of Variance was not violated (i.e., the variances were equal across groups),

data were interpreted for the assumption of equivalence; however, if the variances were

not equal across groups the corrected output will be used for interpretation.

**Results**

Two independent samples t-tests were conducted on the whole sample ($n = 37$)

for both the pre and post assessment scores.  Results for the pre-test were calculated to

find the mean for the treatment group ($M = 3.30$) and standard deviation ($SD = .64$) and

mean for the control group ($M = 3.07$) and standard deviation ($SD = .57$).  Levene's

Homogeneity of Variance was not violated ($p > .05$), meaning the variance between

groups was not statistically different and no correction was needed, and the t-test showed

non-significant differences between the mean scores on the pre-tests between the two

groups $t(35) = 1.15, p > .05$.  Meaning that both groups had similar perception toward

social media use in the classroom before they were exposed to the intervention (see Table

1).

Results for the post-test were calculated to find the mean for the treatment group

($M = 4.12$) and standard deviation ($SD = .40$) and mean for the control group ($M = 3.18$)

and standard deviation ($SD = .49$).  Levene's Homogeneity of Variance was not violated

($p > .05$), meaning the variance between groups was not statistically different and no

correction was needed, and the t-test showed significant differences between the mean

scores on the post-tests between the two groups $t(35) = 6.60, p < .001$.  The statistic

shows that the students in the treatment group demonstrate greater perception of

engagement and improved upon their learning performance as compared with the

students who did not receive social media intervention (see Table 1).  This finding

confirmed the hypothesis that students exposed to teacher integrated online social

networking would increase their participation and improve upon their learning

performance, as students in the treatment group scored statistically significantly higher on

the post-test than did the control group.


Table 1

*Results of Independent Samples T-Tests*

|  | Mean | SD |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Pre Test |  |  |
|   Treatment | 3.30 | .64 |
|   Control | 3.07 | .57 |
| Post Test |  |  |
|   Treatment | 4.12 | .40 |
|   Control | 3.18 | .49 |

*Note.* SD = Standard Deviation.


After determining the differences between pre and post assessment scores

between groups, two paired t-tests were run for both groups (i.e., treatment and control)

to determine if the mean scores from pre to post were significantly different within each

group (see Table 2).  Results for each group were as follows: treatment group, $t(19) = -7.26, p < .001$; control group, $t(16) = -1.51, p > .05$.  The negative t-value for each group

indicates an increase in scores from pre to post assessment.  Additionally, the results

show a significant change from pre-test to post-test in the treatment group (increase of

.82 points) but not in the control group (increase of .11 points).  Therefore, the treatment

group scored statistically significantly higher from pre to post-test; however, the control

group did not.  This indicates that the treatment group demonstrated a higher increase in

participant average scores than the control group.  Meaning that the intervention of online

blogging discussions was shown to be more effective than the traditional classroom

instruction for ESL students.  Again, these results confirm the researcher's hypothesis that

students perceptions about online learning would increase when using a blog.

Table 2

*Results of Paired T-Tests*

|  | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| Treatment Group | | |
| Pre | 3.30 | .64 |
| Post | 4.12 | .38 |
| Control Group | | |
| Pre | 3.07 | .57 |
| Post | 3.18 | .49 |

*Note.* SD = Standard Deviation.

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the ESL students' experience in the

classroom facilitated by using a social media platform, and how this platform supports

academic achievement.  This study included 20 ESL students who received an online

blogging intervention and 17 ESL students who received traditional classroom

instruction.  Based on previous findings, it was hypothesized that the students exposed to

teacher integrated online social networking in class (i.e., treatment group) would feel

more engaged and improve upon their learning performance, than those in the control

group (Al-Rahmi & Othman, 2013a; Chen et al., 2010; Faizi et al., 2013; Junco et al.,

2011).

The results of this study indicated that the use of a blog as an online writing

platform made students feel more engaged in the classroom than without the use of social

media.  The results of the post-test showed that students who received the online

blogging intervention had higher scores than students who received traditional classroom instruction.  As mentioned by Bakar and colleagues (2010), the use of a blog as an educational tool in the ESL classroom enhanced the students' reading and writing. During the four week online blogging intervention, the students in the treatment group were engaged in the class blog discussion.  As compared to the students in the class with traditional instruction only, the students in the treatment group enjoyed the online blogging discussion.  They began commenting to each other and posting their ideas related to the topic assigned each week.  These findings were reinforced by the studies cited in the literature review (Bakar, Latif, & Ya'acob, 2010).

Moreover, Chen and colleagues (2010) discovered that students who utilized social networking technologies in their learning were more likely to feel engaged and have higher gains in general education.  Through an analysis of pre and post-test scores in this study, the students in the treatment group had a greater increase in scores than the students in the control group.  In other words, the students in the treatment group demonstrated greater perception of engagement and improved upon their learning performance than the students who did not receive an online blogging intervention.  The results suggested that using a blog as an online writing platform had a positive effect on ESL students' learning performance.

Incorporating online social network in the classroom creates a different learning environment for students, by allowing students to have discussion with each other within a virtual community.  Students with low participation in traditional face to face discussion may have felt more comfortable expressing themselves and sharing their thoughts via text through online channels.  The students in the treatment group remarked

that using the blog as an online discussion platform had benefited their personal

relationships with their peers and teachers.  They could discuss the same content, build

upon conversations, and exchange ideas within the group.  Specifically, they were able to

construct their learning through the comments given by their friends, which encouraged

them to learn successfully.  By effectively incorporating social media in educationally

relevant ways, it may lead to a positive effect on student engagement (Revere & Kovach,

2011).  Although this study had positive findings that supported the researcher's

hypothesis, as with every study there were some limitations that should be noted.

**Limitations and Future Research**

One limitation in this study was time.  Due to time constraints, the study was

conducted over the course of four weeks.  The time constraint may have impacted student

growth.  A longer duration of intervention would provide richer data for more accurate

results of the intervention.  Another limitation in this study was that this research was

conducted with a small group in only one grade level of English proficiency in an adult

school.  Future studies should involve more participants and include participants from

different grade levels, as this would provide more information that might yield better or

more transferable findings.  Additionally, some ESL students were not exposed to the

online blogging previously, which limited participation for these students considerably,

compared with their classmates who were familiar with blogs.  Previous experiences and

comfort with online blogging may have affected the students' attitude and perspective

toward an integrated blog project in this research.  Thus, future research should provide a

longer pre-intervention period where participants can become familiar with blogs before

beginning the formal intervention.  In addition, there is a need for future research to

explore students' actual learning in and out of classrooms with social media, moving beyond just changes in students' attitude (e.g., observe actual writing on the blog and apply a word limit to the writing).

Another recommendation for future research is to conduct similar studies with younger students to determine if the findings of this study could be seen with school-aged student. It would be worthwhile to conduct a study using social media to improve students' language learning and engagement with the students in different age groups to increase the generalizability of findings. Finally, differences in the types of social media have not been considered in this study. Therefore, the need exists for future research to determine how other social media platforms can be incorporated into academic courses. It would be beneficial to determine how different types of social media have different effects on ESL students' learning performance in the future.

During a four-week intervention, this study provided support for the usefulness of a blog in an educational setting; particularly for the ESL students in the language-learning classroom. Students shared knowledge with their peers and used online forums (i.e., blogs) to discuss new knowledge they gained from the class. The finding of this study found that social media platforms are an effective way for ESL students to improve their writing and participation.

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## Appendix A

Student Perception Toward Social Media in Education Survey

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement.

Likert 5 points agree/disagree scale.
1 – strongly disagree
2 – disagree
3 – neutral/no opinion
4 – agree
5 – strongly agree

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Interactivity with peers** | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| 1.  Using the social media in class facilitates interaction with peers. | | | | | |
| 2.  Using the social media in class gives me the opportunity to discuss with peers. | | | | | |
| 3.  Using the social media in class facilitates dialog with peers. | | | | | |
| 4.  Using the social media in class allows the exchange of information with peers. | | | | | |
| **Interactivity with teachers** | | | | | |
| 1.  Using the social media in class facilitates interaction with the teacher. | | | | | |
| 2.  Using the social media gives me the opportunity to discuss with the teacher. | | | | | |
| 3.  Using the social media in class facilitates dialog with the teacher. | | | | | |
| 4.  Using the social media in class allows the exchange of information with the teacher. | | | | | |
| **Engagement** | | | | | |
| 1.  By using the social media this class has favored my personal relationships with my peers and teachers. | | | | | |
| 2.  By using the social media in this class, my peer and faculty interactions made me feel valuable. | | | | | |
| 3.  By using the social media I felt that my opinions have been taken into account in this class. | | | | | |
| **Perceived usefulness** | | | | | |
| 1.  I believe that using social media is a useful learning tool. | | | | | |
| 2.  I feel that using social media will help me to learn more about my class. | | | | | |
| 3.  I believe that using social media enhance my effectiveness. | | | | | |
| 4.  I believe that using social media will improve | | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| students' satisfaction with collaborative learning. | | | | |
| **Students' academic performance** | | | | |
| 1. Using of social media to facilitate academic activities and coordinate with peers. | | | | |
| 2. Using of social media to facilitate academic activities and coordinate with teachers. | | | | |
| 3. Group discussions can be arranged with my classmates using of social media and this will improve my academic performance. | | | | |
| 4. Using of social media to build a student-lecture relationship with my lecturers and this improves my academic performance. | | | | |
| 5. Using of social media improves my interaction with classmates and lecturers, thus, help me to improve my academic performance. | | | | |

**Appendix B**

Fidelity to intervention

| Date | Treatment/Control | Signature |
|---|---|---|
| Monday, February 27, 2017 | Treatment & Control | |
| Tuesday, February 28, 2017 | Treatment | |
| Wednesday, March 1, 2017 | Control | |
| Thursday, March 2, 2017 | Treatment | |
| Monday, March 6, 2017 | Control | |
| Tuesday, March 7, 2017 | Treatment | |
| Wednesday, March 8, 2017 | Control | |
| Thursday, March 9, 2017 | Treatment | |
| Monday, March 13, 2017 | Control | |
| Tuesday. March 14, 2017 | Treatment | |
| Wednesday, March 15, 2017 | Control | |
| Thursday, March 16, 2017 | Treatment | |
| Monday, March 27, 2017 | Control | |
| Tuesday, March 28, 2017 | Treatment | |
| Wednesday, March 29, 2017 | Control | |
| Thursday, March 30, 2017 | Treatment & Control | |