

Predictable Factors that Help Students Engage in Online EFL Classroom and their Relationship to Self-Management

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Abstract—Online teaching has become a decisive factor to keep growing in higher education settings. The present analytical correlational study examined the predictable factors that would help EFL Jordanian students engage in online learning in English courses after COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve the objective of the study, a validated and a reliable survey was administered to investigate the students' perceptions toward various factors that would affect their success and engagement in online EFL classroom. Additionally, the relationship among some factors was investigated. Fifty-nine EFL students in an English Language Skills course in a technical university college in Jordan were randomly selected to respond to a questionnaire which was adapted from Bernard [7]. Data of the study were analyzed using the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and Person Correlation Coefficient. Findings of the study confirmed that relationship among some factors has uncovered the importance of having basic skills in building other skills. A positive relationship was also found between the factors that help students engage in online learning and self-management. Findings of the study would be helpful for teachers, instructors, and course designers when designing and delivering online courses as well as policy makers.

Keywords—EFL, interaction, online learning, self-confidence, self-management

1 Introduction

Unprecedented rapid global changes in the educational systems have occurred as a response to COVID-19 where the World Health Organization declared it as a pandemic. COVID-19 has caused the change of the educational systems. It has forced all the educational institutions in most countries to shift to remote learning in all its different kinds whether synchronous or asynchronous. It has been affirmed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2020) that 1,186,127,211 learners were affected across the world, approximately about 67.7% of the total enrolled learners from 144 country-wide closures [3].

The rapid migration from conventional learning to online has raised many questions regarding the preparedness of the educational institutions generally and uncovered the importance of utilizing technology in various sectors. Before COVID-19, the utilization of technology was not clear enough to the extent that enables these institutions deploy the emergent technologies appropriately. However, it has been noted that the negative effects of this pandemic on people all around the world have increased the value of investing in technology as a sustainable method of teaching. This pandemic has opened new doors to several institutions. Thus, all policy makers and educators have started thinking that migrating to online education is not a temporary solution and it should be looked at as the most sustainable method of learning. Meanwhile instructional activities should become more blended considering the challenges experienced during the pandemic and transform them to opportunities, people should be prepared positively toward adapting to the use of technology as an essential partner in the process of learning [2].

Online courses delivery has imposed big challenges on both teachers and students. Teachers need intensive training that enable them to shift successfully to online environments. Similarly, students are not familiar to this new emergent kind of education particularly in the Arab world. Online learning necessitates students to put great efforts in the learning process because they have to be independent learners. Thus, meetings the challenges together could help both teachers and learners discover the factors that make the learning process flexible, understandable, effective, beneficial and feasible.

During the pandemic, many universities around the world have fully digitalized their operations understanding the dire need to adapt according to the current situation. There was an overnight shift of conventional classrooms into e-classrooms, that is, educators have shifted their entire pedagogical approach to tackle new market conditions and adapt to the changing situations. During COVID-19 tough time, the concern was not about whether online teaching–learning methods could provide quality education, it was rather how academic institutions would be able to adopt online learning in such a massive manner [11]. Examining students’ perceptions would undoubtedly reveal the areas that need improvement in online teaching as well as would give insights to both teachers and educators about the opportunities that can be invested [29].

Investigating the data that was collected from students could provide in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of online learning [28]. It has been stated by Jackson and Helms [16] that, “the learner’s or student’s perception offers crucial information in assessing and defining quality” (p. 8). During the rapid transition to online teaching as a result of COVID-19, the need to address the factors that would improve the students’ performance in online courses from their perspective has become an urgent need. This study intended to explore the factors that constitute students’ perceptions about the decisive factors that would help in students’ engagement and success in EFL online courses.

Several factors were considered in the present study after reviewing the past studies. These factors included students’ pre-requisite skills, general beliefs about online learning, desire of interaction, and self -management, as confirmed by Bernard and others [7]. Similarly, Jiang and Ting [17] affirmed that the importance of instructional emphasis on learning through interaction significantly influenced students’ perceptions of learning. Moreover, flexibility and availability of opportunities to communicate teachers in online environment were among the factors that affected students’ positively [18]. Further, technology is a crucial factor that could play a vital role in the success of

online learning [13], [14]. Students' ability to overcome the technical problems and the way they deal with them have been valued from the students' perspectives' [27].

This study was carried out to present the factors that would help the students engage and succeed in online learning from their perspective in a not the Technical University College in Jordan during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, it intended to examine the relationship between these factors and self-management. By the end of March 2020, Luminus Technical University College (LTUC) has transmitted to online teaching as a result of COVID-19. LTUC has distinguished itself from all other Jordanian institutions in its preparedness to meet the pandemic. Thus, its transition was very smooth due to the LMS it has and the quality of the training its staff has received. This study focuses on the following research questions:

1. What are the most predictable factors that help students engage in online learning in EFL classroom?
2. What is the level of self-management for students engagement in online learning in EFL classroom?
3. Is there any significant statistical relationship between the students' responses on predictable factors that help students engage in online learning and their responses on self-management?

The results of this study would definitely provide implications for the improvement of teaching online English courses. In particular, it is hoped that this study would provide a better understanding of the issues related to teaching and learning in online in the EFL context. Additionally, it would provide the teachers with some of the practices that help students to be more self-disciplined.

2 Literature review

Online learning literature has expanded considerably after the appearance of COVID-19 in 2020. Online learning emphasizes Internet-based courses offered synchronously and asynchronously. Synchronous learning is a form of learning with direct interactions between students and teachers while simultaneously using online forms such as conferences and online chat. Meanwhile, asynchronous learning is a form of learning indirectly (not at the same time) using an independent learning approach. Some subject matter is designed and displayed on LMS on Moodle, or email systems, blogs, online discussions, Wikipedia, videos, articles, and other platforms [26], [23]. During the shift to online learning, public and private institutions have faced many obstacles. These obstacles represented firstly in the poverty of the infrastructure. Secondly, the shift from teaching traditionally through face-to-face to more online methods. Thirdly, the lack of training the teachers have received in changing the instructional materials to online and the methods to interact with students and reach each other easily. Fourthly, teachers have not been informed even theoretically about the difference between teaching face-to face and online. Fifthly, the difficulties in dealing with technology.

Reviewing the factors that help in students' engagement in online learning in the past studies while considering the challenges that face students, is a very important issue needs to be addressed. Thus, this study presents the issue from the students' perceptions. Several factors have been considered while investigating this issue. Students' digital skills,

beliefs toward online learning, self-management, and interaction [7]. Further, in Parkes & Reading [22], students were also found to be poorly prepared for several e-learning competencies and academic-type competencies. Additionally, there is a low-level preparedness among the students concerning the usage of Learning Management Systems.

The unexpected change to online learning has become a measure of organizational agility for several academic institutions which have primarily focused on the transfer of the educational content to the digital world and not specifically on online teaching and delivery methods [1]. Nonetheless, it was a reminder of the lack of resources in academic institutions and the social marginalization of students, where insufficient access and availability of the internet and the lack of latest technology have affected organizational responsiveness and students' capacity to participate in digital learning. Lack of proper interaction with instructors is another major concern associated with online learning [31]. Additionally, virtual classes cannot be of interest to students who are tactile learners. Conventional classroom socialization is another major missing in online learning. Students only communicate with their fellows digitally and never see fellow students in person, and thus the real-time sharing of ideas, knowledge and information is partially missing from the digital learning world.

Twigg [25] linked the problems of online education to: (a) the requirement of separate quality assurance standards, (b) programs having low (or no) quality standards, and (c) the lack of consensus on what constitutes learning quality. Federal regulators, accreditors, state regulators, administrators, faculty, and students need to have a better understanding of what contributes to quality in online learning [21].

Eaton [12] argued that online education has “the potential to disrupt basic quality expectations within the academic community throwing higher education and accreditation into disarray” (p. 10). Recognizing Eaton's and others concerns, Yang and Durrington [30] stated that “To prevent disruption and chaos in the education arena, accrediting organizations need to assess distance learning over the Internet to verify that it meets their standards thereby establishing the credibility of the medium to other stakeholders” (p. 2). One step in this direction is to more specifically identify problems and issues related to online education [30].

From a macro viewpoint, very little is established regarding the decisive predictors that affect online education [20]. Furthermore, the capacity to successfully teach digitally is likely to differ based on the wide range of learning goals that guide the instructional and the educational priorities [19]. Consequently, educators and policymakers alike recognize the importance of understanding their students' perceptions in online learning environments as they play a vital role in uncovering the factors that affect the learning process. Consumer demands, organizational excellence and efficiency, and accountability to stakeholders should be the driving forces that ensure the quality of online courses.

3 Past studies

Past studies [5, 6, 15, 24, 4, 8] have reported different favourable and unfavourable perceptions by students on online learning. Various studies have reported that having digital literacy skills in online environment, the general beliefs toward online learning,

self-management, and interaction are among the most important factors that affect online learning from students' perspectives.

Research has affirmed that students have had some technical difficulties in online learning. In a Jordanian study, Almahasees et al., [5] confirmed that although the merits of online learning which have been represented in self-learning or directing, flexibility, and reducing the costs, teachers and students have uncovered some problems related to technical and internet issues, lack of interaction and motivation, data privacy and security.

In another two recent studies conducted by Al-Nofaie [6] & Al-Qahtani [15] within the Saudi context, students showed positive attitudes toward online learning. In her study, Al-Nofaie [6] identified the challenges of online learning from students' perspectives on their learning experiences during the sudden shift to online learning and suggested practical solutions. 25 university students majoring in the English language and enrolled in Morphology class were included in the study. Based on an analysis of the students' learning logs, the results showed students' preference to asynchronous environment rather than synchronous due to its flexibility. Further, the study revealed that virtual education was not always preferred to students. Similarly, Al-Qahtani [15] investigated teachers' and students' perceptions of English as a foreign language (EFL) in virtual classes. The study aimed to highlight the effect of this kind of virtual class on enhancing communication skills. This study was conducted in the English Department, King Khalid University. 30 teachers and students who were divided into two equal groups were included in the study. Data were collected via a questionnaire. The results showed positive attitudes toward teaching and learning through EFL virtual classes from the students and the teachers' perspectives. The results affirmed the significant role of virtual courses in enhancing communication skills.

Further, Ta'amneh [24] examined students' attitudes towards virtual classes in learning English courses. He aimed to identify the obstacles that face students in online learning. The sample of the study consisted of 336 students at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia. A questionnaire was administered to collect data. The results asserted that students' attitudes towards the use of the online learning were positive. To elaborate more, students considered virtual learning as a tool that helped them in organizing their homework, assignments, and time. They agreed that the use of virtual learning saved their times and efforts. Furthermore, students confirmed the existence of some pedagogical, technical and personnel problems while attending virtual classes.

In Alshumaimeri & Alhumud [4] study, students affirmed the effectiveness of virtual classrooms in enhancing their communication skills. The sample consisted of 43 female students from the English Department at a Saudi university. A mixed method design was implemented to collect data. Two data collection instruments were used: a questionnaire and observations. The findings showed students' lack of confidence, anxiety when making mistakes, and lack of vocabulary as their greatest challenges when communicating in English. The qualitative data revealed that virtual classrooms could play a significant role in enhancing students' communication skills. However, despite the positive attitudes toward online classes, students agreed that the lack of face-to-face communication was a major obstacle in online learning.

In another EFL context, Cakrawati [8] investigated students' perceptions on the use of online learning platform in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. 40 participants were involved in the study. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected via

a questionnaire and interviews. Most of the participants affirmed the efficacy of using Edmodo or Quipper in English teaching and learning in terms of time, online platforms could be a good choice to encourage practicing language skills, acquiring new vocabulary, and helping students in understanding the content. However, the results showed that slow-speed internet was one of the main difficulties in using online.

Some of the studies have focused on the instructional practices in online environment between the students and their teachers, the students and the content, and among the students themselves. For example, Cheung, A. [9] has investigated the interaction patterns that occur in online environment and its effectiveness on the students. In his study, Cheung examined multi-modal exchanges between the teacher and the students. Data were obtained via 80 recordings from whole-class and small-group sessions over in four months. Various modes of synchronous computer-mediated communication that the teacher utilized were analysed. The findings showed that skilful students could demonstrate remarkable interactional skills during small-group sessions. One concern emerged through interaction was students' reticence, though it was alleviated by extending the wait-time. The study confirmed the importance for re-conceptualizing the constituents of classroom interactional practices. Similarly, Jiang and Ting [17] found that the degree of instructional emphasis on learning through interaction significantly influenced students' perceptions of online learning. Results indicated that percent of grade weight on discussion and instructor's specification of requirements of students' contributions in discussion were significantly and positively correlated to students' perceived amount of learning.

Reviewing the past studies, it was found that very few studies have considered all the elements that might affect the students' engagement in online education in the Arab context. The researchers in the presents study tried to highlight the most important factors that might contribute to a better online education in the Jordanian context in particular and the Arab world in general. Because of the dearth of studies in online education in Jordan, the present study would contribute to the literature of online education not only in Jordan but also in the Arab context.

4 Methodology

4.1 Participants and context

The present analytical correlational study attempts to explore the predictable factors that help students' engage in online English courses and their relationship to self-management for students at Luminus Technical University College (LTUC), in Jordan. Researchers who choose this design are interested in research that aims to detect the relationships between some variables [10]. The target population in this study is represented by all students who registered for the English Language Skills course at the Foundation Department, LTUC, Jordan. The sample included 59 students who were randomly selected. The included students in the study have already passed some other online English courses. The English Language Skills course was delivered online through D2L platform integrated with Zoom. The students' ages ranged between 19–21 years old. They were also homogenous in terms of their mother tongue (which is

Arabic), cultural background and the years of studying EFL (12 years) in the Jordanian schools.

4.2 Data collection

Data were collected using a questionnaire for predicting online learning achievement which was adapted from Bernard et al., [7]. The questionnaire used in this study consisted of three parts. The first part was constructed to collect background information about the participants (age, gender, class level, and number of English online hours that have been taken). The second part of the questionnaire includes 18 items, which covered three domains (Confidence in prerequisite skills, (5) items, General beliefs about online learning, (7) items, and Desire for interaction, (6) items). The third part includes 4 items on self-management. Five-point Likert scale (1=never, 2=occasionally, 3=sometimes, 4=usually and 5=always) was used to obtain data on students' perceptions toward the factors that help them engage in online English courses and self-management. Validation of the instrument was conducted by asking a jury of university instructors to give their remarks on the validity of the questionnaire. Analysis of reliability of the questionnaire refers to how the items in the questionnaire are interrelated among themselves. For questionnaires, one of the most popular methods is the Alfa Cronbach method. Value of the Alfa Cronbach method results of 59 students were (0.82–0.89) for the domains and (0.90) for the whole questionnaire

4.3 Data analysis

The factors that help students engage in online learning in EFL classroom were addressed through analysing students' responses to 18 items. The researchers examined these factors in relation to students' self-management. Self-management consisted of 4 items. To specifically address this, SPSS software was considered to answer the research questions. The data were analyzed by using the descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation) and Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

5 Results

The results of the present study are presented by research question:

Question 1: What are the most predictable factors that help students engage in online learning in EFL classroom?

As presented in Table 1, students' responses on the most predictable factors that help them engage in online learning in EFL classroom were computed. Table 1 shows that "confidence in prerequisite skills" domain ranked first based on the mean value (4.13±0.74). Meanwhile, "desire for interaction" domain ranked second based on the mean value (3.95±0.76), "general beliefs about online learning" domain ranked the least based on the mean value (3.35±0.57), which is considered as neither high nor low. The results indicate that overall mean score of the students' responses on predictable factors that help them engage in online learning in EFL classroom was (3.77±0.49).

Table 1. Means and standard deviations of the students’ responses on the most predictable factors that help them engage in online learning in EFL classroom

#	The Domains	# of Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Degree
1	Confidence in prerequisite skills	5	4.13	0.74	High
3	Desire for interaction	7	3.95	0.76	High
2	General beliefs about online learning	6	3.35	0.57	Mid
The Whole Predictable Factors		18	3.77	0.49	High

Note: Out of (5).

As presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4, the items in each domain were arranged based on the mean value of each item.

Table 2 presents the first four top items which included, “I am able to easily access the online classes via Zoom” and it ranked the first based on the mean value (4.56±0.82), “I have been trained by my power users in the college to communicate electronically via LMS and Pulse application which has been downloaded on my mobile” and it ranked the second based on the mean value (4.39±1.00), “I am able to communicate with my classmates as well as my teachers electronically” and it ranked third based on the mean value (4.25±1.03), and “I can text my teachers and my classmates via LMS on my mobile” ranked the fourth based on the mean value (4.27±1.08), where they all considered as high. However, item number 5, “I feel comfortable communicating online in English” ranked the least based on the mean value (3.29±1.44), which is considered as neither high nor low. Based on the overall mean score of the students’ responses on confidence in prerequisite skills domain it was (4.13±0.74).

Table 2. Means and standard deviations of the students’ responses on confidence in prerequisite skills items

#	The Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Degree
1	I am able to easily access the online classes via Zoom.	4.56	0.82	V. High
2	I have been trained by my power users in the college to communicate electronically via LMS and Pulse application which has been downloaded on my mobile.	4.39	1.00	V. High
3	I am able to communicate with my classmates as well as my teachers electronically.	4.25	1.03	V. High
4	I can text my teachers and my classmates via LMS on my mobile.	4.27	1.08	V. High
5	I feel comfortable communicating online in English.	3.29	1.44	Mid
The Whole Domain		4.13	0.74	High

Note: Out of (5).

Table 3 shows that item 9, “I can practice English grammar via the online activities outside the class” ranked first based on the mean value (4.34±0.86), which is considered as very high. However, item number 8, “Learning in class or online at home is the same” ranked the least based on the mean value, which is considered as low (2.00±1.25). Based on the analysis of the results, items 7 and 11 where considered as neither high nor low based on the mean value (3.10±1.31) and (2.66±1.65) respectively. The total mean score of the students’ responses on general beliefs about online learning domain was (3.35±0.57).

Table 3. Means and standard deviations of the students’ responses on general beliefs about online learning items

#	The Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Degree
9	I can practice English grammar via the online activities outside the class.	4.34	0.86	<i>V. High</i>
10	I feel can improve my listening skills using the online activities and links provided by the teacher.	4.32	0.80	<i>V. High</i>
6	I am motivated by the content on my LMS outside the class.	3.81	1.21	<i>High</i>
12	I believe I can complete online course without any difficulty.	3.47	1.32	<i>High</i>
7	Learning activities contain clear, detailed instructions for students better than a conventional class.	3.10	1.31	<i>Mid</i>
11	Online learning at home is more motivating to me than a face-to-face class.	2.66	1.65	<i>Mid</i>
8	Learning in class or online at home is the same.	2.00	1.25	<i>Low</i>
The Whole Domain		3.35	0.57	<i>Mid</i>

Note: Out of (5).

Table 4 shows that item 18, “I can interact with the teacher via the posts he shares with us via the LMS outside the class” ranked first based on the mean value (4.46±0.84), which is considered as very high when compared to the other items. With reference to the remaining items 17, 14, 16, 15, and 13, all were considered as high. However, item number 13, “As a student, I enjoy working with other students via Breakout rooms” ranked the least based on the mean value (3.49±1.43) although it was considered as high. The results indicate that the overall mean score of the students’ responses on desire for interaction domain was (3.95±0.76) and considered as high.

Table 4. Means and standard deviations of the students’ responses on desire for interaction items

#	The Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Degree
18	I can interact with the teacher via the posts he shares with us via the LMS outside the class.	4.46	0.84	<i>V. High</i>
17	I can collaborate with other students outside the class to finish the tasks and the assignments.	3.98	1.15	<i>High</i>
14	I feel that face-to-face contact with my teacher is necessary for learning to occur.	3.97	1.25	<i>High</i>
16	Online learning activities encourages me to interact with the content outside the class.	3.92	1.06	<i>High</i>
15	Online learning activities encourage me to interact with students outside the class.	3.73	1.14	<i>High</i>
13	As a student, I enjoy working with other students via Breakout rooms.	3.49	1.43	<i>High</i>
The Whole Domain		3.95	0.76	<i>High</i>

Note: Out of (5).

Question 2: What is the level of self-direction or management for students engagement in online learning in EFL classroom?

To answer the second research question, the researcher used the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) of the students’ responses on the self-direction or management in the EFL online class. As shown in Table 5, meanwhile item (19) “When it comes to learning and studying, I am a self-directed person” ranked first based on the mean value (4.37±0.81), item (22), “In my studies, I set goals and have a high degree of initiative” ranked second based on the mean value (4.20±0.92), and both are considered as very high. However, item (21), “I am able to manage my study time effectively and easily complete assignments on time” ranked the least based on the mean value (3.69±0.97). The overall mean score of the students’ responses on self-direction items was (4.02±0.73).

Table 5. Means and standard deviations of the students’ responses on self-direction or management items that help them engage in online learning in EFL classroom

#	The Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Degree
19	When it comes to learning and studying, I am a self-directed person.	4.37	0.81	<i>V. High</i>
22	In my studies, I set goals and have a high degree of initiative.	4.20	0.92	<i>V. High</i>
20	In my studies, I am self-disciplined and find it easy to put time for reading and doing all my homework.	3.81	1.06	<i>High</i>
21	I am able to manage my study time effectively and easily complete assignments on time.	3.69	0.97	<i>High</i>
<i>The Whole Self-Direction or Management Items</i>		4.02	0.73	<i>High</i>

Note: Out of (5).

Question 3: Is there any significant statistical relationship between the students’ responses on predictable factors that help students engage in online learning and their responses on self-management?

The third research question intended to identify the relationship between the predictable factors that help students engage in online learning and their responses on self-management. To achieve this, the researcher used Pearson correlation coefficient. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Pearson correlation coefficients of the study subjects’ responses on the self-management and desire for interaction

Predictable Factors that Help Students Engage in Online Learning	Pearson Correlation	P-Value
Confidence in prerequisite skills	0.525	0.009*
General beliefs about online learning	0.618	0.003*
Desire for interaction	0.659	0.002*
<i>The whole predictable factors</i>	0.692	0.001*

Note: *Significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.01$).

Table 6 shows that there is a strong positive correlation coefficient between the study subjects' responses on the predictable factors that help students engage in online learning and their responses on self-management.

6 Discussion

In this study, we have examined the predictable factors that affect the online learning in the Jordanian EFL context. These factors included the general beliefs about online learning, confidence in the prerequisite skills, interaction and self-management. A quantitative research design was used to address the three research questions of the study. Data were analyzed using SPSS tests which included descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages) and Pearson Correlation Coefficient. This study has revealed that the students' responses on the most predictable factors that affect Jordanian EFL students engage in online learning in the English Language Skills course are arranged as follows: (1) confidence in prerequisite skills domain ranked first, (2) desire for interaction ranked second, (3) and the general beliefs about online learning domain ranked third. While the study revealed a strong positive correlation coefficient between the students' responses on the predictable factors that affect the students' engagement in online learning and their responses on self-management. These findings can be attributed to the awareness of the students' ability to use technology at LTUC. LTUC has adopted the blended methods of teaching very early before COVID-19 and it was in a continuous work to invest appropriately in the educational technology. Thus, the shift to online learning took place smoothly, fast, and professionally.

Talking about LTUC context, its students are familiar with the use of technology in learning. Even though, technical problems would appear from time to time. The results of the present study showed the students' positivity toward online learning as well as comfort with some of the basic skills and components of online learning which could help in determining their self-confidence as users of technology and online learners. Examples on these skills included the ease in accessing online classes via Pulse application which is integrated with Zoom, the ability to communicate electronically with their teachers as well as their classmates via the LMS, and the comfort in communicating in English. With reference to the findings of our study, Al-Qahtani [15] asserted similar results with regard to the improvement in communication skills in the virtual classes. However, the results of the study were opposite to some of the results reported in Alshumaimeri & Alhumud [4], where students showed lack of self-confidence and anxiety when making mistakes.

In addition, interaction has been looked at as one of the key factors that leads to the success of online learning. The results showed that instructor's interaction with their students had a positive impact on the students' perceptions toward online learning. Further, students' satisfaction in online learning was high because students received training to use LMS and Pulse application. Even though, lack of internet connection could affect the levels interaction. Opposite to what has been reported in Al-mahasees et al., [5] study, where they affirmed that one of the obstacles in the online learning was the lack of interaction among the students themselves, the teachers and the students, or the students and the content. Similarly, this was asserted by Alshumaimeri &

Alhumud [4]. Thus, all the previous types of interaction should be encouraged in online classes.

Furthermore, the results revealed that students were aware to the difference between online learning and conventional learning. The results also affirmed that online learning was neither better nor worse than face-to-face learning. These results were consistent with An-Nofae [6] study where the results showed that online education was not always preferred to students. Additionally, students showed that asynchronous environment was more preferred and motivating than synchronous. This might be attributed to the flexibility in choosing the suitable time to do their assignments.

Self-management is one of the most important factors that help the success of online learning from the students' perspective. Stating course goals and objectives at the beginning of any course should be communicated clearly with the students in first orientation classes. Getting know what is expected from the students would help students overcome their fears from the course and would reduce the levels of anxiety. Monitoring students' progress would be helpful to keep them motivated. As a result, students' opportunities to become self-directed learners would improve. In the current study, the students showed high level of self-management. Further, the strong relationship that was revealed between the prerequisite skills, general beliefs toward online learning, and desire for interaction and self-management could draw the teachers' attention to the factors that could enhance the online learning process. Self-management would definitely leads to creating an independent learner. Online learning needs students to be more independent learners. The results of the study are supported by Ta'amneh [24] and Cakrawati [8], where they affirmed the goodness of virtual learning as a tool to improve students' ability in organizing their homework, assignments, and time during the EFL online classes.

Establishing a healthy online environment is the teachers, course designers, and policy makers' responsibility. Studies have been done to uncover the gaps in online learning. Thus, generalizations cannot be made based on the present study. More studies should be conducted to examine different factors as well as various contexts need to be considered to make online learning easy, and accessible to a greater audience of students.

7 Conclusion

This analytical correlational study aimed at identifying the most predictable factors that help EFL Jordanian students engage in English online classes in an English Language Skills course. This study also sought to identify the relationship between the confidence in prerequisite skills of online learning, desire for interaction, and the general beliefs about online learning and self-management. This study showed students positive perceptions toward the most predictable factors that help Jordanian EFL students engage in online learning in an English Language Skills course. The findings affirmed that confidence in prerequisite skills domain ranked first, desire for interaction ranked second, and the general beliefs about online learning domain ranked third. Further, the study confirmed a strong positive relationship between the students'

responses on the predictable factors that affect students' engagement in online learning and their responses on self-management. The findings of the study could contribute to the knowledge in the field of online learning in the EFL Jordanian context, and other EFL contexts. Online learning is a complex process which necessitates various factors to be considered to guarantee a successful and a sustainable online learning. Uncovering the relationship between different factors would help in the improvement of online learning in various contexts.

Future studies may focus on other contexts. Different factors may be examined. Further, employing different methods of qualitative and quantitative research methods could contribute in the field as well. Meanwhile the present study has been limited to studying confidence in the prerequisite skills, desire for interaction, the general beliefs toward online learning, and self-management, other studies could consider the different levels of interaction in online environment, the online preference learning style (e.g., synchronous or asynchronous) and social presence in online learning.

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