GENDER DIFFERENCES IN EFL UNDERGRADUATES' DIGITAL LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY USE

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The evolution of digital technology has revolutionized teaching and learning on all levels of the education system across almost every country in the world. School stakeholders have recognized the importance of equality among students in their ability to use technology for learning purposes as well as their usage to explore, create, collaborate, and communicate with teachers and other learners at schools, at home, or in a broader context outside schools (Fraillon et al., 2014). Although the topic has been investigated by a host of researchers and scholars in different educational contexts, the results of those studies remain controversial (ACARA, 2015; Kaarakainen et al., 2018). In the current study, the researchers aimed to explore the level of digital literacy and technology utilization among 655 fourth-year English as a foreign language undergraduates who were joining English courses at Vietnamese universities. An adapted questionnaire was used to assess students' technological knowledge and their digital skills as well as their usage of technologies for language learning purposes. The questionnaire was randomly administered to students via an online platform, then the data was analyzed with software like SPSS, Amos and Conquest. Multiple data analysis methods were used to check the reliability and validity of the instrument, such as content validity, confirmatory factor analysis, and item validity. T-test was used to investigate the differences between two genders in terms of their level of using technology and their frequency of usage in language classrooms. The results of the study confirmed that the instrument is reliable and valid to assess students' technology level and usage. It was also revealed that female learners had a better knowledge about technologies than their male counterparts while males' skills surpassed females, and there was a significant disparity between the two genders in their usage of online learning and task-based tools. The findings of the study may contribute to the research of technology competence and usage in teaching and learning languages under the light of technology integration. It could also be a reference for school stakeholders to ensure that both males and females are given opportunities to enhance their digital knowledge and skills as well as to receive fair opportunities to use technology in language classrooms at schools.

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