Importance of Assistive Mobile Applications for Dyslexic Students in Saudi Arabia

Abstract:

Worldwide, Education systems have been affected by Covid-19, with many countries suspending physical engagement within their educational institutions to minimize the pandemic's massive impact. Therefore, mobile learning (M-learning) has become more important than ever in supporting learning flexibility and availability, leading to a clear trend in the learning process for this significant and valuable society sector. Much research has been conducted in measuring the benefits of using Mobile Applications (as a learning platform) for students in general, but also specifically for students with learning disabilities such as dyslexia. The explosive development of mobile applications has given M-learning new and powerful opportunities. Although a significant amount of research has discussed M-learning with dyslexic students in multiple languages, it is considered to be in its initial stages in many other languages; especially in Arabic countries. Thus, it is worthy of investigating the gaps related to such matters. This paper focuses on developing a mobile application that aims to enhance Arabic dyslexic students’ reading skills. The focus is to evaluate this technology's usability by assessing its effects on each dyslexic student’s experience and advantages. The proposed mobile application is applied to dyslexic students in Saudi Arabia who are eight to ten years old. The preliminary results showed promising prospects in such contexts for mobile learning, especially for dyslexic students. Students showed very positive attitudes towards the proposed mobile application, leading to better engagement with Arabic language learning.

Keywords: Dyslexia, Saudi Arabia, Mobile Application, M-Learning, Dyslexic students.