

Cultural Influence on Online Educational Simulation: A Comparison of the Attitudes of Jewish And Arab Pre-Service Teachers towards Online Simulations

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ABSTRACT:- This study examines the differential attitudes toward online educational simulations among pre-service teachers in Israel's Jewish and Arab societies. While prior research has investigated the cultural and social disparities between these two groups across various domains, the influence of these disparities on attitudes toward online educational simulations remains underexplored. A quantitative investigation was implemented to address this knowledge gap, employing a research questionnaire distributed among Jewish and Arab pre-service teachers in Israel (n=65, 80% females). Consistent with existing literature, the study identified a positive relationship between students' academic performance, the number of digital tools employed, attitudes towards the simulations, and the motivation to engage. Interestingly, diverging from previous research, a positive correlation emerged between the society's level of tradition and attitudes towards the simulations and motivation to participate. The subsequent discussion contemplates these findings and the possible reasons for these contrasts with established literature-based hypotheses.

Keywords: educational simulations, online educational simulation, pre-service teachers, pre-service teachers' attitudes, culture

I. INTRODUCTION

This study explores the differing attitudes toward online educational simulations among educators within Israel's Jewish and Arab sectors. Educational simulations, encompassing workshops and exercises simulating realistic teaching scenarios, offer pre-service teachers valuable firsthand experiences. These simulations cover a range of teaching situations, from traditional frontal didactic instruction to managing disciplinary issues, value conflicts, and boundary ambiguities, among others. It is widely accepted that such simulations, as part of teacher training, furnish efficient preparation for professional and pedagogical encounters, bolster teachers' sense of self-efficacy, and enhance their effectiveness in their roles (Yablon et al., 2022).

The ongoing information revolution and digitalization characteristic of the 21st century has permeated various facets of daily and professional life, education included. Over the past decade, global secondary and higher education institutions have leveraged digital tools to augment teaching and learning processes. This has also impacted teacher training, particularly educational simulations, most of which now occur online. This shift enables educators to partake in simulations remotely, review recordings later, and receive detailed feedback through personal devices (stationary, mobile, or handheld) (Ade-Ojo et al., 2022).

However, the online educational simulations (with all their inherent features) represent only one side of the equation, as the effectiveness of these tools also depends on the educators themselves. Among the array of internal and external factors influencing educators' attitudes towards online educational simulations (for more, see: Baumann-Birkbeck et al., 2022), cultural factors are notably significant within the Israeli context due to the socio-cultural disparities between the Jewish majority and the Arab ethnonational minority.

Recognizing the significance of these factors, this study aims to explore any existing disparities in attitudes toward online educational simulations and participation between educators from the Jewish and Arab sectors. The broader theme of Jewish-Arab relations in Israel, especially the cultural and social differences, has been extensively studied. However, the impact of these cultural differences on attitudes toward online educational simulations among educators has yet to be comprehensively addressed. This study intends to contribute to filling these knowledge gaps in the literature.

The structure of this study will begin with a review of the current scholarly literature on online educational simulations, the factors shaping attitudes towards them, and the critical socio-cultural gaps between Israel's Jewish and Arab sectors. The presentation of the research questions and hypotheses will follow this. Subsequently, the methodology section will detail the research methods, tools, and process. The fourth chapter will present the research findings based on the statistical analysis of the data. Finally, the discussion and conclusion chapter will integrate the research findings with the existing literature, culminating in the conclusions and future directions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Online educational simulations are becoming increasingly popular, offering an accessible, interactive learning experience to educators everywhere, with a sensation of total immersion. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a sudden shift to online education in academia and school systems in Israel. This transition accentuated socioeconomic disparities among Israeli populations, placing the education system before a formidable challenge. Amidst this shift, online simulations started gaining traction in Israel. While ethical concerns persist, like data storage, usage, photography, and recording, online educational simulations offer many benefits (Self & Stengel, 2021).

Online simulations allow studying various teaching styles regardless of geographic location. Furthermore, they can teach multiple subjects and skills, which is particularly effective for promoting in-depth learning, problem-solving capabilities, and interpersonal communication. The primary goal of online educational simulations is to provide a supportive, interactive learning environment where teachers can develop the skills and knowledge they need to become proficient educators in the 21st-century digital era (Dallinger et al., 2020; Levin & Flavian, 2020; Levin & Paryente, 2021; Pasacucci et al., 2014; Tutticci et al., 2018).

Several factors may influence the efficacy of online educational simulations, including the design of the simulation, learner engagement level, and the integration between online and offline components. Successful online educational simulations must be well-planned and designed to give teachers agency and control over their learning experience. Along with these factors, the digital environment (Floridy, 2010, 2014, 2015; Levin & Mamlok, 2021; Levin & Tsybulsky, 2017, 2019; Prensky, 2001) in which these simulations are used and education continues to evolve and develop, may impact the effectiveness of the simulations. The increasing reliance on digital technologies in education has created a new learning environment characterized by access to learning materials and sources from anywhere and anytime, alongside developing 21st-century skills. The digital environment can allow teachers more flexibility and convenience in the teaching and learning processes. However, it may pose challenges concerning accessibility and the need to adapt to new technologies and various knowledge acquisition and creative types.

In the digital era, digital culture (Levin & Mamlok, 2021) has significantly influenced the development and use of online educational simulations. Digital culture has made online educational simulations more available and accessible. Due to the swift proliferation of digital technologies and the internet, creating and sharing online simulations has become simpler and cheaper, thus expanding accessibility for a broader range of students and educators. Another way in which digital culture has influenced online educational simulations is by making them more interactive and engaging. Digital culture has led to new technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality, which can be utilized to create more immersive and engaging online simulations. These technologies enable students to interact with simulated environments more naturally and intuitively, making learning more effective and enjoyable. Additionally, digital culture has led to the development of more sophisticated and realistic simulations. Technological advancements in computer graphics and other digital technologies have made it possible to create simulations with more precise details to enhance the learning experience.

The increasing popularity and use of social media, video games, and various forms of digital entertainment have also shaped online educational simulations at the form and design level. Game-based learning, "gamification," and principles from the field of computer game design have been increasingly integrated into the design of simulations, which has been shown to arouse more significant interest in students (Dicheva, 2015; Mora et al., 2017; Wai Chu & Fowler, 2020; Wiggins, 2016).

Moreover, digital culture has fostered the development of online communities and platforms dedicated to sharing and discussing online educational simulations. This enables educators and students to share resources and collaborate on creating new simulations, potentially improving and expanding the use of online educational simulations in education. In summary, digital culture has facilitated the creation of online educational simulations that are more interactive, immersive, and engaging, providing students with more and better learning opportunities, irrespective of their location.

The literature suggests that online educational simulations can be a potent tool in promoting deep learning, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities. However, their effectiveness is influenced by many factors, including simulation design, student involvement level, and integration between online and offline

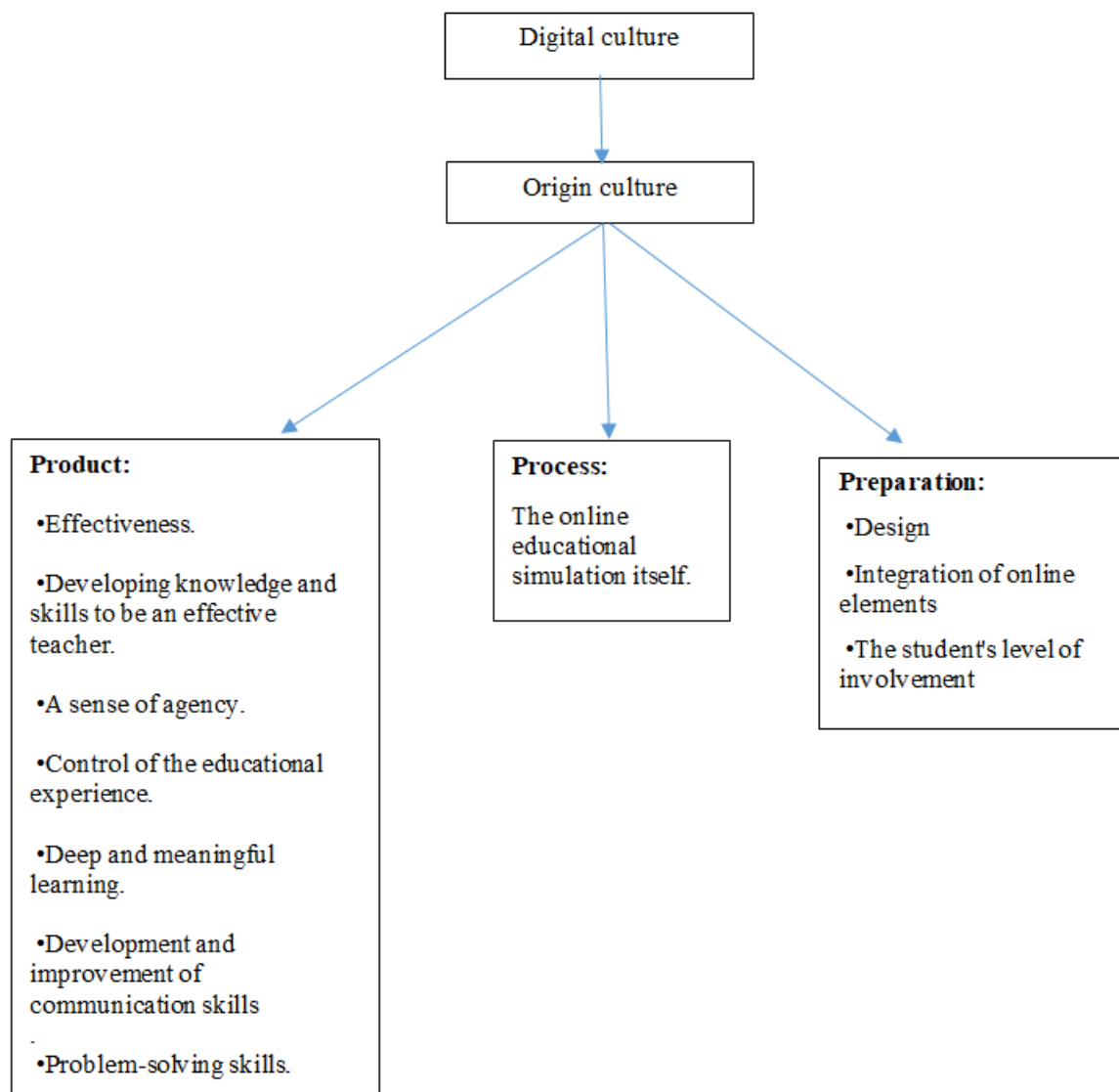
elements. The digital environment in which these simulations are utilized can also impact their effectiveness, and educators should consider this context when designing and implementing online educational simulations. However, the digital culture also influences participants' home culture and online educational simulations. Cultural factors can significantly impact the efficacy of online educational simulations and how educators perceive and use them. Cultural differences can affect how learners access and use online educational simulations and the types of simulations that are most effective for different learners. For instance, educators from different cultural backgrounds may have different expectations about the purpose and value of online and offline simulations, and they may approach the simulations with varying goals and objectives. They may also prefer different types of simulations, such as a more structured or open learning experience or more visual or verbal forms of instruction.

Furthermore, understanding cultural differences is crucial for educators designing and implementing online educational simulations. By considering cultural factors in designing and planning simulations, educators can create more relevant and meaningful simulations for students of different teaching styles, which better serve the educators and their goals and are more likely to succeed in promoting online learning and engagement. Cultural differences between the Jewish and Arab sectors in Israel could potentially influence how online educational simulations impact students in each sector. There might be differences in learning styles, preferences, and how students perceive and interpret online simulations. Additionally, specific differences exist in the educational systems in which Arab and Jewish students study in Israel. One such difference is that most Arab students in Israel generally learn in separate schools from Jewish students. These schools, often called "Arab schools," may adhere to a curriculum like that of Jewish schools but also incorporate elements of Arab culture and history. Arabic is typically the primary language of instruction in Arab high schools in Israel. Notably, Arab-Israeli society is more traditional than most of Israel's Jewish population. Studies have concluded that the transition to a wholly digital environment, including a predominantly online education configuration, occurs more within a traditional society than a secular one.

Another difference is that Arab students in Israel generally have lower academic achievements than Jewish students, evident in various indicators such as test scores, graduation rates, and matriculation certificate eligibility. There is an apparent disparity between Arab and Jewish societies in Israel (Dahan et al., 2020). It is well known that there is a cultural, social, economic, and digital gap between Jewish and Arab societies (Amzalag & Masry-Herzallah, 2021; State Comptroller's Report, 2021), along with inherent issues within the education system itself. Thus, teachers entering online educational simulations come from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. Teachers from specific cultural backgrounds may have different inclinations toward online educational simulations. Some may view them as a tool for research and discovery, while others from different cultural backgrounds may see them as a means of reinforcing existing knowledge and skills. While acknowledging the disparities, it is imperative to understand that there is extensive diversity within Arab and Jewish communities in Israel, with significant intersectionality between the experiences and challenges of these communities' teachers. Equally important is to realize that the teaching fraternity in Israel, encompassing both Jews and Arabs, grapples with several universal issues, including the swiftly transitioning economy and the urgency to prepare for an increasingly global milieu.

Numerous determinants may shape individuals' and groups' stances toward online education, such as their prior experiences with virtual learning, the standard of online curriculum and instruction, learners' learning styles and predilections, and the degree of technological and other resource accessibility. Some individuals might demonstrate favorable attitudes towards online education, valuing its adaptability and convenience. Conversely, others might exhibit negative views, prioritizing face-to-face instruction or harboring adverse experiences with online courses. Perceptions towards online education might also fluctuate based on individual goals and needs, encompassing socioeconomic and cultural backdrops. In this context, Masry-Hersallaj and Stavissky's (2021) study posits that teachers' attitudes towards virtual teaching and learning vary, influenced by aspects such as cultural factors, access to technology, educational styles, parents' capacity to assist their children's education, and economic and social elements along with school management. Alongside these disparities, commonalities like the teacher's age were also discovered. The study found that older teachers tended to harbor more negative views toward online education.

The model: based on the 3P (Presage – Process – Product) model of Biggs (1993).



This research seeks to address the following queries:

1. Do attitudes towards online simulation differ between Jewish and Arab teachers?
2. How do cultural factors modulate the influence of online educational simulation on teaching within the Jewish and Arab sectors in Israel?

The proposed hypotheses for this research are:

1. There will be identifiable disparities in the attitudes of Jewish and Arab teachers toward online simulation.
2. Cultural factors will significantly influence the way online educational simulations mold teaching styles in the Jewish and Arab sectors in Israel, possibly creating distinctions between the two sectors.

III. METHODOLOGY

Participants

The current research involved 65 teachers with simulation experience; 33 Jews and 32 Arabs. These participants hailed from various national seminars such as Levinsky College, Al Qassami College, Beit Berel, and the Kibbutzim Seminary. Predominantly female (81%), the average participant age was 29 years (SE = 8.25, range = 20-54), with most in their second (31%) or third (45%) year of study. The remaining were either in their first or fourth year. All participants were assured anonymity and informed that their responses would be used solely for research.

Instruments

1. Attitudes toward simulation: We assessed attitudes towards the simulation using 17 statements from Zapko et al. (2018), a study examining attitudes towards nurse training simulations. Statements such as "The simulation allowed me to experience different situations relevant to the educational field" were designed to gauge the perceived contribution of the simulation. Participants rated their agreement with each statement on a 1 ("not at all") to 5 ("to a very large extent") scale. In the present study, the instrument demonstrated high internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha, $\alpha = .973$.
2. Motivation: The motivation to participate in the simulation was examined using ten statements from Mozgalina's (2015) study, which dealt with task motivation. Participants rated their agreement with statements, including "I took part in the simulation because it promoted me" and "I really wanted to take part in the simulation," on the same 1-5 scale. In the current study, the instrument showed high internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha, $\alpha = .919$.
3. Integration of digital tools in the simulation: Participants rated their perception of the extent to which the online simulation integrated digital tools like Kehot, Padlat, Nearpod, online games, etc., on a 1-5 scale.
4. Cultural dimensions: Culture dimensions were measured using the instrument from the international GLOBE project, which evaluates different culture dimensions across numerous companies (House et al., 2004). For convenience, the present study employed two statements for each of the nine cultural dimensions. Participants rated how well these statements described their society.
5. Demographic questionnaire: This section collected demographic information such as age, sector, educational institution, and GPA.

Process

A link to an online questionnaire was distributed to simulation participants after contact with the various institutions. The survey link was disseminated via email, with several reminders sent subsequently. Data collection occurred from January to March 2023 via the Qualtrics platform. An Arabic translation of the questionnaire was provided, facilitated by a native Arabic-speaking faculty member from El College - Kasami. Participants chose to respond in either Hebrew or Arabic.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1 presents the Pearson correlations among the variables of the study.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Scores	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Positions	.48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Motivation	.39	.85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Digital Tools	.09	.43	.29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Avoidance of Uncertainty	.41	.78	.75	.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Power	.48	.66	.64	.21	.69	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Collectivism	.34	.66	.61	.46	.75	.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Group Collectivism	.42	.78	.75	.24	.78	.68	.62	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Gender Inequality	.40	.53	.48	.33	.65	.74	.62	.65	-	-	-	-	-
10. Assertiveness	.27	.49	.43	.44	.67	.68	.65	.60	.82	-	-	-	-
11. Future Orientation	.41	.65	.62	.20	.76	.81	.66	.80	.80	.77	-	-	-
12. Performance Orientation	.45	.70	.71	.23	.74	.81	.66	.78	.78	.71	.89	-	-
13. Humanistic Orientation	.44	.71	.65	.40	.75	.75	.63	.65	.66	.61	.76	.79	-

Table number 1. Correlations between the study variables

Note: n = 64. Correlations exceeding .27 are significant at the 0.05 level, and those surpassing .36 are significant at the 0.01 level.

As depicted in the table, it was discovered that the students from more traditional societies reported a higher level of positive attitudes towards the simulation and a stronger motivation to participate. Similarly, the higher the student's grade point average, the more positively they perceived and were motivated towards the

simulation. Additionally, an increase in the usage of digital tools within the simulation was associated with heightened positivity and motivation toward it.

Subsequently, employing a t-test for two independent samples, a distinction between Jewish and Arab students regarding these variables was examined. The results of this analysis are demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Differences between Jews and Arabs in the research variables

Variable	Jews (n = 33)		Arabs (n = 32)		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Scores	81.72	6.95	80.23	9.40	0.72	.48
Attitudes Toward Simulation	3.64	0.46	2.87	0.96	4.11	<.01
Motivation to Participate in Simulation	3.33	0.31	2.94	0.48	3.87	<.01
Digital Tools	3.07	1.03	2.91	0.78	0.68	.50
Avoidance of Uncertainty	3.26	0.61	2.59	0.16	3.53	<.01
Power	3.33	0.73	2.58	0.93	3.65	<.01
Collectivism	3.26	0.76	2.56	0.89	3.39	<.01
Group Collectivism	3.68	0.75	2.75	1.13	3.93	<.01
Gender Inequality	3.21	0.99	2.70	0.98	2.07	.04
Assertiveness	3.20	1.02	2.77	0.90	1.81	.07
Future Orientation	3.50	0.86	2.67	0.95	3.68	.95
Performance Orientation	3.39	0.70	2.66	1.02	3.40	<.01
Humanistic Orientation	3.38	0.79	2.59	0.94	3.65	<.01

As seen in the table, participants from the Jewish society report that they live in a society considered more traditional, as found in most indices.

V. DISCUSSION

This study investigated educators' attitudes, perceptions, and motivational levels within the Israeli state education system regarding using online educational simulation tools in digital settings. The research primarily focused on two aspects: first, discerning whether significant differences exist in attitudes, perceptions, and motivation towards online simulations between Jewish and Arab educators, and second, understanding how the impact of online educational simulations is influenced by the educators' cultural backgrounds when comparing the Jewish sector with the Arab sector.

Drawing upon current scholarly literature and previous studies on the subject, our research hypothesized the existence of disparities between Jewish and Arab teaching approaches, asserting that distinct cultural characteristics and specific variations between Jewish and Arab cultures would shape these discrepancies. To explore this, a credible research questionnaire was administered to 65 teacher students in Israel (33 of whom are Jewish, with women comprising 81%). Completed questionnaires were then subject to statistical analysis using the Pearson correlation coefficient and the t-test for independent samples.

In more traditional societies, students tend to manifest greater positivity and increased motivation

Notably, the research results uncovered a positive linear relationship between the degree of societal traditionalism (measured via factors such as collectivism and gender inequality) and attitudes towards online educational simulation, as well as motivation levels to engage with it (these results were deemed significant, between 0.05 to 0.01). This implies that students from traditional societies favor online educational simulation and demonstrate amplified motivation to participate.

These findings substantiate the initial research hypothesis, which predicted variations in attitudes, perceptions, and motivational levels toward online educational simulation based on cultural disparities between Jewish and Arab educators. Prior literature has indicated that attitudes and motivation towards digital tools, especially online educational simulation, are directly swayed by students' cultural contexts (Dahan et al., 2020), in addition to their cultural and socioeconomic standings (Masry- Hersallah & Stavisky, 2021). The present study's findings reinforce these assertions.

However, this result is unique and potentially contentious. Given the academic literature, one might safely anticipate contrary findings, corroborating the prevailing notion that students from more traditional societies favor conventional pedagogical methods, strategies, and aids (hence exhibiting more negative attitudes and reduced motivation towards online educational simulations). Illustrative examples exist. Firstly, Amzalag and Masry-Herzallah (2021), and the State Comptroller's Report (2021), delineated stark gaps between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority in Israel, especially in critical indicators germane to this study. Notably, they identified two primary disparities: a cultural divide, with Jewish culture aligning more with Western-

modern societies (individualistic, liberal), while Arab culture emphasizes collectivism and conservatism, and a digital divide, where the Jewish populace exhibits greater access to advanced computing technologies and higher digital literacy. This suggests that more traditional societies, like the Arab community in Israel, would likely hold less favorable attitudes towards advanced digital tools, such as online educational simulations, and lower motivation to participate, compared to modern societies like the Jewish community in Israel. However, the study findings starkly contradict this conclusion, challenging prior scholarly insights.

Secondly, as noted by Masry-Hersallah and Stavisky (2021), students' attitudes towards online educational simulations and their incorporation into the curriculum are heavily influenced by their general attitudes towards digital tools, their actual access to computer resources and digital environments, their preferences for self-directed learning in a digital setting versus traditional face-to-face methods, and the attitudes and capability levels of their parents in assisting with digital learning environments. As documented in the literature (Amzalag & Masry-Herzallah, 2021; State Comptroller's Report, 2021), a digital divide is evident in more traditional societies than modern ones. This manifests in limited access to computer technologies and digital environments, less positive attitudes toward integrating digital aids in education, and a preference for conventional teaching-learning methods and strategies. Contrary to this, the current study's findings portray a different scenario, wherein students from a more traditional society exhibit greater positivity towards online educational simulations and heightened motivation to participate.

Moreover, as highlighted by Levin and Mamlok (2021), a society's digital culture profoundly impacts the development of digital learning tools, specifically online educational simulations. A robust digital culture promotes greater access to digital tools and environments, especially educational aids and learning environments. It plays a significant role in advancing and disseminating digital resources, ensuring their accessibility to the public. Therefore, in societies where the digital culture is underdeveloped (such as more traditional societies), one might expect negative attitudes toward digital tools and a preference for traditional teaching-learning methods. However, the study findings contradict this notion, suggesting a predilection for online educational simulations even in societies typically characterized by limited digital culture influence.

Lastly, in contemporary societies where digital culture is prevalent and influential, numerous effects of the "gamification" of education can be observed. This involves leveraging computer game-based learning to enhance student engagement, stimulate curiosity, increase learning motivation, and foster meaningful learning. The principles of computer game development are also integrated into online educational simulations to make them more engaging, intriguing, and enjoyable (Dicheva, 2015; Mora et al., 2017; Wiggins, 2016; Wai Chu & Fowler, 2020). Therefore, it might be expected that in these modern societies, where digital culture's effects are prevalent, more positive attitudes and higher motivation toward online educational simulations would be evident. However, as noted, the present study's findings illustrate an opposite trend, which holds for more traditional societies.

Perceiving Israeli Jewish Society as More Traditional than Arab Society

Another interesting finding from this study is that participants perceived Jewish society in Israel as more traditional than Arab society. This outcome contradicts the prevailing perceptions, both in public opinion and academic literature. As previously mentioned, researchers who have recently explored the cultural characteristics of Jewish and Arab societies in Israel (Amzalag & Masry-Herzallah, 2021(a); Masry-Hersallah & Stavisky, 2021(b); State Comptroller's Report, 2021) explicitly addressed the traditional-modern spectrum. According to a broad academic consensus, while Arab society has undeniably been undergoing a modernization process, it is generally understood that several years will pass before it matches Jewish society and Western countries.

Several theories and conjectures could explain this contradiction between the present study's findings and the established perception (which, as noted, is widely supported in research and academically agreed upon). However, it is noteworthy that these findings from our study elucidate the discrepancy between the previous results (concerning the relationship between a society's level of traditionalism, attitudes, and motivation levels towards online educational simulations) and the existing body of literature. If Israeli Jewish society, renowned for its digital culture and a variety of technological attributes (ranging from its digital literacy level to its reputation as a "high-tech powerhouse"), is perceived as more traditional than Arab society in Israel, then the previous findings—that more traditional societies hold more positive attitudes towards online educational simulations and higher motivation to participate—are more readily accepted.

High-Performing Students Exhibit More Positive Attitudes and Elevated Motivation

High-achieving students tend to present more positive attitudes. Correspondingly, this study found a positive linear correlation between students' average grades, attitudes towards online educational simulation, and motivation to engage with it (these findings were statistically significant, between 0.05 and 0.01). This implies that students with higher grade point averages tend to demonstrate more positive attitudes toward online

educational simulations and higher motivation levels to participate.

These findings are in line with the existing literature. A significant discrepancy between the Jewish and Arab sectors lies within the educational sphere, where the Arab education system is perceived as less successful and of lower quality than the Jewish education system. This is reflected, among other aspects, in the lesser government budget allocation. Consequently, one of the known (and inevitable) results of this situation is that students in the Arab education system generally attain markedly lower academic achievements compared to their counterparts in the Jewish education system (Dahan, 2020; Amzalag & Masry-Herzallah, 2021; State Comptroller's Report, 2021). Added to this, as mentioned earlier, Jewish society in Israel is deemed more modern and characterized by a higher level of digital literacy than Arab society. The inference drawn is that students in societies showing positive attitudes and high motivation towards online educational simulations tend to achieve good academic results, a finding corroborated by the current study.

Increased Utilization of Digital Tools Enhances Attitudes and Motivation towards Simulation

Furthermore, the study results indicated a positive linear relationship between the level and breadth of digital tool use in online educational simulations, attitudes towards it, and motivation to engage with it (these findings were highly significant, with p-values between 0.05 and 0.01). This implies that the more digital tools are incorporated into the online educational simulation, the more positive the attitudes towards it become and the greater the motivation to participate.

These findings are consistent with existing scholarly literature. As previously discussed, one of the primary ways digital culture influences online educational simulations is by enhancing their interactivity and engagement by fostering the development of innovative computational and digital technologies and integrating these advanced technologies into the simulations. This is exemplified in online educational simulations that utilize high-quality computer graphics and trending technologies such as augmented reality and virtual reality (Levin & Mamlok, 2021).

Another instance is the incorporation of "gamification" and video game development principles in simulation design (Dicheva, 2015; Mora et al., 2017; Wiggins, 2016; Wai Chu & Fowler, 2020). As a result, modern online educational simulations are more realistic and precise, stimulate student interest and enjoyment, and foster deeper, more meaningful, and successful learning experiences (Dicheva, 2015; Levin & Mamlok, 2021; Mora et al., 2017; Witteborn, 2022; Wiggins, 2016; Wai Chu & Fowler, 2020). Thus, more effective and comprehensive utilization of digital tools in online educational simulations enhances its immersive and enjoyable attributes while increasing its didactic and academic efficiency. This is expected to bolster attitudes toward online educational simulation and augment motivation to participate, as shown in the current study's findings.

Study Limitations

Like any quantitative research, this study has inherent methodological limitations that invariably introduce bias to its results. These methodological limitations are significant in any investigation. Still, they are even more critical in research such as this one, where some findings contradict established professional-academic knowledge and conventional axioms. As this study discovered a positive linear relationship between a culture's level of traditionalism and its attitudes and perceptions towards a digital tool like online educational simulation, it is crucial to focus on the methodological aspects that could cause this.

Participant Sample and Sampling Method

While our sample of 65 participants sufficed for this study, it is worth noting that this number is relatively small and may differ from a larger population. A broader, more diverse sample might have led to differing outcomes. Furthermore, the drawbacks of convenience sampling, apart from being non-probabilistic and non-representative, include inherent social grouping based on shared characteristics. Thus, this method might result in an insufficiently diverse sample concerning participant attitudes and perceptions. This factor is particularly relevant when participants are drawn from a specific organization, where the influence of shared organizational culture, social identity, and other factors may shape responses. The limitations of the small sample size and the use of convenience sampling restrict the generalizability of the findings to a larger population. A larger, more varied participant pool may have yielded different, even opposing, results to this study's results.

Research Tool

For this study, using valid and reliable research tools was crucial. However, despite questionnaires being a common instrument in quantitative research, they remain self-report tools, susceptible to potential biases due to participant authenticity, integrity, awareness, etc. Factors such as social desirability and lack of concentration also play a part. One issue particularly pertinent to this study is the subtleties of language; several Arab sector participants opted to complete the Hebrew version of the questionnaire, which may have led to

misunderstandings of specific questions.

Researchers

Despite striving for academic objectivity, perfect neutrality does not exist. Furthermore, the collaborative nature of research often results in a collective output greater than the sum of individual contributions. Working with a limited team constrains the potential benefits of brainstorming, consultation, shared opinions, peer learning, and peer review. Other researchers, or a more extensive research team, could have arrived at different decisions, analyses, and findings than those presented in this study.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Online educational simulation is an effective teaching and learning tool with tremendous potential for contemporary educators. The cultural characteristics of students can significantly impact their perceptions of the simulation, influencing their attitudes toward its usage and their motivation levels to participate. This difference becomes apparent when comparing Jewish and Arab teaching methods. Students from the Jewish majority population in Israel typically benefit from a more resourced, budgeted, and high-quality education system, resulting in better academic achievements, higher socio-economic statuses, and greater digital literacy and accessibility than their Arab counterparts. While digital tools form an integral part of the daily routine for most Jewish students, Arab students tend to resonate less with such learning methods, preferring more traditional approaches.

Nevertheless, the present study reveals that the described cultural and digital realities are not fixed. The same social, organizational, behavioral, emotional, etc., forces that defined Jewish society in Israel as more traditional than Arab society could also be leveraged to enhance the attitudes of Arab students towards online educational simulation. Though not a simple or quick endeavor, quality education remains a potent tool for improving social mobility, especially for minority populations. In the context of the 'Flowers of Teaching,' the educators' level of education directly influences the education quality their students will receive, underscoring its importance.

Future research could explore the same hypotheses, employing a larger, more diverse participant sample and higher internal reliability research tools. The findings of such a study could substantively contribute to the knowledge base, either by validating the current study's results or by contradicting them. Investigating the relationships between the same variables in this study would also be worthwhile, including gender comparisons within each population and across genders. Lastly, a qualitative study based on in-depth interviews could provide recurring themes to elucidate attitudes towards digital learning aids in Jewish and Arab sectors in Israel, as articulated by the students themselves.

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