

## EFFECTIVENESS OF MALL ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING SKILLS DURING PREPARATION OF IELTS: STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

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### Abstract

*Mastering the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English is crucial for effective communication and self-expression. Proficiency in these skills is crucial for confidently navigating in real-life situations and for the success of second language learners of English in examinations like IELTS, SAT, TOFEL, etc. The role of mobile devices is significant in this age of technology to learn English language learning skills. Therefore, the current study aims to examine the students' perception of the efficacy of MALL during the preparation of IELTS. In the current research, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis (1989) is employed to analyze the Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use of MALL (PeoU). A mixed-method approach is employed, to collect the data. Sampling is done by using a non-probability sampling technique, combining purposive and convenience sampling. For qualitative data, interviews were conducted and a survey questionnaire was executed to collect quantitative data. The findings display that participants have positive perceptions of MALL usage. 81% of participants gave positive responses about the usefulness of MALL but 66% of participants agreed that they had encountered some challenges like internet connectivity problems, technical problems, and difficulty in finding targeted apps and reliable content while using MALL. The MALL integration with classroom learning positively influences their learning, as MALL was found to support their language learning experiences.*

**Keywords:** Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), IELTS, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PeoU)

### INTRODUCTION

#### Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

Wireless transmission technology is no different in a world where gadgets propelled by emerging technologies are growing quickly. Currently, students are

commonly known as “Digital Natives” or “Net Generation” meaning that they have grown up with internet and computer at their disposal (Hargittai, 2010). This is the era that educators are currently working with. The rapid advancement of communications technology and its applicability to mobile devices over the past decade has drawn the attention of scholars and professionals to Mobile Assisted Language Learning, or m-learning. Mobile phones, Personal Digital Assistants PDAs, tablet PCs and smartphones are some examples of such gadgets. These technologies have been incorporated into learning and teaching gradually because instructors must first understand how to use them to reinforce contrasting types of learning and create efficient techniques and resources for mobile learning (m-Learning), a subfield of mobile-assisted language learning (Kukulka-Hulme & Shield, 2008). While not all learning activities and content are suitable for mobile devices, mobile devices complement existing learning tools by providing an extension for learning in unusual settings (Gay et al., 2001). A few key factors influence the execution of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning devices in educational settings. When considering a mobile phone, it is important to assess its physical characteristics such as its weight and dimensions, as well as its input and output functionalities, for example, the keypad versus the touch screen, display size, and audio capabilities. The final results of such mobile-based tasks are greatly influenced by the learner's abilities, past knowledge, and experience using mobile devices for learning, and the learner's motivation to learn via mobile phones (Koole, 2009).

English language learning skills encompass varied capabilities that assist the learner in getting involved in effective communication. The skills incorporate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Good listening skills are useful for comprehending spoken English in varied contexts and accents. Speaking skills require mastery for communicating ideas and thoughts fluently and in a coherent manner. Moreover, reading comprehension skills require a good command to analyze and decode complicated texts. Besides, writing skills require proficiency in generating well-structured and clear texts, correct use of grammar, and correct choice of vocabulary items, idioms, and different phrases. The mastery of these four skills is crucial for good scores in IELTS. These skills

are not only beneficial for IELTS but also allow learners to navigate real-life situations confidently.

### **The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**

The Technology Acceptance Model was derived from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and it was presented by Davis (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). It claims a powerful justification for how user embraces and uses information technology. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was developed to support the prediction of technology acceptance by utilizing the variables of perceived utility, perceived ease of use, behavioral intention, and attitudes. According to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), a person's behavioral intention to acquire a system is influenced by two beliefs, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness (Davis, 1985).

Perceived usefulness is "the extent to which an individual feels that utilizing a specific system would improve how they perform at work. This is suggested by the meaning of helpful, which is "able to be utilized beneficially." Consequently, a system that is considered highly helpful is one in which the user believes there is a beneficial correlation between usage and effectiveness.

" On the other hand, perceived ease of use relates to "the extent to which an individual thinks that utilizing a specific system would be without any exertion." This stems from the meaning of "ease": "lack of difficulty or significant effort.

### **Examination for Second Language Learners of English**

The learners who acquire a language in addition to their first language usually in an environment where the targeted language is widely spoken are second language learners (SLL). Contrary to this, foreign language learners (FLL) learn language in an environment where the targeted language is not commonly spoken. The distinction between the two is made in terms of the setting in which the language is being learned. SLL learners learn a language in a naturalistic environment and they can use language in real-life situations they require language for educational purposes and everyday communication whereas foreign language learners learn a language in the classroom setting and have fewer opportunities to practice language outside classrooms

They require language to accomplish tasks like researching or reading and to work in technical fields.

Exams for individuals who are acquiring English as a second language are extremely significant to assess their capability to comprehend, communicate, and interact proficiently in English-speaking settings. These evaluations are critical for academic enrollment, professional certifications, and immigration procedures. These exams include SAT, TOEFL, IELTS, etc. International English Language Testing System or IELTS assesses the skills and abilities of non-native English speakers. Applying for immigration and studying in European countries, including New Zealand, Canada, and Australia, requires passing this test. The main objective of IELTS is to assess the skills in four areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing for a well-grounded evaluation of English abilities. It assesses the capability to effectively communicate in both real-life situations and academic situations. IELTS is not merely required for scholarships and university admissions, but it is also regarded as an indicator of worldwide recognition as opposed to a communication proficiency exam (Khan, 2009). In the preparation of the IELTS test, mobile devices assisted language learning. This research primarily aims to examine the usage of various mobile applications by Pakistani students to aid in their preparation for the IELTS exam.

### **Objectives of study**

1. To assess the effectiveness of MALL that students experience while preparing for IELTS.
2. To investigate the challenges of MALL that students experience while preparing for IELTS.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the perceptions of IELTS students about the effectiveness of MALL for learning English language skills?
2. What are the perceptions of IELTS students about the challenges of MALL for learning English language skills?

### **Significance of Study**

This study is noteworthy as it investigates the effectiveness of utilizing MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning) which strengthens the English language skills,

specifically in IELTS preparation. This research underscores the usefulness of mobile apps that assist in language learning and emphasizes the use of technology in education. Moreover, MALL makes provisions for personalized learning, intensifies learning outcomes and it expands the pupils learning engagement and motivation (Miangah & Nezarat, 2012).

### **Limitations of Study**

The study is delimited to Pakistani students who are preparing for IELTS test. The researchers used the Fred Davis model of TAM (Technology Assisted Model) as a theoretical framework to investigate the ease of use and usefulness of MALL.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is an approach that makes use of mobile devices to aid and improve language acquisition. Miangah and Nezarat (2012), asserted that "The domain of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) focuses on the utilization of mobile technologies to language learning. Unlike traditional classroom instruction, MALL learning does not require students to spend time in a classroom or in front of a computer to access learning resources". These days, MALL acts as the primary means of language communication for students and advances the retention and application of newly learned language abilities. By employing mobile devices in brief exercises and assignments, learners can sharpen their language skills while minimizing the danger of losing important knowledge, skills, and potential. MALL provides students access to the educational resources they want. Additionally, Bachmair et al. (2009) defined MALL as "the processes of understanding and being able to use our everyday life-worlds as learning spaces, with a focus on understanding and knowing how to operate in, and across, new and ever-changing contexts and learning spaces."

Moreover, MALL applications foster students' interest in cooperative learning with others at any time and location. Therefore, how a learner and instructor engage in educational institutions is highly affected by the advent of MALL as a fresh method of education (Huang et al., 2010). As demonstrated in quantitative research that was

executed to analyze the perceptions of students who are learning English as a foreign language regarding Mobile Assisted Language Learning through cross-cultural analyses. The data analysis was conducted with three constructs: technological affordances, constructivism of MALL and applicability. The findings of the research display that participants from varied cultural backgrounds exhibit varying perspectives toward the technological affordances of MALL, however, they collectively acknowledged its potential for subsidizing a constructivist approach to EFL learning (Hsu, 2013). In addition, another mixed-method research was done to analyze how MALL affects students' attitudes and methods for learning foreign languages. Forty college students with various majors participated in a study that involved a 5-point Likert scale survey and semi-structured interviews with some volunteers to gather data. The results showed that Students firmly believe that mobile devices are very useful for language learning, providing instant access to input in the target language, with the majority showing a favorable attitude toward their role in foreign language development based on high usage rates, media preferences, and frequency of use (Shaheen et al., 2024). Correspondingly, another research was conducted to address the gap by providing a detailed overview of 44 research studies carried out from 2012 to 2017, which concentrated on enhancing L2 reading comprehension using mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). A majority of the studies reported that students who used MALL achieved higher scores in post-tests and displayed favorable attitudes towards the learning approach. These results indicate that mobile devices can positively impact reading comprehension, particularly in informal learning environments (Gutiérrez-Colón et al., 2023).

Moreover, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) is very useful for preparing IELTS and other similar tests conducted for analyzing language competency. For instance, research was done that had used the Technology Acceptance Model theory to explore test-takers' attitudes towards using exam-oriented mobile applications. 235 Chinese IELTS test-takers who had used similar apps participated in an online survey, and the data collected were analyzed using various techniques. The findings suggested that test-takers' attitudes towards using exam-oriented mobile applications were

influenced by their perceptions of the app's usefulness and ease of use. Additionally, there was a voiced concern about the necessity of a customized AI function to help with speaking exam adaptation (Q. Li & Chan, 2024). Likewise, a mixed method research was conducted to examine the application of new media technology to improve the reading skills of students stimulating learner autonomy and motivation within the context of IELTS. The findings show that it has enhanced the students' autonomous learning capabilities with over 70% of students as it enables students to make their constructive learning plans. Pre-test and post-test assessments show that the reading skills of students were positively impacted. The research highlighted the need for promoting a collaborative and student-centered approach (Liu & Pei, 2023). Similarly, a study was carried out to explore the impact of using the "IELTS Liulishuo" mobile app for language learning on Chinese college students' spoken English abilities. The findings suggest that incorporating a mobile app for assessing oral English with an automatic speech recognition (ASR) system positively affected the fluency, accuracy, and naturalness of English learners in Chinese universities. Nevertheless, various technical and educational obstacles presented challenges to implementing mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) methods in certain underdeveloped areas of the country. (X. Li, 2022).

This research conducted intends to fill a significant gap in the literature by noticing how Pakistani IELTS students view Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) for exam preparation. Despite the excessive use of technology for language learning globally, there has been limited prior research in this area, especially regarding Pakistani students. To gain insights into how Pakistani students perceive and utilize MALL devices and materials when preparing for the IELTS exam, the study employs Fred Davis' 1989 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). By addressing this gap, this research seeks to improve understanding of the acceptability and effectiveness of MALL among Pakistani students, thus informing future teaching methods and technology integration approaches.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



Woody in 1927, states that research methodology includes characterizing problems, redefining them, hypothesis formulation, collecting data, organizing it, accessing it making the deductions, and then reaching a conclusion (Kale & Jayanth, 2019). Mixed-method approach is used in this study to collect and analyze data. Mixed methodology is a hybrid of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. When these two methods are used together they allow a thorough analysis (Migiro & Magangi, 2011). To collect and analyze the data non-probability sampling technique is employed using a combination of purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling which is also known as judgmental sampling is a technique in which the researcher chooses participants deliberately for the research because of their qualities according to his/her judgment (Nikolopoulou, 2023). Convenience sampling is a method in which the researcher chooses participants that are easily available to the researcher (Golzar, 2022). A survey questionnaire is used in this study to analyze the research topic from students' perspective. A questionnaire is a standardized data-collecting research tool that is often used in educational research to assist researchers to effectively and quickly get information it is standardized because all the participants are made known to the same question (Roopa & Rani, 2012). To collect qualitative data interviews are done. The current study tried to analyze the perceptions of Pakistani students about the effectiveness of MALL on their language skills during their preparation for IELTS. For this purpose, a questionnaire is distributed among students of two institutes of Multan, and students who have experience taking IELTS. Additionally, interviews are done to gather qualitative data from the students who are currently preparing for IELTS or have recently passed the IELTS test. The questionnaire and interview questions are based on MALL's perceived usefulness and ease of use. The quantitative data collected from the survey questionnaire was examined using SPSS 20 software to generate descriptive statistics. The information is collected in frequency and percentile. Following that, the information was examined and the average scores for all items were calculated.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The current research is focused on the usefulness of MALL and the challenges that students encounter or how effortlessly they improve their skills while using MALL



for this purpose researcher has employed the **TechnologyAcceptanceModel** that was presented in 1989 by **Fred Davis**, which proposed that perceived usefulness and ease of use of technology are crucial to determining the attitude of users towards the usage of technology. The “perceived usefulness” in TAM refers to the extent to which users feel that technology usage will helpful for them to improve their performance and “perceived ease of use” refers to the perceptions of users regarding how effortlessly he/she uses technology. These both are varied factors that impact the attitude of users towards technology usage(Davis, 1989). PeOU is a factor that also influences the PU. TAM also acknowledges the external stimuli like the cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses of the users.

## DATA ANALYSIS

### Analysis 1: Questionnaire

#### Participants’ Demographic Information

The demographics of participants, IELTS students’ such as their age and education level are independent variables in the current study. The participants’ demographic information is illustrated in detail.

The table below displays the frequency distribution of participants’ gender. In this study, a high proportion of the participants were female (51.8%) and (48.2%) of participants were male.

**Table:1**

Frequency distribution table of participants’ gender

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Male	27	48.2
Female	29	51.8
Total	56	100.0

The frequency distribution of participants’ education levels is highlighted in the table below. The data showed that (83.9%) of participants, were graduates and (16.1%) of them were undergraduates.

**Table:2**

## Frequency distribution of participants' education level

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Graduate	47	83.9
Undergraduate	9	16.1
Total	56	100.0

**Perceived Usefulness**

In the present research, the impact of participation perception on the effectiveness of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) was examined based on 6 different elements. The students' views were gathered using the Likert Scale, which is a five-point rating scale.

The frequency distribution of students' perceptions of perceived usefulness of MALL is demonstrated in the table. Firstly, for 1<sup>st</sup> item (71.4%) agreed that MALL usage has made them creative and productive because these mobile apps have assisted them in improving their English Language Skills. However, only (1.8%) of participants strongly disagree that MALL has made them productive and creative, and has improved their language skills. Moreover, (73.2%) of respondents agreed with Item 2, that integration of MALL with traditional classroom learning has made them overcome the difficulties in their preparation for IELTS, and only (1.8%) of students strongly disagree with the statement.

On the other hand, the responses for the third item show that (64.3%) agreed that MALL gives them access to a vast range of practicing material that is useful for them to learn language skills. Additionally, for fourth item (60.7%) agreed that MALL usage has enabled them to feel confident in my ability to perform well in IELTS.

**Table:3**

Frequency distribution of perceived usefulness (PU)

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
Using MALL has made me productive and creative because MALL applications have contributed to my English Language skills.	1.8% (1)	1.8% (1)	16.1% (9)	71.4% (40)	8.9% (5)	56
MALL integration with traditional classroom learning has helped me to overcome the difficulties in preparation for IELTS.	1.8% (1)	3.6% (2)	10.7% (6)	73.2% (41)	10.7% (6)	56
MALL gives me access to a wide range of practicing material (for instance videos, audio recordings, and different articles) that is useful for all the sections of the IELTS test (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing)	1.8% (1)	3.6% (2)	5.4% (3)	64.3% (36)	25% (14)	56
Usage of MALL has enabled me to feel more confident in my capability to perform well in the IELTS.	1.8% (1)	7.1% (4)	12.5% (7)	60.7% (34)	17.9% (10)	56

Varied interactive features in the MALL applications like different quizzes and mock tests have proved helpful for me to practice for IELTS.	3.6% (2)	3.6% (2)	12.6% (7)	62.5% (35)	17.9% (10)	56
Overall, I feel that integrating MALL has had a positive impact on me because corrections and feedback that are provided in some MALL apps have helped me to overcome my weaknesses.	5.4% (3)	3.6% (2)	14.3% (8)	67.9% (38)	8.9% (5)	56

**Note:** SD - strongly disagree, D- disagree, N – neutral, A – Agree, SA- strongly agree.

Besides that, for the 5<sup>th</sup> item, (62.5%) of respondents agreed that different interactive features in the MALL like different mock tests and quizzes have proved helpful for them to practice for IELTS, and the 6<sup>th</sup> item (67.9%) agreed that overall integrating MALL has had a positive influence on their performance because correction and feedback assist them to overcome their weaknesses.

The mean score for each aspect of Perceived Usefulness is calculated. The mean score displays that participant’s perceived using mobile as a useful tool for preparation of IELTS. The top rating (M=2.286) indicated that students generally believe that MALL has positively impacted their performance. They find that the correction and feedback provided in certain applications have assisted them in addressing their weaknesses.

The second-highest result was (M=2.161), indicating that utilizing MALL has enhanced their creativity and productivity by improving their English language abilities. Additionally, the students agreed with the mean score (M=2.143) that using MALL has made them confident in their capability to perform well in their IELTS exam. Meanwhile, the students also showed agreement with the other two items with (M=2.125) mean score that MALL integration with traditional classroom has assisted them in overcoming their

difficulties during their preparation for IELTS and different interactive features of MALL, different mock tests and quizzes have proved helpful for them to practice for IELTS. Besides, the mean score (M=1.929) stated that MALL gives access to a wide range of practicing material that is useful for learning language skills.

**Table :4**

Descriptive statistical analysis of perceived usefulness (PU)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Usage of MALL has made me productive and creative because MALL applications have contributed to my English Language skills.	2.161	1.722	56
MALL integration with traditional classroom learning has helped me to overcome the difficulties in preparation for IELTS.	2.125	1.701	56
MALL gives me access to a wide range of practicing material (for instance videos, audio recordings, and different articles) that is useful for all the sections of the IELTS test (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing)	1.929	1.547	56
Usage of MALL has enabled me to feel more confident in my capability to perform well in the IELTS.	2.143	1.783	56
Varied interactive features in the MALL applications like different quizzes and	2.125	1.773	56

mock tests have proved helpful for me to practice for IELTS.			
Overall, I feel that integrating MALL has had a positive impact on me because corrections and feedback that are provided in some MALL apps have helped me to overcome my weaknesses.	2.286	1.927	56

Based on the results it was displayed that participants showed positive responses about the perceived usefulness of MALL. Mostly students showed positive responses, that MALL has helped them in preparing for the IELTS test.

#### Perceived Ease of Use (PeoU)

In this part, the viewpoints of students at the PeoU of MALL on six different aspects were examined. To gather the students' viewpoints, a Likert Scale was used for this study.

The frequency distribution of perceived ease of use (PeoU) is showing the varied frequencies of each item. Firstly, it's evident from the table that, overall, the participants indicated a lack of agreement with the 7th statement. The majority of the participants (39.3%) showed disagreement that they find it difficult to navigate and use the mobile applications for IELTS preparation however, (26.8%) agreed with this statement. As for the Item 8 results, a greater proportion of participants (64.3%) showed agreement that internet connectivity issues hinder their ability to use MALL consistently for their test preparation. On the other hand, just (5.4%) disagreed with the statement.

**Table:5**

Frequency distribution of perceived ease of use (PeoU)

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
I find it difficult to navigate and use MALL apps for my IELTS	1.8% (1)	39.3% (22)	26.8% (15)	26.8% (15)	5.4% (3)	56

preparations.						
Internet connectivity problems or limited access to the internet in some areas hinder the capability of MALL usage consistently for IELTS preparation.	0% (0)	5.4% (3)	14.3% (8)	64.3% (36)	16.1% (9)	56
Technical problems such as slow internet, app crashes, and slow loading time disrupt the learning process and it becomes frustrating.	1.8% (1)	5.4% (3)	21.4% (12)	50% (28)	21.4% (12)	56
At times it is a cumbersome task to find apps that provide content that targets the learning language skills needed for IELTS.	0% (0)	7.1% (4)	10.7% (6)	75% (42)	7.1% (4)	56
It is quite a challenging task in self-directed learning using MALL apps to stay disciplined and motivated.	1.8% (1)	10.7% (6)	19.6% (11)	48.2% (27)	19.6% (11)	56
At times I worry about the accuracy and reliability of content that is available on different apps so it's very crucial to find reliable content which is a time-consuming task.	0% (0)	8.9% (5)	23.2% (13)	50% (28)	17.9% (10)	56

Concerning statement 9, (50%) of the participants agreed that technical problems like slow internet services, app crashes, and slow loading time disrupt their learning process and then it becomes frustrating to use. Furthermore, for statement 10 a high



proportion of participants (75%) agreed that at times it becomes very difficult to find the apps that provide them content that targets the learning language skills required for IELTS just (7.1%) respondent disagreed with the statement. Moreover, for the 11<sup>th</sup> item (48.2%) respondents agreed that it is difficult for them to stay disciplined and motivated in self-directed learning. Finally for the 12<sup>th</sup> statement, (50%) of respondents agreed that they worry about the reliability and accuracy of the content and it is a time-consuming task to find reliable content.

The below table displays the mean scores for all statements of this section PeoU. The highest mean score (M=3.143) was obtained in which the respondent claimed that technical problems disrupt their learning. Similarly, participants agree with the statement that it is difficult for them to navigate and use mobile apps for test preparation (M=3.054). In addition to this, the mean score for the statement that self-directed learning is challenging is (M=2.268), followed by a statement that they also worry about the accuracy and reliability of content (M=2.232). The mean score is (M=2.179) for the statement that it cumbersome task to find apps that provide content that exclusively targets learning language skills required for IELTS.

**Table:6**

Descriptive statistical analysis of Perceived Ease of Use (PeoU).

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
I find it difficult to navigate and use MALL apps for my IELTS preparations.	3.054	2.686	56
Internet connectivity problems or limited access to the internet in some areas hinder the capability of MALL usage consistently for IELTS preparation.	2.089	1.669	56
Technical problems such as slow internet, app crashes, and slow loading time disrupt the learning process and it becomes frustrating.	3.143	2.686	56

At times it is a cumbersome task to find apps that provide content that targets the learning language skills needed for IELTS.	2.179	1.732	56
It is quite a challenging task in self-directed learning using MALL apps to stay disciplined and motivated.	2.268	1.946	56
At times I worry about the accuracy and reliability of content that is available on different apps so it's very crucial to find reliable content which is a time-consuming task.	2.232	1.861	56

### Analysis2: Interviews

Interviews were conducted, and 15 students participated in the interviews. Thirteen students were randomly chosen who were preparing for IELTS from different institutes in Multan. Two students participated who hadn't joined any institute and had completely relied on MALL.

### Perceived Usefulness of MALL (PU)

Students were asked about the usefulness of MALL, and the student's responses were positive that MALL has proved beneficial for them. Most of the students responded that they get help from YouTube videos and Google because of the practicing system that it provides. There are different websites where you can practice for your test for free. The most common website that students use is "British Council Website". This website provides a lot of practicing material and you can easily check your score there. Students responded that they have improved their language learning skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). MALL has made learning easy for them; they can get guidance from their teacher and by putting in extra effort can also get assistance from material

available on YouTube and Google. Two students were interviewed who completely relied on MALL; they didn't join any institute for preparation. They responded that they just used to watch a few videos on YouTube from different channels and practice from the resource material that the British Council provided them. Moreover, they responded that for listening and reading it is good to opt for MALL because we get instant results after practicing which is very helpful.

### **Perceived Ease of Use (PeoU)**

Despite the usefulness of MALL students responded that it can't replace traditional classroom learning because it is sometimes difficult for them to stay motivated and consistent while doing self-directed learning using MALL. Furthermore, they also think that the class environment assists them in building confidence which is very crucial for them to get prepared for IELTS, and listening to and getting feedback from subject experts is very helpful in resolving their problems. Some students are of the view that it's a time-consuming task to find relevant data. Additionally, students responded that internet connectivity issues are the biggest problem that doesn't let them completely rely on MALL. Besides, the use of mobile also negatively impacts their health. The two students who didn't join any institute and have prepared for tests living in Pakistan responded that they haven't faced many challenges. Using MALL during their preparation has proved beneficial for them, but still, it depends on the skills of the person and their attitudes toward learning. They clarify that they already have a good command of these four skills but for the person who is a beginner they need an expert who can guide him, motivate him, and provide feedback.

The analysis of the interviews shows that MALL is useful but in the case of perceived ease of use, it depends on students' capabilities and attitude towards usage.

### **DISCUSSION**

The results of the present study show that the majority of participants had positive responses towards using MALL. However, students in Pakistan are also facing some challenges in using mobile devices for learning. Likewise, students' responses demonstrate a general agreement that MALL has the potential to be used as a convincing approach for better learning during IELTS preparation. The findings of Itayem (2014),

who found that students' attitudes toward the iPad are significantly influenced by their perceptions of its usefulness and ease of use, are also consistent with these results.

Besides that, based on the results, participants showed positive responses on the perceived usefulness of MALL. Most of the students showed agreement with all the statements of perceived usefulness. Therefore, students are of the view that MALL has proved advantageous for them. Furthermore, nearly half of the student participants in this study expressed a favorable opinion of the use of cell phones in learning language, which is consistent with results from Lawrence (2015) study.

Meanwhile, the survey results reveal that students encounter difficulties when using mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). Most students agreed that they experience technical issues and other challenges when using their mobile devices for learning. However, a lower percentage of participants disagreed with the statement as they hadn't encountered challenges. The responses of students varied because of their socio-economic background and the abilities of students also varied. Consequently, the favorable impression that these students have creates a favorable atmosphere.

The significant result in the current study was that the majority of students believe that overall, MALL had a positive influence on them. This indicates that MALL had a positive role in English Learning Language skills during the preparation for IELTS. Furthermore, according to Traxler (2009), smart phones and other mobile devices represent a promising technological advancement for language learning since they are making the process more contextualized, real, and personalized. Furthermore, Kukulska-Hulme (2013) suggested that the changing nature of language learning in the twenty-first century has altered the conventional approach to language acquisition by allowing for increased autonomy of learners and the adaptable use of modern educational resources such as cell phones.

The interview results showed that MALL usage is favorable for students and students' responses demonstrate that it can't replace traditional classrooms. Besides, most of the students get benefits by watching YouTube videos and doing practicing exercises from Google, these videos and practice materials assist them to enhance their proficiency in all four skills but MALL lacks the motivation that students require. Furthermore,

students think that the classroom environment helps them to gain confidence. Moreover, there is biggest challenge that students face in using MALL is network issues.

The usage of MALL is recommended for learning language skills because numerous advantages of MALL. Students from Pakistan come from different socio-economic backgrounds, and all of them don't have equal access to opportunities, many students don't have access to good mobile phones due to financial conditions. In some areas, there are critical internet problems that hinder the successful usage of MALL. The abilities and skills of students vary which impacts the MALL usage. So, still, all the students don't completely rely on MALL for their preparation.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from this research findings that the participants, who are IELTS students, believed that MALL plays a crucial role in their preparation for enhancing their learning language skills. The MALL integration with traditional classroom learning assists learners in accessing useful material, and varied practicing material to gain proficiency.

The study suggests that using mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) can support students in utilizing mobile devices to their advantage without incurring additional costs, as there is a vast amount of IELTS-related material available. Students can get access to reliable and accurate material, which makes them efficient learners. MALL is also interesting as students can study according to their feasibility and can have a better understanding by watching things and practicing material of their interest. Students can easily work on their weak areas by integrating MALL into their learning regardless of place and time. The findings also reveal that this self-directed learning requires effort; it lacks motivation which may hinder progress therefore students need to be disciplined and consistent. The analysis also shows that students are learning from YouTube videos and practicing material available on Google, they didn't specify any mobile app for this purpose. Students responded that it can't replace traditional classrooms as learners require expert assistance to practice all skills as feedback and constructive criticism help them to enhance their skills.

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