

## EXPLORING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN ATTITUDES AND INTENTIONS TOWARD PARTICIPATING IN SLA RESEARCH AMONG EFL STUDENTS: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY AT THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES OF MEKNÉS, MORROCO

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### Abstract

This study was conducted to explore the relationship between undergraduate EFL students' attitudes and their behavioral intentions toward participating in SLA research at the School of Arts and Humanities, Moulay Ismail University. This was a quantitative study with descriptive-correlational design. The study population consisted exclusively undergraduate EFL students from the School of Arts and Humanities at Moulay Ismail University. A validated Likert scale-based questionnaire was used to collect data from 115 participants selected through convenience sampling. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to measure students' attitudes and intentions toward participating in SLA research. While Spearman rank correlation was used as a non-parametric test to measure the relationship between attitudes and behavioral intention toward participating in SLA research. The study found that EFL students have moderately positive attitudes towards participation in SLA research. Likewise, the study found that EFL students have a moderately positive intention to participate in SLA research. Spearman rank correlation yielded a coefficient of .703 indicating a strong positive correlation between attitudes and behavioral intention to participate in SLA research. The results of this study can serve as a basis for further research into attitudes toward participation in SLA research.

**Keywords:** Attitudes, Behavior, Behavioral intention, SLA research, research participation.

### INTRODUCTION

Research is the process of finding answers to questions relevant to a scientific field. According to Bryman (2012), questions arise when researchers review the literature on a topic or when they think about current social issues in real-life situations. Research is essential not only in

science but also in various aspects of life (Schuman & Johnson, 1976). It forms the knowledge based that leads to innovation in various area. Research on second language acquisition (SLA) is no exception as it aims to develop a better understanding of how learners acquire a second language (Saville-Troike & Barto, 2016). This includes examining the different linguistic

and non-linguistic factors in language acquisition, such as age, input, motivation, and aptitude. According to Pica (1997), SLA researchers also aim to explore the cognitive processes involved in language learning, such as attention, memory, and perception, and how these processes interact with various aspects of language learning. In order to specifically address these factors and processes in second language acquisition, researchers must address second language learners as a target group.

For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, participating in SLA research studies can be highly beneficial. It can contribute to the development of knowledge in the field and provide EFL students with direct experience of research methods, such as data collection, analysis, and interpretation. By participating in SLA research studies, EFL students also have the opportunity to practice and improve their language skills, gain access current language learning techniques, and identify areas in need of development. They can also build a professional network with researchers and other professionals in the field, opening up new opportunities for collaboration and career development.

However, EFL students may have negative attitudes toward participating in SLA research despite the numerous potential benefits that participation in such research can provide. Attitudes toward research have been identified as one of the most frequently cited factors affecting research and research participation (Papanastasiou, 2005, 2019). Therefore, it is important to understand EFL students' attitudes towards participating in SLA research is important to promote the ethical and effective conduct of research, and to ensure that research findings are accurate, reliable, and applicable to the populations studied.

## **Research gap**

In recent years, the role of attitudes and intentions in influencing behavior has garnered attention in various academic disciplines. However, when focusing on the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), especially within the Moroccan context, there appears to be a limited body of research addressing the correlation between attitudes and intentions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students toward participating in SLA research. Specifically, at the School of Arts and Humanities of Meknés, there is a conspicuous gap in understanding how the predispositions of students shape their willingness and commitment to be a part of SLA studies. This paucity of data not only hinders academic exploration but also affects the design and efficacy of SLA research that relies on active and willing participation from EFL students. Addressing this gap is crucial to fostering an environment conducive to more robust and inclusive SLA research within the region.

## **Statement of the Problem**

There is growing interest in university students' attitudes toward research and research participation. Both researchers and participants may have different attitudes toward research, which may affect their willingness to participate in studies or their commitment to conducting challenging research. Review of the relevant literature revealed that most studies focused on students' attitudes from the practitioner's perspective, using Papanastasiou's (2005) construction of the Attitudes Towards Research (ATR) scale. However, little is known about students' attitudes towards participation in research. A positive attitude toward participation in research can lead to increased participation and a greater likelihood of conducting high-quality research, while a negative attitudes can lead to lower participation

and poorer research quality (Deniz & Çıtak, 2010; Khan et al., 2021). Therefore, measuring EFL students' attitudes and behavioral intentions toward participating in SLA research can help SLA researchers develop effective ways to recruit and retain EFL students for SLA research studies. When EFL students are adequately represented in SLA research, the results can accurately reflect the experiences and perspectives of this population and lead to reliable and valid SLA research findings.

### **Research Questions**

The aim of this study was to measure the relationship between EFL undergraduate students' attitudes and their behavioral intention towards participating in SLA research studies at the School of Arts and Humanities in Meknes. This study aimed to examine the following questions:

Q1. What attitudes do EFL students have toward participating in SLA research studies?

Q2. What is the behavioral intention of EFL to participate in SLA research studies?

Q3. Is there any relationship between students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research and their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research studies?

### **Research hypotheses**

Based on the previously mentioned research questions, the following hypotheses can be developed:

1. EFL students have positive attitudes toward participating in SLA research studies.
2. There is a statistically significant correlation between students' attitudes toward participating in

SLA research and their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research studies.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In many studies of students' attitudes towards research, terms such as attitude and behavior must be defined at the beginning of the study. The term "attitude" was first used by psychologist Herbert Spencer in 1862 (Fishman et al., 2021). Thurstone (1946, cited in Fishman et al., 2021) defined attitude as the degree of positive or unfavorable affect associated with a particular psychological object. As y Ajzen (1993) stated, attitude refers to an individual's tendency to respond to a particular object, behavior, person, institution, event, or other observable aspect of their environment. While different theorists may have different definitions of attitude, there is a general consensus that attitude includes an evaluative component (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) that can be measured and assessed. Ajzen, (1993) acknowledged that attitude is not directly observable as it is latent. However, it can be assessed by examining the reactions or answers of the respondents, which can be either positive or negative towards the object. In the present study, the term "attitude" refers to the opinions, beliefs, and feelings that EFL students have toward participating in SLA research. Additionally, the variable attitudes toward participating in SLA research will be used in two dimensions: positive attitudes and negative attitudes.

Behavior is strongly linked to attitude and is considered a key concept in defining psychology as a "science of behavior" (Ettinger, 2018, cited in Henriques & Michalski, 2020). However, there is disagreement regarding the definition of behavior. On the other hand, Neveanu's definition of behavior is limited to observable responses to environmental stimuli (Neveanu, 1978, as cited in

Popescu, 2014). Observable expressions of behavior determine how an organism behaves and presents itself, and the adaptability and significance of such behavior are critical factors (Popescu, 2014). Broadly speaking, behavior refers to both internal and external responses to environmental stimuli, whether objectively or subjectively observed. In the narrow sense, behavior is limited to directly observable external responses. For the purpose of the study, this paper follows the broad definition of behavior as we rely on self-reported attitudes in studying EFL students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research. An attitude towards participation in research scale questionnaire is used to collect data.

According to Ajzen (1993) attitude towards an object is formed by assigning certain attributes to it. These attributes can be other objects, characteristics or events (Ajzen, 1993). In the late 1980s, Icek Ajzen proposed the theory of planned behavior, TPB for short, that explains the relationship between individuals' behavior and their attitudes, beliefs, and intentions (Ajzen, 1991, 1993; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) Ajzen & Fishbein (1977) stated that:

*A single behavior is determined by the intention to perform the behavior in question. A person's intention is in turn a function of his attitude toward performing the behavior and of his subjective norm. It follows that a single act is predictable from the attitude toward that act, provided that there is a high correlation between intention and behavior. (p: 888)*

According to the TPB, a person's intention to engage in a behavior is influenced by their attitudes towards that behavior, their perceptions of social norms regarding the behavior, and their perceived control over the behavior (Ajzen, 1991, 1993; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). In the

context of SLA research participation, a student's intention to participate may be influenced by their attitudes towards research participation, their beliefs about what others expect of them, and their perceptions of their ability to control their own participation. Attitudes towards participation in research can be shaped by a variety of factors, including beliefs about the value of research, perceived benefits of participating, and concerns about risks or discomfort associated with participation (Ajzen, 1991, 1993; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Students can also be influenced by the attitudes of those around them, such as their peers, instructors, or family members. For example, if students perceive that their instructors or peers expect them to participate, they may be more likely to do so. Perceptions of social norms regarding research participation may also influence a student's intention to participate. Moreover, students' perceived control over research participation can also determine their intention to participate. In other words, students may be more likely to participate in research if they feel they have control over their participation.

The relationship between attitude and behavior is complex and twofold. Schuman & Johnson (1976) pointed out that it becomes necessary to know how and to what extent attitude and behavior are linked. The classical view suggests that attitudes determine behavior. According to this view, when a person has a positive attitude towards something, they are more likely to behave positively toward that thing. By early 1930s this view was challenged by Richard LaPiere in his influential "seminal study" (Firmin, 2010). LaPiere spent two years travelling around the United States with a Chinese couple to see if people would accept them as guests in hotels and restaurants. The Chinese couple was refused entry only once out of 251 places they visited. Six months later, LaPiere sent questionnaires to the 251 hotels and restaurants asking establishment owners were asked "will you accept

members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?" (LaPiere, 1939, as cited in Firmin, 2010). Surprisingly, 90 % of the respondents said that they would not accept Chinese members as guests. As a result, LaPiere concluded that attitude did not influence behavior (Firmin, 2010). However, LaPiere acknowledged that questionnaires were relatively poor to determine how people respond to prejudice and discrimination and that "Likert's popularization of the questionnaire" should be used to weight respondents' attitudes against how they behave in given situations (Firmin, 2010).

Similarly, Corey (1937) found that students' attitudes toward cheating had no influence on their actual cheating behavior (Fazio & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2005). The correlation between attitude and behavior was zero (Fazio & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2005). Wicker (1969) confirmed the study of LaPiere's and Corey in a review of 31 studies on the relationship between attitude and behavior. He found that "a relatively low relationship exists between measured attitudes and overt behavior" (Wicker, 1969, p. 41)

Although many studies suggest that attitudes not influence behavior, there are cases where attitudes can predict behavior. Studies of pre-election attitudes and voting have shown that voting as a behavior can be predicted from pre-election attitudes (Kelley and Mirer, 1974, as cited in Fazio & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2005). Studies have shown a range of results, from no correlation at all (Corey, 1937) to a almost flawless correlation in the case of voting behavior.

Other models reverse the equation upside down. Self-perception theory, for example, suggests that people come to understand their attitudes and beliefs by observing their own behavior and the context in which it occurs ( Bem, 1972). Bem & McConnell (1970) also asserts that individual's "own behavior will be used by him as a source of evidence for his beliefs

and attitudes" (p. 8). In other words, people infer their attitudes based on their actions and the resulting consequences, rather than having an innate sense of their attitudes that guides their behavior (Bem, 1972) This means that people may not have strong attitudes towards a particular issue but may form opinions based on their actions and the feedback they receive from others. Self-perception theory links attitude and behavior by suggesting that people may adjust their attitudes to match their actions, rather than the other way around.

The view that attitude determines behavior has received the most empirical support in research on the attitude-behavior relationship. The present study will follow Ajzen and Fishbein's account of attitude-behavior relationship (Ajzen, 1991, 1993; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). The theory proposes that a person's attitudes towards a behavior, along with their beliefs and subjective norms, determine their intention to engage in that behavior, which in turn predicts their actual behavior. This framework provides a useful basis for understanding how attitudes can influence behavior, and it has been widely applied in various domains of psychology and social science research. By adopting this perspective, the present study aims to contribute to our understanding of how EFL students' attitudes towards SLA research influence their willingness to participate and provide insights that can inform future interventions and policies.

Research plays a crucial role in advancing our knowledge and understanding of various phenomena. It helps us develop theories, test hypotheses, and make informed decisions based on evidence. It is important for instructors to understand students' attitudes towards research so they can help them develop more positive attitudes. Papanastasiou (2005) conducted a study on 226 students who had completed a research methods course to create an "Attitudes toward Research" scale (ATR). Papanastasiou's

aim was to hypothesize that attitudes are multidimensional rather than unidimensional. The study identified five factors through which attitudes can be measured: usefulness of research, anxiety, positive affect towards research, relevance of research to daily life, and difficulty of research. However, Papanastasiou (2005) pointed out that it is necessary to further investigate the findings of this research to ascertain whether they can be duplicated using other groups of students and diverse populations.

Later, Papanastasiou (2014) revised the ATR scale to measure its psychometric characteristics through confirmatory factor analysis. By removing 19 items and consolidating the subscales into four, Papanastasiou was able to establish a good model fit. The revised version of the ATR scale (R-ATR) consists of 13 items, which measure attitudes towards research in terms of its usefulness, anxiety, and positive predisposition. According to Papanastasiou (2014) the R-ATR has strong psychometric properties, and it can be beneficial to researchers measuring research attitudes, as well as to practitioners for evidence-based practice. Both ATR and R-ATR scales (Papanastasiou, 2005, 2014) have been commonly used by several researchers to investigate students' attitudes towards research and research subjects.

Despite the importance of research, many studies have found that university students have negative attitudes towards research and research subjects in certain academic contexts (Papanastasiou, 2005, 2014; Papanastasiou & Schumacker, 2014). These negative attitudes can hinder the progress of research and limit its potential impact on society. According to Papanastasiou (2005), undergraduate students tend to have negative attitudes towards research methods courses. This negative attitude has been documented in numerous studies for several years related to research (Butt & Shams, 2013;

Obermeier, 2019; Rind et al., 2022; Torres et al., 2022; Wishkoski et al., 2022)

However, despite the negative attitudes of engaging students in research, research courses are also associated with positive attitudes towards research for some students. Several studies have resulted in positive attitudes towards research. Siamian et al. (2016) found that students at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences had a positive attitude towards research and had the least favorable view of its relationship with their everyday lives. These results were confirmed by Hussain et al. (2016) in a study that investigated the attitudes of Master of Technology Education students towards research in the University of Punjab. Similar results were obtained by Daran & Daran, (2021), Kakupa, (2019) and Maqsood et al., (2019) in different educational environments.

Other researchers shifted their interest to how students' attitudes towards research affect their behavioral intention. Abun (2021) conducted a study to investigate the correlation between students' cognitive and affective attitudes towards research and their intention to undertake research in the future. The research findings indicated that students' attitudes towards research affect their intention to conduct future research.

Participation in research is a vital component of academic life, and it plays a crucial role in advancing our understanding of the world around us. Students may encounter research opportunities throughout their academic journey, whether it be in the form of conducting their own research project or participating in a study conducted by a faculty member or researcher (Papanastasiou, 2019). While participating in research can be a rewarding experience, it is understandable that students may have varying attitudes towards it. Some students may view research participation as an opportunity to learn and develop new

skills, while others may see it as an obligation that takes away from other academic pursuits.

Students' attitudes towards participating in research can play a significant role in ensuring the validity of research findings. Papanastasiou (2019) discussed how "pre-existing attitudes can impact the ways in which individuals respond to research studies as well as possible methods of minimizing these threats to the validity of a study's results" (P: 208). In this context, Papanastasiou linked participants' attitudes towards research participation to 'crosstalk'. Edlund et al.(2009, as cited in Papanastasiou, 2019) defined 'crosstalk' as "the act of informing future participants of the details of a study." According to Edlund et al. (2017, as cited in Papanastasiou, 2019), The most serious type of 'crosstalk' is 'key crosstalk' that refers to the sharing of crucial information regarding the research process or protocol of which participants should not have prior knowledge. "This practice is particularly problematic since it can influence the ways in which participants respond to a study, thus affecting the degree of validity of the data obtained." (Papanastasiou, 2019, p: 210).

According to Papanastasiou (2019), research anxiety can have an impact on both the willingness of individuals to take part in research studies and the quality of data that they may provide as study participants. She stated that:

*Individuals with high levels of research anxiety are least likely to choose to voluntarily participate in research studies as a subject. Moreover, such individuals are least likely to make an effort to respond truthfully to the research prompts, either because they do not see the value of research in general or because they would like to complete their participation in the study*

*as quickly as possible.*  
(Papanastasiou, 2019, p: 214)

This also means that low level of anxiety brings about the opposite. The varying degrees to which people are willing to take part in studies can affect how accurately the results of the studies represent the general population (Papanastasiou, 2019). If the people who choose not to participate in a study are different from those who do participate, then the results of the study may not be representative of the wider population, and may not be applicable to them (Papanastasiou, 2019).

The way individuals feel about participating in research is a crucial factor that affects the quality of research. According to Khan et al. (2021, p: 2071) "The quality of research papers is dependent upon the attitude of researcher and participants' attitude toward participation as a sample in the study". Therefore, Khan et al. (2021) aimed to construct and test a scale that could measure university students' attitudes towards research participation. Khan et al. (2021) concluded that their scale has been approved for measuring students' attitudes towards participating in research. Therefore, it can be used to evaluate their responses to research surveys or questionnaires during any research project. It could also serve as a screening tool for selecting research participants. Additionally, the scale could help identify students who have negative attitudes towards research and guide them to overcome any misconceptions they may have. This scale together with R-ATR scale (Papanastasiou, 2014) can be adopted and adapted to create this study's research instrument.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study measured EFL students' attitudes and behavioral intentions to participate in SLA research using both

descriptive and inferential research questions (Creswell, 2014). The two descriptive questions were designed to describe the current state of affair of students' attitudes towards participation in SLA research and students' behavioral intention to participate in SLA (Stangor, 2011). The third and inferential question of this study focused on how EFL students' attitudes affect their intention to participate in SLA research.

### **Research Design**

To achieve the objective of the study, a descriptive-correlational research design was used (Akinlua, 2019). While the descriptive design was used to measure EFL students' attitudes and intention to participate in SLA research, the correlational design aimed to determine the relationship between EFL students' attitudes and intention using correlational statistical tests.

### **Data Collection Methods**

The research instrument of this study was a questionnaire consisting of three parts. The first part collected demographic information including age, gender, and academic level of participants. In the second part attitudes toward participating in SLA research were measured using a Likert scale. This scale was adopted from Khan et al. (2021) and adapted to assess EFL students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research. It consisted of nine items in, with items 1-5 representing a positive attitude factor and items 6-9 representing a negative attitude factor. The third part is a Likert scale that measured EFL students' behavioral intention to participate in SLA research. The scale was designed for the purpose of the current study. It consisted of nine items that represent two factors: positive intention factor (items 1-7) and negative intention factor (items 8 and 9). The reliability of the two scales was measured

using Cronbach's alpha test. The coefficients for Cronbach's alpha were .820 and .766 for Scale 1 and Scale 2 respectively.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Descriptive statistics were used to measure EFL students' attitudes and behavioral intention toward participating in SLA research. Univariable analysis including frequency tables and measures of central tendency (Bryman, 2012) was used to measure students' attitudes and behavioral intention to participate in SLA research. The mean scale scores of the two Likert scales were then calculated to create interval variables. Central tendency measures including means and standard deviations of the newly created interval variables were taken and interpreted using the range of Likert scale means (1.0 to 2.4 = negative attitude/intention, 2.5 to 3.4 = neutral attitude/ intention, and 3.5 to 5.0 = positive attitude/intention).

Inferential statistics were used to answer the third research question. This inferential question measured the relationship between EFL students' attitudes and behavioral intention to participate in SLA research. Spearman rank correlation, as a nonparametric test, was used based on the Kolmogorov Smirnov normality test ( $p$ -value = 0.00).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Research Question One**

Question one aims to measure students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research using descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviation. By using these statistical measures, this analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research. Examining the means will provide insights into the central tendencies of students' attitudes, while the standard deviation will illustrate



the extent of variation within the data. The null hypothesis associated with this research question is that EFL students have positive attitudes toward participating

in SLA research. By answering the research question, the null hypothesis is either confirmed or rejected.

**Table 1.** Responses to Attitudes towards Participation in SLA Research

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Whenever I participate in SLA research, I honestly respond to the research questionnaire.	7 6.1%	11 9.6%	26 22.6%	50 43.5%	21 18.3%
2. I must complete the research questionnaire even if it does not appeal to my interest	4 3.5%	28 24.3%	16 13.9%	53 46.1%	14 12.2%
3. Whenever I see someone asking others for filling out their SLA research questionnaire, I also try to participate in it.	6 5.2%	7 6.1%	28 24.3%	59 51.3%	15 13.0%
4. I think that we should participate in SLA research because it is beneficial for researchers and society.	4 3.5%	7 6.1%	19 16.5%	40 34.8%	45 39.1%
5. I appreciate people who put their energy in conducting SLA research.	3 2.6%	4 3.5%	24 20.9%	45 39.1%	39 33.9%
6. I fill out the SLA research questionnaire randomly without reading it.	47 40.9%	37 32.2%	15 13.0%	11 9.6%	5 4.3%
7. Whenever I participate in any SLA research study, I feel that I wasted my time.	38 33.0%	43 37.4%	11 9.6%	14 12.2%	9 7.8%
8. If someone asks me to fill an SLA research questionnaire, I become angry.	44 38.3%	40 34.8%	19 16.5%	6 5.2%	6 5.2%
9. If someone asks me to fill out an SLA research questionnaire, I object.	28 24.3%	33 28.7%	32 27.8%	19 16.5%	3 2.6%

Table 1 shows the responses to the first scale, attitudes toward participating in SLA research. It indicates the number and percentage of responses that fall into each category. The first five items (1 to 5) represent the positive attitudes factor, while the last four items (6 to 9) represent the negative attitudes factor.

Most participants showed significant or strong agreement with the items related to the positive attitudes factor (items 1 to 5, Table 1). According to these findings, participants answer research questionnaires honestly when participating in SLA research (Item 1). Participants also believe it is important to complete research questionnaires, even if they are not interested in doing so (Item 2). In addition,

participants demonstrate their willingness to participate in SLA research when they see others doing so (Item 3). Furthermore, participants recognize the benefits of engaging in SLA research for both researchers and society large (Item 4). Finally, participants know the efforts of individuals who invest their energy in conducting SLA research (Item 5). The consistent pattern of responses highlights the importance of acknowledging the positive aspects identified in this study, which may have profound implications for future initiatives aimed at fostering EFL students' positive attitudes toward participating in SLA research.

Most participants expressed strong disagreement or disagreement with the items describing negative attitudes (items 6 to 9 in table 1). Most participants indicate that they do not fill out SLA research questionnaires randomly (Item 6). Additionally, participants do not consider participating in SLA research to be a waste of time (Item 7). Likewise, participants do not feel anger when asked to complete an SLA research questionnaire (Item 8). Finally, participants do not object to completing an SLA research questionnaire when requested to do so (Item 9). These responses are consistent with those of positive attitudes factor.

**Table 2.** *Descriptive Statistics of Attitudes towards Participation in SLA Research*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitudes towards participation in SLA research means.	3.75	.698

The mean score of the nine items regarding attitude toward participation in SLA research was 3.75 indicating a relatively positive attitude toward participation in SLA research (see Table 2). The standard deviation of .698 indicates that the attitude scores are closely distributed around the mean. Therefore, we can confirm the null hypothesis that that EFL students have a positive attitude towards participating in SLA research.

According to the TPB, attitudes play a crucial role in shaping behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991, 1993b; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). In the context of this study's results, EFL students' moderately positive attitudes toward participating in SLA research suggest that they recognize the value and benefits of engaging in research activities. These attitudes may be influenced by their beliefs about the relevance of research to their academic and professional development, the potential contributions they can make to the field,

and the perceived positive outcomes associated with research participation. Positive attitudes serve as the driving force behind their behavioral intentions to participate in SLA research.

### **Research Question Two**

The second research question aims to measure EFL students' behavioral intention to participate in SLA research. To answer this question, descriptive statistics including frequencies, means, and standard deviations are provided to provide insight into the central tendency of EFL students' intention. The null hypothesis states that EFL students have a positive intention to participate in SLA research.

Table 3 shows the numbers and percentages of responses to the intention to participate in SLA research scale. The scale consists of nine items, with seven items (1-7) representing the positive

intention factor and two items representing the negative intention factor.

**Table 3.** Responses to Intention to Participate in SLA Research

Items	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree
1. I intend to participate in SLA research studies when given the opportunity.	5 4.3%	16 13.9%	19 16.5%	60 52.2%	15 13.0%
2. I would be willing to sacrifice some of my time to participate in SLA research studies.	3 2.6%	12 10.4%	36 31.3%	51 44.3%	13 11.3%
3. I feel confident that I can successfully participate in SLA research studies.	2 1.7%	10 8.7%	27 23.5%	60 52.2%	16 13.9%
4. I would like to learn more about how to participate in SLA research studies.	5 4.3%	12 10.4%	19 16.5%	47 40.9%	32 27.8%
5. I am interested in learning about new SLA research studies	7 6.1%	8 7.0%	15 13.0%	59 51.3%	26 22.6%
6. I would recommend participating in SLA research studies to my friends and colleagues.	3 2.6%	8 7.0%	29 25.2%	53 46.1%	22 19.1%
7. I believe that my participation in SLA research studies can contribute to the advancement of knowledge in my field.	4 3.5%	9 7.8%	20 17.4%	58 50.4%	24 20.9%
8. I do not believe that participating in SLA research studies is beneficial for me.	30 26.1%	36 31.3%	19 16.5%	22 19.1%	8 7.0%
9. I do not trust that the researchers conducting SLA studies have good intentions.	24 20.9%	39 33.9%	29 25.2%	17 14.8%	6 5.2%

Most students responded “*neutral*”, “*agree*” or “*strongly agree*” to the first seven items representing the positive intention factor with, accounting for more than 80% of responses. On the other hand, more than 80% of the responses for the two items representing the negative intention factor were “*strongly disagree*”, “*disagree*” or “*neutral*”. In general, the numbers and percentages in this table indicate moderately positive intentions to participate in SLA research.

65.2% of respondents expressed their intention to participate in SLA research if given the opportunity. A significant percentage of respondents expressed willingness to sacrifice some time to participate (65.6%) or to learn more about how to participate in SLA research (68.7%). Additionally, 73.9 % of

respondents expressed interest in learning more about new SLA research studies and 65.2% would recommend participating in SLA research studies to their friends and colleagues. On the other hand, a minority of respondents (20%) believed that they were wasting their time by participating in SLA research and that participating in SLA research was not beneficial to them (26.1%).

On the contrary, a small portion of students expressed a negative intention to participate in SLA research studies (less than 15%). A minority of students (10.4%) did not feel confident that they could successfully participate in SLA research. Similarly. A few students (11.3%) did not believe that their participation in SLA research could contribute to the advancement of their field.

**Table 4.** *Descriptive Statistics of Intention to Participate in SLA Research*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intention to participate in SLA research mean.	115	3.64	.614

To corroborate the results in Table 3, the mean score of the responses was calculated (table 4). The result was a score of 3.64, which was above the cut off value, indicating moderately positive intent. The standard deviation of .614 indicates that

### Research Question Three

By providing a detailed and objective account of EFL students' attitudes and intentions toward participating in SLA research, the two descriptive questions set the stage for the subsequent inferential question. Research question 3 aims to investigate whether there is a significant relationship between students' attitudes toward participating in SLA and their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research. To answer this question, the Spearman rank correlation test was used.

The choice of Spearman rank correlation, as a nonparametric test was

the response values are closely distributed around the mean. Therefore, the null hypothesis is confirmed. The null hypothesis states that EFL students have a positive behavioral intention to participate in SLA research.

based on the Kolmogorov Smirnov normality test. This test yielded a significant p-value of 0.001 ( $P < 0.05$ ) indicating that the data does not follow a normal distribution. Table 5 shows the results of the Spearman rank correlation of students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research and their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research.

**Table 5.** *Relationship between students' attitudes and behavioral intention to participate in SLA research.*

		Attitudes	Intention	
Spearman's rho	Attitudes	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.703**	
		N	.000	
	Intention	Correlation Coefficient	115	115
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.703**	1.000
		N	.000	.
		115	115	

Considering the correlation between students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research and their

behavioral intentions to participate in SLA research, the correlation coefficient was 0.703. This coefficient suggests that there

is a strong positive correlation between the two variables. In other words, when students' attitudes increase, their behavioral intention also increases and when students' attitude decreases, their behavioral intention also decreases. The p-value associated with this correlation is .000 (2-tailed) indicating that the correlation is statistically significant, and that it is unlikely that this correlation occurred by chance. Therefore, the correlation matrix provides evidence to reject the null hypothesis and suggests that there is indeed a significant relationship between students' attitudes and their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research.

The finding that there is a strong correlation between EFL students' attitudes and their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research is consistent with the TPB proposed by Icek Ajzen . According to TPB, attitudes towards a specific behavior are positively correlated with behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991, 1993b; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). In the context of this results of this study, the correlation coefficient of 0.703 indicates a strong relationship between attitudes and behavioral intentions. This means that as students' positive attitudes toward SLA research increase, their intention to participate in research studies also increases. The results support the idea that students who have positive attitudes toward participating in SLA research are more likely to have positive intentions to engage in SLA research activities. Conversely, students with negative attitudes are more likely to have negative intentions to participate in SLA research. At this point, it is important to note that establishing a causal relationship between attitudes and behavioral intention to participate in SLA research is beyond the scope of the objectives of this study.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed that EFL students have moderately positive attitudes towards participation in SLA research, indicating a positive inclination toward participating in SLA research activities. Additionally, the study showed that EFL students have moderately positive intentions to participate in SLA research, indicating a genuine interest in contributing to scholarly endeavors in their field. Moreover, the analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between EFL students' attitudes and their behavioral intentions to participate in SLA research, suggesting that individuals with more positive attitudes are more likely to have a stronger intention to actively participate in research.

### *Limitations of the Study*

The researcher acknowledges several limitations that may affect the internal and external validity of this study, in addition to those noted in the introduction of this study. Generalizations should be made with caution based on this research alone, due in part to the following factors: (a) the study was limited to EFL students at the School of Arts and Humanities of Moulay Ismail University. (b) The study used convenience sampling technique instead of random sampling techniques. Despite the availability of the sampling frame, it is extremely difficult to reach randomly selected individuals in higher education settings. (c) the questionnaire was distributed during a time of unrest of exams preparation, which may have affected the way participants handled the questionnaire.

### *Implications for Practice*

The results of this study have several implications for SLA educators and researchers interested in promoting students' attitudes toward participating in

SLA research to collect high-quality data that produce accurate results. The scales used in this study can be used as a screening tool to determine whether EFL students respond correctly to SLA research questionnaires. When conducting any SLA research, consideration should be given to the finding that students' attitudes are significantly related to their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research. Therefore, students with a negative attitude toward SLA research can be guided to clear up any misunderstanding. Awareness programs can be developed for EFL students to help them understand the importance of their participation. Raising EFL students' awareness of the importance of the participation can ensure the authenticity and accuracy of SLA research findings and ultimately improve the field of English language teaching. Understanding EFL students' attitudes and behavioral intention may also aid in developing strategies to improve participant recruitment and retention throughout the SLA research process.

### ***Recommendations for Further Research***

The following recommendations for further research can be made based on the limitations and findings of this study. This study was limited to EFL students from the School of Arts and Humanities, Moulay Ismail University. Expanding the scope of the study to include EFL students from other schools could preferably provide better opportunities for a deeper understanding of the topic. In addition, the use of random sampling techniques could increase the generalizability of the research results. Future research should address the limitations of this study to provide further insights into EFL students' attitudes and intentions towards participating in SLA research.

Based on the results of study, further recommendations can be made. Finding that EFL students' attitudes are positively

correlated with their behavioral intention to participate in SLA research may motivate further regression research. These study results can serve as a foundation for future research on the causal relationship between attitudes and intentions to participate in SLA research. Moreover, cross-tabulating students' attitudes and behavioral intentions with the demographic variables revealed some associations. More research should be done to measure these relationships using precise statistical tests. Due to the impact of participants' attitudes toward research on the quality of the data collected (Khan et al., 2021; Papanastasiou, 2019), it becomes necessary to design a scale to measure EFL students' attitudes toward participating in SLA research. The scale used in this study was adopted from Khan et al. (2021) and adapted to serve this study's objectives. The original scale was constructed to measure university students' attitudes towards research. A scale that considers the specificities and unique characteristics of EFL students and SLA research is needed.

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