Podcasting holds great potential both as a teaching and learning tool. As a result, the podcasting phenomenon has attracted the attention of educators at all levels. Much has been written about the use of podcasting as a learning activity and lecture recording, but there is little research on the social and cognitive impacts of educational podcasting. In this study, data were collected from a convenience sample of undergraduate and graduate students and used to assess the impact of podcasting on three sets of variables: classroom community, student learning, and students’ preferences for consuming podcasts. Rovai’s (2002) Classroom Community Scale was used to assess social community and learning community, and students’ perceived learning was evaluated using the Cognitive, Affective, Psychomotor (CAP) Perceived Learning Scale. Students’ preferences for consuming podcasts were evaluated using an author-developed Podcast Consumption Preferences Survey (PCPS). The PCPS also facilitated assessing student listening patterns. Demographic data were collected as well. The results of this study indicated podcasts did not significantly impact student learning but did significantly impact students’ sense of community in the classroom. Additionally, data from the PCPS indicated an overwhelming preference among students for listening to the instructional podcasts while focused on studying for the course. Three important implications arise from the results: (a) faculty should give greater attention to nurturing a sense of community in the classroom; (b) building community in the classroom is not difficult—even modest attempts can have a significant positive impact with significant benefits for students—and (c) universities should substantially invest in faculty
training and development to improve faculty proficiency and effectiveness in integrating
technology in teaching. Such investments have the potential to improve not only student learning
but student success and persistence as well.

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