

Research on Self-efficacy Cultivation in VLC of College Students Based on Satir Model and Iceberg Theory

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Abstract: Thanks to the advancement of information and communications technology, virtual reality technology, and multimedia technology, virtual learning community has evolved into the online platform for educators to facilitate and students to accomplish remote learning, which offers a good foundation for realizing lifetime learning. The self-efficacy of the learner is a significant component impacting the efficiency of online learning. According to studies, the Satir model can be used in instructing group work to successfully increase individual self-efficacy. By combining Satir model and iceberg theory, this paper attempts to explore how learners' self-efficacy can be gradually enhanced via virtual community interactions.

Keywords: Self-efficacy Cultivation ; VLC, Satir Model ; College Students

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Introduction

Since its conception, psychologists have paid close attention to the idea of self-efficacy in a variety of fields, and the field of education is no exception. College students' self-efficacy, which refers to students' perceptions of their own abilities to accomplish specific learning tasks and goals, is one of the subjective aspects influencing their autonomous learning ability and learning motivation. As a result of fast development in the philosophy and technology of virtual learning communities (VLC) which has led to a broad application of online learning platforms, an increasing number of schools and educators began to look into the impacts of VLC on learners' self-efficacy and further on learning outcomes (Chen, Chen, & Kinshuk, 2009).^[1] It is found that students' self efficacy would influence their self-confidence, motivation, and thus learning outcomes in VLC for educational purposes. Studies have shown that self-efficacy is highly connected with both self-consistency and interpersonal interaction, which are among the focuses of Satir model (Bandura, 1977).^[2] The model is thus applicable on the topic of how to successfully raise an individual's self-efficacy by engaging them in specific learning tasks in educational VLCs. Therefore, the present study probes into the positive drive in self-efficacy of college students via VLCs and tries to develop strategies for cultivating and enhancing the self-efficacy based on the Satir model and the iceberg theory.

1. VLC and Self-efficacy

1.1 VLC

First proposed by Howard Rheingold (1994), VLC refers to individuals engaging in long-term open discussions in the public space of the Internet, and it takes learning and education as its main purpose. A VLC is characterized by openness, diversity of learning styles, and democracy and equality. Users share information and knowledge in VLC and learn together through online interaction. Mobile VLC is becoming a new research field as development in the information and communications technology (ICT) and mobile devices.

1.2 Self-efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy, first introduced by Bandura in 1977, refers to an individual's judgment, belief or subjective self-grasp and feeling about his or her ability to complete a certain activity at a certain level, i.e. an individual's feeling of whether or to what extent he or she is competent to complete a specific activity when faced with the task. Self-efficacy has proven to be a more consistent predictor of behavioral outcomes than have other self-beliefs (Graham & Weiner, 1996).^[3] Also, it is closely related to self-confidence, and self-esteem when one person is faced with a certain task. In other words, self-efficacy is not a skill or a person's true ability, but the perception of one's competence. Self-efficacy has an impact on learners' motivation, learning goal setting, learning strategies and emotions in the VLC.

2. Factors Affecting Self-efficacy

2.1 Subjective Factors

2.1.1 Personal Presence in the Community

Personal presence in the community, or the extent to which learners are personally noticed in the VLC, is an important factor affecting learning motivation. Under Satir Model, the more attention an individual receives, the the stronger the sense of self-efficacy he or she possesses. When learners feel like they are a part of the community and their contributions are recognized, they are more likely to actively participate in and collaborate with other learners in the same community.

2.1.2 Learners' physical or emotional states

Mood states bias attention and affect people's interpretation of events, cognitive organization, and memory extraction (Bower, 1981).^[4] Learners' mood state, physical health state, jealousy and other emotions also affect self-efficacy. Having a positive physiological or emotional state generate a high sense of self-efficacy in the process of online learning; otherwise, their self-efficacy is undermined.

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Mood states bias attention and affect people's interpretation of events, cognitive organization, and memory extraction ((Bower, 1981; Eich, 1995; Isen, 1987).^[4,5,6] Learners' mood state, physical health state, jealousy and other emotions also affect self-efficacy. Having a positive physiological or emotional state, community members interact well, generate a sense of belonging, and have a high sense of self-efficacy in the process of online learning; on the contrary, if learners' physiological or emotional state is negative, their self-efficacy is undermined. Therefore, in VLC, conscious adjustment of their emotions better assists learners in integrating into the VLC.

2.2 Objective Factors

2.2.1 Community Safety

The technical security of the community directly affects the members' trust and willingness to express in the VLC, which in turn has an impact on self-efficacy. If the the management of the community members is chaotic, and the personal information of the learners cannot be protected, few students would like to communicate in the community.

2.2.2 Timeliness of Interaction and Feedback

In order to facilitate effective communication among learners in different locations, the VLC provides remote communication tools such as synchronous/asynchronous discussion forums, and discussion groups to promote mutual understanding and learning among members. It is worth noting that the timely feedback from the teacher would make students feel that their efforts have been recognized, which can improve their self-efficacy, and promote them to complete higher-level tasks.

2.2.3 Community incentives

In virtual learning environments, learners are often dispersed and may lack a sense of community. However, establishing a sound community motivation mechanism can help to improve learners' self-efficacy and foster a sense of belonging.

3. Satir Model and Iceberg Theory

The Iceberg Theory is a central concept in the Satir Model and compares a person to an iceberg floating in the water. The visible part of the iceberg above the water level represents behavior, while the hidden part underwater represents a person's emotions, beliefs, assumptions, values, thoughts, expectations, and yearnings (Wu, 2016).^[7] These internal elements are the key drives of a person's behavior and can influence their interactions with the world around them.

The Satir Model utilizes the Iceberg Theory to help individuals better understand their inner world and how it affects their behavior. By examining the hidden aspects of the iceberg, individuals can identify and address their emotions, beliefs, and expectations, leading to more authentic and fulfilling interactions with others.

For instance, when someone is upset or irritated, they could isolate themselves. Individuals can address the underlying difficulties and express themselves more effectively by looking at the hidden parts of the iceberg and figuring out the root of their feelings, such

as unmet expectations or unsatisfied yearnings.

4. Self-efficacy Cultivation Strategies

The level of self-efficacy directly affects learners' learning motivation, learning goals, and learning outcomes. To improve their self-efficacy in VLC, the writer proposes the following strategies based on Satir Model.

4.1 Strengthen the Learners' Own Value Experience in the VLC

Learners' involvement and self-efficacy are crucial for any virtual learning environment to succeed. Learning how valuable they are in the virtual learning environment can boost learners' confidence and sense of accomplishment, which in turn improves their perception of their own efficacy.

4.1.1 Pay Close Attention to Students' Feelings

In any learning environment, including virtual ones, learners' feelings significantly shape their behavior and overall learning experience. The Iceberg theory suggests that people's emotions directly impact their behavior. However, gauging learners' emotions in virtual learning environments can be challenging, as face-to-face interaction is limited.

To overcome this challenge, educators must closely examine students' feelings and find ways to track their emotions. One practical approach is to develop administer questionnaires regularly to monitor students' feelings and perceptions. These questionnaires can be customized to assess learners' engagement, satisfaction, and motivation. By tracking and reflecting on students' feelings, educators can gain valuable insights into the virtual learning environment's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

4.1.2 Create a Welcoming Environment in the VLC

For students to feel at ease and empowered to engage entirely in the learning process, educators are obliged to establish a safe and encouraging environment in the VLC. A welcoming environment can be achieved by establishing clear rules and expectations for behavior and communication within the online learning community and allowing students to express their views and thoughts in a respectful and nonjudgmental setting.

Educators may foster a secure learning environment by encouraging students to clarify their understanding and ask questions without worrying about being judged or ridiculed. Creating a welcoming learning environment where students can openly express their thoughts and opinions is critical. Learners are more eager to participate in discussions and activities when they believe their opinions are valued and acknowledged, further boosting their confidence and giving them a sense of accomplishment. Educators could offer students several means of communication, including email, chat rooms, and discussion forums, and immediately and carefully respond to their inquiries.

Additionally, educators can promote community collaboration by encouraging learners to share their experiences, perspectives, and insights. Group projects, peer review and feedback, and collaborative learning activities can help learners build trust and respect for one another.

4.1.3 Show your Acceptance and Agreement

The Iceberg Theory holds that humans have a strong desire to be appreciated and respected by others (Wu, Liao, Jie, & Peng, Y, 2022).^[8] It is crucial for instructors to welcome all students in the virtual learning environment and to acknowledge and value their efforts. Celebrating student accomplishments and valuing their ideas and efforts helps promote a sense of belonging and community, which will ultimately increase students' self-efficacy.

In the VLC, learners may feel disconnected from their peers and instructors. It is far from enough for educators just to provide a platform for students to share their ideas. Actively listening to learners, praising their efforts, and providing constructive feedback acknowledging their contributions are necessary for educators to cultivate the learning environment. Providing prompt feedback containing acceptance and agreement can help learners feel more comfortable and confident in expressing themselves and sharing their ideas. By creating a positive feedback loop and enhancing learners' self-efficacy in the VLC, educators can help to build a sense of community and collaboration in the virtual learning environment.

4.1.4 Provide Incentives

Students' values can be presented as prizes. Teachers can reward students who actively participate in community conversations by raising their prestige level, designating forum champions who can advise and assist other students, and awarding points to students who make contributions, so as to enhance learners' self-efficacy. These rewards can motivate students to actively interact in the online learning environment, boost their motivation and sense of worth.

4.2 Make Humanized Design for the VLC

The Satir model advocates for people to live a more humane life. VLC provides a free and equal communication platform for learners, and learners are in a virtual social relationship.

4.2.1 Protect Users' Privacy

Privacy protection is essential if the VLC is to have a humanized design. Learners must feel safe and confident when interacting with others in the virtual community and exchanging knowledge. To avoid data breaches or privacy violations, the VLC must ensure its technology is constantly enhanced, including implementing secure login and password management systems, and regular software updates to eliminate vulnerabilities.

4.2.2 Enhance Mutual Understanding among Learners

In order to tailor learning experiences and provide appropriate resources, the VLC should gather information about learners' behaviors, interests, and needs. Through connections with people with interests and objectives, learners will feel a sense of community and belonging.

4.2.3 Establish a Service-Oriented Virtual Community

A service-oriented virtual community with accessible resources and communicative features should be the goal of the VLC's design. Examples of such functionalities are online discussion boards, video conferencing, and collaborative learning tools. Learning environments that are more engaging and dynamic are produced when learners can exchange knowledge, ask questions, and provide feedback. The community may also be created to provide assistance and resources beyond those required for academic success, such as those for mental health and wellness.

Also, there should be more freedom provided for students. The perception that learners can freely choose the learning place and content, which is helpful to improve their ability and broaden their scope of knowledge, is positively correlated with their self-efficacy. The content setting in VLC should give learners as much space as possible for free choice and set more content of high value to improve learners' learning interests and motivation to improve their self-efficacy.

5. Conclusion

As an important platform for realizing distance education, VLC is characterized by unrestricted space and time, which effectively solve the learning needs of students in the state of time and space separation between teachers and students, but it also puts forward higher requirements for learners' independent learning ability. In virtual learning communities, learners' self-efficacy directly affects their motivation, learning goals and learning outcomes. Therefore, educators can implement a series of measures to enhance learners' self-efficacy based on the Satir Model and the Iceberg theory, which can help learners build up their self-confidence in virtual learning communities and improve the learning effectiveness of distance education.

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