How to Use Social Identity Theory to Stimulate Students' Community Citizenship Behavior in a Blended Learning Environment

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Abstract

The course group is the best channel for teachers to build relationships with students and other members in the blended learning environment. Based on the theory of social identity, this research explores the impact of learning passion, community engagement, learning commitment, and community commitment on community citizenship behavior. After collecting 339 valid questionnaires in this study, the structural equation model was used to verify the proposed conceptual model. This study used Cronbach's α test reliability, and the validity was tested by CR (> 0.7) and AVEs (> 0.5). The results show that all research hypotheses are supported. This article provides a conclusion and practical enlightenment for teaching.

Keywords: *social identity theory; community engagement; community identification; learning passion; community citizenship behavior*

1   INTRODUCTION

Today's college students are all born after 2000. They are very different from the previous students. Because they have lived in the network since childhood, they like to interact with other people in the virtual world. They have low concentration and will shift focus to other things if they are not interested in something. Today's one-way transmission teaching method has been unable to attract college students' investment in learning. Therefore, many scholars have proposed a blended learning (BL) method that combines online and offline, allowing students to freely decide when to watch the video learning course content online and when to conduct group discussions online before class [19]. Scholars believe that the blended teaching method that combines online and offline is more in line with the learning needs of modern students. If teachers can design a learning situation suitable for modern students and let students learn in the way they like, it can trigger students' interest in learning and help improve students' desire to learn. In other words, teachers need to create a learning environment that students like, which will help improve students' interest in learning and recognition [8]. However, in current higher education, teachers often neglect to design a learning environment that students

agree with, and most of them focus on improving students' participation [25].

Course grouping is often a part of teachers' teaching methods, but it often fail to achieve good results in China, because too many students do not agree with the team in the course, and are unwilling to spend time on the content of group activities, resulting in students not having sufficient interaction after class and poor learning outcomes. In marketing, many scholars use social identification theory, which states that customer engagement with the community leads to a commitment relationship [7], and when customers identify with the community, they are also more willing to provide assistance, participate in community activities, and continue to support the community with actions that increase the value of themselves and others. If this point works in marketing research, can it be translated into teaching with the same effect?

Therefore, this study complements the teaching gap of social identity theory in a blended learning, focusing on recount how social identity theory can to explore (1) when students are grouped into courses, the impact of community identity and community engagement on community commitment, (2) in offline learning the impact of college students' learning identification and

learning passion on learning commitment, (3) the impact of learning commitment and community commitment on community citizenship behavior, (4) and to provide suggestions for teachers to design courses to use course grouping.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   *Explore the impact of learning identification on community identification, learning commitment, learning passion*

Social Identity Theory (SIT) perspectives involve clarify the relationship between self-concept, groups, and intergroup phenomenon. The main premise of this view is that people define their own unique personal attributes and the collective attributes of the groups to which they belong [11]. Learning identification (LI) refers to students' recognition of teachers in terms of curriculum design and teaching methods, and believes that teachers' teaching methods are helpful for acquiring knowledge of the course; community identification (CI) refers to the fact that course group members believe that they belong to the group and has a sense of belonging. When a student develops a learning identification with a course, it will help him/her identify with the learning community of the course to which he/she belongs [28]. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis.

H1: LI is positively effects to CI.

Scholars believe that commitment refers to a consumer's emotional or psychological attachment to a product. When consumers generate a strong product identification, they will make a commitment to the product to which they belong [26]. Therefore, when students identification with the course, they will make a commitment to the course. The following hypothesis is proposed.

H2: LI is positively effects to LC.

Learning passion (LP) refers to an individual's 'love' of learning and savor in devoting effort to learning-related activities [27]. It encourages an individual to apply new information to improve upon his or her capabilities by combining new and existing knowledge. Albert et al. (2009). [1] have proposed that brand identification can lead to brand passion; some studies also pointed out that when a community member has a favourable impression of a brand, he or she is more likely to share their enthusiasm for the brand with other community members [2]. Therefore, this study deduced that when students have a good course identification, they will be encouraged to share their learning results with other members and increase their learning passion. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis.

H3: LI is positively effects to LP.

2.2   *Explore the impact of community identification on community engagement, community commitment*

People build self-esteem and self-rightness through the degree of similarity between themselves and others, and to protect and strengthen self-esteem, people will actively engage in certain behaviors to maintain their relationship with society [4]. Thence, community members with high identification with the community are more willing to help, participate in community activities, and continue to support the community with their actions, thereby enhancing their own value and that of others [26]. Based on scholars' arguments, this research infers that when students have a high degree of identification with course groupings, they are more willing to participate in grouping activities and support the course group with actions to maintain their relationship with group members. This leads to the following hypothesis.

H4: CI is positively effects to CE.

Organizational scholars have confirmed that members' sense of identification with the organization builds their connection with the organization, motivates members achieve the organization's goals, and strengthens the willingness to maintain a long-term relationship with the organization [6]. Keh & Xie (2009) [16] believe that identification will make consumers think that they share the same identity or have a similar value system with the organization, and will attract consumers maintain the relationship between. Thence, it is inferred from this research that when course group members establish community identification with the group, it will motivate members achieve the group's course goals and strengthen their willingness to maintain a long-term relationship with the course group. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis.

H5: CI is positively effects to CC.

2.3   *Explore the impact of learning passion on community engagement, learning commitment*

In the context of consumption, brand passion is a consumer's emotional and very positive attitude towards a brand, which leads to an emotional connection to the brand and related brand engagement behaviors, reflecting the passion and positive feelings toward the brand [24]. When consumers are passion about a brand, the brand will be able to transform the consumer's social self, or show the inner self [5], and the community engagement will also increase. During the learning, students' learning passion is their emotional and positive attitude towards the course group, which will lead to an emotional connection to the course group and a willingness to participate in the group activities, which

will help enhance community engagement. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis.

H6: LP is positively effects to CE.

When consumers feel passion and infatuated with a brand, they want to maintain a relationship with the brand [24], and willing to build a strong commitment to the brand [9]. If a student with passion and joyful about the course, he will also hope to maintain learning with the course after class, which will help to enhance the learning commitment to the course. This study hypothesizes the following.

H7: LP is positively effects to LC.

2.4　Explore the impact of community engagement on community commitment

Customer engagement in the community leads to commitment relationships [7]. In the customer relationship, the higher the degree of interaction and involvement between customers and the organization, the higher the degree of customer attachment to the organization and it is easy to have a commitment relationship to the organization [27]. Therefore, in the course group relationship, the higher the level of interaction and involvement among group members, the higher the members' favourite for the course group, and they experience the importance and value of the group through the participation, so they will create a committed relationship to the group. These arguments lead to the following hypothesis.

H8: CE is positively effects to CC.

2.5　Explore the impact of community commitment on learning commitment

Scholars have found that when members experience or obtain value and benefits from participating in social organizations, they are willing to continue to maintain the relationship. And when members have a commitment to the organization, they will also commit to supporting the organization's actions, believing that the success or failure of the organization is quite related to themselves [3]. Therefore, when students find that they experience the joy of learning from the course group, they will be willing to continue maintain the relationship with the group members, thus when students have a commitment to the course group, they will also commit to supporting the organization's actions, thinking that the group is in the performance in the course is quite relevant to oneself. The hypotheses of this study are as follows.

H9: CC is positively effects to LC.

2.6　Explore the impact of community commitment and learning commitment on community citizenship behavior

Community citizenship behavior (CCB) is defined as the behavior of individuals who choose to benefit other people in the community [20]. In teaching, this study found that most students think that other students are unwilling to contribute to the course group, and often have the idea of free riding. To make the teaching method of course grouping more effective, this research uses the view from Peloza and Hassay (2006) and defines CCB as students' intension to help other community members. In organizational research, Shaari et al. (2012) [23] pointed out that brand commitment will positively affect the generation of employee citizenship behavior. When consumers' brand commitment reflects their positive attitude towards the brand or enterprise. This research infers that in teaching, when students have a LC to the course, they will take a positive attitude towards the course, and they will also have a CC to the course group. In group activities, for the group to perform well in the course, the students' intension, and behavior to help each other enhanced. Therefore, the inference of this study is as follows:

H10-H11:CC and LC are positively effects to CCB.

3　METHODLOGY

3.1　The questionnaire designs

This study modifies the questions raised by previous scholars, and all scales contain multiple items. First, LI has six questions, which are based on the research of Huang and Li (2016) [13]. The second LP question has five, and these questions are based on the research of Lee and Durksen (2018) [18]. Third, LC is modified from the three-item measure adopted by Kang et al. (2012) [15]. Fourth, CI is a modification of the four questions proposed by Qu and Lee (2011) [21]. Fifth, CE is using the four questions proposed by René et al. (2005) [22]. Sixth, CC is the three questions raised by Kang et al. (2007) [14]. Finally, CCB is measured using the 3 questions posed by Bartikowski and Walsh (2011). This study uses a 7-point Likert scale for measurement. It can be seen from Table 1 that this research has a total of 28 measurement items in seven structures.

3.2　Data collection and the sample

The data for this study were obtained from a university in Guangzhou, China. This study adopts the purposive sampling method to select business school students as the target group. A total of 350 business administration students completed the survey. All students are in the same subject (management) in the same semester (i.e., September-December 2021), but

undergraduates in four different classes. All four classes are taught by the same teacher, syllabus and learning outcomes. The questionnaire for this study was anonymous. A total of 339 valid questionnaires were collected in this study, with a recovery rate of 96.9%. Among them, 4 students asked for leave, and 7 students gave up the analysis due to incomplete answers resulting in missing data.

4   RESULTS

4.1   *The measurement model*

The reliability and validity of this study are based on the three indicators of single item reliability, latent variable combination reliability (CR), Cronbach's α and mean variation extraction (AVE) proposed by Hair et al. (2011) [10], which are verified as follows: (1) Reliability interpretation of individual observed variables: The factor loadings of all observed variables in this study are greater than 0.5, indicating that the observed variables in this study have good reliability. (2) CR and Cronbach's α: Scholars suggest that CR and Cronbach's α should be greater than 0.7. This study ranged from 0.708 to 0.916, both greater than 0.7, indicating that the latent variables in this study had good internal consistency. (3) AVE: AVE greater than 0.5, indicating convergent validity. The AVE in this study was between 0.528 and 0.730, all greater than 0.5, the latent variables in this study had good convergent validity. The $\chi 2/df$ ratio of the CFA model in this study is less than 3.0, RMSEA=0.059, GFI=0.0.87, AGFI=0.84, IFI=0.99, and other indicators meet the requirements of scholars' analysis [17], which proves that the hypothetical model is suitable for analysis using structural equations.

Table 1: Overall result of measurement model

Factor	Standardized Factor Loadings		AVE	CR	M	SD
LI α=0.904	LI1	0.82	0.647	0.916	6.29	0.766
	LI2	0.78			6.19	0.828
	LI3	0.84			6.27	0.783
	LI4	0.79			6.24	0.825
	LI5	0.76			6.040	0.917
	LI6	0.83			6.390	0.731
LP α=0.827	LP1	0.69	0.528	0.847	6.210	0.888
	LP2	0.77			5.980	0.887
	LP3	0.66			6.170	0.888
	LP4	0.72			5.860	0.915
	LP5	0.78			6.250	0.791
LC α=0.806	LC1	0.82	0.640	0.842	6.340	0.758
	LC2	0.78			5.800	0.933
	LC3	0.80			6.310	0.815
CI α=0.906	CI1	0.86	0.680	0.895	6.320	0.774
	CI2	0.79			6.310	0.793
	CI3	0.84			6.310	0.796
	CI4	0.81			6.370	0.823
CE α=0.900	CE1	0.84	0.730	0.915	6.550	0.696
	CE2	0.89			6.320	0.799
	CE3	0.79			6.150	0.803
	CE4	0.89			6.340	0.788
CC α=0.708	CC1	0.89	0.673	0.862	6.340	0.784
	CC2	0.79			6.620	0.665
	CC3	0.79			6.370	0.770

Factor	Standardized Factor Loadings		AVE	CR	M	SD
CCB α=0.890	CCB1	0.82	0.700	0.874	6.110	0.851
	CCB2	0.80			6.290	0.873
	CCB3	0.88			6.140	0.912

Table 2: Research hypothesis testing results

Hypothesized	Standardized estimate	T-value	Hypothesis supported
H1: LI→LP	0.85***	12.55	YES
H2: LI→LC	0.22*	2.10	YES
H3: LI→CI	0.90***	15.71	YES
H4: CI→CE	0.26***	4.30	YES
H5: CI→CC	0.88***	13.55	YES
H6: LP→CE	0.53***	7.11	YES
H7: LP→LC	0.64***	6.32	YES
H8: CE→CC	0.13*	1.96	YES
H9: CC→LC	0.15**	2.98	YES
H10: CC→CCB	0.40***	4.72	YES
H11: LC→CCB	0.48***	5.04	YES

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

4.2 Structural pattern analysis and verification

The SEM model was used in this study, and the fitting of the model was based on the requirements of Kline (1998)[17] and Hu & Bentler (1999)[12]. The RMSEA of this study was 0.059, which was less than 0.08, the χ^2/df ratio was 2.08 (<3), the GFI was 0.87, the AGFI was 0.84, all of which exceeded 0.80, and the IFI was 0.99, which also all exceeded 0.90. Thence, the measure of the goodness-of-fit index of the model is the coincidence criterion. All hypotheses of this study were supported (see Table 2). This study found that in a BL environment, (1) when students have a LI with the curriculum, will help to enhance students' LC, LP and CI. (2) When students have CI with the course learning group, it will help to enhance students' CE and CC. (3) LP will help enhance students' CE and LC. (4) CE helps to enhance students' CC. (5) CC has a positive impact on LC. (6) LC and CC have a significant impact on the helping behavior of community members.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Management implications and limitations

Modern students have grown up in the active Internet age. They are good at using the Internet to learn new knowledge and interact with others. Thence, teachers can no longer use traditional teaching methods, but should adopt BL methods to create a learning environment suitable for modern students, and how to use SIT to promote students' CCB. Both CI and CE contribute to a student's commitment to the community. It is recommended that teachers use BL let students understand the content of the weekly lesson through online video, and then discuss the problem in class. Through the interaction of group discussions, students can improve their sense of identification and participation in the group, and students will be more willing to make commitments to the group. Second, LI has an impact on CI, LP, and LC. Teachers should teach students how to apply what they have learned in their lives so that they can understand that learning knowledge is useful and valuable and that students can identify with learning. When students have a LI, they will enhance their CI and LP in the course, making them generate LC. Furthermore, when students have LP, they are more willing to engage in group activities. They will be willing to help other members so that the group can perform well in the course.

This research strives to be rigorous in all aspects, but due to time, human, financial, and resource constraints, there are still imperfections in the research process: First, this research only discusses college students and cannot be extended to other groups. Secondly, this study only conducts a sample survey of students in a certain school,

and the sample size is small. Future researchers could compare schools in different regions to conduct surveys. Third, due to time constraints, this study is only a cross-sectional study, and future researchers can conduct long-term investigations.

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