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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNER CONTROL AND ONLINE LEARNING SELF-EFFICACY

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Education

at Massey University, Manawatu Campus,
New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

Online learning has been growing rapidly in recent years, providing increased opportunities for tertiary institutes to reach out to learners who previously may have had limited access to a traditional university. Although students frequently use information technologies in their daily life, online learning requires considerably more competencies than basic computer skills. Many students are unsuccessful in their learning without face-to-face contact and collaboration with lecturers and peers. They can feel isolated and doubt their ability to succeed in the online course. To increase online learner success, support is needed, especially to improve learner self-efficacy. Very few studies have focused on student self-efficacy in an online learning environment and especially those conducted in an authentic setting. Learner control is thought to facilitate students in online learning, but the relationship between learner control and learner self-efficacy is still unclear. Therefore, this study intends to examine this relationship using an embedded-correlational mixed method design to answer the research question, what is the relationship between learner control and online learning self-efficacy? The quantitative approach was used to find the correlations among learner control, online learning self-efficacy, and related variables such as age, gender, prior online experience, and computer skills. An online Learning Self-efficacy Scale (OLSES) was constructed and validated with an internal consistency of 0.895. Open-ended questions were added to the questionnaire to gain a greater level of insight of online learning experience in relation to self-efficacy and learner control. Seventy-five students in a four year teaching online programme at a New Zealand tertiary institute participated in the online survey. Data analyses revealed that the relationship between learner control and online learning self-efficacy was confirmed, $r = .526$, $p < .01$. Age and gender had no effect on the relationship while prior online experience, computer skills for social and academic purposes did. The multiple linear regression showed that learner control and computer skills for academic purpose are good predictors of online learning self-efficacy. Analyses of the qualitative data not only confirmed the quantitative findings, but also provided insight into the nature of self-efficacy and importance of feedback in the online setting. As a result of this study, the embedded framework for successful line learners (SUCCESS) was developed and is recommended as a set of guidelines for online learning developers.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my dad who gave me my blood and soul. He was the one who showed me the great strength of self-efficacy which inspired and led me into a long lonely but the enjoyable PhD journey. Though we did not spend quality time during the past years, I was touched by his love.

Learning is a never-ending process. Those who wish to advance in their work must constantly seek more knowledge, or they could lag behind and become incompetent.

(H.M. Bhumibol Adulyadej, 1961)

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กิตติกรรมประกาศ

ขอขอบคุณมหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีราชมงคล พระนคร ที่ให้ทุนการศึกษาตลอดระยะเวลา ๔ ปี ทำให้ผู้รับทุนมีโอกาสไปพัฒนา ไปศึกษาหาความรู้ และเก็บเกี่ยวประสบการณ์ในประเทศนิวซีแลนด์ จนสำเร็จการศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก

ขอกราบขอบพระคุณท่านคณบดี คณะเทคโนโลยีสื่อสารมวลชน รองศาสตราจารย์ วิมลพรรณ อาภาเวท ที่ได้เห็นศักยภาพของผู้รับทุน และเสนอชื่อผู้รับทุนต่อทางมหาวิทยาลัยฯ ขอกราบขอบพระคุณท่านอดีตอธิการบดี รองศาสตราจารย์ ดวงสุดา เตโชติรส และ ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ ดร. นุชลี อุปภัย รองอธิการบดี ด้านวิจัยและบริการวิชาการในขณะนั้น ที่ให้การสนับสนุน และให้ความสะดวกในการมาศึกษาที่ประเทศนิวซีแลนด์ในครั้งนี้

ขอขอบคุณเจ้าหน้าที่กองบริหารงานบุคคล โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่ง คุณวันใหม่ สุกใส ขอขอบคุณเจ้าหน้าที่การเงิน กองคลัง และเจ้าหน้าที่สายสนับสนุน คณะเทคโนโลยีสื่อสารมวลชนทุกท่าน ที่ช่วยเหลือในการส่งหนังสือ ทำเรื่องเบิกจ่าย และอื่นๆ ในขณะที่ผู้รับทุน ศึกษาอยู่ที่ประเทศนิวซีแลนด์ ผู้รับทุนเดินมาได้จนถึงจุดหมาย ด้วยการสนับสนุนของบุคคลากรทุกฝ่าย ขอขอบคุณอีกครั้งมา ณ ที่นี้ด้วย

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

RMUTP	Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon
PISA	The Programme for International Student Assessment
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
NEA	National Education Act
LC	Learner control
OLSE	Online learning self-efficacy
OLSES	Online learning self-efficacy scale
CSAP	Computer skills for academic purpose
CSSP	Computer skills for social purpose
PCA	Principle Component Analysis
ANOVA	Analysis of variance

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