

Self-Efficacy and Effect on Blended Learning in Moral Education Course Among Students

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Abstract: This study explored the impact of blended learning on self-efficacy in moral education among 414 university students in China. The respondents, mostly female, were primarily freshmen. They experienced blended learning as the dominant teaching format, with face-to-face and online formats also present. The analysis revealed no significant gender-based discrepancies in self-efficacy across most domains, except for notable differences in ICT skills and enlisting peer and social support, pointing to potential gender-specific areas for intervention. The study identified significant correlations between students' self-efficacy and the effectiveness of teaching moral education in blended learning environments. Higher self-efficacy among students was associated with better teaching outcomes in blended learning contexts. These findings highlight the importance of enhancing students' self-efficacy to improve the success of blended learning in moral education. The results suggest that educators could focus on building self-efficacy to optimize the effectiveness and impact of blended learning in moral education courses.

Keywords: Self-efficacy; Moral Education; Blended Learning; ICT Skills.

1. Introduction

With the advancement of digital technology and its integration into education, the ways of acquiring knowledge and learning have undergone significant changes. Blended learning, which combines online and face-to-face instruction, has become a popular teaching method across various disciplines, including moral education in China. Yu and Wang (2023) highlighted that blending learning, as the integration of the internet with learning, places Chinese university students at the center and enhances their autonomous learning abilities, learning experiences, and knowledge management. Blended learning offers students the flexibility to interact in both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities, leveraging the dual advantages of online and traditional classroom environments.

Besides, self-efficacy is also a crucial factor in determining the learners' blended learning effect in moral education. Warner and French (2020) defined self-efficacy as "individuals' beliefs in their capability to implement a behavior needed to reach a goal or perform a task successfully" and provided practical guidelines and concrete examples on how to design and evaluate behavior change interventions that target self-efficacy. The study shows that the self-efficacy is closely related with the people's capabilities in action, and their engagement, motivation, learning outcomes, and behaviors. Blended learning presents challenges in enhancing the self-efficacy of teachers and students. Many universities in China are undergoing reforms, viewing blended learning as an effective way to engage learners in moral issues, closely related to self-efficacy research. For teachers and students, exploring better ways to improve self-efficacy in blended learning for university moral courses is crucial. This study focuses on freshmen and sophomores at a Chinese university, examining their self-efficacy in blended learning moral education courses and analyzing the factors that influence it.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

The framework or manual used for the design, execution, and analysis of a study is known as a research design. It functioned as the strategy for addressing the research questions and hypotheses. Hence, this study employed a descriptive-comparative-correlational research strategy that combined focus group discussion with a quantitative method. According to Panhwar & Shah (2017), the quantitative study design frequently exhibited role of the post-positivist paradigm or school of thinking. This research, which focused on self-efficacy in the blended learning of moral education courses, utilized a research design incorporating quantitative, descriptive survey, and comparative analysis. Questionnaires were employed to assess teacher's self-efficacy, students' self-efficacy, and the effect of blended learning in moral education courses. A descriptive survey was conducted among Chinese university students to explore self-efficacy and the effects of blended learning. The survey aimed to understand the status of today's blended learning of moral education courses in China by sampling Chinese students and teachers.

2.2. Sampling Method

A quantitative approach was used to establish relationships and patterns and then transfer these patterns into numerical data (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Quantitative research focused on testing hypotheses or theories based on statistical data (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Questionnaires were used to gather data for statistical analysis. Variables were measured to determine relationships between variables using statistics. The variables measured in this study included teacher's self-efficacy, students' self-efficacy, and the effect of blending learning in moral education courses.

2.3. Participants

Utilizing the SPSS program and conducting an a priori

computation at alpha 0.05 and power 0.80 with a medium effect size, a response rate of 74 is needed for research question one to achieve an acceptable sample size. Using the sample size calculator, the participants included 414 students from a Chinese university.

2.3.1. Sampling:

A stratified random sampling of students and teachers from a Chinese university was conducted. Representation from various disciplines and academic levels was ensured.

2.3.2. Data Collection:

Self-efficacy measurement: A validated self-efficacy questionnaire specific to moral education courses in a blended learning environment was used.

Demographic Data: Information on gender, age, academic major, and academic level was collected.

Academic Performance: Data on students' grades or other relevant indicators of academic performance were gathered.

2.3.3. Data Analysis:

Descriptive Analysis: Means, standard deviations, and frequencies were calculated to describe the level of self-efficacy and demographic characteristics.

Inferential Analysis: Inferential statistical tests (e.g., t-tests, ANOVA) were conducted to examine the differences in self-efficacy across demographic factors.

Regression Analysis: Regression analysis was performed to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and the effect of blended learning of moral education.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Profile of the Student Respondents in Terms of Sex, Age, Grade Level, and Teaching Modality

Table 1. Profiles of the Respondents

Variable	Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	175	42.0
	Female	239	58.0
Total		414	100.0
Age	18 years old & <	180	43.0
	19 years old & >	234	57.0
Total		414	100.0
Grade Level	Freshman	277	67.0
	Sophomore	137	33.0
Total		414	100.0
Teaching Modality	Online	68	16.0
	Face-to-Face	87	21.0
	Blended Learning	259	63.0
Total		414	100.0

In terms of the profiles of respondents, the majority of them were female. Their ages revealed that 58% of them belonged to 19 years old and above. The highest frequency observed among their grade levels was apparent among freshmen, wherein their experiences in the modality of teaching indicated that blended learning yielded the highest frequency among others. The analysis of respondent profiles indicates a study sample dominated by female students, primarily freshmen, and those aged 19 years old and above. The

predominant teaching modality experienced by respondents is blended learning, suggesting a focus on investigating the effectiveness of this approach in moral education courses. These findings provided valuable insights into the demographic characteristics of the study participants and the prevalent teaching methods utilized in the research context.

As observed from the table, participants were under three different teaching modalities, including online learning, face-to-face learning, and blended learning. Among these, 63% of participants experienced blended learning, indicating that blended learning had become the most dominant approach in moral courses learning. Moreover, it suggested that the majority of university students in China adopted blended learning as the primary teaching modality for moral education.

3.2. Self-efficacy for ICT Skills on Moral Education

In terms of ICT skills, Table 2 displayed the assessment of students on their self-efficacy of blended learning in moral education, generating a composite mean score of 2.97 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.98. The highest mean was 3.03, and the lowest mean was 2.90. This implied that students were satisfied with blended learning as employed in moral education through their ICT skills. This suggests that students generally felt confident in engaging with digital tools and resources to support their learning in moral education.

The standard deviation of 0.98 indicated a moderate degree of variability in students' self-efficacy scores regarding ICT skills. This suggested that while there was an overall positive perception of ICT integration, individual students may have had differing levels of confidence in their ICT abilities and the effectiveness of digital resources.

The highest mean score was evident in feeling comfortable with various digital resources (e.g., online videos, interactive websites, educational apps) integrated into blended learning moral education courses, which was closely followed by believing in their abilities to navigate and utilize digital resources (e.g., online platforms, educational apps, multimedia content) for learning moral education in a blended learning environment. Conversely, the lowest mean score was evident in believing that any malfunctions or issues would decrease the learner's willingness to continue learning. This suggests that students generally feel confident in engaging with digital tools and resources to support their learning in moral education. However, it also shows that malfunctions or issues in blended learning will cause barriers for the blended learners, which will influence the learners' self-efficacy. This highlights a potential barrier to effective blended learning implementation, as technical difficulties may disrupt the learning process and affect students' motivation and engagement.

In terms of enlisting peer and social support, Table 3 displayed the assessment of students on their self-efficacy of blended learning in moral education, generating a composite mean score of 2.96 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.99. The highest mean was 3.02, and the lowest mean was 2.88. This suggested that students were satisfied with blended learning as employed in moral education through their utilization of peer and social support.

Table 2. Assessment of the Students on their Self-Efficacy in Blended Learning of Moral Education in terms of ICT Skills

Indicators	Mean	SD	Adjectival Description Interpretation	Rank
I believe my ability in navigating and utilizing digital resources (e.g., online platforms, educational apps, multimedia content) for learning moral education in a blended learning environment.	3.02	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	2
I feel comfortable integrating various digital resources (e.g., online videos, interactive websites, educational apps) into my blended learning moral education courses.	2.92	0.97	Agree/Satisfied	6
I believe that my ICT skills positively impact my engagement and participation in online activities and discussions related to moral courses in a blended learning format.	2.95	0.98	Agree/Satisfied	5
I believe that educational data mining is very helpful for my blended learning in moral education.	3.00	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	3
I believe that the real-time feedback from the online Learning Management System (LMS) is highly valuable for blended learning in moral education.	3.03	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	1
I believe that any malfunctions or issues that occur during the online learning process of moral education, such as inability to log in or submit assignments, will not affect my willingness to continue learning.	2.96	0.94	Agree/Satisfied	4
I believe that any malfunctions or issues that occur during the online learning process of moral education, such as inability to log in or submit assignments, will not affect my willingness to continue learning.	2.90	0.98	Agree/Satisfied	7
Composite	2.97		Agree/Satisfied	

Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree/Highly Satisfied; 3.50-2.51=Agree/Satisfied;
2.50-1.51=Disagree/Not Satisfied; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree/Not Highly Satisfied

3.3. Self-Efficacy for Enlisting Peer and Social Support

The standard deviation of 0.99 indicated a moderate degree of variability in students' self-efficacy scores related to enlisting peer and social support. This variability suggested that while there was an overall positive perception of peer and social support, individual students might have had differing levels of confidence in their ability to effectively leverage such support mechanisms.

Specifically, the highest mean score was equally evident in

believing that, in the process of blended learning in moral education, teacher encouragement and assistance could help students learn better, and in being confident in their abilities to understand and apply ethical principles in a blended learning environment. This indicated a positive perception of how peer and social support contributed to their learning outcomes and overall educational experience, suggesting that students felt confident in their ability to engage with peers and utilize social networks to support their learning in moral education.

The lowest mean score was evident in believing that, in the process of blended learning in moral education, competition

among peers could motivate respondents to learn better. Addressing students' confidence in enlisting peer and social support could have significant implications for promoting peer interaction and networking within the blended learning

environment. Encouraging students to collaborate, communicate, and support one another could enhance their sense of belonging and engagement in the learning process.

Table 3. Assessment of the Students on their Self-Efficacy in Blended Learning of Moral Education in terms of Enlisting Peer and Social Support

Indicators	Mean	SD	Adjectival Description Interpretation	Rank
I am confident in my ability to seek and receive support from my peers and the larger social network in a blended learning moral education course.	2.98	0.98	Agree/Satisfied	3
I believe that peer and social support positively impacts my learning outcomes in a blended learning moral education course.	2.97	1.00	Agree/Satisfied	4
I am confident in my ability to understand and apply moral principles in a blended learning environment.	2.89	0.98	Agree/Satisfied	6
I believe that in the process of blended learning in moral education, the teacher's encouragement and assistance can help me learn better.	3.02	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	1
I believe that in the process of blended learning in moral education, competition among peers can motivate me to learn better.	2.88	0.97	Agree/Satisfied	7
I believe that in the process of blended learning in moral education, collaboration between peers can help me improve my learning efficiency.	2.95	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	5
I am confident in my ability to understand and apply ethical principles in a blended learning environment.	3.02	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	1
Composite	2.96		Agree/Satisfied	

Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree/Highly Satisfied; 3.50-2.51=Agree/Satisfied; 2.50-1.51=Disagree/Not Satisfied; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree/Not Highly Satisfied

3.4. Difference on the Assessment of the Student Respondents on Their Self-Efficacy in Blended Learning of Moral Education Course When Profile is Taken as a Test Factor

Table 4. Differences in the Assessments of the Students on their Self-Efficacy in Blended Learning of Moral Education by Sex

Variables	Mean		t-value	sig	Decision Ho	Interpretation
	Male	Female				
Enlisting Social Resources	3.09	2.99	1.178	.240	Accept	Not Significant
Academic Achievement	3.06	2.91	1.865	.063	Accept	Not Significant
ICT Skills	3.06	2.90	1.968	.050	Reject	Significant
Independent Learning	3.00	2.88	1.521	.129	Accept	Not Significant
Social Consciousness	3.02	2.90	1.479	.140	Accept	Not Significant
Enlisting Peer and Social Support	3.05	2.89	2.027	.043	Reject	Significant
Overall	3.05	2.91	1.673	.111	Accept	Not Significant

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 revealed, through a T-Test of Independent Samples, that significant differences were found only in ICT skills and enlisting peer & social support based on sex. This suggested that male and female respondents had different assessments of their self-efficacy in the blended learning of moral education course regarding these variables. However, male and female respondents indicated that they had similar assessments of their self-efficacies concerning enlisting social resources, academic achievement, independent learning, and social consciousness.

The table offers a comparative analysis of students' self-efficacy in blended learning of moral education between male and female students across different variables. It includes mean scores, t-values, significance levels, decisions on the null hypothesis (Ho), and interpretations. Here's a breakdown

of the analysis based on the provided statistics:

In terms of enlisting social resources, male students have a mean score of 3.09, while female students have a mean score of 2.99. The t-value is 1.178, with a significance level of .240. Since the p-value (.240) is greater than the significance level (.05), we accepted the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant difference in self-efficacy in enlisting social resources between male and female students. Thus, the difference is considered not significant.

Regarding Academic Achievement, male students exhibit a mean score of 3.06, while female students have a mean score of 2.91. The t-value is 1.865, with a significance level of .063. As the p-value (.063) is greater than .05, we accepted the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant difference in self-efficacy in academic achievement between male and female

students. Hence, the difference is deemed not significant.

For ICT Skills, male students scored a mean of 3.06, while female students scored a mean of 2.90. The t-value is 1.968, with a significance level of .050. Since the p-value (.050) is less than .05, we rejected the null hypothesis, indicating a significant difference in self-efficacy in ICT skills between male and female students. Thus, the difference is considered significant.

In terms of independent learning, male students had a mean score of 3.00, while female students had a mean score of 2.88. The t-value was 1.521, with a significance level of .129. Since the p-value (.129) was greater than .05, we accepted the null hypothesis, indicating that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy in independent learning between male and female students. Thus, the difference was deemed not significant.

Regarding social consciousness, male students had a mean score of 3.02, while female students had a mean score of 2.90. The t-value was 1.479, with a significance level of .140. Since the p-value (.140) was greater than .05, we accepted the null hypothesis, indicating that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy in social consciousness between male and female students. Thus, the difference was deemed not significant.

For Enlisting Peer and Social Support, male students had a mean score of 3.05, while female students had a mean score of 2.89. The t-value was 2.027, with a significance level of .043. Since the p-value (.043) was less than .05, we rejected the null hypothesis, indicating a significant difference in self-efficacy in enlisting peer and social support between male and female students. Thus, the difference was deemed significant.

Overall, the analysis suggests that while there were no significant differences in self-efficacy between male and female students in enlisting social resources, academic achievement, independent learning, and social consciousness, there were significant differences in ICT skills and enlisting peer and social support. These findings can inform educators about potential areas where gender-specific interventions or support may be necessary to enhance students' self-efficacy in blended learning of moral education.

3.5. Overall Assessment on the Effect of Blended Learning

The table 5 provided an overall assessment of the effect of blended learning on a moral education course across different variables, including perceptions of blended learning, learning experiences, technology used in blended learning, and moral education effect, along with their respective composite mean scores, standard deviations, ranks, and interpretations. Here's an analysis based on the statistics provided:

Overall, the assessments of respondents on the effects of blended learning in the moral education course obtained a grand mean score of 2.95 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.99. This implied that the respondents were satisfied with their assessments of the effects of blended learning and showed a positive overall view of the effectiveness and benefits of blended learning approaches. In other words, it indicated a positive perception of the blended learning approach as a whole, encompassing various aspects such as perceptions, learning experiences, technology use, and moral education outcomes.

Table 5. Overall Assessment on the Effect of Blended Learning on Moral Education Course

Variables	Composite			Rank
	Mean	SD	Interpret	
Perceptions of Blended Learning	2.97	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	2
Learning Experiences	2.98	0.98	Agree/Satisfied	1
Technology Used in Blended Learning	2.93	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	3.5
Moral Education Effect	2.93	0.99	Agree/Satisfied	3.5
Overall	2.95		Agree/Satisfied	--

Scale: 4.00-3.51=Strongly Agree/Highly Satisfied; 3.50-2.51=Agree/Satisfied;

2.50-1.51=Disagree/Not Satisfied; 1.50-1.00=Strongly Disagree/Not Highly Satisfied

Of all the variables, learning experiences ranked the highest, followed by perceptions of blended learning. Furthermore, tied ranks were apparent for the technology used in blended learning and moral education effect.

Learning experiences received the highest composite mean score of 2.98 and ranked first. This indicated that respondents highly valued their learning experiences within the blended learning environment for moral education. Positive learning experiences are crucial for engagement, motivation, and overall satisfaction with the educational process.

The composite mean score of 2.93 and ranking of third and a half suggested that respondents generally agreed with the technology used in blended learning. While still positive, it ranked slightly lower compared to perceptions and learning experiences, indicating that there may have been some room for improvement in the technological aspects of the blended learning environment.

Similarly, the composite mean score of 2.93 and ranking of third and a half indicated agreement with the overall effect of blended learning on moral education. This suggested that respondents perceived blended learning to have positive effects on moral education outcomes, but it may not have been as highly rated as learning experiences.

Overall, the analysis indicated that respondents generally perceived blended learning to have positive effects on moral education across different dimensions. While there may have been some areas for improvement, such as enhancing technology use, the overall sentiment was favorable, highlighting the potential of blended learning to enhance the effectiveness and outcomes of moral education courses.

3.6. Relationship between the Assessment of the Student-Respondents on Their Self-Efficacy in Blended Learning and its Influence to Teaching Moral Education Course

Table 6, using a Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r), revealed significant relationships between the self-efficacy of students in blended learning and its influence on teaching moral education courses across its variables. This implied that the self-efficacy of students in blended learning strongly influenced the teaching of moral education courses, as indicated by the overall Pearson r-values ranging between .700 and .800. It was evident that students' self-efficacy significantly related to the effect of blended learning

on moral courses, highlighting it as one of the key elements influencing the effect of blending learning on moral courses. As proposed by Schunk & Pajares (2010), learner's belief on self-efficacy is the basic foundation for motivation, wellbeing, and personal accomplishments in every field of life, providing evidence for enhancing the effect of learning moral courses

by improving students' self-efficacy. Afolabi (2010) applied it to his study and showed that "students' enlisting the Force of Self-Efficacy Beliefs of the urban public-school student for proficient or better performance on a high-stakes mathematics test such as the MCAS math test is destined to become a Guardian of Dreams".

Table 6. Relationship between the Self-Efficacy of Students in Blended Learning and Its Influence to Teaching Moral Education Course

Self-Efficacy in Blended Learning	Statistical Treatment	Influence to Teaching Moral Education Course				Overall
		Perceptions of Blended Learning	Learning Experience	Technology Used in Blended Learning	Moral Education Effect	
Enlisting Social Resources	<i>Pearson r</i>	.790**	.795**	.777**	.777**	.785**
	<i>sig</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	<i>Decision Ho</i>	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject
	<i>Interpretation</i>	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Academic Achievement	<i>Pearson r</i>	.823**	.804**	.795**	.795**	.804**
	<i>sig</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	<i>Decision Ho</i>	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject
	<i>Interpretation</i>	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
ICT Skills	<i>Pearson r</i>	.845**	.844**	.846**	.846**	.845**
	<i>sig</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	<i>Decision Ho</i>	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject
	<i>Interpretation</i>	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Independent Learning	<i>Pearson r</i>	.837**	.844**	.863**	.863**	.852**
	<i>sig</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	<i>Decision Ho</i>	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject
	<i>Interpretation</i>	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Social Consciousness	<i>Pearson r</i>	.879**	.888**	.886**	.886**	.885**
	<i>sig</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	<i>Decision Ho</i>	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject
	<i>Interpretation</i>	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Enlisting Peer and Social Support	<i>Pearson r</i>	.900**	.894**	.890**	.890**	.894**
	<i>sig</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	<i>Decision Ho</i>	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject	Reject
	<i>Interpretation</i>	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The significant results of the correlation analysis indicated that students' self-efficacy played a crucial role in influencing the teaching of moral education courses in a blended learning environment. This suggested that when students felt confident in their abilities to learn and succeed in blended learning settings, it positively impacted the overall effectiveness of teaching moral education.

The findings highlighted the importance of students' self-efficacy as a key determinant of the effectiveness of blended learning in moral education. A strong correlation between self-efficacy and the effect of blended learning suggested that enhancing students' self-efficacy could lead to improved outcomes in moral education courses delivered through blended learning modalities.

Overall, the findings underscored the critical role of students' self-efficacy in influencing the effectiveness of teaching moral education courses through blended learning. By nurturing and improving students' self-efficacy beliefs, educators could potentially enhance the impact and success of

blended learning initiatives in moral education, leading to better outcomes for students in terms of learning and personal development.

4. Conclusion

1. The primary teaching modality experienced by respondents was blended learning, indicating a concerted effort to assess its efficacy in moral education courses. These insights offer valuable understanding into the demographic composition of the study participants and the prevalent teaching methodologies employed within the research framework.

2. The data suggested an overall optimistic outlook regarding students' self-efficacy in blended learning of moral education across diverse realms. The findings highlighted strengths in enlisting social resources, academic achievement, ICT skills, peer and social support, and social consciousness, while also identifying areas for potential improvement in

independent learning.

3. Significant differences were observed in ICT skills and the enlistment of peer and social support based on the gender of the participants. Gender-specific interventions or support may be necessary to enhance students' self-efficacy in blended learning of moral education.

4. Learners have expressed a positive assessment of the effect of blended learning on moral courses. While there may be some areas for improvement, such as enhancing technology use, the overall sentiment is favorable, highlighting the potential of blended learning to enhance the effectiveness and outcomes of moral education courses.

5. The findings highlighted the importance of students' self-efficacy as a key determinant of the effectiveness of blended learning in moral education. A strong correlation between self-efficacy and the effect of blended learning suggested that enhancing students' self-efficacy could lead to improved outcomes in moral education courses delivered through blended learning modalities.

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