

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

The recent move towards online and blended learning environments has necessitated the development of frameworks supporting meaningful collaborative learning experiences. One such a framework is the Community of Inquiry (CoI). The CoI framework is a theoretical model that explains and guides the creation of effective online learning environments (Arbaugh et al., 2008). On the other words, it is a model for designing online courses that promote meaningful learning through the interaction of social presence, cognitive presence, and teaching presence (Lambert & Fisher, 2013).

Regarding its importance, several studies highlight the potential for using the CoI framework to evaluate online learning environments. Arbaugh et al. (2008) found that the it is influential in understanding the dynamics of online learning. In addition, Garrison et al. (2010) showed that the framework is a useful model for examining and comprehending the elements of effective online learning environments. Those different studies imply that the concept of CoI in the learning environment is very crucial to investigate today.

Despite the existence of CoI in the online learning environment, it still needs improvement for better clarification in the future. Several studies focus only on the

CoI in the learning environment as a useful tool for researching online learning, and future research should focus on enhancing methodological and analytical rigor in future studies (Garrison & Arbaugh, 2007). Hence, student feedback is essential to ensure the successful implementation of any teaching-learning methodology to enhance distance learning (Wagemann & Schneider, 2010). However, student feedback is not just beneficial, but essential for improving distance learning. It serves as a quality assurance tool that helps refine instructional methods, optimize digital tools, and ensure that students remain engaged and satisfied. Without active feedback mechanisms, distance learning risks becoming ineffective, disengaging, and misaligned with student needs.

Considering the existence of the CoI framework in today's learning and its complications, this research aims to investigate the students' views on the CoI framework, to identify issues from this research, and to present an outline for future research directions.

1.2. Research Question

The following research question provides the direction for this research.

What the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework does students experience during their online learning?

1.3. Research Objective

Based on the formulated research question, the research objective is to investigate the students' experience on the Community of Inquiry (CoI) during their online learning.

1.4. Research Significance

The results of this research are expected to give significance to both the theoretical and practical aspects, especially in the implementation of an online or blended learning environment.

1.4.1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, the results of this research could be beneficial for the future researchers as relevant insights to understand what elements they need to consider in investigating similar topics.

1.4.2. Practical Significance

Practically, the Community of Inquiry framework helps teachers or researchers build a scope in which they can focus on what students might experience during their online or hybrid learning. By considering the supporting aspects, teachers can facilitate students with those elements to optimize the online learning environment.

1.5. Research Limitation

The research focuses on a specific group of English Language Education undergraduate students at one university. While the findings provide valuable insights,

they may not be generalizable to students in different academic programs, universities, or regions. A larger and more diverse sample would be needed to apply the results to broader contexts.

1.6. Clarification of Relevant Terms

1.6.1. The Community of Inquiry (CoI)

The community of inquiry (CoI) is a model for understanding and fostering effective online learning environments, which was first proposed by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer in 2000. It posits that a successful online learning experience depends on the presence and interplay of three main elements: social presence, teaching presence, and cognitive presence (Arbaugh et al., 2008).

1.6.2. Cognitive Presence

Learners can communicate and reflect. It focuses on how learners engage in critical thinking, problem-solving, and knowledge construction. Cognitive presence is the key element within the CoI framework, which refers to the extent to which learners engage in critical thinking, knowledge construction, and meaningful learning within an online community (Dempsey & Zhang, 2019)

1.6.3. Social Presence

Social presence is the ability of learners to project themselves socially and emotionally in a learning community. It refers to online learners' ability to interact

socially and emotionally with other participants, perceiving them as real people within a learning community (Guo et al., 2021).

1.6.4. Teaching Presence

Teaching Presence is the ability to set the curriculum in good learning conditions. Teaching presence is a key component of the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework, which was developed to describe the necessary elements of an ideal learning experience in an asynchronous, virtual higher education environment (Gurley, 2018).

