WHEN PROFESSORS CONFRONT THEMSELVES:
TOWARDS A THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF VIDEO
SELF-CONFRONTATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ARYE PERLBERG
Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa, Israel

ABSTRACT

The use of video self-confrontation (VSC)* as a method to reinforce desired behaviors or induce changes in human behavior, has been increasing in recent years. The major reviewers of the literature on VSC in the last three decades point out that there is relatively little qualitative and quantitative research which explores the underlying processes of VSC and its theoretical conceptualization. Moreover, there is still a need to prove many of the claims advanced by practitioners about the effectiveness of VSC.

This article reviews two of the theoretical conceptualizations and tentative explanations of the VSC process. The first is based on affect, such as self-confrontation, dissonance, anxiety, stress, distress and eustress. The second explanation is based on a cognitive and information-processing approach and includes: feedback, self-concept, self-efficacy and attribution theories. The article describes an emerging integrated conceptualization which may provide better insight into the process which should be the focus of further studies.

The main purpose of VSC in higher education is to improve teaching-learning processes. Faculty's commitment to this purpose is determined by many factors, such as: their perception and attitudes towards the research/teaching dichotomy and the university's reward system; their motivation and concepts of self-efficacy and self-fulfillment; and their attribution mechanisms of success or failure in teaching. All these factors greatly influence their readiness to be motivated in VSC processes and the effectiveness of their VSC uses. VSC is a powerful technique which has a great potential in facilitating behavioral changes. It can cause harm or be wasted if not used properly. Suggestions for optimal uses are presented.

Video Self-Confrontation (VSC) – The State of the Art

The use of video recordings as a source of feedback to reinforce or induce changes in human behavior has been increasing rapidly in recent years. Innovations in video t...
tive applications of video feedback have been developed. It is used extensively at all levels of formal and informal education to improve teaching–learning processes, and in particular in the pre-service training and continuing education of professionals in different fields. Industry, business and the armed forces, public organizations and other groups involved in training recognize it as a powerful and effective tool in the acquisition of psychomotor, communication and social skills. It also serves as an adjunct to therapists in the therapeutic process, and in some cases, has become the focus of therapeutic interventions where it has been described as "videotherapy" (Fryrear and Fleschman, 1981).

It has often been stated that imagination is the only limit of where and when video recordings could be used. Video recordings can serve wherever and whenever there is a need for instant, accurate, reliable audio-visual feedback that could repeatedly be played back for closer examination and analysis.

Even though video has been used extensively in a variety of settings, most research on its effectiveness has been conducted in psychological therapeutic settings and published mainly in the psychological literature. Even Fuller and Manning (1973), who focus on teacher education, drew heavily on the literature from psychological settings. However, if one accepts Rogers' (1961) conceptualization about significant learning in education and therapy, and about the similarities between the two disciplines, then research evidence from psychological settings, teacher education and other educational settings could also serve the purpose of the article. Space limitations do not enable a detailed account and analysis of all of the issues related to the use of VSC and its theoretical conceptualization. For a detailed discussion of the issues, the reader is advised to refer to the major reviews of the literature [1] and other sources cited in this article.

REVIEWS OF THE LITERATURE

Historically, the therapeutic use of photographs and tape recorders in the early forties (Rogers, 1942) could be considered the forebearer of video recordings. Video playback made its appearance in the mid-fifties, to the accompaniment of both enthusiasm and skepticism about its use in therapy. Danet (1968), who was probably the first to review the literature, was enthusiastic about its potential, while Holzman (1969) and Bailey and Sowder (1970) were more concerned that many of the reported studies were deficient in methodology, design, and theoretical conceptualization. Moreover, Bailey and Sowder (1970) failed to identify sufficient reliable data to support claims of the therapeutic effectiveness of video playback, and saw it necessary to warn users against potential harm.

A few years later, Fuller and Manning (1973) reviewed the corpus of research reports and testimonials on VSC. In their conclusions, they contrasted