



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS IN WORKPLACE

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**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE SELF-DIRECTED
LEARNING READINESS IN WORKPLACE**

SITI NURFATIN AININA BINTI RAMLI 62589

This project is submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
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(2020)

The project entitled '**Factors that Influence Self-Directed Learning Readiness in Workplace**' was prepared by **Siti Nurfatin Ainina binti Ramli** and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours (Human Resource Development).

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ABSTRACT

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS IN WORKPLACE

SITI NURFATIN AININA BINTI RAMLI

The purpose of this study is to determine the factors that influence self-directed learning readiness. Data were gathered from 120 employee's from one organization in Perak, Malaysia. Quantitative research methodology is used in this research and the data were collected using questionnaires as the instrument. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were reported, followed by reliability analysis, Spearman's correlation and hypothesis testing using stepwise multiple regression. The findings have shown that there is a strong relationship between all the four factors (proactive personality, career ambition, job autonomy, task variety) and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace. Besides, findings from this study also indicated that proactive personality is the most dominant among independent variables. The study contributes to the existing pool of knowledge to the organization in Malaysia. It has enhanced both the organization and human resource practitioners' knowledge and understanding on how self-directed learning readiness is important in the organization. On the other hand, the result of this study could help the organization to improve the quality to ensure the organizations can achieve performance of the employee's.

Keywords proactive personality, career ambition, job autonomy, task variety, self-directed learning readiness in the workplace

ABSTRAK

FAKTOR-FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI KEPERLUAN

PEMBELAJARAN KENDIRI DI TEMPAT KERJA

SITI NURFATIN AININA BINTI RAMLI

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi kesediaan belajar sendiri. Data telah dikumpulkan dari 120 pekerja dari sebuah organisasi di Perak, Malaysia. Metodologi penyelidikan kuantitatif telah digunakan dalam penyelidikan ini dan data telah dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan borang soal selidik sebagai instrumen. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan inferensi. Statistik deskriptif telah dilaporkan, diikuti dengan analisis kebolehpercayaan, korelasi Spearman dan pengujian hipotesis menggunakan regresi berganda bertahap. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan yang kuat antara keempat-empat faktor tersebut (keperibadian proaktif, cita-cita kerjaya, autonomi pekerjaan, pelbagai tugas) dan kesediaan belajar sendiri di tempat kerja. Selain itu, penemuan dari kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa personaliti proaktif adalah yang paling dominan di antara pemboleh ubah bebas. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada kumpulan pengetahuan sedia ada kepada organisasi di Malaysia. Ini telah meningkatkan pengetahuan dan pemahaman pengamal sumber manusia dan organisasi mengenai bagaimana kesediaan belajar sendiri penting dalam organisasi. Sebaliknya, hasil kajian ini dapat membantu organisasi untuk meningkatkan kualiti untuk memastikan organisasi dapat mencapai prestasi pekerja.

Kata kunci keperibadian proaktif, cita-cita kerjaya, autonomi pekerjaan, pelbagai tugas, kesediaan belajar sendiri di tempat kerja

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of Study

One of the key shields for a successful organization and amazing workplace is the employee's own practices or attitudes such as self-directed learning readiness.

Numerous entities require self-directed teaching strategies as a mechanism for the development of learning. Organizations are often solely reliant on the outputs of these self-directed learning efforts, however most organizations are struggling to provide the necessary encouragement and guidance to self-directed learners (Johnson, 2001).

What is self-directed learning readiness? According to Hashim (2007), self-directed learning (SDL) is a holistic process for persons, with or without the help and direction of others, to take an innovative phase in determining their learning needs and goals, to investigate the accumulation of human and material expertise, to plan and execute appropriate information approaches and to define learning outcomes. Percival, 1996 (as quoted in Ellinger, 2004) claimed that SDL is also believed to be a learning and teaching approach. Self-directed learning, along with self-directed work teams, plays a crucial role in the learning organisation, as described by Cho (2002) and Guglielmino (2002). Cho (2002) declares that "self-directed learning still has many advantages over traditional employee development strategies" (p. 467). He concludes that self-directed learning has started to be used as an innovative tool for the production of human resources to be utilized to successfully increase the efficiency of employees.

As shown in the Yeo (2008) report, 80% of work-based learning is indirect and self-directed in nature. Therefore, the willingness to gain knowledge lies with the person or the team members itself. Workplace learning should not only involve educational programs, it can also concentrate on work experiences (Billett 2014),

where training has proven itself to be method-based, job-related and self-directed. Ellinger (2004) has emphasized that learning at work is largely self-directed as learning is now viewed as an integral part of employment. Throughout the workforce, there is an growing interest in shifting authority from organizations to employees (Rigby and Ryan 2018) and individual self-directed behavior tends to be the answer to facilitating the the growth of expertise and innovation (Gijbels et al. 2012). The use of SDL is therefore acknowledged as a prominent and essential aspect in the field of study and practice in the area of knowledge at the workplace, particularly in cases where the purpose of learning is to improve the skill of employees (Soila & Kaija, 2020).

Thus, there will also be a diverse range of variables that may adversely impact self-directed learning readiness among employees in the workplace. In this study , the researcher would like to discuss further and concentrate on the personal characteristics and work characteristics that may affect self-directed learning readiness. In brief, this analysis will be performed on the basis of four factors functioning as independent variables, such as proactive personality, career ambition, job autonomy and task variety, which may affect self-directed learning readiness as the dependent variable.

1.1 Problem Statement

According to the Maurer et al., (2003), the role of employees in the learning process is very important in a dynamic business world and in an ever-changing climate, both for corporate benefits and for the motivation of employees to support the development and profitability of the organization. Self-directed learning is a crucial element in expanding the productivity of the business and creating a positive

reputation for investors that the organization has a successful partnership with employees. The rationale for this study is to analyze the constituent that stimulates self-directed learning in the workplace.

The study conducted by Lai, (2015), was to analyze the attitudes of teachers on the self-directed use of technology by learners. A conceptual model of three forms of teacher support (affection support, ability support, and behaviour support) that were documented to impact the self-directed use of technology for students to learn outside the classroom was developed based on interviews with 15 foreign language students. To understand the roles of teachers in facilitating the self-directed use of language learning technology by learners, it is first and foremost necessary to perceive the implications of self-directed learning (Lai, 2015). However, the result of the research cannot be generalized for any professionals as they only related to the specifics of the teachers' job and students. Therefore, this study is conducted to look over the factor that control self-directed learning readiness in a business environment.

Notwithstanding this, work on career design suggests that workers react to enriched employment favorably (Prince, 2003). The best jobs to foster growth are those with a high level of determination (i.e. complexity of job) and a high level of personal versatility (i.e. autonomy of job) because this combination provides practical competition and possibility for successful knowledge (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). Low-qualified workers, though, may not consider their willingness to comply with the criteria necessary to perform a compound and highly autonomous of work. Thus, while work difficulty and task autonomy can create a positive stimulus for self-directed learning, too much autonomy and uncertainty will contribute to too much tension for low-skilled employees, stirring up self-directed learning (Chung-Yan and Butler, 2011). Accordingly, this study is conducted to measure on how job autonomy

may influence the organization in terms of readiness in self-directed learning.

Past study has indicated that individuals with a high level of SDL preparation, such as individuals who chose to guide and drive their own learning rather than a teacher-centered model, have experienced higher overall results (Conn, 2000).

Nonetheless, previous studies have not explored the real factors that may influence those individuals in order to become more self-directed throughout their job in the workplace.

1.2 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to determine the factors that influence self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.

1.2.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives for this study were to identify:

1. To determine the relationship between proactive personality and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.
2. To determine the relationship between career ambition and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.
3. To determine the relationship between job autonomy and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.
4. To determine the relationship between task variety and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.
5. To determine the most dominant variable among the independent variables.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

Ha1: There is a significant relationship between proactive personality and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.

Ha2: There is a significant relationship between career ambition and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.

Ha3: There is a significant relationship between job autonomy and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.

Ha4: There is a significant relationship between task variety and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.

Ha5: To determine the most dominant variable among the independent variables.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

As shown in Figure 1.4, this study attempt to look into the relationship between two types of factors (personality characteristics, job characteristics) and self-directed learning readiness in the workplace. The independent variables in this study are proactive personality, career ambition, job autonomy and task variety. The dependent variable for this study is self-directed learning readiness in the workplace.

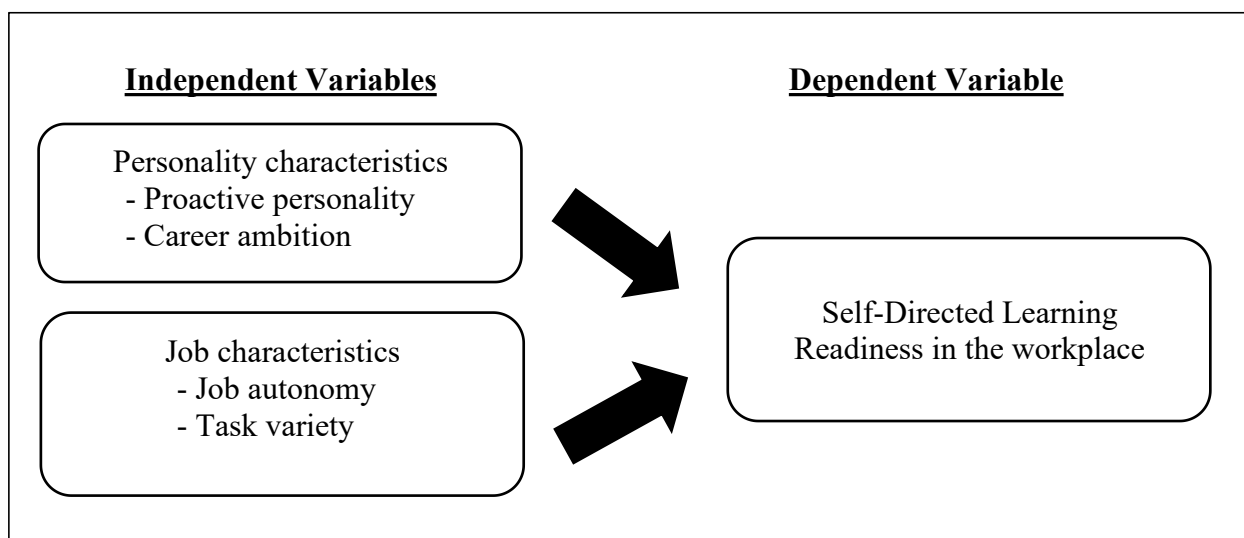


Figure 1.5 *Conceptual Framework*

1.5 Significance of Study

This research can be said to be significant since this research can attribute to different aspects which are body of knowledge, organization as well as to human resource development. Firstly, the research of four different factors which are proactive personality, career ambition, job autonomy and task variety on self-directed learning readiness in the workplace has not been done previously. This will also lead to other potential studies relevant to this topic. This study will allow potential studies to look further into the variables that can affect self-directed learning at the workplace and to provide more valuable data that can enable the company to be stronger.

In fact, the results of this study will educate the employer exactly how this practices can significantly effect the role of workers in the organization. It would also allow the corporation to implement self-directed learning opportunities for employees in order to increase the productivity of the organization itself. For instance, based on the findings, the employer able to provide a positive environment in the workplace in order to motivate the employees to become more self-directed.

In addition, the results of this study may lead to the awareness of self-directed learning preparedness discipline among employees in the workplace. As example, the factors that will be discussed in this study are proactive personality, career ambition, job autonomy and task variety. Thus, on the basis of the results, the employees should understand the value of this practice and become more driven to be self-directed in learning as well as able to meet difficulties and challenges on their own.

Other than that, the outcome of this research was important for HRD practitioners

in enabling the organization to build an efficient learning environment. This condition can contribute to a better working environment for the company. As an example, HRD practitioners will help the organization to plan an initiative such as professional growth or other motivational activity to offer an insight, as well as inspire employees to implement self-directed learning practices.

1.6 Limitations of Study

There are many factors that may influence self-directed learning readiness, however this study is only limited to four factors as the independent variables which are proactive personality, career ambition, autonomy of job and task variety.

The sample of the study is limited to employees in one organization in a private sector only. Different organization might have different working environment so that the result of the study might be different.

Besides, this study only limited to a manufacturing industry. Therefore, there is limited generalization to other industries.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

The definition of relevant items are expressed both in conceptual an operational forms in shown in the following Table 1.7.

Table 1.7 *Conceptual and Operational definitions of terms*

Term	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition
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Proactive personality	Proactive personality identifies a proactive propensity to perceive and respond on opportunities to change things at work (Crant, 2000).	A relatively stable tendency to effect environmental change.
Career ambition	Employees with a high knowledge-based interest are more confident to perform their job (Raemdonck et al., (2012).	Have a willingness to shift from a current place to something better, ideally a career ladder.
Job autonomy	The definition of job autonomy can be described as a worker's degree of control over his or her own immediate schedule and activities (Liu, Spector, & Jex, 2005).	To what degree the task represents the individual considerable independence of choice in scheduling jobs and determining the method to be used.
Task variety	The diversity of tasks is the degree to which staff can undertake a wide range of tasks and is related to the use of different skills and versatility in their job content (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006).	To what point the job requires a variety of tasks or a wide range talents and abilities
Self-Directed Learning Readiness	Knowles, 1975 (as cited in Boyer et al., 2014) defines SDL as a process initiated by individuals who may or may not involve the assistance of	A characteristics adaptation to influence work-related learning process. An individual's ability to plan and identify the tools,