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Can Self-directed Learning Environment Improve Quality of Life?

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Abstract

The SeDLE (Self-directed Learning Environment) Index is developed to measure the strength and ability of the learning environment to facilitate self-directed learning. This paper is descriptively explained the development and validation of the SeDLE index. Studies showed that a self-directed learning environment will produce a learner who is self-directed that can be a contributing factor to enhance the individual quality of life or at a workplace. Thus, this paper viewed the self-directed environment as a solution to support and inhibit the ability to function with minimal supervision that improve individual and group responsibilities among instructors and learners.

1. Introduction

In the past several years, the approach of self-directed learning has emerged in the streamline under the realms of learning and education. It theorizes that individuals can become more self-directed with additional support and

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motivation to endure more self-autonomy that can cater the problem of spoon feeding. At the same time, learning environment such as self-directed learning is seemingly able to improve one's life (Shireen Haron, 2004) as defined in the context of the quality of life in this study. One of the well-known proponents in support of the adult education and self-directed learning is Knowles (1975). He had indicated that the broadest meaning of a self-directed learning' is a process whereby the individuals are taking the initiative, with or without the assistance of others. Knowles's definition also includes determining students' learning needs as to formulate their learning goals. In addition, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implement appropriate learning strategies as well as evaluating learning outcomes are part of the self-directed learning process.

Apparently, the activities provide a learning environment that promotes learner's intellectual growth that may improve learner's cognitive quality of life for better thinking skills. Studies in the areas of self-directed learning are seemly in popularity for various reasons. The growing dissatisfaction with students' attitude in the class, the public schooling rigid system, the role of instructors in a classroom, and the rich formal and informal learning materials available online are some of the reasons. Along with the problem of spoon feeding the factors associated with the interest in the self-directed learning stems out from those reasons mentioned. After all, this is the "age of information" and self-directed learning can be the solution. Hanaffin et al., (2014) stated that the new learning environment designs and frameworks have emerged that are consistent with constructivist-inspired views of learning.

Nomenclature

SeDLE   Self-directed Learning Environment

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2. Research objective

The objective of this study on the SeDLE (Self-directed Learning Environment) Index is to measure the strength and ability of the learning environment to facilitate self-directed learning. Most importantly, this study is to describe the main components or domains of the Self Directed Learning Environment Index (SeDLE Index) that helps to determine the evaluation of the instrument further.

3. Operational definition

- Self-directed learning

Self-directing learning is about a process whereby the learners are to determine their learning direction with minimal assistance from others. Later, the learners are to diagnose their learning needs to formulate their learning goals. Identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implement appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes are parts of the process (Knowles, 1975).

- Learning environment

In the context of learning environment, the operational definition for this study is how learning environment describe interaction amongst students and teachers in everyday classrooms. (Rickinson et al, 2010).

4. Literature review

4.1. The self directed learning environment index (SeDLE INDEX)

The development of Self-directed Learning Index came into existence in 2012. It had won the innovation competition conducted by the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies University Technologi MARA Malaysia with the Gold Award. In fact, research on self-directed learning has started way back in 1999 where many initiatives were emphasized to inculcate the self-learning among students to reduce their total dependency on the lecturers or in other words spoon feeding. During the development of this Index, the co-author has produced more than twenty publications to measure the scores of each component. Amongst the publications are Shireen Haron et.