

Chapter 5

Self-Management Strategies in a Student-Driven Learning Environment

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ABSTRACT

Self-management in learning is vital. An individual's self being is an agent who acts upon his or her environment required for him or her to achieve academically. Blended learning has been extensively propagated as a means for learners to self direct and drive their learning. However, many students in blended learning courses are facing difficulties in managing their learning time. Many studies have highlighted the importance of self-management strategies in blended learning, but studies about how to manage well one's learning time is much required. This chapter reported a quantitative study that was designed explore the above issue. A questionnaire was constructed to obtain information on self-management strategies of learning (planning, monitoring, and evaluation) as well as time management. The target population was distance learning students who were taking a mathematics course conducted in blended learning environment at the Faculty of Education in a public university. A total of 224 students were randomly selected to participate in this study. The finding showed that the three dimensions (planning, monitoring, and evaluating) named as independent variables significantly contributed to the time management. Besides, the highest coefficient of the contributed factor towards time management is evaluating. Hence, evaluation has played a major role in effective time management. On the other hand, planning and monitoring are significantly contributing to evaluating.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers play very important roles in building relationship and engaging students in blended learning environment. Similarly, students' ways of managing themselves within the blended learning environment which emphasizes in interactions and connections are primary means of engaging learning. Even though the teachers' task is to make blended learning active, it is important for students to be responsible and knowledgeable in managing their learning. Studies have indicated that knowledge on self-management can create many opportunities in gaining expected outputs such as high achievement (Felman, Khdemian, Ingram & Schneider, 2006). Many universities for example Griffith University are looking for ways to engage students meaningfully (Bath & Bourke, 2010). It is also found that the relationship between teacher and student in face-to-face classroom contributes significantly in the online blended learning context (Bishop *et al.*, 2003). Hence, the students' engagement is needed to be examined in the specific learning context in order to justify the students' practices within their 'ways of knowing and doing' towards their engagement. In brief how students managing themselves when engaging in a learning environment is essential. The importance of such awareness was highlighted by Sullivan (2015). Students' feedback on their self-management skills and experience in a blended learning environment is expected to provide guidance and develop key principles that underpin the practice in blended learning. For this purpose, a study was initiated with the aim to investigate the contributing factors of self-management strategies in particular the time management factor in blended learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educators play a major role in guiding students' learning. High quality instructional design is in fact needed in the guiding process. A well-constructed content is expected in the high quality instruction. Providing complete educational content for students' learning together with opportunities to facilitate the students to access and communicate are the major tasks that ensure the efficiency of delivering educational outcomes (Byrne, 2012). With the comprehensive contents, students are also expected to assume the responsibility of self management in the blended learning environment. Thus, good learning contents and self-management in blended learning play major roles in the blended leaning process.

In dealing with self-management strategies in the learning, there are guidelines resulted from many study outcomes. Students' needs of having different self-management strategies in more advance learning environment have been highlighted in several studies (e.g. Al-Oriini, 2007; Palloff & Pratt, 2003). Wenden (1991) identified some important components of self-management strategies such as planning, monitoring and evaluation. A good self-management strategy enables student to oversee and focus on their learning in order to perform within their abilities as well as achieve academically (Brak, Lan, & Paton, 2010; Chamot *et. Al*, 1999; Wenden, 1991). Other studies found that most independent learners who practice self-directed learning and self-regulated learning are presumably more skillful in planning, monitoring and decision making (Hara *et. al.*, 1998; Holec, 1981; Koopmans, 2002; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Ranjit and Mohamed Amin Embi (2007) conducted a study to examine learners' autonomy or level of learners' independence in the context of ICT evaluated from the aspects of planning, organizing, monitoring, evaluating, and computer usage. They found that these learners needed guidance to manage their own learning in the ICT environment. In addition, Ranjit and Gurnam (2010) also highlighted that learners need help in empowering their self-management skills especially in aspects

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