UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND SELF-DIRECTEDNESS OF TESL POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This topic has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

In the event that my dissertation be found to violate the conditions mentioned above, I voluntarily waive the right of conferment of my degree and agree be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA.

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ABSTRACT

The study is aimed to identify the characteristics of self-directedness as perceived by postgraduate students, to investigate self-directedness among postgraduate students, and to examine the extent to which learning environments influence postgraduate students' self-directedness. The study involves 20 semester 1 TESL postgraduate full time students. In conducting the study, the mixed methods design is applied and three sets of instruments are used – questionnaire, interviews, and classroom observations. Interestingly, the study found that the respondents are self-directed and portray the characteristics of adult learners' self-directedness. Among the characteristics of self-directedness as perceived by the respondents are planning the learning, having learning objectives, good time management, resourcefulness, and problem-solving and decision making abilities. Nonetheless, sometimes the perceived characteristics are negated by the respondents' actions. Besides, the findings show that the learning environments do influence the postgraduate learners' self-directedness. It is hoped the study would provide useful insights to improve the existing practice of teaching and learning, employers, and the learners. It is also recommended that the learners be mentally prepared for postgraduates expectations, and the lecturers apply a variety of teaching practices to adapt to the various characteristics of self-directedness.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti kriteria-kriteria pembelajaran secara kendiri seperti yang dianggap oleh responden, untuk mengkaji ciri-ciri pembelajaran secara kendiri di kalangan pelajar pascasiswazah, dan untuk menyelidik sejauh manakah persekitaran pembelajaran mempengaruhi ciri-ciri pembelajaran secara kendiri oleh pelajar pascasiswazah. Kajian ini dilakukan ke atas 20 orang pelajar pascasiswazah sepenuh masa jurusan TESL dalam semester pertama. Dalam menjalankan kajian ini, kajian jenis campuran dan tiga set instrumen iaitu soalselidik, temubual, dan pemerhatian dalam kelas digunakan. Kajian ini menemukan bahawa responden mempunyai ciri-ciri pembelajaran secara kendiri dan mempamerkan ciri-ciri tersebut dalam perlakuan. Antara kriteria pembelajaran secara kendiri yang dianggap oleh responden adalah kebolehan melakukan pelan dalam pelajaran termasuk objektif pembelajaran, pengurusan masa, kebolehan mencari sumber dan material akademik, dan kebolehan menyelesaikan masalah dan membuat keputusan. Walau bagaimanapun, kadangkala anggapan kriteria tersebut tidak sejajar dengan perbuatan responden. Selain daripada itu, hasil kajian membuktikan persekitaran pembelajaran mempengaruhi ciri-ciri pembelajaran secara kendiri antara pelajar pascasiswazah. Kajian ini diharapkan dapat member impak kepada sesi pengajaran dan pembelajaran, majikan, dan pelajar. Kajian ini juga mencadangkan agar pelajar dewasa bersedia dari segi mental untuk mengahadapi kehendak program pascasiswazah, dan para pensyarah dapat mengaplikasikan kepelbagaian pendekatan pengajaran bagi tujuan menyesuaikan dengan kepelbagaian karakter dalam pembelajaran kendiri.