

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter provides a brief explanation of theories that support the study. The theories relate to the concept of self-directed learning, the role of andragogy in self-directed learning, and adult learners.

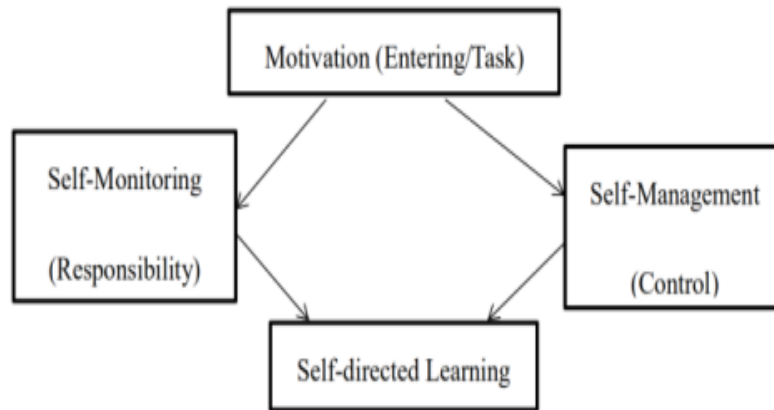
#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.1.1 The Concept of Self-Directed Learning**

The concept of self-directed learning begins with the idea by Ryan et al. (1982) that self-directed learning within informational structures leads to some stimulating paradoxes. All teachers have a common objective: to ensure their students' success. Besides, most educators believe that a crucial goal of the education system is to motivate students and foster their curiosity in learning. Supported by Rogers (1969) stated that encouraging active learning is key to flourishing education, with the facilitator being an essential aspect. Furthermore, in self-directed learning, the learner sets learning objectives, identifies feedback assessments, and finds resources to help achieve their goals. Self-directed learning can teach individuals to meet their learning needs and cultivate their passion for learning. As supported by Geng et al. (2019), learners can resolve their problems mutually through understanding and learning. Brockett et al. (2018) define self-directed learning as a process that involves setting goals, planning, selecting, seeking information or sources, and evaluating the learning process. Likewise, Vlachou (2010) says that self-learning is learning in which students can set their own learning goals, design their learning process and techniques, make academic decisions, and engage in activities that help them reach their goals. Supported by Ahammad (2023) explain that self-directed learning requires learners to take charge, set goals, and decide what to learn. This type of learning can occur both in and out of school, with teachers serving as facilitators rather than transmitters of knowledge. Hence, Knowles (1975) views learners' maturity level as an analysis of how much they will take charge of their education. Knowles, (1975) also stated that self-directed learning is a process by which individuals, with or without help, diagnose their learning needs, set

learning goals, identify material resources for learning, choose and implement appropriate learning strategies, and evaluate learning outcomes.

Furthermore, Knowles (1975) has consistently focused on this type of learning. The dimension of self-directed learning is as follows:



*Figure 1. Dimension of self-directed learning*

Learning objectives may involve developing and enhancing existing knowledge structures or modifying and expanding new knowledge. Self-management involves learning strategies to set goals and carrying out learning activities closely linked to goal setting. It concerns task control related to the social and behavioral aspects of implementing learning intentions. It involves external activities that are associated with the learning process. Garrison (1993) acknowledged that self-management is essential for effective task management. Student independence and ability to choose depend on their commitment to educational subjects.

Hence, Self-monitoring is the practice of examining one's own self-perception to identify flaws or weaknesses in the learning process. Parkes (2021) explains that in this process, the learner takes responsibility for constructing their own understanding by integrating new concepts and ideas with their primary knowledge.

In addition, motivation is the learner's ability to deal with their guidelines and take responsibility for their learning process to set and achieve their goals. Tan et al. (2019) stated that motivation motivates individuals, which indicates their willingness to commit to a particular goal and take action. It measures how an educational objective is valued based on individual desires and passionate circumstances.

Based on Van der Walt (2019) explains self-directed learning as a dynamic and non-deterministic process that involves both learners and educators as responsible. The comparison between self-directed learning and traditional learning is based on the person who leads the learning, as shown in the table below:

**Table 2.1.1:** Comparison of learning needs.

Concept	Learning element	Self-directed	Other-directed
<b>Theory and practice</b>	<i>Which</i> kind of learning	Andragogy: art and science of helping adults learn.	Pedagogy: art and science of teaching.
<b>Learning needs</b>	<i>What</i> to learn	Identifying own learning needs, selecting and enrolling in courses, modules or subjects regardless of institution or degree purpose.	Structuring of degree programmes, coursework, modules, subjects, prerequisites by academics or administrative staff. Main emphasis of content-led and banking education.
<b>Learning goals</b>	<i>Why</i> to learn	Learning motivation engendered by personal interest.	Goals are determined by the course outcomes or lecturer's determination.
<b>Learning resources</b>	<i>With</i> what to learn	Freedom to choose learning resources such as web, articles, books etc. Can be online or offline.	Prescribed textbook, reading list and limitations of sources.
<b>Learning strategies</b>	<i>How</i> to learn	Free to learn in a way that learner has become accustomed to.	Not normally prescribed in HEI, except for academic development courses.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<i>How</i> to evaluate	Learner determines when he knows enough about the subject or method of learning.	Courses require summative and formative assessment to evaluate progress.

*Source: Adapted from Knowles (1975)*

From the comparison above, educators are responsible for providing students with new knowledge, while learners must recognize their needs and seek to achieve their goals. Moreover, Williamson (2007) explains that self-directed learning can be divided into five broad areas: (1) Awareness, which relates to learners' understanding of the factors that influence their concepts or ideas when making a decision. (2) Learning Strategies involve actively setting goals, seeking information, and performing independent learning processes to achieve their goals. (3) Learning Activities, where learners must be independent and active in facilitating their learning. (4) Evaluation, where learners must evaluate their progress regarding the quality of their learning and focus on improving it. Finally, (5) Interpersonal Skills relate to the learner's relationship with others, gaining insight, discussing, and practicing social skills.

Additionally, looking at some of the aspects mentioned, it depends on how the learners behave, since not all aspects of the student are considered, it is important to evaluate themselves. However, because it is returned to the learners about how they learn, some of these aspects can be seen as a reference to how students respond to their self-directed learning during their learning process in accomplishing their study. In addition, these aspects combined make self-directed learning highly effective, and learners can decide what aspect they want to learn.

After considering the insights of various experts, the researcher concludes that self-directed learning requires individuals to take charge of their learning and proactively search for educational opportunities according to their specific needs and objectives. Therefore, the dimension of self-directed learning and the aspects mentioned above are included in the interview questions outlined in this research's guidelines.

### **2.1.2 Andragogy**

According to Knowles (1984), the andragogy theory suggests that the adult learning process differs significantly from that of children. Knowles et al (2005) revealed that andragogy focuses on facilitating adult learning, while pedagogy relates to children's education. Pedagogy was specifically designed for teaching children, whereas andragogy centers on adults taking charge of their own learning process. Furthermore, Merriam (2001) stated that andragogy aims to distinguish adult education from learning and childhood education. Nevertheless, Nagara (2020) argued that the pedagogical paradigm heavily emphasizes dependency because children are seen as learners who lack knowledge and experience. However, andragogy and pedagogy exhibit distinct characteristics and learning principles. Knowles (1980) defined Andragogy as “the art and science of helping adults learn.” Malcom Knowles popularized this theory of learning in the 1960s in the USA. Supported by Mews, (2020) explain that Knowles was often referred to as “The Father of Andragogy”.

Knowles (2005) identified six principles of andragogy: (1) the motivation behind adult learning, (2) the higher self-concept of adults compared to children, (3) the experiences in adults and their support of these experiences for learning, (4) the internal motivation of adults, (5) their readiness to learn, and (6) their

orientation in learning. These principles would be beneficial for both educators and learners in designing teaching and learning processes that will meet adults' needs. Supported by Jimmy (2018) stated that principles of andragogy have clearly improved learners' abilities. Knowles' version of andragogy presents the individual learner as one who is autonomous, unrestricted, and growth-oriented. Further, Merriam (2001) stated critics have pointed out that there is little or no acknowledgment that every person has been shaped by culture and society, that every person has a history, and that social institutions and structures define, to a large extent, the learning transaction irrespective of the individual learner. In addition, it can be concluded that andragogy can be applied in educational settings for adult learners. Supported by Abdullah et al. (2021), andragogy should be employed in higher education since the theory fulfills adults' learning needs and characteristics.

Moreover, self-regulation learning (SRL) is related to self-directed learning (SDL). As noted by Mahbuba (2023), self-directed learning (SDL) and self-regulated learning (SRL) represent two distinct yet interconnected approaches to learning. Self-directed learning emphasizes learners' autonomy, allowing them to take charge of their educational journey, decide on their objectives, and navigate their chosen resources independently. In contrast, self-regulation learning involves a form of regulation, with learners engaging in metacognitive processes to plan, monitor, and control their learning strategies. The differences extend to goal orientation, with intrinsic motivation being a mark of self-directed learning. Zimmerman (2000) claimed learners pursuing self-directed learning are driven by personal interest or curiosity, which guides their learning experiences. On the other hand, students engaging in self-regulated learning are motivated by achieving specific objectives. A structured approach to goal attainment characterizes their learning process. He also argued that self-directed learning encourages flexible and adaptable learning strategies tailored to individual preferences and contexts. In contrast, self-regulated learning involves systematic strategy, where learners consciously plan and apply specific techniques to achieve their learning goals. To understand the differences between self-directed and self-regulated learning, a distinction between both concepts as design features of the learning environment learner characteristics. The idea of self-directed learning is broader than self-regulated learning.

### 2.1.3 EFL Adult Learners

In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) field, self-directed learning has become a key factor in shaping the learning experience of adult learners. The ability to take charge of learners' own learning process is increasingly important. Yoko Iwai (2011) defined English for Foreign Language (EFL) as learning English in non-English-speaking countries. Indonesian learners studying English in their country are considered EFL learners. Moreover, individuals studying English in non-English-speaking countries are considered in this study. Indonesia uses English as a foreign language since it is designated second language. By that, the participants were called EFL learners in the context of this study.

Furthermore, Knowles (1975) assumes that adult learners move from dependent to self-directed. In addition, Knowles (1980) assumptions five criteria that describe the adult learners underlying the andragogy such as (1) has an independent self-concept and can direct his or her own learning, (2) has accumulated a reservoir of life experiences that a rich resource for learning, (3) has learning needs closely related to changing social roles, (4) is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge, and (5) is motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors. As a result of these assumptions, he developed a programming model to design, implement, and evaluate educational experiences with adults. In Snyder's (2009) view, adult learners develop a sense of self as they mature and transition from dependent children to self-directed adults. Supported by Dewi et al. (2019), stated that adults can direct or at least assist in planning their own learning because they manage other aspects of their lives.

Furthermore, Huang (2002) argued that as adult learners develop their self-concept, they also develop techniques for self-directed learning. Snyder (2009) contended that adult learners draw on their experiences, which become valuable learning resources. Stavredes (2011) suggested that their experiences can be utilized in their learning and shared with others. Adult learners must comprehend how the learning process will develop, what they will be learning, and why they must learn it. In line with Loeng (2020), lifelong learning provides people with the essential knowledge and abilities for all stages of their lives. These abilities include the ability to learn independently.

#### **2.1.4 Academic Achievement**

Academic achievement is a term used widely in education. Academic achievement in this context was related to how learners accomplish their study as their academic achievement. Achieving academic success is a complex process influenced by various factors, including individual learning strategies and educational support systems. In line with Fernandez et al. (2017), academic achievement is a crucial driving force that guides individuals' actions toward success, greatness, and accomplishment. Academic achievement includes multiple elements and is increasingly affected by learners' competence in establishing and working towards their own educational objectives. As supported by Almashaleh (2023), academic achievement is the ultimate outcome that reflects a student's growth and proficiency in acquiring the expected knowledge and skills.

In addition, the capability to oversee their academic track significantly influences their accomplishments, especially regarding the influence of defining and reaching learning goals on overall implementation and individual outcomes. Spinath (2012) defines academic achievement as the general term for performance outcomes in intellectual domains taught at school, college, and university. Similarly, Weidinger and Wirthwein (2020) defined academic achievement as performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in schools, colleges, and universities.

#### **2.2 Study of Relevant Research**

There are a few studies that are relevant to this research. Dewi et al. (2019) conducted one of these studies focused on self-directed learning. The study aimed to explore the learning behavior of adult learners using two male and one female participants in their fourth and sixth semesters. The research revealed that learners' motivation, strategy, self-monitoring, and social competition were important factors in self-directed learning that can be utilized in designing and implementing effective learning programs.

In addition to this study, Ahammad (2023) conducted a study to investigate the effective practices of self-directed learning. The study found that education should generate self-directed learners. He discussed the importance of understanding why self-

directed learning is useful and noted that it goes beyond simply controlling the learning environment. In addition to managing learning scenarios, self-directed learning involves reflection, critical thinking, and seeking alternative information. He also highlighted the significance of providing personalized feedback based on students' reflective learning to support their self-directed learning. Furthermore, this feedback helps learners stay engaged in their study and maintain progress.

(Ngozwana, 2020) also, a qualitative research design with four (two females and two males) adult learners who are above 18 years and enrolled as part-time learners in the institution that offers education to adults, and one female and two males making a total of three adult educators serving in the same institution. The researcher suggested: (1) Instructional methods be improved to give adult learners autonomy, to empower them to be assertive, and to engage them in active participation, (2) Adult educators should infuse andragogy and adult learning principles in the courses that they teach by tapping into learners experiences that serve as a rich resource in learning, (3) Adult educators should consciously improve their teaching and learning styles and try to be compassionate and act as mentors for adult learners, (4) Both adult educators and adult learners should use more educational media materials and technology in a learning process, and (5) Adult learners should learn how to be empowered for learner-centered and self-directedness aspects by making their own decisions pertaining to the content. Furthermore, through several supportive learnings in the study, they managed to overcome their learning challenges.

Previous studies have mainly focused on the behavior, strategies, and methods for improving adult learning, viewing self-directed learning in higher education as adult learners. However, self-directed learning depends heavily on individual learners' needs. Since learners are aware of what they need to achieve their goals, it is crucial to consider how to facilitate self-directed learning. Therefore, this research aims to fill the research gap by investigating how learners accomplish their study through self-directed learning. This study was done by conducting interviews with four graduates, including one male and three females.