

Graduate students' attitudes & self-directed for lifelong learning in foreign language environment

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Received: 3 July 2020; Revised: 5 August 2020; Accepted: 11 August 2020

Abstract: The student's attitude is needed to be self-directed learners to maintain lifelong learning in the ever-changing world. Thus, this study aimed to reveal whether graduate students' self-directed skills and attitudes vary based on university type and gender. Also, this study explored the relationship between graduate students' attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning skills then, further identified the lowest attitudes predictors for SDL, and analyzed how the students perceive the lecturer's role in self-directed learning. In a mixed-method study, 92 students from two selected public universities took questionnaires to measure their attitudes and self-directed learning and four students involved in the semi-structured interview. The obtained results showed that SDL and attitudes were found not to vary based on the university type. However, gender, made a significant difference in SDL in favor of female students. Then, attitudes variable statistically significantly predicted students' SDL and perceptions of confidence and ability that emerged as the attitude dimension, seemed to be the lowest associated with the students' SDL. The majority of the students are still unaware of the SDL behaviour and see the lecturer as a factor that decisively affects them in developing greater independence. Further theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: student's attitudes, foreign language, self-directed learning, lifelong learning

How to Cite: Sari, D., & Ashadi, A. (2020). Graduate students' attitudes & self-directed for lifelong learning in foreign language environment. *LingTera*, 7(1), 38-50. doi:<https://doi.org/10.21831/lt.v7i1.32971>



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INTRODUCTION

Learners' responsibility and active engagement in self-directed has been a major focus in adult educational areas to the enhancement of lifelong learning. It indicates that to be able to adapt to learning as a lifelong mission, self-directed learning is necessary skills for learning in higher education in the 21st century (L. M. Guglielmino, 2013; Su & Duo, 2010). Further, L. M. Guglielmino (2013); Knowles (1975); Merriam and Baumgartner (2020) suggest that self-directed learning occurs when the learners take the responsibility for setting clear learning needs in line with goals and plans, locating learning resources and implementing the plan, and evaluating the outcomes and the process essentially, initiating his or her learning. In addition to this, self-directed learning may also be viewed as a target that learners strive to achieve. To achieve it, individuals take responsibility for their learning and embrace individual autonomy and preferences (Kaufman, 2003).

According to L. M. Guglielmino and Long (2011), self-directed lifelong learning is a dynamic combination of attitudes and skills, crucial to coping with the complexity that individuals face not only in formal schooling but also in a rapidly growing technology and information society. Attitude towards self-directed learning has often be seen as psychological characteristics that influence individuals to undertake responsibility for their learning behavior (McGarry, 1995). In this case, attitudes tend to include beliefs that influence the learner's view of the learning process. It may also be an evaluative component in which the learners may generate like or dislike, or component of action that appears to affect learners to adopt certain learning behaviors (Abidin et al., 2012; Gan, 2004; Kara, 2009; Montañó & Kasprzyk, 2015). In short, one of the considerable factors affecting learning progress is the attitudes of the students towards learning a foreign language. Many who have positive attitudes are likely to become more conscious of their learning and become more responsible.

Prior studies have focused on learning strategies underlying self-directed learning readiness (Adenuga, 1989; Su & Duo, 2010; Yustitiasari et al., 2020) indicated that metacognitive, affective, social strategies used by the learners have significant influence to boost the learners' language learning readiness. It can be seen learning strategies as a determinant factor for the learners as an effort to achieve the goal of learning a language. Meanwhile, many studies also recognized the effectiveness of self-directed learning to increase learning aspects such as students' achievements and motivation (Cazan & Schiopca, 2014; Hsu & Shiue, 2005; Kamarruddin et al., 2014; Saeid & Eslaminejad, 2016). It indicates that self-directed learning predicts academic achievement and the influence of learner's needs and desires both have a vital impact on the direction of learners' motivation. Motivation predisposes how students learn and how they behave towards the subject matter. Briefly, the relationship between learning strategies, motivation, and students' achievement has been indicated concerning success in self-directed learning.

The literature also reveals that lifelong learning encompasses various skills known as 21st skills and these skills are thought to be increasingly crucial in information societies. Self-directed learning skills are part of these skills. It discloses that a close link exists between lifelong learning and self-direction. Greveson and Spencer (2005) argue that self-direction is a pre-requisite for lifelong learning, while (Candy, 1991) asserts that a mutual relationship exists between the two. This shows that students will need to become self-directed lifelong learners with the attitudes and skills related to autonomy and being goal-oriented. However, the capacity for self-directed lifelong learning does not develop automatically as students learn independently outside the classroom (Cremers et al., 2014). The nature of the Asian students who tend to be passive learners and are not fully aware to control their learning, responsible, and actively engaged in group learning is a challenging problem that needs to be taken into consideration. The fact that such a shift is crucially needed to close the barrier for any attempt to integrate self-directed learning into their learning behaviors.

The evidence indicates that it is difficult for learners to emerge life-long learning characteristics of basic studying skills. While research has tended to focus on identifying the underlying dimensions of attitude towards self-directed learning, little empirical research has been conducted to explore the relationship between learners' attitudes towards self-directed lifelong learning especially focusing on higher education in the Indonesian context. Scholars (Kraiger et al., 1993; Larsen-Freeman, 2001; Park et al., 2014; Winberg & Hedman, 2008) have suggested that there is a relationship between attitudes and learning outcomes, but how self-directed lifelong learning and attitudes are specifically affected to different levels of success in language learning is still far from research. Therefore, examining the relationship between graduate learners' attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning can provide new insight between these two areas of research.

Having the background above as a pointed departure, it is important to find out the relationship between the students' attitude and self-directed for lifelong learning within the context of foreign language environment. Moreover, the researcher also identified the lecturer's roles in determining students' self-directedness. Thus, the issues reported on in this study specifically aims to address five research questions: (1) Do students' attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning skills differ significantly based on university type? (2) Do students' attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning skills differ significantly based on gender? (3) Is there a significant relationship between Graduate students' attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning? (4) Which attitudes dimensions towards self-directed lifelong learning do the students under investigation report themselves as the lowest? (5) How do the students perceive the lecturer's roles in self-directed learning?

Attitudes in Foreign Language Learning

Learners' attitude plays a vital role in maximizing foreign language learning. Attitudes towards the learning situation refer to the individual's reaction to anything relevant to the context in which the language is being taught (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). As stated by Latchanna and Dagnew (2009), attitude is accepted as an important concept for understanding human behavior and is defined as a mindset comprising beliefs and feelings. Beliefs about language learning are directly related to progress in language classes. According to Lennartsson (2008), students' beliefs can be an obstacle if they believe that they cannot effectively learn the new language. Negative attitudes can contribute to challenges in learning a language. A student with negative attitudes can, however, be changed and turned into positive ones and facilitated getting a positive outcome. Having positive attitudes towards learning a language is a good start to learn a language. Then, it should be acknowledged that the students' ability to take res-

possibility for their learning depends on their attitudes (Fisher et al., 2001). Therefore, good attitudes are required to improve students' efficiency in language learning behaviors.

Self-directed for Lifelong Learning

The terms "self-directed learning" and "lifelong learner" are used extensively in many educational policies and course objective settings. The term "self-directed learning" was first provided by Houle (1961), and since then, several terms have been given with similar definitions, such as self-directed study, self-planned learning, independent study, self-study, self-education, autonomous learning, self-instruction, self-regulation, and many other terms related (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991; P. J. Guglielmino et al., 1987; Tough, 1979).

Knowles (1975) renders the most popularly accepted concept of self-directed learning; he stated that "*self-directed learning describes a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes*". Knowles (1975) believed that self-directed learning is one part of human nature; as people growing up, one would want to be in charge of one's learning, and by making decisions on his/her own, one becomes responsible for his/her behavior. P. J. Guglielmino et al. (1987) suggested that self-directed learning refers to a readiness to learn ways of confronting or solving life-situations problems. Self-directed learning readiness indicates one's capacity to develop the skills to do self-directed learning, and to some extent it exists in each person.

Individuals who have learned how to learn can prepare their learning, exchange new information to larger contexts, overcome challenges, and are willing to learn, open to development and change, possess self-confidence and awareness, use various learning strategies, and know their learning styles (Fredriksson & Hoskins, 2007; Hofmann et al., 2008). Knowing how to learn is among the fundamental skills of lifelong learning. With lifelong learning, individuals can become respectful of their own learning needs and they can decide how they want to achieve knowledge. At the same time, instead of memorizing it, they can understand the nature of knowledge. Lifelong learning may be associated with adult education; however, it cannot be limited to a certain age group as it lasts throughout a lifetime (Mocker & Spear, 1982). Lifelong learning focuses on the knowledge and skills needed by everyone regardless of age. Lifelong learning enables individuals looking for self-development or further education to respond to their learning needs independently and flexibly.

In proportion to Candy (1991), self-directed learning is a way of turning individuals into lifelong learners. On the other hand, one of the primary goals of lifelong learning is to equip individuals with skills and competencies that enable them to learn on their own. According to this belief, self-directed learning is both the meaning and the outcome of lifelong learning (Candy, 1991). At any rate, self-direction as a dimension of lifelong learning, and it can be promoted through formal and informal learning (Aspin & Chapman, 2001; Mocker & Spear, 1982; Spencer & Jordan, 1999). Referring to this, lifelong and self-directed learning are related concepts that form a basis for each other. It is reasonable that self-directed learners need to develop self-directed skills not only for the sake of university-level learning but also to prepare them to learn for life (McCauley & McClelland, 2004).

METHODS

Participants

This study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze the data obtained from the participants. The participants of this study comprised 92 (60 female and 32 male) students of Graduate School from two selected Public University in Indonesia. All the participants were associated with the English Language Education program. The sample subjects still represent the population well due to that it is a very common situation in Indonesia that female students outnumber male students in language-related departments in Universities. The students are ranging in age from 22 to 40 years old and they are first- and second-year students. Thus, the participants in this study were believed to have a homogeneous sample in terms of their educational profile.

Instruments

The instruments in this study consisted of demographic background involving five questions about participants' gender, age, institution, current academic major, and academic year. Then, semi-structured

interviews were carried out to four selected students concerning provide an in-depth description related to their attitudes of self-directed for lifelong learning and how do they perceive the lecturer's role in self-directed learning. The interviewees were selected according to purposiveness and convenience in which the students expressed their willingness to participate in this study. The names of the respondents are not mentioned in this study to preserve the anonymity of the participants. The students in this study are named Julie, Margot, Dean, and Kim.

Furthermore, a set of two questionnaires were also used to obtain the data needed. The questionnaire about Students Learning Attitudes which developed by Gan (2004) consisted of 15 items, examined the students' attitudes of Learning English as the Foreign Language which measure students' perceptions of confidence and ability (6 items), an initiative in learning (3 items), attitudes towards teacher's role (3 items), and attitudes towards learner's role (3 items). Responses of each item are rated by using a Five-Likert scale, varying from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Second, Self-directed Lifelong Learning Scale developed by Williamson (2007) to reveal graduate students' self-directed learning skills. This questionnaire included 20 items which categorize of four items of awareness (explores learners' understanding of the factors contributing to becoming self-directed learners), four items of learning strategies (measure the various self-directed learning strategies), four items of learning activities (measure the requisite learning activities learners should actively engage to become self-directed learners), four items of evaluations (measures learners' specific attributes to monitoring the learning activities), and four items of interpersonal skills (measure learners' skills in inter-personal relationships). Each had five options rated by using a Five-Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The questionnaire was then piloted to ensure the researcher of avoiding ambiguity that might lead to biased answers and other related problems in the main study. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were assured that there were no right or wrong answers and the researcher made it particularly clear that all information would be kept strictly confidential and would be used for research purposes only. The questionnaire was then piloted to ensure the researcher of avoiding ambiguity that might lead to biased answers and other related problems in the main study. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were assured that there were no right or wrong answers and the researcher made it particularly clear that all information would be kept strictly confidential and would be used for research purposes only.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process lasted about two weeks and the questionnaire was sent through an online survey administration application. The respondents were given three days to complete the questionnaires and send it back to the researcher for data analysis. After two weeks, all the complete filled-up questionnaires were gathered and collected to be analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Then, the semi-structured interviews were conducted via video conference with duration ranged from 15-20 minutes for each interviewee, allowed the respondents to elaborate and give insight related to their learning attitudes and self-directed for lifelong learning. The information was firstly recorded, with the participants' agreement, and was later transcribed by the researcher to discover any themes. To accurately present the results of the interview transcripts, the verification of the data was done by asking participants to verify our interpretations of their responses as it also could increase the validity of the results. The analysis includes both descriptive and inferential analysis to identify the overall information concerning the respondent's background and to see the correlation between two variables to get the output and result for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Learning Attitudes, Self-Directed Lifelong Learning, and University Type

Table 1 shows the *t*-test analysis result to reveal whether learning attitudes and self-directed learning skills vary by university type.

Table learning attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning based on university types were compared. On average, L University students ($M= 44.19$, $SD= 4.148$) reported higher in terms of learning attitudes than Y University students ($M= 43.11$, $SD= 5.217$); $t(90) = 1.076$, $p > .05$. On the other hand, Y University ($M= 77.41$, $SD= 9.759$) reported higher in self-directed lifelong learning than L University

($M= 76.09, SD= 6.425$); $t(90) = -.742, p > .05$. According to t -test results, university types did not significantly influence students' learning attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning.

Table 1. t -test Results Comparing Attitudes and Self-Directed Lifelong Learning based on University Types

Variable	University	n	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Attitudes	L university	92	44.19	4.148	1.076	90	.285
	Y university	92	43.11	5.217			
SDL	L university	92	76.09	6.425	-.742	90	.460
	Y university	92	77.41	9.759			

Learning Attitudes, Self-Directed Lifelong Learning, and Gender

The relationship between students' attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning differ by gender are given in Table 2.

Table 2. t -test Results Comparing Females and Males on Attitudes and Self-Directed Lifelong Learning

Variable	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Attitudes	Female	92	77.63	5.162	1.912	90	.210
	Male	92	75.31	3.693			
SDL	Female	92	44.28	8.737	1.263	90	.049
	Male	92	42.31	7.697			

Table learning attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning based on gender were compared. On average, female students ($M=44.282, SD=5.162$) reported higher in their attitudes towards learning than male students ($M=42.312, SD= 3.693$); $t(90) = 1.912, p > .05$. The same conditions applied in self-directed lifelong learning, female students ($M=77.633, SD= 8.737$) appear to be better than male students ($M=75.312, SD=7.697$); $t(90) = 1.263, p < .05$. Thus, it can be inferred that no significant differences by gender were found in students' learning attitudes. However, there was a significant difference existed between gender and self-directed lifelong learning in favor of female students.

Relationship between Graduate Students' Learning Attitudes and Self-Directed Lifelong Learning

The relationship between students learning attitudes and self-directed lifelong learning was studied using simple linear regression. The result revealed that Learning Attitudes variable statistically significantly predicted Students' Self-Directed for Lifelong Learning, $F(1, 90) = 31.768, p < .05, R^2 = .261$ ($B = .901, p = .000$).

Table 3. Linear Regression for the Prediction of Learning Attitudes

Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	R	R2	R2 adj	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1683.56	1	77.63	.511 ^b	.261	.253	31.768	.00 ^b
	Residual	4769.65	90	75.31					
	Total	6453.65	91						

Table 4. Coefficients of the Regression Model of the Relation between Learning Attitudes and Self-Directed Lifelong Learning

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	37.566	7.007			5.361	.000
Attitudes	.901	.160	.511		5.636	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Self-Directed Lifelong Learning

Learning Attitudes of Graduate students to Self-Directed Lifelong Learning

Table 5 gives an overall picture of reasonably strong support for self-directed among the students. The students demonstrated to predominantly value the learner's role in language learning ($M= 13.26, SD= 1,66$), as illustrated, 'I know how to select appropriate ways of learning English.' On the contrary, students' perception of the teacher's role was ($M= 10.66, SD= 2.00$), this was best reflected the statement that 'the best way of learning a language is mainly in the classroom from the lecturer.' The students

also showed a strong awareness to take the initiative in learning ($M= 12.32, SD= 1.83$), it is reported strong agreement with the statement, *'it is important for me to make use of learning sources outside the classroom.'* Meanwhile, students' attitudes reported the lower level in the category of the students' perception of confidence and ability ($M= 7.34, SD= 3.25$), which best represents the statement, *'I worry a lot about making mistakes.'*

Table 5. Graduate Students' Attitudinal dimensions to Self-Directed Lifelong Learning

Dimensions	n	Mean	SD
Initiative in learning	92	12.32	1.83
Students' perceptions of confidence and ability	92	7.34	3.25
Attitudes towards the teacher's role	92	10.66	2.00
Attitudes towards learner's role	92	13.26	1.66

The Students' Attitudes: perceptions of confidence and ability and the Students' view of the lecturers' role in Self-Directed

A follow-up semi-structured interview was conducted with the four students to figuring out the reasons for the students' lowest attitudes category in self-directed and the students' view of the lecturer's role is self-directed.

The Students' Attitudes: perceptions of confidence and ability

The students reported having the lowest attitudes score in the perception of the students' confidence and ability. The majority of the students (72.8%) either agree or strongly agree with the statement *'I worry a lot about making mistakes.'* The students claimed that it is hard for them to initiate responses during the class discussion with the lecturer without being called on. The students' attitude towards errors may account for speaking anxiety which leads them to worry about making productive sounds. The students' responses are:

'I am still nervous and worry about making some basic mistakes. I mostly have a problem with my fluency and occasionally grammatical mistakes when speaking or having a discussion in my language class.' (Margot)

'...when the lecturer pushed us to deliver the arguments about the topic, at that time I have to take note first, it's only to minimize the occurrence of mistakes when talking.' (Dean)

Additionally, 63 students (68.5%) agree and strongly agree with the statement *'I am afraid people will laugh at me if I do not say things right.'* The students feel anxious in the situation when the lecturer or students with superior speaking skills correct their inaccurate responses. They found that the classroom settings will potentially lead them to the natural situation in which inappropriate vocabulary use, pronunciation errors and grammatical mistakes may occur, as indicated in the following statements:

'... individual presentation is the most difficult parts when I can't deliver the material clearly to the audience and they could not get the message across due to my linguistic problems.' (Kim)

'I regard those as a challenge for me, but still the fear is still there. I saw my friend is getting stressed out when her utterances are not clear enough and another friend corrected her.' (Julie)

'Sometimes, it is not easy to express what I think while speaking. Therefore, I tried to limit myself to short sentences because I'm afraid I might get lost while constructing longer ones.' (Dean)

Lastly, 42 students (45.7%) favor to the statement *'I end up trembling and practically in a cold sweat when I have to talk in front of people.'* The students have something interesting to say and would like to participate in the discussion, but the prospect of saying something publicly seems to cause a lot of anxiety and stress. The students expressed in the following statements:

'I got hand trembling when I have to do unprepared speech or presentation in front of the class, but it lasted only in the first five minutes.' (Margot)

'.... Once I was being interviewed in front of public and I got totally blank on what I have to say, it is not because of my grammar mistakes but I don't know, maybe because of the situation.' (Julie)

The student's view on the lecturer's roles in self-directed

In self-directed, it is clear that the students take the ownership of their learning, however, the students from both Y and L universities argued that the lecturer encouragement influenced them for self-

directed learners, the lecturer also played a vital role in providing feedback to the students as they will evaluate their learning and make use the relevant sources for learning, as expressed in this statement:

'I think support from teachers is vital, especially at the beginning. We may be poor in identifying our gaps and may face difficulty to do the assignments. Thus, we need the lecturer's guidance to support us.' (Margot)

'I definitely take charge of my learning progress, but I should say the support and feedback provided by lecturers inspired my self-directed It is important that the lecturer ask us to clarify things which were very helpful to recognize what we didn't clearly know.' (Dean)

The students also argued that the communication between students and the lecturer is also important and should be managed to build the interactions so that the students will be more engaged and learn more. In the students' opinion, the interactions helped them to develop insight to plan further learning, as indicated in the following statement:

'...the lecturer provided us with enormous opportunities for fostered independence and awareness in the classroom such as group projects, group observations, and group presentations.' (Kim)

The classroom environment optimized them to have a discussion in which the learners could maximize their opportunities to acquire the language to which they are being exposed. In such situations, the students are engaged in their learning if they fully take charge of the classroom activities. The student reflected:

'My friends and I often share our knowledge of language learning to solve the learning problems we faced in doing the assignment. We discussed sometimes in the campus library.' (Julie)

Moreover, the students claimed it is beneficial to have monitoring from the lecturer or guidance from the peers for supporting the greater learning autonomy, since the students are not fully aware of having the capacity to control the learning decisions, critical reflection towards the subject matters, and evaluate what has been learned. Mentoring should happen regularly for each student to see their progress, then the lecturer has a system for providing feedback to the students. The students expressed in the following statements:

'...when we come to the group project assignment, we need the lecturer to help us in identifying the concepts and giving continuous evaluation through the learning process.' (Kim)

'Sometimes it is not easy to implement the learning goals, I tried to find the solutions like share the problems with friends or lecturers when I got stuck in reflecting the result of my learning.' (Margot)

'I keep myself updated on learning resources, but I am still in trouble to value and critically reflect on what I have learnt.' (Dean)

Despite the importance of the lecturer guidance for supporting self-directed learning, the students were given minimal guidance to some courses in their responses. Students from L university similarly stated that the classroom activities seemed not motivating the students for self-directedness. It becomes clear that the activity did not foster the students to be self-directed. Some classroom activities are still dominated by lectures and student's presentations until the end of the semester. Meanwhile, the students from Y university believed that the classroom activity mostly student-centered, the students actively participated in the classroom discussions and presentations, nonetheless, the lecturer seemed to push all the responsibility to the learners with few direct controls from the lecturer. The students expressed it as:

'I experienced in one of my courses that the lecturer asked us to have group presentations from meeting 2 until the last meeting we had the final exam. We had non-interactive sessions' (Julie)

'At the beginning of the semester, we have a good enough learning environment, such as discussion, presentation, and sometimes lecturers visit. In one course, I surprised that we are asked to do the task that we are not familiar with. I have no clues at all to make it as our final task and the lecturer only give the general description without equipped us with any entail knowledge.' (Kim)

Some students regarded feedback as insufficient and confusing. Many students have high expectations of one-on-one feedback with lecturers, thereby reaffirming the recognition of the teacher as the transmitter of knowledge. Only a few students appreciated their independence from the supervision of the teachers. First, an overwhelming majority of the students, regardless of their respective language levels, valued one-on-one review with teachers as the most successful type of

feedback. Some students, for example, believed that teachers could correct mistakes in front of the entire class. The students confirmed:

'Many courses required research article as the final assignment, we did it, unfortunately, we are struggling with peer review. I need a lecturer review on my project so I got a clear path on what I have done, just one to two lecturers gave insightful feedback.' (Julie)

'For me, I need more straightforward feedback. I got confused if the feedback only a mark or a circle without any claims. I need to know what I need to improve on.' (Margot)

Not only did the students deal with a face-to-face learning environment, but the students claimed that the distance education courses contain topics of the lectures, forum through which students could interact and discuss lectures that may foster self-directed to have self-monitoring and self-management processes. The students said that the lecturer stressed on ongoing communication with the lecturer. It is required for online students to text the lecturer in the classroom online groups, share information about themselves, and bring questions forward. This helps in building an engaging community of the online classroom. The students expressed in the following statements:

'When we can clearly discuss the materials with the lecturer and get genuine feedback, I think it helped me a lot to get better and get closer to meeting my goals' (Dean)

'As we started online learning, I am able to do self-studying and discuss with friends about related subjects. At some point, I think my inner drive directs me towards further development which is good for my learning improvement.' (Julie)

However, other students stated the one lecturer gave abundant assignments without coming up with any input. Thus, they argued that lecturers are expected to provide the different learning modes and styles in the virtual classroom, so it could enhance and maximize students learning. The students expressed in the following statements:

'This time, we have to deal with multiple deadlines, we even did not receive any feedback to get the improvement for our progress. They gave us a lot of assignments.' (Kim)

'I need more than group chatting communication with the lecturers, it is much easier to have video conferences as it ensured our weekly progress but some of my lecturers are not doing so.' (Dean)

'The lecturer gave online tasks not held online learnings, we have lectures, assignments, and few discussions. Then, we are asked to have peer review on it in that I am not capable to do that.' (Margot)

Discussion

The study aimed to explore the graduate students' attitudes and self-directed for lifelong learning skills and reveal how these skills vary based on university types and gender. Besides, this study also examined the relationship between graduate students' attitudes and their self-directed for lifelong learning with an in-depth description related to the lowest attitudes dimension of self-directed and how do they perceive the lecturer's role in self-directed. The statistical analysis showed that no significant difference was detected between L and Y University students' attitudes, self-directed for lifelong learning skills, and university type. The reason for this may have been because attitude is a determinant factor for success in learning and it depends on the individual's interest in language learning. On the other hand, the self-directed learning skills of the students from the two institutions had relatively identical self-directed learning abilities. Although there are differences between the two universities, their students are believed to have similar characteristics concerning self-directed learning skills. Previously, Afzal and Rashid (2018) stated students' attitudes towards higher education did not significantly differ by university type. Turner (2007) claimed that students from different high schools also showed that their self-directed learning readiness levels did not differ significantly. Tekkol and Demirel (2018) also found the university type no significantly influenced the students' self-directed.

Analysis of self-directed for lifelong learning skills concerning gender showed that a significant difference existed between female and male students. The results showed that female students had significantly higher self-directed learning skills than male students. This was contrary to the findings of Premkumar et al. (2018), the study claimed that there was no significant effect of gender on students' SDL scores in Indian Medical college. Similarly, Saban and Saban (2008) researched teacher candidates and showed that female students had a higher level of cognitive awareness and motivation relative to

male students. Demirtaş and Özer (2007) found that female teacher candidates have more effective time management. Karasakaloglu and Saracaloglu (2009), on the other hand, stated that in the field of Turkish female students have higher academic self-design than male students. Higher self-directed learning skills in female students than males may be associated with the fact that they have higher cognitive and affective characteristics, which are critical for applying self-directed learning. The literature also includes other studies that show higher self-directed learning skills among females (P. J. Guglielmino et al., 1987; Slater et al., 2017; Swart, 2018).

The result also showed that the graduate students who held strong beliefs about the learner's role showed strong initiative in language learning and considered the lecturer roles as the facilitator, were more likely to report the positive attitudes towards self-directed for lifelong learning. However, positive attitudes, except for perceptions of the confidence and ability were not significantly predicted the students' self-directed. Valeriu (2015) further deeper analyzed that attitude is linked to the affective and cognitive elements which give meaning and significance to it. Therefore, the students who have strong attitudes probably had a high level of self-responsibility towards their learning progress. Conversely, a student with a dependent learning experience who has low confidence and not sure with his/ her ability was more likely to be unsuccessful with SDL as effective self-directed demonstrate an awareness and confidence of their role as agents by actively shaping their learning environment (Bown, 2009). Evidence has found that those students who have low readiness for SDL and are exposed to an SDL project, exhibit high levels of anxiety (Fisher et al., 2001). Among the dimensions of attitudes, confidence resulted in self-perceived proficiency as well as self-reported anxiety (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2018).

The study also examined the relationship between graduate students' attitudes and self-directed for lifelong learning skills. These two were found to be related to each other. It shows that those who have good learning behavior, also can be self-directed learners as well as critical reflections of their learning. Students will need to become self-directed lifelong learners with the attitudes and skills related to autonomy, motivation, experience, and being goal-oriented. However, making students emerge with these qualities would entail a paradigm shift of unlearning and relearning which is best achieved in this century through self-directed lifelong learning (Cremers et al., 2014; L. M. Guglielmino, 2013; Hiemstra, 2011). Long (1991) stated that "...Attitudes toward learning as measured by the SDL positively interact with quality of performance (as defined by GPA in school)." Moreover, Slaughter (2009), in a four-year study of students in a pharmacy preparation program, found that students with above-average SDL scores performed better than those with lower scores.

The study finally highlighted the students' view of the lecturer's role is self-directed. The findings revealed that the students seem to not fully aware of self-directed learning behavior. They have a proficient awareness to develop very effective strategies which help them make considerable progress in their language learning; however, for every successful, motivated, independent learner, there are many others who, despite their efforts, struggle to make meaningful progress or experience problems with self-encouragement and lack of confidence in their study strategies. Thus, in these circumstances, they still see the lecturer as a factor that decisively affects them in developing greater independence. Lecturer, cannot be doubted, hold a power to foster and lead the learning situations in the classroom. L. M. Guglielmino (2013) comments that the uniqueness of language learning lies in the fact that learners are much more vulnerable to criticism and negative evaluation than in other subjects because the chances of making mistakes in the language class are much greater. The roles of the lecturer are equally important in helping students develop the skills to become more self-directed in their learning (Karlsson et al., 2007; McGarry, 1995). The lecturers are a considerably greater impact on learner autonomy in self-directed learning which can be made through simple adaptations to classroom activities or the inclusion of short discussions and reflections. Benson (2010) adds to these elements the need for learners to have control over learning content, including not only what to learn, but also how they learn, to foster autonomy.

CONCLUSION

In the present study, it clearly showed that no significant differences were found in students' attitudes and SDL vary by university type. The same situation applied to the students' attitudes differ by gender, meanwhile, there was a significant difference existed between gender and self-directed lifelong learning in favor of female students. Furthermore, the study also indicated that learning attitudes

variable statistically significantly predicted students' self-directed for lifelong learning. Within SDL attitudes, it is perceptions of confidence and ability that emerged as the dimension that seemed to be the lowest associated with the students' self-directed compared to the initiative in learning, students' perceptions towards the learner's role and teacher's role.

Furthermore, this study claimed that even though students are the agent who take responsibility for their own learning, embrace individual autonomy and preferences, the roles of the lecturer are equally important in helping students develop the skills to become more self-directed in their learning. Because developing students' self-directed learning takes much effort; thus, both educators and learners must have a clear understanding of the concept and nature of self-directed learning skills for its further development (Williamson, 2007). Since the lecturer as the educator is interrelated to assist the students to be autonomous in their SDL, it is crucial to have innovative, effective, and engaging teaching strategies that can lead and motivate the students to successfully contribute to improving learning independency.

The results from the study also point some possible future action for researchers. Further research in the field needs to find out other aspects such as, intrinsic motivation or self-efficacy. Other issues remain unsolved, such as the effectiveness of SDL within a variety of foreign language teaching contexts, the analysis of social interactions, and out of school context which can affect self-directed learning. A few limitations, however, will need to be taken into account when interpreting the result. A small number of participants seem to have misinterpreted some questions in both of students' attitudes and self-directed learning assessment tools; thus, to be able to generalize the results to a wider population, a larger scope of subjects should be included for further study.

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