Enhancing the Effectiveness of Self-Directed Learning Management for Primary Education Students at Tan Trao University

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Abstract

The article is based on guiding perspectives and theories on self-learning activities of learners; it assesses the current state of self-learning activities and management of self-learning activities of primary education students at Tan Trao University. Based on the current situation, I propose four solutions: Enhancing awareness of the role and importance of self-learning activities for students and lecturers; organizing a unified self-learning plan for students; Instructing students in effective self-learning methods; regarding assessment, evaluating students' self-learning activities.
Keywords: *Management, Self-learning Activity, Student, Primary Education, Tan Trao University.*

1.   Introduction

With the aim of creating fundamental and robust transformations in the quality and effectiveness of education and training, Resolution 29 of the Central Executive Committee of the 11th term has outlined the following: building an open, practical, and vocational education system; promoting effective teaching and learning, and sound management; adopting a flexible and suitable educational structure and methods linked to the construction of a learning society; ensuring conditions for enhancing quality and international integration. Particularly, the goal for higher education is to focus on training high-level human resources with sufficient qualities and capabilities to meet the demands of society.

Self-learning is the foremost factor that determines the quality of education and is the fast track to bring our country's educational career in line with other countries in the region and around the world. Self-learning originates from the inherent desire to acquire knowledge, to increase understanding for better work and life. It is an indispensable form of learning for students studying at universities. To achieve the expected results in students' self-learning activities, innovation in educational management is considered a crucial solution.

The Faculty of Preschool and Primary Education at Tan Trao University has its origins in the Faculty of Education, established in April 2012. By March 2020, the Faculty of Education was officially formed according to Decision No. 213/QĐ-ĐHTT, dated March 10, 2020, issued by the Principal of Tan Trao University. The faculty aims to train and nurture human resources in the field of primary education and preschool education to serve the cause of education, industrialization, and modernization of the country, meeting the learning needs of students. To ensure the quality of education, the fac always creates the most favorable conditions for teaching; the team of lecturers possesses professional qualifications, experience, and enthusiasm for the profession; the educational programs are consistently

focused on updates and adjustments as needed. Particularly, the self-learning process of students is a crucial focus for faculty and department leadership to fulfill the training mission.

The article is based on instructional viewpoints and theories regarding learners' self-directed learning activities; it evaluates the current state of self-directed learning activities and the management of these activities among students to propose solutions aimed at improving the effectiveness of self-directed learning management for primary education students at Tan Trao University.

2.   Content
Studies Related to Self-Learning and Enhancing Self-Learning Activities for Students
Since ancient times, self-learning has been a topic of interest for thinkers and educators. With the development of history, this issue has increasingly attracted the attention of thinkers, educators, and researchers to enhance the role of learners and improve the quality of learning activities.

On the global stage, great Chinese thinkers and educators like Confucius (551-479 BCE) considered self- learning not only as knowledge accumulation but also as a means to train the soul, develop character and ethics. It was deemed an integral part of building a community and a society with values. Confucius emphasized "Learning without thinking will lead to mistakes, thinking without studying will lead to deadlock" meaning learning and independent thinking are two factors that interact and bind each other, and both factors must be respected. French educator J. Vial believed that teaching should create ideal learning situations, providing conditions for students to actively engage in self-worth, independence, creativity, and control over their own learning. Authors Bobbi Deporter and Mike Hernacki in the book "Quantum learning" pay attention to and clarify learning techniques. Accordingly, they attach importance to the role of learners' self-learning, determining that self-learning motivation is formed from the learners' emotions and consciousness.

In Vietnam, Chu Van An (1292-1370), known as the "Master of a thousand generations," always promoted the spirit of self-learning and self-teaching. He was evaluated by Tran Nguyen Dan as having a high moral philosophy, capable of "turning the waves of knowledge, making customs return to purity, renewing justice and education."

Ho Chi Minh, a shining example of determination in self-learning and self-improvement, urged, "Must voluntarily and conscientiously consider studying as the task of a revolutionary and strive to complete it actively and independently, making an effort to fulfill the study plan." He also emphasized, "Learning is based on self-learning, with guidance and discussion contributing". The profound ideas of President Ho Chi Minh, as applied and implemented in Party resolutions, were reflected in the Resolution of the Second Conference - Central Executive Committee, term VIII, which affirmed: "Renew teaching methods... enhance the ability of self-learning and self-research of learners".

The issue of self-learning has received significant attention from researchers and educators. Stemming from different purposes, subjects, and methods, researchers and educators have drawn various conclusions. For example, Nguyen Canh Toan with "The teaching process - self-learning", Vu Van Tao with "Discussing the experience of self-learning", Phan Trong Luan with "Self-learning - the golden key of education" and others. These research works have highlighted the role and importance of students' self-learning activities and the methods of teachers in developing and enhancing self-learning skills for learners.

In summary, self-learning has been a subject of study for a long time. However, there has been no specific research on this issue regarding primary education students at Tan Trao University. Building on previous research findings, I conducted an in-depth study on 'the management of self-learning activities for primary education students at Tan Trao University.

Some Theoretical Issues on Self-Learning and Enhancing Self- Learning Activities for Primary Education Students at Tan Trao University
Some General Issues on Management
Concept
According to the Vietnamese Dictionary, management is defined as "organizing and controlling the activities of a unit or an organization". F.W. Taylor described management as "specializing and tightly controlling every type of work, with management being the art of knowing precisely what needs to be done and how to do it in the best and cheapest way".

According to Pham Viet Vuong, management is "the conscious impact of the management subject on the management object to command, conduct, guide social processes, and individual behaviors towards common objectives, in line with objective laws".

Management Functions
Management functions are considered as the form of expressing the purposeful impact of the management subject on the management object. Management has four functions: (1) Planning; (2) Organizing; (3) Leading; (4) Controlling. Through these functions, the management subject can influence the object to achieve the set goals.

School Management
The school is an educational institution where activities and educational goals take place. Therefore, school management is also considered a specific type of micro-level educational management. Author Pham Minh Hac stated, "School management in Vietnam implements the Party's policy within its responsibilities, operating the school according to educational principles to achieve educational goals, training goals with the education system for children and each student".

School management differs from other types of social management in its regulations, specifically defining the nature of teaching and the essence of the teaching and learning process. The product of the school is the character of the learner formed, cultivated, and trained according to societal requirements and recognized by society. In other words, school management essentially involves managing the education and teaching process of the school to fulfil its mission.

Teaching and Self-Learning
Teaching
Teaching is the process where the teacher, through content delivery, guides (organizes, instructs, controls) the activities of the students to achieve the teaching goals [10, p. 91]. Learning is the process of receiving, collecting, and absorbing knowledge, skills, and information from various sources with the aim of self-improving one's knowledge, understanding, and skills. This can be the process of studying at school, vocational training, learning from life experiences, reading books, learning from others through communication and conversation, and various other forms. Learning is an ongoing process that helps individuals develop and progress in life.

Teaching activities involve the teacher or instructor transmitting knowledge, skills, and information to learners or students. It includes activities such as lecturing, presenting

information, discussing, practicing, using educational tools (whiteboard, textbooks, multimedia, etc.), organizing tests and assessments, as well as creating conditions for learners or students to understand and apply knowledge effectively.

Self-Learning
According to Ho Chi Minh, "self- learning is learning how to learn automatically" [9, p. 257]. According to author Pham Viet Vuong, "self-learning is a form of learning outside of class hours through personal effort following a focused study plan and without the direct presence of a teacher. Self-directed learning is often carried out at home or in the library, using entirely independent research methods. The content of self-directed learning involves reviewing previous lessons, preparing for new lessons, and completing creative exercises to apply knowledge".

Teaching and Self-Learning at University
Teaching and Self-Learning Both Play Crucial Roles in the Higher Education System
Teaching at the university is the organized process of instruction delivered by teachers, lecturers, or mentors. Teaching typically includes classes, lectures, group discussions, practical classes, and planned educational activities. Teachers convey knowledge, skills, and information to students through teaching methods such as presentations, discussions, exercises, and assessments. The goal is to help students gain a deep understanding of the subject, develop skills, and apply knowledge in practical situations.

Self-learning at the university is a process in which students take initiative and manage their own learning. It involves not only reading books and materials but also researching, practicing, and applying learned knowledge in real-world situations. Students can use materials provided by teachers, textbooks, online resources, reference various sources such as videos, online lectures, participate in study groups, or even conduct independent research and projects.

The nature of teaching and self-learning at the university is often not entirely separate. In some cases, teachers guide and encourage students to engage in self-learning through assignments, individual or group projects, and creating conditions for independent research. Self-learning is a crucial skill in the university environment, helping students develop a lifelong learning ability and adapt to professional learning and working environments later on.

Current state of self-learning activities for primary education students at Tan Trao University
To assess the current state of self-learning activities for primary education students at Tan Trao University, I conducted a survey of teaching activities by lecturers and self-learning activities of 50 primary education students. The results are as follows:

Lecturers
In terms of advantages, to enhance the self-learning spirit of students, all lecturers, when asked during teaching, consistently: (1) utilize critical thinking questions, guidance, and actively encourage students to explore materials, participate actively in pre, during, and post-lecture activities. For instance, posing questions to stimulate creative thinking, requiring students to seek information from various sources, and providing opportunities for them to solve problems in their own way; (2) guide students on how to approach materials, textbooks, and other useful information. They may also offer regular feedback to assist students in gaining a clearer understanding of their learning progress and improvement methods; (3) create a space for discussion in the classroom or through online platforms. Lecturers

encourage students to discuss topics related to the course; (4) suggest or assign projects or research tasks to students to motivate them to explore on their own, ask questions, and develop self-learning skills; (5) employ online tools and platforms to provide additional materials, lectures, videos, and study resources to support students in self-learning.

In terms of limitations: (1) Due to time constraints in completing the teaching program, preparing lectures, and evaluating students, there may not be enough time to focus on encouraging and supporting students in self-learning; (2) In classes with a large number of students, lecturers may find it challenging to provide individual attention and support to each student to encourage them in self-learning; (3) Some lecturers may lack the interpersonal skills to encourage and support students in developing self-learning abilities; (4) Some lecturers may feel uncomfortable or lack sufficient knowledge to use new educational technologies, limiting their ability to support students in self-learning through online resources.

Students
In terms of advantages: (1) The majority of students surveyed have the ability to decide how to approach and consume knowledge. They can determine their own study schedule and create learning methods that suit them; (2) They can choose learning methods that are most effective for them. They can adapt to various teaching styles and choose resources that suit them; (3) They have skills in accessing learning materials; (4) They actively assess their own learning progress, identify strengths and weaknesses, and then self-adjust and improve their learning process.

In terms of limitations: (1) Some students may lack the necessary skills for effective self-learning, such as organizational skills, time management, research methods, and reading comprehension skills; (2) Lack of motivation and clear goals can reduce students' motivation for self-learning. Lack of specific goals and interest in the subject can lead to loss of interest and motivation; (3) Difficulty accessing suitable and quality information sources for learning, especially when resources are not abundant or easily accessible.

Solutions to Enhance the Effectiveness of Self-Learning for Primary Education Students at Tan Trao University
To improve the effectiveness of self-learning for primary education students at Tan Trao University, the following solutions can be applied:

Increase Awareness of the Position and Role of Self-Learning for Students and Lecturers
This solution aims to raise awareness and responsibility among students and lecturers regarding guiding, motivating, and encouraging self-learning activities for primary education students. The content includes: (1) Introducing and creating a deep awareness of the importance of self-learning for students' academic progress and personal development. Emphasizing the role of lecturers in supporting and encouraging students in self-directed learning. (2) Providing opportunities for students and lecturers to participate in workshops, courses, or training activities on methods and self-learning skills. This content may include skills such as information retrieval, time management, setting personal goals, and providing feedback on self-assessment and evaluation of their learning progress. (3) Organizing discussions, workshops, or conversational activities between students and lecturers about the role of self-learning. Promoting the sharing of experiences, opinions, and effective self-learning methods. (4) Creating opportunities for lecturers to provide constructive feedback

and support to students in developing self-learning skills through assessment and suggestions for improvement.

By implementing these contents, self-learning can be recognized as an organized activity by the university, acknowledged by students to have a plan, strive for goals, and assert themselves.

Organize Students to Build Unified and Strict Self-Learning Plans
This solution aims to help students develop a self-learning plan, including goals, content, and organizational methods, thereby ensuring the quality of learning activities.

The content of the solution focuses on constructing a scientific and feasible self-learning plan for students. This is reflected in the accurate determination of self-learning content, the rational arrangement and distribution of study time, and the correct identification of the methods to organize and complete each task. The student's self-learning plan must allocate appropriate time for each subject based on the corresponding information load, usually at least equal to the number of regular class hours. It should ensure a reasonable alternation and sequence of different self-learning forms, various subjects with different characteristics, and between self-learning and rest periods. The plan must also maintain flexibility and feasibility.

The formation of study planning skills helps students develop a habit of working systematically, adhering to the overall class plan. It enhances the responsibility of class teachers and subject teachers in participating in students' self-learning activities. The solution leverages the self-management role of the class through the implementation of the outlined plan.

Lecturers Guide Students in Effective Self-Learning Methods
This solution aims to help students identify appropriate self-study content and methods based on their abilities and levels. This not only helps achieve teaching goals but, more importantly, equips students with the necessary tools to assimilate humanity's knowledge and transform it into their own knowledge in learning and life.

The content of the measure involves training students in self-learning methods through the application of active teaching methods. The formation and improvement of students' self-learning methods depend heavily on the teaching methods employed by instructors.

A system of methods that stimulates students' positive cognitive processes during teaching plays a role in enhancing students' subjective cognitive roles. Students are encouraged to be self-aware and actively explore to grasp knowledge, develop skills, techniques, and a learner's attitude. Designing lessons as a system of problems or situations and guiding learners to participate in problem-solving from initial exposure to materials before lectures, progressing to independent problem-solving during the learning process are positive teaching methods that guide students in self-learning.

Enhancing dialogue methods, debates, role-playing in lectures, practical exercises, and constructing a system of self-study exercises with gradually increasing difficulty levels suitable for training objectives will stimulate students' enthusiasm for self-learning.

There is no one-size-fits-all effective learning (self-learning) method for all learners. Self-learning methods have a strong personal aspect and are only formed through the learner's effort, self-awareness, and positivity in learning. It must be continuously self-assessed and adjusted by the learner to align with the content and nature of each subject. Content management reinforces the teaching, guidance, and assignment of homework tasks by subject teachers to students, ensuring that the assessment of guiding self-learning methods for

students is closely aligned with each student group. Regulations and requirements for each class to present self-learning content in each lesson, with individuals determining self-learning content and organizing the sequence of implementation.

Controlling and Assessing Students' Self-Study Activities

Controlling and assessing the results of students' self-learning is a crucial function. Performing this function well promotes students' planned self-learning activities with high achievements. Simultaneously, it provides feedback information to adjust the teaching activities of lecturers, manage activities of educational administrators, and helps students adjust their self-learning activities towards the identified goals and training requirements. Therefore, controlling and assessing the results of students' self-learning aim to: 1/ Ensure the scientific, objective, and accurate nature of assessments, identifying strengths and weaknesses as a basis for effective and timely school management measures. 2/ Enhance the responsibility of teachers in research and investment in teaching activities. 3/ Develop a serious learning attitude, enhance responsibility in learning, create awareness of self-awareness, needs, and habits of self-assessment and evaluation in students.

The content of the solution includes: (1) Controlling the implementation of self-learning time. (2) Controlling the development of students' self-learning plans. (3) Controlling and assessing the results of implementing self-learning tasks assigned to students. (4) Designing exams related to self-learning content. (5) Assessing academic results linked to training outcomes, including considering attitudes, self-learning abilities of students.

3. Conclusions

Self-learning is a vital activity in the human cognitive process to dominate knowledge. The efforts of Tan Trao University, lecturers in enhancing self-learning activities for students majoring in education, have contributed to innovating teaching methods that leverage the self-learning abilities of students. The step-by-step formation and robust development of self-learning skills, self-learning methods, fostering students' motivation, and awareness of self-learning, enable them to excel academically. To make the teaching activities focus on learners, each teacher must be a role model for self-learning and creativity. The teaching staff needs to organize guidance on students' self-learning skills and methods meticulously and closely. To continue consolidating and raising awareness of self-learning activities for students, planned training, and appropriate professional training are required to build a team of competent and solid management and teaching staff, always serving as bright examples for learners to follow, especially in self-learning and research.

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