

# **A Study of Factors Affecting for Self-Directed Learning of Management Undergraduates in Sri Lanka**

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In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the ability to engage in self-directed learning (SDL) considered to be essential for university undergraduates to improve and frequently update their knowledge in modern world. The education system has become facilitator which gives the opportunity to develop student's critical thinking, creative thinking and innovative thoughts which are required in their working environment. The aim of this study was to identify the factors affecting for self-directed learning of university management undergraduates in Sri Lanka. In order to achieve the objective of the research, the study was conducted in qualitative research design. Thirty management undergraduates from five regional universities were selected by using convenience sampling technique. The qualitative data were collected through semi structured interviews. The Thematic analysis technique was utilized for the analysis of interview transcripts with the support of NVivo 8 Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) software. This qualitative study came up with ten critical factors which effects positively and negatively for self-directed learning of management undergraduates in Sri Lankan Universities. Those critical factors were language, interest to subjects/ topics, accessibility of resources, lecturing style and methods, friends' and others' support, time adequacy, student's perception, student's learning style, prior knowledge, student's future goal. Based on the findings, those factors were affecting to undergraduates for engaging in Self-directed learning or preventing from self-directed learning. The result of this research is a significant source for the education policy makers to change teaching pattern, academic curriculum and create appropriate learning context in the university education system to enhance self-directed learning of the undergraduates. Results of this study provide qualitative data to enhance literature related to factors affecting self-directed learning of the undergraduates.

*Keywords:* Self-directed learning, Adult learning theory, Management undergraduates, Regional university