

**THE CONCEPTUAL AWARENESS OF HEUTAGOGY APPROACH AMONG  
LECTURERS OF FACULTY OF EDUCATION IN KUIS**  
**Kesedaran Konseptual Pendekatan Heutagogi Pada Pensyarah Di  
Fakulti Pendidikan Di KUIS**

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**Abstract**

Heutagogy is defined as the study of self-determined learning. Heutagogy is a learner-centered approach structured on the principles of learner agency, self-efficacy, capability, meta-cognition and reflection. Associated with present technologies, the approach provides a groundwork for developing learner-centered environments which have the capacity to equip learners with the necessary skills for a lifetime learning. This research centralizes the awareness of educators of different range of years of teaching experiences utilizing this approach. Considering that, this research seeks to explore the concept of heutagogy approach implied by the educators. According to a comprehensive review of literature, the depth of knowledge sharing is analyzed. These include the definition, design elements, principles, the learning theory involved and attributes of educators in heutagogy approach. Primary data were collected through interviews that were conducted via a purposeful sample consisting educators, each from the cluster of teaching experiences of 1 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years and 21 to 30 and presently employed at the Faculty of Education of IIUCS. Experiential themes that emerged from respondents' descriptions of their experiences utilizing heutagogy approach portrayed that a new system that emphasized the application of technologies in current teaching and learning process managed to be mastered despite the range of years of teaching experience. Thus, this study identified that learning is life long and the readiness of educators along with the skills and the accessible of resources lead to a successful implementation of the learning approach.

**Keywords:** heutagogy, self-determined learning, teaching and learning, technology.

**Abstrak**

Heutagogy ditakrifkan sebagai pembelajaran sendiri. Heutagogy adalah struktur pembelajaran yang berpusatkan pelajar yang berpegang pada prinsip-prinsip agensi pelajar, keberkesanan diri, keupayaan, meta-kognisi dan refleksi. Dikaitkan dengan teknologi sekarang, pendekatan ini memberikan landasan untuk mengembangkan lingkungan yang berpusatkan pelajar yang memiliki kemampuan untuk melengkapkan diri dengan keterampilan yang diperlukan untuk pembelajaran seumur hidup. Penyelidikan ini memusatkan kesedaran pendidik terhadap pengalaman mengajar menggunakan pendekatan

ini. Tampak kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk meneroka konsep pendekatan heutagogi yang difahami oleh pendidik. Mengikut tinjauan menyeluruh kesusasteraan, termasuklah definisi, elemen reka bentuk, prinsip, teori pembelajaran yang terlibat dan sifat pendidik dalam pendekatan heutagogi. Data yang dikumpulkan melalui temu bual yang dijalankan melalui sampel yang terdiri daripada pendidik, masing-masing daripada kluster pengalaman mengajar 1 hingga 10 tahun, 11 hingga 20 tahun dan 21 hingga 30 dan kini bekhidmat di Fakulti Pendidikan di KUIS. Tema-tema yang muncul daripada deskripsi responden tentang pengalaman mereka menggunakan pendekatan heutagogi dapat menggambarkan bahawa sistem baharu yang menekankan penerapan teknologi dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran semasa dapat dikuasai walaupun memiliki perbezaan dari segi tahun pengalaman mengajar. Oleh itu, kajian ini telah mengenal pasti bahawa pembelajaran adalah sepanjang umur dan kesediaan pendidik serta kemahiran dan sumber yang lengkap mampu mencapai kejayaan dalam pelaksanaan pendekatan heutagogy ini.

Kata Kunci: heutagogy, pembelajaran sendiri, pengajaran dan pembelajaran, teknologi

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education system is vital to have proper knowledge, skills, attitudes and willingness to be accustomed with fast changing world (Gütl et al., 2013). A good quality of education system roots from excellent educators. However, in a research done by aKept in 2011 states that only half of the overall lesson is being delivered effectively. The underlying reason is due to the content creation or passive lecture style. The primary focus of the lessons is on gaining comprehension at the surface level rather than creating a higher order thinking ability. Acknowledgement has to be given to pedagogy which requires to be 're-done' at the same time as it requires to be 're-thought' (Beetham & Sharpe, 2007). Hence, the stand of this study is to understand in depth the change that is required in the education approach at the tertiary level in Malaysia which is highly impacted by how educator's mediate knowledge, taking into consider the 21st century context to produce a suitable approach that suits the people and the time being.

The evolution of the technology has opened the door for mass development of the Internet. It is no more chalk and talk but has advanced to click and learn. Educators are responsible to unlock student's creativity and innovation by encouraging students to enhance communication skills as well as to improve learner's collaboration (Bruns, A., & Humphreys, 2007). Learning materials and tasks are ought to be authentic for learners to experience real-learning environment (Herrington, J., Herrington, A., & Olney, 2012). This helps to promote learner active participation during lessons (McLoughlin, C. & Lee, 2008). A primary approach that can be used to achieve this knowledge innovation, is by exploring the use of technologies such as smartphones, tablets and laptops that is applied through heutagogical approach.

Heutagogical approach refers to a self-determined learning. Heutagogy is learner-centred, future-focused and it aims for learner to acquire life-long learning skills. How the technologies have developed and advanced over the last decade help educators to view the world and how they interact and communicate with their students (Lewis, S., Pea, R., & Rosen, 2010). Therefore, this study aims to understand in depth the awareness towards heutagogy approach by educators of Education Faculty in International Islamic College University of Selangor (IIUCS).

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Heutagogy is derived from a Greek word  $\eta\upsilon\alpha\tau\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  that brings a definition for self and “gogy” defined as study of. Thus, heutagogy can be defined as the study of self-determined learning (Blaschke et al., 2018). The main goal of heutagogy is for people to be self-determined learners and create an optimal experience. A preliminary study of Strong and Hutchins (2009) considered heutagogy as an approach that focuses learning to develop the capability of an individual at the same time enabling and empowering people. This is commonly achieved by sharing of information. In broad, self-determined learning lead learners to both the question of ‘what’ and ‘how’ things occur.

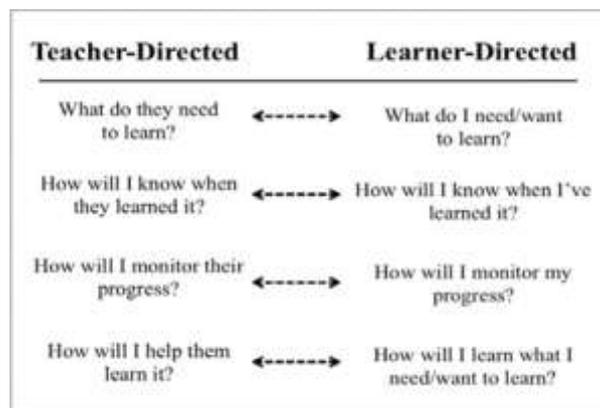


Figure 2.1 Teacher Directed vs Learner Directed

Self-determined opens vast opportunity for learner-directed learning. According to Figure 1, learners are given the authority to decide what they want to learn, how they will determine learning has taken place, how to assess learning progress and determine how to learn what is needed (Blaschke et al., 2018). Educators usually integrate self-determined through blended learning. It is a method of learning that occupies learner’s experiences while connecting it online or face-to-face with the intention to learn and grow (Blaschke et al., 2018).

The Internet as a source which provides connections to learners to develop. Learners are given the opportunity to build a personal learning that supports learner to be able to control the time, place, pace and path of learning that is integrated by digital connections. This has highly impacted learning to take place at home, work, school, in transit between locations, or anywhere desired. This is what self-determined learner experience. Learners hold the authority to decide learning according to their preference, needs, interests and life goals (Blaschke et al., 2018).

There are several principles of heutagogy that has been listed. First include the learner as a participant in the creation of their own learning material and the process. In addition, recognizing that learning is not linear which helps to make the program flexible so that new paths are created, new questions and understanding can be explored. Also, to personalize as much training as possible. The curriculum and facilitators provide students with versatile or agreed assessment. Next encourage the learner to contextualize concepts, knowledge and understanding. In the teaching and learning process, educators use experiential learning methods. This promotes training in partnership. Importantly, educators make it easier for learners to analyze and understand double loop and triple loop (Blaschke et al., 2018). Furthermore, facilitators ought to provide a variety of resources and allow students to explore.

This aids to build research skills among learners including how to distinguish ideas and content. Next, teaches how to distinguish between acquisition of knowledge and abilities (skills) and deep learning. Besides, recognize the importance of informal learning and we only need to allow it instead of regulating it. (Blaschke, 2014; Blaschke et al., 2018; Hase, S., & Kenyon, 2016)

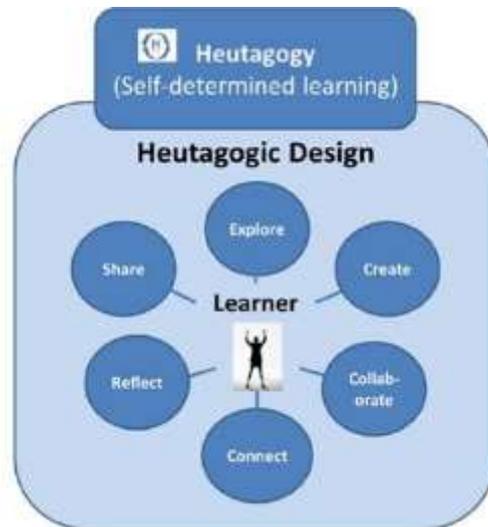


Figure 2.2 Heutagogic Design Element

Figure 2 consists of a six key elements model that must be taken into review when designing a learning experience to learners. Whether the teacher is conducting a face-to-face, online, or a hybrid which include both learning style. Indeed, the learner is at the center of the learning process and considered as a partner to the teacher. Moreover, to begin with the learning process, there is existing curriculum or program outline that can be adhered depending on the type of learning experience teachers planning to achieve. Undoubtedly, the interaction between learner and learning leader regarding the learning process, is widely open for negotiation to ensure a balance of control shifts (Blaschke et al., 2018). Hence, these six key elements of heutagogic design include explore, create, collaborate, connect, reflect, and share are discussed according to the prior research by Blaschke & Hase (2016).

Significantly, learning takes place based on the acquisition of knowledge by interactions. Interactions are generated through acts and experience through networking which needs tools such as social media to facilitate the production, processing, sharing and recovery of information (Al-Abri et al., 2017). Connectivism encompasses the main attributes of self-determined reading, abilities and knowledge in heutagogy. Connectivism prepares students for an increasingly complex world. Training is distributed within a networked world, which is technologically and socially enhanced, according to the connectivism view (Strong & Hutchins, 2009). Technological improvements differentiate connectivism from the more prevalent theories of education (Strong & Hutchins, 2009). Experiences from external sources should be borrowed, and individual learners must seek ways to connect related external experiences and knowledge objects to their own knowledge (Vas et al., 2018).

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The research approach used in this qualitative study is a case study. A case design provides an opportunity for researcher to explore an area or issue where little attention given. This ability encourages researchers to holistically have the drive to understand specific situation, concept, event, location, group or environment. In this design method, researchers unable to solely utilize random sample. Alternatively, the implementation of purposeful sampling which capable to provide relevant information to investigators.

In this qualitative research, the samples chosen are 3 lecturers of Educational Faculty. They are chosen out of 26 lecturers from the faculty. Prior to choosing the respondents, the lecturers are delegated into cluster of lecturers with the range of experience of teaching in tertiary level of about 1 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years and 21 to 30 years of experience in teaching the tertiary level. The cluster of 1 to 10 years comprised of 11 lecturers. Secondly, the cluster of 11 to 20 years comprised of 12 lecturers. Thirdly, the cluster of 21 to 30 years comprised of 3 lecturers. According to the cluster, a lecturer is picked to represent that particular group of range of years teaching in a tertiary level.

This is justified by the rationale that different years of experience among the lecturers will have different degree of professionalism in implementing certain learning approach. This factor may lead to variety of understanding, diverse methods and techniques and wide range of capabilities in the implementation of particular approach. Thus, the chosen respondents are assumed to be assisting to explore the awareness of the approach.

### **4.0 RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

First and foremost, the concepts of heutagogy approach that were implied by all three respondents were that heutagogy is a student-centered approach that corresponds to current development. In other words, students required to be self-initiative to learn new knowledge that they were interested, try out new things and solve problems around them using their higher order thinking skills as well as the resources present around them. Heutagogy approach concentrated on the significance of the process of learning rather than the results obtained. It was the knowledge utilization by the learners during the process in order to see the outcome. This was adhered by the past research of Canning & Callan (2010) which emphasized heutagogy for discovering the comprehension of the knowledge a learner needed to know. In the same research, it was mentioned that heutagogy was an approach where the mechanism to address the problems were more essential than the presentation's ultimate result.

Significantly saying, that the educators were no more the center of knowledge in this approach. Educators were only the facilitators which will assist in learning. This means that the tutor's central role as an expert in a system of complete learning had been altered (Canning & Callan, 2010). The respondents were positive that heutagogy approach enable to lower the hustle in knowledge learning. This was in regard to, the teachers acknowledged that somehow this approach able to spare not just teachers' time, as well as the students' time (Chan et al., 2019). Having said that, the respondents agreed that learning was made easier as it takes place anywhere especially through online platform. Thus, it was the educators' obligation to set up an autonomous learning environment at a time and place of choice for the students (Green & Schlairet, 2017).

According to the theories presented by Strong & Hutchins (2009) the primary learning theories relatable with heutagogy approach was connectivism The justification was that the most effective way to find the necessary knowledge in today's technology-enhanced environments was using networks (Vas et al., 2018). A respondent had the same view which

affirmed that the learning took place using technologies. However, a clear difference of perspectives by the other respondents who believed constructivism and cognitivism played a major role in heutagogy approach. The respondents quoted that constructivism was seen to be useful as it provides the alternatives to new solutions. Another respondent went against this theoretical explanation, mentioned that learning theory related to heutagogy approach was cognitivism in regard to the process whereby students need to think by themselves for solutions and references.

Following that, this research had analysed on the requirements needed in order to practice heutagogy approach among tertiary learners. Firstly, to include the learners as participants in the creation of their own learning material and the process. A respondent indirectly agreed to this point as it was necessary for every party to be well prepared especially the students. Moreover, teachers needed to be also ready to explain what they were discovering to the students (Green & Schlairet, 2017). Additionally, the activities conducted by the tutors, had to allow, help and maintain a non-hierarchical strategy and democratic practice in a classroom based for learners (Canning & Callan, 2010). Conjointly, it was the role of Ministry of Education in attempting to influence teachers' attitudes and belief for implementing this approach (Chan, Embi, & Hashim, 2019).

Secondly, to make the program flexible so that as new paths are created, new questions and understanding can be explored. This idea was supported by two of the respondents. However, it was inevitable that the implementation of an updated program is not easy as educators had to put on additional effort to grasp a particular system (Chan, Embi, & Hashim, 2019). In regard to this, indeed a need to suggest a procedure to implement this heutagogy approach in the curriculum to prevent any misjudgment of the approach from any parties. Considering that, the academic integrity had to be well maintained. Additionally, the past research had quoted that it was essential for tutors to consider the complex needs of adult learners by designing versatile programs (Canning & Callan, 2010). For instance; include more discussions in the approach to stimulate the flexibility of learners via promoting information concepts (Canning & Callan, 2010).

Thirdly, Blaschke's principal of heutagogy encouraged the learners to contextualize concepts, knowledge and understanding. In line with this, the respondents had a strong view for educators to introduce this approach formally to the students. A prior research supported this method as the learners were asked to be critical about the learning phase they were pursuing and to recognize dimensions of existing heutagogy (Canning & Callan, 2010). Also, in another prior research, the teachers introduced new learning strategies to help boost the academic level of the learners (Chan, Embi, & Hashim, 2019).

Fourthly, facilitators were ought to provide a variety of resources and allow students to explore. (Blaschke et al, 2018) Educators agreed on this idea as they used available facilities to provide task and to ensure the tasks given were monitored. In fact, the curriculum and facilitators had to provide students agreed assessment as well as application to a variety of contexts. A past research by Canning & Callan (2010) emphasized that innovative alternatives in heutagogy developed new insights by several different ways of learning, instead of always relying solely on conceptual justification. A past research cited that not only do teachers use technologies in teaching, teachers were also conscious that using the right strategies in the classroom will help students to learn. (Chan, Embi, & Hashim, 2019).

Finally, Blaschke's principal of heutagogy approach emphasized to distinguish different acquisition of knowledge, abilities and deep learning. It was fundamental for educators to utilize different elements of teaching into the curriculum. A past research cited that this approach utilised a combination of learning styles, which made learning mixed and adaptive (Canning & Callan, 2010). Even so, educators had to considerate few aspects such as the subject, the topic, the time and the technology necessities required in the learning.

It were equally important for educators to be aware the learning needs of learners as the learner is at the centre of the learning process and considered as a partner to the teacher in heutagogy approach (Blaschke et al., 2018).

Firstly, learners must be capable to develop and test their hypotheses through exploring (Blaschke & Hase, 2016). The respondents stated that it was necessary for students to ready to explore new knowledge. Secondly, the respondents had the consent of giving them the learners to discover and the ability to create the knowledge needed for themselves and others. Thirdly, heutagogy inculcates collaboration process aligned with the past research which highlighted cooperation in learning where teachers serve as mentors had allowed learners to develop together. The respondents had positive impression towards learning when students work together and build a strong teamwork among them and use their peers to explain concepts that they did not understand (Green & Schlairet, 2017).

Fourthly, heutagogy provides an opportunity for learners to interact with people around the world (Blaschke & Hase, 2016). The respondents were determined that with heutagogy students were able to connect with the educators for many purposes without so much hesitation. This merely adhered to a past research by Canning & Callan (2010) whereby it was positive heutagogy approach opened a space for understanding individual learning habits where some came alive whilst utilizing online forums.

Fifthly, teachers assisted learners in recognizing and using resources and software for sharing information (Blaschke & Hase, 2016). The respondents had stated that in heutagogy approach it were crucial for educators to scaffold, to light the direction, to encourage share opinions and perspectives among learners. This belief was agreed by the researchers of a past research that heutagogy played major role in sharing experiences and providing supportive networks (Canning, 2010).

Finally, reflection offers an opportunity to promote higher levels of cognitive activity in learners such as observation and synthesis (Blaschke & Hase, 2016). The respondents were well aware of the consequences in technology in learning. The respondents emphasized that students had to be nurtured to reflect on their actions especially when learning through online mediums.

Moving on, to the assessments conducted in learning relevant to heutagogy approach; students were given vast relevant information strategies such as peer teaching, small group work, brief class discussion, problem-solving scenarios, case studies, simulation, quizzes and small group presentation in this form of group learning (Green & Schlairet, 2017). The sense of connection with other learners were fostered by using social technology such as forums, wikis, social networking sites and other web-based applications that promote self-governed, problem-based learning while fostering collaboration and community building (Strong & Hutchins, 2009). The respondents supported all these assessment as they carried out in their teaching learning process with the students. The respondents were in favor primarily using presentations. In another case, the respondents also implemented video and media presentation. The other predominant face to face assessments include discussion and executing projects. Other than that, the respondents also utilized writing reports and journal analysis.

Overall, according to the answers quoted by the respondents, the impact of using heutagogy approach in tertiary level teaching and learning was that it permitted decision making for learners. Learners were ought to take responsibilities in their learning in heutagogy approach. Moreover, this approach inculcates interpersonal effectiveness in students. Nevertheless, heutagogy approach still allowed the direction of learning to be maintained. This means that heutagogy serves an opportunity for a mutual relationship with student and peer perspectives (Canning & Callan, 2010). Additionally, heutagogy approach ratified the capability of project management both in students and educators. Besides that, heutagogy approach emphasized on collaborative learning that were aligned with the need of the 21st

century learning. A prior research supported this idea as it was quoted that interaction in learning among students were prompted for those within the collaborative environment (Canning & Callan, 2010). Finally, heutagogy approach yielded educators in the willingness to change from their own ideas and beliefs. This was aligned with the past research by Chan, Embi, & Hashim (2019) which mentioned for teachers need to have a strong and optimistic type of mentality in teaching in a heutagogy settings.

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

This research had discovered the awareness of heutagogy approach among lecturers of Faculty of Education. It clearly showed that the respondents possessed high level of awareness in implementing heutagogy approach towards tertiary level student particularly in comprehending the underlying concept to carry out heutagogy approach. The crux of the matter, despite respondents were chosen from different cluster of years of experience in teaching which were; 1 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years and 21 to 30 years, the respondents deemed to portray high level of interest in utilizing technology in teaching and learning process.

The problem of this study which was; learning approach applied by educators remain in a pedagogical way and are not aligned to current needs was solved. This was by virtue of the respondents held a strong concept of heutagogy approach which were a self-determined learning. This learning approach deemed to be introduced to students at the tertiary level as they will be the product that will contribute to the society. Moreover, in this approach the educators were only facilitators and students were the center of knowledge. Resulting from this, the learners began to take responsibility of his or her learning. Subsequently, the educators embraced a more guiding role to the learners. Nonetheless, it will be the responsible of the educators to shape well the students before they leave from an institution. Students were ought to think of the problems they want to solve and how they will be executing it via using technology. These aspect of heutagogy demanded students to be aware of the aim of their learning and the expected outcomes from it.

Despite, the most relatable learning theory was connectivism it was clear that other learning theories such as cognitivism and constructivism were as well prominent in the approach of heutagogy. Thus, educators were proposed to implement heutagogy approach as learners will not only enhance mental processes by utilizing cognitivism, but this approach will also be complemented with the ability to generate new ideas and ways to solve problems through constructivism. Plus, with the facilities and resources available learning were to be boosted with the application of ubiquitous technology. Besides that, educators were aware to adapt heutagogy approach, a procedure was required at the same time all parties shall be ready for the application of the approach. It had to be the responsibilities of educators to introduce the approach formally to students also, promoting the use of technology in their learning.

To be mindful, educators must know that learners in heutagogy approach needed to have the abilities to explore, create, collaborate, share, connect and reflect. Assessments in heutagogy were student based, and it were modified to suit the learners' interest such as using the social media and making videos. Heutagogy encouraged an active participation of learners in their learning. Consequently, students were urged to come out of their comfort zone. In this way, students will eventually develop a capability to assess their learning. Furthermore, the respondents were all conscious of the impact of heutagogy approach which were the ability to foster decision making, ability to maintain the direction of learning, ability to foster collaborative learning, ability to encourage interpersonal effectiveness and finally educators as an expert in project management. These features had successfully negotiated the element of concept studied under the conceptual framework of this research.

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