

ABSTRACT

Khoirotusyarifah, The Exploration of Self-Initiated English Learning Through Personal Learning Network (PLN) at Muthahhari English Club.

English language learning is no longer limited to the classroom today. The development of digital technology has opened many opportunities for learners to determine what they learn, how they learn, and with whom they learn. Some learners who learned English independently through a Personal Learning Network (PLN) demonstrated developing English skills, particularly in writing, reading, and speaking. Therefore, this study explores how informal learners utilize and select learning resources, as well as build connections within that network, thereby contributing to the development of their English language skills.

Existing literature on PLN has mainly focused on university learners, teachers, and professional learners, while informal learners remain underexplored. Guided by Warlick's (2009) theory, this study examines PLN as a self-initiated learning network, exploring learners' motivations and outcomes to provide evidence of its effectiveness.

A qualitative multiple-case study approach was adopted, using interviews, observations, and document analysis conducted at the Muthahhari English Club in Bandung, Indonesia. Four learners participated in this study and provided rich insights into their self-initiated learning processes. This study offers a comprehensive overview of how learners build and utilize PLN as a space to develop their English language skills.

The study indicates that learners use various learning resources and strategies to support self-initiated learning. The roles of peers, the community, and the surrounding environment are crucial in establishing learning connections. Digital technology helps engage learners in interest-driven learning. However, feelings of laziness, boredom, and stagnation do not pose significant challenges because the desire to learn comes from within. Goals and interests serve as the motivation to continue growing and learning. Additionally, PLN provides learners with opportunities to access learning resources and practice their English skills, particularly in writing, reading, and speaking.

This study concludes that PLN is an effective environment for fostering holistic development through self-initiated learning. It contributes to the theoretical, practical, and empirical understanding of English language learning in the digital era and offers recommendations for language communities, educational institutions, and future researchers to enhance the quality of learning.

Keywords: Self-initiated, English learning, Personal Learning Network, English club