

ANALYSIS OF STRUCTURAL RELATION AMONG ADULT LEARNERS' SELF- DETERMINATION, ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT, SATISFACTION, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTION

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Abstract The purpose of this study is to investigate the mechanism related with academic engagement that can explain adult learners' behavioral intention. For this purpose, we are going to analyze structural relationship among adult learners' self-determination, academic engagement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention. We planning to survey adult learners who participate in the lifelong learning programs in lifelong learning institutions. And we are examining the content validity of a questionnaire to apply to adult learners. Based on this study, we'll summarize what the empirical evidence is for the effect of academic engagement and suggest areas for future research.

Index Terms— self-determination, academic engagement, satisfaction, behavioral intention.

I. INTRODUCTION

Paradigm of lifelong learning has shifted from “provider-centered” to “learner-centered” [14]. It is harder for adult learners to continue their learning because of situational, institutional, and dispositional barriers [2]. Drawn from this context, adult learner's sustainable participation is growing more important in lifelong learning.

Academic engagement is an important factor to expect behavior intention. Academic engagement predicts successful school life [7] and sustainable participation [10, 25]. Also academic engagement shows a student's psychological feature. Academic engagement defined as a psychological process that students expend the attention, interest, investment, and effort in the work of learning [21], is regarded as a factor different from motivation [8].

Academic engagement differs from psychological motivation. Specifically, even if the learner is motivated, participation in learning occurs selectively. Thus, academic engagement can be seen as an attitude much closer to action than motivation.

There are many factors to influence academic engagement. Particularly in adult education, however, self-regulation is very

important, because human beings change from dependent beings to autonomous beings as they become more mature [13]. Self-regulation distinguishes between self-determined and controlled types of intentional regulation [5]. In this context, self-determination is very closely related to self-regulation and academic engagement.

Some studies show that both academic engagement and self-determination influence sustainable participation [10, 22, 26]. However, those studies were conducted with university students and employees targeted, not with adult learners. Even adult learning area shows a lack of studies on a causal relationship about behavior intention of adult learners participated in lifelong education program.

Thus, this study aims to inquire a mechanism related with academic engagement that can explain a cause of adult learners' behavioral intention. Also, we will reexamine a relationship between satisfaction and behavioral intention [9, 10, 19].

To achieve the purpose above, we develop following research questions. First, does academic engagement influence a relationship between self-determination and behavioral intention? Second, does satisfaction influence a relationship between self-determination and behavioral intention? Third, Can we suggest a causality model among self-determination, academic engagement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention?

II. THORICAL BACKGROUND

A. Self-determination

For the last two decades, Deci and Ryan suggested self-determination as factor determining personal internal motivation. They regarded motivation as the continuum and classified motivated behavior according to self-determination. At first they classified motivation into five categories, such as non-regulation, external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic

regulation [4]. As also suggested in Fig. 1, they added integrated regulation to extrinsic motivation and classified motivation into six regulations [6].

| Behavior | Not self-determined | | | | Self-determined | |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Type of Motivation | Extrinsic motivation | | Extrinsic motivation | | Intrinsic motivation | |
| Type of Regulation | Non-regulation | External Regulation | Introjected Regulation | Identified Regulation | Integrated Regulation | Intrinsic Regulation |
| Locus of Causality | Impersonal | External | Somewhat External | Somewhat Internal | Internal | Internal |

Fig. 1. The self-determination continuum, showing the motivational, self-regulatory, and perceived locus of causality bases of behaviors that vary in the degree to which they are self-determined

According to Ryan and Deci [6], a motivation at the left end is the state of lacking the intention to act. External regulation is the least autonomous form of extrinsic motivation and includes the classic instance of being motivated to obtain rewards or avoid punishments. Introjected regulation involves an external regulation having been internalized but, not truly accepted as one's own. Identified regulation is a more self-determined form of extrinsic motivation, because it involves a conscious valuing of a behavioral goal or regulation, an acceptance of the behavior as personally important. Integrated regulation is the most autonomous form of extrinsically motivated behavior. It results from the personally endorsed values, goals, and needs that are already part of the self. Intrinsic motivation is the prototype of self-determined activity and as such represents a standard against which the qualities of an extrinsically motivated behavior can be compared in order to determine its degree of self-determination.

B. Academic Engagement

According to Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Bakker [23], engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. It refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior. Vigor is characterized by high level of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. Dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. The final dimension of engagement, absorption, is characterized by being fully concentrated and deeply engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work.

Engagement is commonly to be mixed with or regarded as the same factor of flow. However, these factors distinct from each other. Flow is more complex concept than engagement, defined as a state of concentration so focused that it amounts to absolute absorption in an activity [3]. Typically, flow is a more complex concept that includes many aspects and refers to rather particular, short-term 'peak' experiences instead of a more pervasive and persistent state of mind, as is the case with engagement [23].

C. Educational Satisfaction

Locke [20] defined satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". He focused on only emotional feelings and excluded external factors such as specific condition or target of satisfaction. However, recently, satisfaction considering particular condition, such as educational condition, has emerged. One of them is educational satisfaction.

Lim [18] defined educational satisfaction as subjective response to students' educational experience. It is noteworthy that Li [16] defined educational satisfaction in adult educational context. He regarded satisfaction as emotional response when person evaluates positively and pleasantly his/her own work and experience. In this context, educational satisfaction comprises satisfaction with curriculum, instructor, teaching method, institutional, and educational facilities.

D. Behavioral Intention

Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman [27] viewed behavioral intentions as indicators that signal whether customers will remain with or defect from the company.

It is consisted of loyalty to company (loyalty), propensity to switch (switch), willingness to pay more (pay more), external response to problem (external response), and internal response to problem (internal response).

In this context, Lim's [17] behavioral intention in adult education comprises reentrance intention that adult learner participate in education program again and recommendation intention that adult learners refer education program to other adult learners.

E. Relation among adult learners' self-determination, academic engagement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention

Advanced researches investigate relationship among adult learners' self-determination, academic engagement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention. Kim and Kim [11] showed that students' self-determination influences their academic engagement. They suggested that teachers should understand type of self-determination of students and guide it. The study of Kim, Jeon and Choi [10] reports that academic engagement of students influences positively both educational satisfaction and behavioral intention. It also shows that educational satisfaction influences behavioral intention and that self-determination has a significant effect on educational satisfaction. Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens and Soenes [24] also reveal that self-determination influences educational satisfaction significantly. From these studies, we can identify causal relationship among adult learner's self-determination, academic engagement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Subject of study

We are going to survey four hundreds Korean adult learners who participate in the lifelong learning program in lifelong learning

institutions. Two hundreds are female and the other half are male students, with over 20 years old.

B. Instrument

Self-determination. To measure self-determination, we will use questionnaire developed by Yoo [26]. It comprises four dimensions, such as external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. Each scale comprises six self-constructed items. In her study, reliability of this questionnaire ranges between 0.75 and 0.85.

Academic engagement. To measure academic engagement, we will use questionnaire developed by Choo and Sohn [1]. It comprises three dimensions, such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. Academic engagement is assessed with 13 self-constructed items. In their study, reliability of this questionnaire ranges between 0.77 and 0.82.

Educational satisfaction. To measure educational satisfaction, we will use questionnaire developed by Lee [16]. It is comprised of five dimensions, such as satisfaction on curriculum, instructor, teaching method, institutional facilities, and educational facilities. Educational satisfaction is assessed with 13 self-constructed items.

Behavioral intention. To measure behavioral intention, we will use questionnaire developed by Lim [17]. It comprises two dimensions, reentrance intention and recommendation intention. Behavioral intention is assessed with 4 self-constructed items.

IV. EXPECTED RESULTS

Through our review of the literatures, we can find that there are causal relationship among adult learner's self-determination, academic engagement, satisfaction, and behavioral intention. Based on the studies reviewed here, we develop an expected model as Fig. 2 shows.

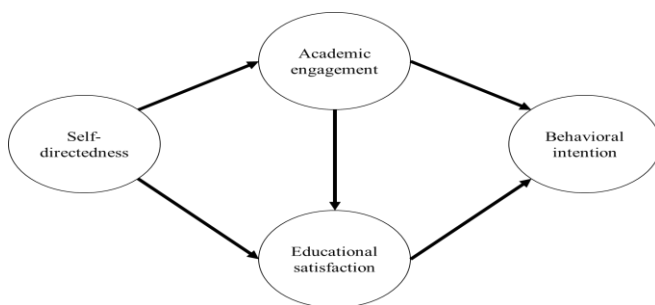


Fig. 1. Fig. 2. Expected model

For this study, we are examining the content validity of a questionnaire to apply to adult learners. And we are going to suggest this structural model to apply our empirical study to.

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