

How Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Are the Millennial Generation of Indonesian Public Service?

Enni Iriani*

Puslatbang Dan Pemetaan Kompetensi Aparatur Sipil Negara
Lembaga Administrasi Negara
Sumedang, Indonesia
*enni.iriiani@gmail.com

Abstract—In the roadmap of Indonesian Bureaucratic Reformation Agendas, one of the goals to be realized in 2025 is the professionalism of the Public Service Apparatus (PSA). The millennium generation of PSA (Gen Y) is expected to play bigger and better role in the realization of the goal than its parents, the baby boomer generation. Accordingly, the first is challenged to boost their capacities and qualities as fast as possible in spite of the limited budget available for their development. This will be possible if the Gen Y is capable of doing Self-Directed Learning (SDL). In regards to that, this paper discusses the Gen Y perspective of their ability in carrying out of SDL. It aims to identify both challenges and resolution to be faced by both the Government Institutions responsible for training and educating PSA in Indonesia and the parent organizations. The discussion is based on a survey conducted on the millennial generation of Indonesian Public Service working in several central and local governments.

Keywords—*self directed learning; corporate university; human resource management*

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian Civil Service Management system is regulated by the Act number 5 Year 2014 on The State Civil Apparatus (SCA). It is the Merit System, a policy in which employee's appraisal is fairly based on their qualifications, competencies, and performances regardless of political background, race, color, religion, origin, gender, marital status, age, or disability condition (chapter I Section 1 paragraph 24). Fachturahman Nur states that from a normative juridical perspective, the substance of Law 5/2014 is considered ideal to build a professional government bureaucracy [1]. The mechanism of promotion, placement of employees, and filling in positions are said to have led to the creation of The Right Man on The Right Job. These important aspects are complemented by the obligation of each government institution to develop career development plans, competency development, and employee career patterns which are then integrated nationally by The State Civil Service Agency. Moreover, the existence of The State Civil Apparatus Commission and the supervisory institution for implementing policies is promising for the achievement of one of Bureaucracy Reform Goals, The Professional Civil Service.

Regarding The SCA employees' competency development, the National Agency of State Administration has issued a regulation Number 5 Year 2018 concerning SCA Competencies Development. In the regulation, competency development is carried out by utilizing information technology. The development of SCA competencies is the basis for providing job competency certification.

Although the laws and regulations have been considered good and ideal, their implementation in each government agency absolutely needs special attention. The heavy duty of all stakeholders to create professional SCA, which target to be realized in 2025, encourage the Government to do best practice in the private sector. Best practices' results show that a large number of Corporations in Indonesia have started implementing a concept or strategy for Corporate University for several years now. Among these corporations are Telkom, Pertamina, PLN, Semen Indonesia, IPC, BRI, BNI, Mandiri, Bulog, and Wijaya Karya [2].

According to Yusuf, quoted Meister and Mark Allen, the essence of CorpU is the organization's strategy in increasing the capacity of its employees through wisdom excavation, knowledge and learning of individuals and organizations to be able to help achieve the organization's mission [2]. In essence, CorpU aims to create professionals and prospective leaders who have the capacity and scientific capabilities and skills that are integrated with the business processes within each corporation. Thus, learning at CorpU has two targets, namely developing employee competencies and increasing business performance of the corporation. Related to this, when CorpU is to be adapted in the public sector, the synergy between the mission and target performance of the organization as well as the development of employee competencies must be ensured. The absence of these aspects is a classic problem in the public sector which seems has never been completed.

As mentioned above, best practices in the private sector show that the learning process at CorpU tends to be based more on initiative and active learning from each individual employee. This can be seen in the learning system in the Telkom CorpU (Integrated Learning Cycle), which consists of six components / dimensions, namely self-led learning, internet learning (e-learning), classroom learning, learning from others, dialogue, and online communities [3].

The limitations of training opportunities and the demand for faster competency development certainly become a great challenge for every PSA. It requires PSA to push themselves to develop their own competencies independently. The right to get training opportunities as many as twenty hours of lessons per year will not be enough at all for any employees to improve their competence adequately. Thus, employee development will be more effective if each employee is able to learn independently to improve their competencies.

Therefore, it is interesting to identify how much SDL are the Indonesian PSA, especially those categorized as the Millennial Generation (ages up to 38 this year). This paper discusses employees' perceptions of their abilities in doing SDL and identifies challenges to be faced by government institutions which function in training and educating PSA. It also offers resolutions for accelerating the embodiment of PSA professionalism.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Directed Learning (SDL) is nowadays essential for the growth of people capacities otherwise they will not survive as individual and be left behind by others [4]. In the context of an organization or workplace, SDL is critical due to limited resources, in particular financially, for carrying out training and education programs for the employees. Furthermore, Classroom Teaching or Teacher Directed Learning as opposed to SDL tends to be uninteresting for today people especially for the Gen Y. Therefore, SDL is very strategic for the capacity development of PSA. Accordingly, understanding the nature of SDL will help the PSA training and education institutions to promote SDL in many ways, such as in designing appropriate curriculum and learning resources.

Analyzing the definition of SDL is the best first step of comprehending it on top of researching on it. Knowles defines SDL as [4]:

a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes.

In accordance with Bulik, et al., that interactivity and learner control are embedded parts of SDL, the writer sees that the definition above offers four qualities of a self-directed learner, such as [5]:

- A Self-Directed Learner has motives and opportunities so as to be able to take initiative in learning
- A Self-Directed Learner need to understand how to learn effectively
- A Self-Directed Learner must be able to manage their own learning process
- A Self-Directed Learner must be able to measure their progress of learning.

In order to be able to do SDL, a learner must have the competencies above. Knowles elaborates the competencies

more specifically, which are simplified by the writer as follows [4]:

- Understand the difference between self-directed learning and teacher directed learning.
- Having an independent self-concept.
- Able to collaborate, give and receive assistance, with colleagues.
- Able to diagnose learning needs realistically, with the help of others.
- Able to arrange learning goals in such a way that they are easily assessed.
- Having initiatives to take advantage of the presence of resource persons as optimal as possible.
- Able to recognize appropriate resources to achieve learning goals.
- Able to choose and use effective strategies for learning.
- Able to choose and show evidence of learning outcomes.

The nine competencies are embedded in a test developed by Gibbons [6]. The test is intended for individual students to know their ability to do SDL. It is seen to be adequate for collecting data needed for this study, however, the analysis is contextualized as needed in the workplace, where learning is aimed at making significant contributions to the achievement of the organization's mission and vision as well. Hence, learning seems to be facilitated more by organizations so that employees will be ensured only to possess high basic competencies, namely soft-skills. The data analysis is around these four competencies or skills:

- Having an independent self-concept,
- Able to collaborate with colleagues,
- Have initiatives to take full advantage from all kind of resources available, and
- Able to evaluate, choose and use effective strategies for learning.

III. METHOD

The research approach used in this study is a qualitative approach. The data presented in this paper are those generated from a survey conducted toward PSA working in central and regional government institutions. In this case, the research data were collected using an assessment test consisting of 30 items of questions/statements. The data obtained were then analyzed using descriptive analysis methods.

A. Population and Samples

The number of population was very large, therefore some amount of samples was taken using random sampling technique from Central and Regional Governments PSA with following formula [7,8]:

$$n = \frac{N Z^2_{1-\alpha/2} P (1-P)}{(N-1) d^2 + Z^2_{1-\alpha/2} P (1-P)}$$

As the population was so large that $(N-n) / (N-1)$ approaches 1, therefore the sample formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2_{1-\alpha/2} P (1-P)}{d^2}$$

The use of the formula, with the highest margin of error as much as 10%, resulted in the number of 94 samples.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Respondents' Profile

A number of 115 respondents filled out the questionnaire voluntarily and anonymously in the Google form sent to 10 WhatsApp Groups and only 111 responses are valid. The other four responses are not valid due to the status of the respondents (non PSA).

The respondents comprise of 48.7% female and 51.3% male. All respondents, as requested, are between 19 and 38 years old. They are the employees of several Regional and Local Governments in Indonesia and of several Central Government Institutions. Most of them, around 90%, are newly recruited as PSA. They are the Y Generation or known as The Millennial Generation on whose shoulders lie the future Indonesia world-class bureaucracy and the following is the description of their perceptions on their SDL skills.

1) *Independent self concept*: Out of the four SDL competencies, Having Independent Self Concept is more dominant than others. It means the competency is the basic but the most important one. No self concept could mean no ability to do SDL. It has 18 indicators such as Influence, Effectiveness, Challenge, Self-Direction, Excellence, Vision, Clarity, Goal-Setting, Confidence, Determination, Celebration, Attribution, Esteem, Self-Worth, Character, Process, Self-Efficacy, dan Self-Motivation.

The results show that overall the respondents have good self-concept relating to the independency in learning (the average score is 4.07 out of 5). However, their skill to direct themselves in learning is relatively low (the score is lowest, 3.20) as they prefer to learn from others. It means that they are still quite dependent on others in learning. For some people, learning independently can be a great challenge. It usually is caused by their habits in learning, and they become merely more receptive. This must be taken to a good consideration when learning material is being prepared for SDL. Learning guidance must be given as much as they need at the beginning of their independent learning process. Then it should be gradually decreased as they are getting more and more used to the learning system.

Another skill that gets the second lowest score (3.44) and needs special attention is lack of 'celebration' that the respondents are not always happy with what they have done or achieved. This means that they are not used to give appreciation, either for others or for themselves. Similar with

independent learning, showing gratitude is also a matter of habit. These must be encouraged by their organization.

On the other hand, the respondents perceive themselves as people with vision (highest score, 4.15). They see the future is good and positive. This is a good spirit for continuous learning and for self-development. For their long-life learning, reinforcement of learning spirit is crucial to maintain initial interest and enthusiasm [9].

2) *Collaboration*: This second competency refers to Knowles that a Self-Directed Learner does not conduct learning in isolation / solitude, but always gets help from various resource persons, such as teachers, mentors, tutors and so on. SDL learners always collaborate with other learners and they usually form a group, where members provide mutual assistance or benefits to one another [4]. Accordingly, this competency is built from several indicators, namely 1) getting support, 2) giving support, 3) openness, and 4) support.

The results indicate that overall the collaborating skills of the respondents are perceived quite good (average score is 3.9). However, this score is not very satisfactory as the skills are crucial in the workplace. The ability to collaborate can increase the effectiveness of learning in the workplace, because in the process of collaborating employees can learn from each other.

The lowest contribution to the above score is from the skill of getting supports, that is only 3.23. This shows that the respondents tend to work more by themselves. This may be caused by many things, but in the workplace, the reasons must be lack of resources persons available as well as reluctant to get support. Therefore, organization should set up a helping system in which resources persons are easy to access and are always stand by anytime needed. Besides, the reason why employees are reluctant to get support is lack of team work spirit. Teamwork is not an instant matter, it is to be built and enhanced periodically and consistently. Teamwork must be nurtured gradually and it is not an option but it is organization survival [10].

3) *Initiative to take full advantage from all kind of resources available*: The third SDL skill, as embedded in the definition given by Known, is Initiative. Operationally, however, it refers to the initiative in keeping oneself busy doing activities, in planning the activities, and in recognizing ones' own learning style. These three aspects indicate initiative to take full advantage from all kind of resources available.

The 'planning' aspect emphasizes that a learner must arrange his learning plan in such a way by focusing on the process not on the results. While the 'learning style' aspect is oriented towards the most effective way of learning, in which learners are required to understand how to learn the most effective way. The aspects of the 'initiative' require learners to always explore and explore knowledge from all available sources, without being pushed by anyone.

The overall average score for this third skill is 3.6. This means that the respondents have moderate initiative in learning. Unfortunately, SDL does not accept moderate initiative in learning, it requires high initiative in learning [4-6,9].

Therefore, this initiative must be enhanced through challenges and motivation. The combination of both will give good reasons for employees to take initiatives in learning and in giving their best performance [10].

The lowest score is given to 'learning style'. Most respondents do not understand their own learning styles; they still need to be directed by others. This of course greatly inhibits the occurrence of effective and efficient learning, especially when they are required to learn independently. Many of us say that in learning anything we often have a hard time in remembering, understanding, and comprehending. This is due to various factors and one of them is the learning style factor.

Related to learning style, there are many models of individual learning styles. The ones which are very popular among educators are Burke Barbe's Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (Wikipedia). However, no one can accurately assess and understand the learning styles of others. Therefore, an understanding of when and how we can learn effectively is the most important thing in our learning process [11].

Thus, in order the employees to learn effectively anytime, anywhere, from any source, they need to be enlightened about their respective learning styles. They need to be introduced to various learning styles that are relevant to work life in the office. In addition, they also need help to find out their own learning methods / styles so that they can further practice them in their daily lives. With this, it is expected that employees will get used to learning independently effectively.

4) *Learning Evaluation*: The fourth competency consists of five indicators, namely 1) Management, able to manage resources available, 2) Evaluation, understanding performance standards that must be achieved, 3) Reflection, has a habit of self reflection, 4) Renewal, able to organize things for a better future, and 5) Self Evaluation, capable of assessing one's own performance accurately. The results show that the overall average score is 3.71. This means that the participants have relatively good abilities in doing evaluation. However, given that evaluation skills are essential abilities for independent learners, the skills need to be improved.

The lowest contribution is given by second indicator, understanding performance standards. Participants have difficulties in evaluating their own works, they usually rely on their superior's judgments (average score is 3.23). The potential causes are that they do not know the exact standards of their performance or they do not know best how to give high performance.

The other lower score is 'self-reflection' (average score is 3.50). This shows that most the participants have no regular habits of self-reflection. It is not surprising because self-reflection seems to be less popular among many people, even though the benefits of self-reflection are extraordinary for our healthy life. The reason that the writer can point out is that we humans tend to do self-reflection only when something extraordinary happens to us, for example a business goes bankrupt, trap in debts, a broken marriage, a calamity, and so on. It seems that we rarely or never do self-reflection if nothing extraordinary happens.

V. CONCLUSION

Self-Directed Learning is fundamental inhuman resources development, but it is relatively new in Indonesia public sector organizations. It is one of the main areas in the Strategy of Corporate University. In order SCA employees to develop their capacities faster, they are required to do SDL. On the other hand, SDL requires certain soft skills such as independent self-concepts, collaboration, initiatives to benefit resources, and learning evaluation.

The survey shows several basic competencies that need to be strengthened by all participants with the help of their parent organizations. The enforcement is needed so that the independent learning process becomes more effective. The skills are as follows:

- The ability to set the direction of learning. This learning process begins with recognizing weaknesses and shortcomings, followed by choosing a correction program, then specifically determining what will be done, and finally start making improvements consistently.
- The ability to take advantage of the learning styles they have. Any learning style that is owned by someone will be very useful to improve learning outcomes as long as he understands about the style/style and when and how to use it.
- Build reflection habits to improve themselves. Reflection and renewal need to be internalized and periodically actualized so that eventually it becomes a good habit that encourages self-improvement.
- The ability to challenge and take initiative in learning. People will get valuable experiences that will improve their life skills if they are able to challenge themselves to do anything better [12].
- The enforcement of teamwork, in which employees are confident to get and give benefits from each other and from the resources persons for the betterment of their learning product.

SDL skills must certainly be developed consistently so as to make employees able to contribute significantly to the achievement of organizational goals. The development of soft-skills is certainly not merely the responsibility of individual employees. It must be fully facilitated by the organization. The facilitation is in the following areas:

- Provide Learning Infrastructure. It is the core facilitation of SDL. It includes hardware and software for learning, both for e-learning and classroom, such as broad bandwidth of internet network and Multi Media Equipment's for teleconferences and webinars. It also composes of variety learning material which is suitable for SDL and packages of learning guidance.
- Set up ELearning Management System including Reward System and Certification. This is for reinforcing SDL as well as a kind of challenge for the employees who is willing to learn independently. Learners who have reached a certain level of learning

must be rewarded. The rewards can take in any forms appropriate for advanced learning.

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