Breaking Down Barriers: Factors that Drive and Deter Lifelong Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract
This study examines barriers to lifelong learning among higher education lecturers in order to identify motivational factors that influence their participation in professional development activities. Through qualitative interviews with 20 lecturers from diverse backgrounds, the research explored how organizational environment, personal motivation, and individual needs affect their own learning engagement. Data collection used are in-depth, open-ended interviews in which responses were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to identify key barriers and motivators. The study investigated work settings, motivational orientations, personal demands, and reasons for learning participation. Results reveal that barriers to lifelong learning stem from both internal and external factors. Internal barriers include personal motivation, lifestyle constraints, and individual perceptions. External barriers encompass job-related motives, skills-related motives, relationship/family motives, educational progressive motives, learning styles options, learning issues, and progression issues. These same factors that motivate learning can paradoxically become deterrents when circumstances change. The findings demonstrate that successful lifelong learning programs must address multiple barrier types simultaneously, considering both organizational support and individual learner needs. Understanding these barriers is essential for developing effective professional development strategies in higher education settings.
Keywords: Lifelong Learning, Barriers to Lifelong Learning, Motivation, Organization Environment, Work Setting

Introduction

The only constant and ongoing process in an individual and the environment is change. Change is inevitable, and it comes, at times, without warning. The only way to survive is to have a strategic plan that can ensure the sustainability of individuals and organizations. Organizations and individuals now rely on continuous learning to stay competitive in today's changing world. Learning has become more than just education—it represents broader goals for political, social, and economic progress. As the conditions around us shift politically, economically, and culturally, the way we learn must also adapt. While we naturally learn throughout our entire lives, much of our most valuable learning happens through deliberate planning and clear purpose rather than by accident (Tough, 1971). This is what it meant by the notion of lifelong learning.

To some extent, the learning that goes in lectures can be understood through an examination of the social context in which it occurs. How is learning among lecturers shaped by the society in which it takes place? How does the socio-cultural context determine what is learned? What is it about the education line context in particular that promotes learning among its educators? What are the barriers to lifelong learning as seen from the perspectives of the educators? In Malaysia, in the race to embrace globalization, it is aimed that the country to be the education hub for the East Asian Region. In line with this vision, most of the organization is opting for a shift in paradigm for corporate survival and competitiveness in global education markets. One of the universities in Malaysia which is Universiti Teknologi MARA (with the vision to be a world-class university and a top player, has to ensure that front-liners (lecturers) of its operation have to be ready to face the challenges.

Organizations must constantly evolve to stay competitive in today's fast-changing world. Universities can maintain their edge by ensuring their lecturers remain active learners throughout their careers. This makes lifelong learning essential for academic staff who want to contribute to a learning-focused institution. While lifelong learning is becoming more popular across organizations, many people still don't fully understand what it means. Despite extensive academic discussion, its real impact in workplaces remains vague and poorly studied (Lim et al., 2024). Even in adult education, where lifelong learning should be central, its role is not well understood. Most learning theories focus on creating logical frameworks but fail to connect these ideas to how lifelong learning works within organizations. Descriptive theories, on the other hand, appear to have concentrated on learning processes and politics, and have little attention to the potential role of lifelong learning in organizational learning (Krespani et al., 2021).

The importance of organizational environment on the impact on the type of learning that would influence the people has been recognized by many writers. However, there are few research done to explore the impacts of organizational environment on lifelong learning (Kula, 2025; Bennedsen et al., 2024). Part of the problem lies on the appropriate construct to link both of the concepts. Motivation may be influenced by organizational objectives and social roles. If the environments are in conflict with individual needs or anticipation, then there may be a great tendency for participation in learning might be hampered. Understanding why people participate in learning can help senior leaders develop effective strategies for building a learning culture within their organization. In some organizations, employee participation in learning activities and their willingness to share knowledge with

colleagues become a critical factor that influences success more than any other element. To achieve this goal, it is important to conduct research in an organization that strives for learning to be part of the organizational culture to get greater insight into the issue. Therefore, to promote a learning culture in an organization, we need to understand the concept of lifelong learning (Golomb & Bauer, 2023).

In Malaysia, the concept is beginning to gain momentum in organizations and in classroom debates among students. However, studies done so far in the local setting have been negligible (Kula, 2025). Therefore, it is necessary to get insight on organizations that are experiencing it and bring out its good merits and weaknesses as well as to provide suggestions that can further enhance their strengths and reduce their weaknesses. Education is a lifelong process and is accomplished in many different ways and takes place throughout our lives. Lifelong learning includes both our formal education and our life experiences. As we are faced with multiple roles, the process of learning can become challenging. Taking the first step to learn something new can often be a challenge in and of itself. This is particularly true among many lecturers on our campuses today and is just one of the many barriers faced as they consider furthering their education. With the approaching retirement of so many senior adults from our workforce and the abundance of workload and responsibilities that has been entrusted, we must not only understand some of the barriers that our lecturers face, we must also learn how to help these individuals overcome some of these barriers.

There are other aspects to consider about the learning environment for lecturers. First, we must understand the learners and aware of their challenges. Problems such as reduced mobility, working demands, lack of encouragement from management, not being able to participate in the learning process due to facilities restriction, are all challenges that must be addressed to create the optimal learning environment. Proper facilities, reduced responsibilities in administrative work, having time-off to pursue learning interest, contribute to creating the optimal learning environment. Making lifelong learners feel comfortable in their learning environment is a key to their success (Conesa et al., 2023).

Other barriers that mature adults face include external motivation that affects attitude towards learning. Learners' concerns about the cost of their education further contribute to the list of barriers. The high and rising cost of training gives organization reasons to be selective in sending lecturers for self-development programs, thus reduce motivation among learners. Worker's perceived barriers to learning can also give impact to lifelong learning (Fusch, 2002). Personal challenges facing learners are often ignored as barriers to education. Extended work hours leave little time for personal reflection, while increasing conflicts between job and family responsibilities make learning even harder. With most households requiring two incomes, employees struggle to get time off for training. The challenge of balancing external learning opportunities with both work schedules and family obligations often discourages people from pursuing further education (Coolahan, 2002).

As a part of the organization family, each organization must embrace the problems of its population in campuses and help them succeed and overcome these barriers. Educational institutions have multiple stakeholders—from classroom instructors to enrolment personnel who support training and development—that collectively serve an essential function in helping students address obstacles encountered during their educational journey. The

requirements and challenges of these learners should be a priority for all parties involved in the educational process. With this in mind, this research focuses on analyzing university characteristics and profiles. This study seeks to comprehend and investigate the elements that affect continuous education within higher education institutions. The research aims to improve understanding of factors that hinder ongoing learning. These influential elements can be categorized into two groups: those that create barriers to learning and those that promote and support a learning-focused mindset.

This objective was achieved by examining the barriers to learning in terms of the organization environment, motivation and personal needs. Specifically, this research investigates:

1. The work settings and learning
2. Motivational orientations of learners and learning
3. The personal demands of learners and learning
4. The reason learners participate in learning

This study made a significant contribution by affirming the importance of lifelong learning with regard to its motivation and its barriers. The findings in this study can provide the learners with useful strategies to make learning more fun and enjoyable. The motivation for this study derived from the intention to make lifelong learning a journey that will be fulfilling when the learners know what can motivate them and what can deter them to learn.

Literature Review

Lifelong learning is probably the 'most positive trend in education' over the recent years and may provide the key to coping with and adapting to current changes in the employment market and technology innovations. The role of lifelong learning in professional development is little understood, despite a voluminous body of prescriptive and descriptive learning literature (Kula, 2025). Many prescriptive (rational) learning theories have been criticized as too narrow and have seemingly failed to take into account how lifelong learning actually operate. Empirical studies seem to support this view and tend to suggest that lifelong learning has been camouflaged by the looks of self-directed learning. Social demands in university can be seen as academic staff activities to accumulate knowledge. Furthermore, when they are being met, it is not through the traditional university educational system. Does this suggest that the social requirements for 'life-long learning' could contribute to the downfall of the traditional university? This opinion is supported by O'Hearn (2000), who outlines the requirement for alternative learning facilities that are not bounded by traditional academic structure but can offer the equivalent learning. The very survival of the traditional university may depend on how higher education institutions address the concept of 'life-long learning'.

Lifelong Learning

The concept of lifelong learning was rooted at the concept of adult education, and then evolved to lifelong education and finally lifelong learning (Wang, 2005). However, lifelong learning is more than adult education, which often emphasizes providing people with opportunities to engage in (school-like) learning activities during their adult life (Fischer, 2000). They argued that the concept of continuity generally suggested that if a person is an active learner when young, he/she will stay that way when he/she is older. Yet discontinuity of learning safeguards our creativity and our ability to adjust to our changing environment. Learning provides opportunities for individuals to develop the capacity to integrate new experiences and adapt to new situations. Learners learn because learning enables change,

sustain and improve our skills, knowledge and attitudes across lifespan. Change involves self-growth, self-actualization, and the development of self-efficacy, skill development, knowledge acquisition and creativity development.

The Dimensions of Lifelong Learning
Knapper and Cropley (2000) have described the characteristics of lifelong learners as someone who is strongly aware of the relationship between learning and real life, recognizes the need for lifelong learning and highly motivated to engage in the process, and has all the necessary confidence and learning skills. These skills include the following dimensions: 1) people plan and monitor their own learning, 2) learners engage in self-evaluation and reflection and 3) assessments focuses on feedback for change and improvement. These concepts stress the importance of having people take responsibility for their own learning, while the task of educators or organizations is to provide an environment in which this can be done most effectively.

New Forms of Learning in Lifelong Learning
There are new forms of learning that are emphasized in the lifelong learning concept. These forms have been summarized by Fischer (1999, 2001) in Table 1.

Table 1
Overview of new forms of learning in lifelong learning (Fischer, 2001)

Form	Complement Form	Major challenges
Self-directed learning	Prescribed learning	Problems framing
Learning on demand	Learning on advance	Identifying the breakdown leading to the demand; integration of work and learning
Informal learning	Formal learning	Larger; purposive activities provide learning opportunities
Collaborative learning and organizational learning	Individual learning	Shared understanding

Self-Directed Learning
The self-directed learning concept is important in lifelong learning. In the self-directed lifelong learning, the learners are responsible owners and managers of their own learning process. Fischer (2001) argues that in order to prepare a learner for lifelong learning; an attempt may be needed to transform learning from an externally prescribed learning to an internally directed learning by the learners. Thus, from learning derived from systematic branches of science to learning dependent on the contexts developed by the learner's own needs.

Learning on Demand
The information technologies play an increasingly important role in the current information age. Today's people live in the information technology changing and updating environment. The rapid changing economy and society represents demands on today's people on lifelong learning, which comes from the demands of people's environment (Markkula et al., 2000).

Informal Learning
Informal learning is a process to help people learn outside of classrooms (Bennedsen et al., 2024). Smith (2001) summarizes different views on information learning. Some view it as learning in daily life and some view it as learning projects in which we work ourselves. The attributes of informal learning that in contrast with formal learning are it often occurs in group activities rather than individual activities; the learner can decide the topic, time and place for learning; and activities can be done with flexible time and environment (Bennedsen et al., 2024).

Collaboration and Organizational Learning
Individuals can learn through collaborating with others on a task and the collaboration outcome can be more than the outcome from multiple individual activities (Arias et al., 2000). In the organizational learning, individuals learn through living in the organization and participate in organization activities (Smith, 2001). A key step in organizational learning is to store knowledge in organizational memory (Fischer, 2001). He pointed out that "organizational memory must be 1) extended and updated as it is used to support work practices, 2) continually reorganized to integrate new information and new concerns, and 3) serve work by making stored information relevant to the new task at hand."

Comparison between formal Learning and Lifelong Learning
There are many differences between the conventional formal learning and lifelong learning. The following differences are summarized by Fischer's work (1999) and other lifelong learning literature. Firstly, we need to look at the emphasis. Formal learning emphasizes the "basic skills", exposure and access to prescribed materials, while lifelong learning emphasizes the learning embedded in ongoing practices and informal participation. Secondly, we need to look at the flexibility on time, place and context. The lifelong learning usually has more flexibility on the learner's choosing the time, place, and situations for learning (Matsumoto-Royo et al., 2021).

Thirdly, we need to look at the topics to be learned and problems to be solved. In formal learning, the topics to be learned often are pre-defined in the curricula, and the problems are usually given by the teachers to the students. However, in lifelong learning, the topics to be learned, especially for new topics, often come up from the ongoing work context incidentally and problems can be constructed by learners. Fourth, the need to see the structure of learning. The structure for formal learning is pedagogic and that for lifelong learning is work activity, that is, the formal learning is structured and is done through formal educational systems, and the lifelong learning is unstructured and takes place in activities.

Fifth, the role of teachers. Teachers in formal learning often tell what they know about something to a passive learner. In lifelong learning, the teachers not only teach something to the students, and they also engage in work practice and can learn something from the teaching activities, from the students. So, the model relationship between the teacher and the student in formal learning can be modelled by an expert-novice model and that in lifelong learning is reciprocal. Sixth, the teaching mode. Teachers in formal learning need to teach the students the knowledge and the knowledge is absorbed by the students, while students in lifelong learning construct the knowledge with the teachers together, rather than simply receive delivered knowledge from teachers (Smith, 2001).

Lastly, the potential drawbacks. Potential drawbacks for the formal learning include that the learning is decontextualized and not situated, and it may not fit to all situations and all students. Those for lifelong learning include that the learning is not systematic and some important concepts may not be encountered by the learners in the learning process. Fischer (1999) argued that formal learning needs to cultivate and develop the skills and processes for lifelong learning. He states that by contextualizing and situating the formal education institutions could make the learner develop positive attitude for learning (Shapiro, 2000).

Understanding Learning Environments and their Contribution to Lifelong Learning
Learning is both an individual and a social process. While learning takes place at the individual level with the interplay of cognitive, emotional and physical elements, the learning process is very much shaped by the environment in which the learner finds him/herself. Learning environments are not static and constantly poses new challenges to the learner. The community or the workplace is another key element in the learning environment. The more diverse learning opportunities there are in a community or workplace, the richer is the environment for learning. Community libraries, community learning centers and on job training not only enhance and complement formal learning facilities but also provide venues for learning for other sectors of the community that do not have access to school or universities. Gene raises the issues of how lifelong learning can promote learning in groups. Even as self-directed learning is a key element of lifelong learning, it should not exclude the possibility of group learning approaches in promoting understanding of lifelong learning (Boudioni et al., 2007; Gill, 2000; Gunen & Vural, 2023).

Professional Development in the Context of Lifelong
Lecturers are involved directly with the teaching and learning situation on an almost daily basis, which has contributed to the development of higher education of lecturers' academic and pedagogic knowledge and skills. Lecturers have been involved in lifelong learning by the nature of their positions and job. Professional development is part of lifelong learning (Gil, 2000), however in a learning society we need to see the connection between professional development and its role in lifelong learning. A significant amount of research (Bennedsen et al., 2024) has examined the role of professional development and professional, but the role of teacher's (lecturer) learning has not always been made explicit and explained. Professional development in higher education is a way to improve the quality of learning and teaching of the lecturers and to develop a culture of lifelong learning (Kula, 2025; Krespani et al., 2021) suggest that 'teacher development as knowledge and skill development', is a key to successful lifelong learning.

The need to be ready to change in professional development is crucial. Knowledge and skills learnt in schools or university rapidly become obsolete in an environment where practices and processes change so rapidly that industries and jobs that have existed for centuries can disappear overnight (Knapper and Cropley, 2000). In this context, our traditional notions of front-end-loaded "education by inoculation" will no longer serve, and traditional continuing education through formal courses is often inadequate. The acceleration of change, both social and technology, have altered our way of thinking in the world of work. MacBeath (2000) has distinguished between "old" and "new" ways of learning and thinking. He argues that intelligence is not fixed at birth but is created and recreated throughout our lifetimes. It is not an individual quality, but resides both within and between people. Learning is often

episodic rather than logical and sequential, and most learning takes place outside the classroom, not inside.

Motivation and Lifelong Learning
The literature about lifelong learning clearly indicates the importance of motivation of the lifelong learners (Illeris, 2002). Motivation to learn is an internal, naturally occurring in the capacity of human beings that is enhanced and nurtured by quality supportive relationships, opportunities for personal choice and responsibility for learning, and personally relevant and meaningful learning tasks (Kula, 2025). Lifelong learning is also a natural propensity of human beings to continue to learn, grow, and develop that is facilitated by "uncovering" natural learning tendencies and enjoyment of learning and by reducing or eliminating negative, insecure thoughts and belief systems (Krespani et al., 2021). The relationship between motivation and lifelong learning are indistinguishable. The motivated person is a lifelong learner and the lifelong learner is a motivated person (Bennedsen et al., 2024). In order to understand the connection between these two constructs, there is a need to understand the psychological processes related to learning. Human psychology and behavior work together in complex ways to influence lifelong learning. People have different levels of motivation and willingness to pursue continuous learning, which depends on both their personal drive and the external conditions that support these tendencies. What ultimately encourages people to keep learning throughout their lives are their individual interests, needs, and personal motivations (Kula, 2025; Bennedsen et al., 2024; Gunen & Vural, 2023).

The relationship between thoughts, mood, and behavior underlies the psychological health and functioning of individuals as well as their learning efficacy. Understanding cognitive construction and belief system is an important part of seeing how to facilitate both learning and motivation to learn. Motivating learning is largely dependent on helping to bring out and develop learners' natural motivations and tendencies to learn rather than "fixing them" or giving them something they lack. At the same time, however, when individuals are motivated to learn, facilitating the development of higher-order learning strategies and thinking skills has been shown to enhance learning efficacy. Individuals have a natural motivation to learn, grow, and develop in positive, self-determining ways, and to be competent and exercise personal control in their lives. The biggest challenge is to uncover this natural motivation and intrinsic desire for positive self-development.

Characteristics of Motivation and Lifelong Learning
The principles above suggest several key characteristics of motivation and lifelong learning (Conesa et al., 2023). Firstly, learning and motivation to learn are natural human capacities in social contexts and relationships supportive of the learner and in content domains perceived as personally meaningful and relevant. Secondly, what and how much is learned is a function of each learner's unique views of themselves and the learning process, including their goals, expectations, and interpretations of task requirements. Lastly, insecurities and other forms of negative cognitive conditioning interfere with or block the emergence of an individual's natural motivation to continually learn, grow, and develop in positive and self-determining ways.

Lim et al. (2024) also addressed the importance of motivation in lifelong. He described some characteristics of successful lifelong learners similar to (ref) with additional skills. The learners

need to have such skills: use of different learning strategies and learning in different settings, basic learning skills and basic "intellectual powers" such as critical thinking, and use of learning devices. Lim et al. (2024) also discusses ways that motivation attributes can be developed in lifelong learning. The strategies are: 1) communicating expectations- the institutions should clearly state the goal of lifelong learning; 2) expecting learners to take responsibility for their learning- providing learning opportunities outside the classroom; 3) providing motivation for students so that the student can receive benefits of self-directed learning; and 4) teaching students how learn, such as how to learn through individual or group activities and how to manage the time.

Barriers and Lifelong Learning
In adult education, deterrent to learning participations are examined through existing models that attempt to explain participatory behavior. Viewing participation from the perspective of barriers lends some dimension as to understand why learners participate in learning and others do not. The reasons why learners do not participate in learning have been clustered into types of barriers. (Kula, 2025; Bennedsen et al., 2024; Gunen & Vural, 2023) clustered ten potential barriers into two categories: external or situational, and internal or dispositional barriers. He stated that external barriers are "influences more or less external to the individual or at least beyond the individual control" and internal barriers reflect personal attitudes. Gunen & Vural (2023) added a third cluster to the situational and dispositional barriers, which is the institutional barriers, consisting of "all those practices and procedures that exclude or discourage working adults from participating in educational activities".

Models of Participation
Models are visual representations of how concepts related to participation interact to explain who participates and perhaps even predict who will participate in the future (Merriam & Caffarella, 1998). Firstly, Rubenson's (1977) Expectancy-Valence model addresses socialization and structural dimensions, as well as individual orientation. The decision to participate is a combination of the negative and positive forces within the individual and environment. Expectancy consists of the anticipation of being successful in an educational situation. Valence relates to the value a person puts on being successful; one could be positive, negative, or indifferent. The individual is the center of this model because everything depends on a person's perception of the environment and the value of participating in learning. The model emphasizes the perceptual components of the individual life space. The actual experiences, needs and environmental factors are less important in determining behavior than how they are perceived and interpreted by potential learners.

Secondly, Cross's (1981) Chain-of-Response Model conceives of participation as a result of a complex chain of responses to both psychological and environmental factors. Although this model does have environmental components, it is primarily a psychological model with its focus on the individual progressing through the chain of response. For Cross, the psychological factors are most important: "If adult educators wish to understand why some adults fail to participate in learning opportunities, they need to begin at the beginning of the model with an understanding of attitudes towards self and education". Internal psychological variables such as self-concept and attitude toward education are critical determinants of prospective learner's decision making. Thirdly, Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) Psychosocial Interaction Model emphasizes "social environmental forces, particularly

socioeconomic status, not because individual traits or attitudes are not important but because less is known about their influence on participation". The model shows participatory behavior is determined by a continuum of responses to internal and external stimuli. The degree of probability of participation is affected by such socioeconomic status, perceived value of participation, readiness to participate and barriers to participation.

Lastly, Henry and Basile's Decision Model (1994) is unique in its incorporation of both motivational factors and deterrents to participation to help explain adult's decision to participate in formal adult education. The findings of their study stated that complexity involved in "a simple decision to participate in a course that both motivations and deterrents influence the decision to participate". The authors noted that vocational reasons were a particularly strong motivator with learners: "According to our data work-related factors pile up in favor of participation; typical is a person who has job-related interest, received a course brochure at work, and has an employer who is willing to pay for the course fees". These theories and models imply that a variety of variables are associated with participatory behavior. A number of researchers have explored the influence of demographic variables such as age, sex, income, race, educational attainment, employment status, and demographic location. Non-demographic variables affecting participation are categorized as situational that associated with individual life circumstances, particularly in terms of career and social roles; dispositional that associated with values, attitudes, beliefs, or opinions; or psychological that associated with individual psychological and personality traits.

Work Settings and Lifelong Learning
Lifelong learning plays a key role in organizational and employee survival in the current rapidly changing industrial environment, which demands that organizations and employees must be flexible and responsive (Pampouri et al., 2020; Panitside, 2014). The importance of continually updating job-related skills and knowledge has been emphasized by a number of authors. Workplace learning generally involves procedural knowledge, is contextualized by the nature of the organizations, deal with real pragmatic problems, and often depends on collaborative teamwork. In this context, the importance of lifelong learning skills becomes crucial and emphasis on assisting employees to develop multiple skills that could enable them to transfer knowledge to a wide range of contexts (Pampouri et al., 2020; Panitside, 2014). This, in turn, requires an ability to integrate new information with previous knowledge and make connections to form wider perspectives.

In contrast, surface-level learners are mainly driven by the goal of fulfilling basic assignment expectations, and they view learning as essentially copying or restating information without genuine concern for understanding its significance. Consequently, to address contemporary workplace demands, there will be a growing need for learning methods that emphasize thorough comprehension—specifically, deep conceptual grasp and the ability to connect new information with previously acquired knowledge to address complex and unfamiliar challenges. Historically, workplace learning has been defined primarily through structured training programs, while the combination of learning activities with job responsibilities is commonly referred to as work-based learning. (WBL), a term which originated in the USA and is defined as: 'learning linked to the requirements of peoples' jobs... learning for work... learning at work... learning through work' (Panitside, 2014). Shapiro (2001) defines workplace learning as:

… on-the-job training and its application to work-related problems. It might be specific workstation training or general-education curricula designed to improve knowledge and skills. It encompasses many of today's pop terms such as constraining, retraining, continuous improvement, employee empowerment, and troubleshooting. Work-based learning calls for a perpetual learning process and is seen as the central element to integrated quality systems.

Personal Issues and Lifelong Learning
Valuing Learning
Learning is seen as an activity to gain recognition and certification purposes. Waddington (2001) in A Memorandum on Lifelong field learning which is a response from the consultations carried out by NIACE from UK NGOs working in the of Adult Learning states that valuing learning does not necessarily mean accrediting learning. Learning has a wider value than qualifications for the individual. Learning contributes to a range of longer-term benefits for the wider society, including active citizenship, active ageing, improved social relationships, better health and crime reduction. Greater emphasis should be given to valuing the wider benefits that lifelong learning can bring. The diversity of learners should also be recognized (Waddington, 2001). They have many different backgrounds and aspirations. Different sorts of provision attract and are appropriate for different kinds of learners. Any accreditation system should therefore respect this diversity and not strive to fit everything into one model. The diversity of learners, learning providers and learning outcomes should be valued.

Summary of the Literature
Lifelong learning is crucial to our personal success as well as the success of our organizations. Gaining new skills and knowledge energizes us; it gives us the strength to tackle the challenges we face in our jobs every day. It also provides us with the tools we need to progress in our careers and, most importantly, to better serve our organization's clientele.

Methodology
Theoretical Framework
As the knowledge to be learnt has cultural and social genesis, this is a need for learners to engage in interactions with social partners and practices thus, able to make the knowledge accessible (Billet, 2001). Billet (2001) proposes that how individual is able to interact with social partners will influence learning throughout life. He states that the kinds of goal-directed activities learners engage in and how the goals of the activities are determined and negotiated within the particular social practices of work in which they act. Therefore, learning is an ongoing and inevitable process arising from participation in work practice across working lives as individuals think and act in everyday activities at work. The learning that takes place is shaped by the kinds of activities in which individuals engage, and also interactions with social partners and sources that are available at the workplace (Billet, 2001). This paper discusses the proposition that what individual learn throughout their working life depends on the types of activities they engaged in. These activities, in turn, will influence the continuity or discontinuity of their learning. Participation in learning at the workplace depends on the affordance of the workplace itself. Thus, there is interdependence between social practice and the individual acting in that social practice. This paper discusses factors within work practices that either facilitate or constrain individuals' participation in work and consequently their learning.

Research Design

To understand how the work setting shapes the nature of lifelong learning among university educators, a qualitative research design was employed. The qualitative research design included a sampling of lecturers who were selected to represent diverse perspectives. A case study approach was adopted, focusing on a sample of educators from one of the public universities in Malaysia. Qualitative research is descriptive and inductive in nature, focusing on uncovering meaning from the perspective of participants (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990)

Research Sample

The sample consists of twenty lecturers with minimum two years' experience. The minimum year experience was set as a criterion for inclusion in the sample for several reasons. First, majority of the lecturers here have served the campus for two years. Therefore, it is easier to find participants for the research. Secondly, most lecturers start to be involved in research and learning to upgrade their status in the university after initial two years period. Participants were located through researcher's professional academic networks; most of the participants are colleagues and have worked together with the researcher.

Of the twenty participants, fifteen are Malays, two are Chinese and three are Indians. There are twelve women and eight men. The youngest participant is twenty-seven years old, and the oldest is fifty years old; the average age of the sample is thirty-three. The level of education ranges from first degree to a master's degree. Participants also represent a range of work experience from those with administrative post to just ordinary lecturers and most of them had worked with another organization before. All of the respondents characterized themselves as learners.

Data Collection

Data were collected through an interview of approximately one hour in length. Fourteen were conducted in English and six were conducted in Malay language. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. The interview schedule consisted of open-ended questions regarding the issues, concerns, and learning activities done by the respondents. Interviews were the primary source of data. Data collection was through qualitative interviews using a structured, open-ended approach, incorporating an interview guide as well as observations in the office. An appointment was made to interview each selected participant after working hours, whereby they are freer to answer the questions without forsaking their duties. There were a number of difficulties encountered in identifying potential interviewees, some related to issues of confidentiality and some because of the reluctance on the part of the interviewee to be interviewed. The solutions to this reluctance lead to adopting a range of outreach strategies. This varied from one respondent to another. Most of the interviews took place in a one-to-one situation and lasted for up to an hour per interview.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using three levels of coding: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The first stage of coding involves breaking down data and beginning the process of categorization. Axial coding takes initial categories and makes further comparisons that describe relationships between categories. Using selective coding, saturation of categories is examined, which means that further analysis produces no information or need

for additional categories. In short, all the data are captured and described by key categories and a core category emerges that tells the central story of all participants as a group. Data were analyzed by using the constant comparative method as presented by Glaser and Strauss (1967). First, researcher analyzed the transcripts and coded data that appeared to address the research questions, comparing segments of data within each interview scripts. Next, themes and concepts were compared across interviews. From this process, a set of themes was inductively derived that identify the factors that influence lifelong learning among lecturers in UiTM from the perspectives of the participants.

Interview Questions
Four research questions were developed to elicit the process of identifying the factors that influence lifelong learning in a university. These questions evolved from a review of the literature and experiences of the researcher during eight years as a lecturer. Several revisions of the questions were done, resulting in the following four research questions addressed in the study.

Core Interview Questions
The following questions have been used at all interviews connected with the study in order to standardize the process and facilitate the collation of responses. Additional questions may be added to reflect local circumstances, but further consideration will need to be given as to how the responses from any additional questions will be represented in the final report. The order in which the questions are asked can be altered to suit circumstances or to fit in the interviewer's own preferences in approaching the interview, and supplementary questions should be used to help clarify the questions where necessary. During the interview, the following key themes should have been addressed:
- Barriers to learning
- Motivation for learning
- Work setting to learning
- Perception/attitudes to learning

An attempt has been made to keep the core questions to a minimum in order to make the interview process more manageable and to allow maximum flexibility for supplementary/additional questions of local interest.

Question 1
What are your reasons to participate in learning? Or 'what prompts you to be involved in learning? – (if those being interviewed have not yet decided to get involved).

Key Theme: Reason for Learning
This question aims to identify why learners are involved in learning, and since they are in the educational sector and learning is their main business, why the need to be engaged in learning. Responses may include, for example, workplace requirement, self-satisfaction, competitions among colleagues and etc. The question will be posed differently depending on whether or not those interviewed are currently engaged in learning.

Question 2
What are your reasons to improve your knowledge or motivates you to learn? Or 'what would prompt you to improve or motivate you to engage in learning?
– (if those interviewed have not yet decided to get involved).

Key theme: Motivation to Learn
This question aims to identify what motivates learners to learn, and particularly to seek support with their learning. Responses may include, for example, the need to improve their skills at work, the desire to improve their job prospects, etc. The question will be posed differently depending on whether or not those interviewed are currently engaged in learning.

Question 3
What would stop you to learn or seek help with your knowledge and skills?

Key theme: Barriers to Learning
The aim of this question is to identify some of the possible barriers to accessing learning. Responses may refer to physical factors such as time constraints, facilities, or emotional factors such as stigma or lack of confidence.

Question 4
Either from your past experience of workplace or what your impressions about what workplace support towards staff learning might be like, what would you consider to be good or bad points on the workplace support for staff learning?

Key theme: Attitudes to Learning at Workplace
The aim of the question is to identify some of the possible barriers to accessing learning at a workplace. Interviewers should include discussion on any previous experiences of learning at workplace or delve for interviewees' impressions/expectations about workplace support.

Summary of the Methodology
The paper is developed with the main purpose of researching learner barriers in lifelong learning. The particular focus is on improving the participation in learning among lecturers in university, ultimately leading to increased uptake of learning and thus enhancing lifelong learning at workplace. Interview sessions are set up and a questionnaire was developed to address the key research themes: reason for participation, motivation for learning, barriers to learning and workplace attitudes. The results of these interviews are collated and analyzed.

Results Analysis
General Profile of Interviewees
The respondents of this research were 20 lecturers from various universities in the east coast of Malaysia. All of the educators had done or were doing research at the time of the interview. Below are the variables used to identify the background of the samples:

Overview of Interviewees by Gender

Total Number Interviewed	20	%
Male	9	48
Female	11	52
First Degree	4	20
Masters	16	80

Breakdown of Age Groups Interviewed

Age 20-29	5	25%
Age 30-39	11	55%
Age 40-50	4	20%

Breakdown of Sample Group on Research Experience

YES	13	65%
NO	7	35%

Observations
The sample group was fairly evenly split between male (40%) and female (52%), but with a greater proportion of Masters holders (80%) to degree holders (20%) respondents. Only 20% of those interviewed were in the 40-50 years age group. The most predominant age group (52%) was between 30-39 years and respondents age 20-29 accounted for 25% of the sample. On the question of research experiences, 65% of the sample had done and presented their researches and 35% without any experience in research. Attracting such respondents to cultivate the research culture within was clearly a task for the university.

The Research Culture in Universities in East Coast of Malaysia
At higher education institutions, newly appointed faculty members and experienced academic staff are expected to publish scholarly articles or conduct research each term, or produce a book annually. This requirement aims to cultivate a strong research environment among teaching staff and improve the institution's academic standing in research metrics. Through tailoring research projects to align with individual faculty members' expertise and preferences, this initiative enables scholars to pursue their investigations according to their preferred timeline while creating direct connections between their educational experiences and professional responsibilities.

Through multiple learning methods (i.e., coaching, mentoring, discussion, team projects, research, e-mail, and the Internet), customized instruction assists the individual's professional development. This could be seen through the establishment of SIG groups. Lecturers assess their needs (with their peers' assistance) and develop methods and requirements for meeting the university requirements. Although it may sound similar to some self-paced learning activity, this activity was designed to have an instructor (among the colleagues) acting in the capacity of a mentor and meeting with learners at the workplace on a regular schedule. The instructor provided the learners with the basis knowledge of academic research and helped them to assign certain task for a research and learners worked through each task at their own pace. Most researches are funded by the university. The learners can use the wealth of management material online, and the library continuously updates new websites in regard to the needs of the learners. Some lecturers use books that can be accessed easily in the library.

Each research requires a certain time limit to be completed; however, these time limits are set by the researchers. After completion of the research, papers are sent to be audited by a panel of research auditors set by the university and need to be presented at conferences. The written projects are in the form of papers and proposals that demonstrate the learners' ability, that shows their involvement in learning to their workplace.

Motivation for learning
The following question was put to interviewees:

'What are your reasons to improve yourself? (Or 'What would prompt you to seek help or improve your learning or knowledge?'- if those being interviewed do not know how to answer the first question.)'
The aim is to identify the kind of motives which would prompt those to be involved in learning.

Thematic Breakdown
From the different responses given a pattern could be established and the responses reported under a number of broad themes.

Job Related Motives
Job related issues were the largest single motivator factor (55% of respondents). This was variously expressed in terms of a desire to improve job prospects, including their CV for scholarship purposes, to improve skills at work, to get more qualifications, to be able to be confirmed in the service, etc. This also included the need to keep up to date with current job requirements, for example, knowledge of IT and pedagogy and andragogy, or writing skills for academic publications. Conversely, this suggests that the remaining 45% were motivated by factors other than employment issues.

Skills Related Motives
Skills-related movies refer to motives expressed in terms of the desire to improve skills in specific identified areas. This covered the desire to be able to conduct research at a macro level and collaborate with outside organizations with big grants. Respondents expressed a desire to improve their knowledge of statistics and information skills, as well as to improve English language proficiency. Approximately 30% specifically mentioned the need to develop writing skills such as being able to write articles for refereed journals, get thoughts and ideas onto paper, or generally improve presentation skills.

Personal Issues
Personal motives were expressions of perceived emotional needs such as to gain confidence among peers, no longer feel inadequate, to have a sense of fulfilment or self-respect, to be more independent or self-reliant. Some 20% talked about wanting to increase intellectual capabilities.

Relationship/ Family Related Motives
Relationship/family related motives could perhaps be seen as an extension of the personal motives, but expressed in terms such as to be able to help children with schoolwork, spending time with family, spouse not able to compromise with the learning schedule, or because of boredom.

Education Progression Motives
Educational progression motives show the need to finish a research project on time, accounted for the majority of the responses. Some felt the need to 'catch up' or 'fill in the gaps' where they left off in their alma matter.

Miscellaneous
Few respondents referred to the enjoyment of learning, their need for help, now that research is seen as a measure of a lecturer's intellectuality, or because the university sent them.

Observations
The participants were free to make as many different comments as they wished, with the result that those who mentioned job-related motives, for example, mentioned skills-related motives or personal motives as well. Looking at the results in purely percentage terms could therefore be slightly misleading. Participants were not asked to rate their responses in terms of importance. The most frequent responses referred to job-related motives. However, motives which related to gaining specific skills or motives related to gaining confidence or self-fulfillment may have been seen by respondents as prerequisites to their ultimate goal of improving their job prospects. The desire to gain more qualifications was considerably stronger and was more common answer from female participants. Conversely, those who were motivated by job-related issues might have seen their improvements in learning leading to gaining a sense of self-satisfaction. All of the respondents see job motives as important. The social interaction linked to learning was a stronger motivator for female participants. There were also a number of respondents who indicated they had no motivation for learning or improving their skills. They were happy with their level of literacy and numeracy skills in themselves and were not interested in improvement.

Learning Styles
The following question was put to interviewees:

> **'If you were to seek help with your research, which of the following styles of learning would suit help you best?'**

The aim was to identify the kind of approaches to learning that participants would be most comfortable with.

Results by Learning Style Options
The following standard options were put to all interviewees, and the percentage results from the interviews are provided in brackets after each option:
- Working in a small group/ SIGs (65%)
- Working one-to-one with a tutor (50%)
- Working with a combination of working styles, i.e., one-to-one and computers (25%)
- Working on your own using paper-based self-study materials (35%)
- Working on your own using computer programs (45%)
- Working in a traditional class (15%)

Observations
The results above, in order of preference, indicate that those with lack of knowledge in research prefer either working in small groups or working one-to-one with a tutor.   While

there was little difference in male preference between small group and one-to-one study, it did appear that female respondents were more comfortable with small group activity than one-to-one learning (75% as opposed to 45%). On the other hand, some respondents, because of their lack of confidence, tended to be nervous about involvement in a group. The 'traditional classroom', with much of the input led from the front by an instructor, was only chosen by some 15% of the respondents. Only 25% of those interviewed opted for a combined learning styles approach, with male learners twice as likely as females to want a combination learning. A number of participants indicated that they preferred one-to-one to begin with, then progressing to a small group.

Working on your own using a computer-based program or working on your own using paper-based self-study materials both scored 45% and 35%, respectively. There was confusion amongst interviewees on the difference between using a computer as a tool for research literacy and using the computer just for typing. The majority of the participants, however, agreed that computers and the internet are important to support and consolidate learning. It is observed that the age group of 40-50 stressed that using computers is essential in research, but they need clear instructions and assistance on hand to help with problems. For others, using computers was seen in the context of self-directed learning, which they regarded as less time-consuming than face-to-face learning. Not all interviewees were familiar with or had experience with the different learning styles and therefore were more likely to choose styles that they had experience and found effective.

Barriers to Learning
The following questions were put to interviewees:

'What would stop you from learning or returning to learn?'

The aim was to identify, in a straightforward question, what interviewees regarded as problems or barriers they saw in accessing learning at work.

Thematic Breakdown
Responses have been categorized under a number of broad headings, listed from the most popular answer to the least popular.

Work Issues
Work issues were expressed in terms of workloads, work demands, extra administrative jobs or time management. This was the single most popular answer, with some 45% of responses.

Personal/Lifestyle Issues
Personal/lifestyle issues were related to poor health, family commitments, emotional problems, lack of confidence, embarrassment, lack of enthusiasm for learning, admitting to others or one that there is a problem, and having learned to live with the lack of knowledge to research. The most frequent responses were those relating to family commitment and lack of confidence.

Work/Learning Environment Issues
Work/learning environment issues were related to the perception that the university should provide all the necessary facilities to facilitate lifelong learning among learners. Some said that by not having the proper connection to the internet deters their learning enthusiasm. Some are not even aware that the basic skills for learning are available or some are admitted that they are not aware of what the college can offer. Others had frustrating experience in SIGs, such as the feeling that the momentum gained to learn was not sustained but fizzles away. Participants said that the management did not monitor the progress of each of the SIGs. More specific issues were raised, such as the university not communicating well with people who have disabilities or having inadequate disable accommodation, and the university not taking sufficient cognizance of learners' needs.

Observation
In considering the various barriers identified, it was noted that many who were concerned about job responsibilities issues did not seem to be aware of the options given to them by the university, and others were specifically concerns with workloads and timetable scheduling. A considerable number of respondents were dependent on the university to provide them the proper facilities in learning, and were concerned with IT related issues such as internet net connection and websites availability. Time was sometimes a factor in terms of the learners participated in learning in an environment they saw give too much emphasis on teaching rather than research; most respondents would compare workloads by other universities with their workloads. Their heavy commitment with classes and assessment of students were a major stumbling block. Some interviewees indicated that their difficulties were due to finding the right SIG to suit their interest; others referred to specific learning difficulties that had gone unattended.

Attitudes to the Workplace
The following were put to the interviewees:
'What would you consider to be the good and bad points about your current workplace I terms of supporting its staff to pursue or get involved in learning?'
The aim was to identify the positive and negative impressions that interviewees had with regard to their working environment, and in particular, their hopes and fears about getting help with improving their learning through workplace support.

Thematic Breakdown
The results were collated under the two broad headings of positive perceptions (good points) and negative perceptions (bad points). It should be noted that the interviewees had many experience in learning in the workplace and therefore expressed their perceptions from reflecting on actual experience.

Positive Perceptions of Workplace Learning
The most positive aspect of learning in the workplace setting was identified as management support, where respondents cannot deny the culture set by the university, as a research university got to them. Respondents felt that their management teams are friendly and helpful if they need any assistance and the easy accessibility for good guidance, learning new skills and technologies. The social aspects of the university were highlighted, with colleagues who are understanding and cooperative. The positive view of this either comes from personal

experience or from the experience of a friend. It was felt that learning becomes tolerable when respondents knew the existing sub-culture in the organization and friends were supportive and understanding. The university also felt positive where funding for the researches done would be accessible by IRDC (an advisory body for researchers – in case of Universiti Teknologi MARA). Respondents felt that the opportunities set by the university to present their papers locally or sent them for overseas presentation were encouraging.

Most of the respondents felt positive where the facilities were seen as available to all learners or good computer equipment's. Respondents stated that the office rooms are spacious and have all the basic necessities. Thus, resulting in a conducive and effective learning environment.

Negative Perceptions of Workplace Learning
The largest single issue against workplace learning was undertaking extra responsibilities apart from the required job at hand, many were put off by the idea of spending weekends at the office rather than staying at home with family. Viewing the university as responsible for the development of the learners made some respondents see it as a deterrent if university could not keep up with their demands of having new equipment's or facilities to aid their learning. A few seemed to come from most of the female respondents, who also felt that university needs to chart their progression and help them in career development. Some negative attitudes to university were in fact related to respondents concern about their own abilities. Interviewees seemed to view learning as complicated and stressful, and therefore an activity that they would be unable to cope with.

A small minority (5%) referred to issues relating to how they were treated by staff who had not been as friendly and as supportive as expected, and this was sometimes expressed in terms of the university failing to address their specific learning needs. A respondent who was physically challenged referred to problems encountered with regard to accessibility to the university and library facilities.

Observation
Concern about working too much or overloading should be seen in the context of the question related to learning among participants. This may also affect concerns about responsibilities that need to be undertaken by the learners. Worries expressed about a lack of appropriate facilities by some of the respondents may reflect a lack of awareness of the various departments responsible at the university. In terms of the progression of their research work, the researchers had found something interesting.

One significant finding from the interview with regard to progression was that almost half (45%) of the participants indicated they need their progression to be checked from time to time-to-time basis. Less than 15% said that they did not need a progression check. The majority of the participants, 75% stated that they need effective guidance that involves a close examination of progression routes in relation to individual learners.

Voices from the Workplace
During the process of preparing my paper, we had several discussions with colleagues as well as lecturers participating in the research. In addition, we met with several other management

representatives who are also in the teaching field at the university.   To honor their privacy, we refer to all informants in our study with pseudonyms. Correspondingly, some of the blue-collar workers and industry representatives have shared some interesting insights.

One afternoon in 2024, one of the researchers interviewed Neina, filled with enthusiasm. She is a new lecturer with less than 2 years of experiences and one way to be promoted to a permanent position is by having a research to her name.   After hearing that there are SIG groups to assist her in her research she had signed up in a group. She explained that she was thrilled that there was a way she could pursue the learning she always wanted and also earn credit for her future advancement in the organization. She explained that with two small children and her workload at the university she could not focus in a research project on her own and the support from her SIG members let her work at her pace without the stress. Moreover, the university had computers online located at her workstation and she could do a lot of the researching during the in-between break from her classes.

Similar in enthusiasm with Neina, Ahmad a young man took up the research challenge from the administration and has completed a couple of researches. Working a traditional five-day workweek in an office that does not have access to computers online, Ahmad does his look for information online.

From a coordinator perspective, Razak represents his department on the advisory committee. Razak became so excited about the prospect of career advancement and the ability to get full scholarship to pursue his PhD that he decided to join a SIG group. Razak has completed several researches and presented his group work in seminars and conferences. He calls the SIG groups the "a humbled man way to learning" and explained that "the university sends a few people for short courses…this provides anyone in the university the practical skills and those sent for the courses will come back and share it with the rest of the educators community." He goes on to explain how the university pays all the cost and allows him to be exposed to the qualitative research methods.   From his research, he has been studying what other researchers are doing throughout the world and is developing a major collaboration with an outside organization for his next project. One member who is holding an important post in the organization talked about how the vision of the university to be a world-class university and the needs for its employees to carry out the mission. At first, she is worried with the acceptance of the senior lecturers that she said are in the comfort zone. However, after they looked at the SIG approach they quickly try to be part of the effort. During the first annual program review the advisory committee applauded the program for its availability, interactive format, that it was self-paced and a win-win proposition, stating that the individual and the organization win. They indicated that the amount of research submitted has increased and that many the university pay all cost including allowing individuals to present overseas. They indicate that the program is a university solution for the fundamental building blocks of developing people.

Although the advisory committee and participants in the program herald what appears to be ideal, the program has suffered minimal enrolments. And has met scepticism from some lecturers. Vince asked the question "will my workload be lessen when I am doing my research?" Although he was assured of the reduce in workloads, Vince never enrolled nor did some of his friends. However, from Vince question it appears that there may be additional

labor-management issues and labor may need to show support for the program before lecturers will participate. Additional study is needed to determine what the perceived barriers to participation are in this company and if there are similar perceptions in other organizations.

Minah who is a senior lecturer when asked says that she needs a good computer and a good connection to the internet. In addition she needs knowledge on how to get the information or in other words surf the net. The management indicates that learners were put off to use the Internet because lack of knowledge to go to the right source of information. He feels that they must overcome that barrier before getting the senior learners to be more interested. The director may be correct and perhaps informational sessions where the lecturers were given a basic computer and Internet orientation may enhance participation in the research activities.

Another issue was the deviation from the original strategy which would have had the instructor at the workplace at regularly scheduled hours. This did not happen because learners communicate with SIG leader and members through internal e-mailing system. It would be interesting to have guidance and assistance among peers and ascertain if there is a change in participation such as werstch (1991) found that the impact life/education advisors (education and career guidance counsellors) had on participation in the education and training opportunities in the UAW-Ford Education, Training, and Development Program.

Summary of the Findings and Analysis
 To summarize the chapter, the interviews were done on 20 respondents on their views and opinions on lifelong learning in particular in universities have been identified. There variables are 1) motivation with other related issues such as job related motives, skills related motives, personal motives, relationship/family motives, educational progressive motives and miscellaneous, 2) learning style to see learning styles options; 3) barriers to learning with issues such as personal/lifestyle issues, and workplace learning issues; 4) perceptions of learners; and lastly 5) progression issues. All of these variables give implication to lifelong learning in an organization. Based on the analysis done, we can now identify the barriers to lifelong learning and will be well equipped to handle any issues pertaining to the matter.

Discussion
Objective One: The Work Settings and Lifelong Learning
Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that work setting has influence on the perception of lifelong learning. A positive response would be a work setting that is supportive and conducive in presenting learning to the learners. However, a negative perception would be a work setting that did not provide enough equipment and facilities to learners to engage in learning. These perceptions will influence the attitudes that learners have towards learning in an organization. Despite the weaknesses and confusions of current policies or situations that organizations had to prepare for learners, there have been significant shifts in policies and these require interrogation; and there have been major changes in the ways in which management approach learning. Support in terms of morale and financial were given in exchange of the lack of equipment faced by the learners.

Objective Two: The Motivational Orientation and Lifelong Learning
Based on the findings in the research, it was identified that many issues pertaining to motivational orientation of the learners. Among them are other related issues such as job related motives, skills related motives, personal motives, relationship/family motives, educational progressive motives and miscellaneous. Since lifelong learning was seen through work environment, the major attributes to learners wanting to participate in research was to fulfill their job requirements. Work environment has always been seen as a major extrinsic motivation to push an individual to upgrade his/her skills. A learner's motivational orientation to life and work could ensure that they would participate in lifelong learning in order to gain knowledge and develop capabilities. Learning continually throughout life is vital if learners are to make informed choices about their lives and the societies in which they live in. However, there is confusion between professional development and lifelong learning.

Objective Three: The Personal Demands and Lifelong Learning
Based on the findings in the research, the personal demands, such as motivation with other related issues, such as relationship/family issues and personal/lifestyle issues, could affect learning in adults. Personal demands give different perceptions towards learning. Depending on individual needs learning is either seen a personal development or professional development. Learners demand not to be left alone when involved in learning. They need guidance from a mentor and support from peers. Individualization meant that access to social support mechanisms has weakened.

Objective Four: The Barriers to Lifelong Learning
Based on the findings in the research, barriers to learning can be recognized from the internal and external perspectives. Internal issues such as personal motives, lifestyle issues and perceptions of learners relate to why learners did not participate in learning. In addition, external issues such as job related motives, skills-related motives, relationship/family motives, educational progressive motives, learning styles options, learning issues and progression issues contribute to fewer participants in the learning activities. Lifelong learning is now a mechanism for exclusion and control in organizations. As well as facilitating development, it has created new and powerful inequalities. There are issues around access to knowledge; and individualization. In knowledge-based economy, those who have the lowest levels of skill and the weakest capacity for constant updating are less and less likely to find intellectual and career advancement.

Conclusions and Recommendations
This research highlights key barriers to lifelong learning among educators, focusing on motivation, learning styles, personal circumstances, and individual perceptions. The findings reveal several important insights: universities must recognize that learners have diverse motivations. While most participants (55%) focus on job-related goals, many prioritize building self-confidence and developing skills in areas where they feel weak. Effective lifelong learning programs should appeal to these varied motivations through personalized approaches. Personal guidance and peer collaboration are crucial for success, with direct contact proving most effective in overcoming learning barriers. Organizations should address workplace and personal obstacles that prevent participation, particularly a lack of confidence and heavy workloads, by developing targeted strategies to remove these barriers.

Recommendations for Future Research

We concluded that further studies should investigate whether:

1) Better workplace communication between colleagues and management increases participation in employer-sponsored learning programs
2) Leadership involvement boosts engagement in company-provided educational opportunities
3) On-site instructors improve participation rates in workplace learning initiatives
4) Workplace-based educational programs reduce employees' perceived barriers to learning
5) Participating in employer-sponsored workplace education affects employee attitudes and behaviors

We feel that these research directions could provide valuable insights for developing more effective organizational learning cultures.

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