INFLUENCE OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING ON THE ACADEMIC RESEARCH ABILITY OF CHINESE UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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The study explores how continuous learning behaviors influence the academic research ability of Chinese university teachers and suggests context-specific management strategies. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory, it employed quantitative methods, surveying 322 teachers across China's eastern, central, and western regions via stratified random sampling. The research used descriptive statistics, linear regression, and between-group difference analysis to test hypotheses.Key findings indicate that frequent Self-Directed Learning significantly boosts academic competence. A blended learning mode (combining online and offline methods) most effectively enhances research output. Resource inputs, such as training funds and digital libraries, indirectly bolster academic competence by fulfilling teachers' needs for autonomy and competence. Notably, regional disparities in resource availability impact learning outcomes, with eastern region teachers achieving 18% higher results than their central and western counterparts due to better resource access.However, the study acknowledges limitations, including potential sample coverage bias and the challenge of drawing causal inferences from cross-sectional data. Future research should incorporate longitudinal tracking as well as mixed methods to deepen understanding of technology-enabled mechanisms and conduct cross-cultural comparisons. This would offer localized empirical support for global teacher development theories.Overall, the study offers a systematic approach to fostering university teachers' professional growth, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education). It provides a practical model for the connotative development of higher education in China and contributes to global education governance.

Keywords - Continuous Self-Directed Learning (SDL), University Teachers, Academic Research Ability, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Regional Educational Resource Disparities