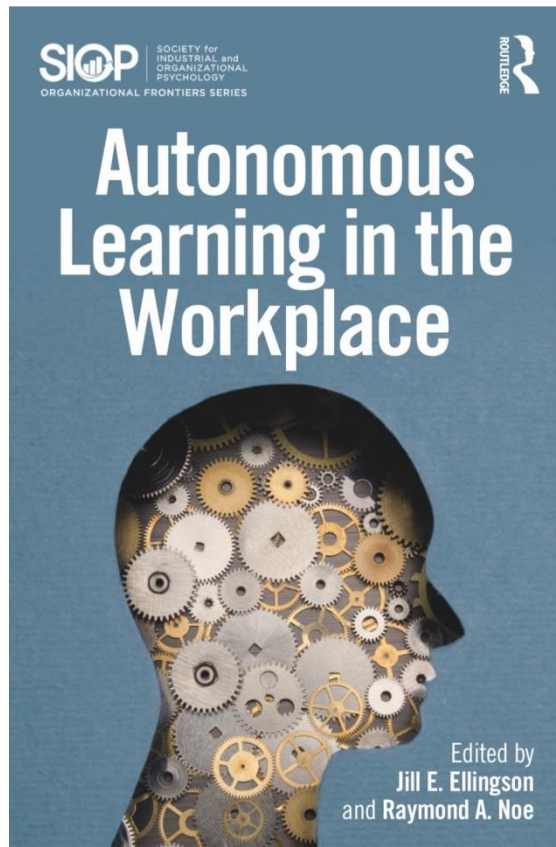## BOOK REVIEW: AUTONOMOUS LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE

Jill E. E. and Raymond A. N (2017)
New York, NY: Routledge

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Introduction

What are difference between formal and informal training and development (T&D)? Formal training development in organization have invested in T&D the programs to insure employees have the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to perform their current job as well as to prepare them for future positions and career opportunities. Formal T&D activities have specific goals, learning objectives, assessment instruments, and expectations with specific courses and events, including classroom instruction, on-line courses, college degree programs, and mentorship programs which are systematically designed and organized by a company. They can set the strategies of human capital and enhancing the firm's ability to attract, motivate, and retain talented employees and they can contribute to and align with business goals. For the reasons of learning sustainability both of formal and informal learning reflected by "Autonomous Learning in the Workplace" attention is shifting to how employees are developing their skills and acquiring

knowledge outside of formal training and development programs.

The key concepts emerge with two points. First, they pointed out of methods of learning in formal and informal learning that made them to have the greater awareness that learning in the workplace involves more than just attending formal training and development events, courses, and programs. Second, the individual differences and contextual factors such as self-regulation, self-directed learning that have influence to use of autonomous learning and how to evaluate its effectiveness.

What is Autonomous Learning?

The conceptualization of autonomous learning can define as following; First, autonomous learning is *voluntary*, meaning it effort toward individual learning. Second, autonomous learning involves *unstructured* experiences. Third, autonomous learning generates *human capital*. The domains of T&D include employee development, self-development, self-directed learning, voluntary employee development, workplace learning, and informal learning. Employee development refers to "the expansion of an individual's capacity to function of human capital development or future job and work organization". These also include workplace and workforce characteristics, greater awareness of the value of human capital for competitive advantage, advances in technology, and increased emphasis on learner- rather than instructor-driven instruction. The autonomous learning points out four additional parts, each of which provides a unique perspective on autonomous learning as following;

Part I: Autonomous Learning: An Evolution toward Technology-Enabled, Learner-Driven, Social, and Experiential Learning, in "Agency in Vicarious Learning at Work," Myers and DeRue investigate how individuals engage in vicarious learning from others' experiences at work. They present a social learning theory-based framework of the conditions that enable an argentic vicarious learning process. The more agentic at work, which focus on learning such as specific actors, greater emphasis on enacted learning process. The mechanisms of learning focus on active, deliberative mechanism, learning as international adaptation of practices. "Developing Cultural Intelligence through autonomous Learning from Cultural Exposure" by Li emphasizes that cultural exposure is a form of autonomous learning that facilitates the development of one's ability to work effectively with people from other cultures. Based on experiential learning theory by Kolb's model (1984) with four experiential modes: (1) concrete experience (2) reflective observation (3) abstract conceptualization (4) active experiment this chapter emphasizes that the breadth and depth of cultural experience is key for developing cultural intelligence. Learning from failure is another possible way autonomous learning occurs. Seckler, Funken, and Gielnik point out specifically on how entrepreneurs learn from failure. In "Learning from Entrepreneurial Failure: EMC model, Integrating Emotional, Motivational, and Cognitive Factors," they outline how the experience of failure produces short-term and long-term emotional reactions which in turn influence entrepreneurs' motivation to learn from the experience. They point out that error management mindset is a critical factor in determining whether failure will lead to growth, assessment, and development on the one hand or frustration, helplessness, and stagnancy, on the other. Cordery and Wenzel in "Organizational Communities of Practice and Autonomous Learning" describe organizational communities of

practice as vehicles for employee autonomous learning. They explain how learning takes place within these unstructured groups, and what organizations should do to facilitate the development and maintenance of these communities as central means to exchange and grow knowledge. The last two chapters in this part highlight the critical role of self-regulation in autonomous learning. In "Regulating Our Own Learning: Stuff You Did Not Realize You Needed to Know", Vancouver, Halper, and Bayes describe the roles that self-assessment of needs, deciding how to allocate cognitive resources, choice of a learning method, and progress assessment play in autonomous learning these related learning in organization and social cognitive theories. "Strategies for Supporting Self-Regulation during Self-Directed Learning in the Workplace" by Bell critically examines the features, boundary conditions, and effectiveness of self-regulation strategies, including prompting, cultivating, and guiding strategies, that the individuals can use to regulate autonomous learning.

Part II: Organizational and Societal Influences Shaping Autonomous Learning, the contents address individual, job/firm, and broader environmental factors that facilitate or inhibit individuals' decisions to engage in different types of autonomous learning. Parker explains the work design growth model for the importance of job design as a way to induce autonomous learning that model shows how work characteristics promote learning and Development." This conceptual model provides a systematic framework for understanding how job and task features combine to change the learning aspects of work and thus promote cognitive, self, and moral development. For human resource management practices have an important influence on individual's behavior in

organizations, too. In "Effects of Human Resource Management on Informal Learning," Sanders, Yang, Shipton, and Bednall discuss the role of bundles of HR practices, HR strength, and high performance work practices in facilitating individual and collaborative informal learning and innovative behavior. Informal learning activities and collaborative learning activities, they refer to the learning part of individual learning, reflection on daily activities, keeping up-to-date, collaborative informal learning, and seeking feedback from supervisors. Beier, Torres, and Gilberto outline the key stages in a career and how autonomous learning and its determinants change across these stages in "Continuous Development throughout a Career: A Lifespan Perspective on Autonomous Learning." In "How Do Conditions Known to Foster Learning in the Workplace Differ across Occupations?" Kyndt and Beausaert discuss the work context and learning conditions that influence informal learning. The dimensions and learning conditions refer to dimension 1: on- or off-the-job-learning, dimension 2: formal or informal learning, dimension 3: role of facilitators, dimension 4: role of peers, and dimension 3: proactive role of learner. Telford, Fletcher, and Bedwell shift the conversation to the potentially negative effects of autonomous learning in "Informal Learning and the Healthcare Industry: The Detrimental Effects of a Hidden Curriculum." They emphasize that healthcare workers must rely on autonomous learning to acquire the values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors deemed acceptable and implicitly endorsed within the culture of the medical profession. This "hidden curriculum" is a powerful force which can have negative or unintended effects on employees' choices and development over time. The last chapter in this part, "The Medium is the Message: On the Emergence

of Autonomous Learning, MOOCs, and Technology- Enabled Active Learning" by Billsberry and Brown, also offers a critical assessment. They argue that the rise in technology-enhanced learning has a dark underbelly, namely it is one of many factors shifting the responsibility of teaching and training to individuals and away from nation states, universities, and organizations. This societal, even global, trend implies that autonomous learning has a number of costs to stakeholders that must be recognized.

Part III: Effectiveness and Value of Autonomous Learning, in "Failing to Learn from Feedback: Inter- and Intrapersonal Roadblocks to Autonomous Learning," Williams and Ehrlinger discuss the critical role that high-quality feedback plays in effective autonomous learning. Taking a counterpoint perspective, they outline the numerous ways in which feedback rendered during autonomous learning may be deficient to this task. Their discussion raises important questions about how effective autonomous learning really is at producing skill development. Ployhart, Call, and McFarland propose that effective autonomous learning contributes to the development of a company's human capital resources. In "Autonomous Learning, Human Capital Resources, and Value Capture," they argue that autonomous learning can and should lead to individual performance improvement. the organization's perspective, autonomous learning needs to create value, and the organization needs to take action to capture that value.

Finally, in *Part VI: Closing Comment*, Kurt Kraiger provides his perspective on the different chapters, autonomous learning in general, and offers directions for future research. He touches on the many different terms and definitions related to autonomous learning to highlight key elements. He

reflects on a variety of individual and organizational factors that influence autonomous learning. And, he astutely points out the need for more research on the effects and outcomes of autonomous learning for both individuals and organizations. To conclude, we are excited by the contributions brought together in this volume. The chapters make clear that autonomous learning is a pervasive phenomenon, one that leads to ability and skill development as a function of a variety of factors. Clearly, we still have much to learn, but the landscape for future research on autonomous learning is rich and dynamic. We look forward to seeing how future research evolves and hope the ideas discussed in this volume excite and engage scholars toward their own autonomous learning about autonomous learning.

Conclusion

The autonomous learning in the workplace is an important and emerging area where practice is evolving and innovating. Learning in the workplace involves more than just attending formal training and development events, courses, and programs. Employees learn informally, through talking with colleagues, searching the internet, watching videos, and even taking free on-line courses offered by educational providers that are not affiliated with or sanctioned by their employer. There are a variety of autonomous learning "methods" discussed in the popular press and practitioner journals, such as T&D, that individuals are using to acquire knowledge and skills, including Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), informal learning, communities of practice, social media, and even YouTube videos. As a result, they describe a variety of disciplines including management, education, and industrial/organizational psychology to provide their perspectives and insights on

autonomous learning. This volume will provide a useful starting point for readers to understand autonomous learning as well as to stimulate research that can inform practice about how to best design and create conditions for effective autonomous learning.