IMPORTANCE OF SELF–MANAGEMENT AND FUTURE RESEARCH THOUGHTS: A CRITICAL REVIEW PERSPECTIVE

Article · July 2020

1 author:

Thuduwage Lasanthika Sajeevanie
University of Sri Jayewardenepura
63 PUBLICATIONS   **127** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-MANAGEMENT AND FUTURE RESEARCH THOUGHTS: A CRITICAL REVIEW PERSPECTIVE

[1] T.L.Sajeevanie

[1] Senior Lecturer

[1] Department of Human Resource Management

[1] University of Sri Jayewardenepura,
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Abstract

Self-management has very broad meaning and its gives many benefits to the human beings. However, majority of the people has not identified the importance of self-management. They always try to manage others. The most important part is first we should manage our self then we should try to manage others. The main purpose of this study is to emphasis the importance of self-management and several future research suggestions have been identified. These future research suggestions may help to find research problems for researchers in this area. Based on the analysis of the existing literature the researcher of this study has introduced a model for self-management. According to that model, self-management consists with many very important components called: self-care management, self-mastering, self-quality management, self-career management, self-finance management, self-development, self-marketing management, self-disciplinary management, and self- performance management. In addition to that, the researcher has introduced a conceptual framework in order to test empirically to establish the relationship between self-management and Self-performance, and to identify the mediating role of self-competency on that relationship. More over the researcher of the study has directed some future research suggestions, specially in the area of strategic self-management.

Index Terms: Future research thoughts, Importance, Self-Management, Strategic Self-Management

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Most of the existing literature on self-management has been address the medical definition on self-management. That mean, they address self-care management as self-management. In reality, self-management is broader concept and self-care management comes under self-management. It is very critical to understand that self-management with very broad meaning. Specially, as human beans we have to get the proper outcome from our life. In addition, we have to understand the aims, goals, and objectives of our life. Every person in the world should identify the main objective/s of his or her life. This is the most important or critical part of self-management. Hence, it is critical to identify the importance of self-management. Self-management refers to the behavior that an individual must adopt to see the desired change in his or her life and at the workplace (Alsemgeest et al, 2017, p. 79). Botha & Musengi (2012, 73) has explained self-management as undertaking activities that complement personal attributes such as honesty, trustworthiness and reliability. On the other hand, self-management means individuals manage their own behavior by setting personal standards, evaluating their performance in terms of these standards, and by self-administering consequences based on their self-evaluations (Manz and Sims, 1980).

1.2 Purposes and Objectives

Everybody pay attention on 'management' relevant to managing others. However, no body or few people pay attention on how to manage themselves. The purposes of this study are, conducting a conceptual study on the importance of self-management and identifying future research areas to encourage future researchers to conduct studies on the area of self-management.

The objectives of this study are to identify what is self-management; to find out the importance of self-management; to develop a model of self-management and to identify some future research directions on the area of self-management.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Self-Management

Stent and Staden (2018) has mentioned self-management is an essential managerial competency and entails taking responsibilities for one's own actions and behavior. Another important point they have stated is managers who do not have effective self-management competencies may affect the organizations performances adversely. As Opatha (2010), self-management refers to a deliberate and systematic attempt to plan and control a person's life for achieving his or her life goals without wasting time, energy, and available resources. Furthermore he has defined as " the totality knowledge, attitudes, skills, techniques and systems that assist you to plan and control your precious life to achieve what you want as a person of good personal quality" (p.117).

In other words, self-management is a process that begins with monitoring and evaluating one's behavior followed by reinforcing improvements in one's performance (Hughes and Lloyd, 1993, p. 409). (Goldfried and Merbaum, 1973, p. 12) have defined self-managements "a personal decision arrived at through conscious deliberation for the purpose of integrating action which is designed to achieve certain desired outcomes or goals as determined by the individual himself". Hetlriegel et al (2013, 53) has identified self-management as a managerial competency involves ethical conduct and integrity, personal drive and resilience, self-awareness and self-development as well as work-life balance. Forst (2014) has identified self-management competency as self-development and self-awareness. The author has explained self-awareness as a continuous venture; being able to question yourself at any specific point in time is built upon large amount of self-awareness, self-development experience.

Self-management is the taking of responsibility for one's own behavior and well-being and it is the competence to shape one's personal and professional development independently without external influences. Petor Drucker author of the book 'managing oneself' has mentioned 'knowledge workers must effectively be their own chief executive officers'. Alvernaz in year 2019 has explained as 'you are both a company and a manager' and further she has explained as 'your body and mind personify the company through its beliefs and physiological qualities. Your behavior and how you handle your decisions to bring this business to prosper represents your role as a manager'. On the other hand, self-management include self- control, self-regulation and self-determination (Hughes and Lloyd, 1993).

In generally, self-management is the ability to prioritize goals, decide what must be done, and be accountable to complete the necessary actions. Complete self-management involves for realms: physical, mental, social and spiritual. Self-mastering also can be identified as relevant concept to self- Management. However, individual leaning does not guarantee organizational leaning. Organizations learn only through individuals who learn (Senge, 1990). According to Senge (1990) personal mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively. It is about beyond competence and skills, although it involves them. In addition, it is about beyond spiritual opening, although it involves spiritual growth. The most important point is people with high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode. Personal mastering, is not a something you possess, it is a process. Moreover, it is a lifelong discipline. Most advantage is people with a high level of personal mastery are aware their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. In addition, they are deeply self-confident. The five that Peter Singe (1994) identifies are said to be converging to innovate learning organizations. They are Systems thinking, Personal Mastery, Mental models, Building shared vision, Team learning. Systems theory's ability to comprehend and address the whole and to examine the interrelationship between the parts provides, for Peter Senge, both the incentive are the means to integrate the disciplines. Even in the organizational context manager's tasks mainly involve with enabling employees to work together with a view to accomplish specific goals and objectives (Stent and Staden, 2018). Self-management of employees makes them more dedicated their work. Moreover, self-management of employees contributes in organizational success (Ghali at el. 2018).

There are variety of terms have been used to describe self-regulatory process such as self-management, self-leadership, self-reinforcement, and behavioral self-management (BSM). BSM has been defined as 'deliberate regulation of stimulus cues, covert processes, and response consequence to achieve personally identified behavioral outcome' (Saks and Ashforth, 1996, p. 303). Individuals who practice BSM have been found to display greater levels of performance,

motivation and are better able to manage and cope with obstacles (Saks & Ashforth). As they mentioned self-management related to cognitive, affective and behavioral outcomes. They have identified few studies on investigating self-management in organizational settings. The authors have quoted Aldag et al (1983) self-reinforcement has positively related to job involvement and several factors of job satisfaction. Recently BSM has received a considerable amount of attention in research on training. Self-management training intervention improved trainee's acquisition and maintaining of complex interpersonal skills.

According to the study done by Stent and Staden (2018, p.9) top and middle level managers had well to very good level of self-management competencies. These included integrity and ethical conduct, personal drive and resilience, work-life balance and self-awareness of self-development. Findings of this study they have concluded 'if managers have a good knowledge of the identified competencies and associated key elements thereof, they can enhance personal as well as business, performance'.

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

Bergen, et al (2002) have cited Luthans and Davis 1979, p.43 as "Research and writing in the management field have given a great deal of attention to managing societies, organizations, groups, and individuals. Strangely, almost no one has paid any attention to managing oneself more effectively….. Self-management seems to be a basic prerequisite for effective management of other people, groups, organizations and societies". Self-management skills allow to maximize our productivity, improve our workplace performance efficiently achieve professional goals. In addition to that, self-management skills can help to increase our employability and better management of our career path. In broadly, self-management consist with self- disciplinary management, self-marketing management, self-finance management, self-career management, self-quality management, self-mastering, and self-care management. These all parts are the totality of our life. If we properly manage these areas of our lives that mean we are totally, successful. The importance of self-management is can be identified in different ways. The most important one is almost all workers are suffering serious stress. Hence, as Alvernaz (20190 pointed out self-management support to become self-aware. This achieve our goals and objectives. If we know how to manage our self, then we will recognize the impact of emotion and thoughts on given action. This will supports us to be more responsible and equipped to evaluate our work and determine the ways to proceed.

Not only are the above mention direct benefits of self-management, some authors have mentioned, there are some indirect benefits. When the employees highlighting their self-management skills appropriately then the employers can give due recognition. Employees can and do take an active role in regulating their performance (Bergen, Soper and Gaster, 2002) In other way, candidates can include specific self-management skills on their resume. Further they can elaborate on how it can be used them to improve their productivity or efficiency. Even at the interview, the candidate can use his or her self-management skills to build positive image and get the expected job opportunity. On the other hand, employers can include self-management practices as criteria of employee's performance evaluation. Then employees recognize the importance of practicing self-management. This leads to benefits both parties: employers and employees.

IV. THEORIES OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

Operant and cognitive explanations

In 1993 Hughes and Lioyd has mentioned Skinner (1953) is the first theorist to propose an operant view of the self-management paradigm. Skinner, Rachlin and others who base self-management on operant principles typically focus their analyses on individuals' controlling and concomitant controlled responses. In contrast, the cognitive explanation of self-management suggests the occurrence of two steps: (a) first, the assessment of and decision to control one's behavior followed by (b) the actual self-controlling response (Hughes and Lloyd, 1993, p. 409). They further has explained that Self-management is a process that begins with monitoring and evaluating one's behavior followed by reinforcing improvements in one's performance. Although there are differences between these two concepts, there are some similarities, such as both views arose from s behavioural perspective, not from a psychoanalytic or other non-empirical tradition. In addition, both views accepts self-management as not a trait. On the other hand, both views accepts individuals can acquire greater facility in exercising self-management. Hence it can be identified some differences between operant and cognitive perspectives on Self-Management. However, there are some similarities between the operant and cognitive perspective on self-management. As explained by Hughes and Lioyd (1993) both views arose from a behavioral perspective, not from a psychoanalytic or other non-empirical tradition. Moreover, they have pointed out both views, self-management is not a trait and individuals can acquire greater facility in exercising self-management.

V. SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Self-management skills are the ability that allow people to control their thoughts, feelings and actions. In other words if you have strong self-management skills you are able to set goals independently and take the initiative to achieve them. There can be identified many self-management skills: stress management skills, time management skills, organizing skills, problem-solving skills, decision making skills, self-confidence, and self-controlling skills. Self-motivation is the ability to take initiative and finish our tasks, as those should be completed. When we are self-motivated, we anticipate and plan for potential tasks needed to achieve more significant assignments or to solve ongoing issues. Self-motivation is the side of self-management that ensures forward progress with your projects and activities. Studies have shown that stress can hamper balanced logical thinking, much needed for decision-making (Acharyya, 2017). Proactively managing workplace stressors can help us remain calm on the job. Handling stress before it becomes an issue allows us to focus on our goals emotions and maintain a professional behavior in the workplace. Time management becomes quite inherent if we are able to train yourself to become efficient (Acharyya, 2017). We can apply our organizational skills to manage our time, physical space, energy and mental capabilities to establish neatness and improve functionality. If we are well organized, then we are able to plan, prioritize and execute important activities. Clean the piles of paperwork from your desk and the icon traffic from your desktop. Organizing our lives. Neatly labeled hard a soft folders will bring a sense of order in your life (Acharyya, 2017). It is one of our main responsibilities to use facts and unbiased assumptions, analyze different situations, and reach fair solutions. The problem solving skills are common to our personal lives and professional lives. Throughout our lives, we have to face problems. Hence, the ability to solve the problems is very critical success factor of self-management. It is our responsibility to take firm and faithful decisions. Hence, one of the most important self-management skills is decision-making ability. Moreover, self-confidence is another very important self-management skill. We need to be confident about our abilities. It may supports to achieve our goals and objectives. Accountability is the act of taking personal ownership of your thoughts and actions. Therefore, accountability is a very important self-management skill.

5.1 How to Improve Self-Management Skills

Ochs (2017) has mentioned three simple strategies to improve our self-management skills. They are manage your breath, activate your strengths, and consider your beliefs. Self-Management techniques can be identified as self-observation, goal specification, cueing strategies, incentive modification, and rehearsal. Organizational learners can help subordinates to develop their self-management skills. As explained by Frayne and Geringer (2000) training in self-management skills significantly improved job performance as assessed through both objective and subjective measures. Several self-management skills can be presented as assess your strengths, Prioritize your responsibilities, Develop organization system (This mean you should have information system with you regarding time management, streamline your daily activities), Create strict deadlines (Assess death line of all-important works and another important test is to maintain your schedule). Moreover, perform one task at a time (another important part is complete each task fully before moving on to another), Practice patience (this helps to think clearly and objectively). In addition, Take care of your health and wellness, having a proper diet, exercise regularly; care for your personal hygiene and managing stress are very significant. Also evaluate your progress; it is very significant to assess the progress of achievement of the goals. Get a support from a mentor to assist the appraisal. Use this feedback to improve your self-management going forward. Some authors have pointed out a few ways to improve the self-management skills. They can be explained as follows;

- Assessing the strengths
  Understanding strengths helps to manage the career path.
- Prioritize the responsibilities
  Clearly define which responsibilities are most important, and focus your attention on the most critical activities.
- Develop organizational systems
  Find effective methods that help to manage the time, streamline the daily activities and keep important items in easy- to find places. This step can be completed using an agenda book, setting up a time-management app on a phone or creating a filing system at a desk.
- Creat a strict deadline
  Assign deadline to each stage of project and maintain a schedule.

On the other hand, it is such important to practice proper management activities in the workplace.
- Arrive at the meeting on time and fully prepared

  It is your responsibility to respect for your time and others time. Hence, presence at time is important and proper preparation for the meeting also important.

- Plan for the next day before leaving work.
  Leave time at the end of each working day to organize your calendar, and write a new to-do-list or organize your planner to include tasks to complete the next day. You can also use this time to review what you did accomplish to see how successful you were in reaching your daily goals.
- Keep an organized agenda

Maintain a detailed schedule of events, deadlines or meetings. You can use planner, organizer or task-tracking application to organize these items.

VI. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Having identifying the importance of self-management the author of this study would like to introduce the following model on self-management, figure no one. Accordingly, Self-management can be defined as collection of self-disciplinary management, self-performance management, self-care management, self-learning management, self-quality management, self-career management, self-finance management, self-development and self-marketing management. As discussed above the area of self-management has not been defined properly. In addition, it has not been identified the importance of self-management even with in the management field. Moreover, self-management is not limited to management field. It is relevant to everybody in the world. Hence, the author of this study would like to propose every academic fields should pay their attention on self- management practices of the personnel in their organizations. It may be either in medical, manufacturing, educational, forces, farming etc. Not only employees even school children, university students and all other people in the society should aware and practice the self-management properly. Ultimately, the benefits or results of self-management practices will gain not only for the relevant person but also for the entire country and to the world.
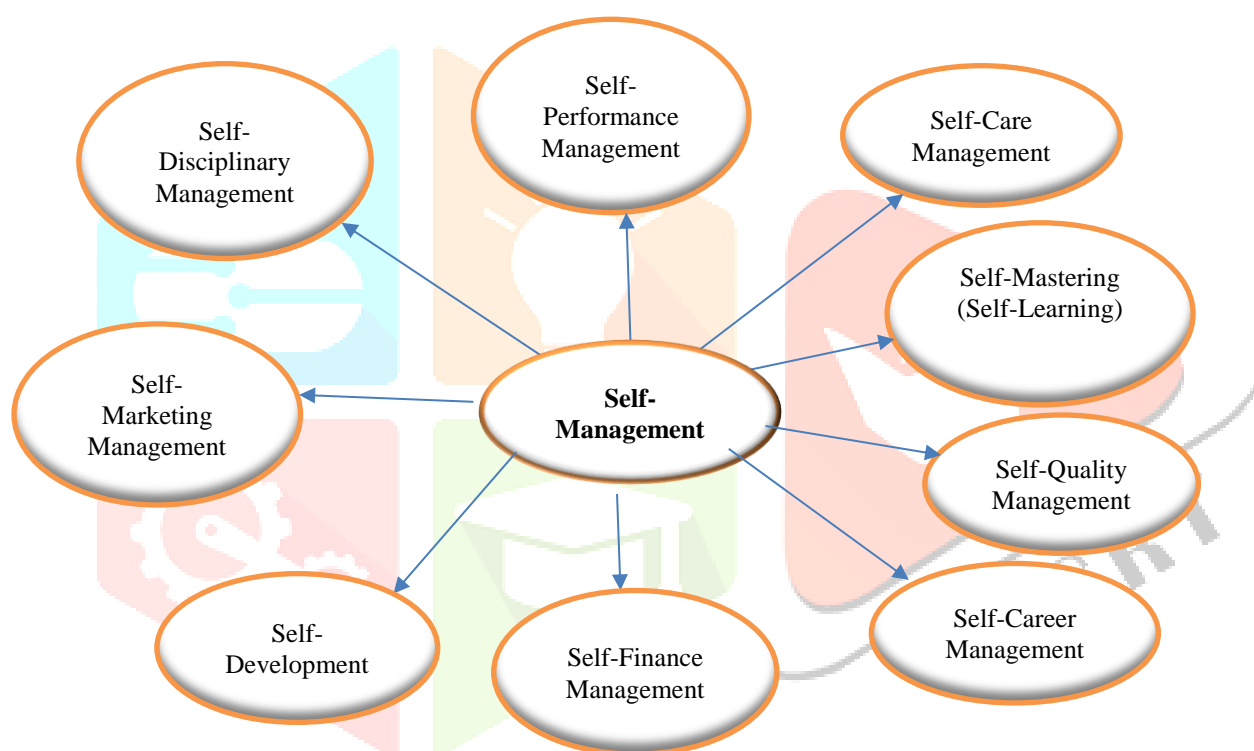

Figure 01: A Model of Self-Management

VII. IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS

As implications, the researcher would like to propose everybody should inculcate the self-management practices to our lives. This will leads to enhance our personal life and professional life success. Similarly, through practicing self-management we can reduce the stress level from our lives. Then, this will positively affect maintaining our mental and physical health. Most significant limitation of this study is it has not done any empirical study. Hence, the researcher has suggested to future researchers to conduct empirical studies on these area. Future researchers can conduct studies to identify the impact of self-management on individual success or performances, which can be identified as self-performance. Author of this study would like to propose following conceptual model (Figure: 2) in order to test empirically to establish the relationship between self-management and self-performance, and to identify the mediating role of self-competency on that relationship.
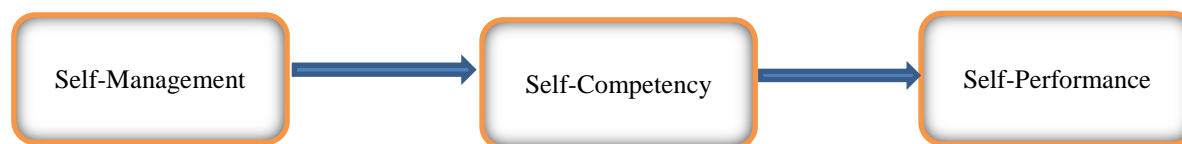
Figure 2: A conceptual framework on Self-management, self-competency and Self-performance developed by the author

Finally, the study would like to propose, future researchers would be able to do studies relating to Strategic Self – Management. Currently there are very few studies on this area. Those studies will helps to develop the literature on Strategic Self-Management. Moreover, the implications of the studies will enhance the success of human lives. They can set their goals and objectives properly and achieve these objectives while minimizing their vices and maximizing their virtues. When majority of the people in the world practicing this Strategic Self-Management practices, it will be a support to the development of the world.

REFERENCES

[1] Acharrryya, R. 2017. Self management skills every manager should have www.careerizma.com/blog/self-management-skills

[2] Alsemgeest, L., Booysen, K., Bosch, A., Boshoft, S., Betha, S., and P. Cunninghum. 2017. Introduction to business management. Fresh Perspective, Pearson, Cape Town.

[3] Bergen, C.W.V., Soper, B., and Gaster, B. 2002. Effective Self-Management Techniques. Journal of Business & Entrepreneurship. 14(2): 1-13.

[4] Botha, S. and Musengi, S. 2012. Introduction to business management; Fresh perspective, Peason. Cape Town.

 [5] Ghali, I.A.A., Habeeb, L.M. and Khitam, I. 2018. Self-Management and it's Relation to organizational Excellence. International journal of Engineering & Technology. 7(4.7): 47-52.

[6] Goldfried, M.R. and Merbaum, M. 1973. A perspective on self-control. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

[7] Hellriegel, D., Slocum, J. Jackson, S.E., Louw, L., Staude, a., Amos, T. 2013. Management, 4th edu, Oxford university press, Cope Town.

[8] Hughes, C. and Lioyd, J.W. 1993. An Analysis of Self-Management. Journal of Behavioral Education. Vol. 5(4): 405-425.

[9] Manz, C.C and Sims, H.P. 1980. Self-Management as a Substitute for leadership: A Social Learning Theory Perspective. Academy of Management Review. 5(3).

[10] Opatha, H.H.D.N.P. 2010. Personal Quality. Author publication, Colombo, Sri Lanka

[11] Steyn, Z. and Staden, L,J. 2018. 'Investigating selected self-management competencies of managers'. Independent research journal in the management sciences. 18(1): 1-10.