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Evaluation Form

Reviewer Information

First Name: REDACTED
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Date of Evaluation Submission: REDACTED

Originality and Significance of the Contribution: *(Does the manuscript clearly explain its mission and coverage?)*

Overall, I think this is a fantastic topic and would be a very timely addition to the literature. In the U.S., at least, we are on the cusp of pendulum swing in the view of education from a very curriculum centered view to a learner centered view. Authors who address this change now will be in a good position to lead the change and influence the practices of education.

With that said, I have a few concerns about the background information as it is presented in this manuscript. My biggest concern is that I think the developmental aspect of education and learning has been left out of the model. The convergence of cognitive and curricular theories provide a great starting point for looking at self-directed learning – but the literature review seems to skip from adults to gifted 5th graders without ever addressing the idea of developmental progressions in learning. I would suggest adding early childhood theorists such as Montessori to the discussion and thinking about self-directed learning in terms of child development as the third influence on your project. I would also love to see more discussion of SDL vs. SRL and balancing the theoretical perspective on SDL with some practical research pieces – what does this actually look like in schools?

Interest to the Research Community and/or Practitioners: *(How useful is the material to the field?)*

I think the target audience is more clearly researchers than educators, though I think that with some supplemental case studies it can be tremendously useful for both.

I cannot speak for the international audience, but it is well-timed for the U.S. market, there is a need for learner centered theories and for the first time in a very long time, there is a recognition that our standards and curriculum centered education process is not working. This could be one of the texts that brings about real change in how students are educated.

Coverage of Existing Literature: *(Does the literature review contain relevant information in support of the manuscript?)*

I have suggested several areas where the references could be more inclusive, mostly in the area of child development and specifically Montessori.

I did notice that the references seemed somewhat dated, but as the author is describing a view of learning that was

last practiced in the 1990's, I question if there are updated references to include? There may be smaller studies or case studies that should be included in the supplemental/follow-up manuscript. Most likely they are from conferences and smaller journals, as the field has largely ignored SDL for some time.

Satisfactoriness of the Methodology, Analysis, and Comprehension: *(Does the manuscript contain a detailed explanation of research methods and procedures?)*

The manuscript as presented is a well-timed, strong addition to the literature. We have seen a very curriculum, data-driven approach to education within the U.S. and the failure of that model to create thoughtful, critically thinking adults is now apparent to the entire world. There is need for clearly structured studies and resources to support the move to a learner centered approach. This manuscript will fill a void in the published literature.

I realize as I go through my notes, that I have very little in the way of changes, and a great deal of suggestions for 'more' – I want the author to add practical pieces and a developmental rationale. I think there is a great deal of need for this work in the current climate of education.

I'd like to see more in the area of culturally diverse schools and SDL. The author mentions that it can be effective in such contexts but does not go into specifics. In terms of the book being useful, it would be more so as a course text or supplemental reading if there were more practical case studies attached. If this does not fit the scope of the manuscript, I would suggest a supplement – either in press or online – with this kind of practical information. I think university professors would use both resources.

Also, this is clearly a presentation of the authors' work and multiple research studies, but there is little technical information about peer review or university permission. I'd like to see, perhaps in an addendum, where the work has been presented so far and how it complies with research guidelines.

Specifically, an area I have great concern is the use of Raven's Matrices as a measure of cognitive reasoning. Best practice would indicate a more updated view of cognitive reasoning – most standardized tests are outdated within twenty years (at least, according to school psychology guidelines in the U.S.) and this one appears to also use norms from 2000, which is problematic. Regardless, the process of inquiry that the authors' used should be outlined for the readers to fulfill the 'high-quality' resource piece of the review.

Clear, Concise, and Jargon-Free Writing: *(Does the manuscript clearly state the issues being addressed?)*

Yes, all pertinent issues are clearly addressed (see major strengths).

Organizational Structure: *(Is the manuscript clearly organized in a logical fashion? Are the author's conclusions supported by the research?)*

I might suggest moving the section on external influence/school environments into its own chapter. Right now it is addressed briefly in one chapter and then again in a separate chapter. I think it warrants two chapters to address that idea fully.

Major Weaknesses: *(List some of the major weaknesses of the manuscript)*

I simply want more from the author. I think the topic is a wonderful addition to the literature and I would push strongly for a supplemental or perhaps a follow-up manuscript with the practical or case study type of resources that would add to the base set by this work. It may simply be beyond the scope of this initial manuscript to do everything I would like it to do, but that should be seen as a positive review of the topic.

I'd like to see a developmental perspective added to the literature review. There has been a great deal of work in the early childhood field on self-directed learning under different names and I think looking at the topic from that perspective will complement the cognitive and curricular approaches already contained in the manuscript. I also think

that will help translate the ideas from adult learners or gifted learners to an entire school of children.

I want to see the process the author followed in each of the research steps. Quality research is transparent and it is important for the readers to see the process.

I have serious concerns about the use of Raven's Matrices as an outdated construct of cognitive reasoning and with potentially outdated norms.

Major Strengths: *(List some of the major strengths of the manuscript)*

The topic itself is the greatest strength of the manuscript. I have not read such a clear address of learner centered theories in a long time and it has the potential to be a core text in the coming change of educational philosophies. The ideas are thoughtfully and clearly presented and I very much liked the 'opportunities for researchers and educators' at the end of each chapter. That will be very useful.

Recommendations: *(List of suggestions for the author to consider for improving the manuscript)*

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Additional Comments to the Author:

I recommend targeting universities and professional educational organizations with the marketing of this publication. I would also recommend working on a follow-up or supplemental resource with case studies and more practical information. I would market that directly to schools.