

Study of Relationship between Organizational Culture and Organizational Learning in [Iran University of Medical Sciences Deputy Department for Development]

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Abstract: This research attempts to analyze the relationship between organizational culture and organizational Learning. The independent variable is the organizational Culture of its components are: Get involved, Compatibility, Adaptability and Mission and the dependent variable is the Management Commitment, Perspective, opening workspace and experiences, and Transfer and integration of knowledge. The population of the research staff Department of Medical Sciences, Iran comprise that sample consisted is 300 individuals. Sample size of 169 patients was obtained through Cochran formula. Data collection method is included questionnaires Dennison and questionnaire Gomes et al. Method of analysis has been done using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The results showed that there is a relationship between organizational Culture and organizational.

[Najmeh Vakili, Shahrzad Saremi. **Study of Relationship between Organizational Culture and Organizational Learning in [Iran University of Medical Sciences Deputy Department for Development.** *Researcher* 2016;8(3):8-13]. ISSN 1553-9865 (print); ISSN 2163-8950 (online). <http://www.sciencepub.net/researcher>. 2. doi:[10.7537/marsrsj08031602](https://doi.org/10.7537/marsrsj08031602).

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Organizational learning, Department of Medical Sciences, Iran

1. Introduction

Since human life is constantly subject to changes and developments, it is essential to learn how to overcome them. It has been said that those who stop learning they have indeed stopped living. The same rule holds for organizations as well. Today, organization that have traditional structures lack sufficient flexibility to keep pace with developments that are ongoing surrounding that originate from globalization. They need to either update their structures of equip themselves with instruments that can help them overcome the consequences arising from global developments. One of the most important instruments is institutionalizing the learning culture inside organization or 'turning the organization into a learning one'. Pitter Draker believes that 'knowledge' is the key to gain organizational success because value is generated through innovation and production and the two latter require knowledge. That is why from 1990s, learning was understood to be a means of power and progress. There are great varieties of factors that involve in organizational learning and can facilitate it inside the organization. Organizational culture is one of the most important of them. Organizational culture means 'a common understanding and vision that partners share'. This is a factor that differentiates two organizations from each other. Organizational culture serves as a crucial means to achieve organizational success. Culture for organization is personality in humans. Culture can integrate an organization in its course of actions towards fulfillment of it is goals. Since organizational culture forms all behaviors within organization from

personnel to manager's levels, it can influence organization's power to update and adopt strategic approaches remarkably. Without an organizational culture, it is not possible to think the organization to be learning one (Davis 1994, p. 96). Thus, the present research is going to focus on the relationship between 'organizational culture' and 'organization learning' for Iran University of Medical Sciences which suffers from organizational culture and organization learning; an issue that has faced this university with personnel dissatisfaction particularly for the promotions and payments to be made at the end of the year which has, in turn, confused them and also discouraged them to deal with clients friendly. We aim to find how 'leaning' can correct this situation and make personnel perform their duties best.

Definition of 'Culture'

Culture is a word that has very common usages. In some usage, it takes a very general meaning referring to complicated and advanced products of civilizations which include literature, art, philosophy, science and technology. In this meaning, 'culture' is a criterion by which differentiation can be made between unlearned humans (those who have no culture) and learned humans (those who enjoy culture).

'Culture' has also a peculiar meaning for anthropologists and those who study humans. For them, culture means thoughts, customs and material things. It indicates that anthropologists consider the 'culture' as a lifestyle or as an embodiment for human behaviors, so it can be realized that they think people can be classified into different groups because their

way of living can be classified into groups (Tousi 1993, p. 2).

Hafsted thinks that culture for human community is much like personality in human. Los Stras thinks of culture as a common symbolic system which has been created by human mind. Ralph Linton believes that culture is a set of thoughts, conditional responses, normal behavioral patterns and a sort of social-psychological thing. He considers it as a heritage that has passed on to us from our ancestors. He says it has two duties. It further states that it helps humans to match his position in community and surroundings (the same, p. 504).

Organization culture inspires a sense of identity for organization's members. Culture creates some commitments in personnel which are beyond personal preference and interest. Managers can deploy culture (a powerful culture) to control occupational and social performance of the personnel through unwritten laws and regulations that culture helps them to lie down.

Organizational culture is a system that comprises of values (what which is important and what which is not important) and believes (who persons act and who they don't act) which lay down behavioral norms inside the organization through its interactions with manpower, organizational structure and control system (Mamizadeh 1997).

Elsewhere it has been defined as values that a majority of members in an organization adopt and support them as a shared symbol to unite them.

Here we can stress on Bernard's theory of 'clarity of organizational culture' because he refers in his precious writings to 'unofficial organization' or what which is also known as 'culture' as an essential condition for organizational success (Poursadegh et al. 2010).

Professor Denison considers 'organizational culture' to have four characteristics each comprising of different branches (Mobli et al., 2010 p. 164). These characteristics are:

1- Practical activities (participation): which include empowering personnel (empowerment), team work (teaming) and enhancement of personnel capabilities?

2- Resemblance (compatibility or integrity): which includes crucial values, personnel satisfaction, compatibility and integrity?

3- Adjustability: which includes change towards customer-orientation and becoming a learning organization?

4- Mission or mandate: which includes strategic leadership (strategic orientation), objectives, intentions and visions (the same, p. 165).

Organizational Learning

Experts have defined 'organizational learning' in different ways. Ergris definition is one of the first ones

that were introduced by him. It focuses solely on 'process' (Ergris 1997, p. 116). It says 'organizational learning is a process of discerning and correcting errors'

After one year, Ergris in association with Shon updated the definition by adding 'individual learning' and 'organizational knowledge' to it (Ergris and Shon 199, p. 29).

Their updated definition states that 'organizational learning is achieved when members of the organization take the role of learning inside organization and respond, based on their personal understanding and organization's standards, to internal and external developments through discerning and correcting errors and recording the results of this process.

Organizational learning is a necessary precondition for organizational development. It is nothing but a process by which knowledge is learnt over time and improvement is achieved (Nejad Irani 2002, p. 107).

Faivel and Layelz think that organizational learning is a process of improvement of actions through learning knowledge and gaining deep insight (Faivel and Layelz, 2000, p. 805).

Elsewhere, Arjeris states that organization learning is fulfilled when knowledge, assumptions and visions are shared among teams and their members (Graham 2006, p. 13). Dajson considers organizational learning a method that organizations adopt to improve their efficiencies and make best use of their manpower skills in favor or their normal processes (Lamsa 2008, p. 12).

Templton et al., consider organizational learning as a set of organizational actions which trigger positive organizational change such as gaining knowledge, sharing information, interpretation of information (Templton et al., 2007, p. 193). Elgra and Chiva define organizational learning as a process by which an organization starts to learn and this learning eventually ends in an improvement of organizational models and performance (Elgra and Chiva 2008, p. 321).

In his 'the First Order' book, Piter Senge describes a learning organization as the one which constantly develops its capabilities for more innovations. Such an organization should not think only of survival but it must think of 'how to learn' as a means to guarantee survival, because learning can expand an organization's potentials. When organization adopts such a vision and approach, nobody can stop learning, because learning has been understood as a vital action for living.

Gomez et al., define four building blocks for organization learning:

1- Managerial commitment: it refers to management's function in supporting and commitment. Indeed, management has to lead an innovative and try to encourage personnel. Managerial commitment improves personal capability for learning and organization's ability to update itself in line with the outside world.

2- System perspective:: organization's members must come together at times on the basis of a common identity and common vision. It contributes to creation a link between personal and communal activities in personnel and also enhancement of mentalities.

3- Openness and experimentation of workplace: such an atmosphere allows innovative ideas and visions to arise. This, in turn, provides the organization with an opportunity to keep updating itself and improve its personnel's knowledge an insight. It can also help the organization find best solutions for future problems and issues.

4- Knowledge transfer and integration: it refers to the fact that when knowledge is integrated it can easily be transferred and spread inside the organization through oral and non-oral communications that individuals have (such as official and non-official talks, discussion, interpersonal interactions as well as information systems). It can also help authenticity, reproduction and accessibility of information (Ac Gon et al., 2007).

Research Background

Javaheri and Kosar Neshan (2009) launched a research titled 'review of relationship between leadership, organizational culture, leaning organizations' activities and personnel satisfaction', and found that: it is essential for organizations to ensure that their organizational culture serve and support organizational learning, and make sure that if this culture helps the process of achievement and transfer of knowledge within organization. In addition, in a learning organization, personnel-management relationship has a profound impact on organizational success. It is vital for such an organization to ensure that there is a close relationship between leadership and organization. In a learning organization, leadership and organizational culture have a significant link with organizational success. It can encourage personnel to get involved in learning process, and can remarkably enhance personnel performance through improving their productivity, lowered absences from workplace and raising their occupational satisfaction.

Another research that has already be conducted on this subject is Sina et al., research (2011) titled 'review of links between organizational culture and organization learning with knowledge management by faculty members of Islamic Azad University (IAU)'. It used multivariate regression on step by step basis and

also Pearson correlation coefficient to analyze data. Its results indicate that there is a meaningful relationship between organizational culture as well as organization learning with knowledge management. Also, there is such meaningfulness between organizational culture and knowledge management. That is the case with organizational learning and knowledge management.

Yielmaz and Oregan (2008) studied the impact of Denison's organizational culture model on organizations' knowledge, and found that 'adjustability' has the highest score and 'compatibility' has the lowest score. Also, the research findings indicated that 'mission' has the highest impact on improvement of manufacturing organizations knowledge. Further, the ability of organization to manufacture new products is heavily influenced by 'adjustability' and 'compatibility'.

Yong (2007) studied the impact of knowledge-sharing on organization learning. He concludes that sharing knowledge turns a personal knowledge into communal knowledge which can, in turn, serve the whole organization.

Methodology

This research is a descriptive one and also an applied research in terms of its objective. Since it studies multiple variables, it can be described as a correlation one. For data gathering, both library and field methods were employed. It statistical population comprises of the personnel working for Deputy Department of Iran University of Medical Sciences (n=300). Size of the sample was determined to be 169 using Kochran relation. Denison's organizational culture questionnaires were used to gather data. It contains 24 questions. Gomez organization learning questionnaires comprises of 16 questions. Personnel's ideas and thinking about organizational culture and organization learning were achieved by these instruments. Reliability was determined to be 0.788 for organizational culture questionnaire and 0.730 for organization learning questionnaire, using Cornbrash alpha coefficient. Data were then analyzed through Pearson correlation test because results of Kolmogorov – Smirnov are beyond 0.05.

Research Findings

Main Hypothesis: there is a relationship between organizational culture and organization learning in Deputy Department of Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H₀: There is no relationship between organizational culture and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H₁: There is a relationship between organizational culture and organization learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

Table 1- Correlation Coefficient between organizational culture and organization learning

		Organizational culture	Organizational learning
Organizational culture	Pearson correlation	1	.639
	Meaningfulness		.000
	Number	169	169
Organizational learning	Pearson correlation	.639	1
	Meaningfulness	.000	
	Number	169	169

Value of the correlation coefficient is 0.639. Since the meaningfulness is less than 1% it can be claimed that the main hypothesis of the research can be confirmed in level of significance of 99%. That is, the main hypothesis (H_1) is confirmed and zero hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Hypothesis 1: there is a relationship between occupational and learning activities in Deputy

Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_0 : there is no relationship between occupational and learning activities in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_1 : there is a relationship between occupational and learning activities in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

Table 2- correlation coefficient between occupational activities and organizational learning

		Occupational activities	Organizational learning
Occupational activities	Pearson correlation	1	.423
	Meaningfulness		.000
	Number	169	169
Organizational learning	Pearson correlation	.423	1
	Meaningfulness	.000	
	Number	169	169

Value of the correlation coefficient is 0.423. Since the meaningfulness is less than 1% it can be claimed that the main hypothesis of the research can be confirmed in level of significance of 99%. That is, the main hypothesis (H_1) is confirmed and zero hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: there is a relationship between organizational compatibility and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_0 : there is no relationship between organizational compatibility and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_1 : there is a relationship between organizational compatibility and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Science.

Table 3- correlation coefficient between compatibility and organizational learning

		Compatibility	Organizational learning
Compatibility	Pearson correlation	1	.343
	Meaningfulness		.000
	Number	169	169
Organizational learning	Pearson correlation	.343	1
	Meaningfulness	.000	
	Number	169	169

Value of the correlation coefficient is 0.343. Since the meaningfulness is less than 1% it can be claimed that the main hypothesis of the research can be confirmed in level of significance of 99%. That is, the main hypothesis (H_1) is confirmed and zero hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: there is a relationship between organizational adjustability and organizational

learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_0 : there is no relationship between organizational adjustability and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_1 : there is a relationship between organizational adjustability and organizational learning in Deputy

Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

Table 4- correlation coefficient between organizational adjustability and organizational learning

		Adjustability	Organizational learning
Adjustability	Pearson correlation	1	.518
	Meaningfulness		.000
	Number	169	169
Organizational learning	Pearson correlation	.518	1
	Meaningfulness	.000	
	Number	169	169

Value of the correlation coefficient is 0.518. Since the meaningfulness is less than 1% it can be claimed that the main hypothesis of the research can be confirmed in level of significance of 99%. That is, the main hypothesis (H_1) is confirmed and zero hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: there is a relationship between organizational mission and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_0 : there is no relationship between organizational mission and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

H_1 : there is a relationship between organizational mission and organizational learning in Deputy Department for Development in Iran University of Medical Sciences.

Table 5- correlation coefficient between organizational mission and organizational learning

		Mission	Organizational learning
Mission	Pearson correlation	1	.600
	Meaningfulness		.000
	Number	169	169
Organizational learning	Pearson correlation	.600	1
	Meaningfulness	.000	

Value of the correlation coefficient is 0.600. Since the meaningfulness is less than 1% it can be claimed that the main hypothesis of the research can be confirmed in level of significance of 99%. That is, the main hypothesis (H_1) is confirmed and zero hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

Conclusion

Understanding the culture of an organization is vital to understand the organization itself and its behaviors as well as the performance of its members. So, it is highly important to gain such understanding prior to taking actions, because when culture of the organization is well realized, it will become easy to make changes and updates and adopting innovative approaches. Indeed, no changes within organization can be effective unless its culture is understood. If managers really seek to enhance productivity and efficiency, they have to take serious attention to 'culture of organization and its building blocks'. Today, we can track the process by which large organizations were formed during the recent decades. These organizations have lost their efficiency because they are no longer able to keep pace with the social

and global developments that are ongoing across the world, and are beginning to lose their competitive advantage. Since, such large organization with the traditional structures lack flexibility and are increasingly losing their efficiency, they have no choice but to achieve the means that can overcome global developments in order to guarantee their survival. Organizational learning is among the means that can serve the organizations to fulfill this goal. Algra and Chiva (2008) think that organizational learning is a process by which an organization can learn and gain knowledge; a knowledge that brings insight and ends in improvement of organizational models and organization performance. A major finding of this research is that: 'there is meaningful relationship between organizational culture and organization learning' which is consistent with Sina et al., (2011) findings that there is a relationship between organizational culture as well as organization learning with knowledge management. Also organizational culture and organizational learning are two variables that each one has meaningful relationship with knowledge management.

The second finding of this research is that: 'there is a meaningful relationship between organizational culture (occupational activities, compatibility, adjustability and mission) with organizational learning. Yilmaz and Oregan (2008) studied the impact of Denison's organizational culture model on organizational knowledge. They found that 'mission' has the highest impact on improvement of manufacturing organizations knowledge. Further, the ability of organization to manufacture new products is heavily influenced by 'adjustability' and 'compatibility'.

Practical recommendations

Result of the first hypothesis testing indicates that there is a positive, meaningful relationship between occupational activities and organizational learning. The correlation of these two variables was determined to be 0.423. Accordingly, Iran University of Medical Sciences is recommended to:

- Encourage its personnel to get more involved in their occupational activities.
- Constantly organize their works, based on clear plans.
- Handle their affairs through teamwork as a way to improve their occupational skills and abilities
- Invest on its personnel's skills.

Result of the first hypothesis testing indicates that there is a positive, meaningful relationship between compatibility and organizational learning. The correlation of these two variables was determined to be 0.343. Accordingly, Iran University of Medical Sciences is recommended to:

- Lay down a permanent and clear set of values as a basis to organize the ways individuals handle their affairs in organization
- Pay serious attention to organization's fundamental values
- Taking arrangements to make coordination of projects more convenient.

Result of the first hypothesis testing indicates that there is a positive, meaningful relationship between adjustability and organizational learning. The correlation of these two variables was determined to be 0.518. Accordingly, Iran University of Medical Sciences is recommended to:

- Ensure that processes by which personnel handle their affairs are flexible and easy to change, if necessary.

- Pay attention to clients' comments, as a means to help organization update.

Result of the first hypothesis testing indicates that there is a positive, meaningful relationship between organizational mission and organizational learning. The correlation of these two variables was determined to be 0.600. Accordingly, Iran University of Medical Sciences is recommended to:

- Ensure that its managers adopt a long-run vision and think of a clear strategy for future.
- Make the organizational goals clear for personnel and ensure they are fully aware of them. Effort must also be made to achieve a wide agreement about these goal within the organization.

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