

Determinants of Learning Organization in Higher Education Institutes of Pakistan: A Correlational Study

Muhammad Ehsan Malik, Rizwan Qaiser Danish, and Yasin Munir

Abstract—Higher Education (HE) institutes are normally considered as a learning organization. The objective of this paper is to analyze that how well HE institutes function as a learning organization. The reason to opt this sector is that HE institutes produce thousands of graduates annually who ultimately run the organization and become input for the organization to transform into learning organization. But their creativity, capability and system thinking depends on what they have learnt from their institutes. To investigate this study non-probability convenient random sampling technique was used to analyze the data while a self administrated questionnaire was used as a research methodology, for this purpose 200 questionnaire were distributed out of which 160 were received and response rate was 80%, senior faculty members selected to get responses and 5 points Likert scale was used to explore this study. This paper provides a strapping foundation for all the HE institutes to analyze that whether they are functioning as a learning organization or not.

Index Terms—Concrete learning process, leadership that reinforce learning, supportive learning environment and learning organization.

I. INTRODUCTION

The transformation of HE institutes into learning organization requires continuous effort. From last few decades inventions, innovations and modernizations have entirely changed the way of doing work. Many studies have been conducted to explore the new ways for the learning of the individuals. Today policy makers of the institutes are forced to think about the challenging organizational environment. Striving for the best and deployment of skilled personnel and knowledge management is the spirit of the learning organization. The idea of learning organization is the outcome of knowledge management. Learning organization is a continuous approach of the individuals towards creative and progressive learning environment through optimal use of the organizational resources and proper utilization of knowledge from upward to downward to streamline the individual goals with the organizational goals.

Only knowledge management is not essential for the learning organization but also individuals must be ready to support the new changes. In third world countries like Pakistan, most of the institutes suffering because individuals are not ready to adopt the new things due to their destructive approach towards the organization. Senge has opened up a new horizon about the learning organization and he has introduced a book “The Fifth Discipline”. Senge defined: In

learning organizations people continually develop their capacity to achieve their desired goals, where new and expensive patterns of thinking are fostered, where they have collective objectives, and where people are frequently learning to learn jointly. In his book Senge has planned a framework of five disciplines: Personal mastery, Mental model, System thinking, Team learning and Shared vision to provide a foundation for the heads/ leaders to transform the organization from organizational learning to “learning organization”. Senge has discussed many management flaws which hold back the practices of learning organization. He has given many practical examples to highlight the organizational issues in context of learning organization [1].

The objective of this paper is to analyze that how well HE institutes function as a learning organization. The reason to opt for this sector is that HE institutes produce thousands of graduates annually that ultimately runs the organization and becomes input for the organization to transform into learning organization. But their creativity, capability and system thinking depends on what they have learnt from their institutes. This paper provides a strapping foundation for all the HE institutes to analyze whether they are functioning as a learning organization or not.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Supportive Learning Environment

Today every organization intends to penetrate in the market and wishes for competitive advantages over all the others. To achieve this goal they are much focusing on “restructuring”, “reengineering” their processes, competent hiring and bearing millions for training, just to meet their future needs. Switching towards learning organization desires Psychological Safety, admiration of different opinions, openness to new ideas, time for reflection, experimentation, information collection and information transfer to all the individuals and also acceptability of new changes is much essential for the HE institutes. Employees exhibited high level of career satisfaction and determination if they perceived learning environment in the organization [2]. HE institutes considered as a learning community where faculty members and students both engaged in learning environment [3]. Learning organization supports learning culture that makes sure the learning of individuals which requires shared vision to build such type of environment in the organization [4]. there is still need to develop a consensus about learning organization to be converted into a significant model for the other organizations.it replicates a variation among the approaches this thing leads the executives towards uncertain outcomes due to their lack of understanding about the learning organization [5]. There are multiple benefits of transforming the organization into learning. One of the most significant benefits is that learning organization improves the

Manuscript received February 29, 2012; revised April 2, 2012.

Muhammad Ehsan Malik is with the Economics and Management Sciences, Pakistan (e-mail: drmalikehsan@hotmail.com).

Rizwan Qaiser Danish is with the University of the Punjab, Gujranwala Campus, Pakistan (e-mail: rdanish2000@yahoo.co.uk).

Yasin Munir is with the National University of Modern Languages, Lahore Campus (e-mail: yasinmunir@hotmail.com)

continuous performance of the organization [6]. Continuous learning has two phases' internal environment and external environment and most of the trends imposing and being formed by a learning organization. It comprises growing up globally, market competition, customer-centric approach and strategies regarding cost minimization of the product. In form of increasing environmental complexity, organizations have need of proper monitoring and capabilities of transformation of information from one individual to another [7].

B. Concrete Learning Process

Learning of the HE institutes depends on the learning of the individuals. Whether they are students or faculty members learning acquire continuous efforts in changing behaviors, perceptions, values and norms. It is psychological phenomena of the individuals that they learn to see the others and that they learn from their experiences. HE institutes help out the learners to develop learning environment like study groups and learning communities for their students to foster the HE institutes to learning organizations. Learning of the individuals depends on the interest of the individuals with fear and anxiety the learning of the individuals stops and there is no further learning [8]. Moreover in context of HE institutes, there are two major concepts organizational learning and the learning organization. Organizational learning is that organization that is existing organization and learning from their experiences while learning organization is that who is continuously striving for their best approaches [9].

Learning organization focus on continuous effort and a series of generally distributed activities and it comprises on frequent experimentation, comparing performance, information collection about the stakeholders, analysis about the performance whether it is engaged in productive work or not, education training of the individuals and finally information transformation among the individuals and among the whole system of the institutes [10]. In Addition learning is the essence of the organization therefore managers think without learning it is difficult to survive in future [11]. Most of the institutes desire to identify the position of their organization that where do they situate, whether they are learning or not but it is little bit difficult to develop a learning culture [12].

C. Leadership That Reinforce Learning

Most of the leaders think that providing incentives to their employees, engaged them in excessive training, delivering superior services to their clients is sufficient to transform the organization into learning organization [13]. While HE institute functions little bit different, in HE institutes leaders lead institutes and produce people having leadership skills. The behavior of the leaders directly influence HE institutes, and other employees towards encouragement and learning [14].

An excellent leadership can reinforce supportive learning environment and can create learning process in organization more effectively. Leaders give direction and integrate shared understanding among the employees and facilitate learning environment in organizations [15]. Leaders directly influence the creative ideas and implementation of purposeful actions to renovate HE institutes into learning organization and also their general behaviors [16]. People are much interested into

leadership positions that are unable to work in team and have low temper to resolve the social problems and handle complex situations [17].

No change is possible without leadership; leader is the only key to reinforce the learning in organization. The question how local human communities switch towards multinational companies depends on the person who led the organization and develop learning environment to foster the organization [18]. there are six elements which a leader should have to foster the organization, 1) Responsibility to accept and adopt new changes 2) realized their employees to take responsibilities 3) having confidence to face complexities 4) having encourage to use "I" word to reinforce learning process when it appropriate 5) having the courage to conduct process review 6) give equal opportunity to all their subordinates so that they could participate in creative activities [19].

III. METHODOLOGY

Present study explores whether HE institutes function as a learning organization or not. Self administrated questionnaire were distributed to get responses. Public institutes of Sialkot and Daska region of Pakistan were selected as a population sample. For this purpose convenient random sampling technique was used to collect responses. A tool kit of learning organization was used [9] and 5-points Likert scale was used to record responses. 200 questionnaire were distributed out of which 160 were received the response rate was 80%. Questionnaire was comprised on demographic part and building blocks of the learning organization. Demographic part comprises on Age gender, job experience qualification and designation.

In demographic section total numbers of selected respondent were 160 out of which 21.2% were female and 78.8% were Male. Demographic data shows that 18.8% of the total female have master degree and rest of the 2.5% female did M.Phil while 75% of the total male have passes master degree and 3.1% did M.Phil and only one candidate had doctoral degree. 50.6% of the total respondents were between 1-5 years of job experience while 31.9% of the total selected population was between 6-10 years of job experience and rest of the 10% had 11-15% and 5% had 16-20% and remaining 2.5% were above 20 years of job experience. In Our sample 68.1% were Lecturer, 18.8% were assistant professors, 5% were associate professors, and just 2.5% were professors and rest of the 5.6% were teacher assistant.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics was applied to find out the arithmetic means and standard deviations for three building blocks of the learning organization and of each variable that is shown in table I and The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient "r" range from -1 to +1 was computed to determine the relationship between variables. Cronbach's alpha was 0.79 that shows the reliability and validity of the analysis.

In descriptive statistics the least values of the arithmetic means were 2.1 and 3.4 and the least values of the standard

deviation were .51 and 1.2 of the psychological safety, appreciation of differences, openness to new ideas, time for reflection, experimentation, information collection, analysis, education and training, information transfer and leadership that reinforce learning which shows majority of the respondents responded disagree about these variables in HE institutes while .51 is the least standard deviation which shows variation among the responses of the respondent, While 1.2 is the highest variation among the variables mentioned in table I.

The Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient “r” demonstrates relationship between variables which are presented in table II each variable shows strong positive significant correlation except of yellow shaded variables in table II while green shaded variable shows strong negative correlation of appreciation of differences with leadership that reinforce learning it means in HE institutes leaders do not appreciate creative ideas and opinions from their subordinates and they follow only those ideas which they bring from their home and even that they do not ready to accept new changes in their institutes.

TABLE I: MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION

Variables	Mean	SD
Psychological safety	2.7	.54
Appreciation of differences	2.6	.79
Openness to new ideas	3.1	.69
Time for Reflection	3.0	.65
Experimentation	2.8	.59
Information Collection	3.4	1.2
Analysis	2.6	.57
Education and training	2.1	.63
Information transfer	2.6	.51
Leadership	2.5	.61

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In Pakistan it is normally considered that HE institute is a learning organization due to its learning environment because

both faculty members and students engaged in learning process. The results prove that there is need of transforming HE institute into learning organization by resolving some hindrances that are explained in analysis and results in form of components. These components depict true picture of the HE institutes, that which area acquire further improvements to build learning organization. Psychological safety, appreciation of differences, time for reflection, information collection, information transfer and education and training are frequently repeated variables.

According to analysis leadership that reinforces learning in HE institute perform a highly insignificant role to transform learning organization because our heads of HE institutes are not ready to accept new changes. They do not want to hear new creative ideas from their subordinates and even they criticize their different opinions and carry on that agenda which they have from their home.

Higher education institutes are not functioning as learning organizations. Senior faculty members do not share information how their work is going and do not feel psychological safety, Appreciation of Differences, Openness to New Ideas and Time for Reflection in their learning environment while their heads do not appreciate different views and they do not handle their problems properly. The whole story of the higher education organizations revolves around their heads that reinforce learning. Leaders of the organization should be broad minded, visionary and competent so that he/she could create learning environment in HE institutes. Experienced faculty members should encourage new ideas and should be ready to accept the new changes in organizations.

A. Limitations and Future Directions

In Pakistan there are many constraints to access international journals to review secondary resources and another big issue is to get responses. Time limitation is also a major factor. Different statistical techniques should also apply at different organizational environment for more concrete results. For future research “Constrains of Govt. policies to transform organization into learning organization” is a healthy suggestion that researcher should go for this topic.

TABLE II: PEARSON’S MOMENT CORRELATION

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Psychological safety									
Appreciation of differences	.351**								
Openness to new ideas	.479**	.320**							
Time for Reflection	.312**	.086	.471**						
Experimentation	.195*	.081	.124	.562**					
Information Collection	.305**	.075	.497**	.556**	.449**				
Analysis	.384**	.042	.239**	.460**	.173*	.037			
Education and training	.468**	.260**	.395**	.352**	.124	.403**	.250**		
Information transfer	.423**	.043	.302**	.412**	.376**	.200*	.409**	.348**	
Leadership that reinforce learning	.197*	-.334**	.023	.310**	.121	.212**	.384**	.293**	.350**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
 *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

REFERENCES

- [1] P. M. Senge, "Leading learning organizations the bold, the powerful, and the invisible," *The Drucker Foundation*, 1-9, 1996
- [2] B. K. Joo and S. Park, "Career satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention The effects of goal orientation, organizational learning culture and developmental feedback," *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 482-500.2010.
- [3] J. Rowley, "Learning organization in higher education," *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 1998, pp.16-19.
- [4] S. E. Berryman, "Designing Effective Learning Environments Cognitive Apprenticeship Models. *Institute on Education and The Economy*, 2007, 1-8.
- [5] L. Prieto, "Some Necessary Conditions and constraints for successful learning organizations," 2009, pp.513-520.
- [6] C. W. Cheng, "A study of the current learning organization profile to elementary schools at Pingtung county,Taiwan," *The journal of American Academy of Business, Cnabridge*, 2009, pp.183-188.
- [7] J. Marsick, V. and K. E. Watkins, "Demonstrating the value of an organization's learning culture: the dimensions of the learning organization questionnaire," *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 2003, pp.132-151.
- [8] P. A. Smith and P. Tosey, "Assessing the learning organization: Part 1-theoretical foundations," *The Learning Organization*, 1999, pp.70-75.
- [9] A. D., Edmondson, and F. Gino, "Is yours a learning organization," *Havard Business Review*, 2008, 109-116.
- [10] N. Govaerts, E. Kyndt, F. Dochy, and H. Baert, "Influence of learning and working climate on the retention of talented employees," *Journal of Workplace Learning* , 35-55.2011.
- [11] Y. Berson, L. A. Nemanich, D. A. Waldman, B. M. Galvin, and R. T. Keller, "Leadership and organizational learning: A multiple levels perspective," *The Leadership Quarterly*, 2006, 577-594.
- [12] R. Bolden, "Leadership in higher education: facts, fictions and futures introduction to the special issue," *Centre for Leadership Studies*, 2008, 291-298.
- [13] N. Govaerts, E. Kyndt, F. Dochy, and H. Baert, "Influence of learning and working climate on the retention of talented employees," *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 2011, pp.35-55.
- [14] S. Guri Rosenblit, "Eight paradoxes in the implementation process of e-learning in higher education," *Higher Education Policy*, 2005, pp.5-29.
- [15] S. T. Hannah and P. B. Lester, "A multilevel approach to building and leading learning organizations," *The Leadership Quarterly*, 2009, pp.34-38.
- [16] H. Kurland, H. Peretz, and R. H. Lazarowitz, "Leadership style and organizational learning: the mediate effect of school vision," *Journal of Educational Administration*, 2010, pp.7-30.
- [17] R. Mahoney, "Leadership and learning organization," *The Learning Organization*, 7, 2000, pp.241-243.
- [18] T. O'Banian, (1997), "A learning college for the 21st century," *American council on education*, pp.1-4.
- [19] T. M. Rebelo and A. D. Gomes, "Organizational learning and the learning organization reviewing evolution for perspecting the future," *The Learning Organization*, 2008, pp.294-308.



Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ehsan Malik is Dean of faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, Director, Institute of Business Administration Lahore. Director General, University of the Punjab Gujranwala Campus, Pakistan.



Rizwan Qaiser Danish is Chairman of department of Business Administration, University of the Punjab, Gujranwala Campus, Pakistan



Yasin Munir is M.Phil Scholar, Faculty of Advanced Integrated Studies and Research, National University of Modern Languages, Lahore Campus