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Examining the Role of Organisational Learning Theory and Learning Organisations in the Era of Digitalization: A Literature Review

Nor Intan Adha Hafit¹, Azilah Anis², Zaimy Johana Johan³, Nor Azairiah Othman⁴, Zarina Munir⁵

^{1,2,3,5}Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Puncak Alam Campus, 42300 Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia, ⁴Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, UiTM Johor Campus, 85000 Segamat, Johor, Malaysia
Email: azilahanis@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

In order to translate individual knowledge into organisational knowledge, organisations use organisational learning (OL). In the absence of clear prescriptions, organisations have difficulty putting practical ideas into practise. Adaptability, acceptance of change, and performance in terms of operations are critical to the existence of any organisation, but this is especially true for profit-oriented organisations. An existing literature review on organisational learning and learning organisations was conducted to answer the following question in this conceptual paper: For starters, how can you tell if a company is learning when you see it? Second, how do organisational learning and learning organisations vary conceptually? What are the barriers that prevent an organisation from becoming a learning organisation? Fourth, how can being a learning organisation benefit company? The study also looks at for instances of learning organisations, such as those in Malaysia and the United States, to bolster its findings. Since organisational innovativeness is directly linked to long-term organisational performance, this article backs up the claim that organisational learning culture has an impact on it. As a result, all organisations should make an effort to transform into organisations that value learning.

Keywords: Organisational Knowledge, Innovativeness, Organisational Learning, Conceptually, Profit-Oriented

Introduction

Purwanto et. al (2021); Hussein and Ishak (2006) argued that an organisation's ability to learn helps increase both the organisation's competitive advantage and responsiveness to change. This link has been established. "Business executives and intellectuals have realised that knowledge assets and intellectual capital can best serve as a source of competitive advantage in comparison with the total dependence on traditional forces of production," interestingly enough. This bolsters the argument which was established almost 30 years ago by Bahrami (1992), according to which a company's organisational learning assistances and knowledge properties are sometimes worth many times as much as its tangible assets. There are

numerous ways in which organisations can be advantageous from focusing on the organisational learning procedure and its outcome, which will be explored in this research.

Meaning of Organisational Learning (OL) Theory

In literature, initially, the term "OL" was employed by Kurt and March (Saadat & Saadat, 2016). However, Easterby-Smith, Crossan, and Nicolini (2000) use empirical analysis to explore the organisational learning. Whatever the case may be, the debate over whether OL are viewed as an alteration in perceptions or behaviour is declined considerably recently as a result of prevalent reception in recent literature that acquisition involves equally a shift in perception and a shift in bearing. Practically everyone agrees that learning entails both mental processes and actual behaviour. For Odor (2018), OL is a process occurring within the learning organisation. Since learning organisational culture has a direct impact on performance and innovativeness, this research argues that it can lead to long-term organisational prosperity.

Approaches for Studying OL

When it comes to study organisational learning, there are primarily two schools of thought: A method that combines cognitive and behavioural elements. According to Day (1994), "the process of fostering open-minded inquiry and informed interpretation" is what organisational learning is. Because an organisation can acquire knowledge without changing its behaviour, some academics describe organisational learning as a shift in possible behaviours an organisation might take (Huber, 1991). Huber (1991) claims that a company learns when one of its divisions gains knowledge that it identifies as having the potential to be valuable to the entire organisation. "Acquiring new insights where learners construct new cognitive maps or belief systems". If individual recognises that their assumptions, beliefs, and interpretative schemas have changed, then learning has occurred, according to her, whether or not there is a corresponding change in behaviour.

Scholars that favour a cognitive-behavioral approach to organisational learning are few and far between. This school of thought claims that for learning process, a person's belief arrangement and bearing should be taken into consideration. According to Argyris (1977), learning is the discovery and repair of errors and is a challenge for establishing a connection between bearing and accomplishment (Ekeledo, 2019). According to Alvani (2008), it is "the process of detecting flaws and mistakes and resolving and correcting them," which is in line with Argyris' definition.

Mayo and Lank (1994) opine that OL includes the policies, mechanism, and progressions exploited in the organisation for attaining learning. The core element of learning is to take action. Knowledge management systems and statistics databases have been exploited in order to progress and use information composed by the organisation for the upgradation of the organisation" (Giesecke & McNeil, 2004). As a result, acquiring information but not putting it to use in daily actions does not imply learning. Also, according to Pentland, OL is the ability of an organisation to operate proficiently (Pentland, 1992). A number of academics assessed an organisation's product or service features or patent stock to measure knowledge (Alcacer & Gittelman, 2006). Better knowledge and understanding improve actions in organisations through the process of organisational learning.

Power and Waddell (2004), who support a broader definition of organisational learning, argue that it is a procedure intended to support organisations for emerging and utilising knowledge to adjust and improve the performance through time. According to research, learning organisations foster both creativity and high levels of performance. In our ever-changing world, businesses' ability to learn has been connected to their ability to adapt and adjust to meet the difficulties they face. In general, learning necessitates information to gain, knowledge sharing, knowledge utilisation, as well as new success (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009). As a result, learning cannot occur solely through theoretical consideration.

Action and bodily experience and recognition are both required to achieve this. Knowledge acquisition, according to Huber, consists of five processes: For starters, knowledge accessible at the time of the organisation's founding can be used as a basis for learning" (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009). The second concept is learning from experience, and it denotes to what individuals have already learned in the past. The third method is role modelling and involves learning by looking at other organisations. The fourth step is to graft on mechanisms that have knowledge that the organisation lacks, and then to notice or look for information about the physical surroundings of the organisation. A firm's aptitude to connect and mix knowledge attributable to numerous persons and groups results in an organisation's learning capability. According to Grant, this skill can only be achieved by intelligent assimilation of knowledge.

When it comes to organisational learning capabilities, Morgan suggested caution because it is more dependent on how well a company can integrate its information than on the amount of knowledge that an individual or group possesses on its own. That is why learning can only take place in an environment that allows time for students to reflect on their previous actions and outcomes. Learning can only flourish when members of an organisation are willing to face certain uncomfortable realities about their own thinking and behaviour. A blame culture, on the other hand, will not allow it to flourish as faults are unescapable and are the result of learning. In such a situation, 'mistakes' are distinguished from genuine investigations of a novel concept or a new way of working and thinking owing to irresponsibility and lack of planning.

In light of the foregoing, individuals and teams should be urged to be creative and inventive; the possible way to be pioneering is to study all options thoroughly and to take calculated risks wherever possible. We must do numerous tests due to the fact that not all experiments will be successful. While facing difficulties, we should not consider them catastrophes but rather acceptable explorations of the potentials space in order to discover new methods to work or do things. As a result of contextual factors, organisational learning takes place in a context (Glynn et al., 1994). Those variables under the management's control are referred to as the internal environment. All of the above make into a system. Competition, customers, political and economic systems, and legal frameworks are all examples of external surroundings that organisations cannot control. Volatility, ambiguity, connectivity, and benevolence are just a few of the numerous dimensions that make up the environment.

Dimensions to Organisational Learning

When it comes to management, the message is to make people more alike than distinct in some way, while also seeking to downplay the importance of individual variations in other areas. Many organisations devote a great deal of time, effort, and resources on homogenising

their management teams. Revealing managers to thoughts and standards they are expected to mimic and ponder correspondingly are instances of implanting business ethics and viewpoint and instructing the organisation's milieu and imposts (Reilly, 1998). Examples of appropriate management training include administration of salaries, payrolls, data and information when it comes to management development, that implies offering managers a chance to grow and realise their full potential while also encouraging them to be more distinctive in their own personal characteristics. The educational advancement programme, for example, is a popular management development programme since it allows employees to build on already-developed competencies.

As a result of organisational development efforts, employees gain the attitudes, skills, and information they need to be successful in their jobs. Individuals and their advancement within the organisation are only a part of organisational development. There is a choice between several learning methods depending on the organisation's goals and the desired level of change. When it comes to making changes, performance is the most important consideration, regardless of whether the goal is to reduce specific transformations, legitimise distinct alterations, or improve assembly/intergroup alliance.

What Is Organisational Learning?

Chris Argyris and Donald Schon are two of the most prominent figures in the field of organisational learning theory. According to Argyris & Schon, organisational learning (OL) is a part of systematic research. When the anticipated conclusion differs from the actual outcome, an individual (or a group) will conduct research to identify and, if required, address the inconsistencies. The individual will interact with other members of the organisation and learn through the organisational inquiry process. As a result, learning is a direct result of this connection. These relationships, according to Argyris and Schon, frequently go beyond established organisational rules and processes.

Why Is Organisational Learning Important to the Company?

OL is important to compete with the demands of the people and survive in the global world. The corporate climate has never altered so quickly as it is doing right now. The twenty-first century introduced captivating novel technology that altered people's daily lives. We no longer do things like shopping, driving, cooking, learning, or communicating without the aid of technology. If you want to keep your clients interested in your company, you must change with the times. New technologies have altered business practises, but the technology themselves are evolving at a rapid pace as well. The usage rules for these technologies are also altering.

Social media is the product of this age. During past, companies were unaware of the usage of social media to promote their products. They didn't even require an online presence. For a time, having only a website and email address is giving advantages to the companies. Using accounts like Facebook and Twitter etc., products can easily be advertised throughout the world within seconds. After a while, tweeting updates about your company was no longer enough; you had to engage your followers by asking personal questions and sharing personal tales.

A few years ago, authorities cautioned people against using the internet to discuss divisive topics like politics. Today, large corporations gain attention by captivating a position on controversial subjects or even by means of fun about politicians. It comes down to the fact that your company must be constantly learning in order to be relevant in an ever-changing world. It's not enough for your employees to upgrade their abilities.

To Promote OL For Managers

Several steps can be taken to promote OL for managers.

- **Create Knowledge**

To learn something new, you must first acquire knowledge and information by either creating it or consuming it. Businesses, their customers, and their environment benefit from managers who are perpetual learners. Surveys, market assessments, networking with peers in the sector, and competitor analysis are all methods they can use to gather this information.

- **Retain Knowledge**

Managers need a system to keep the knowledge they've created or acquired within the company. In the future, other employees should be able to view the information you captured or stored. An intranet is a popular tool for accomplishing this. In the business world, these are known as "knowledge management systems. "

- **Transfer the Knowledge**

Last but not least, knowledge must be transferred from the small group to the larger organisation. Transferring knowledge can be as simple as giving a training session or creating an essay to post on a website. However, it's critical to employ data for updating the company's professional procedures as well.

Think about the Toyota company. The managers who figured out why the oil gasket was leaking did more than that. They made use of this information in the future to alter their gasket purchasing strategy. They may convey personal information to the entire organisation by leveraging information for notifying policymaking and alteration procedures.

To put it another way, consider organisational learning to be the organisation's entire knowledge structure. Whether it's a single boss or an entire department, everyone learns something new. They pass on their expertise to the organisation, which subsequently adapts its methods in light of what they've learned. This is how companies change with the times. And that's how long-term successful companies do it.

Advantages of OL

Technological innovation, process improvement, and product improvement are all by-products of organisational learning (Gomes & Wojahn, 2017). OL, on the other hand, will boost a company's keenness and is hailed as a miracle treatment for long-term success and growth. It's been proven that the amount of organisational turbulence correlates positively with the amount of organisational learning. That means that as the external environment changes, a company's demand for organisational learning increases. Without organisational learning, the organisation will stagnate and be incompetent to respond to conservational variations. Knowledge production and organisational learning can lead to a new approach to

incessant development and a rise in the performance of organisations (Senge, 2003). As a result of environmental changes caused by technological innovation, organisations with a poor level of organisational learning will struggle to keep up. Organisational learning is critical. If this happens, the organisation will be unable to compete and will die sooner rather than later. Resultantly, establishing a "learning organisation" is a calculated asset for a firm. They have an enterprise architecture that turns the company into a learning environment so that the corporation can adapt to the changing environment, as reported by (Ramírez et al., 2011).

Levels of OL

Three levels of OL are defined:

The Individual Level: This type of learning involves providing an individual with new, cumulative, interpretive or experimental ideas and information about his or her surroundings and then having him or her alter their behaviour in light of the findings. Su, Huang, and Contractor (2010) claim that specialisation and delivery of knowledge among organisational followers generates obstacles to the effective identification, retrieval, and convey knowledge when needed.

The Group Level: Individual learning turns out to be group learning when persons transfer knowledge and communicate with others. Individuals here transfer their knowledge with one another, understand it cooperatively, and derive a joint postulation. The focus is on announcement in this instance. Joint replacement surgery in teaching hospitals was the subject of a study by Reagans, Argote, and Brooks (2005). This study found that "having a greater amount of experience working in a team encouraged better coordination and collaboration".

Organisational Level: OL is now interpreted into instructions that are suitable for all people and is evaluated by anybody who necessitates them when groups come together to part their knowledge they have learnt through communication (Kabiri, 2006). The study of OL exploiting the organisation as a unit of analysis is activated by three basic variables. The first is the memory of organisational knowledge, which identifies the key methods it employs to gather new information on the other hand, when it comes to technological advancement, it's crucial to focus on the core competencies of both individuals and groups Organisation memory and knowledge bases must be put into practise through routines.

Process of Organisational Learning

There are five stages of organisational learning: knowledge acquisition, information sharing, knowledge interpretation, knowledge maintenance, and knowledge utilisation. Each of these stages is critical to organisational learning. Organisational efficacy should be experienced before one can declare that organisational learning has taken place, according to Argyris (1977). "Organisations should not indiscriminately accept a centralised structure or reject a decentralised structure of information and learning networks" (Su et al., 2010). When it comes to information access, centralization may be more efficient and convenient, but decentralisation may make it easier to distribute essential information. Adaptation and survival in an uncertain and competitive world require organisational learning to be as natural as learning for individuals.

Factors that Contribute to Organisational Learning

1. Corporate strategy: how organisation is structured to learn from mistakes.
2. Resource allocation: exploration and exploitation.
3. Recognition for the employees' motivation for learning.

9 primary features influence the OL including thinking system, team learning, psychological representations, superlative and vision commons, talent and supremacy personals, and investigating with novel methods. It is argued that the efficiency of learning is powerfully affected by the management of organisations. Leaders who see knowledge as a vital asset are more open to the idea of their companies learning together. In order to continuously improve creativity and performance, organisations must design themselves as learning laboratories that include the acquisition, generation, distribution, and usage of knowledge-based capitals by all of the organisation's members. As a result, Ayriss stated that for double loop learning to happen, fundamental assumptions and conventions must be exposed to impartial assessments. It's no wonder Ayriss said this. He claims that in more established and successful systems, problems and absurdities are considerably more expected to happen due to the fact that early-stage flaws have been deeply ingrained. For the same reason, West and Burnes (2000) argued that while organisational learning can help develop a company's keenness, it cannot and does not ensure achievement on its own. Khandekar and Sharma (2006) exposed a link between organisational learning, which is mostly reflected in HRM activities, and organisational performance. Organisational learning, according to Benn et. al (2006), is a critical path to better presentation, greater accomplishment, and an inexpensive edge.

The Concept of a Learning Organisation

Those organisations that are skilled in generating, receiving, and shifting knowledge, as well as changing their behaviour in light of new information and insights, are called to be learning organisations. In the realm of management sciences, learning organisation is a brand-new idea. Organisations that foster and enable learning for all of their members are referred to as "learning organisations" (Hussein et al., 2014). When Peter Senge proposed the notion of learning organisations in 1990, it was according to (Yadav and Agarwal, 2016). Senge, who was a professor of leadership and sustainability at the MIT Sloan School of Management and was also the Society of Organisational Learning's founder and chairman, defines that a learning organisation is one that promotes and enables learning in order to constantly adapt itself in order to succeed and thrive in a quickly changing business environment.

To facilitate continuous growth at the individual, group and organisational levels, a learning organisation integrates learning and work in a systematic manner that is ongoing. People who work in learning organisations consider learning as an ongoing process and derive value from practically everything they do, as implied by the definition above. Griego, et al (2006) opine that it is "an organisation that pursues transformation and excellence through interrupted and ongoing organisational renewal and increasingly grasping the subject matter. We must accept new methods that are concerned with learning culture, incessant investigation, understanding with the network, information systems, reward systems, human resource management and leaders' mandate in order to create learning organisations.

Characteristics of Learning Organisation

Information flows seamlessly throughout the organisation's hierarchy in a learning organisation. It is possible to learn simultaneously at four different levels: the individual; the

group; the intergroup; and the organisation. Organisations that are growing and developing are those that have a clear and shared vision for the future.

There is a form of reflective thinking and insights about people, organisation or management in a learning organisation. Learning organisations can be identified by their differences in organisational structure, organisational culture, information systems, human resources practises, and leadership. A learning organisation's organisational structure promotes employee, career, and service user involvement by creating administrative hierarchies. Openness, innovation, and experimentation are encouraged in learning organisations because of their strong organisational cultures. When members are given the tools and opportunity to try new things without fear of failure or ridicule, they become more productive.

Learner-centered organisations require information systems that go beyond traditional organisations' use of information for control and instead improve and support practise. Organisational learning is viewed as originating from and being consumed by people. As a result, human resource management places considerable emphasis on fostering individual growth. Appraisal and incentive systems are intended to monitor long-term performance and to encourage employees to learn and share new skills and knowledge with one another. As with any other type of ideal organisation, the effectiveness of a learning organisation's leadership is critical. Providing the support and interpersonal help needed to transform and sustain an organisation growth path helps leaders articulate a feasible vision of the learning organisation. Managers and staff who foster work-related learning, information exchange, and ongoing organisational growth can also be identified as a learning organisation.

Furthermore, a learning organisation supports anticipatory learning as well as learning for immediate application. This is a circumstance in which a person gains new knowledge and applies it to the accomplishment of his or her task. In fact, mistakes are not seen as failures in a learning organisation, but rather as chances to learn and improve on the outcomes of the organisation. Because of their brand equity and ability to attract and retain top personnel, learning organisations have a competitive advantage over their peers. According to some research, capabilities serve as a source of competitive advantage and can help maintain those advantages (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993). Because competencies can only be acquired through learning, it follows that organisational learning has certainly become a source of competitive advantage. To the degree that every organisation member recognises and is convinced that continuing education is both a means to and an end in itself, the organisation heads proclaim, drive and exemplify the value of continual learning in a learning organisation. To be considered a true learning organisation, there must be an open and unrestricted flow of communication at all levels. Everyone in the organisation "has to know" what is going on at all times.

A presumption exists that senior executives in an organisation must demonstrate that they are always learning by reporting their findings as they do so. People who have demonstrated that they are in fact learning will be rewarded both monetarily and non-monetarily in the form of recognition, new work opportunities, and promotions, for example. Learning organisations have a competitive advantage since they're better competitors, have more brand equity, and hire and retain better employees. Every organisation wants to be one when

these qualities and benefits are considered. Even yet, how many companies can truly claim to be learning organisations?

Examples of Some Learning Organisations

According to the characteristics of a learning organisation outlined above, these company can be described as learning organisations. Proton (Automotive Malaysia) and Petronas (Oil and Gas Malaysia) are two examples of this type of organisation.

Proton: Through an organisational learning system that is aligned with firm business goals, Proton is able to map their existing knowledge and skills, manage the generation of new knowledge, and facilitate the transmission of learning throughout their company.

Expert knowledge from several departments is exchanged, including Product Planning, Prototyping, Testing and Homologation, Engineering Design, Manufacturing, Quality Control, and Customer Sales and Service. Proton and vendors also communicate information in ensuring that parts provided by vendors fulfil the required specifications. When knowledge is shared, it leads to an improvement in department training resources.

When knowledge is shared, department training resources are optimised as a result of a better understanding of what knowledge and experts exist within the departments. Proton's investment can be used to capture, produce, and transmit existing knowledge within the organisation.

Petronas: Collaboration across multidisciplinary teams has become normal. Real-time data communication from remote reservoirs, as well as data processing in a collaborative environment integrating many teams and vendor locations, has become an important aspect of the business decision-making process. In other words, crucial business decisions in oil majors are based on a knowledge-driven approach.

Organisational learning approaches serve to encourage greater collaboration amongst interdisciplinary teams in a knowledge-intensive and high-tech firm like PETRONAS. This might save millions of dollars in costs by preventing workers from trying the same thing over and over again. Staff acceptance of current LO practises including Communities of Practice (CoP) concepts is high, which is critical for effective change management. More intense LO practises and collaboration platforms could be built as more staff members are encouraged to participate in LO activities. This would aid in the implementation of systems across the organisation and overall business alignment.

CLO cites the following instances of American learning organisations as examples of such organisations.

General Electric: As these learnings are freely disseminated to other members of the organisation, it has a robust learning centre where leaders can learn continuously. It takes great satisfaction in instilling a culture of lifelong learning among its employees (Argote & Todorova, 2007).

Goldman Sachs: It has a learning centre that offers ongoing thorough training to a large number of its managerial employees, and that training is then passed on to other members of the organisation.

Microsoft: When the marketplace shifted, Microsoft was able to make a significant shift in its attitude from desktop computers to the Internet. It has remained strong in its commitment to lifelong learning and process improvement. In addition to Honda and Corning, numerous businesses have adopted an organisational learning culture. As a result, they have mastered the art of adapting to new information and changing their behaviour accordingly. They've taken charge of their education, making sure it's well-organized and never ends.

Discussion

Learning organisation and Organisational learning are two distinct concepts. It is possible to achieve the optimal condition of a learning organisation through the process of organisational learning. In truth, organisational learning is ingrained in the culture of every learning organisation. Creating structures, strategic fits, and strategic crafts are all aspects of what make a company a learning organisation. Organisations must be constantly learning in order to meet the future challenges posed by rapidly changing technological environments. But it must also constantly unlearn previous beliefs that are no longer useful or in tune at the same time. A learning organisation's management must ensure that learning does not slow down once it has been established.

There is a constant need to boost the tempo. When a company has initial success, it is common for them to stop learning because they feel they have arrived. This is the primary reason why most businesses fail after first success is achieved. When organisations are young, they are fluid, adaptable, and eager to learn, but as they succeed and grow, rigidity sets in, and their vigour and eagerness to learn are sapped away. Because they believe they have arrived and consequently see nothing fresh to learn, their initial success has brought them failure. Those that work for the company take it easy and bask in their good fortune. They've lost their environmental sensitivity, and as a result, they're blind to new commercial potential. They've been overtaken by their competition before they even recognise it, and that's what ultimately brings them down.

The philosophy and fundamental values and cultures of the organisation should include learning as a core value. Only by doing this can a company be prepared for tomorrow, when it comes. Organisational leaders must also see learning as a remedy for long-term organisational sustainability if successful double loop learning is to occur. It's time for company heads to move beyond their traditional roles as spokespersons and resource allocators to a broader cross-functional role that encourages open communication and encourages constructive dialogue and experimentation with ideas. This will create an environment that allows for more open communication.

Conclusion

The relationship between organizational learning and organizational learning brings competitiveness and flexibility to an organization. To face challenging situations in business, competencies such as technical expertise, quick decision making, and analysing of business situations are essential. Through the Learning organization, employees constantly practice these skills; in an organizational learning culture, these skills are gathered through experience to deal with difficult business situations. However, both concepts are very important for a sustainable competitive advantage.

Organizational learning focuses on employees obtaining information and experiences from their daily actions. Learning organisations, on the other hand, are concerned with increasing employees' competencies and capabilities. The key distinction between organisational learning and organisational learning is thus. In addition, organisational learning is a structure, whereas organisational learning is a process.

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