



## The Relationship between Learning Organization and Quality of Work Life among Physical Education Teachers in Delfan, IRAN

Somayeh Darvishi\* and Mehdi Kohandel\*\*

\*Physical Education and Sport Science, Borujerd Branch, Islamic Azad University, Lorestan, IRAN

\*\*Physical Education and Sport Science, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Alborz, IRAN

(Corresponding author: Mehdi Kohandel)

(Received 07 January, 2015, Accepted 14 March, 2015)

(Published by Research Trend, Website: [www.researchtrend.net](http://www.researchtrend.net))

**ABSTRACT:** The aim of present study was to investigate the relationship between learning organization and the quality of work life among physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran. It was a survey and descriptive-correlation. The statistical population included all (n=84) male and female physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran who participated in this study through all-counting method. In this study, two 43-question questionnaires of Watkins and Marsick's learning organization model (1996) and Karyalna Yaron (2007) 44-question questionnaire of work life quality were used. Data analysis was done using Pearson's correlation and multivariate regression. The results showed that the quality of work life and its dimensions (team communication, role clarity, authority in decision-making, organizational commitment, organizational participation, occupational stress, organizational conflict) has a significant relationship with the LO of physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran. Based on the parameters of quality of work life LO can be predicted among the physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran ( $P=0.001$ )

**Keywords:** Learning organization and quality of work life, Teamwork communications, Role clarity

### INTRODUCTION

Huge and wonderful advances in science and technology have hardly evolved the organizations and this change will continue with an increasing pace. In such situations, organizations in which informed developments and useful innovations takes place are needed. Nowadays, one of the major factors of survival in organizations is to accept evaluation. The intensity and depth of these changes is to the point that new and developed ways are required to tackle, coordinate and adapt with it. An organization which responses these requirements against changes and developments is known as learning organization [1]. Learning organization is the resultant of efforts that have been done for the organizational improvement and development. The study of management literature suggests that the role of individual training, group training and organizational learning has been mentioned as the most effective and reliable solution for continuous improvement of the organization. However, today these concepts are manifested in developed and expanded concept of learning organization. In this regard a difference should be considered between 'organizational learning' as the concept of individual's learning and within organization groups and 'learning organization' as a general system of organization

learning. Learning organization is an organization which through creating structures and appropriate strategies promotes organizational learning [3]. Garvin says 'learning organization is an organization that has the ability to create, acquire and transfer knowledge and modify its own behavior in a way that reflects novel knowledge and insights [4]. Michael G. Marquardt in his systematic definition states that a learning organization is an organization, which learns things collectively and powerfully, and changes itself constantly to gather, manage and use information somehow better [3]. The imagination of any cultural atmosphere of the quality of work life is an especial notion that managers should try to understand it. When talking about matters relating to the maintenance of employees in an organization, it is necessary to consider the various dimensions which create individual, group and organizational requirements and aspirations. Therefore individual and group differences in interpretation of qualitative work conditions are considered and human beings are studied with their all aspects of social life and work. Considering human being as a system or part of a work system creates the notion that one can study human being as a mechanical system. In fact what makes it hard to keep him is the recognition of intangible dimensions of human being [5].

Walton (1973) defines quality of work life as the staff's reaction to the work, especially the essential outcomes of job satisfaction and mental health needs. Therefore according to this definition, the quality of work life emphasizes on the personal consequences of work life and how to improve the quality of work in order to satisfy the individual needs [6]. In order to determine the QWL, Walton has proposed a theoretical model that includes options such as: fair and adequate payment, safe and healthy working environment, providing opportunities for continued growth and security, rule of organization, social dependence of work life, total living space, integration and social cohesion in the organization and the development of human capabilities. Organizations, particularly at the present time are exposed to discontinuous changes. Communication and interaction of these organizations with various factors such as government, private sector, sponsors and other national and international sports organizations and above all social, economic, political and cultural elements of have all joined hands to create a dynamic environment for these organizations. The promotion of organizational learning among physical education teachers can largely protect the related sports organizations such as education department and physical education against environmental changes. It is noteworthy that the creation of a sportive learning organization along with the characteristics which the innovators of learning organization speaks about, rather than a specific point at the end of a long way is an infinite path. Therefore the creation of learning organization means to move forward in an endless path and step to the next stage. Education is a vital institution in the process of growth and development of any nation. It is an institution that is able to create and facilitate the areas of economic, social, political and cultural development. The distinguished role of education lies in two main activities, namely teaching and research. The interaction of these two characteristics guarantees the dynamism of education. Since physical education teachers are the most important elements of education and their duty is to transfer and create new knowledge for the community therefore paying attention to the quality of work life is an important duty of education authorities. One way of improving the QWL of physical education teachers is to use the components of the learning organization in education [7]. Teachers as one of the greatest assets of each community and also one of the most important elements of the educational systems play a very crucial role in the training of experts and the outcome of their efforts follows the growth and development of human

societies [6]. According to the above mentioned issues, firstly the present study aims to investigate the relationship between learning organization and QWL among physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran and secondly assess the predictive ability of QWL through the components of the learning organization.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study is a descriptive-correlational one. The population includes all physical education teachers (n=84) of Delfan with at least three years of service. Due to the limited number of statistical population, all-counting sampling method was used. Independent variable included the organizational learning among physical education teachers and dependent variable included the QWL and some of its aspects, such as teamwork communication, role clarity, decision-making authority, organizational commitment, organizational participation, occupational stress and organizational conflict. Data collection tools included two questionnaires; one learning organization questionnaire, this questionnaire has been prepared by Watkins and Marsick's professors of the University of Georgia based on an integrated model of learning organization (1996). The 43-question questionnaire has six options that range from never to always. The other questionnaire is the QWL questionnaire prepared by Karyalna Yaron (2007) which contains 44 questions based on 5-point Likert-scale range from very low to very high. Some aspects of learning organization include: teamwork communication, role clarity, decision-making authority, organizational commitment, organizational participation, occupational stress and organizational conflict. To analyze the data, Kolmogorov - Smirnov was used. In order to determine the distribution of data, Pearson's correlation and multivariate regression coefficient was used.

## FINDINGS

In terms of gender, 53.6 percent of testees were males and 46.4 percent were female. 23.8 percent of participants were married, and 76.2 percent unmarried. 72.6 percent of testees had bachelor degree, 13.1 percent had master degree or higher, 14.3 percent had associates' degree. 39.3 percent of testees were 35-45 years, 25 percent 25-35 years, and 25 percent were under 25 years and 10.7 percent over 45 years. 29.8 percent of testees had 15-20 years of experience, 22.6 percent 10-15 years, 17.9 percent had 20- 25 years, 16.7 percent below 10 years and 13.1 percent over 25 years in teaching.

The data distribution survey using the Kolmogorov - Smirnov showed that all variables were normally distributed. The analysis of hypotheses showed a significant relationship between learning organization and QWL and its components, including team communication, role clarity, authority in decision-

making, organizational commitment, organizational participation, occupational stress and organizational conflicts among physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran (P=0.0001). The QWL variables can predicate learning organization among physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran (P=0.0001).

	Quality of work life	Communications team	Role clarity	Authority to decide	Organizational Commitment	Organizational partnerships	Job Stress	Organizational conflict
<b>Learning Organization</b>	<b>r : .59 P:0.001</b>	<b>r: .69 P:0.001</b>	<b>r :.58 p:0.001</b>	<b>r:.64 p:0.001</b>	<b>r:.49 p:0.001</b>	<b>r:.44 p:0.001</b>	<b>r:-.44 p:0.001</b>	<b>r:-.47 P:0.001</b>

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The results of study showed a positive significant relationship between that the learning organization and the dimensions of QWL among physical education teachers in Delfan, Iran and the dimensions of QWL can be a good predictor for the learning organization. The results of Kelly & et al (2007) in their study concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between the application of the components of learning organization and employees' job satisfaction and retention of knowledge workers. Job satisfaction is one of the consequences of QWL and retention of knowledge workers, includes quality of work life of workers as well. Creating learning, collective learning and team leading opportunities enhance the quality of life of employees [8]. As a result, the more organizations turn in to the learning organizations and forefront of knowledge, quality of work life of employees and their job satisfaction becomes richer. Teamwork communication is the mutual understanding and sharing process between an individual and other members of the group or organization. This relationship as well as the self-relationship occurs for various reasons, reasons, such as to resolve their problems with others, resolve conflicts, exchanging information, better understand of themselves and meet their social needs, such as the need to join to a group together, to love and to be loved. Direct and positive relationship between learning organization and team communication suggest that the spread of organizational learning culture and the tendency of an organization toward learning organization can develop healthy relationships between

members of the organization. Specialist and committed human resources that are consistent with organizational goals, intend to join the organization and act beyond their required duties. The definition and clarity of roles can lead to job satisfaction and this sense cause encouragement and desire to remain in the organization and creates the sense of being useful and ultimately leads to customer satisfaction of organization and changes the overall attitude of an individual toward his own duties and job. According to Robbins (2005) role clarity, sense of satisfaction and usefulness can cause encouragement and desire to remain in the organization. Role is the dynamic aspect of a position or status in an institution. An individual's expectation of one role means that what are the expectations of the owner of that role and what expectations this role creates for him. Therefore, the transparency of the role can create job satisfaction and job commitment of an individual toward the organization [9]. The tendency of physical education teachers to learning organization can affect the clarity of their role. Organizational commitment represent the views of the staff toward their organization and job and mostly appears through indicators such as to be proud of organization, greater willingness to engage in the works of organization, remain in organization for a long time and considering organization as a an valuable entity [10].The existence of organizational committed force can reduce absenteeism, delay and mobility, increase organizational performance, mental freshness of employees, better manifestation of lofty goals and individual goals [11].

Some studies show that if an organization pays attention to the individual and group developments therefore it can enhance their organizational commitment [12]. That is why managers pay much attention to educate their employees and in order to get better results support working environment [13]. Organizations need to create a learning environment for their employees, where anyone gets interested in learning and enhance the relevant knowledge of their own business and in other words make their organization a learning one [14]. In order to achieve its goals the organization is in need of staffs who work with love and desire and be committed to the organization. To create and maintain these characteristics in employees, appropriate context should be provided. According to the obtained results the reinforcement of the attitude of individuals toward learning organization principles and providing opportunities to exercise managerial functions and participate in groups are among the strategies that can be applied in this regard. Denison and Neil (1996) suggests that organizations that have low compatibility scores typically have internal focus and face difficulties in response to customers, competitors and employees who have new ideas. Often, previous success can act as a barrier to future successes. On the other hand in organizations that have low scores on the contribution characteristics, normally people who are apart from their jobs are not aware of the their importance and relationship with organizational outcomes and feel uncertainty compared with the ones who have close relationship with working cycle. Organizations that have a low level of participation often have traditional hierarchy in which people are completely dependent on their manager and much attention is paid on the directions that are given by the manager [15]. Sharma (2005) introduces adaptability and participation as the predictor factors of organizational effectiveness and finally concludes that these two factors can be used as a complement to evaluate and predict the changing priorities in the organization and better development of strategies for the successful implementation of management techniques and processes [16]. According to the results, probably paying attention to the learning organization and tendency toward such organization will have a positive impact on increasing the participation of employees.

## REFERENCES

- Masum Ali S. (2000). Learning organizations a respond to change of today. Journal of Educational press "Command and Staff", No. VIII, Fall. 3: 48-43.
- Rahnavard, Faraj Allah. (2008). Organizational Learning and Learning Organization. *Journal of Public Administration*. 43: 22-11.
- Lashkar Boloki, M. (2003). Designing a learning organization, the first step is to identify the main pillars. *Industry*. 35: 27-18.
- Garavan, Thomas. (1997). The Learning Organization: A Review and Evaluation. *The Learning Organization*. 4(1): 18-29.
- Mirsepasi N. (2009). Strategic Management of Human Resources and Labor Relations (with respect to globalization). Tehran.
- Albedo A. Shafaei R. (2002). Introduction to strategies for creating learning organizations in Iran. *Knowledge Management*. 57: 27-5.
- Daft, Richard L. (2006). Organization Theory and Design. Translation by Ali Parsaïan and Mohammad Arabi. Tehran: Cultural Research Bureau.
- Kelley, Lizlee, Blackman, Deborah A, Hurst, Jeffrey Peter. (2007). An exploration of the relationship between learning organizations and the retention of knowledge workers. *The learning organization*. 14(3): 204-221.
- Robbins SP. (2005). Management of organizational behavior. Translated to Persian by: Parsaeyan A, Aarabi M. Tehran: *Institute of Business Studies and Research*. 3:150-3.
- Kermani B. (2008). The relationship between organizational atmosphere with organizational commitment of staff and managers in Hamedan educational hospitals]. MSc. Dissertation. Tehran, Science and Research University.
- Taejo L. (2010). Relationships among organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and learning organization culture in one Korean private organization. *Asia Pacific Educ. Rev.* 11(3): 311-320.
- Cohen A. (2007). Commitment before and after: An evaluation and reconceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*. 17(3): 336-354.
- Dirani KM. (2007). The relationship among learning organization culture, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment in the Lebanese banking sector and the effect of social patterns as moderator variables. PhD Dissertation. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Haque MM. (2008). A study of the relationship between the learning organization and organizational readiness for change. PhD Dissertation. Pepperdine University.
- Anonymous. Denison Model: Involvement. (2007). Available at: <http://www.denisonconsulting.com/advantage/research/Model/model/involvement.aspx>.
- Sharma B. (2005). Local government organization on its journey to becoming a learning organization. *Business Process Management Journal*, 11(4): 388-402.