

Learning Organization and Organizational Commitment in Primary School

Ahmad, Abd Rahman⁺ and Marinah, Awang

Management & Economics, University Pendidikan Sultan Idris 39000 Tanjung Malim, Perak Malaysia

Abstract. The objective of this study is to identify the relationship between learning organization and organizational commitment among the Public Primary School Senior Teachers. A quantitative cross sectional research design with purposive sampling was employed in collecting the data. The questionnaires was based on the Learning Organization and Organizational Commitment indicators that had been modified and used locally. The respondents for this study were senior teachers of public primary school who attended the three years intensive program of Bachelor Degree in Education Management. Two cohorts comprised of 107 students were chosen from 600 students who enrolled for the Head Teacher Degree Program. The study shows that, there is a significant relationship between learning organization and organizational Commitment. Therefore, learning organization and organizational commitment are deeply interwoven and opens up new questions to be explored by further research.

Keyword: Public School, Learning, Learning Organization, Organizational Commitment.

1. Introduction

Much has appeared in professional articles and journals regarding the importance of learning organization. Some had found that learning organization has comes out with two focuses, the internal and external learning, where the combination produce a great impact for adapting and coping with the environmental challenges. Others found that, learning organization enable the workers to be committed with the learning process that encourages experimentation, sets open communication, dialogue and continuous learning towards the achievement of excellence. However, some looked at the integration of several factors that enables the organization to development a new culture for transformational process in the structuring and managing the organization. Thus, this paper raises the question of to what extent and how learning organization was accepted, appreciated and practiced at different organization that relates to commitment of the employees.

Many attempt to define and describe learning organization, as the learning process, both for individual and organizations (Mayo & Lank, 1994) [1]. As research literature has demonstrates, there are various definitions of learning organization (Garvin, 1993[2]; Daniels, 1994[3]; Calvert et.al, 1994[4]) and base on several theories (Levit & March, 1988) [5]. However in order to understand learning organization clearly, Garrat (1990)[6] identified three characteristics of learning organization as follows; (1) encourage people at all levels of the organization to learn regularly and rigorously, (2) have systems for capturing the learning and moving it where it is needed, and (3) value leaning and are able to continuously transform themselves.

Furthermore, Pearn et.al (1995)[7] pointed-out that the critical aspect of learning to organizations is that it helped organizations to achieve and sustain competitive edge, and becoming a sharper vision of possible futures. Learning is critical to competitive advantage and will make the difference in the future. Therefore, what is really important is to understand how organizations learn to become effective, and build the systems and structures that are necessary to gain and keep competitive advantage. Besides that, according to Frahm and Brown (2006) [8], the changes demanded by the learning organization approach cannot be mandated, but they can be led. They cannot happen rapidly, but as they begin to happen they can lead to major improvements. This is not working harder; it is not even just working smarter. It is working together in entirely new ways. It is engaging new depths of personal mastery and commitment, addressed to newly-found shared visions, using powerful new methods of team learning that address the mental models and

⁺Corresponding author. Tel: +605-4506298 Fax: +605 459 4642.
E-mail address: ahmad@fpe.upsi.edu.my

assumptions that each person brings to the collaboration. Meanwhile Timperley (2006) [9] identifies three challenges faces by school leaders in building a learning organization namely did not perceive themselves or their skills to be the target of the initiative, despite being nominated as the focus, they were more concerned about teachers collaborating with one another than whether that collaboration was leading to improved student learning and they did not put in place robust organizational processes to support evidence-engaged professional learning.

According to Serrat (2009) [10], learning organization needs people who are intellectually curious about their work, who actively reflect on their experience, who develop experience-based theories of change and continuously test these in practice with colleagues, and who use their understanding and initiative to contribute to knowledge development. On the other dimension, Weldy (2009) [11] stated that becoming a learning organization and improving transfer of training could be the critical factors necessary to improve learning, better manage knowledge, make improvements in individual and organizational performance, and maintain a competitive advantage in turbulent markets. Furthermore, Filstad and Gottschalk (2010) [12] identified, there are four stages for an organization to move from ordinary organization into learning organization. The four stages are activity organization, problem organization, value organization, and learning organization.

Commitment is a psychological frame of mind which motivates people to work towards certain goals. Commitment do exist in a person that have a positive attitude, while negative attitude is one of the major reasons for non-committal approach. Committed people commit their total resources, which include going extra mile for achieving goals assigned to them. The concept of commitment in the workplace has been a phenomenon of ongoing interest and focus which regard to the linkage between the individual and the organization. Building employee commitment to the workplace is one important goal of human resource policies and practices. Research shows commitment has a positive effect on productivity, turnover and employees willingness to help co-workers. In assessing employees' commitment, it is important to determine the focus of their commitment. Different individuals may have different "profiles of commitment"; they may be highly committed to the organization, but not to the team, or committed to both, or committed to neither. According to Meyer and Allen (1997) [13] organizational commitment is "a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationships with the organization, and has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization. According to Hadibah (2009) [14], there were some factors such as organizational culture, leadership style and human resources practices, which could be deliberately manipulated by organizations to influence the levels of organizational commitment in their employee. She further suggested that organizational commitment was a key to increasing public service motivation and recommends more empirical studies of employee commitment. Such studies were warranted for helping to understand the motivational base of public sector employees.

Commitment to organization is important and plays a key role in the formation of an integrated human effort in the organization. The important of organization commitment has attracted consideration over recent years and has been reflected in many management studies. According to Nik Mutasim and Mohd. Hizam (2002)[15] the commitment to organization is compatible with commitment to profession. They indicated that there was no conflict between employees' commitment to their profession and their organizational commitment. Ju et al., (2008)[16] mentioned that, both mandatory and fringe benefits were having significant and positive relationship with organizational commitment and fringe benefits having higher relationship as compared to mandatory benefits. The finding proposed that when employees received more fringe benefits, their organization commitment tend to be higher. Kadyschuk (1997)[17] stated that, there was no significant difference between organizational commitment of teachers in public schools in Saskatchewan and gender. Furthermore, Al-Ajmi (2006) [18] stressed that, the relationship between gender and organizational commitment has also remained unclear. Mixed results have been reported on the relationship between gender and organizational commitment in previous studies. Besides that, he also mentioned that most of the studies in this area showed no significant differences between males and females with regard to organizational commitment. Hoy and Miskel (2001) [19]. State that, schools are service organizations that are committed to teaching and learning. If schools are to be effective, they must find ways to create structures that continuously support teaching and learning and enhance organizational commitment.

The learning organization is the important element that a management has to understand in her/his school in order to enhance the commitment towards the organization based on the belief that the more people learn, the better they can perform when they grow up. Therefore, there need a study to identify the relationship between learning organization and organization commitment, while the possible close link between organizational learning culture and organizational commitment has been much said and yet little investigated the relationship between the two constructs. According to Maryam Yaghoubi et al (2010)[20], there was a significant relationship between learning organization and organization commitment. On another study, Chien-Chi, T. (2010)[21] identify that there is a strong influence of learning organization practice on organizational commitment where the relationship between learning organization practices and organizational commitment is reciprocal.

2. Objective

The objective of this study is to determine the relationship between learning organization and organizational commitment among senior teachers of Public Primary School in Malaysia.

3. Methodology

The research design used in this study was a quantitative and cross sectional by using a purposive sampling. A cross sectional survey design was used to determine the demographic variables of gender and ethnicity. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section One was designed to identify the demographic variables of respondents. Section Two was designed to measure the Primary Public School Principals perception of learning organization and organizational commitment. The questionnaire consists of five elements that focus on the practice of Learning Organization at school level developed by Marinah and Omar (2004)[22]. Respondents were asked to choose from a 5 point Likert scale that ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Meanwhile, the questionnaire for Organizational Commitment was obtained by using the fifteen question organizational commitment measure which was adapted and adopted from Mowday et al. (1979)[23]. This was a widely accepted measure with strong predictive and discriminate validity, as well as internal consistency and reliability (Maathieu & Zajac, 1990)[24]. Respondents were asked to choose from a 6 point Likert scale that ranges from strongly disagrees to strongly agree. Both the local language (Malay) and translated version (English) were given to the respondent. The respondents were requested to complete and return the questionnaire after one hour session given to them. Out of 107 questionnaires given, 100 were fully completed, accepted and analyzed. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 was used in the process of data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, mean and standard deviation provide the information on the demographic variables. For inferential statistics, data was analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine the significant different between learning organization and organizational commitment with demographic variables.

4. Findings

A correlation analysis was performed to examined the relationship among the independent and dependent variables. The results of the Pearson r correlation are showned in table below.

Table 1: The Pearson analysis of relationship between learning organization and organizational Commitment (N= 100)

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	r value	-	0.503**	0.268**	0.288**	0.303**	0.706**	0.270**
2	r value		-	0.560**	0.508**	0.481**	0.770**	0.382**
3	r value			-	0.410**	0.321**	0.594**	0.217
4	r value				-	0.412**	0.712**	0.374**
5	r value					-	0.660**	0.441**
6	r value						-	0.443**
7	r value							-

** correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Indicators:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1= Vision | 5= Culture |
| 2= Management role | 6= Learning Organization |
| 3= Organizational structure | 7= Organizational commitment |
| 4= Inspired individual | |

There is no relationship between organizational structure and organization commitment ($r=0.217$, $p < 0.05$). However, there is a positive and significant relationship between four others element of learning organization (Vision, Management role, Inspired individual and Culture) and organization commitment ($r=0.270$ to 0.441 , $p < 0.5$). There is also a correlation between learning organization and organization commitment ($r=0.443$, $p < 0.05$).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The results in table above showed there are significant relationship between learning organization and organizational commitment except for the element of organizational structure. This study is in line with Yaghoubi et al (2010) and Chien-Chi (2010) where they identify there is a significant relationship between learning organization and organization commitment. However, the findings is inconsistent with the suggestion proposed by Hoy and Miskel (2001) stated that, school must find ways to create structures that continuously support teaching and learning and enhance organizational commitment. There is no relationship between organizational structure and organization commitment ($r=0.217$, $p < 0.05$). In the findings of this study, results suggested that learning organization practices can be viewed as an important antecedent factor for organizational commitment although it has a moderately positive association. The findings does not only provided a new direction for organizational research on key variables, but also generated an important implication for organizational practice to strengthening learning organization practices in its relationship with organizational commitment. The results of this study further suggested that when it comes to performance, transforming the cultural dimensions of the learning organization approach should be the first priority. In turn changing the organizational culture accordingly, should be the first critical step when building the learning organization.

6. References

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