The Role of Organizational Capabilities on Organizational Learning in Employees of The Razavi Khorasan General Directorate of Education: A Case Study

Parisa Saadati[1], Mahmoud Ghorbani[2]*, Saeid Khayatmoghadam[3]

1- Department of Educational Sciences, Mashhad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran

2- Department of Educational Sciences, Mashhad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran

3- Department of Industrial Management, Mashhad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran

* Corresponding author's Email: ghorbanim@gmail.com

Abstract: The objective of this study was to ascertain the impact of enhancing organizational capabilities on organizational learning among the employees of the General Department of Education, Khorasan Razavi, and the seven districts of Mashhad. This research employed a mixed exploratory design (sequential exploratory mixed research design) and was conducted in two distinct stages: qualitative and quantitative. The statistical population encompassed all employees of the General Department of Education and the seven districts of Mashhad (770 individuals). Sampling was conducted utilizing the simple random method (282 individuals). The research findings revealed that organizational capabilities encompass four dimensions (empowerment, learning, managerial, and operational) and 16 components, while organizational learning consists of four dimensions (continuous learning, empowerment, commitment, and application knowledge) and 12 components. Additionally, the empowerment dimension, with a percentage of 89%, the learning capability dimension, with a percentage of 60%, the managerial capabilities dimension, with a percentage of 79%, and the operational dimension, with a percentage of 90%, were deemed influential in this context. Consequently, in order to enhance the professional development of teachers, managers, and officials within the General Department of Education of Khorasan Razavi, it is imperative for teachers to be supported in achieving the goals outlined in the education document by assigning direct responsibility in accordance with each individual's capabilities. By implementing a collaborative management system, managers can effectively utilize their ideas, opinions, and initiatives in addressing educational matters through the cooperation and active participation of teachers.

Keywords: Organizational capabilities, Organizational learning, Education department, Empowerment, Managerial capabilities, Operational dimension

Introduction

Today, organizations of significant size and complexity that were established several decades ago are no longer operating effectively and can be likened to dinosaurs that failed to adapt to their environment and consequently faced extinction. Traditional large-scale organizations lack the necessary strength and flexibility to align with the ever-changing surrounding environment, particularly in relation to globalization issues. In order to ensure their survival, these organizations are compelled to either alter their structure or equip themselves with tools to effectively navigate global changes. One of the most crucial tools is the establishment of a learning organization and the institutionalization of organizational learning (Azogh et al., 2015). The current competitive landscape no longer revolves around possessing assets, but rather centers around two key elements: investing in knowledge and fostering a culture of learning and training proficient employees (Demirchi et al., 2018). By cultivating dynamism within their

capabilities, organizations must continuously strive to maintain their superiority over competitors and consistently progress while upholding their competitive position in the market. To achieve this objective, numerous companies worldwide contemplate strategies and develop plans for their implementation. Nevertheless, if the expenses and time invested in devising and executing these strategies are not consistently monitored and revised, their impact will be inadequate (Safari et al., 2018). The creation of a conducive environment and the enhancement of trust and the organizational atmosphere significantly influence the processes of organizational learning. The effectiveness of knowledge management processes extends beyond the functioning of the organization and also impacts creative organizational learning. In the present era, the effective management of human resources has assumed paramount importance, to the extent that other management categories are placed in subsequent stages. The development of human resources and the establishment of conditions conducive to enhancing the quality of knowledge and attitudes among employees are fundamental necessities. Consequently, successful organizations of today are characterized by employees who strive to enhance their capabilities, while it is the responsibility of managers to create suitable conditions for this training and empowerment process. One of the key strategies in facilitating such conditions is the managers' focus on organizational learning (Acacia, 2016). Organizations play a pivotal role in the pursuit of sustainable development. Organizational learning theories have been employed to elucidate the processes of change aimed at improving organizational capabilities (Hermlingmeyer and Wirth, 2021).

Learning transfer within any organization is an indispensable element that determines the triumph of employees and ultimately the triumph of the entire organization (Welch, 2017). Numerous organizations invest substantial amounts of time in training their employees, yet these individuals remain unaware of the appropriate application of such training, thus diminishing its efficacy. Consequently, the implementation of a novel agenda to examine transition becomes imperative (Balvin et al., 2017).

In order to endure within the contemporary dynamic and competitive milieu, organizations are compelled to undergo transformation and adapt to their surroundings. This adaptation is solely achievable through the process of learning. To survive, compete, and prosper within such an environment, organizations must enhance their learning capacity beyond previous levels (Arafa Jamshidi et al., 2018). Organizational learning represents a promising strategy that managers can employ to enhance organizational performance. In order to advance the objectives of the organization, it is essential to clearly define and describe organizational learning. Organizational learning materializes when experiences undergo a metamorphosis, resulting in positive changes to the organization's knowledge, cognition, and collective actions (Lyman et al., 2019). The literature on inter-organizational learning substantiates the assertion that organizational capabilities can be transferred from one entity to another. This transfer occurs in organizations characterized by complex and sizable structures, facilitating the exploitation of learning benefits for the organization (Solheim and Moss, 2021).

Education organizations also require employees who can keep up with the pace of changes. Organizational learning is a dynamic process that enables the organization to swiftly adapt to change. The concept of organizational learning aims to develop strategies for designing the organization in order

to achieve a more favorable performance, wherein employees can fully realize their potentials with the support and ultimately contribute to making the world a better place. Consequently, this concept has gained traction among organizations interested in enhancing their competitive advantage, fostering innovation, and promoting effectiveness (Rahimi et al., 2016).

An examination of existing research on learning transfer reveals that, despite the significance and impact of organizational factors on organizational learning, these factors have received less attention from researchers in the context of training effectiveness compared to educational and individual factors. As knowledge acquired through training can be applied in the work environment, it is crucial to consider the unique characteristics and context of each organization, as they can greatly influence employees' motivation to apply what they have learned. By modifying its characteristics and educational policies, an organization can create a suitable platform for the implementation of training for its human resources. Furthermore, previous research indicates a negligence in the transfer of learning to the work environment within educational organizations. Therefore, training plays a vital role in developing knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies in employees. In light of the aforementioned points, the primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of enhancing organizational capabilities on organizational learning among employees of the General Department of Education, Khorasan Razavi. Consequently, the central question of this research is: What is the influence of improving organizational capabilities on organizational learning among employees of the General Department of Education in Khorasan Razavi and the seven districts of Mashhad?

Material and Methods

In terms of the environment, the current research is of the field type. This study was done quantitatively. The statistical population included all employees of the General Department of Education and 7 districts of Mashhad (770 people). Sampling will be based on a simple random method, based on Morgan's table, 256 questionnaires should be distributed in the statistical population, according to the phenomenon of dropout, the researcher distributed 282 questionnaires and the results were analyzed. In this research, according to the nature of the research problem and the statistical population and the sampling method used in it, data collection was done through a researcher-made questionnaire. The questions and items of the questionnaire were compiled using the research literature and the results of a qualitative study. Based on this, the themes extracted from the text of the articles and interviews and the Delphi questionnaire were extracted and after classifying the text into homogeneous classes, the number of themes was selected by the method of item extraction and used in compiling the items. Finally, 75 questionnaire items were prepared and adjusted and distributed among 5 experts to confirm validity. In the selection of experts, orientation, history and active experiences in the field of educational management were considered. In the descriptive part, frequency distribution tables and graphs were used to describe the research variables. For the inferential analysis of data, factor analysis technique and structural equation modeling approach were used. Calculations in this type of research were done using version 23 of SPSS and pls software.

Results

Demographic results showed that the gender of the respondents was 0.68% (equivalent to 174 people) male and 0.33% (equivalent to 82 people) female. Regarding the marital status of the respondents, 16.4% (equivalent to 42 people) are single and 83.6% (equivalent to 214 people) are married. Regarding the age of respondents, 7.4% (equivalent to 19 people) are less than 30 years old and 43.4% (equivalent to 111 people) are between 30 and 40 years old, 33.2% (equivalent to 85 people) are between 40 and 50. year, 0.16% (equivalent to 41 people) are over 50 years old. In terms of respondents' education, 9.4% (equivalent to 24 people) have diploma and under-diploma, and 8.6% (equivalent to 22 people) post-diploma, 45.7% (equivalent to 117 people) bachelor, 36.3% ((equivalent to 93 people) are graduate and above.

According to the results, organizational capabilities have four dimensions and 16 components, which are measured by 44 questions. The factor analysis performed shows the amount of each factor and the value of T. The factor load shows the ability to measure the variable by the dimension; According to the obtained results, all the identified dimensions have the ability to measure the variable of organizational capabilities. Organizational learning also has four dimensions and 12 components measured by 25 questions. The factor analysis performed shows the amount of each factor and the value of T. The factor load shows the ability to measure the variable by the dimension; According to the obtained results, all the identified dimensions have the ability to measure the variable of organizational learning. In Tables 1 and 2, findings related to the loading factors of dimensions of organizational capabilities and organizational learning are presented.

Table 1. Loading factors of dimensions of organizational capabilities

Dimension	Loading factor	T value	p	Result
Empowerment	0.94	60.03	0.001	Confirmed
Learning capabilities	0.77	13.66	0.001	Confirmed
Management capabilities	0.88	10.89	0.001	Confirmed
Operational	0.95	85.58	0.001	Confirmed

Table 2. Loading factors of dimensions of organizational learning

Dimension	Loading factor	T value	p	Result
Continuous learning	0.51	10.03	0.001	Confirmed
Empowerment	0.55	10.19	0.001	Confirmed
Commitment	0.82	18.27	0.001	Confirmed
Application of knowledge	0.80	18.37	0.001	Confirmed

The effect of each aspect of improving organizational capabilities with the organizational learning approach is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The effects of each dimension of organizational capability on organizational learning

Dimension	R	R^2	Variance
Empowerment	0.94	0.89	0.89%
Learning capabilities	0.77	0.60	0.60%
Management capabilities	0.88	0.79	0.79%
Operational	0.95	0.90	0.90%

According to Table 3, empowerment dimension with 89%, learning ability dimension with 60%, management capabilities dimension with 79% and operational dimension with 90% are effective in organizational learning.

Discussion

The findings of the research conducted on identifying the dimensions of enhancing organizational capabilities indicated that organizational capabilities encompass four dimensions, namely empowerment, learning capabilities, management capabilities, and operational capabilities. These dimensions consist of a total of 16 components, which were evaluated through the administration of a questionnaire comprising 44 items. The research conducted by Demirchi et al. (2018), Salamat Ahwazi et al. (2019), Mohammadi et al. (2019), Lancaster (2016), and Buginda (2014) align with the aforementioned findings.

Upon a thorough examination of the theoretical underpinnings of the research as well as the outcomes of previous studies, it becomes apparent that organizational capabilities are regarded as inherent attributes possessed by individuals, which are effectively and sustainably utilized to attain desired levels of performance. These capabilities encompass core competencies, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are visibly conducive to excellence within the workplace. Alternatively, capability can be defined as a quantifiable human capacity that is suitable for performance and may encompass knowledge, skills, individual abilities, personal traits, or a combination thereof. Capabilities serve as the fundamental building blocks of work performance, with the majority of tasks necessitating the simultaneous or sequential demonstration of multiple capabilities. In the context of this definition, knowledge represents the consciousness, information, or comprehension of facts, regulations, principles, guidelines, concepts, theories, or processes that are indispensable for the successful execution of a task. Knowledge can assume an objective and specific format that is easily measurable, or it may manifest as a more intricate, abstract, and challenging-to-measure entity. Personal traits, as outlined in this definition, such as attitudes, values, and characteristics, often possess an emotional or personality-related aspect. Marley proposes that it is more appropriate to refer to these personality traits as empowering behaviors. These behaviors encompass work habits, interpersonal interaction styles, or personal guidance methods that contribute to effective work performance. Knowledge is acquired through

learning and experience. Organizational capabilities, on the other hand, represent the methods or routines that facilitate the acquisition, configuration, or assimilation of knowledge within a company. In a broader sense, the company's ability to utilize resources, combine them, and employ organizational processes to attain desired objectives is defined and predicated on specific tangible or intangible information and processes. This ability is forged over time through intricate interactions among the company's resources (Olaner et al., 2013).

In order to empower teachers, as well as managers and officials in the education sector, it is imperative for them to receive training in the domains of leadership, human relations, group relations, and evaluation. Moreover, they should create an environment that fosters the acquisition of necessary skills and enhances teachers' understanding, ultimately empowering them in the field of education. This empowerment should extend beyond mere task completion and encompass the realm of improved performance of duties and responsibilities in the educational context. To facilitate the professional development of teachers, managers, and officials within the General Directorate of Education of Khorasan Razavi, it is crucial for these individuals to support teachers in achieving the objectives outlined in the education document by delegating direct responsibilities commensurate with each individual's capabilities. By adopting a collaborative management system, managers can effectively leverage the ideas, opinions, and initiatives of teachers in resolving educational issues through their active involvement and participation.

The findings of the study regarding the identification of the dimensions of organizational learning indicated that organizational learning comprises four dimensions, namely continuous learning, empowerment, commitment, and application of knowledge. These dimensions were assessed through the use of 25 questions, aligning with the research conducted by Madani et al. (2014), Ardahan and Vinay (2018), and Azogh et al (2016).

Upon examining the theoretical underpinnings of the study and the findings of other researchers, it becomes evident that the phenomenon of learning is undeniably the most significant psychological phenomenon in both humans and evolved creatures. This is due to the fact that learning serves as the foundation for numerous aspects that differentiate humans psychologically from other creatures and their peers. The psychology of learning holds a prominent position within the field of psychology, garnering extensive research and scrutiny from scholars. Various theories have been proposed in relation to this topic.

The importance and value of learning become apparent to individuals when they are deprived of the knowledge they have acquired. In such instances, individuals may be physiologically mature and healthy, but they regress mentally to the stages of childhood (Qeshlaghi, 1999). Schools serve as the central hub for education, with teachers and trainers acting as the agents responsible for facilitating the

learning process of students, under the guidance of school administrators. In essence, the mission of the education system is realized within the school setting.

The key requirement for successful education in any society lies in the professional development and enhancement of knowledge and skills among teachers. Consequently, the effectiveness of schools in the past decade has primarily been attributed to the professional development of teachers. This is because the quality of education is contingent upon the performance of teachers, with curricula gaining significance and vitality in the hands of capable, motivated, and confident educators. Indeed, teachers represent the most pivotal factor in creating a favorable environment for the achievement of educational objectives. The progress of any society hinges upon the educational capabilities of its teachers, and the attainment of the goals of the education system would be unattainable without the presence of teachers possessing professional abilities and competencies.

Within the educational organization, learning instills individuals with the potential capability to act differently. However, this ability may not be immediately evident in the teaching approach or educational environment. Instead, the effects of learning and the enhancement of teachers' abilities become observable in the long run, within the country's education system.

The results of the research based on the identification of the impact factor of each dimension of improving organizational capabilities with the organizational learning approach showed that empowerment with 89%, learning ability with 60%, managerial capabilities with 79% and operational capabilities with 90% are effective in this regard; which is in line with the research. By examining the theoretical foundations of the research and the results of other researchers, it seems that the great and surprising advances in science and technology have changed organizations and this change continues at an increasing speed. In such conditions, there is a need for organizations in which conscious changes and useful innovations take place. Acceptance of change in today's world is one of the biggest factors of sustainability and survival of organizations. The intensity and depth of these changes is such that it requires new and developed methods to deal with, coordinate and adapt to it. An organization that responds to the needs of these changes is known as a learning organization (Masoumali, 2019). The concept of organizational learning capability includes some managerial and organizational characteristics that facilitate the learning process in the organization and allow organizations to learn continuously (Mehzabi et al., 2018).

The most crucial and indispensable asset of any organization is its human capital. The quality and competence of the human workforce stand as the foremost factor in the survival and vitality of the organization. A robust human force begets a robust organization. Educational systems, which serve as the most apparent manifestation of human investment in the sphere of societal prosperity, play a pivotal role. In today's world, these systems have allocated a significant portion of each country's budget. Given the importance and impact of education on the economic, social, cultural, and political aspects of society, it becomes imperative to implement fundamental measures to enhance the quality of educational systems

and prevent the squandering of human capital. The well-being of any society hinges on the caliber of its educational system. Failure to impart values, norms, and social skills essential for good citizenship, as well as neglecting to equip individuals with the expertise and abilities necessary for effective and efficient performance of their individual and social responsibilities, implies that educational institutions have not fulfilled their mission. To achieve this mission, attention must be devoted to the quality of the educational system. Enhancing workforce flexibility to bolster the country's competitiveness, combating social exclusion, and increasing the demand for education are objectives that cannot be attained without enhancing the quality of education.

Based on the research findings and identification of the empowerment dimension of organizational capabilities in the employees of the General Department of Education of Khorasan Razavi and the seven districts of Mashhad, it is recommended that managers and officials utilize the available resources to foster innovation within the organization. This can be achieved through the introduction of creative ideas, integration and coordination of organizational processes, and establishing two-way communication channels among employees. Furthermore, promoting research resources within the organization and fostering interaction between senior managers and employees in line with empowering teachers should be part of the planning. Additionally, based on the research findings and identification of the continuous learning aspect of organizational learning in the employees of the General Department of Education of Khorasan Razavi and the seven districts of Mashhad, it is advisable for managers and officials to provide encouragement and support for learning. This can be done through integrated training of employees in the form of work groups and the creation of a conducive physical environment for learning within the organization. Moreover, establishing communication channels with the external environment of the organization to enhance organizational learning and fostering a continuous and integrated learning process within the organization are recommended.

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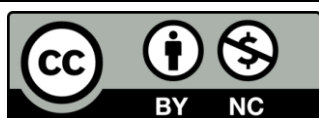
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