Relationship between organizational culture and organizational learning among employees in physical education organizations

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between organizational culture and organizational learning among woman employees in physical education organizations in Isfahan. For reach this aim, a total of 125 employees in physical education organization from Isfahan participated in this study. To data collection, all subjects filled in Organizational Culture questionnaire (OCQ) and Organizational Learning Questionnaire (OLQ). Results showed that the positive and significant correlations between overall organizational culture and overall organizational learning and its sub-scales at the level of $P<0.05$. Furthermore, the positive correlations between organizational culture sub-scales with organizational learning sub-scales (including emotional commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment) was significant at the level of $P<0.05$. Based on these results we concluded that the organizational culture and organizational learning are the main elements for promoting an innovative work environment and organization.

Key words: Organizational Culture, Organizational Learning, Employees, Physical Education Organization
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INTRODUCTION

Organizations are operating in an environment of complexity and uncertainty where the only constant is change. The environment is characterized by changes in workforce competency, high customer expectation, greater competitive pressures, technological advancements and globalization [1].

Meek (1988) argued that the concept of culture in organizations has been borrowed mostly from anthropology, although some sociologists have also been influential [2]. In anthropology culture has been defined in many ways but it broadly refers to the behavioral patterns that differentiate one group or category of people from another [3]. Similarly, Meek (1988) identified that culture is made up of or includes symbols, myth, ideational system (ideology), and ritual [2]. Trice and Beyer (1984) recognized that many authors have used different terminologies to conceptualize organizational culture, which has led to overlap and confusion. Each organization has its own distinct rites and ceremonials and hence a unique culture which drives the organization and its action and guides how the members think, act and feel [4]. Organizational culture (OC) has also been expressed as a group's operative communication rules [5]. She identifies that a group's operative communication rules is a more accurate representation of culture than the formally sanctioned rules espoused by top management [5].

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Organizational culture is the most significant input to effective knowledge management (KM) and organizational learning (OL) because corporate culture determines values, beliefs, and work systems that could encourage or impede both learning (knowledge creation) and knowledge sharing [6-9]. Organizational culture (OC) will affect OL and organization's capabilities and can guide it to change and innovate [10]. Learning through individuals and the organization will lead to organizational innovation (OI), especially in knowledge-intensive industries [11].

Historically, there are numberless definitions about organizational culture, which is defined in many different ways in the literature [12]. Perhaps the most commonly known definition is "the way we do things around here. Organizational culture is manifested in the typical characteristics of the organization, in other words, organizational culture should be regarded as the right way in which things are done or problems should be understood in the organization. It is widely accepted that organizational culture is defined as the deeply rooted values and beliefs that are shared by personnel in an organization [11-12]. Ogbonna (1992) declaring that organizational cultures are the outcomes of the interweaving of an individual into a community and the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members … it is the values, norms, beliefs and customs that an individual holds in common with other members of a social unit or group [13]. Another opinion from Bro Uttal (1983) who regarded organization culture as a system of shared values (what is important) and beliefs (how things work) that interact with a company's people, organization structures, and control systems to produce behavioral norms (the way we do things around here) [14]. In another perspective, culture may be considered as 'software' within an organization, since it is 'software', so, managers are supposed to study carefully and try to find how does each element of 'software' works on the basis of 'hardware' (simply regarding an organization as an operating hardware) [12-14].

Generally speaking, organization culture is the "set theory" of important values, beliefs, and understandings that members share in common, culture provides better (or the best) ways of thinking, feeling and reacting that could help managers to make decision and arrange activities of organization [12]. A successful organization should have strong cultures that can attract, hold, and reward people for performing roles and achieving goals, whereas strong cultures are usually characterized by dedication and co-operation in the service of common values. So, how much does an employee involve for an organization at their best should be recognized clearly [14]. Organizational learning is the process by which an organization gains new knowledge about its environment, goals, and processes. Herbert Simon (1997) posits three ways in which organizations learn: (1) individuals within the organization learn some new fact or procedure, (2) the organization ingests outsiders with knowledge not already in the organization, and (3) the organization incorporates new knowledge into its files and computer systems. As broader organizations, governments and policy-making communities also learn [15]. Unfortunately, both the definition and use of the term organizational learning are still associated with considerable confusion [12]. The organizational learning field has the problem of trying to unify different theoretical approaches while at the same time valuing the diversity that has evolved since its early start. In this article, various conceptual frameworks are analyzed based on the major divergences of opinion among the scholars in the field. Within the first part of the paper, the focus will be on different aspects of organizational learning while the second part centers on knowledge management, the facilitation of organizational learning. Scholars have frequently associated the facilitation of organizational learning with the learning organization [12-15].

Schein (1996) suggested that OL failures may be caused by lack of communication among the organization's different cultures [16]. OC could serve as a standard of cognitions or interpretations and so would affect the effectiveness of OL and behavior [17]. According to Kululanga et al. (2001), OL acts as a catalyst for implementing an OL culture and the learning culture systematically improves OL [18]. OC can be seen as a knowledge repository with the capabilities for storing and processing information, whereas OL plays an important part in ensuring that the knowledge repository is continually replenished and updated to enable efficient responses to changes in its competitive environment [19]. Brian and Pattarawan (2003) suggested that OC is positively related to OL [20]. To analyze how the OC impacts KM, OL, and business performance, Susana, Jose´ and Camilo (2004) argued that collaborative culture influences OL, which in turn influence business performance [21]. In addition, Czerniewicz and Brown (2009) found that OC has a positive effect on OL [22]. However, a few articles, no different types of OC been investigated on this relationships. Based on these results and literature, the purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between organizational culture and organizational learning among employees in physical education organizations from Isfahan.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was the correlation study decision. Participants were included 125 employees in physical education organizations in Isfahan and their ages ranged from 21-45 years-old.

Instruments and Questionnaires
To data collection, all subject filled in Organizational Culture questionnaire (OCQ) and Organizational Learning Questionnaire (OLQ). The Organizational Culture questionnaire (OCQ) was used to determined organizational culture in participants. The Organizational Culture questionnaire consists in Involvement, Consistency, Adaptability and Mission in 5-point Likert scale. Also, the Organizational Learning Questionnaire (OLQ) asks about impact of various elements of organizational learning process and innovations on organizational performance. The questionnaire itself has three main parts. The first part assesses various elements of organizational learning process in organization. The second part addresses the issue of innovativeness. The third part aims to assess performance of organization. This questionnaire consist 85 questions in 5-point Likert scale. Also, reliability questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha for organizational culture and organizational commitment were obtained 0.91 and 0.87, respectively. The collected data was analyzed by descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential (Pearson's correlation test and Cronbach's alpha) statistical tests at the $P<0.05$ significant level with SPSS Version 15.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of organizational culture and organizational learning sub-scales among employees in physical education organizations.

Table1. Means and Standard Deviations variables used in this research

Variables	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Overall organizational culture	220.5	3.5
Involvement	43.5	2.5
Consistency	55.9	2.1
Adaptability	56.6	2.4
Mission	65.5	2.5
Overall Organizational Learning	271.5	4.5
Elements Of Organizational Learning	124.5	2.4
Issue Of Innovativeness	75.3	2.8
Performance Of Organization	71.5	2.6

In addition, the matrix correlation among all variables that used in this research presented in table 2. Results showed that the correlation between overall organizational culture with overall organizational learning and its sub-scales was significant at the level of $P<0.05$. Furthermore, the correlation between organizational culture sub-scales with overall organizational learning and its sub-scales was significant at the level of $P<0.05$.

Table 2. Matrix correlation between organizational culture and organizational learning variables

Variables	Overall Organizational Leaning (OL)	Elements of OL	Issue of Innovativeness	Performance of Organization
Overall organizational culture (OC)	0.92*	0.89*	0.87*	0.83*
Involvement	0.90*	0.68*	0.89*	0.76*
Consistency	0.89*	0.70*	0.72*	0.84*
Adaptability	0.87*	0.72*	0.65*	0.89*
Mission	0.91*	0.79*	0.71*	0.86*

* Significant at the level of P<0.05

CONCLUSION

The concept of learning originated in psychology and focused on learning at the individual level. Behavioral psychologists defined learning as the acquisition of chains of reactions which persist over time leading to behavioral change. Thus, changes in behavior are a result of repeated experience. This perspective of learning is concerned with observable behavior, and neglects the cognitive processes of individuals [23]. Based on these documents, our results

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showed that the significant and positive correlations between overall organizational culture with overall organizational learning and its sub-scales. Also, the positive correlations between organizational culture sub scales and overall organizational learning and its sub-scales were significant (see table 2). Thus, the strength of the correlations obtained in the present research suggests that the organizational leaning and its sub-scales have a significant role in organizational culture. These results are consistence with previous research in this field.

Sathe (1983, 1985) stated that he culture of an organization influences every aspect of organizational life and behavior as it affects the five basic processes of an organization: communication, cooperation, commitment, decision making, and implementation, but the members of the organization may not be aware of these shared assumptions that guide thought and action as they are taken for granted. The pervasiveness of culture can be understood from two of its major elements: the strength of the culture that determines the efficiency of an organization and the content of culture that determines effectiveness because content determines the direction in which culture influences behavior [24-25].

Considering these differing views, organizational culture has been defined in various ways in the literature. Deal and Kennedy (1982) have defined organizational culture as the way things are done in an organization and refer to both the formal and informal ways of getting things done [26]. Schall (1983) has defined it as a symbolic system of values, beliefs and assumptions that are interdependent and relatively enduring, which evolve as members interact with one another and are imperfectly shared by organizational members. These values, beliefs and assumptions allow members to explain, coordinate, and evaluate behavior and enable them to respond to stimuli encountered in the organizational context [27]. Schein (1992) defines organizational culture as a pattern of basic assumptions-invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration [16]. Organizational culture has an impact on the performance of an organization but there are differing views in the literature regarding the relationship between organizational culture and the performance of the organization. Culture of the organization can be manipulated by management so that a system of strongly-held, shared values and beliefs prevails in the organization and these values and norms are internalized by the members so that they identify with the organization and see their own interest as congruent with it. On the other hand, organizational learning achieved prominence amongst the ideas influencing management studies. Instead of focusing on change in behavior, cognitive psychologists focused on change in the state of knowledge which creates the potential for changing behavior [20-25]. This approach centers on changes in potential behaviors and in underlying cognitive structures. If this approach is adopted at the individual level, the learning potential is a function of individual insight and cognitive abilities, as well as intelligence and experience. Organizational leaders and theorists increasingly view learning as a key element in developing and maintaining competitive advantage [28-31]. Although organizational learning has been studied for decades, a new emphasis on learning has arisen due to rapid changes in the business climate, including uncertain market conditions, increasing complexity, changing demographics, and global competition [28]. The view that learning increases competitive advantage has stimulated interest in developing organizations that foster and promote learning. Learning organizations are designed to increase competitiveness through generative learning that is forward looking and reduces the major shocks of change, through close relationships with customers and other key constituents that allow for mutual adjustment, and through the ability to quickly reconfigure and reallocate resources based on environmental change [32].

Generally, Organizational culture and organizational learning are the collective behavior of humans that are parts of an organization and the meanings that the people attach to their actions. Culture includes the organization values, visions, norms, working language, systems, symbols, beliefs and habits. It is also the pattern of such collective behaviors and assumptions that are taught to new organizational members as a way of perceiving, and even thinking and feeling. In-concussion this research revealed that the positive and meaningful correlations between overall organizational culture and its sub-scales with overall organizational learning and its sub-scales. Based on these results, we can state that in any organization the organizational culture and organizational learning are important variables in employees. Also, based on previous researches, these variables are correlated with personality traits and organizational commitment and we suggested that in future researches to be considered these personality variable.

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