

The Study of Learning Capability on Information Community School

Liao Tung Chao

National Yunlin University of Science &
Technology Department of Information
Management
g9523232@yuntech.edu.tw

Tang Shun Ming

National Yunlin University of Science &
Technology Department of Information
Management
tangsm@yuntech.edu.tw

摘要

本研究以個案探索 96 學年度雲林縣資訊社群學校之組織學習能力。主要探討推動學習型組織之組織特性與管理實務之基準。研究內涵呈現以下命題：『建立組織遠景』、『領導與賦權』、『經驗與反饋』、『團隊學習』。研究結果將可提供資訊社群學校擬定組織策略與選擇領導方式及任務型態的參考，進而提升組織學習能力。

關鍵詞：組織學習能力

Abstract

This article is to explore the learning capability of organizations on the IT Integration of Teaching community school in Yulin county, A.D. 2007 session. We take a school as the case to study the essential organizational characteristics and management practices that promotes organization learning. This article provides some advices of learning capability that would enable managers to design interventions to overcome specific barriers in building a learning organization. Our research finds out some propositions, such as 'Clarity of Purpose and Mission', 'Leadership Commitment and Empowerment', 'Experimentation', and 'Teamwork and Group Problem Solving'. According to the research, it could provide that Information Community school to frame a organizational device and select the type of leadership, and then promote the learning capability of organizations.

Keywords: learning capability of organizations.

1. Introduction

In accordance with "Stipulate in Ministry of Education subsidize to construct Information Seed School and teacher group training", 'The Information Incorporates the Teaching Community School' should establish 'Information Incorporate The Educational Group'. The inside expands various kinds of teaching ways in which information incorporates teaching. And then, Information Incorporates The Teaching Community takes shape the learning organization to expand the way in which information incorporates teaching.

It is a dominant perspective that organizational learning with influence on both organizational research and management practice, in the 21 century (Argyris & Schoon, 1996). But, the domestic topic relevant information incorporate of teaching, short of the studies commenting and measuring the capability of the learning ability. On the other hand, implementation of organizational learning is complicated by lack of a systematic research about the measurement of learning capability. Therefore, we propose that by identifying and measuring the essential organizational characteristics and management practices that promote organization learning.

2. Learning Capability of Organizations

We begin our review with a discussion of the concept of organizational learning.

Organizational learning promises to be a dominant perspective with influence on both organizational research and management practice, in the 21 century (Argyris & Schoon, 1996).

The study of organizational learning considers organizations to be cognitive entities. The study of organizational learning considers organizations capable of experimenting to discover the effects of alternative actions, modifying their actions to improve performance, and observing their own actions (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). Dependent upon revisions to organizational memory can improve organization.

Understandings shared by members of an organization is an analogy used to describe. Especially, the cognitive maps connect organizational actions to outcomes (Anand, Manz & Glick, 1998; Duncan & Weiss, 1979; Walsh & Ungson, 1991). Organizational learning is not a configuration of structural components, instead of a process. It often emphasizes nonhierarchical, team-based structures, while prescriptions for the design of learning organizations. To make a long story short, the learning process can occur within a variety of structural arrangements (Wishart, Elam & Robey, 1996).

Stata (1989) shows that through activities changes, using planning and quality improvement as learning tools, learning can be accelerated. Leonard-Barton (1992) states such emphasis features program as an on problem solving, constant integration of knowledge, continual innovation and experimentation, and integration of external information into day-to-day activities. McGill & Slocum (1993) suggest that openness to different experience, to acknowledge failure are important behaviors. And to learn from them, and an orientation to continuous experimentation that promote organizational learning. McGill, Lei and Slocum (1994) mentioned that an ability to learn from past success and failures is the new learning strategy for organization must include a strategic intent to learn, a commitment to continuous experimentation. The author states it will enable organizational renewal and develop new source of competitive advantage through these practices.

Dixon (1993) stated that learning occurs at the individual, team and systemic levels in an organization. The three parts are interrelated. And to promote learning at all levels can be developed specific organizational systems. Dixon (1993) also mentioned that an organization should generate a holistic view of the organization to encourage learning. It can acquire and interpret information from the environment, by providing only minimum specifications for jobs, facilitate alliances with other organization and implement systems that retain knowledge.

Pedler, Boydell & Burgoyne (1989) list a set of condition describing a learning company that includes: individuals, groups and departments exchanging and sharing information on expectations and feedback on satisfaction to assist learning. It enables members to question current operating assumptions and seek information for individual and collective learning by information systems. Management style and culture within the organization encourage experiment and learn and develop from success and failures.

The product of individual and group learning applied the accomplishment of the organization's vision and performance goals is the real organizational learning that certain management practices and internal

condition can either help or hinder this process (Duncan and Weiss, 1979; Hall and Fukami, 1979; Senge, 1990; Garvin, 1993; Mills and Friesen, 1992). Thus if we can identify and assess the impact of a set of internal organization conditions and management practices that lead to learning, we could assess an organization capability. This information could then help managers focus on specific intervention required to improve learning.

DiBella (1995) has identified the normative perspective of a learning organization. It is that learning is a collective activities that takes place under certain conditions or circumstances. Therefore, it is need to foster and allow learning to take place in organizations.

Garvin (1993): Creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge is a skill in a learning organization (p. 80)

It is needed to have a clearly articulated purpose is as a whole and each unit within the organization. This purpose and how the work they contribute to attainment of the mission need to be understood by the organization employees. In addition, it is important that the organization promote employee commitment to these goals. Senge (1990, 1992) and others have mentioned that creates tension that leads to learning, especially of a future desired state such as 'building a shared vision'. It can be better strive to overcome the vision and gap through that employees understand the gap between and the current state. (Mohrman and Mohrman Jr., 1995)

To accomplish organization goals that leaders need to be committed the goal of learning. On the other hand, leaders have to create a climate of trust that employees are approachable. And leaders need take failures as a part of the learning process. Specifically, to help identify performance gaps and then help set goals is most important thing that leaders need to do. The search for knowledge will be encouraged to narrow and solve these performance gaps.

Good leadership is presented through some behaviors, such as seeking feedback, being open to criticisms, admitting mistakes and empowering their employees to make decisions and take some risks. Many writers mentioned that Leadership is virtually as an important element to foster an important element in fostering a learning climate (Garvin, 1993; Slocum, McGill and Lei, 1994)

It shows opportunities for experimentation by facing the organizational problems. This practice should be supported by the organization's structure and systems. For example, budgeting systems can be designed to challenge the need for doing things such as 'we have always done them'. And to reward innovation and risk-taking that compensation systems can be

design. In learning organization, it is observed the most consistent managerial practice by far. It is free and be encouraged and supported to experiment with new methods and innovative processes. The freedom to (Senge, 1990; Garvin, 1993; Pedler, Boydell and Burgoyne, 1989; Slocum, McGill and Lei, 1994).

The clearer and faster and more focused communication is important. Functional and sub-unit boundaries within the organization should be crossed. Information distributed and acquired and grown should relate to organizational problems and opportunities. Many writers mention that again. Especially, go transfer knowledge across departmental boundaries and to transfer knowledge from the external environment, e.g. from suppliers, customers and even from benchmarking of competitors is the ability of the learning organization (Garvin, 1993; Shaw and Perkins, 1991 and Pedler, Boydell and Burgoyne, 1989).

In today's complex world, to accomplish organizational objectives individuals need to help each other. In order to reduce the dependency on upper management, structures and systems in the organization need to encourage teamwork and group problem-solving. Teams must also have the ability to work cross-functionally. Knowledge can be shared among organizational members by working in teams. There will be also a better understanding of other individuals, their needs and how they work in different parts of the organization, encouraging knowledge transfer as well (Senge, 1990, 1992; Garvin, 1993).

3. Research Methodology

To explore the learning capability of organization, we developed the questionnaire that captured from all of the elements discussed in the literature earlier. We refined the questionnaire through a supervisor of information education department of Yunlin County Education Bureau, two school principals, a professor of National Yunlin University of Science & Technology Department of Information Management. Next, 18 members from a 'IT Integration in Teaching School' were asked to be interviewed. According to the interview result (528 terms), three grades carried on the open coding. The reliability of this research is .704 (372/528). Later, the same open encoding compressed into the axial coding.

4. Case Introduction

The case is a small Elementary school (18 members) in the suburb of the Douliou city. 2007, the case has applied for 'IT Integration in Teaching Community School'. Until December 10, the case has

incorporated the information topic to teaching, two administrative meetings of schools had processed. According to the meeting resolution, it establishes three teaching communities, part as follows: English teaching, Health teaching, Artistic teaching. Generally, 3 to 4 members take part in each community. At present, 6 seminars and 2 discussions had ran.

4. Results

According to the investigation result of the case, the research developed out the following proposition:

Proposition 1:

The chiefs have to accept change and new ideas and share a common vision of what our work should accomplish with teachers in this school.

The definitions in the case:

Under limited resources, only a lot of intellectual resources just make knowledge exchanging, this often needs to extend through organizational learning. Traditionally, the organization visions are what the management group made from top to bottom. However, the managers' visions do not to represent the whole organization members' visions.

Organization visions can act on spontaneous common understanding among the basic level member. Main task of administrator is that creating a net with deep discussion and find out and move the barriers. Between administrator and members must have carry on knowledge exchange to establish the cooperation. Then the organization has stronger cohesiveness, more independence, higher environmental control ability and more extensive cooperative range too. On the contrary, those organizations lack good communications only relied on the one-way possibility, lack the independence of making decision. So, it comes through organization newer to be a kind of existence must to learn. The members do understand how the mission of the teaching community is to be achieved and have opportunities for self assessment with replace to goal attainment. Like this, organize operation will be very steady towards the vision.

Proposition 2:

The principal have to frequently involve teachers in important decision and accept criticism without becoming overly defensive.

The definitions in the case:

The organization visions must be clear and can be admitted and definite. While organization involves, though management tactics changes with environmental changes. But the manager must have all the time

unanimous commitment to its basic mission, can't change easily. The organization development must go on in the good interaction. So the organization must have opening and permeability. The organization development must go on in the good interaction, So the organization must have opening and permeability, The more interaction of the administrator with members, the more learning resources can obtain. At the same time, the management tactics and steps can adjust at any time. It improves the motive force of organizational learning.

Proposition 3:

The principal in this school encourages team members to experiment and bring innovative ideas into the teaching community to improve teaching process. On the other hand, The principal in this organization often has to provide useful feedback that helps to identify potential problems and opportunities.

The definitions in the case:

The successful inertia experience will influence the base behavior in the past. When environmental condition is not quite changing, the successful inertia experience can still duplicate and extend using. But face new topic and challenge, the organization should rebuild new leading logic, in order to meet the new environmental condition. The organization can plan the experimental tactics to estimate the diversified situation in advance. Once, these tactics experiments succeed, its successful behavior type mould is incorporated into normal processing. It can regard as the new tactics foundation.

Initiative and creativity are the main source organization value, that is the key to develop. In order to let members dare to break through the old procedure and adopt the new teaching way. The administrator must depend on member's demand to offer suitable and the real reward. That increase the motive force of member's study and improve the learning ability of organization.

Proposition 4:

Teachers often have an opportunity to share to other one about successful or failures problems or work activities. And then, new teaching processes that may be useful to the organization as a whole are usually shared with all teachers.

The definitions in the case:

Current organizational practice encourages teachers from a variety of teaching areas from inform groups to solve problems together before discussing them with a chief. An vigorous organization, it is one designing that is the independence and the initiative. It can give stability, efficiency, and mobility. At the same time, it can

mediate collective achievement and individual. Every intra department can all obtain the same and abundant merger service any time in any place. The different experience sharing can excite the vigor of organization. To combine different experience will have breakthrough innovation. The good knowledge sharing platform can offer rookies to consult and avoid trying the mistake. It can adjust amendable old procedure, and then improve the performance.

5. Conclusions

Organizational learning is important to both education and business organization. Faster learners will have more distinct advantage than slower learning competitors. So, managers have to improve the ability of organizational learning. Managers of education organization should approach the ability of organizational learning by systematically focusing on specific interventions designed. This research would see managers how to improve the ability of organizational learning by providing specific interventions in high impact areas.

According to the article, the management need to keep good communicate with members to work out the common distant view to the environment challenge. To open wide the communicative channel that members can share the suggestion freely and set up the knowledge and experience sharing platform.

6. References

- [1]Anand, V., Manz, C. C., & Glick W.H. An organizational memory approach to information management. *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp.796–809, 1998.
- [2]Argyris, C., & Schoon, D. A. *Organizational learning II*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1996.
- [3]Duncan, R., & Weiss, A.. *Organizational learning: implications for organizational design*. *Researching Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 1, No. 11, 75–123. , 1979.
- [4]Dixon, N. "Report to the Conference Board of Canada on Organization learning", 1993.
- [5]DiBella, A. "developing learning organization: A Matter of Perspective. *Academy of Management Proceedings*", Vol. 7, No. 12,, pp. 287-290, 1995.
- [6]Fiol, C. M., & Lyles, M. A.. *Organizational learning*. *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 803–813, 1985
- [7]Garvin, D. "Building a learning organization. *Harvard Business Review*", pp. 78-91, 1993
- [8]Leonard-Barton, D. "The factory as learning laboratory". *Sloan Management Review*, pp. 23-38, 1992.
- [9]Senge, P. "Building learning organization. *Sloan Management Review*, pp. 7-23, 1990.

- [8] Senge, P. "The Fifth Discipline. Doubleday", New York, 1992.
- [9] McGill, M. and Slocum, J.W, Jr "Unlearning the organization Organization Dynamics", pp. 67-79, 1993.
- [10] Pedler, M., Boydell, T. and Burgoyne, J. Towards the learning company. Management Education and Development", Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 1-8, 1989.
- [11] Senge, P. "Building learning organization. Sloan Management Review, pp. 7-23, 1990.
- [12] Senge, P. "The Fifth Discipline. Doubleday", New York, 1992.
- [13] Shaw, R.B. and Perkins, "D.N.T. Teaching organization to learn". Organizational Development Journal, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp.1-12, 1991.
- [14] Slocum, J. W., McGill, M. and Lei D.T. "The new learning strategy: anything, anywhere". Organization Dynamics, pp. 33-47, 1994.
- [15] Stata, R. 9 Organizational learning: the key to management innovation; Sloan Management Review, pp. 63-73, 1989.
- [16] Walsh, J. P., & Ungson, G. R. Organizational memory. Academy of Management Review, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 57-91, 1991.
- [17] Wishart, N. A., Elam, J. J., & Robey, D. Redrawing the portrait of a learning organization: inside Knight-Ridder Inc. The Academy of Management Executive, Vol. 10, No 1, 7-20, 1996s