Journal of Financial, Accounting and Managerial Studies
ISSN 2352-9962/E-ISSN 2572-0147
Vol 08, Number 01 – March 2021

OEB Univ. Publish.

The organizational learning: new competitiveness challenge for the Algerian public company

التعلم التنظيمي : تحدي تنافسي جديد للمؤسسات العمومية الجزائرية

DAGHRIR FATHI [1], AISSA MOSBAH [*] [2]

[1] Faculty of Economic Sciences, Commerce and Management Sciences, Souk Ahras University, Algeria, f.daghrir@univ-soukahras.dz.

[2] Faculty of Business Management and Professional Studies, Management and Science University, Shah Alam, Selengor, Malaysia, mosbah_aissa@msu.edu.my.

Date of receipt: 15/11/2020 Date of revision: 13/12/2020 Date of acceptation: 11/01/2021

Abstract

this paper sets out to answer the following "what is the optimal model of Organizational learning process that could help to develop dynamic capabilities of public organizations, in order to deal with the business environment changes and turbulences happening in national, international, organizational and other environment factors? This research also aims to suggest a clear and integrated conceptual framework that helps the Algerian public entity in its transformation into a learning organization capable of facing competition and globalization.

Keywords : Organizsationa learning, competitiveness, Algerian public company.
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ملخص

تهدف هذه الورقة للإجابة على ما يلي "ما هو النموذج الأمثل لعملية التعلم التنظيمي التي يمكنها أن تطور القدرات الديناميكية للمنظمات العمومية لمواجهة التغيرات والاضطرابات في بيئة الأعمال والتي تحدث في سياق العوامل البيئية الوطنية والدولية والتنظيمية ؟ كما تهدف هذه الورقة أيضًا إلى اقتراح إطار مفاهيمي واضح ومتكامل يساعد المؤسسة العامة الجزائرية في تحولها إلى منظمة متعلمة قادرة على مواجهة المنافسة والعولمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم التنظيمي، التنافسية، المنظمات العمومية الجزائرية.

[*] Corresponding Author: Aissa Mosbah, mosbah_aissa@msu.edu.my.

1. Introduction :

The debate led by scholars and practitioners around the concept of the learning organization has contributed to the refounding and re-reading of many assumptions underlying the concept of organization and the theory of organization as a whole. The organization has moved from a mechanical definition based on a rational orientation and a bureaucratic model to a social entity based on the social interaction between its components, to the definition perceived as a learning system, which puts the 'emphasis on the functioning of the system (as a whole) and on the means of remedying the deviations and correcting the errors, here we are talking about methods, mechanisms, approaches and learning tools. From this perspective, the organization is seen as a social entity capable of learning, producing and storing knowledge, as well as modifying the behavioral patterns of its members (employees) and rooting these patterns in the form of organizational routine.

In this article we will try to answer the main question:

Why is it so important for Algerian public organizations to learn?

To answer this question it is necessary to clarify the notions of organizational learning, the learning organization, and how can we distinguish a learning organization from those of traditional organizations?

We note a priori that it is the individual who learns, this vision is based on the work of psychologists who work on human behaviour. As Dodgson (Dodgson, 1993, p61) and Kim (Kim, 1993, p97) point out, all organizations follow a "normal" or "natural" learning logic. This learning is incremental in nature, it is barely conscious and often based on repetition (Fiol and Lyles, 1985, p354). However, the real learning lies beyond, in an active and structured process. It is in this sense that Argyris and Schön (Argyris and Schön, 1978, p29) define learning as a modification and restructuring of theories of action, that is to say systems of rules and beliefs embedded in the practices of the firm.

Gérard Koenig defines the learning organization as a collective phenomenon of the acquisition and development of knowledge which modifies the management of situations and the situations themselves. Paul shrivastava (shrivastava ,1983, p128) defined learning systems as the means by which the company learns. learning systems are mechanisms.

According to Kezar (Kezar, 2005, p83), organizational learning is firstly concerned with the threats to and limitations, while the learning organization focuses on the process for overcoming threats to learning. Secondly, the learning organization tends to focus more on external threats as the reason for fostering learning and looks to external forces and logic to prompt learning, whereas organizational learning researchers discuss internal concerns about performance and learning as part of the condition of human beings within settings. According to Yeo (Yeo and al, 2005, p70), organizational learning is a process of learning while a learning organization is a type of organization. Ortenblad (Ortenblad, 2001, p61) observes that three distinctions have been suggested in the literature to differentiate organizational learning from a learning organization. The first distinction is that a learning organization is a form of organization while organizational learning is about activities or processes (of learning) in organizations. The second distinction is that a learning organization needs to exert efforts while organizational learning exists without making any effort.

Watkins and Marsick (Watkins and Marsick ,1993, p264) observed that several authors have written about the learning organization. The literature on learning organizations shows that there are different ways of conceptualizing the construct that has generated different models and various characteristics of learning organizations (Ali, 2012, p133). Senge's seminal work has the merit of being an eye-opener to the theory that describes the learning organization. He laid the foundation for research interest that followed his publication and continues to grow in the business environment. However, Senge (senge, 1990, p367) has been criticized (Garvin, 1993, p15) for leaving too many questions unanswered. He has also been criticized for making recommendations that are too abstract since he does not provide guidance or a framework for action. What is more, his book is not supported by formal research on the learning organization. (Pedler et al, 1991, p154) conceptualization's is comprised of 11 elements. This model has several strengths for such a pioneering effort. First, the idea of the boundary worker attaches the importance of learning within organizations to front-line workers (Watkins & Marsick, 1993, p269). Furthermore, the book can be both a theoretical journey for the learning company concept as well as a manual for managers who would wish to venture into the learning company field. Walton (Walton, 1999, p172) states

that one criticism of this model is that it is more structural and "recipe driven" than Senge's (1990) learning organization model. Its focus on processes and practices is illustrated in the visual image of the model as an "11-piece puzzle". They naively lead the reader to believe that if all the pieces are in place, the puzzle is solved and thus the learning organization can be successfully implemented.

Garvin's (Garvin, 2000, p50) model consists of 5 components. The model provides a comprehensive explanation of three types of organizational learning using the cognitive perspective: gathering intelligence, learning from past experience and providing opportunities for experimentation. However, other authors have insisted on including multiple perspectives when trying to explain the objectives and impact of a learning organization (Watkins & Marsick, 1993; Matthews, 1999, p147). For instance, a behavioral perspective of learning focuses on individual learning that results from adapting to changing conditions and meeting performance objectives (Chalofsky, 1996; Redding & Catalanello, 1993). In addition, the humanistic perspective of learning focuses on the transformative power of personal relationships and individual emotions within the overall realm of individual and team learning (Dixon, 1997; Kofman & Senge, 1995; Vince, 2002). None of these models had an instrument designed to help practitioner measure them. The traditions for measuring learning organizations have not been well-established or validated, and there are few measurement tools available regardless of their background or purpose (Moilanen, 2001, p45). From eight instruments reviewed, the Dimension of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) is the most comprehensive questionnaire (Moilanen, 2001, p49). This tool has been scientifically and empirically tested, which is not the case with the other instruments presented by Moilanen.

2. The learning subject

One of the difficulties of the notion of organizational learning lies precisely in the so-called organizational nature of learning, a difficulty accentuated by the fact that most of the texts are based on individual learning models. Either organizational learning is seen as an extension and consolidation of individual learning, or the role of individuals in organizational learning is ignored to see the organization metaphorically as

an individual or a collectivity. On the one hand, therefore, an "individualistic" approach which apprehends learning from the cognitive activity of individuals in the organization, on the other a "holistic" position which personifies the organization and apprehends the learning to from organizational systems such as practices, routines, procedures or organizational memory. As Miner and Mezias (1996) point out, the quarrel over the organizational dimension of learning is no doubt doomed to remain in vain insofar as the levels of analysis and the problems are often different, depending on whether one is interested. first of all to the learning of individuals or that we pay more attention to organizational characteristics.

At least, this is the observation made by De la Ville (De la Ville, 1998, p12) which calls into question the work merging the levels of individual learning and organizational learning. From this point of view, we would be grateful to Argyris and Schön (Argyris and Schön ,1996) for recalling that learning rests first of all on individuals who interact in an organizational context which provides a framework for collective action.

According to Boisot (1995), there are two kinds of theories about learning organizations. The neoclassical theories explain the ‘war of position’ and Schumpeterian theory explains the ‘war of movement’. Neoclassical theories of learning favor retentive strategies and lead the firm to accumulate its technological assets. Learning is based on the codification and diffusion of knowledge about objective reality. Schumpeterian learning is based on subjective apprehension of reality. Innovations occur through creative destruction. Tea interpretations of reality are not fully shared. Schumpeterian learning emphasizes the absorption of knowledge (learning by doing, internalizing of tacit knowledge) and scanning (integrating codified and uncodified knowledge). A learning organization is ‘a Schumpeterian animal, a creative destroyer that is forever destabilizing markets ’. This book will focus on ‘war of movement’. This approach can be identified in an extreme form in D’Aveni and Gunther’s (1994) idea of ‘strategic maneuvering’. It involves disrupting the market and status quo and eroding and destroying an opponent's advantage by making it obsolete, irrelevant, or non-unique. It implies that companies should abandon the objective to establish fit between environment, mission, strategy, and organizational characteristics, because ‘fit’ implies permanence and predictability that is easy to read by competitors.

3. Foudations of organizational learning

If we take all of these definitions into account, we can see three fundamental aspects of the learning organization.

1- The person

First, when it comes to people, learning organizations are characterized by an environment and leadership that promotes lifelong learning among employees. In this regard, the workplace is almost a kind of school: employees continue to learn; managers support employee learning; and the organization helps managers support employee learning. In the learning organization, learning is continuous. Learning becomes a conditioned reflex or habit.

2- The group

As such, learning organizations seek to create a fluid sharing of knowledge and experiences throughout the organization. The term "knowledge" does not only refer to explicit knowledge (the type of knowledge that can be recorded in one way or another); indeed, it also includes tacit knowledge, that is to say the set of experiences and opinions related to the work that each employee has stored. Team discussions are based on a form of open dialogue characterized by great respect for the diversity of opinions. Ideas are seen as an opportunity to discover, and mistakes are seen as an opportunity to learn. Teams are encouraged to think about the way they work, not only to celebrate successes, but also to make necessary improvements.

3- The organization

To do this, learning organizations make the link between learning and organizational transformation; in other words, learning translates into the development of the organization itself. Thus, the learning organization is also a tool for change, and perhaps even for profound change. Learning organizations invest in learning because they believe it fuels productivity. Learning does not take place on the sidelines of organizational life (for example, in a classroom for a few days).

By most definitions, the learning organization is a self-examining organization. She's not just trying to get results; indeed, she tries to understand how she achieves these results. The learning organization actively seeks to learn from its successes and failures. She asks herself

tough questions, can speak openly about her weaknesses, and has the courage to correct herself. In addition, it regularly questions its basic assumptions about how the business is carried out. In short, the learning organization tries to overcome what Argyris calls its organizational defense mechanisms (usual excuses, automatisms and "qualified incompetence").

4. Description of conceptual learning models :

4.1 Single, double and triple loop learning:

According to Argyris and Schön, organizational learning can be described as a three-level model consisting of single, double and triple loop learning:

• Single-loop learning is undertaken according to explicit practices, policies and standards of behavior. Learning consists of identifying and correcting deviations and variations from these references.

• Double-loop learning is a reflection on the relevance of the practices, policies and standards underlying the action. This approach addresses the fundamental aspects of an organization, so that the same solutions are not applied to new contexts.

• Triple-loop learning, also called Deutero-learning, this occurs when organizations learn how to perform single-loop learning and double-loop learning. The first two forms of learning will not happen if organizations do not realize that learning is happening. This means identifying the directions and styles of learning, and the processes and structures (facilitating factors) required to promote learning. It is a questioning of the very foundations of an organization, of its raison d'être, which may eventually lead to radical changes in its internal structure, its culture and its practices, as well as of its external context.

4.2 The eight-function model

The eight functions model suggests that, in order to ensure effective learning, an organization must pay attention to eight essential functions:

- Gather internal experience;
- Access to external learning;
- Communication systems,
- Draw conclusions,
- Develop an organizational memory;
- Integrate learning into strategies and policies;

 Apply the learning;
 Create a favorable culture.

Each of these functions is linked to the others. Creating a supportive culture encompasses the other seven functions, as there can be no commitment to them without an organizational culture that is supportive of learning. A fundamental element of organizational learning is the application of the learnings. This model is based on the idea that learning can only really happen when it is translated into action. Its aim is to create learning organizations ".

4.3 Marquardt 16 Steps to Building a Learning Organization :

- Commit to becoming a learning organization.
- Form a powerful coalition for change.
- Connect learning with business operations.
- Assess the organization's capabilities on each subsystem of the Systems Learning Organization model.
- Communicate the vision of a learning organization.
- Recognize the importance of systems thinking and action.
- Leaders demonstrate and model commitment to learning.
- Transform the organizational culture to one of continuous learning and improvement.
- Establish corporate-wide strategies for learning.
- Reduce bureaucracy and streamline the structure.
- Extend learning to the entire business chain.
- Capture learning and release knowledge.
- Acquire and apply the best technology to the best learning.
- Create short-term wins.
- Measure learning and demonstrate learning successes.
- Adapt, improve, and learn continuously.

5. The 5 disciplines of organizational learning

Senge describes the bulk of the work of a learning organization as a system based on five learning disciplines. According to Senge, these five disciplines have a "synergy" that makes organizational learning possible only if they are all brought together.

5.1 Systemic thinking:

The discipline of learning to contemplate the whole and not just the individual parts of it. "It is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and tools developed over 50 years facilitating the analysis of" patterns "and the understanding of how to act to change them. It is the glue that binds the other disciplines together. The 10 laws of systems thinking are:

• Today's problems come from yesterday's solutions
• The harder you push, the harder the system pushes back
• Behavior grows better before it grows worse
• The easy way out usually leads back in .
• The cure can be worse than the disease
• Faster is slower.
• Cause and effect are not closely related in time and space
• Small changes can produce big results - but the areas of highest leverage are often the least obvious
• You can have your cake and eat it too - but not at once.
• Dividing an elephant in half does not produce two small elephants, it produces a mess

"Thinking" systems represent a major leap in the general way of thinking. Thinking systems, according to Senge, are critical to the learning organization, because they represent a new perception of the surrounding world.

5.2 Building shared vision:

The discipline of translating an individual vision (that of subordinates or leaders of the organization) into a vision shared by all members of the organization, that is to say a set of principles and practices guiding the actions of each, so as to bind all members to a common identity and to the sense of a common destiny.

5.3 Mental models:

A mental model is a structure for the cognitive processes of our mind. In other words, it determines how we think and act.

the discipline of continually learning to question our biases, visions and inner images that influence how we understand the world and the way we act. It is also about learning to lead meaningful (learning) conversations that balance inquiry and advocacy, challenging the mental patterns by which we and our interlocutors think.

5.4 Team learning:

It is understood that teams are made up of individuals, to which is added the willingness to achieve a goal and to act together.

the discipline to engage in dialogue, to suspend prejudices and to engage in a real process of "brainstorming", to think together. This discipline also involves being able to recognize the "patterns" of interactions between team members that threaten the ability to learn.

Peter Senge sees the team as the key learning unit for organizations. According to him, the definition of team learning is: "a process of alignment and development of capacity". He builds his talk on the discipline of developing shared vision and on personal mastery; the result being linear: gifted teams are made up of gifted individuals.

5.5 Personal mastery

The discipline of continuously clarifying and deepening our personal vision, focusing our energies, developing our patience and looking at reality objectively "This is the spiritual foundation of learning organizations.

The Personal Mastery is made up of two key pieces:

- Definition of the goal to be reached.
- Measure of the means

It should be noted that the word "goal", in this context, is not used in the usual way, either in the short and medium term, namely in three to five years. In personal mastery, the goal is far in time, just like a business strategy. Sometimes it takes a lifetime to reach it, if it ever is once reached.

6. Obstacles to learning:

Alain Gautier describes the fact that organizations learn poorly is no accident. The way they are formed and managed, the way tasks are defined, and above all the ways of thinking and relating that we have been taught make them incapable of learning.

It is essential to identify the seven barriers to learning:

1 - "I am at my post":

When members of an organization focus only on their own task, they feel little responsible for the results produced by the combined effort of all.

2 - "The enemy is outside":

When things go wrong, there is a tendency in each of us to find causes foreign to ourselves. Yet "the outside" and "the inside" are only parts of the same system.

3 - The illusion of "proactivity":

A "proactive" decision is often a disguised reaction, especially following aggression from the outside. A true "proactive" decision must come from a way of thinking, not an emotional reaction.

4 - Fixation on immediate events:

The threats to our organizations and societies today are not precise and sudden events but the result of slow and gradual processes.

5 - The illusory learning by experience:

Each of us has a learning horizon, a field of vision in space and time in which we can assess the effects of our actions. When these effects are outside our field of vision, it becomes impossible to learn by experience.

6 - The myth of the management team:

According to Chris Argyris, most managers find the collective investigation designed to raise substantive issues disturbing. The result: teams that are incredibly skilled at finding ways not to. . . learn, which Chris Argyris calls the "incompetent talent."

These learning disabilities are an old tradition of mankind. The five disciplines of intelligent organizations, however, can be antidotes.

7- Prisoners of the system or of our ways of thinking?

Analysis shows that the root of the problems lies much more in our ways of thinking and relating than in policies and structures.

The lessons to be learned are as follows:

- Structure influences behavior (systems often produce their own crises): placed in the same context, individuals, however different they may be, end up producing similar results.
- The structure of human organizations is subtle (it takes into account the way in which decisions are made).
- The use of levers often results in new ways of reasoning.

7. Conclusion :

The extrapolation of references, articles, research and books dealing with the concept of organizational learning shows us the extent of the importance of this organizational phenomenon at the academic / academic as well as the application levels, as organizations facing this frantic struggle for leadership which is fueled by the globalization of competition, the globalization of markets and the globalization of standards and practices in all their forms, are called to explode All its creative energies to maintain its

competitive capabilities within this turbulent and ever-changing reality, and this will only have one source, which is the persistence of learning in all its styles and tools, and at all individual, collective and organizational levels.

This remarcable and increasing interest in the phenomenon of learning has led to a diversity of research approaches and analytical approaches adopted by thinkers. However, despite the multiplicity and diversity of research, it remains necessary to indicate the need for more study and analysis to adjust the conceptual framework for organizational learning.

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