

An Investigation into the Relationship between the Organizational Learning and Performance Management in Khorasan Razavi Customs

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the relationship between the organizational learning and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs. It is a survey study in terms of data collection and an applied research for its purpose. The sample consisted of 214 people randomly selected out of 487 employees using Morgan Table. The data required was collected using standardized questionnaire for organizational learning and performance management with reliabilities of 0.841 and 0.792, respectively. The data so collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean and female. Furthermore, the research hypotheses were tested using SPSS software by Friedman and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests as well as Spearman Correlation Coefficient.

Keywords: Organizational Learning, Knowledge Transfer and Integration, Systematic Approach, Performance Management

Introduction

The most important goal of any organization is to achieve the highest possible productivity or optimal efficiency. Numerous factors affect the efficiency of individuals in an organization. One of them is organizational learning. In today's world, where intense competition overwhelmed the old boundaries and imposed new rules to the organizations, so that many organizations are faced with the challenge of failure, "Organizational learning" is considered as a powerful driving force behind the success of companies and organizations. (Ghorbani Zadeh, et al., 2008, p 85) Today, due to frequent changes in the technology, the jobs have also been changed, and therefore, employees need to improve their personal skills. Modern societies need superior people in order to employ a set of different skills in various occupations with a proper insight. These individuals help organizations achieve determined goals through creativity, ingenuity, knowledge and extensive skills, while doing their tasks efficiently. A state that fails to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and operate them effectively at the national economy will be unable to develop anything else. Survival of an organization is largely depended on the skills and knowledge of its staff. The more trained the employees, the more they can be involved in improving organizational performance. Also, employees who have improved their skills by learning are more capable of coordinating with changing environmental pressures. Therefore, the growth and survival of an organization and the ability of an organization to adapt to environmental changes are depended on the growth and development of the staff (Rahnavard, 2005, p 43).

Problem Statement

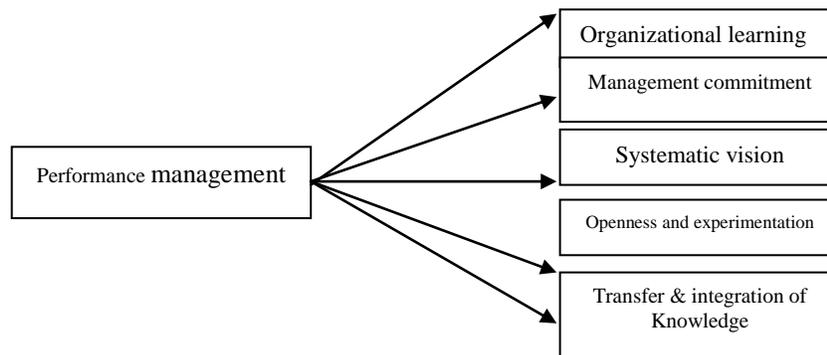
In the 21st Century, organizations are constantly faced with changes. In order to be capable of competing effectively in competitive markets, they should know how to learn and produce new knowledge. Survival and growth of organizations in today's changing world requires the ability to respond timely and appropriately against successive changes of the environment. Organizations that focus on organizational learning are the only organizations that can timely anticipate the needs and environmental changes, and continue their survival in a constantly changing environment (Khan Alizadeh, 2010, p 26). Organizational learning is the process of improving measures through better knowledge and understanding (Aqdasi et al., 2008, p 73). Similar to human beings who have the aptitude and ability to learn and are capable of learning through doing effective activities, and detecting and correcting errors; organizations also benefit from such capabilities.

Therefore, the rapid and widespread development of information technology in the present era, and overt and covert increase in competition in the world have doubled the necessity and importance of organizational learning and psychological empowerment (Timournejad et al, 2010, p 37). On the other hand, every organization needs a social performance management (Barati et al, 2006, p 47). Performance management of any individual or any group for achieving the goals can undoubtedly be beneficial. But this management does not deal only with achievements, but also reexamines how to achieve them. Therefore, it has a key role in the integration of human resources processes and initiatives (Yazdchi, 2004, p.1). The performance management process has been constructed in such a way that should be designed to improve organizational strategy and effectiveness through ensuring continuous improvement in the performance of individuals and groups (System.parsiblog.com, 27th March 2013). Customs administrations are among busy administrations that, for some reasons, are faced with problems such as:

- A great number of different clients from different social groups
- Long duration of customs formalities for goods' [clearance]
- The existence of complicated administrative procedures and the interpretability of the laws and customs procedures
- The possibility of smuggling and its related problems
- The frequency of authorities and policy making centers in customs affairs, including the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, Iranian National Standards Organization, Ministry of Health, Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Iran Veterinary Organization, Ministry of Agricultural Jihad and etc.
- Variety of different operating rules and procedures in each organ
- Failure to modify an organizational structure that is consistent with changes
- Problems related to the employees' motivation including payment system and low level of employees' training
- Lack of effective and active presence of customs in commercial sector policy makings

Hence we aim to study the level of organizational learning and its relationship with organizational performance which undermines the sense of responsibility, performing the tasks and achieving organizational goals. Given the above, this study attempts to examine the relationship between organizational learning in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration and evaluates its relationship with performance management.

Research Operational Model



Hypotheses

Hypotheses are based on the model developed by Gumege et al:

The main hypothesis: There is a direct and significant relationship between organizational learning and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

The Sub- hypotheses

1. There is a significant and direct relationship between management commitment and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.
2. There is a significant and direct relationship between systematic vision and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.
3. There is a significant and direct relationship between openness and experimentation and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

4. There is a significant and direct relationship between the transfer and integration of knowledge and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

Methods: This study was performed using descriptive - correlation method.

The statistical population of this research is composed of Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration staff working in this office in 2013. The sample size was determined to be 214 participants using Morgan Table.

The main tool for the measurement in this research is questionnaire.

Two Questionnaires were developed according to the issues related to the organizational learning and performance management which cover independent and dependent variables of the study, respectively. Also, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of both questionnaires were confirmed. The value of Cronbach's alpha for organizational learning was 0.841 and for the performance management was 0.792.

The main hypothesis: It seems that there is a direct and significant relationship between organizational learning and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

The Spearman correlation coefficient we used to test this hypothesis.

Table 1: Correlation Coefficient between Organizational Learning and Performance Management

Spearman correlation coefficient	Significance level	Number
0.764	0.000	214

According to the table above, we notice that the hypothesis H0 is rejected in favor of the hypothesis H1, and because of smaller significance level (0.000), from a given amount of $\alpha = 0.05$, we conclude that the null hypothesis is rejected and H1 is accepted with 95% reliability. Therefore it can be said that it seems there is a direct and significant relationship between organizational learning and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

The Sub-Hypotheses

The 1st sub-hypothesis: There is a significant and direct relationship between management commitment and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficient between Management Commitment and Performance Management

Spearman correlation coefficient	Significance level	Number
0.621	0.000	214

According to the table above, we notice that the hypothesis H0 is rejected in favor of the hypothesis H1, and it can be said that there is a significant and direct relationship between management commitment and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

The 2nd sub-hypothesis: There is a significant and direct relationship between systematic vision and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient between Systematic Vision and Performance Management

Spearman correlation coefficient	Significance level	Number
0.657	0.000	214

According to the table above, we notice that the hypothesis H0 is rejected in favor of the hypothesis H1, and it can be said that there is a significant and direct relationship between systematic vision and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

The 3rd sub-hypothesis: There is a significant and direct relationship between openness and experimentation and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficient between Openness and Experimentation and Performance Management

Spearman correlation coefficient	Significance level	Number
0.593	0.000	214

According to the table above, we notice that the hypothesis H0 is rejected in favor of the hypothesis H1, and because of smaller significance level (0.000), we conclude from a given amount of $\alpha = 0.05$, that the null hypothesis is rejected and H1 is accepted with 95% reliability. Therefore it can be said that: There is a direct and significant relationship between openness and experimentation and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

The 4th sub- hypothesis: There is a significant and direct relationship between transfer and integration of knowledge and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

Table 5: Correlation Coefficient between Transfer and Integration of Knowledge and Performance Management

Spearman correlation coefficient	Significance level	Number
0.741	0.000	214

According to the table above, we notice that the hypothesis H0 is rejected in favor of the hypothesis H1, and because of smaller significance level (0.000), we conclude from a given amount of $\alpha = 0.05$, that the null hypothesis is rejected and H1 is accepted with 95% reliability. Therefore it can be said that: There is a direct and significant relationship between transfer and integration of knowledge and performance management in Khorasan Razavi Customs Administration.

Evaluation of the correlation coefficient of organizational learning and performance management components indicates the degree of importance of each of them which are shown in Table 1.

Table 6 - Correlation Coefficients Based on the Degree of Importance

Variable	Spearman correlation coefficient
Organizational Learning and Performance Management	0.764
Transfer and integration of knowledge and performance management	0.741
Systematic vision and Performance Management	0.657
Management Commitment and Performance Management	0.621
Openness and experimentation and performance management	0.539

As is seen, the highest correlation coefficient (0.764) is related to the main hypothesis, i.e., there is a significant relationship between organizational learning and performance management. Among sub-hypotheses, the highest correlation coefficient (0.741) is between transfer and integration of knowledge and performance management and the lowest correlation coefficient (0.593) is between openness and experimentation and performance management.

Conclusions

Finally, with regard to the issues mentioned above, it can be said that the organizations that further improve their performance and productivity have the ability to be more sustainable. One of the most important resources for achieving this goal is the manpower of each organization which should be properly directed; and must receive necessary trainings. On the other hand, the performance management approach emphasizes the development of necessary skills and abilities and organizational learning for desirable carrying out of the work and supports collective responsibilities. It has a positive and outcome-based perspective and the words such as "organizational learning", "knowledge transfer" and "mutual commitment" that are appropriate to achieve the goals of modern and progressive organizations are considered as keywords in this approach.

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