

## Surveying the Relationship between Learning Organization (Watkins and Marsick) and Organizational Readiness for Change

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is surveying the relationship between learning organization (Watkins and Marsick) and organizational readiness for change in Islamic Azad University of Boroujerd. This study is according to seven dimensions of learning organization: 1- Continuous learning, 2- Inquiry & Dialogue learning, 3- Team learning, 4- Share learning, 5- Propel people toward Collective Vision, 6- Organization relationship with the environment, 7- Strategic leadership; that are provided via Dr. Watkins and Marsick (1996). The used research method in this research is methadone. Gathering information tool and method in this research is library and field. Scholar questionnaire is used in field level. Questionnaire reliability is confirmed after respected Faculty supervisor and consultant and several experts and professors studied it. Questionnaire validity is calculated with using Cronbach's alpha coefficient as 0.963. Statistical society of the research includes faculty and staff of Islamic Azad University of Broujerd. Sample volume is 210 that are selected via stratified random sampling. Analyzing the gathering data, independent T is used. As a result, findings of the research show that Islamic Azad University of Broujerd as a learning organization has required readiness for creating the change. Within the mentioned seven dimensions, it has the most effect and related relation to strategic leadership and least effect and related relation to encourage for team learning.

**KEYWORDS:** Learning Organization, Change, Organizational Learning, Organizational Readiness.

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### INTRODUCTION

Today's world is the world of constantly and transformational changes. Changes change the world radically and these changes continually are doing. Continuity in changing is what is fixed. Organizations have no chance for survival except accompanied by world changes and this causes them to go toward strategic changes in structure, processes, culture, values and policies. A lot of experts name today's world as change world and report that it differs with the past, a lot of field are changed that no changes were happened within thousands years (Koljahi, 73, 2006). In today's stormy world that environmental changes have growing, organizations' management has a new form. In the past decades, a lot of researches were done in the field of organizational changes and researchers have special attention to change based on learning recently (Davarzani, 2005).

Learning is the only reproducible resource in the organizations. Competitors access to other resources – capital, workforce, raw material or even technology and knowledge (with attract and employment of your employees). But no purchase the ability of your organization's learning or repeats it or does reverse engineering. All organizations learn and it means that they cope with their around world. But some learn slower and some faster (Sange and et al, 2006, 50). Universities have special missions and goals from their inception. Like other organizations, they are obliged to harmony themselves with missions according with the environmental changes and answering to these changes and updating themselves and sometimes they are the origin of these changes (Nobakht, 2008, 14-15-49).

Universities place at the center of governments and organizations' attention as the center of producing science, technology and benefit for nations and have a correct understanding from development and competition (Mashayekhi, 2005).

### RESEARCH BACKGROUND

**Organization:** it is a social institution based on a goal and its structure is designed wisely. It has coordinate and active systems and has relation with external environment (Deft, 19, 2003).

**Learning:** Kimbel defines learning as a relatively permanent change in behavior potential (potential action) that occurs as a result of reinforced practice (Hergengan, 22, 2007).

**Organizational learning:** it is an active process of create, acquisition and integration of knowledge for development of resources and capabilities that are effective in better performance of organization (SobhaniNezhad, 55, 2006).

**Learning organization:** Michel G. Marquardt in his valuable book under the title of “Building a learning organization” provides a relatively broad definition. Learning organization is an organization that learns with power and in bulk. It permanently changes itself to enable to gather information, manage and use them with the aim and success of organizational complex (Marquardt, 1996, 19). Watkins and Marsick provide a consistent pattern from learning organization.

They state learning organization concept as: an organization that learns constantly and changes itself. Learning is a constant process and applicable via strategic point that coordinate and coherent with work in this organization and is active in this regard. Their proposed pattern is seven different even related and correlated dimensions of an organization at individual, group and organizational level. These dimensions and definitions are described as followed:

**Continuous Learning:** organizational attempt for creating constant learning opportunities for all members.

**Inquiry & Dialogue:** organizational attempt for creating discussion culture, feedback and learning experience.

**Team Learning:** shows cooperation spirit based on mutual trust and cooperation skills that can be used effectively by teams.

**Outbreak of share learning:** establish a system that reflects efforts to set up systems that are active in sharing learning.

**Strategic leadership:** it shows a criterion that its leaders think strategically in order to know how use learning for creating changes and movement of organizations in new paths and markets.

**Propel people toward Collective Vision:** it is an organizational process for creating and sharing a collective vision and its member show their feedback about gap between the available situation and new vision.

**Organization relation with the environment:** a systemic relation that refer to universal thinking and operation for making the organization relative with its internal and external environment.

The main meaning of French term of Changer is change or turn like a tree that turn towards the sun light. This idea that the only stable thing is change has been provided at least from the time of Heraclitus in 500 BC. Today the term of change in organizations and trading refer to several matters. It sometimes means external change in technology, customers, competitors, market structure or political and social environment. Change refers to internal environment, too: how organizations are adopting with the environment changes (Sange and et al, 42, 2006).

**Change:** a definition from a gathering of experts is: creating change in the personality and identity of the organization in a way that it changes the behavior and operation in the organization (Mohammad Zade, 1995, 18).

**Readiness for change:** readiness means recognizing the leading behavior for support and resistance against change (Haque, 13, 2008).

Sange published an article with the title of “new work of leaders: creating learning organization” and then the book of “fifth principal: the art and practice of the learning organization” in 1990 and described his idea about learning organization on them.

Surveying the attitude of schools’ managers towards accepting to change the schools to learning organization, case study of high schools in Booshehr was done via Abbas Bagheri in Shiraz University in 2007. Its results are: from the viewpoint of managers, changing schools to a learning organization and accepting them according to 9 components, the component of supportive environment is assessed as the first rate with 84% and learning strategy is assessed as the ninth rate with 5.71%. There is no significant difference between the vision of undergraduate and graduated managers toward accepting the learning organization.

Measuring the organizational learning amount in different units of producer and consumer protection agency by Ms. FarzaneYousefiZenoor (2007) is done in the Institute of Management Studies and Planning. The gained results of the questionnaire data analysis show that supportive organization is lower than the average rate from the view of learning amount.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The used research method in this research is methadone. Gathering information tool and method in this research is library and field. Scholar questionnaire is used in field level. Components of this questionnaire are set as close response according to Likert scale from completely disagree to completely agree. Questionnaire reliability is confirmed after respected Faculty supervisor and consultant and several experts and professors studied it. Questionnaire validity is calculated with using Cronbach's alpha coefficient as 0.963. Statistical society of the research includes faculty and staff of Islamic Azad University of Borujerd. Sample volume is 210 that are selected

via stratified random sampling. Analyzing the gathering data, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and etc.) and inferential statistics (T-independent) is used.

**Chart 1: Model of learning organization’s dimensions from the vision of Watkins and Marsick**

<b>Continuous learning</b>	<b>Readiness for change</b>
<b>Inquiry &amp; Dialogue learning</b>	Readiness for change
<b>Encourage to Team learning</b>	Readiness for change
<b>Inclusive Share learning</b>	Readiness for change
<b>Propel people toward Collective Vision</b>	Readiness for change
<b>Organization relationship with the environment</b>	Readiness for change
<b>Strategic leadership</b>	Readiness for change

**DATA ANALYSIS**

**Hypothesis 1-** Is there any relation between continuous learning in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change?

**Table 1: Results of independent-T test of Hypothesis 1**

Title of organizational status	Hypothesis result	Possibility degree	Degrees of freedom	Standard deviation	Mean	Number of Respondents
Board of directors	Is confirmed	0.594	166	044.5	64.17	72
Employee	Is confirmed	0.541	891.156	301.5	82.17	96
In general	Is confirmed	0.503				

According to the table, since possibility degree (for board of directors is 0.594) is more than significant level of 0.05 and possibility degree (for employees is 0.503), therefore, there is a relation between organizational status and continuous learning in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change because the possibility degree is 0.503 for the organizational status.

**Hypothesis 2-** Is there any relation between Inquiry & Dialogue in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change?

**Table 2: Results of independent-T test of Hypothesis 2**

Title of organizational status	Hypothesis result	Possibility degree	Degrees of freedom	Standard deviation	Mean	Number of Respondents
Board of directors	Is confirmed	0.829	166	7.035	28.17	72
Employee	Is confirmed	0.821	162.028	8.040	28.61	96
In general	Is confirmed	0.406				

According to the table, since possibility degree (for board of directors is 0.829) is more than significant level of 0.05 and possibility degree (for employees is 0.821), therefore, there is a relation between organizational status and Inquiry & Dialogue learning in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change because the possibility degree is 0.406 for the organizational status.

**Hypothesis 3-** Is there any relation between Encourage to Team learning in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change?

**Table 3: Results of independent-T test of Hypothesis 3**

Title of organizational status	Hypothesis result	Possibility degree	Degrees of freedom	Standard deviation	Mean	Number of Respondents
Board of directors	Is confirmed	0.550	166	4.669	17.25	72
Employee	Is confirmed	0.442	146.514	4.327	17.73	96
In general	Is confirmed	0.405				

According to the table, since possibility degree (for board of directors is 0.550) is more than significant level of 0.05 and possibility degree (for employees is 0.442), therefore, there is a relation between organizational status and Encourage to Team learning in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change because the possibility degree is 0.405 for the organizational status.

**Hypothesis 4-** Is there any relation between Inclusive Share learning in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change?

**Table 4: Results of independent-T test of Hypothesis 4**

Title of organizational status	Hypothesis result	Possibility degree	Degrees of freedom	Standard deviation	Mean	Number of Respondents
Board of directors	Is confirmed	0.772	166	6.553	16.85	72
Employee	Is confirmed	0.673	153.549	6.591	17.24	96
In general	Is confirmed	0.894				

According to the table, since possibility degree (for board of directors is 0.772) is more than significant level of 0.05 and possibility degree (for employees is 0.673), therefore, there is a relation between organizational status and Inclusive Share learning in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change because the possibility degree is 0.0.894 for the organizational status.

**Hypothesis 5-** Is there any relation between Propel people toward Collective Vision in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change?

**Table 5: Results of independent-T test of Hypothesis 5**

Title of organizational status	Hypothesis result	Possibility degree	Degrees of freedom	Standard deviation	Mean	Number of Respondents
Board of directors	Is confirmed	0.595	166	5.051	16.57	72
Employee	Is confirmed	0.485	147.860	4.753	17.55	96
In general	Is confirmed	0.359				

According to the table, since possibility degree (for board of directors is 0.595) is more than significant level of 0.05 and possibility degree (for employees is 0.485), therefore, there is a relation between organizational status and Propel people toward Collective Vision in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change because the possibility degree is 0.359 for the organizational status.

**Hypothesis 6-** Is there any relation between Organization relationship with the environment in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change?

**Table 6: Results of independent-T test of Hypothesis 6**

Title of organizational status	Hypothesis result	Possibility degree	Degrees of freedom	Standard deviation	Mean	Number of Respondents
Board of directors	Is confirmed	0.846	166	7.178	24.03	72
Employee	Is confirmed	0.668	145.026	6.546	24.26	96
In general	Is confirmed	0.352				

According to the table, since possibility degree (for board of directors is 0.846) is more than significant level of 0.05 and possibility degree (for employees is 0.668), therefore, there is a relation between organizational status and Organization relationship with the environment in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change because the possibility degree is 0.352 for the organizational status.

**Hypothesis 7-** Is there any relation between Strategic leadership in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change?

**Table 7: Results of independent-T test of Hypothesis 7**

Title of organizational status	Hypothesis result	Possibility degree	Degrees of freedom	Standard deviation	Mean	Number of Respondents
Board of directors	Is confirmed	0.961	166	8.159	25.53	72
Employee	Is confirmed	0.806	150.339	7.896	26.07	96
In general	Is confirmed	0.787				

According to the table, since possibility degree (for board of directors is 0.961) is more than significant level of 0.05 and possibility degree (for employees is 0.806), therefore, there is a relation between organizational status and

Strategic leadership in the learning organization and organizational readiness for change because the possibility degree is 0.787 for the organizational status.

## CONCLUSION

According to independent- T test for surveying the relation between organizational status and continuous learning, it is confirmed that teachers welcome it more than employees. Surveying the relation between organizational status and inquiry and dialogue, it is confirmed that teachers welcome it more than employees. Surveying the relation between organizational status and encourage to team learning, it is confirmed that teachers welcome it more than employees. Surveying the relation between organizational status and inclusive share learning, it is confirmed that teachers welcome it more than employees. Surveying the relation between organizational status and Propel people toward Collective Vision, it is confirmed that teachers welcome it more than employees. Surveying the relation between organizational status and organization relation with the environment, it is confirmed that teachers welcome it more than employees. Surveying the relation between organizational status and strategic leadership, it is confirmed that teachers welcome it more than employees.

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