Comparing Gender and Work Experience of Librarians on Organizational Learning Capabilities (OLC)

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of a study that compare demographic characteristics (gender and work experiences) on organizational learning capabilities' (OLC) among librarians. A research method using questionnaire was personally distributed to academic librarians in selected university libraries in Malaysia. A total of 186 (78%) of the respondents returned the questionnaire for further analysis. However, there was no evidence of difference on the perceptions between gender on the OLC's dimensions (shared vision and mission, teamwork cooperation and systems thinking). Using ANOVA (One-Way Analysis of Variance) test, the results showed that there were significant differences on shared vision and mission and systems thinking among librarians with different years of working experience. The outcome of the study is expected to assist the librarians and academic libraries for improving the skills of acquiring knowledge and learning capabilities toward enhancing the knowledge performance.

Keywords: Shared Vision and Mission; Teamwork Cooperation; Organizational Learning Capabilities (OLC); Librarians

Introduction

Organizational learning has become a main concept that covers various topics in library studies (Geisecke & McNeil 2004; Su 2006; Rowley 2000; Shoid & Kassim 2013). According to Aghdasi and Bafruei (2009), measuring organizational learning capability is the most important issue in organizational studies. Reid and Samer (2005) believed that organizational learning and innovation replicate closely to the related processes and influenced by many elements such as; culture, climate, leadership, management practices, information

acquisition, retrieval and sharing, organizational structures, systems and environment. According to Geisecke and McNeil (2004) and Fowler (1998) there are many library scholars who are concerned about academic libraries and its relevance in embracing organizational learning for future survival. Basically, learning organization is a model and organizational learning is the process, whereby organization can adapt the working-learning relationship in order to innovate and lead. Nevertheless, the idea of an academic library as a learning organization is great and it appears frequently in anything related to organizational learning and academic libraries (Senge,1990).

This study aims to compare organizational learning capabilities (OLC) on demographic characteristics (gender and work experience) of the librarians. The paper addresses three dimensions of the OLC which are *shared vision and mission*, *teamwork cooperation* and *systems thinking.*

Literature review
Organizational Learning Capabilities (OLC)

According to Aradhana and Anuradhan (2006) organizational learning capabilities is the situation where individuals and groups are willing to acquire and apply knowledge in their jobs in making decisions and influencing others to accomplish important tasks for the organization. Organizational learning has a positive relation with the organizational performance. Therefore, organizations should take initiative to design themselves as learning laboratories in terms of acquiring, generating, sharing and using knowledge resources continuously for the innovation and performance of the organization and its members. Moreover, organizational learning capabilities are the learning process for each of the organization who practice it (Fang, Chang & Chen, 2011; Shoid & Kassim, 2014). Therefore, any changes resulted from the learning process may drive to the recovery, or maintenance of organizational function. Organizational learning capabilities has become as important element to enhance the growth and innovation of one organization (Alegre & Chiva, 2008).

Shared Vision and Mission

According to Senge (1990) shared vision is about developing sense of commitment in organization by designing the future images of principle and ambition as a guide to be successful. Determining the clarity of vision and mission in an organization is important in order to prevent the leak of performance consistency (Som et al., 2010). In order to promote sharing knowledge among employees, Lopez et al. (2005) believed that employer should set up goals of achievements of each projects as well as sharing the vision of the organization.

Teamwork Cooperation

The powerful working team has brought the employee's skills and knowledge in order to bear on problems as well as to develop innovative ideas for the organization. A case study by Lim et al. (2006) indicated results of General Linear Modelling (GLM) that teamwork in learning within or out of organization is allied with each other as it supports the commitment to shared vision, learning and open mindedness.

Systems Thinking

Systems thinking framework builds the understanding among the employees regarding the interrelationships of key components of systems that run in the organization. However, systems thinking exists a shifts of mind set as seeing interrelationship rather than linear cause-

effect chains and looking at the process of change fairly than snapshot (Poon & Kamarul Zaman, 1998). Besides, by viewing and understanding organization's original business and determined the problem caused, leaders and other staffs will collaborate with each other in order to find the better solution for the organization (Senge, 1990). On the other hand, Malek Shah (2005) in his study stated that, systems thinking needs to be holistic. It can be proved by constant monitor by the managers on the operational systems in the departments such as quality management systems and infrastructure maintenance.

Research methodology

Quantitative method has been conducted in this study. The selected university libraries in Malaysia were chosen as the study setting. The respective university libraries were Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). They were chosen because the universities have the most number of academic librarians in the university libraries. Questionnaires were personally distributed to a total of two hundred and forty (240) librarians of the selected university libraries. From the feedback, one hundred and eighty-six (78%) of the questionnaires were returned and usable for analysis. The questionnaire consisted of three dimensions of OLC namely *shared vision and mission, teamwork cooperation* and *systems thinking*. The questionnaire items were designed on a 1 (strongly disagree) through 7 (strongly agree) Likert scale. For data analysis, descriptive statistics include frequency and percentage while the inferential statistics include independent samples *t* –test and ANOVA (One -Way Analysis of variance).

Findings and Discussion
Profile of Respondents

The summary statistics for the profile of the respondents are presented. From the total of 186 respondents, 70.4% (131) of the respondents are female and 29.6% (55) of the respondents are male. Majority (153 or 82.3%) are middle management staff compared to 33 (29.6%) holding senior management post. Slightly more than half (95 or 51.1%) of the respondents have Bachelor's degree while 91 (48.9%) have Master's degree. Majority (83 or 44.6%) of the respondents belong to the 31 – 40 years of age group, followed by 20 -30 years of age group (58 or 31.2%), 41 – 50 years of age group (37 or 19.9%) and 51 and above years age group which represents only 8 or 4.3%. Slightly more than half of the respondents (52.2% or 97) have worked less than 10 years, followed by 37.1% or 69 of those who have worked for 11 – 20 years, 9.1% or 17 who have worked for 21- 30 years and a small number (1.6% or 3) have worked for 30 – 40 years.

Comparing on OLC Dimensions between Gender

The parametric statistical test used in this analysis was the independent samples *t*-test analysis as it involved two groups (male and female) of respondents. Table 1 presents the independent samples *t*-test analysis to compare the perception on gender between shared vision and mission, teamwork cooperation and systems thinking. From the findings, the *t* value for all the dimensions was not significant at 5% level ($p > 0.05$). It was concluded that there was no adequate evidence to prove that there were significant differences in the mean scores of dimensions measured between respondents who were male and female.

Table 1: Results of Independent Samples *t*-Test Analysis by Gender

No.	Variable	Mean		t	Df	Sig.
1	Shared Vision and Mission	Male	5.48			0.812
		Female	5.44	0.238	184	
2	Teamwork Cooperation	Male	5.31			0.670
		Female	5.30	0.427	184	
3	Systems Thinking	Male	5.10			0.557
		Female	5.14	-0.059	184	

Comparing OLC Dimensions among Librarians of Different Work Experience

Table 2 presents the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test analysis to compare the librarians' perceptions on shared vision and mission, teamwork cooperation and systems thinking by work experience. From the findings, the computed F-statistic for shared vision and mission (3.512) and systems thinking (3.966) was significant at 5% level. However, the F-statistic for teamwork cooperation (2.984) were not significant (p > 0.05).

Table 2: Results of ANOVA Analysis among Librarians of Different Work Experience

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shared Vision and Mission	Between Groups	4.779	3	1.593	3.512	**0.016***
	Within Groups	82.551	182	0.454		
	Total	87.330	185			
Teamwork Cooperation	Between Groups	1.883	3	0.628	2.984	0.216
	Within Groups	76.005	182	0.418		
	Total	77.938	185			
Systems Thinking	Between Groups	5.522	3	1.841	3.966	**0.009***
	Within Groups	84.461	182	0.464		
	Total	89.982	185			

* The test is significant at the 0.05 level.

Post-Hoc comparison test with Tukey HSD was used to determine which work experience group showed significant difference in the mean scores as outlined in Table 3. For the shared vision and mission dimension, the results showed that the mean scores for those who had a working experience of 21 – 30 years was significantly higher than those who had working experience in the range of less than 10 years, 10 - 20 years and 31 – 40 years. For systems thinking dimension, the results showed that the mean scores for those who had a working experience of 21 – 30 years was significantly higher than those who had working experience of less than 10 years, 10 -20 years and 31 – 40 years.

Table 3:
Results of Post-Hoc Tukey HSD Analysis among Librarians Different of Work Experiences

Dependent Variable	(I) Year of working experience	(J) Year of working experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Shared Vision and Mission	Less than 10 years	11 - 20 years	-.05449	.956
		21 - 30 years	**-.54189***	.013
		30 - 40 years	-.48306	.613
	11 - 20 years	Less than 10 years	.05449	.956
		21 - 30 years	-.48739*	.041
		30 - 40 years	-.42857	.703
	21 - 30 years	Less than 10 years	**.54189***	.013
		11 - 20 years	.48739*	.041
		30 - 40 years	.05882	.999
	31 - 40 years	Less than 10 years	.48306	.613
		11 - 20 years	.42857	.703
		21 - 30 years	-.05882	.999
Systems Thinking	Less than 10 years	11 - 20 years	.05913	.946
		21 - 30 years	**-.55905***	.011
		30 - 40 years	-.23797	.933
	11 - 20 years	Less than 10 years	-.05913	.946
		21 - 30 years	-.61818*	.005
		30 - 40 years	-.29710	.881
	21 - 30 years	Less than 10 years	**.55905***	.011
		11 - 20 years	.61818*	.005
		30 - 40 years	.32108	.875
	31 - 40 years	Less than 10 years	.23797	.933
		11 - 20 years	.29710	.881
		21 - 30 years	-.32108	.875

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Conclusion

The result showed that there were no differences between gender on the *shared vision and mission, teamwork cooperation and systems thinking.* Meanwhile, in terms of work experience, the results showed that there were significant differences on *shared vision and mission* and *systems thinking.* Post-hoc test using Tukey HSD was used to determine which work experience group showed significant difference. Future study can focus on systems thinking, shared vision and mission and teamwork cooperation as other dimensions of OLC. This study had its limitation in which it was based on data from selected university libraries in Malaysia. It is expected that the outcome of the study will be useful in identifying appropriate

programs to improve the skills of acquiring knowledge and enhance the learning capabilities of librarians.

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