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Measuring the Level of Learning in Telecommunication Sector of Faisalabad

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ABSTRACT: *Organizational learning involve some major factors like supportive learning environment, concrete learning practices and leadership that reinforce learning. These three building blocks performs vital role in learning practices of any organization. This paper is an effort to measure the level of learning in telecom sector of Faisalabad. Some major market players of the telecom sector are selected for the comparative analysis. The toolkit introduced by David A. Garvin is used to measure the level of learning in respective organizations. Various franchises are visited to collect the data; structured questionnaire is presented to 40 respondents in selected franchises. Then the output of questionnaire is analysed with the help of SPSS software. Reliability test ensured the reliability of data and mean scores generated by the SPSS is then compared with the benchmark scores presented by David A. Garvin in his article name "Is yours a learning Organization?" The results showed that most of the values of the constructs are falling in the bottom and second quartiles which means that a lot of improvement and corrective measures are required in those organizations to make their practices improved with effect of learning.*

Keywords: Learning Practices, Supportive Learning Environment, Transformational Leadership, Competitive Advantage, Telecom Sector

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Constant change in modern times is continuously increasing the complexity of world. Economic activities, population and technology are the factors that have altered our world from realistic to profound. Some changes are productive while some changes are undesirable that have ruined the world and become a threat for human life. In this scenario only those companies can survive that continuously learn and change their business pattern with the need of time. Edgar Schein, Peter Senge, Christ Agyris, David A Garvin, Jhon D Sterman and his peers are early constructors of concepts of learning organizations. Individual and team learning both lead an organization towards improved performance which ultimately results in profitability of these organizations.

There is no end of learning. At every phase of life we learn. Same is the case with organizations. With changing environment and demands every organization wants to be a competitive player in the respective industry. In Pakistan the importance of learning has been recognized by the owners and managers. In 2008 Pakistan's telecommunication market ranked at third position among emerging telecommunications markets (Pakistan Telecommunication Authority 2008). This growth reveals that each month two to three million subscribers are attracted by the telecommunication industry. There is less empirical research studies in telecommunication industry of Pakistan on learning organization construct. In Pakistan there is extensive competition among mobile network companies. Every company introduces new packages and services to attract more customers, to win more market shares, in short to be a market leader. There is need to know that what is level of learning among these companies and how they learn? The purpose of this paper is to measure the level of learning of these companies and which company's level is higher among the rest of companies. In Pakistan, Warid, Ufone, Telenor and Mobilink are the major market players in telecommunication industry.

For this paper questionnaire developed designed by David A Garvin is used to collect data for measuring the level of learning in telecommunication industry of Faisalabad. This questionnaire is presented among different employees at different hierarchal level of these telecom companies to get primary data for analysis. This research paper will assess the managers and researchers to know the avenues of learning practices and level of learning in telecom industry to sustain long term benefits.

Literature Review

Learning is a continuous procedure that enhances the performance of Organizations. Numerous authors have reviewed and researched about the construct of learning organisation. Peter Senge is called the father of learning organizations who worked on the work of Argyris. He presented the concepts of double and triple loop learning. Peter Senge have presented the five major building blocks to organisation to be a learning organisation. These five essentials are system thinking, mental models, personal mastery, shared vision and team learning (Senge 1997).

The study of learning organisation is a powerful instrument to measure the soundness of degree of learning in organizations and to know the strengths and weakness of the organizations in the learning environment. The importance of innovation and freedom to learn are studied by them. Liberty to learn leads an organisation towards efficient performance and innovative practices which is life blood for every organization. Now Organizations use multiple internal and external dimensions for innovative purposes (Laursen and Salter 2006).

There are certain forces that compel the organizations to be a learning organisation like technological advancement, rapid change in environment, globalisation and customer orientations. In learning organizations people create, acquire and transfer knowledge more quickly than competitors to respond in dynamic and complex environment. Researchers have suggested three requirements to Organizations to be a learning organisation like such internal environment which supports learning, learning process should be concrete and a strong leadership which reinforce learning. Through a survey authors took input from more than 100 executives of different organizations and four quartiles were developed on the basis of results named bottom, third, second and top quartiles, After collection and interpretation of data authors compared the results with Benchmark to measure the learning level of organization (Garvin and Edmondson et al 2008).

Employees may shift from one Organizations to another due to lower level of training. Learning process develops, enhances and improves the performance and adds value in the organisation. Employees learn quickly, develop their capabilities in learning culture that leads an organisation to improve its performance (Baldwin & Johnson 1995). Dialogues and communication have significant impact of learning process on any organisation. Dialogue is key factor in organizational learning process. Major problems exist in Organizations due to communication gaps among personnel. Misunderstandings and misperceptions are caused by limited dialogues and connections (Schein 1993). Learning practices in working environment are effected by psychological safety and working relationships

among employees. Freedom to communicate and frequent interactions among employees are essential to improve the performance level of organisation through learning process. (Carmeli, Brueller et al. 2009).

Continuous learning and training result employee's job satisfaction and loyalty with organisation so there are less chances of layoffs and terminations. In learning Organizations huge amount is invested for training of employees in order to reap the true benefits of learning (Choo and Bowley 2007). Identification of employees in an organization and psychological safety enhance the trustiness of employees in working environment. These two factors are inputs for better the working relations among co-workers in Organizations which ultimately appreciate the differences among employees (Roussin and Webber 2012).

Time is an important factor that directly affects the learning of an organisation. The reflection time of employees; the time required to respond a change, dramatically effects the learning process. Learning at every level whether it is individual, team or organizational learning depends on time availability to respond a change or reflection. Strategy or action plan, knowledge and leadership are key factors of learning. Learning is a process that starts from innovation or creativity which can be accomplished by time for contemplation (Francis 1997).

Working patterns and continuous learning have significant effect on organisation's performance. In learning Organizations high level of success is observed where the employees are happy and satisfy with learning environment and culture while working. Training and learning increase the job satisfaction of employees. Learning environment increases the output level and performance of the employees which improves the profitability of the Organizations. Training processes changes the behaviours of employees in a productive manner. Learning processes make organisation more efficient and effective in their operations. That training program is considered more effective which changes the behaviours of the employees on job in an organization (Watkins and Marsick 1993).

Caldwell re-examined the work of Peter Senge. He discussed the importance of leadership in learning of organization. Both factors learning and leadership move parallel in Organizations. Organizational changes new fashion is actually leadership. A new kind of change representation is shared leadership. In systematic learning process individual experts and rulers are called change agents as many individuals work together on sharing basis in system learning process to achieve leader's vision (Caldwell (2003). Complex and dynamic environment force the organization to change its practices. Leaders are the key participants that help the organizations to change its patterns timely with effect of environment to enjoy competitive advantage. Leaders can better understand the expectations, suggestions, innovative ideas, practices and tenets of employees about change in an organisation. Dealing and transformational leadership features are required to use the vigour of employee's preparedness for change (Nordin 2011).

An enterprise needs a wider approach not individual to be a learning organisation. There must be a logical reasoning for every reason. No short cuts are appreciated to be enjoyed in learning organisation. New ways of thinking, feeling and expansion of mental models are essential for effective learning (Kofman and Senge 1993). Continuous improvement programs like Total Quality Management are very constructive for learning oriented Organizations. Three reasons are identified that create need for organizations to be a learning organisation. First is definition of learning organisation in broad scope, second reason is management and third is measuring technique of learning practices in order to assess the level of learning. For these three reasons, five features must be possessed by learning organisation such as systematic problem solving, experimentation, learning from past experiences, learning from others and transferring knowledge throughout the organization (Garvin 1993).

Aim of the Study

The primary purpose of study was to measure the level of learning in telecom sector of Faisalabad. A comparative analysis is done to know which organization enjoys more learning practices and thus improve its performance.

Methodology

A tool developed by David A Garvin was sued to measure the level of learning in the organizations of telecom industry of Faisalabad. For comparative analysis 5 organizations of telecom industry were selected and 50 respondents participate in data collection process 10 respondents from each organization provided the data. Different franchises of these Organizations were visited to collect data and analysed by using SPSS 20 version. Then the results were compared with the benchmark scores given by David A Garvin in his article "Is yours a learning Organisation". Then scored obtained by individual firm is compared with each other.

Variables and Analysis

- Environment that supports learning
- Concrete learning practices
- Such leadership which reinforce learning in organisation

These primary elements or building blocks which were analysed in this study. In these primary elements 10 highly correlated variables are used such as psychological safety, experimentation, receptivity of ideas, time to respond change and reflection, collection and analysis of information, training, grooming and education, leadership and freely transformation of information and appreciation of differences. The impact of these variables were analysed on learning practices of telecom organizations.

The major units are further divided into various sections,

1. First learning unit "Supportive Learning Environment" is divided into:

Psychological safety
Openness to new Ideas
Time of Reflection

2. Second block "Concrete Learning" includes:

Experimentation
Information collection
Analysis
Education and Training
Information Transfer

3. Third block includes "leadership that reinforces learning"

The toolkit designed by David A Garvin is widely used to measure and evaluate the learning in the organizations. The results are compared with the benchmark scores. To ensure the accuracy in data collection high degree of efforts has been performed. Reliability of data is ensured by Cronbach's Alpha. Compare means analysis is done for comparative study of companies.

Research Findings

Case Processing Summary

Organization Name			N	%
Ufone	Cases	Valid	10	100.0
		Excluded[a]	0	.0
		Total	10	100.0
Mobilink	Cases	Valid	10	100.0
		Excluded[a]	0	.0
		Total	10	100.0
Warid	Cases	Valid	10	100.0
		Excluded[a]	0	.0
		Total	10	100.0
Telenor	Cases	Valid	10	100.0
		Excluded[a]	0	.0
		Total	10	100.0

Reliability Statistics

Organization Name	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Ufone	.402	10
Mobilink	.806	10
Warid	.853	10
Telenor	.766	10

Here data collected from Ufone Company is not reliable as value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.402 it means that the data provided by the respondents of Ufone is not authentic. The respondents did not take the questionnaire seriously and paid less attention.

This is the benchmark scores presented by David A. Garvin in his article "Is Yours a Learning Organization?" For comparative study, the value of mean scores is compared with these scores and found the level of learning of each company included in this analysis.

Scaled Scores

Building Blocks and Their Subcomponents	Scaled Scores				
Variables	Bottom Quartile	Second Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	Top Quartile
Supportive Learning Environment					
Psychological Safety	31-66	67-75	76	77-86	87-100
Appreciation of Differences	14-56	57-63	64	65-79	80-100
Openness to New ideas	30-80	81-89	90	91-95	96-100
Time for Reflection	14-35	36-49	50	51-64	65-100
Learning environment composite	31-61	62-70	71	72-79	80-90
Concrete Learning Processes and Practices					
Experimentation	18-53	54-70	71	72-82	83-100
Information Collection	23-70	71-79	80	81-89	90-100
Analysis	19-56	57-70	71	72-86	87-100
Education and Training	26-68	69-79	80	81-89	90-100
Information Transfer	34-60	61-70	71	72-84	85-100
Learning environment composite	31-62	63-73	74	75-82	83-97
Leadership Reinforce					
Composite for this block	33-66	67-75	76	77-82	83-100

Mean Values

Descriptive Statistics

Mobilink

Organization Name	Building Blocks	Subcomponents	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Score	Average Score
			Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic		
Mobilink	Learning environment composite	Psychological Safety	10	1.67	5.67	3.50	1.01	50	52
		Appreciation of difference	10	2.33	6.00	4.70	1.04	67	
		Openness to experience	10	2.50	6.25	3.70	1.10	53	
		Time for reflection	10	1.00	5.00	2.75	1.36	39	
	Learning processes composite	Experiment	10	2.33	7.00	4.43	1.32	63	58
		Information Collection	10	1.50	7.00	4.20	2.02	60	
		Analysis	10	3.00	5.50	4.35	0.86	62	
		Education and training	10	1.33	5.00	3.07	1.43	44	
		Information transfer	10	1.75	5.75	4.40	1.39	63	
	Leadership Composite	leadership that reinforce learning	10	2.00	7.00	4.44	1.38	63	63
		Valid N (listwise)	10						

Descriptive Statistics

Warid

Organization Name	Building Blocks	Subcomponents	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Score	Average Score
			Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic		
Warid	Learning environment composite	Psychological Safety	10	1.67	4.33	3.40	0.81	49	51
		Appreciation of difference	10	1.33	6.33	3.33	1.86	50	
		Openness to experience	10	2.00	6.00	3.33	1.52	48	
		Time for reflection	10	2.50	6.50	4.05	1.09	58	
	Learning processes composite	Experiment	10	2.00	6.33	3.80	1.35	54	56
		Information Collection	10	1.00	7.00	3.85	2.00	55	
		Analysis	10	2.75	5.75	4.58	0.90	65	
		Education and training	10	2.00	7.00	3.43	1.69	49	
		Information transfer	10	2.75	6.50	3.80	1.25	54	
	Leadership Composite	leadership that reinforce learning	10	2.75	5.50	3.89	0.93	56	56
		Valid N (listwise)	10						

Descriptive Statistics

Ufone

Organization Name	Building Blocks	Subcomponents	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Score	Average Score
			Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic		
Ufone	Learning environment composite	Psychological Safety	10	1.33	4.00	2.73	0.70	39	38
		Appreciation of difference	10	1.33	3.00	2.13	0.55	30	
		Openness to experience	10	1.25	3.00	2.15	0.50	31	
		Time for reflection	10	1.50	5.00	3.55	1.12	51	
	Learning processes composite	Experiment	10	1.00	3.33	1.93	0.83	28	31
		Information Collection	10	1.00	3.00	2.05	0.69	29	
		Analysis	10	1.75	3.00	2.38	0.40	34	
		Education and training	10	1.00	3.33	2.13	0.80	30	
		Information transfer	10	1.00	3.50	2.48	0.85	35	
	Leadership Composite	leadership that reinforce learning	10	2.00	3.13	2.51	0.35	36	36
		Valid N (listwise)	10						

Descriptive Statistics

Telenor

Organization Name	Building Blocks	Subcomponents	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Score	Average Score
			Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic		
Telenor	Learning environment composite	Psychological Safety	10	1.33	3.67	3.07	0.75	44	38
		Appreciation of difference	10	1.00	2.00	1.63	0.33	23	
		Openness to experience	10	1.50	3.00	2.55	0.52	34	
		Time for reflection	10	2.50	6.00	3.45	1.07	49	
	Learning environment composite	Experiment	10	1.33	3.33	2.53	0.55	36	30
		Information Collection	10	1.00	3.50	1.80	0.82	26	
		Analysis	10	1.25	3.75	2.28	0.68	33	
		Education and training	10	1.00	2.33	1.67	0.59	24	
	Leadership Composite	Information transfer	10	1.00	2.75	2.25	0.55	32	
		leadership that reinforce learning	10	1.38	2.88	2.25	0.51	32	32
		Valid N (listwise)	10						

With the help of SPSS, these descriptive statistics are generated for comparative study. Split files helped to better understand the scores of each participative company of analysis. First of all, the data is loaded in SPSS, and then a question included in the questionnaire is converted into 10 constructs to derive and make the results easier. The scores of the constructs are converted into mean scores to compare with the benchmark scores presented by Garvin. In last column the average score of each building block presented which gave a clearer look of level of learning in each organization.

	Companies name			
Variables	Mobilink	Warid	Ufone	Telenor
psychological safety	50	49	39	44
appreciation of differences	67	50	30	23
openness of ideas	53	48	31	34
time for reflection	39	58	51	49
Experimentation	63	54	27	36
information collection	60	55	29	26
Analysis	62	65	34	33
education and training	44	49	30	24
information transfer	63	54	35	32
Leadership	63	56	36	32

The means scores of each variable of companies is presented in this table to see each variables status in respective organizations. These values are compared with benchmark scores to know that which variable lies in which quartile**.**

- In Psychological safety all companies are in bottom quartile
- In appreciation of differences Mobilink is in 3rd quartile while rest of the three companies are in bottom quartile
- In openness of ideas all companies are in bottom quartile
- In time for reflection Mobilink and Telenor are in 2nd quartile while rest of the companies are in 3rd quartile
- In experimentation Mobilink and Warid are in 2nd quartile while rest of the companies are in bottom quartile
- In information collection all companies are in bottom quartile
- In analysis of information Ufone and Telenor are in bottom quartiles while rest of the companies are in 2nd quartile
- In education and training all companies are in bottom quartile
- In information transfer Mobilink is in 2nd quartile while rest of the companies are in bottom quartile
- In leadership composite all companies are in bottom quartile

Table 1 is the case processing summary of individual company in which the total items included in test was 10 and no value was excluded from the case. The table 2 is the results of reliability test of the data collected from the each company included in the study in which cronobach's Alpha's value is greater than 0.7 which ensures the reliability of data but in Ufone case the reliability is .402 which is not desirable. The reason of this value is the inattention of the respondents. The table 3 contained the benchmark scores developed and presented by David A. Garvin. The mean scores of each construct compared with these benchmark scores. The tables 4-7 showed the descriptive statistics of the participative companies of the analysis, the descriptive statistics have the mean values used for further study.

Main study outcome of this study is presented in Table 8 in which the actual scores obtained by major market players of telecom industry of Faisalabad is presented and it was compared with the benchmark score of Garvin to measure the level of learning and status of each composite in the respective companies.

Conclusion

The questionnaire structured by David A Garvin was used and the responses of all the respondents have been analysed with the help of SPSS software. the average mean scores of the output generated by SPSS compared with the benchmark score which revealed that a lot of improvement is needed in all participative organizations of this study in all three major dimensions named supportive learning environment, concrete learning practices and learning oriented leadership. Comparative results showed that Mobilink ranked at 1st number, Warid is at 2nd, Ufone is at 3rd and Telenor is at 4th number in respect of level of learning. It was much tough to confirm that this study is a final decision about the participative organizations of this study as sample size was so limited. More doors of the further research are still open to explore the unexplored factors in telecom sector for learning perspective.

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