Abstract:
The primary aim of this survey is to study the relationship between organizational structure and organizational learning in medical university of Semnan. The statistical population includes 300 employees and managers of the proposed insurance company across in Tehran province, Iran and a sample of 73 people are selected, randomly for the survey. Questionnaire is used as a major tool of data collection. Validity of the questionnaire is confirmed through content validity by professors and experts. Reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cranach alpha. SPSS software is used for data analysis. Research findings illustrate there is a significant relationship between organizational learning and two dimensions of organizational structure, i.e. formalization and centralization. No significant relationship was observed between complexity and organizational learning.

Keywords: Organizational learning' Organizational structure' Complexity' Formalization' Centralization

1. Introduction

Superiority in competition is the major purpose of any organization in the current unpredictable and changeable business environment and small shortcoming may end them up having undesirable consequences. Unpredictable, constant and unprecedented changes are dominant in the current business environment. Products and services that are universally across the organizations will not be easily accessible in future. Some organizations continue their activities with difficulty in such environment and sometimes they may be encountered with failure, because their organizational capability is not sufficient to respond environmental changes. Changes in the external environment compel organizations to react and change. Re-engineering of processes and changing of organizational structure, constitution of product development teams, implementing various programs to reinforce employees, moving towards virtual organizations and increased ability of efficient responsiveness to changes are necessary activities. Organizations must think beyond adapting with fast and unpredicted changes and utilize the potential opportunities to come up with new changes occurred in the current competition world.

On the other hand, organizations are increasingly required to increase their abilities as learning system. Today, smart companies have mastered the knowledge required to participate and they enforce knowledge with creating organizational structure as an organizational competence. The corporate culture, education, counseling, supervision, cooperation and collaboration would increase the amount of learning rather than competition (Baker 2004). Consequently the organizational learning is formed. The present study considers the definition of organizational structure and its relationship with learning organization. It also considers whether organizational structure and its components can be effective on increasing learning organization or not.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Literature review

2.1 Organizational structure
Implementing each organizational process needs paying attention to its necessities and a suitable context based on organization studies. Organizational structure is one of the most important dimensions of each organization. It can be stated as the most major part of the organization after organizational purposes. Structure is compared to skeleton and formation basis of other internal sectors and external environment of the firm (Powell, 2002). Organizational structure is one of the most important concepts in constitution of an organization. Extensiveness of definitions and effectiveness of structure focus on its importance especially there is a relationship among any organizational change and dimensions of the organization's structure.

Various definitions have been represented for organizational structure where each one refers one functional aspect of structure. Some people view structure as a device to divide labor in the organization, which could determine individuals' status in organizational diagram. On the other hand, some other people believe structure provides suitable conditions to control things in the organization. Organizational structure is the model and map of relationships and interactions among sections and elements of an organization (Cyert & March, 2007). Formal relationships among individuals, status of jobs and organizational posts, access level to information framework, job descriptions (how to do works), how to allocate resources, rules and regulations, mechanisms to follow and execute rules and coordination among activities are some of the consequences of creating and designing organizational structure (Ergenli et al., 2007).

Organizations have various types of structure used in terms of requirement and conditions of that organization. In a general, classification structure of organizations is divided into two types: mechanical structure and organic structure. Mechanical structure is usable for stable and predictable environments and organic structure is used in turbulent and changeable environments (Gresov & Drazin, 2007).

Mechanical structure of the organization is recognized by characteristics such as high complexity and formalization, centralization and planned behaviors in the framework of rules. In this structure, the manager depends on policies of the firm and acts slowly in reacting towards unpredictable events (Mihm et al., 2010). On the other side, organic structure is flexible and degrees of individuals’ effects are based on skill and knowledge. Tasks in this structure are flexible and information exchange is emphasized. Decentralized authorizations, fewer rules and regulations, informal communication network and considering self-control provide conditions for the organic structure to adapt more with the environment (March & Simon, 2009).

Powell (2002) explained that organic structures provide suitable conditions to implement organizational learning programs. In fact, there are different characteristics such as flexibility, dynamism, mobility, freedom of action and paying attention to proficiency and competency.

Difference in various organizational structures is associated with differences in their dimensions and components. Studying all aspects of structure is too time-consuming because of extensiveness and variety in structure studies (it is more due to antiquity of this concept). Thus, Robbins’ research about structure dimensions (three components of complexity, formalization and centralization) is the standard to study organizational structure in this survey due to its high antiquity and scientific support (Robbins, 1998).

A) Complexity: it refers the limit that there is separation in the organization (Child, 2008). Daft believes complexity is number of management levels in the organization (Daft, 1998: 213). Generally complexity is applied to amount of job titles (dispersion of jobs in the organization), number of managerial hierarchy and levels, education level and geographical dispersion of units in the organization from each other. Complexity includes vertical, horizontal and geographical complexities (Gresov & Drazin, 2007). Geographical complexity considers separation among the units based on geographical situation. Vertical complexity refers levels of the organization and managerial layers and horizontal complexity refers separation and number of jobs of the same group and rank at one organizational level (March & Simon, 2009).

B) Formalization: it refers the degree that organizational jobs have become standardized (Robbins, 1998). Generally, it is said to the degree that rules, regulations, instructions, by-laws and job descriptions of personnel in the organization are compiled and written (Gresov & Drazin, 2007).

C) Centralization: the third index of organizational structure is centralization. Most theoreticians agree it refers the degree a decision-making (financial, human force, plan and exceptional cases of the organization) are centralized in an organization and secondary activities of decision-making are affected (Child, 2008). Centralization considers independence level of a job in decision-making and selection. Some decision-making subsets that could form a centralized scope include determining the programs, resource allocation, attraction of resources, giving reward, employment and firing, performance assessment, enhancement, regulation and budget allocation, having access to information and controlling the processes (Mihm et al., 2010).
2.2. Learning Organizational

Change is one of the characteristics of today's changing world. The need to change is appeared in most societies, organizations understand to move beyond the current situation require learning. Learning means accumulating, thinking and using knowledge, skills and complex attitudes, so that Individual or group could adapt to changing environments (Theron, 2002). Senge (1999) defines the Learning Organizational: The Learning Organization is developing activities, which includes new governance ideas, new management methods and tools to change the way that people would do their work (Rowly & Gibbs 2008). Learning Organization as a change in his behavior is described consequence of the learning (Sicilia & Lytras, 2006). According to our discussion, there are 8 important factors for becoming a Learning Organization:
1. Globalization and the World Economy
2. Technology
3. Sharp change in the business world
4. Growing influence of customer
5. Knowledge
6. Role and changing expectations of employees
7. Diversification and labor mobility
8. Change and turmoil in the rapidly changing (Marquardt 1996)

2.3. Learning Organization skills

Senge states five principles and skills for Learning Organization as follows,
- Individual capabilities
- Shared vision
- Mental patterns
- Team learning
- Systems Thinking

3. Conceptual model

According to these studies, the following conceptual model can be formulated in Fig. 1 as follows,

![Figure1- Conceptual model](image)

4. Research hypotheses

1- There is a significant relationship between learning organization and organizational structure in medical university of Semnan.
2- There is a significant relationship between learning organization and complexity in medical university of Semnan.
3- There is a significant relationship between learning organization and formalization in medical university of Semnan.
4- There is a significant relationship between learning organization and centralization in medical university of Semnan.

5. Research methodology

This survey was conducted using descriptive-correlation method. It's descriptive because it studies the existing status in the organization and is correlation because it studies the relationship among research variables. Statistical population included employees of medical university of Semnan, which was equal to 300 people. Therefore we could use the following formula to calculate the minimum number of sample size. where $N$ is the population size, $p = 1 - q$ represents the yes/no categories, $z_{\alpha/2}$ is CDF of normal distribution and finally $\varepsilon$ is the error term. Since we have $0.5, \frac{1}{2} 1.96 = = p z_{\alpha}$ and $N=250$, the number of sample size is calculated as $n=73$.

Organizational learning and organizational structure questionnaires were used to collect data. Validity of the questionnaires was confirmed through content validity and experts’ views. Cranach alpha was used to measure reliability of the questionnaires that Cranach alpha related to organizational structure was equal to 0.87 and that of organizational learning was equal to 0.82, which indicated reliability of questionnaires.

6. Results of statistical analysis

Kolmogoroff-Smirnoff test has been used to determine whether data is normal or not and the results are displayed in the table (2). Results indicate normality of data related to research variables.

H0: data is normal (data is obtained from normal population).
H1: data is not normal (data is not obtained from normal population).

If significance level is more than the error amount, H0 is concluded and if it is less than error amount, H1 is concluded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variable</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
<th>Error amount</th>
<th>Confirming the hypothesis</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>H0</td>
<td>It is normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalization</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>H0</td>
<td>It is normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralization</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>H0</td>
<td>It is normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational learning</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>H0</td>
<td>It is normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational structure</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>H0</td>
<td>It is normal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the information of Table 1, we can conclude that all collected data is normal. Mean, standard deviation and dispersion coefficient were used to study the status of organizational learning variables in medical university of Semnan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Dispersion coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Formalization</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Centralization</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Organizational structure</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Testing research hypotheses

Testing secondary hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and complexity in medical university of Semnan.

H0: $\rho = 0$ There is no relationship between organizational learning and complexity in medical university of Semnan.
H0: $\rho \neq 0$ There is a relationship between organizational learning and complexity in medical university of Semnan.

| Table 3 |
| Testing research hypothesis 1: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variable</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between organizational learning and complexity</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>-0.122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amount of significance level was obtained equal to 0.291 and more than error amount of 0.05 by conducting the test. Therefore, H0 is confirmed, it means that no significant relationship is observed between organizational learning and complexity in university of Semnan. As a result, secondary hypothesis 1 is rejected.

Testing secondary hypothesis 2: there is a significant relationship between organizational learning and formalization in university of Semnan.

H0: $\rho = 0$ There is no relationship between organizational learning and formalization in medical university of Semnan.
H0: $\rho \neq 0$ There is a relationship between organizational learning and formalization in medical university of Semnan.

| Table 3 |
| Testing research hypothesis 1: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variable</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between organizational learning and formalization</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amount of significance level was obtained equal to 0.001 at confidence level 99% by conducting the test. Therefore, H0 is rejected; it means that there is a significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational structure in terms of formalization dimension medical university of Semnan. As a result, secondary hypothesis 2 is confirmed. Amount of correlation coefficient was obtained equal to -0.351.

Testing secondary hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and centralization in medical university of Semnan.

H0: $\rho = 0$
There is no relationship between organizational learning and centralization in medical university of Semnan.
H0: $\rho \neq 0$
There is a relationship between organizational learning and centralization medical university of Semnan.

| Table 4 |
| Testing research hypothesis 3: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variable</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between organizational learning and centralization</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>-0.263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Amount of significance level was obtained equal to 0.011 by conducting the test. Therefore, H1 is confirmed, which means that there is a significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational structure in terms of centralization dimension in medical university of Semnan. As a result, secondary hypothesis 3 is confirmed. Correlation coefficient between the two variables is equal to -0.263 that shows indirect relationship between these two variables. 

Testing primary hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational structure in medical university of Semnan.

\[ H_0: \rho = 0 \]

There is no relationship between organizational learning and organizational structure in medical university of Semnan.

\[ H_0: \rho \neq 0 \]

There is a relationship between organizational learning and organizational structure in medical university of Semnan.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variable</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between organizational learning and organizational structure</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amount of significance level was obtained equal to 0.001 at confidence level 99% by conducting the test. Therefore, H0 is rejected; it means that there is a significant relationship between organizational learning and organizational structure in medical university of Semnan. As a result primary hypothesis is confirmed. Amount of correlation coefficient is equal to 0.347.

8. Conclusion

Organizational flexibility, and changes in organizational structures using knowledge networks, and finally, the development of boundaries, are challenges of learning organizational in today's world. In other words, it seems necessary to gain this advantage needed for components of organizational structure in organizations. Organizational structure is a new concept, nowadays, which has been widely used in sociology and economics, and recently in management and the organization and this concept refers to links and communication between members of a network as a valuable source that with creation of norms, and mutual trust has created the member's achieving their goals. Organizational structure includes different concepts such as trust, cooperation and collaboration among members of a group or society to form purposefulness system and to lead them towards achieving worthwhile goals. Thus, identifying effective factors on strengthen or weaken organizational structure can help in the development aspects of organizational structure and it can increase people's economic and social performance in the community.

Structure of the organization: structure of the organization must be flexible. The following acts could be done regarding the organization's scope:

- Partnership with other organizations and even among various branches of medical university of Semnan.
- Improving flexibility through decentralization and adopting flexible structures
- Propagation of culture of change and modernity Individuals: ability and flexibility of human play an important role in an agile enterprise that is faced with continuous environmental changes. The following acts are effective in this regard:
  - Focusing on group activities and participation culture
  - Granting authority to the personnel in the organization
  - Relying on education as an important tool
  - Training various skills to the personnel

References: