

**Deanship of Graduate Studies
Al- Quds University**



**Applicability of the Learning Organization Concept
to the Ministry of Health:
Managers' Perspectives**

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**Applicability of the Learning Organization Concept
to the Ministry of Health:
Managers' Perspectives**

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Thesis Approval

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Jerusalem- Palestine

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Dedication

I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to my family, particularly my husband and my best friend Ramzi. Without his understanding, support and encouragement the thesis would not have been completed. I love you.

I would like to thank my sons, Ahmad, Sulaiman, Eyas and Yousif for their patience.

Lot of thanks and love to my parents, who never stopped encouraging me, to my sisters and brothers who believed in me.

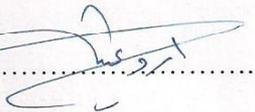
To everyone who contributed to get this study a reality, thank you.

Arwa Abdel Wahab Shalabi

Declaration

I Certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this study (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed.....



Arwa Abdel Wahab Shalabi

Date: July, 2009.

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Abstract

Universally, organizations facing uncertain, changing, or ambiguous contexts need to be able to learn in an efficient and effective manner. In the absence of learning, organizations and individuals simply repeat old practices and improvements are either fortuitous or short-lived. In line with the recently developed learning organization concepts (LO), organizations are increasingly required to be dynamic learning systems in order to develop and thrive. The overall aim of this study is to ascertain the applicability of the LO concepts to the MOH institutions in Gaza from the managers' perspectives.

The design of this study is a quantitative, descriptive, analytical cross-sectional one. Self-administered standardized questionnaire (Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire) was completed by 662 managers with a response rate of 74.9%. The overall reliability coefficient was high (0.820).

The study indicated the total revealed mean of the five LO disciplines was 5.7 (out of 10) with the highest mean for systems thinking discipline (6.1) and lowest mean for the personal mastery discipline. In addition, the dimensions of the LO revealed a total mean of 5.2 out of 10; with the individual learning being the highest (5.3) and the team learning and organizational learning being the lowest (5.1). The extracted findings reflect weak performance of the MOH as a LO from the perspectives of its managers. In other words, the MOH is not yet considered as a LO implying that it is neither facilitating the learning of its members nor transforming itself as needed.

The study concluded statistically significant variations in perceptions among the subjects where the PHC managers had elicited higher mean scores than their counterparts in hospitals (P value 0.05). Also, positive differences were revealed between the managerial positions and the elicited mean scores (P value 0.0001). Congruently, managers who were working in the field of finance and administration had higher mean scores than others who work in technical arenas (P value 0.001). Moreover, male managers elicited higher mean scores than their female counterparts (P value 0.005). Regarding the organizational related variables, the availability of organizational strategies, strategic plan for training, follow up after training and the availability of clear structures were associated with higher means scores with statistically significant differences. The dominant organizational learning style was "Habits Style" which is characterized by repetitive processes and blind automaton.

The study provided a framework for strengthening the MOH to become a LO that transforms and develops itself. Special attention should be paid to support sharing knowledge and team learning. A basic, yet essential, approach includes promoting issues pertaining to strategic management.

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List of Abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CCMD	Canadian Center for Management Development
CSU	Colorado State University
DLOQ	Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire
Fig.	Figure
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRH	Human Resource for Health
HSR	Health Sector Review
LO	Learning Organization
MOH	Ministry Of Health
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPHRDEH	National Plan for Human Resources Development and Education in Health
OL	Organizational Learning
PCBS	Palestinian Center Bureau of Statistics
PHC	Primary Health Care
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WHO	World Health Organization

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Chapter One

Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

The concept of the Learning Organization (LO) has attracted considerable attention from leading management and organizational behavior thinkers (Phillips, 2003). During the last decade, the LO has become the aphorism in the field of organizational change and development (Bhatnagar, 2006). Organizations are increasingly required to be learning systems if they wish to thrive in dynamic business arena. The ability and rate of which organizations can learn and react more quickly than their competitors, has emerged as a pre-eminent sustainable source of competitive advantage (Jashapara, 2003).

Organizations that have the capability of faster learning will adapt to new conditions and have significant strategic advantages in globalized and competitive world. This new kind of organizations will have more knowledge, be more flexible, fast and strong, capable to adapt to changing environmental conditions in order to satisfy both workers and shareholders (Basim, *et al.*, 2007). Organization needs to learn to survive and success in changing and uncertain environments. They need managers who make right decisions through skill and sound judgment. Organizational Learning (OL) is a fighting process for organizations in the face of swift pace of change (Torlak, 2004). So, managers are responsible for increasing the awareness and the ability of the organization members to comprehend and manage the organization and its environment. According to that, they can make decisions that continuously secure the organization to reach its goals.

Becoming an organization that engages all its members in active learning and provides mechanisms for the transfer and application of knowledge requires a collective mind shift at all levels (Terziovski, *et al.*, 2000). Such change is a complex, long-term undertaking. Therefore, a LO is best viewed as an ideal, a vision of what organizations might become. Organizations need only to recognize that continuous improvement activities create the required environment for OL to occur (Terziovski, *et al.*, 2000).

Models from the late 1980s/early 1990s are still discussed in the recent literature and are regarded as being the bedrock of LO thinking (Kontoghiorghes, *et al.*, 2005). Two of the most commonly referenced models are Senge's Fifth Discipline in 1990 and Pedler *et al.*'s in 1991. The two models offer essentially the same concepts to define a LO, but there is a fundamental difference between the two models in that Senge argues that new skills and ways of viewing the organization must be developed, whereas Pedler *et al.* maintain that a LO can be established by merely changing the skills, practices and views already present.

Another model for implementing the LO constructs which support the creation of a LO is learning organization profile based on the work of Marquardt's in 1996. This model assesses the level of OL in five main organizational systems: organization, knowledge, learning, technology and people (Graham and Nafukho, 2007). Many authors had described many other models, the seven Dimensions of the Learning Organization which was developed by Watkins and Marsick (1996, 2003) and they formed the Dimension of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) which has been used in this study. Senge 1990 identifies five disciplines that enable

organizations to move toward the ideal of a LO which are system thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, and team learning (Senge, *et al.*, 1994). All the five disciplines are concerned with a mind shift from seeing parts to seeing wholes, from seeing people as helpless reactors to seeing them as active participants in shaping their reality, from reacting to the present to creating the future (Chang and Lee, 2007). So, to be a LO, that implies an approach to organizational change and continuous improvement which demonstrates a capacity for change need to be practiced.

Globally, in health care context, there are essential transformational requirements, and because this type of organization is embedded in a larger system it has to adopt a systemic process approach which takes into account a variety of power and influence relationships. Only a collective learning process can enable the integration of all of the diverse actors in the system. Consequently, an experiential learning cycle has to be initiated and managed (deBurca, 2000). For instance, hospitals are increasingly complex organizations and the creation of OL system within them is a significant challenge and requires cultural, structural and, especially, change in the organization's relationship to its political environment (Edge and Laiken, 2002).

Since its establishment, the Palestinian Ministry of Health (MOH), examined many transformational trials through the health sector review exercises. Although many learning and training programs have been conducted, still, the results are not as desired (Hamad, 2001). So this study discusses how far the MOH has been reached in the LO journey and what recommendations could be concluded in order to enhance the MOH as a LO.

1.2 Research Problem

Globally, it's assumed that many trainees, trainers and managers had experienced frustration after providing and/or receiving training courses because trainees are not performing on the job as expected. Supervisors and managers also experience frustration when staff members participate in training but then they do not use their new knowledge and skills to improve their work. This all may lead to increasing in staff turnover or even to brain drain (Abed, 2007). Health providers can only perform as the system supports them. Leader and supervisors are responsible for building and sustaining organizational structure that enables providers to work at the expected performance level.

Training in Palestinian MOH is still a questionable issue. A lot of funds and staff time have been spent on training, with the expectations of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization performance, but it is often not obvious that training has made any significant difference or improvement in performance (Jubran, 2007). So this study tries to recognize to what extent the MOH promotes the learning of its members and benefits from their learning and transforms itself according to the needs and to what extent it utilizes the concept of LO.

1.3 Justification of the Study

LO is a recent concept in the field of organizational development and there is a lack of studies about the LO in Palestine, especially in Gaza and this study can be considered as the first one exploring this issue in the MOH. Moreover, all the research studies done previously about the MOH and the Public Health Programs were either

management or training studies, but this research is unique in combining those two fields.

As a part of the Palestinian society, the MOH is living in a changeable and unstable context, so it should be flexible and adaptable to these challenges. Some of these challenges are: the new technologies related to the health sector, the lack of policies and the lack of attainable strategic planning (Hamad, 2009). Additionally, yet importantly, the implementation of training programs and the production of Human Resources for Health (HRH) are not linked to strategic planning balancing the supply with the needs and demands (Jubran, 2007).

This study could contribute through providing a conceptual framework to identify the characteristics of the LO in the Palestinian context, to explore the factors that hinder the development of the LO, whether it is due to individual factors and/or to organizational factors such as the culture of the organization and the system and its policies. In other words, this study tackles a modern approach to organizational development and helps to integrate learning and training into a wider organizational context. Thus, it could help in increasing the impact of learning and training and promoting the utilization of training programs which are frequently provided at the MOH premises, but still perceived to have little if any impacts on performance. Finally, MOH ought to invest in learning, especially continuous education, by adopting new procedures, new techniques, and new modes of operation. This study provides recommendations that might help in improving the outcomes of training and learning.

1.4 Main Objective of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to examine the applicability of the LO concepts to the MOH institutions in Gaza. Thus, the study could help in promoting the organizational development within the MOH premises and could promote the transformation of the MOH into a LO, thus increasing the effectiveness of the provided health services.

1.5 Specific Objectives

- To examine to what extent the concepts and practices of the LO apply to MOH premises.
- To ascertain the features of the LO prevailing at the MOH premises.
- To identify the factors promoting and/or hindering the development of the LO within the MOH
- To explore differences in perspectives about the LO concepts across the MOH premises and personnel.
- To provide a set of recommendations that could promote the development of a LO, thus enhancing organizational development.

1.6 Research Questions

- Does the MOH have the characteristics of the LO?
- Does MOH practice according to the LO?
- What are the most dominant features of the LO demonstrated at the MOH?
- What are the factors promoting the development of LO in MOH?
- What are the factors hindering the development of LO in MOH?

- Are there differences in the staff perceptions about the LO in relation to their characteristics variables?
- Are there differences in the staff perceptions about the LO in relation to organizational related variables?
- Which sector (Primary, Secondary or Administration) in MOH is more applying the concepts of the LO?
- What is the dominant style of learning that the MOH practices?
- What are the recommendations that can be extrapolated from the study in order to promote the MOH as a LO?

1.7 Study Context

This study was conducted at MOH in Gaza Strip which has its unique situation and context. The following paragraphs will provide some information about the Palestinian population, the health status, the health care system, health services delivery and the political situation.

1.7.1. Geographic and Demographic Context

Palestine lies on the western edge of the Asian Continent and the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean Sea (Annex1). It is bounded to the north by Lebanon and Syria, to the west by the Mediterranean Sea, to the south by the Gulf of Aqaba and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula and to the east by Jordan. The land area of the historical Palestine is; 26,323 km², from which the remained Palestinian Territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip) consists from 6,020 km², with the Gaza Strip total land around 365 km² (PASSIA, 2008).

According to the Palestinian Center Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) which has been carried out in 2007, the total population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is 3,761,646, of them 1,416,543 (67.9% are refugees) were living in Gaza Strip concentrated mainly in 7 towns, 10 small villages and 8 refugee camps (PCBS, 2009). Gaza Strip is a narrow piece of land lying on the cost of the Mediterranean Sea with a population density of 4,118 inhabitants per km². Gaza Governorates are five; North of Gaza, Gaza City, Mid-Zone, Khanyonis and Rafah. The Palestinian society is considered a young population with 49.3% of people aged under 14 years and sex ratio is 103.0 males per 100 females (PCBS, 2009).

According to the last available statistics, the percentage of illiteracy in Gaza Strip is 5.5% of the population more than 10 years old, compared with 11.3% in 1997 for the same group of population (PCBS, 2009).

1.7.2. Political Situation in Gaza Strip

Gaza and the West Bank have been occupied by Israel after the Six Day War in 1967. Gaza was run by Egypt between 1948 and 1967 after the partition of the British Mandate of Palestine and the declaration of what is called "Israel". Afterwards, Israel built further settlements in the occupied land (Bhat, 2008).

The implementation of the partial autonomy in 1994 and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA) have had its impacts on the society after the many devastating wars and the long years of occupation and dispersion over the globe (Hamad, 2009). However, Israel still holds overall sovereignty over the Gaza Strip. It has the upper hand over borders, movement of goods and travelers in and out of

Gaza, particularly the Palestinians themselves. It also controls trade, the commercial market, water, the main sources of energy, the means of communications and the overall security. Hence, it still has a hold over the Palestinian economy (Hamad, 2009).

Since 2000, there has been a chronic down turn in wage income from Israel due to the security closure of the borders between Gaza and Israel till it reached the zero level now. This has been complicated by the massive contraction of employment opportunities inside Gaza due to the current collapse of economy due to production factors such as lack of raw materials, fuel, electricity as well as to market failure resulting from closure, lack of transportations and widely prevailing poverty.

A historical turning point took place in June 2007 following the "Hamas' takeover of the Gaza Strip. Since then, tight siege was imposed on Gaza and the Israeli policy sought to ensure 'no development, no prosperity and no humanitarian crisis (Oxfam, 2007). However, signs of humanitarian crisis are clearly obvious. The already insecure and impoverished, Gazans have continued to live under dire conditions. The Israeli government has stopped virtually everything (except basic foodstuffs and some medicines), as well as almost all citizens, from entering and leaving the Gaza Strip. Late in 2007, Israeli declared the Gaza Strip a 'hostile entity'. The Israeli government subsequently began reducing the supply of fuel and electricity to the Gaza Strip resulting in further destruction of the already exhausted economy and distortion of basic services including health and sanitary services. Although a truce has been reached between Israeli and the Palestinians in June 2008, still closure is very strict and access to basic essential goods and services is very limited.

The last war on Gaza which started on December 27th 2009 had further deteriorated the already miserable. The consequences of the war and the siege had manifested itself in thousands of casualties, demolition of thousands of houses, destruction of health facilities and civil institutions, disruption of ordinary work systems, denying access to health services, suspension of developmental activities, interruption of the capacity building activities and so on (Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations "PNGO", 2009).

1.7.3. Health Care System Context

The health care system in Palestine is complex. There are five major providers: MOH, United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), Medical Military Services for Police and General Security, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and private sector (non- and for-profit hospitals). MOH is the main health care provider; it provides primary, secondary, and tertiary services and purchases some services from private providers domestically and abroad (MOH, 2006). MOH plays the main role in providing and controlling immunizations scheme, public health activities, licensing and registration of health facilities. Health care financing is mainly provided through the government, apart from the out-of-pocket health financing which is the first source of health financing in Palestine (MOH, 2006). Additionally, external donations constitute a considerable source for health funding.

UNRWA mainly provides primary health care services to the refugee population. The Medical Services for Police provides preventive and curative services for policemen, general security persons and their families, in addition to the general population. UNRWA operates 20 PHC centers (WHO, 2009). The NGOs sector is extensive:

from missionary hospitals, to facilities supported by international organizations, to community health centers. The NGOs sector operates about 50 centers (WHO, 2009). The private for-profit health sector also provides the three levels of care through a wide range of practices (WHO, 2009).

Being the major health provider, MOH operates 413 primary health care centers in Palestine, 56 centers in Gaza Strip (Annex 2)(WHO, 2009). Also, MOH is responsible for a significant portion of the secondary healthcare services which operates 13 hospitals in Gaza (out of 78 in Palestine). The other 14 hospitals in Gaza Governorates are private hospitals owned and managed by NGOs and for-profit providers (WHO, 2009).

The total health manpower in Palestine who were working in MOH and non-MOH organizations in 2005 was 20,796 (9,375 in the West Bank and 11,421 in Gaza Strip) (MOH, 2006). Out of them; 12,444 were working in the MOH (4,751 in the West Bank and 7,693 in Gaza Strip). About 10,970 out of them were working in the hospitals, 8,130 in PHC and 1,696 in other sectors (MOH, 2006). The MOH Report (2006) showed also an increase in the administrators from 34% in 2000 to 39% in 2005 out of the total MOH human resources (MOH, 2006).

1.7.4. Management at MOH

Palestine is going through a continuous transitional and conflicting context, so the challenges facing the Palestinian health sector are clearly serious, and hence unlikely to resolve easily or quickly. According to Health Sector Review report (HSR), the health system within the public sector is affected by lack of delegation of

responsibilities on decisions about budget and human resources (Abed, 2007). Managers are unable to exercise their best options because they don't have substantial power on inputs and resources, with deficiency of managerial skills at facility and system levels. Moreover, many administrative and management practices need to be revised and improved (Abed, 2007). The report of HSR (2007) highlighted the need for a master plan in order to avoid duplication and fragmentation in system, by defining service needs or a certificate of need (Abed, 2007).

According to Jubran (2007) in the Health Policy Research Report, there is no monitoring and evaluation framework for the health sector. This indicates that there is no shared basis for monitoring progress towards health sector's strategic objectives and there is less lesson-learning that can be built into future strategic plans (Jubran, 2007).

The latter report also pointed to the weak role of professional health associations and unions due to the absence of clear and proper strategies for their involvement in Human Resource Development (HRD) in Palestinian health sector (Jubran, 2007). Moreover, the report mentioned that the health system lacks incentive and retention mechanism all over the sectors due to the lack of strategies in this domain and due to the centralized management structure and the weak participation of staff in policy making. According to the HSR report (2007), there is lack of flexibility in readjusting service profile according to the health needs and inappropriate planned technology and human resources deployment. Also, it was evident that there is a need for a clear vision for the future of health care services (Abed, 2007).

The National Plan for Human Resources Development and Education in Health (NPHRDEH) is the first national comprehensive approach to HRD in health sector which emerged when the health sector was undergoing considerable change since the transformation of authority to the Palestinian National Authority in 1994. This plan provided baseline data on available education program, in-service continuing education infrastructure, continuing education needs for different health professional categories, and a study on the current situation of accreditation and licensing of educational program in health. However, this plan has not been implemented since its development and it needs serious revision and updating (Jubran, 2007).

The Health Policy Research Report by Jubran (2007) has highlighted that there is a mismatching between the actual needs of the Palestinian health sector and the existing supply of education and training capacity programs for HRH, due to an inefficient use of scarce national resources in the production of specific types of HRH. The implementation of training programs is not linked to the strategic planning and there is no decision making process on future health professional requirements.

Moreover, the existing institutional mechanisms for health professional training are still not fully developed and there is a lack of specialized training programs for HRD in various areas (Jubran, 2007). In addition, there is an evident duplication of several educational programs, and new programs are emerging without effective national planning and there is lack of an effective and continuing education systems for health personnel (Jubran, 2007). The HSR report (2007) emphasized on continuous education and training programs of relevant staff mainly in general management, financial management and accounting (Abed, 2007).

Structure is the form of an organization that is evident in the way divisions, departments, functions, and people link together and interact (BNET, 2009). An efficient structure facilitates in delegation of authority and operationalizing control and communication systems. Within the MOH, systems, management structures and clinical decision-making can vary significantly from one place to another and there are strong political forces that make effective coordination, effective team work, professionalism and standardization difficult to achieve (Hamad, 2009). Enhancing and regulating the effective coordination role of the ministry is essential as it affects not only MOH premises but also other providers as well (PNGO, 2009).

During this study, MOH was undergoing a radical change in its organizational structure due to the political situation that affects all the aspects of life in Gaza. This political conflict led to redeployment and shortage of manpower at the MOH. Employees' strike, lack of unity of command, division among Palestinians, politicized aid and political favoritism all affecting the current structure within the MOH.

1.8 Operational Definitions

Learning: In a LO is defined as "an activity for acquiring knowledge at individual, team and organizational levels. It can be obtained by training and education, learning from past experience, learning from others and experimentation" (Dymock and McCarthy, 2006).

Learning Organization: Is an organization that "facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself to achieve superior competitive performance" (Pedler, *et al.*, 1991).

Organizational Learning: The ability of an organization to gain insight and understanding from experience through experimentation, observation, analysis, and a willingness to examine both successes and failures (Marquardt, 2000).

Individual Learning: Is the learning of individual members in an organization in order to expand their ability (Sudharatna, 2004).

Team Level Learning: Is a group of skilled-individuals learning from each other's experiences and knowledge. It can be learning within team and/or learning across teams within the organization (Sudharatna, 2004).

Organizational Level Learning: Is the integration of all levels of learning – individual, team and organizational – that aims of improving and developing an organization's performance so that it can, adapt to an unstable environment. It begins with the individual members sharing insights, knowledge, mental model and skill collecting and progresses on to team and organizational levels of learning (Cavaleri and Fearon, 2000).

Single-loop Learning: Or adaptive learning focuses on solving problems in the present without examining the appropriateness of current learning behaviors (Rodriguez, *et al.*, 2003).

Double-loop Learning: Or generative learning emphasizes continuous experimentation and feedback in an ongoing examination of the very way organizations go about defining and solving problems (Rodriguez, *et al.*, 2003).

Personal Mastery: It is "learning to expand our personal capacity to create the results we most desire, and creating an organizational environment which encourages all its members to develop themselves toward the goals and purpose they choose" (Senge, *et al.*, 1994, p. 6).

Mental Models: These are "reflecting upon, continually clarifying, and improving our internal pictures of the world, and seeing how they shape our actions and decisions" (Senge, *et al.*, 1994, p. 6).

Shared Vision: "Building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create" (Senge, *et al.*, 1994, p. 6).

Systems Thinking: It is "a way of thinking about, and a language for describing and understanding, the forces and interrelationships that shape the behavior of systems" (Senge, *et al.*, 1994, p. 6).

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The framework of this study was designed by the researcher based on the review of the available literature about the LO. The study framework identifies the characteristics of the LO that could apply at the Palestinian MOH and explores the factors affecting MOH as facilitating or hindering factors to become a LO. These factors can be divided either at the personal level, or at the organizational level. The study explores the interactions between these factors and how they affect from one hand, and the perceptions regarding the five disciplines and the dimensions of the LO (Figure 2.1).

2.1.1. Personal Factors

In this study it is assumed that personal factors such as the age of the participants, gender, academic certificate, specialization background and years of experience in the organization which affect managers' mental outlook, perceptions and practices may affect their perceptions about LO and the movement towards it.

2.1.2. Organizational Factors

At the organizational level, some managerial related factors might affect the conceptualization and the practices towards the LO therefore worthwhile to be explored. These factors include; work sector, type of work, training provided, training strategy, policies of the organization and the organizational structure.

2.1.3. The Five Disciplines

The five disciplines defined by Senge are: personal mastery, mental models, team learning, shared vision and systems thinking constituted the main disciplines of the LO explored in this study.

2.1.3.1. Personal Mastery

Personal mastery support individuals to achieve their maximum potential as experts in their fields and to address opportunities and problems in new creative ways.

2.1.3.2. Mental Models

Mental models is the culture and assumptions that shape how an organization's members approach their work and its relationship to society; relationship of employees to their organization and peers.

2.1.3.3. Team Learning

Team learning is creation of opportunities for individuals to work and learn together in a community where it is safe to innovate, learn and try a new.

2.1.3.4. Shared Vision

Building a shared vision is collaborative creation of organizational goals, identity, vision and actions shared by members.

2.1.3.5. Systems Thinking

Systems thinking which is viewing of the systems as a whole and a conceptual framework providing connections between units and members; in general, it is the shared process of reflection, reevaluation, action and reward.

2.1.4. The Dimensions of the LO

The literature identifies different levels of learning according to Watkins and Marsick (1993), worthwhile to be considered when studying LO; therefore, the researcher included them in the study as follows:

2.1.4.1. Individual Level Learning

Individual level learning is important for organizational level learning because organizations are composed of individuals and an LO is an organization that learns through its members and group of members (Sudharatna, 2004). Individuals can learn in many forms; dialogue among individuals, observation of others and learning from success and failure (Sudharatna, 2004). The individual level includes two dimensions of OL: continuous learning and dialogue and inquiry (Watkins and Marsick, 1993).

2.1.4.2. Team Level Learning

It could be learning within team and/or across teams within the organization. It is important as it constitutes the link between individual and organizational level learning (Sudharatna, 2004). To become a learning team, team members must actively ask questions, discuss errors, engage in experimentation and reflection, and seek external feedback. In the group level, team learning and collaboration are included (Watkins and Marsick, 1993).

2.1.4.3. Organizational Level Learning

Learning at the organizational level is built on the ability of individuals and teams to learn and share knowledge and experience. It occurs through shared insights, knowledge and mental models (Sudharatna, 2004). The focus of OL is on the development of general competency and capacities such as teamwork, anticipation of change and the ability to deal with change and continuous improvement, all of which are essential conditions for learning to take place. In the organizational level, there are four dimensions of OL: embedded systems, system connections, empowerment, and provide leadership for learning (Watkins and Marsick, 1993).

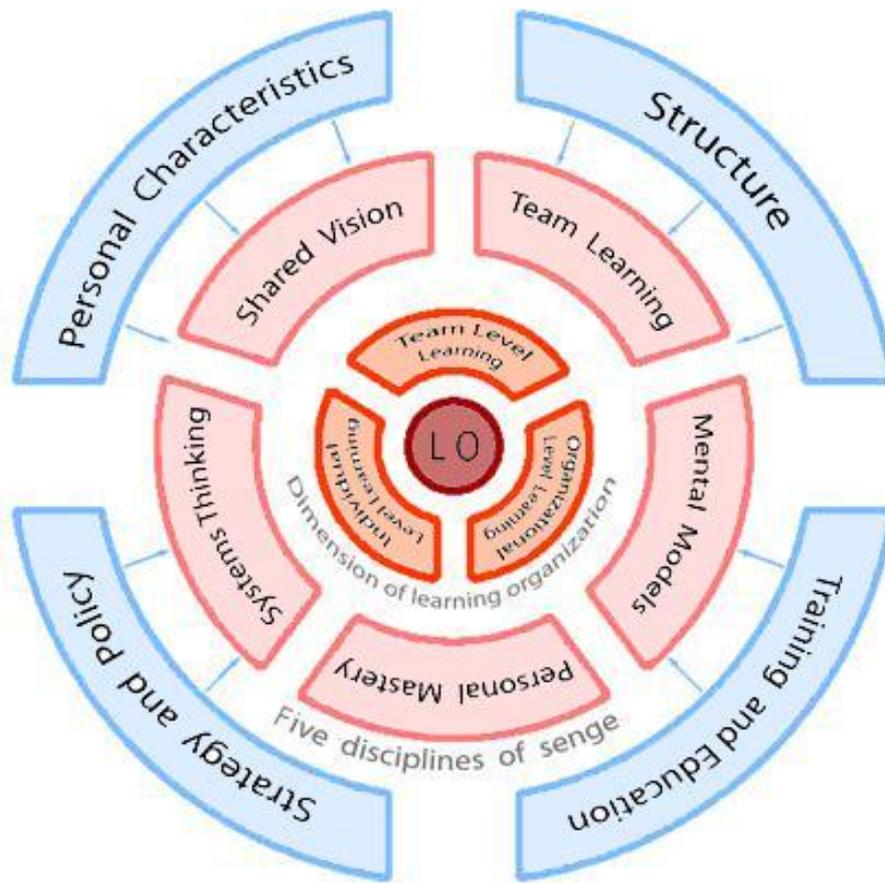


Fig. 2.1: The conceptual framework of the study (self-developed)

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1. Historical Background of the LO Concept

As cited in Karlsson (2007) the idea that an organization can learn in ways that are not directly deductive to individual members of the organization was first articulated by Cyert and March in 1963. Cyert and March's study, often described as the foundational work of OL, sees learning as part of a general model of organizational decision-making. They emphasize the role of rules, procedures and routines in response to external shocks which are more or less likely to be adopted according to whether or not lead to positive consequences for the organization (Karlsson, 2007).

Cyert and March see learning as a strategy for increasing organizations' efficiency. An alternative approach is the idea of different learning types developed by Argyris and Schön in 1978 (Karlsson, 2007). They distinguish between single and double loop learning. In contrast, learning is viewed by many authors; e.g. Pedler *et al* in 1991, as a cyclical process involving a phase of reflection on actions and experience. This results in a reframing of original strategies, leading to new and improved actions in the future (Karlsson, 2007). The current popularity of the learning organization concept dates from the work of Peter Senge (1990) whose work raised LO theory at a new scope (Turkington, 2004).

Senge underlines the importance of clarifying and understanding mental models for effective organizational learning. Senge's idealistic approach allowed for the exploration of abstract ideas, including the role human values play in workplace, emphasizing that organizations must discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels (Senge, *et al.*, 1994). However, Senge's perspective is

more strategic in that he assigns a strong role for the leader in building a shared vision and challenging prevailing frames of reference. The empowerment of employees in order to encourage individual professional development is also seen as crucial. Departing from the assumption that learning emerges from social interactions, the team or working group is put forward as a key learning unit in the organization. In this respect, Senge's work has paved the way for more action-oriented research on learning in organizations.

2.2.2. Definitions of LO and OL

Since the term LO was popularized by Peter Senge in 1990, many definitions have been proliferated in the literature. According to Senge, LO is "an organization that is continually expand its capacity to create results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (Senge, 1990, p. 3). King (2001) noted, "a LO may best be thought of as one that focuses on developing and using its information and knowledge capabilities in order to create higher-valued information and knowledge, to change behaviors, and to improve bottom-line results" (King, 2001, p. 14).

Pedler *et al.* in 1991 described a LO as "one which facilitates the learning of all members and which continuously transforms itself" (Pedler, *et al.*, 1991, p. 1). Garvin (1993) defined the LO which is skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights (Garvin, 1993). Tjepkema *et al.* (2000) describe the LO as it makes use of the learning of all employees and Yeo's (2005) review of the concept concluded that it is

based on a belief that the collective learning of the organization's members will result in improved organizational performance and competitive advantage (Yeo, 2005).

LO is an organization in which people at all levels, individually and collectively are continually increasing their capacity to produce results they really care about (Karash, 2004). McGill *et al.* define the LO as a company that can respond to new information by altering the very programming by which information is processed and evaluated (McGill, *et al.*, 1994). A systematically defined LO is an organization which learns powerfully and collectively and is continually transforming itself to better collect, manage, and use knowledge for corporate success. It empowers people within and outside the organization to learn as they work (Kasvi, 1996).

The LO can be also described according to Wonacott (2000) as an organizational culture in which individual development is a priority, outmoded and erroneous ways of thinking are actively identified and corrected, and the purpose and vision of the organization are clearly understood and supported by all its members (Wonacott, 2000). Within this framework, the application of systems thinking enables people to see how the organization really works; to form a plan; and to work together openly, in teams, to achieve that plan (Wonacott, 2000). Noe (1999) defines LO as an organization, which has enhanced its capacity to learn, conform and change (Neo, 1999). Dogan (2002) defines it as an organization which creates, acquires and transfers knowledge, reflects concepts and has the capacity to change behaviors (Dogan, 2002).

A LO combines the essential elements of strategy development and personal development. It creates a space for people to achieve tremendous business and personal results (Karash, 1995). Such an organization has tremendous capacity to reach its goals. Any type of organization can be a LO, including business, education institutions, health sector, non profit and community groups.

There is another term is used in the literature which is OL. While some researchers used the two terms interchangeably like Crossan *et al.* (1999), others make clear distinction between them like Ortenblad (2001) and Watkins and Marsick, (1996). However a clear distinction between the two terms occurred in the mid 1990's by Easterby-Smith (1997). OL concentrates on the observation and the analysis of the processes involved in individual and collective learning inside organizations. On the other hand, the LO has an action orientation and is geared toward using specific diagnostic and evaluative methodological tools which can help to identify, promote and evaluate the quality of learning processes inside organizations (Easterby-Smith, 1997). Argyris defines OL as the process of "detection and correction of errors" (Argyris, 1977).

However, most of the work that has been conducted on the concept of LO has focused on private sector companies (Bharadwaj, *et al.*, 2003). Nevertheless, the concept is helpful to public sector for many reasons. First, many public sectors organizations operate in strategic sectors, where their performance is critical to other economic sectors. Second, because of deregulation in many countries around the world, some public sectors organizations are losing their traditional (monopoly) status and are competing with private ones. This competition puts pressure on the public sector

organizations to constantly improve their performance thereby enhancing their productivity. Third, employee tenure is typically higher in public sector organizations which may provide an advantage for these organizations in their effort to create a LO (Bharadwaj, *et al.*, 2003).

2.2.3. Values of LO

During the last decade, the LO has become the aphorism in the field of organizational change and development (Bhatnagar, 2006). It continues to be of increasing interest in the present decade. Therefore; organizations are increasingly required to be learning systems if they wish to thrive in dynamic business arena. The ability and rate of which organizations can learn and react more quickly than their competitors, has emerged as a pre-eminent sustainable source of competitive advantage (Jashapara, 2003). LO promotes a culture of learning, a community of learners, and ensure that individual learning is shared and used to enrich the organization (Agarwal, 2005). Extending capacity to use learning as a strategic tool to generate new knowledge, in the form of products and processes, and to use technology to capture knowledge, is becoming increasingly important. According to many authors; some of the major environmental challenges facing organizations in the new century are rapidly changing technology, globalization, uncertainty, unpredictability, surprise, volatility and discontinuity (Jamali, *et al.*, 2006). There is indeed a stark realization that the traditional bureaucratic approach is no longer suitable to support competitive positioning in a hyper-dynamic environment.

It is necessary to be a LO to know if the organization is able to adapt to change, because most of the managers know that traditional, hierarchical, authoritarian,

bureaucratic organizations tend to be slow to adapt and tend to change only in times of crisis, when there is rarely enough time to adapt significantly. Also, the level of performance and improvement needed today requires learning (Jamali, *et al.*, 2006). In most industries, including health care and in most areas of government, there is no clear path to success, no clear path to follow. According to Karash (2004), organization that learn faster will be able to adapt quicker and thereby achieve significant strategic advantages. Also, learning together is healthy, sustainable and nourishing (Karash, 2004).

Garvin (1993) says that continuous improvement requires a commitment to learning, so there is a need for LO due to business becoming competitive and excelling in a dynamic business environment requires more understanding, knowledge, preparation and agreement than one person's expertise and experience provides (Garvin, 1993).

2.2.4. Characteristics of LO

The LO concept can be divided into three levels of learning according to many scholars; which are, the individual level, the group level, and the organizational level (Dirani, 2006). The five discipline model suggested by Senge as shown in Annex (3) also has these three levels of learning: the individual level (mental models and personal mastery), the group level (team working), and the organizational level (shared vision and systems thinking).

At the same time, Watkins and Marsick (1996) suggested three levels of OL as a framework. The individual level includes two dimensions: continuous learning and dialogue and inquiry. The group level has one dimension: team learning and

collaboration. In the organizational level, there are four dimensions of LO: embedded systems, system connections, empowerment and leadership for learning. Annex (4) summarizes Watkins and Marsick's framework of the seven dimensions and their definitions.

2.2.4.1. The Five Disciplines of Senge

It is valuable to define the discipline before defining the five disciplines. According to Senge, the discipline is "a body of theory and a technique that must be studied and mastered to be put into practice, it is a development path for acquiring certain skills and competencies" (Senge, 1990, p. 10).

Personal Mastery: It is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience and of seeing reality objectively. This discipline starts with clarifying the things that really matter to us, of living our lives in the service of our highest aspirations (Senge, 1990, p. 142).

Mental Models: Senge describes mental models as "deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action". The discipline of working with mental models starts with turning the mirror inward; learning to unearth our internal pictures of the world, to bring them to the surface and hold them rigorously to scrutiny (Senge, 1990, p. 8).

Building Shared Vision: According to Senge, "it binds people together around a common identity and sense of destiny" (Senge, 1990, p. 9). The practice of shared

vision involves the skills of unearthing shared pictures of the future that foster genuine commitment and enrollment, rather than compliance.

Team Learning: The discipline of team learning starts with "dialogue" and discussion within small groups. Members of a team learn to grow together to develop intelligence and competence and leverage the knowledge of the whole together as one (Senge, 1990). Team learning is vital because teams, not individuals, are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations. "Unless teams can learn, the organization cannot learn" (Senge, 1990, p. 10).

Systems Thinking: is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and tools that has been developed, to make the full patterns clearer and to help us see how to change things effectively and with the least amount of effort, to find the leverage points in a system (Senge, 1990, p. 12). In another way, systems thinking is looking at problems and goals as a part of a whole and it is the discipline that "integrates the first four disciplines, fusing into a coherent body of theory and practice" (Senge, 1990, p. 12). According to Carnes (2006) it is a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than, things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static snap-shots (Carnes, 2006). Annex (5) illustrates the five disciplines of Senge.

A study by Lee-Kelley *et al.* (2007) conducted in Australia to demonstrate a relationship between LO theory and the potential to retain knowledge workers. The results suggest that three initial strategies should be implemented by human resource managers in order to reduce possible staff turnover. The strategies identified are first, linking shared vision, challenge and systems thinking together via personal mastery;

second, being more critical of which mental models are developed and shared within the organization; and finally, developing team learning systems throughout the organization (Lee-Kelley , *et al.*, 2007).

Create continuous learning opportunities means that learning is designed into work so that people can learn on the job; opportunities are provided for ongoing education and growth. Promote dialogue and inquiry means when people gain productive reasoning skills to express their views and the capacity to listen and inquire into the views of others; the culture is changed to support questioning, feedback, and experimentation. Encourage collaboration and team learning when work is designed to use groups to access different modes of thinking; groups are expected to learn together and work together; collaboration is valued by the culture and rewarded (Dirani, 2006).

Create systems to capture and share learning both high- and low-technology systems to share learning are created and integrated with work; access is provided; systems are maintained (Dirani, 2006). Empower people toward a collective vision this happen when people are involved in setting, owning and implementing a joint vision; responsibility is distributed close to decision making so that people are motivated to learn toward what they are held accountable to do (Dirani, 2006). Connect the organization to its environment when people are helped to see the effect of their work on the entire enterprise; people scan the environment and use information to adjust work practices; the organization is linked to its communities. Provide strategic leadership for learning because leaders model, champion, and support learning; leadership uses learning strategically for business results (Dirani, 2006).

To summarize, a LO does away with the mentality that it is only the senior management who can and do all the thinking for the entire organization. It challenges all employees to tap into their inner resources and potential, in hopes they can build their own community based on principles of liberty, humanity and a collective will to learn (Mason, 2008).

Authors suggest that an LO exhibits four characteristic features: coherence between the formal organizational structure and informal culture; and organizational goals and individual employee needs, challenging work, support and provision of opportunities for learning, and finally, partnership between education, formal training and informal (Raiden and Dainty, 2006).

Kofman (1994) emphasizes that LOs should have the following three characteristics in order to be more creative and coherent than traditional organizations: an organizational culture, which is based on such humane values as love, humanity, curiosity, help, etc. Dialogue and cooperative work practices. Regarding the life as a system (Kofman, 1994). After reviewing the available literature, we can see that there are some common characteristics for being a LO, which are: learning, culture and structure, and leadership.

2.2.4.2. Learning and Training

In recent years, the detail of the concept of learning has expanded to cover a range of more specific areas, such as single- and double-loop learning; generative and adaptive learning; the learning process and systems thinking. For more explanation, learning is considered single-loop whenever error detection and correction are carried out

without looking at the system from the point of view of its underlying values and either questioning and/or altering those values (Wallace, 2002). Argyris and Schon (1978) state that single-loop learning occurs when matches are created or when mismatches are corrected by changing actions (Argyris and Schon, 1978). While double-loop learning occurs when mismatches are corrected, but first examining and altering the governing variables and then the actions (Wallace, 2002). This explanation is shown in Annex (6).

Senge (1990) refers to single-loop learning as adaptive learning and to double-loop learning as generative learning. Single-/double-loop learning and adaptive/generative learning refer to different hierarchical levels of learning within an organization. In single-loop learning, errors are detected and corrected in a "continuous improvement" process through incremental or adaptive learning, it also means when errors are detected and corrected and organizations carry on with their present policies and goals (Szymczak and Walker, 2003).

The current view of organizations is based on adaptive learning, which is about coping. Senge notes that increasing adaptive-ness is only the first stage; organization needs to focus on "generative learning" or "double-loop learning". Generative learning emphasizes continuous experimentation and feedback in an ongoing examination of the very way organizations go about defining and solving problems. In Senge's view, generative learning is about creating; it requires systemic thinking, shared vision, personal mastery, team learning, and creative tension (Chang and Lee, 2007).

According to Pedler and Aspinwall (1996), learning in organization has four types which are important: knowledge, skills and abilities, personal development, and collaborative enquiry. Also, learning can be experienced as incremental or as transforming; incremental is improving or single-loop learning (this learning is done within stages), but transforming is step-jump, or double-loop learning, it is done between stages. While the disciplines are vital, they do not in themselves provide much guidance on how to begin the journey of building a LO. Pedler and Aspinwall (1996), state that there are two board learning processes involved; one of these is improving which is the-day to-day learning of how to make current systems and procedures work better, and it is what every one in the organization should be doing all the time. However, this continuous is not enough, because the LO also needs to be able to change when appropriate. This process of learning is called transforming which is to make a discontinuous change in the organization. This transforming happens occasionally or when a crisis has started or there is a threaten (Pedler and Aspinwall, 1996).

Learning is unquestionably a key determinant of organization survival. Organizations rarely endure if they do not learn, but learning alone does not guarantee survival (Wonacott, 2000).

Despite the powerful intuitive appeal of Senge's five disciplines, consensual learning through experience doesn't always occur (Steiner, 1998). Individuals often have different mental models, levels of personal mastery, and systems thinking, so there is no guarantee of team learning and shared vision. Some individuals may be reluctant to speak the truth as they perceive it to managers or peers, perhaps because of adverse

experience in the past; some individuals just don't want to take part in consensual, organizational decision making; they just don't want the responsibility. The LO concept may collide with more traditional, hierarchical, even authoritarian organizational styles and structures in practice (Wonacott, 2000).

In a study by Barkai and Samuel, (2005) in Israel attempted to relate environmental features, organizational culture, and leadership style with OL, showed that the variation in OL is best predicted by the organization culture. More specifically, the use of OL mechanisms is tightly related to a learning-supportive culture as compared to the leadership style or to the nature of the task environment (Barkai and Samuel, 2005).

In Malaysia, Kassim and Nor, (2005) conduct a study to investigate whether librarians are practicing the concepts of LO, and to examine the perceptions of librarians on the practices of organizational level learning in public and private university libraries in Malaysia. The results of the study revealed that librarians perceived learning practices at the organizational level do exist generally, but they are not overly convinced of the extent to which the practices exist. The findings also demonstrate that the librarians in the private university libraries are more likely to respond with certainty of the existence of learning at the organizational level than do the librarians from the public university libraries.

Another study by Abdullah and Kassim (2008) was conducted in Yemen to examine the perceptions of organizational level learning practices in Yemeni university libraries was to understand to what extent these libraries practice OL. The results of

the study showed that the mean scores of learning practices at the organizational level were not enough to consider Yemeni university libraries as LOs. The result of comparison showed that a significant difference was found in the librarians' perceptions with regard to their type of university and the organizational level learning. This could mean that private university libraries have an environment that is conducive to learning. On the other hand, the result of comparison between the senior and middle-level librarians shows that there is no significant difference between them. A local study by Awad (2004) on nursing continuous education program showed that only half of the participants reported the program was highly suitable and improving the levels of effectiveness was needed.

Perhaps the most important influence outside the individuals themselves is their managers. If managers are unsupportive and give individuals neutral or negative responses when applying skills learned in training, this will be a barrier for the organization to be a LO. This behavior can be placed in one of two categories – indifference or active resistance, according to Kirwan, (2009). Indifference is perhaps more common. Some managers are indifferent to the development of skills, especially from formal training, coming as they may from the old school of management, or perhaps from background that is more used to dealing in certainties and tangible outcomes (Kirwan, 2009). Their reaction may just be to ignore participants returning from a program, or if they feel a little threatened, they may make fun of business school ideas. It's also not unusual for managers to have their own priorities, which may conflict with those of the participants (Kirwan, 2009).

Sometimes managers feel a sense of loss of control resulting from application of new learning and ideas that are not their own. In a study developed by Gephart and Marsick (2003), showed that management practices can be a barrier to optimum learning and performance because: managers did not take responsibility for problem solving, were often unwilling to be questioned, and could not themselves work together productively. An article by Shelton and Darling (2003), finds that LOs quite simply cannot be created by those who either consciously or unconsciously operate under the traditional, mechanistic organizational paradigm. Leaders must adapt a new way of viewing reality—a new paradigm or mental model.

Healthcare organizations in Palestine are generally managed in a traditional fashion. Decision-making is judgmental rather than information based (Hamad, 2001). It is worth noting that many of the rules and regulations currently controlling the Palestinian health organizations are old fashion. Thus, recent approaches in management are not yet utilized in Palestinian organizations. Functions, responsibilities, authorities of various managers and staff members are poorly defined, if at all (Hamad, 2001). Administrative and professional practice policies and procedures for the operation of the system are practically absent (Hamad, 2001). Technical protocols, service delivery guidelines, technical instructions, administrative policies are either lacking or not implemented in the field. Strategic plan is another missing arena that requires more attention. Unfortunately, even in case of the availability of strategic plans, rarely plans are being operationalized and changed into practical policies (Hamad, 2001).

A study by Abu Athra (2007), which is the only study available in Palestine about the LO concept and was conducted at the Education Development Center at the UNRWA in Gaza, aimed to measure the availability of LO characteristics and their reflection on the performance as evaluated by the supervisors. The study revealed a weak level of LO characteristics at all levels of the center and there was a statistically significant difference regarding gender, type of specialization, years of experience and education certification. Another study in Palestine by Awad (2004) done to explore the seven dimensions of perception including LO. The respondents reported a moderate level of perception with LO compared with other dimensions.

Training is something that is done to you, or that you do for someone else, but learning is something you do to and for yourself (CCMD Report, 1994). Training implies that something already known is to be transferred to someone else. Learning, by contrast, implies a process of self-directed exploration and discovery, in search of something not yet known, something yet to be found (CCMD Report, 1994).

In a LO, learning occurs as a part of work often between peers and co-workers. Responsibility for learning belongs to many different stakeholders; individuals, teams, management and the organization as a whole. Responsibility for training is usually delegated to the HRD and management. Training is organized with a specific agenda; learning is more fluid (Burney, 2009). Training usually requires materials and the skills of another person; learning can be done by one person without materials – for example, by someone reflecting on his or her actions (Burney, 2009). As work becomes the primary learning vehicle, trainers become learning facilitators. They acquire a strategic role with the responsibility to learning to the organization's goals

and improve performance. Hence, trainers' career development should emphasize facilitation, on-the-job learning, reflective thinking, performance analysis and intervention, opportunities to learn about new technologies.

So, if any organization is willing to become a LO it must commit resources to learning and then must implement an evaluation program to measure the effectiveness of the learning process. A good evaluation program ensures that the training within the organization is effective and positively impacting all staff (Burney, 2009). Training improves employee performance in their present jobs and is therefore focused on helping the organization meet or exceed its mission today.

According to Garvin (2000), the ability to transfer knowledge around the organization is the key components of a LO, another is the ability to experiment and learn from experience (Garvin, 2000). Another author offers some observations on why organizations fail to adopt and implement effective training practices. He believes that organizations don't assess training and development needs and often make irrational decisions about training. Also, that organizations fail to become a learning one because they don't implement an integrated systems design model in their training, and rarely evaluate their training programs (Kirwan, 2009).

In Palestine at the MOH, there is a moderate availability and activities of continuing education unit and there is a lack of funding to operationalize such a unit (NPHRDEH, 2001). The report pointed to the needed improvements in areas related to educational philosophies adopted by such a unit. There is also limited capacity for developing plans for in-service departments. Moreover, there is a need for certain

institutional and managerial practices to be changed in order to promote continuing education. Health care audits and critical-incident studies are not utilized for assessing staff development needs, which results in unnecessary and expensive education or no continuing education, or education not offered where it is most needed (NPHRDEH, 2001). Furthermore, already existing specialty training programs need to be further strengthened to continue producing the desired number and quality of skilled employees.

It is no longer appropriate for managers to take all the responsibility for implementing organizational change in response to rapid and complex changes within the environment. Each individual within the organization needs to be accountable and take responsibility for making the necessary changes within their individual work place (Silverthorne, 2008). Most organizations have a vision statement, organizational strategy and this can lead to the learning strategy. So, the organization strategy is not developed in isolation because it is divided from the organizational strategy (Silverthorne, 2008).

The direction an organization takes is normally based on an analysis of the strategic options and then a decision to the most suitable application of resources. Then, the organization identifies specific aims and objectives on which to focus. This will lead to the development of the Human Resource strategy. The learning strategy is normally embedded within the human resource strategy and applies throughout the organization (Silverthorne, 2008).

A study conducted in Thailand by Pruksapong (2008); attempted to seek for factors which influence the level of learning in individuals in both cognitive and behavioral contexts. The results suggested that organizations involved in organizational change movement should pay attention in learning of their employees to be highly aware of the importance of OL (Pruksapong, 2008). Individuals also need to share their knowledge with others in the organization thus emphasizing the notion of teams and teamwork.

Strategy is an integral part of the learning process for a LO because it focuses on the organization's development of core competencies, both in the present and in the future. It also focuses the learning process on the desired future position that the organization would like to be in. The organization's vision is central to defining and developing the organization. Strategies should be strongly driven by its vision and mission (Pruksapong, 2008).

The importance of the vision is strongly emphasized in team meetings, regular feedback sessions to staff and other types of communications. The vision and mission should be developed after extensive consultation with employees, including a competition within the organization to find the best mission statement (Theron, 2002). Also another term used which is strategic learning. It is about "monitoring the changing external world, reviewing the organization's position in these changes, making risk assessment to protect and develop the organization, to achieve its purpose and to ensure that there are feedback procedures to measure effectiveness of any strategy being implemented" (Theron, 2002).

A study of three-year research project, conducted in Canada, between 1998-2001, by Edge and Laiken, (2002) was to identify and examine Canadian organizations that were engaged in developing and supporting OL strategies, specifically, to explore how these organizations were working to embed on-going learning within the actual work processes at individual, team and strategic levels. One of these organizations involved in the study was a hospital. This hospital has developed a preventative, long-term approach to insuring its own organizational development, by adopting strategic and proactive OL strategies. It has evolved a culture in which systematic testing and diagnosis of its organizational functioning, process and performance creates baseline data that provide a platform for organizational change and improvement. This is framed by a set of shared values which employees are supported to enact; they are then rewarded and celebrated for their success. Staff experience autonomy in making decisions in collaborative projects which reflect the hospital's values and goals (Edge and Laiken, 2002).

2.2.4.3. Organizational Culture and Structure

The cultural facets consist of a set of shared values, norms beliefs, attitudes, roles, assumptions and behaviors that enable real learning (Small and Irvine, 2006). Also, organizational culture is the capability to integrate daily activities of employees to reach the planned goals, in addition, it can also help organization adapt well to external environment for rapid and appropriate response (Daft, 2001). Senge (1990) also speaks of a shared vision in mental models embedded in the culture of an organization (Senge, 1990). The shared vision, which enables a learning culture to develop, is reflected in such things as commitment to resources for learning prerequisites such as identifying learning needs and delivering training activities.

In addition, it is more necessary to create a cultural climate of organizations' learning (Chang and Lee, 2007). The organization culture influences every aspect of organizational performance, including OL. A study was done by Dymock and McCarthy (2006) to explore employee perceptions of the development of a learning culture in a medium-sized manufacturing company in Australia that was aspiring to become a LO. The study showed that employees were at various stages of understanding and acceptance of the need for learning and competence development on the job to sustain and develop the company. The study also showed that there was a tension detected between the company's objectives and the aspiration of some employees, but the majority appeared to accept the overt learning policy as good for them and the company. The organization culture also support risk-taking and experimentation, and encourage employees to challenge changing environment. Culture is of great importance to OL and LO because it directly influences the quality of learning, interpretation of other's behavior, and determinate the subsequent behaviors (Dymock and McCarthy, 2006).

A survey study by Graham and Nafuko (2007) in USA to determine employees' perceptions of the dimension of culture toward OL readiness, concluded that culture reflects an important role in building LO infrastructure within the larger organization (Graham and Nafuko, 2007).

Another study in Taiwan developed by Chang and Lee, (2007) to observe the learning achievement within the business organizations, showed that both leadership and organizational culture can positively and significantly affect the operation of LO. The organizational structure concerns the systematic organization of control and

communication in the organization. The flatter organizational structure has allowed a larger number of employees to contribute to the development of the business strategy. Individual teams develop strategies and plans for functional areas that are then incorporated and formalized as an integral part of the strategies and plans developed by senior management. The flatter organizational structure has effectively facilitated the communication process required to align organization objectives with functional team plans (Abu-Khadra and Rawabdeh, 2006). Moreover, open lines of communication with employees, customers, suppliers, and competitors must systems and computer networks or dialogue, or through informal personal network. This will facilitate free exchange and flow of information and allow direct feedback (Abu-Khadra and Rawabdeh, 2006).

2.2.4.4. Leadership

Content leadership is the factor to affect OL. Leaders can create organizational structure and shape up the organizational culture to result in influence through various affairs, actions and service; thus, leadership actually affects the organization learning. We can know that leadership and OL are highly correlated and leadership can also improve the process and result of OL activities (Chang and Lee, 2007). Leadership means the critical factor to affect organization learning. Leaders can enhance the capability of OL through conveying their vision and the learning opportunities created by leaders allowable for their subordinates can enhance OL as well. Senge (1990) argues that the leader's role in the LO is that of a designer, teacher, and steward who can build shared vision and challenge prevailing mental models.

Leader as designer: According to Senge (1990), it is fruitless to be the leader in an organization that is poorly designed. The first task of organization design concerns designing the governing ideas of purpose, vision, and core values by which people will live. The second design task involves the policies, strategies, and structures that translate guiding ideas into business decisions. Behind appropriate policies, strategies, and structures are effective learning processes; their creation is the third key design responsibility in LOs (Senge, 1990).

Leader as teacher: Leader as teacher does not mean leader as authoritarian expert whose job is to teach people the correct view of reality. Rather, it is about helping everyone in the organization, oneself included, to gain more insightful views of current reality. The role of leader as teacher starts with bringing to the surface people's mental models of important issues. Leaders as teachers help people restructure their views of reality to see beyond the superficial conditions and events into the underlying causes of problems (Senge, 1990).

Leader as steward: "The servant leader is servant first ... it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first" (Senge, 1990). This conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead, that person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions (Senge, 1990). "Leaders' sense of stewardship operates at two levels: stewardship for the people they lead and stewardship for the larger purpose or mission that underlies the enterprise (Abu Khadra and Rawabdeh, 2006). The leader is responsible for building organizations, where people are continually expanding their capabilities to share their future, that is, leader is responsible for learning (Chang and

Lee, 2007). Bohn and Grafton (2002) said that leadership means the ways to create a clear vision, filling their subordinates with self confidence, created through coordination and communication to details (Bohn and Grafton, 2002). The leadership in the LO has new roles, skills and tools according to many authors and scholars.

2.2.4.5. Organizational Performance

Gardiner and Whiting (1997) indicate some well-established research results within the altered behaviors conducted by LOs in response to external environment cannot only bring with beneficial effect on organization performance but also improve the job performance and satisfaction of employee (Gardiner and Whiting, 1997). Hong (2001) contends the operation efficiency of LO can allow employees to firmly possess the skills about personnel companionship interaction and correct social manners so that it is available to boost morale and reduce the absence rate and job alternation rate (Hong, 2001). We can find from the practical researches that the promotion of LO can help improve job satisfaction. Reward, recognition and incentives improve performance, strengthen motivation, encourage personal learning and advancement and foster job satisfaction (Chang and Lee, 2007).

In Jordan, Abu Khdra and Rawabdeh (2006) conduct a study to examine the impact of the application of management and human resource practices on organizational performance, and they outline the key elements and assess development of the LO concept in Jordan. A total of 41 companies belonging to large industrial sectors participate in this survey. The results show that the learning organization concept can be explored in Jordanian industry companies. The study supports the relationship between LO practices and organizational performance.

Organizational performance needs to be assessed to highlight strengths and improvement opportunities and to reduce gaps. Effective measurement systems are ones which are balanced, integrated and designed to highlight the critical inputs, outputs, and process variables (Abu Khadra and Rawabdeh, 2006). Relevant measures of performance includes: investment in learning, learning application suitability and effectiveness, flexibility and responsiveness to change, operational excellence, knowledge performance, employee satisfaction, employee turnover, training satisfaction, and customer satisfaction (Abu Khadra and Rawabdeh, 2006). Scholars contend that adopting LO strategies should promote individual, team, and OL and that such enhanced learning should yield performance gains (Bhatnagar, 2006).

A study by Bhatnagar (2006) was done to measure the OL capability perception in the managers of public, private and multinational organizations in India, and to establish the link between OL capability and the firm performance. The study provided crucial information regarding the context-specific nature of Human Resource Management that can be used to develop new programs for managers operating in India, which will enhance the OL capability of the managers and the firms. That means there is a positive association between LO practices and firms' financial performance.

A research by Jashpara (2003) was conducted to examine the principal assumption underlying the LO literature that OL leads to increased organizational performance and explores the role of OL, culture and focused learning on organizational performance in the UK. The results suggest that double-loop learning and

cooperative cultures have a positive effect on organizational performance (Jashpara, 2003).

2.2.5. Factors Facilitate being a LO

Some authors write about factors that are essential in building a LO. In health care context, there are essential transformational requirements. Because this type of organization is embedded in a larger system it has to adopt a systemic process approach which takes into account a variety of power relationships (deBurca, 2000). It must foster the learning of all its members and a collective learning process can enable the integration of all of the actors in the system. Consequently, an experiential learning cycle has to be initiated and managed. This has to be designed into the transformational process. The conditions that facilitate learning are: prior identification and recognition of capabilities and areas for improvement, a clear connection to the learning task and its potential consequences, opportunity to practice new skills and competencies, performance feedback, and a climate that encourages, facilitates and reward learning (deBurca, 2000).

Toremén (2001) lists the factors that oblige organizations to transform into LOs as follows: the aim to reach the best performance and gain superiority in competition, the effort to intensify client relationships, the effort to improve quality in order to prevent regression, and the concern for understanding risk and differences. Also Toremén (2001) says it is important to have the aim of innovation, the desire to improve the quality of the staff, the tendency to settle the disputes, the effort to increase the role of cooperation, the aim to be independent and free and the aim to realize the importance of solidarity (Toremén, 2001).

Garrett (2000) stated that the following prerequisites should be fulfilled for establishing the LO: acknowledging organizations as complex human systems, comprehending that organizations are process-oriented rather than structure-oriented, comprehending the importance of feedback for both high and low rank positions, realizing the requirement for the unification of strategic organizational accession and active political learning, acknowledging unexpected incidents as new opportunities and taking advantage of them and finally, acknowledging that management should be profession (Garrett, 2000).

Garvin, Edmondson, and Gino (HBR, 2008) propose a solution. First, understand the three building blocks required for creating LOs: 1) a supportive environment, 2) concrete learning processes, and 3) leadership that reinforces learning. Then use the authors' diagnostic tool, the Learning Organization Survey, to determine how well your team, department, or entire company is performing with each building block. A supportive learning environment, concrete learning process, and leadership that reinforces learning (HBR, 2008).

Kline and Saunders (1993), list ten steps that an organization can take to transform itself into a LO. The ten steps are: assess a learning culture, promote the positive, make the work place safe for thinking, reward risk-taking, help people become resources for each other, put learning power to work, map out the vision, bring the vision to life, connect the systems, and finally, get the show on the road (Kline and Saunders,1993). According to Leithwood and Louis (2000), that among the factors facilitating OL lie as follows: The clarity, acceptability and accessibility of the vision and mission of the organization, the existence of an organizational culture based on

cooperative professional relationships and the establishment of a working environment and opportunities, which favor learning and in which the staff participates in decision-making processes (Leithwood and Louis, 2000).

A study carried out at Victoria University, Australia, by Armstrong and Foley (2003), to recognize what is a LO, how organization learn, and how to develop a LO. The study identified four facilitating mechanisms: the learning environment, identifying learning and development needs, meeting learning and development needs and applying learning in the workplace (Armstrong and Foley 2003).

2.2.6. Factors Hinder being a LO

There may be some factors hindering the achievement of learning in certain organizations. Senge et al. (1994) describe ten challenges (i.e., learning barriers), that a pilot group faces in the organization when implementing double-loop learning and change. They describe the ten learning barriers as: we don't have time for this stuff, we have no help. We don't know what we are doing, this stuff isn't relevant. They (i.e. the management) won't give us power, they are not "walking the talk". Am I safe? Am I adequate? Can I trust others? Can I trust myself? Or, this stuff isn't working, we have no idea what these people (i.e. the pilot group) are doing, we keep "re-inventing the wheel", and where are we going? What are we to do? (Senge, et al., 1994). These ten learning barriers heighten the negative emotions of individuals, affecting their learning capabilities. There is fear and frustration due to loss credibility, lack of understanding, and criticism by others in the organization. These key disablers would lessen the impact of the learning barriers by increasing

enthusiasm and willingness to learn, increasing learning capability, and increasing creditability (Szymczak and Walker, 2003).

Other authors in health care sector write, that there are environmental, organizational and public sector constrains in transforming health care organizations. These organizations operate in a political and public context and are part of a larger system. Historically they are usually monopolistic which influences their bureaucratic identity and culture (The Learning Health Care Organization, 2000). They operate within public service constrains, e.g. public and administrative law, which impact on their planning, financing, and human resource management practice.

Other authors stated that organizations continue to fail, either through deficiencies in the learning process, the inability to adapt and adjust to changing circumstances, failure to reshape their environment, or they are simply overwhelmed by the effects of external events beyond their control (Phillips, 2003). Argyris and Schön refer barriers to individual defensive reasoning (i.e., individual tendencies to by-pass embarrassment and threats) and organizational defensive reasoning (i.e., systems, procedures, policies, and actions preventing individuals experiencing embarrassment and threats) (Argyris and Schön, 1978). Such categorizations recognize what factors inhibiting being a LO (Sun, 2006).

Barriers to learning have been found because an individual's mental models and metaphors are not consistent with management's (Steiner, 1998). When the ideology of OL is not followed by values and norms for behavior supporting the new ideology then barriers to learning occur. Barriers to learning have been traced to dilemmas

caused by the individual and the flow-group, the organizational structure and managerial actions (Steiner, 1998). Barriers to learning according to Karash, (1995) are: defensive routines, dynamic complexity of systems, inadequate and ambiguous outcome feedback, misperceptions of the feedback, and poor interpersonal and organizational inquiry skills (Karash, 1995).

However, there may be some factors hindering the achievement of learning in certain organizations. These factors hindering or delaying the transformation of the organization into a LO may be listed as follows: the learning incapacity of the staff, not realizing the problems hindering the development of the organization and/or hindering the participation of the staff to research solution to these problems, weak organizational culture, insufficiency of encouragement to learning, and isolation of the organization from learning environment (Agaoglu, 2006). A study by Ramkissoon (2006) proposes a model of barriers to OL which includes communication, rigid hierarchies of power, untested assumptions of workers and management, and self defense tendencies in workers as obstacles to building a LO.

Although Senge's five disciplines implicitly considers the levels of learning in the organization, they tell very little about how to deal with the barriers that arise when translating learning across these levels (Annex 7) (Sun, 2006). However, for organization to successfully transform, the learning at the individual level has to be translated across the levels of learning (i.e., individual, group, and organizational) so that a new understanding is developed across the organization (Sun, 2006).

Many researchers consider that any new learning originate in individuals, and it is largely a subconscious process involving perceptions of patterns and possibilities. If the individual is able to bring in new patterns of thinking, which challenge the current beliefs and assumptions of the organization, the individual is said to have an entrepreneurial intuition. Although new learning begins with the individual, it occurs in the organization as a collective, and is considered by many researchers to be a social process. Then, when new learning has taken place on the part of the individual and group, it has to be transferred and instituted into the wider organization (Sun, 2006).

Gephart and Marsick (2003), mentioned that barriers to optimum learning and performance is culture and systems. Norms in the work climate and culture did not always support innovation, risk taking, or learning from experience. In addition, practices and rewards in systems made it difficult to innovate, get needed information, or work well with others toward common goals and problem solving across boundaries (Gephart and Marsick, 2003). O'Brien in 1994 identified a number of factors that inhibit the formation and operation of a LO, and these include; sometimes organizational leaders and middle managers spend too much time solving immediate and pressing problems, whilst the essence of an effective LO requires people to take quality time to think and plan strategically (O'Brien, 1994).

Top-down hierarchical organizations are also prejudicial to the formation of a LO, the reluctance in the workforce to retrain (Turkington, 2004). In addition, bureaucratic organizations with an excessive focus on systems and processes are also prejudicial to the development of LOs (Turkington, 2004). Finally, there are a number of paradoxes

involved in the definitions of LOs, these include the fact that success requires risk taking and leadership requires sharing, such paradoxes can create ambiguity with the understanding of the LO (Turkington, 2004).

Chapter Three

Methodology

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Study Design

This study is a quantitative, descriptive, analytical, cross-sectional one, which tries to identify the characteristics of the MOH as a LO from the perceptions of its managers because it is easily applied and cost effective. The researcher used a survey model which represents one of the most common types of quantitative, social science research. In survey research, the researcher selects a sample of respondents or all the respondents from a population and administers a standardized questionnaire to them (Colorado State University, CSU, 2009).

3.2 Study Population

Data obtained from the MOH currently in charge person indicate that around 450 persons were working in managerial positions at the MOH-Gaza (interview with Director General of Finance and Administration). However, the researcher discovered that the reality on the field is different; therefore, she included all those performing managerial jobs who were available at all MOH premises at the time of data collection. In total, 884 managers met the eligibility criteria who constituted the study population. They were presented as the follows; Director General, Director of Department, Head of Department and Supervisor. Participants were diverse in relation to their work sector and included; primary health care, hospitals and administration.

For the organizational learning style component, only Director Generals and Director of Departments were included (221).

3.3 Period of the Study

The study started in September 2008 after obtaining the ethical approvals from the different sectors of MOH. The pilot study was conducted in December 2008. Data collection started directly after the Israeli war on Gaza Strip in January 2009 till the end of February 2009. Data entry and data cleaning was conducted in March 2009 and finally, data analysis and writing the report continued till July 4th 2009.

3.4 Study Settings

The study was carried out on all primary, secondary and administrative sectors of Palestinian MOH at the five governorates of the Gaza Strip. In total, 83 centers were visited as follows; 56 PHC centers; 13 hospitals and 14 administrative and finance departments.

3.4 Eligibility Criteria

3.5.1. Inclusion Criteria

All managers who were working at the MOH premises during the period of study from the different sectors; primary, secondary and administrative departments were considered eligible. In other words, all managers who had an authorization letter to perform managerial related functions at the data collection period were included.

3.5.2. Exclusion Criteria

Any manager who is not currently working at MOH premises, or who was working in the past at MOH but not any more available at the time of the study for any reason (retired, resigned, out side Gaza, or even in the strike).

3.6 Ethical and Administrative Considerations

- An administrative approval was obtained from MOH with its different sectors and departments: Director-General of PHC (Annex 8), Director-General of Hospitals (Annex 9), Director-General of Financing and Administration (Annex 10) and Director-General of HRD (Annex 11).
- An ethical approval was obtained from Helsinki Committee in Gaza Strip (Annex 12).
- Explanatory letter was attached to the questionnaire and provided to participants; it included the study title, aim, objectives and other information needed (Annex 13).
- The right to participate or not, confidentiality, anonymity was also maintained into the explanatory letter (Annex 13).

3.7 Construction of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire was adopted from the literature and adapted to fit the local situation. The questionnaire translated into the Arabic language (Annex 13). The questionnaire was divided to four parts (Annex 14):

- The first part developed by the researcher and included characteristic data about the participant such as personal demographic data and work related data. It included 29 questions.
- The second part is adapted from the work of Park and Rojewski (2006) with some modifications to be suitable for the study. This part covered the five disciplines with 31 questions.
- The third part is the DLOQ and consisted of 55 questions.

- The fourth part is the Learning Style Inventory, developed by Pedler and Aspinwall (1996). This part is comprised from seven paragraphs; each starts with an uncompleted sentence and followed by five complementary sentences. Each paragraph has 12 points to be distributed at the five complementary sentences. The higher score of any answer of the five will decide the style of learning practiced by the organization from the perspectives of the participants.

It is worth noting that, the DLOQ, the five disciplines questionnaire and the Learning Style Inventory were chosen for this study because they were specifically designed as diagnostic tools to measure changes in OL practices and culture as perceived by the employees and managers. These tools had been internationally validated as tested. The format of the DLOQ, the five disciplines components followed the Likert's scale format with a range scale from 1 to 10. Operationally, 1 means the lowest score implying that the participant totally disagrees with the item from his/her point of view and 10 means the highest score implying that the participant highly agrees with this item.

3.8 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to determine whether the study was feasible or not and to identify possible problems in the design wording and format of the questionnaire. Also, piloting helped to examine the reliability, validity and the suitability of the instrument. A sample of 16 participants participated in the pilot study. Those participants were selected from outside the study population (managers who were not

working in the MOH at the time of conducting the study). Some revisions and modifications were introduced as a result of the piloting process.

3.9 Data Collection

Data were collected by the researcher and one volunteer assistant who received explanation and training by the researcher about the study; its purpose, objectives, procedures and how to distribute and collect the questionnaire. The researcher and her assistant distributed the questionnaires to the study population by circulating the self-administered questionnaires to a focal person in every clinic, hospital and department. The self-administered questionnaire contained an explanatory letter clarifying the aim of the study, the way to fill the questionnaire, and measures to ensure confidentiality. Questionnaires were distributed and participants were given a period of few days to fill and return-back the completed questionnaires. Focal persons distributed and recollected the questionnaires and dealt directly with the researcher and her. Completed questionnaires were revised by the researcher herself to ensure the completion of information. In average, questionnaire took around 25 minutes to be completed.

3.10 Reliability and Validity

3.10.1. Reliability

Reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency and stability with which it measures the attribute it is supposed to be measuring (CSU, 2009). The used tools are internationally tested by many researchers to ensure its reliability. However, the researcher had also tested these tools again to ensure that the reliability in this study is high and congruent with the previous studies. The reliability coefficient for the five

disciplines as a whole was 0.818 (Table 3.1), and for the dimensions of the LO as a whole was 0.820 (Table 3.2) indicating a very good reliability. Additionally, the subscale reliability indicates that all domains demonstrated high Cronbach Alpha scores (above 0.7).

Table 3.1: Reliability of the five disciplines of Senge

No.	Domain	α
1.	Personal Mastery	0.806
2.	Mental Models	0.784
3.	Shared vision	0.806
4.	Team learning	0.789
5.	System thinking	0.804
	Total	0.818

Table 3.2: Reliability of the DLOQ

No.	Domain	α
1.	Learning at individuals level	0.762
2.	Learning at team / group level	0.744
3.	Learning at organizational level	0.882
4.	Performance of the organization	0.778
	Total	0.820

3.10.2. Validity

Validity of an instrument is considered to be an important issue that have been discussed and stressed out by many researchers. Before data collection, the questionnaire has been reviewed by eight different experts (Annex 15) with different background; academics, managers and researchers, in order to ensure its face and content validity.

Face validity is "the extent to which the items of a test or procedure appear superficially to acceptable and appealing to the subjects (CSU, 2009). So, face validity is concerned with popularity or common acceptance rather than scientific

truth and does not depend on established theories for support. In contrary, content validity refers to the degree to which an instrument adequately covers the items it is supposed to be measuring (CSU, 2009). The previously mentioned eight experts reviewed the instrument and consensus about the questions was reached. Additional validity measures were implemented and included training of the researcher assistant, standardization of implementation, standardization of tools, reviewing the filled questionnaires and data cleaning.

3.11 Data Management and Analysis

After collecting and revising the filled questionnaire, the next step was coding these questionnaires using the computer software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 11.0. Then, the coded questionnaires were entered into the computer by the researcher with the help of the supervisor and a statistical advisor. Data cleaning was done through checking out a random number of the questionnaires and through exploring descriptive statistic frequencies for all variables. Means and standard deviations were computed for the continuous numeric variables and then coded. Reliability was tested to ensure the internal validity of the findings. Scores were computed individually based on the specified study domains. Means were appropriately calculated. In addition, to examine the potential relationships between the different variables, an independent t-test and one way ANOVA test were used. t-test were used to examine the differences in the mean scores for variables with two possibilities. ANOVA test was used to examine differences in the mean scores for variables with more than two possibilities.

3.12 Limitations of the Study

- The political situation, especially the current internal conflict between the Palestinian political parties may affect the study findings. Some experienced managers were not presenting themselves to their organization due to political reasons.
- Frequent electricity cut affected the ability to accomplish the work in a timely manner.
- Data were collected immediately after implementing the new organizational structure within the MOH. This led to hiring new managers with limited experience which might affect their familiarity and awareness of their organization.
- Limited resources about the study like books and journals.
- The type of this study is a cross sectional which reflects the situation at the time of carrying out the study. It is possible that managers' perspectives may vary in other contexts.
- The instrument tool was relatively long as it covered many concepts and disciplines in the LO arena.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

Chapter 4

Results and Discussion

This chapter illustrates the findings revealed by the analysis of the collected data. The chapter starts by descriptive statistics which demonstrates the characteristics of the study participants and their organizations. The concepts and domains of the LO are presented as well. Finally, the differences in perceptions about the LO concepts in reference to personal and organizational characteristics are explored.

4.1 Characteristics of the Study Population

4.1.1. Characteristics Variables

The total number of questionnaires distributed was 884 and the number of respondents was 662 with a response rate of 74.9%. The distribution of participants according to gender was as follows; 84.4% males and 15.6% females as shown in Table 4.1; Figure 4.1. These findings are consistent with the findings of the previous studies conducted in Gaza. Al-Najjar (2004) in her study about the nurse managers' leadership style revealed that the percentage of males is 71.3 and percentage of females is 28.7. The variations in gender need more attention from the MOH to be more gender sensitive and to promote more females in managerial positions.

Regarding the age, as seen in Table 4.1 and Figure 4.2; the majority of respondents aged 40 to 50 years representing 37.4% of the total respondents. This result is consistent with the findings of Turban (2007) and Awad (2004) who found similar results.

Table 4.1: Distribution of participants by characteristics variables

	Variable	No.	%
1.	Gender		
	Male	559	84.4
	Female	103	15.6
	Total	662	100.0
2.	Age group		
	Less than 30 years	63	10.9
	From 30 to 39 years	195	33.6
	From 40 to 50 years	217	37.4
	More than 50 years	105	18.1
	Total	580	100.0
3.	Residency place		
	Gaza	250	37.8
	North Gaza	114	17.2
	Mid-Zone	83	12.5
	Khanyonis	104	15.7
	Rafah	111	16.8
	Total	662	100.0
4.	Work place		
	Gaza	356	53.8
	North Gaza	59	8.9
	Mid-zone	43	6.5
	Khanyonis	133	20.1
	Rafah	71	10.7
	Total	662	100.0
5.	Last academic certificate		
	Less than bachelor	57	8.6
	Bachelor	392	59.2
	Post graduate	213	32.2
	Total	662	100
6.	Scientific background		
	Medicine	140	21.1
	Pharmacy	69	10.4
	Nursing	245	37.0
	Administration	103	15.6
	Paramedical	89	13.4
	Others	16	2.4
	Total	662	100

Around half of subjects are less than 40 years old. This young generation of managers represent an opportunity to the MOH which could invest in those young managers and develop their capacity. The later step could have long term effects as those young managers most likely will work for long time at the MOH therefore worthwhile considering.

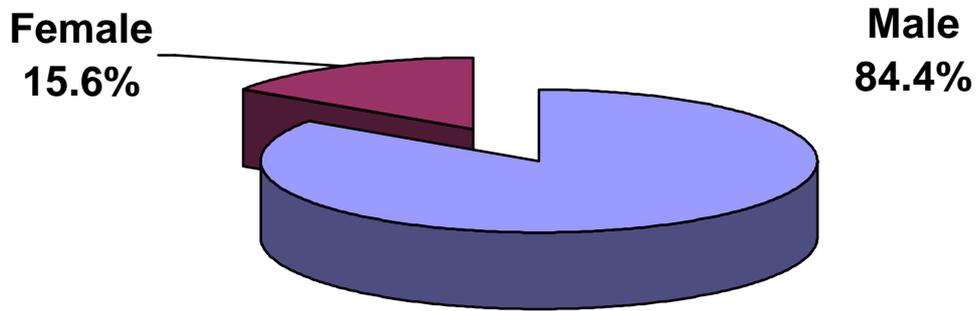


Fig. 4.1: Distribution of participants by gender

The highest percentage of participants according to their place of residency (Table 4.1) was in Gaza Governorate (37%), and the lowest was in the Mid-Zone Governorate (12.5%). Again, these findings were consistent with the findings of Turban (2007) and Awad (2004). These results were in proportion to the distribution of population in Gaza Strip implying that no regional bias is obvious in selecting managers. Similarly, regarding the work place; the highest percentage was in Gaza Governorate (53%) and the lowest was in the Mid-Zone Governorate (6.5%) (Table 4.1). It could be inferred that the majority of the participants were working in the same place of their residency in order to reduce the transportations costs, increase convenience for the staff and overcome the historical Israeli checkpoints.

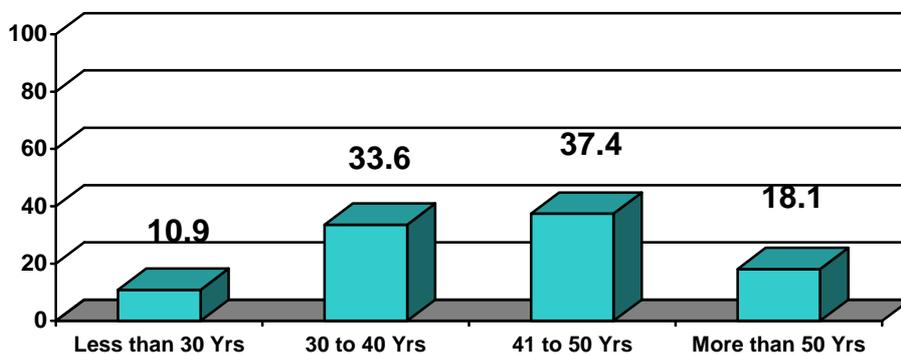


Fig. 4.2: Distribution of participants by age group

The majority of participants were having Bachelor degree (59.2%) which is similar to the findings of Turban (2007). Of respondents, 37.0% were nurses who constituted the largest group of managers followed by doctors who represented 21.1% (Table 4.1). These findings are similar to the findings of Thabet (2004) who found that the percentages of nurses and doctors were the highest among the other occupations.

4.1.2. Organizational Variables

Regarding the work-related data, participants were working at different sectors within the MOH; hospitals, PHC and administrative departments.

Table 4.2: Distribution of participants by work-related variables

	Variable	No.	%
1.	Work Sector		
	Hospitals	414	62.5
	PHC	158	23.9
	Administrative\Finance	90	13.6
	Total	662	100.0
2.	Type of Work		
	Administrative and finance	251	37.9
	Technical only	63	9.5
	Administrative and technical	348	52.6
	Total	662	100.0
3.	Title of Present Job		
	Director (Director General and Director of Department)	159	24.0
	Head of department	503	76.0
	Total	662	100.0
4.	Total Years of Experience		
	10 yrs and less	221	37.3
	From 11 to 20 yrs	200	33.8
	More than 20 yrs	171	28.9
	Total	592	100.0
5.	Experience in Present Job		
	5 yrs and less	360	67.8
	From 6 to 10 yrs	103	19.4
	More than 10 yrs	68	12.8
	Total	531	100.0

The highest percentage of participants were working in hospitals (62.5%) and the lowest was at the administration departments (13.6%). These results reflect the need

for more management staff in order to organize the complex work at these hospitals. The majority of subjects were performing administrative and managerial work (52.6%). These findings implies that managers at the MOH are not performing pure management tasks due to the lack of health management specialty as previously mentioned in the literature. Also, the availability of health managers with technical background gives an opportunity to better understand and respond to the work related needs. Regarding the title of the present job; 76% of subjects were Head of Departments and/or Supervisors and 24% were Director General and/or Director of Department.

According to the total years of experience (Table 4.2), the majority had less than 10 years of experience (37.3%). Additionally, of the respondents 67.8% had less than 5 years experience in their present jobs (Table 4.2). These findings raise a question about the recruitment and promotion policy of managers at the MOH and the importance of considering the experience as an important factor in selecting managers.

In the next Table 4.3, 62.1% of participants had a strategic plan at their departments. This figure is not acceptable as the presence of strategic plan is important and necessary for any organization and department and enables the employees to perform their duties with respect to clear vision and specified objectives. Of participants, 47.7% reported having an educational strategic plan and its availability doesn't guarantee its use (in use in 75% of those reported having it). These findings reflect poor performance in this regard as the presence and usage of the educational plan,

must be embedded as a part of the organization policy for employees and organizational development.

Table 4.3: Distribution of participants by the availability and use of plans and structure

	Variable	No.	%
1.	Availability of strategic plan		
	Yes	411	62.1
	No	196	29.6
	Don't know	55	8.3
	Total	662	100.0
2.	Availability of educational strategic plan		
	Yes	316	47.7
	No	296	44.7
	Don't know	50	7.6
	Total	662	100.0
2.1	The use of strategic edu. Plan		
	Yes	238	75.3
	No	78	24.7
	Total	316	100.0
2.1.1	The extent of usage of strategic plan		
	High extent	60	25.2
	Some extent	176	73.9
	Not at all	2	0.8
	Total	238	100.0
3.	Type of educational program provided		
	Continuous education	146	22.1
	In services education	216	32.6
	On-the-job training	251	37.9
	other	49	7.4
	Total	662	100.0
4.	Availability of training plan		
	Yes	401	60.6
	No	245	37.0
	Don't know	16	2.4
	Total	662	100.0
5.	Following up for training programs after implementing		
	Yes regularly	113	17.1
	Sometimes	369	55.7
	Not at all	180	27.2
	Total	662	100.0
5.1	Frequency of follow up		
	Monthly	260	53.9
	Quarterly	77	16.0
	Semi-annual	67	13.9
	Yearly	78	16.2
	Total	482	100.0
6.	Availability of clear organization structure		
	Yes	465	70.2
	No	153	23.1
	Don't know	44	6.6
	Total	662	100.0

Regarding the type of the available educational programs, 37.9% reported having on-the-job training followed by the in-service education (32.6%). Of participants, 60.6% had a training plan within their departments. Again these figures reflect the importance of training plan within the organization and it must be considered when establishing any strategy at MOH and must be based according to training needs assessment. The follow up for training programs after implementing wasn't as required where respondents reported performing follow up regularly with a low percentage (17%). This reflects the weak follow up of activities after implementing training which needs more monitoring to get the desired results. Of participants, 70.2% had a clear organizational structure, this reflect the need for a clear structure to MOH to be well recognized by all employees in order to facilitate the communications and information flow and to give an honest feedback. This area requires a better communication and a higher degree of formality within the MOH premises.

Regarding training (Table 4.4), 39.1% of subjects had participated in training programs in the last three years, 66.5% reported providing training to others. The majority of the training programs were technical (70.2%) and 51.7% of participants provided training to their colleagues after receiving the training but not regularly. These figures reflect the good participation in training programs, but more employees should be involved in these programs in order to improve their practices, with more emphasizing by MOH on other fields of training like administrative and information system programs. Sharing training with colleagues is an important concept to increase the benefit of training. Moreover, the participation of employees in designing training programs was reported to some extent by 57.9% of subjects.

Table 4.4: Distribution of participants by training related practices

	Variable	No.	%
1.	Participation in training in the last 3 years		
	Yes	259	39.1
	No	403	60.9
	Total	662	100.0
2.	Done any training to other		
	Yes	440	66.5
	No	222	33.5
	Total	662	100.0
3.	If yes, type of training		
	Administrative	88	20.0
	Technical	309	70.2
	Information System	12	2.7
	Other	31	7.0
	Total	440	100.0
4.	Requesting from trainees to provide training to their colleagues		
	Yes regularly	126	19.0
	Sometimes	342	51.7
	Not at all	194	29.3
	Total	662	100.0
5.	Designing training programs		
	High extent	96	14.5
	Some extent	383	57.9
	Not at all	183	27.6
	Total	662	100.0
6.	Implementing training programs		
	High extent	124	18.7
	Some extent	409	61.8
	Not at all	129	19.5
	Total	662	100.0
7.	Evaluating training programs		
	High extent	70	10.6
	Some extent	403	60.9
	Not at all	189	28.5
	Total	662	100.0

Similar percentage of subjects reported participation in implementing the training programs to some extent (61.8%) and also in evaluating the training programs was to some extent (60.9%). The later numbers raise a concern about the systematic are regular involvement of managers in designing, implementing and evaluating training programs. To increase commitment to the implementation of training programs, more involvement should be guaranteed.

As a conclusion for the above mentioned characteristics and the participants' responses, we can say that there are obvious defects in designing, implementing, and evaluating training programs. Participation in designing, implementing and evaluating educational programs is not adequate. The concept and practice of sharing results of training with colleagues is not systematically implemented. These issues required to be considered by the MOH.

4.2 Respondents' Perceptions about Concepts of the LO

Computing the mean scores of the five disciplines of Senge and the means of the dimensions of the LO at three levels of learning were assessed. Results showed that the mean scores ranged between 5.3 and 6.1 and the total mean is 5.7 (Table 4.5 and Figure. 4.3). Because the used scale had a score from 1 (represent almost never) to a score 10 (represent almost always); the score of 5 and 6 is always interpreted as neutral.

Table 4.5: The means of the five disciplines and the dimensions of LO

No.	Domain	No. of Questions	Mean
1.	Personal Mastery	6	5.3
2.	Mental Models	7	5.6
3.	Shared Vision	6	5.5
4.	Team Learning	7	6.0
5.	Systems Thinking	5	6.1
	Total	31	5.7
1.	Learning at individuals level	13	5.3
2.	Learning at team / group level	6	5.1
3.	Learning at organizational level	24	5.1
4.	Performance of the organization	12	5.3
	Total	55	5.2

Using the universal standard, this study has taken a position that any score more than 7.0 indicates that the MOH is concerned with this dimension or discipline. Similarly,

accumulatively, an over all mean score more than 7.0 is an indication that the MOH as a whole is considered as a LO (Kassim and Nor, 2005). The total mean scores for the dimensions of the LO as shown in Table 4.5; Figure 4.4 is 5.2. According to this, it could be concluded in general that the MOH is not considered as a LO from the perceptions of its managers.

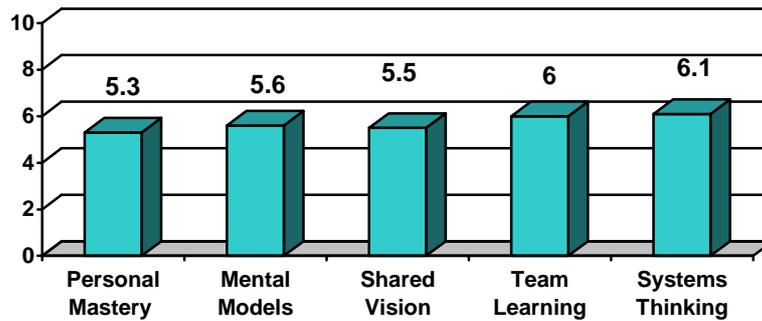


Fig. 4.3: Means of the five disciplines of Senge

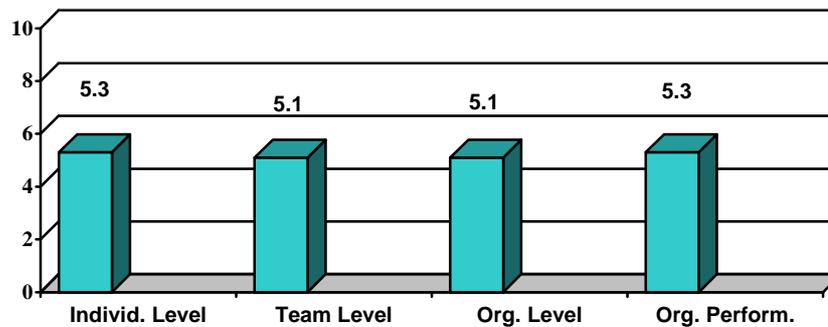


Fig. 4.4: Means of the dimensions of LO

Regarding the five disciplines; the systems thinking discipline elicited the highest mean score which means that participants have positive perceptions toward looking at the organization as a whole. A study by IImanen *et al.*, (2006), revealed that different departments see the importance of their own actions for the company and that they have high knowledge in their own working tasks. Focusing on this discipline, the

employees will develop an understanding for the connections between each part of the organization and can easier create a picture that shows the causes of the problems and how can be solved in the best way. Systems thinking, as previously mentioned is the cornerstone for building the LO and will enable the employees to see the results of their work better, increase managers trusting employees, give them more autonomy, give them freedom to decide how to work, producing greater job satisfaction. This result, although it does not show a high mean, it could be considered a positive sign for the MOH to prepare itself to transform to a LO.

The second highest mean was pertaining to team learning. In any organization, all important decisions occur in groups, and teams, not individuals are the fundamental learning units (Lewis, *et al.*, 2008). Unless the team can learn, the organization cannot learn. With team learning, the ability of the group becomes greater than the learning ability of any individual in the group. A research by Power and Waddel (2004), found that the relationship between team work and organizational learning was weak-mild positive, and the relationship between self managed teams and performance was also insignificant. From this research and the previous studies, employees must be encouraged to participates in collaborative team work and practice this discipline, in order to achieve their own goals and the organizational goals which will help the organization to transform from a traditional to a LO.

Mental models elicited 5.6 mean score; which could be considered a weak component. This discipline implies that each individual has an internal image of the world, with deeply ingrained assumptions. Individuals will act according to the real

mental models that they subconsciously hold, not according to the theories which they claim to believe (Lewis, *et al.*, 2008).

Any organization faces many issues and problems and in order to overcome these challenges, managers should fundamentally change the way they think; their mental models. And to do so, they have to integrate their skills into organizational processes and practices, which will lead them to discover new ways to decrease their organizational disabilities and create communities of continuous learning, and ultimately, will be able to help their organization's transformation into a LO. The findings of this study imply that the MOH is required to think in creative and innovative ways and to challenge its routine practices.

Shared vision also elicited low mean (5.5); which is considered a weak component implying that the MOH managers lack shared vision about their organization. Ilmanen *et al.* (2006), concluded in their study that the three departments included in the study were familiar with their organization vision, but only one department (administration), had participated in the vision formulation process, which means that the vision is imposed on them. Thus, the vision of the organization has to be created in a group process, which is a requirement for a shared vision in the LO. Another study by Hodgkinson (2000), revealed that organizational vision shared by all the workforce involves not just senior managers, but also the most junior individuals and has been identified as an emotional commitment by every one.

It could be concluded that the MOH should emphasize on this discipline because it is an important step to create the organization identity. Vision, provides the guiding

ideas that are at the heart and the soul of the organization, and helps every employee to understand how their actions directly impact the organizational goals. Thus, this will create a sense of belonging to their organization and it is a requirement for building a LO.

The last and the weakest discipline was personal mastery (mean 5.3). Personal mastery is the process of continually clarifying and deepening an individual's personal vision. This is a matter of personal choice for the individual and involves continually assessing the gap between their current and desired proficiencies in an objective manner and practicing and refining skills until they are internalized. This empowers self-esteem and creates the confidence to tackle new challenges. Hsieh (2005) mentioned that the organization can lead its members to master themselves and change their mental models (Hsieh, 2005). Employees with high levels of personal mastery continually learn more about their work, clarify and deepen their personal vision, focus their energy and develop a rational view of reality. As a result, employees are motivated to understand of what is happening across the organization and how their work contributes to the organization success. This implies that MOH needs to pay more attention to the individual needs of its members and enables them to fulfill their full potentials.

The dimensions of the LO as previously mentioned are divided into three levels: individual level (continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry), team level (team learning and collaboration) and organizational level (embedded systems, systems connection, empowerment and leadership for learning), and organizational performance

dimension. The overall mean for this part was 5.2, which means that the practices of LO are not enough to consider the MOH as a LO.

Another study by Kassim and Nor (2005) revealed that learning practices do exist generally but participants were not convinced of the extent to which the practices exist. Abu Khadra and Rawabdeh (2006) revealed that learning is one significant predictor of LO. Organization must be aware for the need of different levels of learning, knowledge sharing and use in practice. Moreover, understanding the whole system and the relationships among different units that are common to exist at all organizational levels. This implies that every member in the organization should be willing and prepared to undertake learning, knowledge sharing, adaptation and change.

The highest revealed mean was for learning at the individual level (mean 5.3), which indicates that participants have positive perceptions toward developing themselves and continuing individual learning which lies at the heart of OL. However, learning at the team level (mean 5.1) is weaker at the MOH. Moreover, organizational level learning, which means that collaboration and team learning is systematically encouraged were found to be low. This indicates that learning is more remained for the individual rather than being transferred and reflected on the organization. In other words, the organization knows less than its members.

Organizational level learning takes place when learning is translated into procedures, systems and rules in the organization. Thus, it will be difficult for the MOH to become a LO without having teams cooperating and learning from each other. All

these findings are important to be considered by the MOH in its destiny for becoming a LO.

4.3 LO Concepts and Managers' Characteristics

4.3.1. Gender

An independent t-test was used to compare the means of the five disciplines and the LO dimensions in reference to gender (Table 4.6). The analysis showed that there is a statistically significant differences between males and females regarding the five disciplines ($p=0.005$) with a higher mean score (5.8) for males than females (5.2).

Table 4.6: Differences in perceptions about the concepts of LO by gender

LO concepts	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Male	559	5.3	1.9	1.881	0.060
	Female	103	5.0	1.8		
Mental Models	Male	559	5.6	1.8	2.489	0.013
	Female	103	5.1	2.0		
Shared Vision	Male	559	5.5	2.1	1.890	0.059
	Female	103	5.1	2.4		
Team Learning	Male	559	6.1	1.9	2.890	0.004
	Female	103	5.5	2.1		
Systems Thinking	Male	559	6.2	2.0	3.130	0.002
	Female	103	5.6	2.1		
Total	Male	559	5.8	1.7	2.835	0.005
	Female	103	5.2	1.8		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Male	559	5.4	1.7	1.484	0.138
	Female	103	5.1	1.8		
Learning at team / group level	Male	559	5.2	2.0	1.325	0.186
	Female	103	4.9	2.1		
Learning at organizational level	Male	559	5.1	2.0	1.425	0.155
	Female	103	4.8	2.0		
Performance of the organization.	Male	559	5.4	2.3	2.568	0.010
	Female	103	4.7	2.2		
Total	Male	559	5.2	1.8	1.893	0.059
	Female	103	4.9	1.8		

Previous studies had explored gender as predictors of LO done by Hodgkinson (2000) and Orland *et al.* (2000) and the data suggested there were no significant differences or predictors between males and females. This implies that female managers need to

be more involved and more actively participate in the vital organization issues at the MOH.

Regarding variations in perceptions about the dimensions of LO in reference to gender, there were statistically significant differences only with performance of the organization ($p= 0.010$), with higher mean among male group (5.4) than female group (mean = 4.7). Abu Athra (2007) who studied the LO in UNRWA Training Centre in Gaza, had the same conclusions. This means that females require more attention in managerial processes within the MOH.

4.3.2. Academic Certificate

One-way ANOVA was used to examine the differences in perceptions about applying the LO in reference to the last academic certificate of the study participants, No statistically significant differences were noticed among the subjects who holding different certificates in this regard as shown in Annex (16). These results are inconsistent with the study carried out by Abu Athra (2007) in Gaza, which found significant differences among participants holding different academic qualifications toward the dimensions of LO in favor of supervisors who had master degree. It could be concluded that across board managers at different level of educational had the same perceptions toward the concept of LO.

4.3.3. Work Sector

Regarding the participants' work sector (Table 4.7) the results revealed that there were statistical significant differences between the five disciplines of Senge and the

work sector ($p=0.050$) with managers working at PHC had higher mean (5.9) than their counterparts in hospitals.

Table 4.7: Differences in perceptions about the concepts of LO by work sector

LO concepts	Work sector	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. The five disciplines of Senge						
Personal Mastery	Hospital	414	5.3	1.9	0.023	0.977
	PHC	158	5.3	1.9		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.3	1.9		
Mental Models	Hospital	414	5.4	1.9	2.646	0.072
	PHC	158	5.8	1.8		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.7	1.8		
Shared Vision	Hospital	414	5.3	2.2	4.095	0.017
	PHC	158	5.8	2.1		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.7	2.2		
Team Learning	Hospital	414	5.8	2.0	3.318	0.037
	PHC	158	6.3	1.9		
	Admin\Finance	90	6.2	2.0		
Systems Thinking	Hospital	414	6.0	2.0	2.279	0.103
	PHC	158	6.4	2.0		
	Admin\Finance	90	6.3	1.8		
Total	Hospital	414	5.6	1.7	2.842	0.050
	PHC	158	5.9	1.7		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.8	1.5		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. Dimensions of the learning organization						
Learning at individuals level	Hospital	414	5.2	1.7	2.895	0.056
	PHC	158	5.5	1.7		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.6	1.6		
Learning at team / group level	Hospital	414	5.0	2.0	2.101	0.123
	PHC	158	5.1	2.1		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.5	1.9		
Learning at organizational level	Hospital	414	5.1	2.0	1.353	0.259
	PHC	158	4.9	2.1		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.3	1.9		
Performance of the organization	Hospital	414	5.5	2.3	8.630	0.000
	PHC	158	4.6	2.2		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.4	2.3		
Total	Hospital	414	5.2	1.8	1.452	0.235
	PHC	158	5.0	1.8		
	Admin\Finance	90	5.4	1.7		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

The difference in perceptions was more obvious in the shared vision ($p=0.017$) discipline and the team learning discipline ($p=0.037$). These results indicate that managers at PHC had more positive perceptions toward the discipline of shared

vision. Probably, this could be influenced by the higher degree of exposure at PHC sector to the policy issues.

Also, the PHC sector is less centralized, more widely spread and more open as a system than the hospital sector. However, deliberately, managers from the different sectors should be more involved in developing the strategic issues pertaining to the MOH such as building the organizational vision, strategies and culture. This also implies that dialogue and communication at the different levels of the organization need to be strengthened.

4.3.4. Type of Work

Table 4.8 shows that in the overall, there were no statistically significant differences in participants' perceptions regarding the type of work they performed ($p=0.159$). Only in the shared vision discipline, there were statistically significant differences ($p=0.004$). Managers working in administrative and finance field had higher perceptions toward the shared vision discipline. Finance and administration personnel are close to the strategic management and they are usually working close to the decision making circle. However, management from different field need to be more involved in the strategic management issues, if real improvement to occur.

The differences in perceptions about the dimensions of the LO in relation to the type of work showed that there are statistical significant differences ($p=0.001$) (Table 4.8) with the highest total score mean (5.5) for the managers who were working in administration and finance.

Table 4.8: Differences in perceptions about the concepts of LO by type of work

LO concepts	Type of work	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Admin. & finance	251	5.3	1.8	0.256	0.774
	Technical only	63	5.4	2.0		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.2	1.9		
Mental Models	Admin. & finance	251	5.6	1.8	0.430	0.651
	Technical only	63	5.5	2.1		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.5	1.9		
Shared Vision	Admin. & finance	251	5.8	2.0	5.650	0.004
	Technical only	63	5.1	2.6		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.3	2.2		
Team Learning	Admin. & finance	251	6.2	1.9	1.477	0.229
	Technical only	63	5.9	2.1		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.9	2.0		
Systems Thinking	Admin. & finance	251	6.3	1.9	1.605	0.202
	Technical only	63	6.2	2.1		
	Admin. & technical	348	6.0	2.0		
Total	Admin. & finance	251	5.8	1.6	1.841	0.159
	Technical only	63	5.6	1.9		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.6	1.8		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Admin. & finance	251	5.6	1.6	4.972	0.007
	Technical only	63	5.3	1.7		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.2	1.7		
Learning at team / group level	Admin. & finance	251	5.5	1.9	7.181	0.001
	Technical only	63	4.5	2.1		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.0	2.0		
Learning at organization level	Admin. & finance	251	5.4	1.9	6.121	0.002
	Technical only	63	4.5	2.1		
	Admin. & technical	348	4.9	2.0		
Performance of the organization	Admin. & finance	251	5.7	2.1	7.193	0.001
	Technical only	63	4.7	2.5		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.1	2.3		
Total	Admin. & finance	251	5.5	1.7	7.265	0.001
	Technical only	63	4.7	1.9		
	Admin. & technical	348	5.0	1.8		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

Other groups must be encouraged more to participate in learning activities in order to improve their perceptions in this regard. Another explanation could be related to the complex role of the technical personnel who also perform managerial roles as well. The majority of managers in health sector are not trained as managers and are required to perform managerial roles although they see themselves more as professional staff.

4.3.5. Type of the Managerial Job

The results (Table 4.9) show strong statistically significant differences with the five disciplines ($p=0.001$) among the different categories of managers.

Table 4.9: Differences in perceptions about the concepts of LO by type of present job

LO concepts	Type of managerial job	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Director	157	5.4	1.9	0.867	0.386
	Head of department	505	5.3	1.9		
Mental Models	Director	157	5.7	1.8	1.515	0.130
	Head of department	505	5.5	1.9		
Shared Vision	Director	157	6.1	2.0	4.167	0.0001
	Head of department	505	5.3	2.2		
Team Learning	Director	157	6.6	1.9	4.650	0.0001
	Head of department	505	5.8	2.0		
Systems Thinking	Director	157	6.5	1.9	2.730	0.007
	Head of department	505	6.0	2.0		
Total	Director	157	6.1	1.7	3.313	0.001
	Head of department	505	5.6	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Director	157	5.6	1.6	2.462	0.014
	Head of department	505	5.3	1.7		
Learning at team / group level	Director	157	5.5	1.9	2.831	0.005
	Head of department	505	5.0	2.0		
Learning at organization level	Director	157	5.7	2.0	4.368	0.0001
	Head of department	505	4.9	2.0		
Performance of the organization	Director	157	5.8	2.3	3.412	0.001
	Head of department	505	5.1	2.3		
Total	Director	157	5.7	1.8	3.965	0.0001
	Head of department	505	5.0	1.8		

Directors elicited higher mean (6.1) than more than the head of departments group (5.6). The higher mean among the directors group may reflect their higher degree of involvement in strategies and policies and also may reflect communication gaps where policies and strategies are not well disseminated to people at lower level in the hierarchy.

Also, the dimensions of LO showed strong statistically significant differences in relation to the category of managers ($p=0.0001$) with higher mean level for the

directors group. This result is supported by the study of Dymock and McCarthy (2006), which concluded that it did not seem there had been much involvement of employees at lower levels regarding the empowerment sub-dimension. A study in by Kassim and Nor (2007) found that there is a statistical significant differences in the perception between the senior and the middle level academic librarians; implying that the senior level had more positive perceptions on the practices of team level learning in their organizations than the middle level librarians.

4.3.6. Type of Specialization

Annex (17) shows that there are no statistical significant differences regarding the perceptions of the five disciplines ($p=0.254$) among the different specialties, except for the shared vision discipline ($p=0.007$) and the highest mean 6.1 was for the administrators.

Table (4.10) shows the differences in perceptions about the dimensions of LO and the type of specialization. The table reveals statistical significant differences ($p=0.045$) with the highest mean for the administrators.

Many studies support these findings; Ellinger *et al.* (2000) found that to create LOs requires new roles for managers, human resource developers, and employees in building the capacity for learning at individual, team, and organizational levels. This group agree more than other groups on individual learning which includes two sub-dimensions; creating continuous learning opportunities and promoting dialogue and inquiry which will create a culture enhancing OL, and the performance of the organization is associated with these sub-dimensions.

Table 4.10: Differences in perceptions about the dimensions of LO by the type of specialization

LO concepts	Specialization	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
1. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Medicine	140	5.1	1.9	2.050	0.050
	Pharmacy	69	5.4	1.6		
	Nursing	244	5.2	1.7		
	Administration	102	5.7	1.6		
	Paramedical	89	5.6	1.6		
	Other	16	5.4	1.3		
Learning at team / group level	Medicine	140	5.1	2.2	1.383	0.229
	Pharmacy	69	5.0	2.0		
	Nursing	244	4.9	2.0		
	Administration	102	5.5	2.0		
	Paramedical	89	5.2	1.9		
	Other	16	5.6	1.3		
Learning at organizational level	Medicine	140	5.0	2.3	1.785	0.114
	Pharmacy	69	4.6	2.1		
	Nursing	244	5.0	1.8		
	Administration	102	5.5	2.0		
	Paramedical	89	5.0	1.9		
	Other	16	5.1	1.9		
Performance of the organization	Medicine	140	5.2	2.6	3.829	0.002
	Pharmacy	69	4.4	2.1		
	Nursing	244	5.4	2.2		
	Administration	102	5.8	2.1		
	Paramedical	89	5.0	2.2		
	Other	16	5.8	2.0		
Total	Medicine	140	5.1	2.1	2.082	0.045
	Pharmacy	69	4.8	1.8		
	Nursing	244	5.1	1.7		
	Administration	102	5.6	1.7		
	Paramedical	89	5.2	1.7		
	Other	16	5.4	1.6		
	Total	660	5.2	1.8		

To increase perceptions and practices of health managers at the MOH, efforts need to be directed to improve their management skills, ensure active involvement and promote effective communications.

4.3.7. Years of Experience

Table 4.11 shows that there are strong statistically significant differences in the perceptions of managers about LO in reference to years of experience ($p=0.001$; $p=0.0001$). Perceptions of those who were working less than 5 years in their current

positions were higher than those who worked more. It seems that perceptions of managers declined with the longevity in the position because the MOH fails to maintain their interests and enthusiasm and their interests in strategic issues as learning decline by time. MOH need to take active steps in this regard to maintain the enthusiasm of its managers and continuously empower them which is an essential principle in LO.

Table 4.11: Differences in perceptions about the concepts of LO by years of experience in present job

Concepts of LO	Years of experience	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	5 yrs and less	360	5.4	1.8	6.157	0.002
	From 6 to 10 yrs	103	5.0	1.8		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.7	1.8		
Mental Models	5 Yrs and less	360	5.7	1.8	6.519	0.002
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	5.4	1.9		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.8	1.7		
Shared Vision	5 Yrs and less	360	5.6	2.1	5.590	0.004
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	5.2	2.2		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.7	2.1		
Team Learning	5 Yrs and less	360	6.1	1.9	3.126	0.045
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	5.8	2.1		
	More than 10 yrs	68	5.5	1.8		
Systems Thinking	5 Yrs and less	360	6.3	1.8	4.789	0.009
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	6.2	2.0		
	More than 10 yrs	68	5.5	2.1		
Total	5 Yrs and less	360	5.8	1.6	6.859	0.001
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	5.5	1.7		
	More than 10 yrs	68	5.1	1.6		
	Total	531	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	5 Yrs and less	360	5.5	1.6	6.189	0.002
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	5.1	1.7		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.8	1.6		
Learning at team / group level	5 Yrs and less	360	5.3	2.0	5.528	0.004
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	4.8	1.9		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.5	1.9		
Learning at organization level	5 Yrs and less	360	5.3	2.0	10.92	0.0001
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	4.7	1.8		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.2	2.0		
Performance of the organization	5 Yrs and less	360	5.6	2.2	17.08	0.0001
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	4.3	2.1		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.5	2.2		
Total	5 Yrs and less	360	5.4	1.8	12.55	0.0001
	From 6 to 10 Yrs	103	4.7	1.6		
	More than 10 yrs	68	4.4	1.8		
	Total	531	5.1	1.8		

A similar result had been concluded in a previous study by Graham and Nafuko (2007) and the results showed that respondents with less than one year of work experience more favorably perceived the dimension of culture in enhancing the OL readiness than others with different levels of work experience (Graham and Nafuko, 2007). Another research involving the investigation of OL at eight USA organizations revealed that employees with less than one year of work experience rated culture more higher as a mechanism for learning than did other employees (Preskill, *et al.*, 2001).

4.4 LO Concepts and Organizational Characteristics

4.4.1. Availability of Strategic Plan

Table 4.12 shows strong statistical significant differences in both the five disciplines ($p=0.0001$) and the dimensions of the LO ($p=0.0001$) regarding the availability of strategic plan. Those who reported having strategic plans had higher mean scores than who haven't. To ensure long-term sustainability, organizations have to develop appropriate strategic responses to change (Kenny, 2006). A more responsive strategic process is required where managers establish a culture for trust, encourage participation and support individuals to learn from their experience and contribute their practice based-knowledge to formation of better strategic outcomes. Kenny found that the development of strategy is closely linked with learning and if appropriately designed, purposeful strategic activity this will help to develop an OL culture (Kenny, 2006).

Table 4.12: Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by the availability of strategic plan

LO concepts	Availability of strategic plan	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Yes	411	5.7	1.8	26.86	0.0001
	No	196	4.6	1.8		
	I don't know	55	4.8	1.9		
Mental Models	Yes	411	5.9	1.8	16.24	0.0001
	No	196	5.0	1.9		
	I don't know	55	5.1	1.9		
Shared Vision	Yes	411	5.9	2.1	20.53	0.0001
	No	196	4.9	2.1		
	I don't know	55	4.5	2.0		
Team Learning	Yes	411	6.4	1.9	20.55	0.0001
	No	196	5.5	2.0		
	I don't know	55	5.2	2.0		
Systems Thinking	Yes	411	6.5	1.9	14.18	0.0001
	No	196	5.6	2.0		
	I don't know	55	5.6	1.9		
Total	Yes	411	6.0	1.6	26.36	0.0001
	No	196	5.1	1.7		
	I don't know	55	5.0	1.6		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Yes	411	5.7	1.7	20.19	0.0001
	No	196	4.8	1.7		
	I don't know	55	4.8	1.6		
Learning at team / group level	Yes	411	5.5	2.0	22.78	0.000
	No	196	4.4	1.9		
	I don't know	55	4.7	1.9		
Learning at organization level	Yes	411	5.5	1.9	36.30	0.0001
	No	196	4.2	1.9		
	I don't know	55	4.6	1.7		
Performance of the organization	Yes	411	5.8	2.2	31.52	0.0001
	No	196	4.4	2.1		
	I don't know	55	4.5	2.0		
Total	Yes	411	5.6	1.7	37.16	0.0001
	No	196	4.4	1.7		
	I don't know	55	4.6	1.6		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

Kenny also revealed that strategic planning has the potential to provide an effective means of directing resources in order to achieve desirable learning within an organization toward its long-term viability (Kenny, 2006).

Strategy and policy making at the MOH should be structured as a learning process to insure involvement of all members in its formation and implementation. MOH

leaders should empower their teams; to take decisions, to share openly and take risks; and they should provide resources, training, and rewards. Finally, good leadership is needed in order to establish a supportive and participative cultural environment that helps design a new form of organizations which emphasizes learning, flexibility and rapid response.

4.4.2. Availability of Strategic Plan for Education

The results presented in Table 4.13 showed statistical significant differences in both the five disciplines ($p=0.0001$) and the dimensions of the LO ($p=0.0001$) regarding the availability of a strategic plan for education. Respondents reported the availability of strategic plans in their departments elicited higher mean scores than those who haven't. This indicates that the availability of training plans with clear strategy positively impacted the perceptions about training and make it more effective. Learning within the organization at all levels should be facilitated and applied, and in order to do this, barriers for transfer learning must be identified and minimized between all the levels of learning in the organization through appropriate strategic plans. Abu Khadra and Rawabdeh (2006) in their research found that learning and development was the only significant predictor of LO.

So, organization may wish to focus initially on the fact of learning to aid in the transformation from the current state to that of the LO. The value of learning is higher in the Palestinian MOH which recruits large number of diverse health teams who graduated from different universities and require intensive training to orient them to the local system.

Table 4.13: Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by the availability of strategic plan for education

LO concepts	Availability of strategic plans	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Yes	316	5.7	1.8	17.49	0.0001
	No	296	4.8	1.9		
	I don't know	50	5.2	1.9		
Mental Models	Yes	316	5.9	1.8	8.332	0.0001
	No	296	5.3	1.9		
	I don't know	50	5.4	1.8		
Shared Vision	Yes	316	5.8	2.1	7.306	0.001
	No	296	5.2	2.2		
	I don't know	50	4.7	2.0		
Team Learning	Yes	316	6.3	1.9	7.704	0.0001
	No	296	5.7	2.0		
	I don't know	50	5.6	1.9		
System Thinking	Yes	316	6.4	1.9	4.393	0.013
	No	296	5.9	2.1		
	I don't know	50	5.8	1.9		
Total	Yes	316	6.0	1.7	11.04	0.0001
	No	296	5.4	1.7		
	I don't know	50	5.3	1.5		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Yes	316	5.6	1.7	9.235	0.0001
	No	296	5.1	1.7		
	I don't know	50	5.0	1.6		
Learning at team / group level	Yes	316	5.5	2.0	10.74	0.0001
	No	296	4.8	2.0		
	I don't know	50	4.8	1.9		
Learning at organization level	Yes	316	5.6	1.9	23.03	0.0001
	No	296	4.6	2.0		
	I don't know	50	4.6	1.8		
Performance of the organization	Yes	316	5.8	2.2	20.29	0.0001
	No	296	4.8	2.2		
	I don't know	50	4.6	2.0		
Total	Yes	316	5.6	1.8	21.80	0.0001
	No	296	4.7	1.8		
	I don't know	50	4.7	1.6		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

Only through developing training plans it is possible to standardize and develop the services. Extensive learning only takes place when the design of the organization enable and encourage it. Therefore, the MOH must embed learning into a strategy, in order to support the employees, by policies, procedures and standards, to enable continuous learning and sharing information within the whole organization. This could help MOH transformation to a LO.

Table 4.14: Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by evaluating training programs

LO concepts	Carrying out evaluation	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	High extent	70	6.4	1.9	37.14	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.5	1.8		
	Not at all	189	4.4	1.8		
Mental Models	High extent	70	6.5	2.0	23.95	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.7	1.7		
	Not at all	189	4.9	1.9		
Shared Vision	High extent	70	6.5	2.0	29.58	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.7	2.1		
	Not at all	189	4.5	2.2		
Team Learning	High extent	70	6.7	2.1	19.69	0.0001
	Some extent	403	6.2	1.9		
	Not at all	189	5.3	2.0		
Systems Thinking	High extent	70	6.8	2.0	19.19	0.0001
	Some extent	403	6.4	1.9		
	Not at all	189	5.4	2.1		
Total	High extent	70	6.6	1.7	34.69	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.9	1.6		
	Not at all	189	4.9	1.7		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	High extent	70	6.2	1.8	27.77	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.5	1.6		
	Not at all	189	4.7	1.7		
Learning at team / group level	High extent	70	5.8	2.3	25.30	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.4	1.9		
	Not at all	189	4.3	2.0		
Learning at organization level	High extent	70	6.0	2.2	40.49	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.4	1.8		
	Not at all	189	4.0	2.0		
Performance of the organization	High extent	70	6.4	2.4	26.55	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.5	2.2		
	Not at all	189	4.4	2.2		
Total	High extent	70	6.1	1.9	40.24	0.0001
	Some extent	403	5.4	1.6		
	Not at all	189	4.3	1.8		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

4.4.3. Availability of Evaluation and Follow up of Training Programs

As shown seen in Table 4.14 the differences in perceptions regarding the five disciplines and the dimensions of the LO vary according to the availability of evaluation of the training programs. The results reveal strong statistical significant differences in perceptions with higher mean scores among those reported carrying out regularly evaluation of training programs ($p=0.0001$).

Table 4.15: Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by carrying out training to colleagues

LO concepts	Providing training to colleagues	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Yes regularly	126	6.3	1.7	41.95	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.4	1.8		
	Not at all	194	4.5	1.8		
Mental Models	Yes regularly	126	6.2	1.7	21.60	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.7	1.7		
	Not at all	194	4.9	2.0		
Shared Vision	Yes regularly	126	6.1	1.9	23.28	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.7	2.0		
	Not at all	194	4.6	2.4		
Team Learning	Yes regularly	126	6.7	1.9	24.44	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	6.2	1.8		
	Not at all	194	5.2	2.1		
Systems Thinking	Yes regularly	126	6.7	1.9	17.71	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	6.3	1.8		
	Not at all	194	5.5	2.1		
Total	Yes regularly	126	6.4	1.5	34.10	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.8	1.5		
	Not at all	194	4.9	1.8		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Yes regularly	126	6.0	1.6	27.61	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.5	1.5		
	Not at all	194	4.7	1.8		
Learning at team / group level	Yes regularly	126	5.9	2.0	24.17	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.2	1.8		
	Not at all	194	4.4	2.1		
Learning at organization level	Yes regularly	126	6.1	1.9	36.88	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.1	1.8		
	Not at all	194	4.2	2.1		
Performance of the organization	Yes regularly	126	6.4	2.2	29.91	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.3	2.1		
	Not at all	194	4.4	2.3		
Total	Yes regularly	126	6.1	1.7	39.3	0.0001
	Sometimes	342	5.3	1.6		
	Not at all	194	4.4	1.9		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

Similarly, higher scores were elicited by those who reported carrying out follow up after training or those who reported providing training to their colleagues after receiving training. The difference between the different groups were statistically significant ($p=0.0001$) (Table 4.15).

Table 4.16: Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by carrying out follow up of training programs

LO concepts	Availability of follow up	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Yes regularly	113	6.5	1.7	61.99	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.4	1.7		
	Not at all	180	4.3	1.8		
Mental Models	Yes regularly	113	6.4	1.6	23.18	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.6	1.8		
	Not at all	180	4.9	1.9		
Shared Vision	Yes regularly	113	6.4	2.0	21.67	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.5	2.0		
	Not at all	180	4.8	2.3		
Team Learning	Yes regularly	113	6.8	1.7	22.26	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	6.1	1.9		
	Not at all	180	5.3	2.1		
Systems Thinking	Yes regularly	113	6.8	1.9	13.98	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	6.2	1.9		
	Not at all	180	5.6	2.1		
Total	Yes regularly	113	6.6	1.5	35.92	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.7	1.6		
	Not at all	180	5.0	1.8		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Yes regularly	113	6.1	1.7	19.21	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.4	1.6		
	Not at all	180	4.8	1.7		
Learning at team / group level	Yes regularly	113	6.1	1.9	30.37	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.2	1.9		
	Not at all	180	4.3	2.1		
Learning at organization level	Yes regularly	113	6.0	2.1	33.42	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.2	1.8		
	Not at all	180	4.2	2.1		
Performance of the organization	Yes regularly	113	6.1	2.4	22.02	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.4	2.2		
	Not at all	180	4.4	2.2		
Total	Yes regularly	113	6.1	1.8	33.42	0.0001
	Sometimes	369	5.3	1.6		
	Not at all	180	4.4	1.9		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

Table 4.16 shows statistical differences in perceptions with higher mean scores among those who reported carrying out regular follow up of training programs after implementing ($p=0.0001$).

A study by Gorelick (2005) found that the hospital learning managers and the organizational development managers recognize the need to become a LO by

understanding the dynamic interchange of structuring and sense-making factors within the OL systems model. That means understanding the organization's informal learning activities, while at the same time, addressing formal training and development programs.

We can conclude that participants recognized that the regular follow up of training programs after its implementation in the workplace is very necessary for applying the new skills or knowledge they had acquired through training for the general benefit of their organization and for their selves. These results are consistent with the study of Turban (2007).

It could be claimed that the concept and practice of follow up of formal training on the field is an important area that is essential in increasing the effectiveness of training. Follow up in the field enable trainees to implement the training on their real work settings. Another important area that requires attention from the MOH is sharing knowledge with colleagues as this helps to disseminate knowledge gain and creates a culture of excellence in the MOH instead of having trained individuals not a trained organization.

4.4.4. Organizational Structure

Table 4.17 clarifies the relationships between the availability of clear organizational structure and the five disciplines and the dimensions of the LO.

Table 4.17: Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by the availability of organizational structure

LO concepts	Availability of organizational structure	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Yes	465	5.5	1.9	9.739	0.0001
	No	153	4.8	1.9		
	I don't know	44	5.0	1.9		
Mental Models	Yes	465	5.7	1.8	7.145	0.001
	No	153	5.1	1.9		
	I don't know	44	5.2	1.9		
Shared vision	Yes	465	5.7	2.1	11.22	0.0001
	No	153	4.8	2.2		
	I don't know	44	4.9	2.4		
Team learning	Yes	465	6.2	2.0	7.587	0.001
	No	153	5.5	1.9		
	I don't know	44	5.5	1.9		
System thinking	Yes	465	6.3	2.0	7.571	0.001
	No	153	5.7	2.0		
	I don't know	44	5.8	1.7		
Total	Yes	465	5.9	1.7	11.57	0.0001
	No	153	5.2	1.7		
	I don't know	44	5.3	1.6		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Yes	465	5.5	1.7	4.481	0.012
	No	153	5.0	1.7		
	I don't know	44	5.1	1.6		
Learning at team / group level	Yes	465	5.3	2.0	10.20	0.0001
	No	153	4.5	1.8		
	I don't know	44	5.0	2.0		
Learning at organization level	Yes	465	5.4	1.9	24.14	0.0001
	No	153	4.2	2.0		
	I don't know	44	4.4	2.0		
Performance of the org.	Yes	465	5.7	2.2	38.16	0.0001
	No	153	4.0	2.2		
	I don't know	44	4.8	1.9		
Total	Yes	465	5.5	1.8	24.22	0.0001
	No	153	4.4	1.7		
	I don't know	44	4.7	1.7		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

Results indicate that there are significant statistical differences in the perceptions of participants who reported the availability of the organizational structure than those who haven't ($P=0.0001$). The mean scores were higher among those reporting having a clear organizational structure.

Congruently, Abu Khadra and Rawabdeh (2006), found that decentralized, flat, team-based, and empowered organizational job structures, enable learning, knowledge sharing, flexibility and change. Kontoghiorghes *et al.* (2005), concluded that organizational interventions that focus on the structural, cultural, and communication system characteristics of the organization will be more likely producing higher levels of

performance than those that strictly focus on learning and its application. The LO, as described by Szostek (2001), fosters a visionary leadership rather than abiding to a hierarchical organization fraught with issues of power and control, power and control only serve to inhibit the spirit of an organization, thus limiting its potential. The power in the LO will be from the teams instead of the top in the hierarchical structure.

However, as some people think the structure of an organization is the organization chart, others think structure means the design of organizational work flow and processes. Hierarchical organizations stifle creative tendencies and often actively seek out and develop specialists whose skills fit narrow functional duties. But, a LO is predicated upon experimentation, learning and collaborative effort.

This implies that MOH should periodically update its structure to be more informative and to illustrate explicitly the lines of communications and the attached roles to different jobs.

4.5 Organizational Learning Style Inventory

Table 4.18, Figure 4.5 shows the style of learning adopted by MOH, which revealed that in general, the learning style is more of habits style followed by memory style. Habits were given the highest score of how the MOH learns then memory came next. The least reported style of learning was experimentation. No obvious variations were noticed between primary health care and secondary health care sectors implying this is more a pattern or culture at the MOH. Off course, the organization will not depend on one method of learning, because organization should be balanced and multi-skilled. The study indicated that innovation and experimentation is less likely utilized learning style which is might be dangerous to the organization as it may miss out on ideas and innovations that come via other routes, or the over use of any particular method of learning can actually cause damage.

As previously mentioned, the habit learning style has advantages and disadvantages. The strength points are that it had common standards and routine procedures, which will help security and stability and contribute to survive the turnover of employees, and will survive the organization for long term. Whilst the weak points are, the danger of unthinking repetition after the habit has ceased to be functional, which is called a "Blind Automaton Syndrome" (Pedler and Aspinwall, 1996). It is unlikely that the MOH will develop and learn if it still uses the traditional routine practices. In other words, blind automation and repeating the work again and again without reflection or learning is risky. The later behavior is a barrier for the organization to adapt well to developmental needs and environmental changes and inhibits it from transforming into a LO. Therefore, MOH should investigate elsewhere which will work and adopt a more effective experiential approach.

Table 4.18: Learning style inventory at MOH

Item	1 Habits	2 Memory	3 Imitation	4 Experiment	5 Awareness
A	485	382	247	323	315
B	463	425	292	388	232
C	242	284	384	301	350
D	323	314	339	308	384
E	416	333	388	172	395
F	543	413	292	256	260
G	398	428	402	174	350
Total	2871	2581	2347	1926	2291
Hospital	1169	1069	1075	812	961
PHC	1136	959	821	687	837

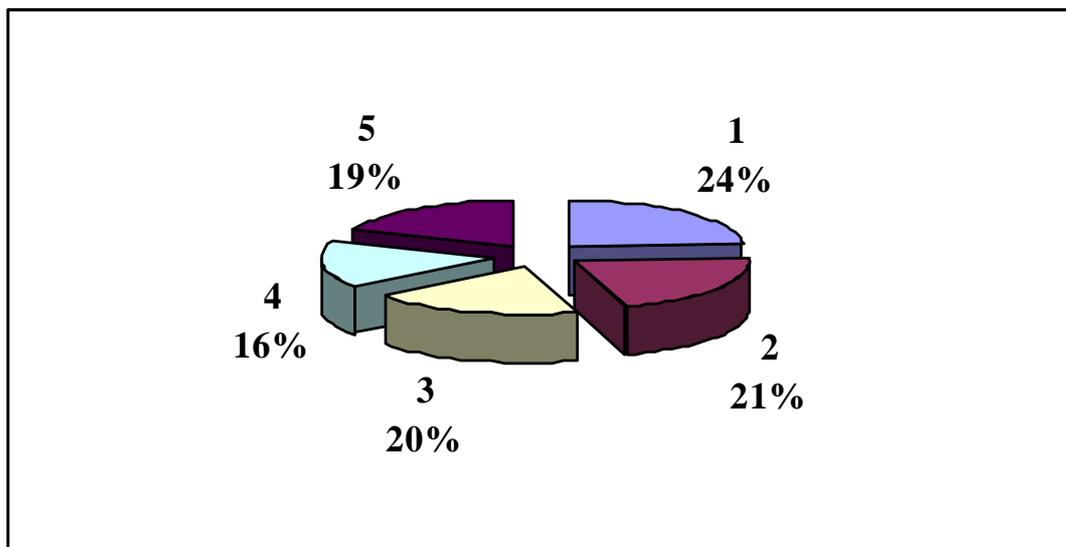


Fig. 4.5: Learning style at MOH

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study was conducted to examine to what degree the Palestinian MOH is applying the concepts of the LO in its different departments in the Gaza Strip from the perceptions of its managers. The study could help in identifying the promoting factors that would facilitate the transform of the MOH into a LO. The study explored some personal characteristics and managerial factors and their relationships with the dimensions of LO and the five disciplines of Senge.

The total number of the target population was 884 of them 662 responded with a response rate of 74.9% of them 84.4% were males. Around half of the respondents were less than 40 years old. The majority of participants (59.2%) were holding Bachelor degree. The respondents were distributed at the different sectors of MOH work as follows; 62.5% in hospitals, 23.9% in PHC and 13.6% in administration. Regarding the type of work; 52.6% were performing administrative and technical work and 76% have were Head of Departments and/or Supervisors. The majority of participants were nurses and most of the MOH managers were relatively new in their present jobs (67.8% with less than 5 years experience in their current position) reflecting the recruitment of new managers as a result of the political division and the politicized promotion.

The total mean of the five disciplines of Senge was 5.7 and the total mean of the dimensions of the LO was 5.2 and according to these results the MOH is still not considered as a LO. Although all the disciplines elicited relatively low scores (less

than the recommended score 7), there were some variations in the reported scores. Personal mastery which concerned with creating an organizational environment which encourages all of its members to develop themselves towards the goals and purposes they may choose elicited the lowest score (mean=5.3). Similarly, the discipline of mental models which is the deeply embedded assumptions and generalizations or models affect how we comprehend the world and how we take action elicited also a low score (mean=5.6). Additionally, the shared vision discipline concerned with building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create had also scored low (mean=5.5).

However; although, the team learning discipline elicited a higher score, still it is not satisfactory (mean=6.0). Team learning is concerned with collective thinking skills and enriched debate and dialogue so that the members of a team or group should be capable of putting aside their own personal assumptions and entering into a collective thinking process. Finally, the systems thinking discipline elicited the highest score (mean=6.1). This discipline enables employees to see the results of their work better, eliciting greater interest in the work.

Regarding the dimensions of the LO, as previously mentioned, is divided into three levels of learning; the first, is the individual level learning which elicited the highest mean (5.3). This level is important for organizational level learning because organizations are composed of individuals and a LO is an organization that learn through its members and group of members. The team level learning elicited a lower mean score than the individual learning (5.1). Similarly, the organizational level learning scored low mean (5.1). Learning at the organizational level is built on the

ability of individuals and teams to learn and share knowledge and experience. It is important to link individual and organizational level learning together in order to become a learning team. Team level learning will take time to develop and requires openness and trust, cooperative planning, interaction management, supportive relationships between individuals, and effective group performance. Managers need to create an environment conducive not only to individual level learning but also to team level learning within the organization.

The study also showed significant differences within the demographic variables regarding the disciplines and the dimensions of the LO. Males showed higher means than females and working at PHC is associated with higher means than working in other sectors. Managers working in administration and finance reported higher means than other groups regarding the dimensions of the LO. The group of Directors reported higher total mean than the Head of Department group in their perception towards the five disciplines and the Dimensions of the LO. Managers with scientific background of administration reported higher level of perception towards the dimensions of LO. Participants with five years of experience and less in their present job showed higher level of perspectives about the LO concepts than others. The availability of organizational strategic plan, educational strategic plan, follow up of trainees and clear organizational structures are associated with higher mean scores about the LO concepts.

The most dominant learning style in the MOH is habits followed by memory indicating a tendency to perform repetitive work with little reflection and minimal learning from experience. In general, the LO is a vision of what might be possible.

It is not brought about simply by training individuals; it can only happen as a result of learning at the whole organizational level. In addition, the LO is one that values learning from mistakes as well as success and management and staff must also involve in continuous learning and be committed to information sharing to improve the overall performance of the organization.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1. Recommendations for Health Policy Makers

- Because the LO is a new concept especially in our country, high level management at the MOH need to receive training about this concept and its application in our context.
- MOH is not considered yet a LO and efforts need to be exerted to support the MOH transformation journey into a LO. Efforts should focus on establishing a shared vision for the MOH with appropriate involvement of employees and effective communication and dissemination of that vision.
- Mental models and team learning disciplines require further attention by the MOH through supporting team learning, expressing of views and risk taking.
- Efforts to support organizational learning and team learning are required in order to build a culture of learning in the MOH. This could be supported by sharing experiences, reflection and experimenting new styles of working within the MOH.
- Managers at MOH are required to show more interest and support to their teams in order to achieve personal mastery. Encouraging and supporting staff to develop better self-esteem and greater confidence are helpful strategies.
- The study showed that the availability of strategic plan, educational plan, training plan and organizational structure are contributing factors for the development of LO therefore, these areas require more attention from MOH in terms of development and dissemination.
- The study showed variations in perceptions about the LO concepts that worth while to be considered by the MOH. Females, hospital sector, middle level

managers, managers who stayed long in their current positions, managers with health background require more attention from the MOH senior management.

- Active steps are required to be taken by the MOH in order to encourage experimentations, exploring new work modalities and avoiding repetitive routine not effective practices.
- Creating a culture that encourages continuous education and life long commitment to learning within the MOH is essential. This requires a precise alignment of organizational values, policies, systems and structures into coherent and consistent organizational action plan that make employees feel secure and relatively certain about the organization future.
- MOH could do better by adopting flexible organizational structure such as becoming more decentralized, flat and team-based organization. This might facilitate learning and knowledge sharing across its levels and departments.
- Focusing more on improving the communication within the MOH which also could facilitate free exchange and flow of information and allow direct feedback.

5.2.2. Recommendations for Further Studies

- Further studies are recommended to explore the impact of the Arab culture on the LO concept, because the concept has originated in the Western culture which is different than the Arab culture.
- Furthermore, it is recommended to apply this study at other health sectors (UNRWA, NGOs, Private) as it still considered a new concept in the Arab world in general and Palestine in particular.

- Further studies about the LO need to be carried out in the other places in Palestine such as the West Bank.
- Researching the employees' perceptions- not the managers- is essential to understand how it differs among the different stakeholders.

Chapter Six

References and Annexes

6.1 References

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6.2 Annexes

Annex (1):Map of Palestine



PSSIA, 2008

Annex (2): Distribution of PHC centers at MOH



MOH, Information System Department, 2009

Annex (3): Disciplines of a learning organization and its definitions (Senge)

Discipline	Definition
Self Mastery – individual	The ability to honestly and openly see reality as it exists; to clarify one's personal vision.
Mental Models – individual	The ability to compare reality or personal vision with perceptions; reconciling both into coherent understanding.
Team Learning – group	The ability of a group of individuals to suspend personal assumptions about each other and engage in dialogue rather than discussion.
Shared Vision – organizational	The ability of a group of individuals to hold a shared picture of mutually desirable future.
Systems Thinking – organizational	The ability to see interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect; the ability to think in context and appreciate the consequences of actions on other parts of the system.

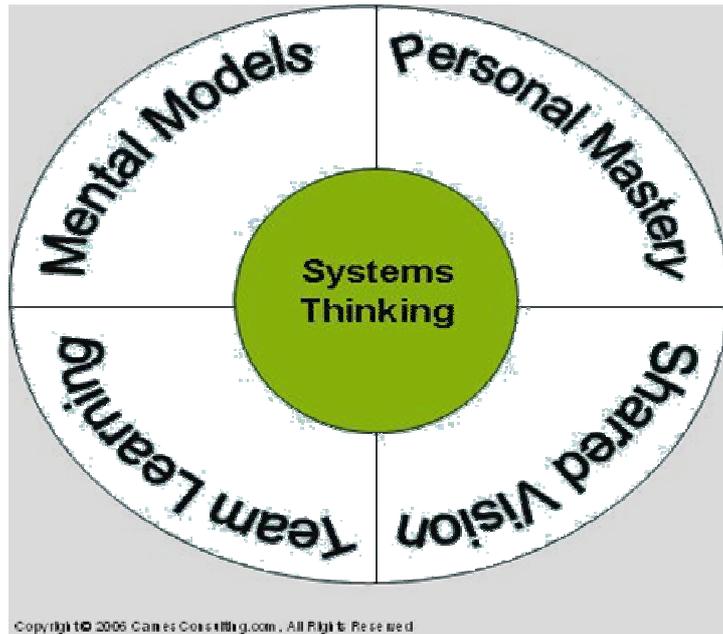
Dirani, 2006

Annex (4): Dimensions and definitions for the DLOQ

Dimension	Definition
Create continuous learning opportunities	Learning is designed into work so that people can learn on the job; opportunities are provided for ongoing education and growth.
Promote dialogue and inquiry	People gain productive reasoning skills to express their views and the capacity to listen and inquire into the views of others; the culture is changed to support questioning, feedback, and experimentation.
Encourage collaboration and team learning	Work is designed to use groups to access different modes of thinking; groups are expected to learn together and work together; collaboration is valued by the culture and rewarded.
Create systems to capture and share learning	Both high- and low-technology systems to share learning are created and integrated with work; access is provided; systems are maintained.
Empower people toward a collective vision	People are involved in setting, owning and implementing a joint vision; responsibility is distributed close to decision making so that people are motivated to learn toward what they are held accountable to do.
Connect the organization to its environment	People are helped to see the effect of their work on the entire enterprise; people scan the environment and use information to adjust work practices, the organization is linked to its communities.
Provide strategic leadership for learning	Leaders model, champion, and supporting learning; leadership uses learning strategies for business results.

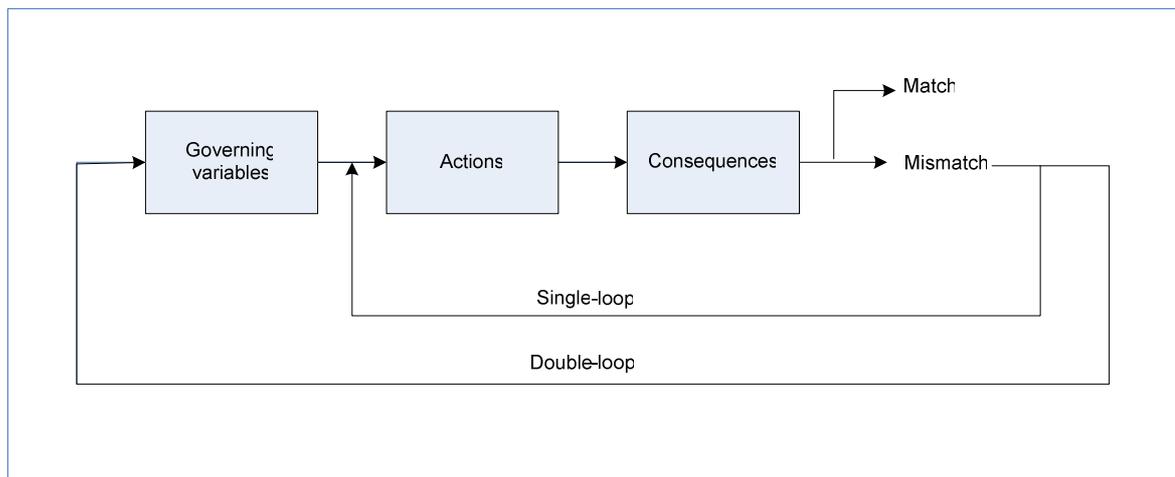
Watkins and Marsick, 1996

Annex (5): Five disciplines of a learning organization (Senge, 1990)



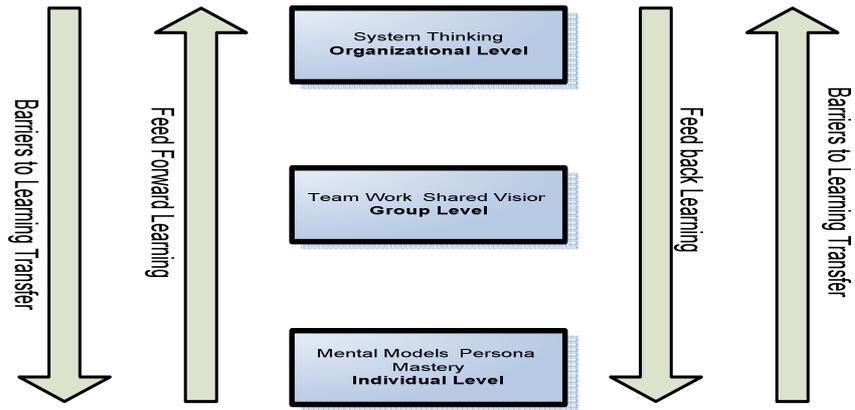
Carnes, 2006

Annex (6): Single- and double-loop learning



Wallace, 2002

Annex (7): Transfer of learning across the levels of learning in the organization



Sun, 2006

Annex (9): Ethical approval: Director General of hospitals, MOH

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
Palestinian National Authority
Ministry Of Health
G. Directorate for Admin & Finance

السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية
وزارة الصحة
الإدارة العامة للشؤون الإدارية والمالية



رقم: _____
التاريخ: 2008/8/26

الأخ الدكتور/ محمد الكاشف
مدير عام المستشفيات
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

الموضوع: مساعدة الطالبة أروى شلبي

تهديكم الإدارة العامة للشؤون الادارية والمالية أطيب تمنياته _____،
برجاء التكرم بالايحاء لجهة الإختصاص بصاحب العمل اللازم
نحو تسهيل مهام الطالبة أروى شلبي في جمع البيانات الخاصة
برسالة الماجستير.

و تحضوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير،،،


د. إبراهيم جابر
مدير عام الإدارة العامة
للشؤون المالية و الإدارية

اللاخوة مراد السليمية
مديرة شؤون مهنة الماظمة المتقدمة
مديرة شؤون الجهاديات شافعية ومجالسها مع نظام لص
١٤٠١/٧

مرفق طيه:

• كتاب الأخ منسق عام برامج الصحة بالجامعة

فلسطين - غزة - شارع الوحدة - المبنى الإداري أمام عيادة : مال تليفون: 2828003

فاكس، رقم : 2848835

Annex (10): Ethical approval: Director General of administration and finance

Al-Quds University
Jerusalem
School of Public Health



جامعة القدس
القدس
كلية الصحة العامة

2008/7/19

الخ/ خالد
رفعت خطابه الى مدير عام
المستشفيات، اريها نسخة الاولي
للمساعدة
والله اعلم

الأخ الدكتور / إبراهيم جابر المحترم
مدير عام الشؤون المالية والإدارية بوزارة الصحة
تحية طيبة وبعد،،،

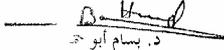
الموضوع: مساعدة الطالبة أروى شلبي

تقوم الطالبة المذكورة أعلاه بإجراء بحث بعنوان:

“Applicability of the Learning Organization Concept to the Ministry of Health :Managers’ Perspectives ”

كمتطلب للحصول على درجة الماجستير في الصحة العامة-مسار إدارة صحية عليه نرجو التكرم للإيعاز لمن ترونه مناسب لتسهيل مهمة الطالب في جمع البيانات اللازمة حيث تشمل العينة جميع الذين في الوظائف الإدارية المختلفة علماً بأن المعلومات ستكون متوفرة لدى الباحثة و الجامعة فقط.

و اقبلوا فائق التحية و الاحترام،،،


د. بسام أبو
منسق عام برامج الصحة العامة



نسخة:

- الملف

Jerusalem Branch/Telefax 02-24799234
Gaza Branch/telefax 08-2884422-2884411

Spheath@admin.alquds.edu

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فرع غزة/تلفاكس 08-2884422-2884411
ص.ب/51000-القدس

Annex (11): Ethical approval: Director General of HRD

Palestinian National Authority
Ministry of Health
Gen.Dir.of Human Resources Development



السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية
وزارة الصحة
الإدارة العامة لتنمية القوى البشرية

التاريخ: 2009/02/10

الرقم:

الأخوة/ المدراء العامون
الأخوة/ مدراء الدوائر
الأخوة/ مدراء المستشفيات
الأخوة / رؤساء الأقسام
تحية طيبة وبعد،،،
المختبرين،،،
المختبرين،،،
المختبرين،،،
المختبرين،،،

الموضوع/تسهيل مهمة الطالبة د./ أروي شلي

بخصوص الموضوع أعلاه، نحيطكم علماً بأن الطالبة منسقة برنامج ماجستير في الصحة العامة تخصص

إدارة صحية - كلية الصحة العامة - جامعة القدس وتقوم بعمل بحث بعنوان: -

**Applicability of the learning organization concept to the ministry of health
":Manager's Perspectives"**

يرجى تسهيل مهمة الطالبة في جمع البيانات اللازمة لتطبيق البحث.

وتفضلوا بقبول خالص الاحترام والتقدير،،،،،

د. ناصر رأفت أبو شعيبان
مدير عام تنمية القوى البشرية



صورة لـ/

- منسق عام برامج الصحة العامة د. بسام أبو حمد
- الملف

Annex (12): Ethical approval: Helsinki Committee

Palestinian National Authority
Ministry of Health
Helsinki Committee



السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية
وزارة الصحة
لجنة هلسنكي

Date: 15/8/2008

التاريخ: ٢٠٠٨/٨/١٥

Name: Arwa Shalabi

الاسم: أروى شلبي

I would like to inform you that the committee
has discussed your application about:

نفيدكم علماً بأن اللجنة قد ناقشت مقترح دراستكم
حول:-

**The applicability of the learning organization
concept to the ministry of health: Managers
perspectives .**

In its meeting on August 2008
and decided the Following:-

و ذلك في جلستها المنعقدة لشهر أغسطس ٢٠٠٨

To approve the above mention research study.

و قد قررت ما يلي:-

الموافقة على البحث المذكور عالياً.

Signature

توقيع

Member

عصو
حما بركي

Member

عصو



Conditions:-

- ❖ Valid for 2 years from the date of approval to start.
- ❖ It is necessary to notify the committee in any change in the admitted study protocol.
- ❖ The committee appreciate receiving one copy of your final research when it is completed.

Gaza Etwam : Telefax 972-7-2878166

Annex (13): Questionnaire (Arabic)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
استبانته

الرقم المتسلسل-----

الرقم المبرمج-----

عزيزي المشارك:

أنا الطالبة أروى عبد الوهاب شلبي أدرس بكلية الصحة العامة – جامعة القدس أبو ديس، أقوم بإعداد بحث بعنوان " تطبيق مفهوم المؤسسة المتعلمة على وزارة الصحة الفلسطينية من وجهة نظر المدراء" باعتباره متطلب للتخرج والحصول على درجة الماجستير وتم اختيارك بناءً لمطابقتك شروط اختيار العينة. نشكر لك مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة بالإجابة على كل الأسئلة، مع العلم أنها تستغرق حوالي 30 دقيقة تقريباً. مشاركتكم تطوعية ويمكنكم رفض المشاركة في هذا الاستبيان، لكن أرحب أن أؤكد لكم أن المعلومات التي تذكرونها ستكون سرية وبدون ذكر الأسماء وستستخدم فقط لغرض البحث العلمي.

وشكراً لكم على حسن تعاونكم

الباحثة: أروى شلبي

للاستفسار الرجاء الاتصال علي الرقم

0599739010

الجزء الأول: معلومات شخصية
عزيمي المشارك يرجى الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية باختيار الجواب المناسب أو ملئ الفراغ بالجواب المناسب

بيانات شخصية

- 1- الجنس أ- ذكر ب- أنثى
- 2- العمر
- 3- مكان السكن أ- محافظة شمال غزة
ب- محافظة
ج- غزة
د- محافظة خان يونس
هـ- محافظة رفح
الوسطى
- 4- سنوات الدراسة
- 5- آخر شهادة أكاديمية حصلت عليها أ- أقل من بكالوريوس
ب- بكالوريوس
ج- ما بعد البكالوريوس

بيانات خاصة بالعمل

- 6- مكان العمل أ- محافظة غزة
ب- محافظة شمال غزة
ج- محافظة الوسطى
د- محافظة خان يونس
هـ- محافظة رفح
- 7- جهة العمل أ- مستشفيات
ب- رعاية أولية
ج- إدارة و/أو مالية
د- جهة أخرى (حدد نوعها)-----
- 8- نوع العمل أ- إداري و مالي
ب- تقني فقط
ج- إداري و تقني
- 9- المسمى الوظيفي الحالي أ- مدير عام
ب- مدير
ج- رئيس قسم
د- مشرف
هـ- مسمى آخر (حدد اسمه)-----
- 10- أسم القسم / المستشفى
- 11- نوع التخصص الأساسي أ- طب
ب- صيدلة
ج- تريض
د- إدارة
هـ- مهن طبية مساندة
و- تخصص آخر (حدد النوع)-----

- 12- سنوات الخبرة أ- إجمالاً
ب- في هذه المؤسسة
د- في المسمى الوظيفي الحالي
- 13- هل يوجد لدى قسمك خطة إستراتيجية ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا يوجد ج- لا أعلم
- 14- هل يوجد لدى قسمك خطة إستراتيجية مكتوبة للموارد البشرية ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا يوجد ج- لا أعلم
- 15- هل يوجد لدى قسمك خطة إستراتيجية معروفة للتعليم ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا يوجد ج- لا أعلم
- 16- هل هي قيد الاستخدام ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا
- 17- إذا كانت الإجابة نعم، لأي مدى هي مستخدمة؟
أ- كثيراً ب- أحياناً ج- أبداً
- 18- ما نوع البرامج التعليمية التي لديكم ؟
أ- تعليم مستمر ب- تعليم أثناء الخدمة
ج- تدريب أثناء الخدمة د- أنواع أخرى
- 19- هل يوجد لدى قسمك خطة للتدريب ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا يوجد ج- لا أعلم
- 20- هل يعمل قسمك متابعة للبرامج التدريبية بعد تطبيقها ؟
أ- نعم، بانتظام ب- أحياناً ج- أبداً
- 21- إذا كانت الإجابة نعم، ما مدى تكرار هذه المتابعة ؟
أ- شهري ب- ربع سنوي ج- نصف سنوي د- سنوي
- 22- هل يوجد لدى مؤسستك هيكلية واضحة ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا يوجد ج- لا أعلم
- 23- هل حضرت أي برامج تدريب في الثلاث سنوات الأخيرة ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا
- 24- هل دربت أشخاص آخرين ؟
أ- نعم ب- لا
- 25- إذا كانت الإجابة نعم، ماذا كان نوع هذا التدريب ؟
أ- إداري ب- تقني
ج- نظم معلومات د- نوع آخر (حدد)
- 26- هل تطلب مؤسستك من المتدربين عمل متابعة لتدريبهم أو تدريب زملائهم بعد تلقيهم التدريب ؟
أ- نعم، بانتظام ب- أحياناً ج- أبداً

27- كيف تصف قسمك من حيث مشاركته (بالنسبة للتدريب للموظفين)

أ.27 في تصميم البرامج التدريبية ؟

أ- كثيرا" ب- أحيانا" ج- أبدا"

ب.27 في تطبيق البرامج التدريبية ؟

أ- كثيرا" ب- أحيانا" ج- أبدا"

ج.27 في تقييم البرامج التدريبية ؟

أ- كثيرا" ب- أحيانا" ج- أبدا"

يرجى وضع درجات من (10-1) لكل بند بحيث (10) تدل على موافقتك للجملة، و(1) تعني العكس. لا يوجد صح أو خطأ لكن هذه الدرجات تعبر عن وجهة نظرك تجاه البنود وأرجو أن تمثلها بكل مصداقية.

الرقم	البنود و المجالات	(10-1)
1-	يحصل الموظفون في المؤسسة على تعليم مستمر، ويعكسون هذه الأنشطة لتحقيق التقدم و النمو الشخصي.	
2-	يعمل الموظفون بشكل متواصل من أجل توضيح أهدافهم المهنية.	
3-	يستعرض الموظفون واقعهم الحالي لأجل الوصول لأهدافهم المهنية.	
4-	الفرص التعليمية متاحة للموظفين في وظائفهم.	
5-	يتعلم الموظفون بشكل مستمر على جسر الفجوات بين واقعهم الحالي و المستقبل المرغوب به.	
6-	يسعى الموظفون بكل جهد لتعويض النقص في مهاراتهم و زيادة المعرفة المتعلقة بوظائفهم.	
7-	في أغلب الأحيان، يعكس الموظفون نشاطات المؤسسة مع بعضهم البعض ليضمنوا أنهم في توافق مع مبادئ العمل.	
8-	يستقصي (يستفسر) الموظفون عن مدى ملاءمة عملهم و توافقه مع أهداف المؤسسة.	
9-	يغير الموظفون نمطهم الخاص بأسلوب عملهم لتطبيق وسائل جديدة .	
10-	يستكشف الموظفون فرضياتهم و آرائهم مع بعضهم البعض بشكل فعال حول ممارسات العمل.	
11-	في أغلب الأحيان، يستخدم الموظفون الأحداث الهامة في العمل للتفكير بشأن اعتقاداتهم.	
12-	يدرك الموظفون بشكل جيد لكيفية تأثير اعتقاداتهم و فرضياتهم على ممارساتهم.	
13-	يستطيع الموظفون بشكل فعال، توضيح فرضياتهم التي هي أساس تفكيرهم و منطقتهم.	
14-	يبنى الموظفون و الإدارة سوية رؤية المؤسسة و أهدافها.	
15-	يطور الموظفون أهدافهم الشخصية التي تتوافق مع أهداف المؤسسة و رؤيتها.	
16-	يشعر الموظفون بارتياح في مشاركة أفكارهم مع الآخرين حول رؤية المؤسسة.	
17-	يلتزم الموظفون برؤية مشتركة لمستقبل المؤسسة.	
18-	يوافق الموظفون على المبادئ الضرورية لتحقيق رؤية المؤسسة.	
19-	عند تغيير ممارسات العمل، يأخذ الموظفون بعين الاعتبار التأثير على رؤية و أهداف المؤسسة.	
20-	يشعر الموظفون بالحرية لطرح أسئلة على الآخرين في المؤسسة، بغض النظر عن الجنس و العمر و المكانة الوظيفية لهؤلاء الآخرين.	

21-	في مؤسستنا، أنشطة الفريق أو المجموعة تستخدم في نشاطات التطوير المهنية (المحترفة).
22-	تتم معاملة الموظفين بشكل متساو في أنشطة الفريق.
23-	يتبادل و يتشارك الموظفون المعلومات من خلال جلسات، و فصول،... الخ ، مع زملائهم الآخرين.
24-	يعتقد الموظفون (أو يؤمنوا) بأن، مشاركة المعلومات أو المعرفة من خلال عمل الفريق مفيد في حل مشاكل المؤسسة.
25-	يحترم الموظفون أفكار و آراء الآخرين، بالنظر إليهم من منظور الزمالة.
26-	يشارك الموظفون في المحادثات المفتوحة و الصادقة للمشاركة في أفضل ممارساتهم.
27-	عند تطوير الخطط، يأخذ الموظفون بعين الاعتبار الاحتياجات والقدرات المختلفة للموظفين الآخرين.
28-	عند تغيير ممارسات العمل، يأخذ الموظفون بعين الاعتبار التأثير الذي حدث على نتائجهم داخل و خارج المؤسسة.
29-	يعتبر الموظفون قضايا المؤسسة كعملية مستمرة أكثر منها كحدث عارض.
30-	عند تغيير أو استحداث قوانين المؤسسة، يتم الأخذ بعين الاعتبار أن تكون متوافقة مع سياسات الحكومة أو الوزارة.
31-	يأخذ الموظفون بعين الاعتبار التأثير الحادث على الآخرين، عندما يتعاملون مع تحديات المؤسسة.

الجزء الثالث Dimensions of the Learning Organization

الرقم	البند و المجالات	(10-1)
1-	في مؤسستي، يناقش الموظفون الأخطاء بهدف التعلم و استخلاص العبر.	
2-	في مؤسستي، يحدد الموظفون المهارات اللازمة لأداء المهمات المستقبلية.	
3-	في مؤسستي، يساعد الموظفون زملائهم على التعلم.	
4-	في مؤسستي، يمتلك الموظفون دافع ذاتي للتعلم و كسب المهارات الجديدة.	
5-	في مؤسستي، يستطيع الموظفون الحصول على المال و المصادر الأخرى اللازمة لدعم تعلمهم.	
6-	في مؤسستي، يعطي الموظفون الوقت لدعم تعلمهم.	
7-	في مؤسستي، يرى الموظفون في المشكلات فرصة للتعلم.	
8-	في مؤسستي، يحصل الموظفون على حوافز مقابل التعلم.	
9-	في مؤسستي، يعطي العاملون تغذية راجعة مخصصة للآخرين.	
10-	في مؤسستي، يستمع الموظفون لأفكار الآخرين قبل الحكم عليها.	
11-	في مؤسستي، يمتلك الموظفون القدرة على التساؤل.. " لماذا" ..؟ بغض النظر عن المرتبة الوظيفية.	
12-	في مؤسستي، عندما يطرح الموظفون آراءهم يسألون عن رأي الآخرين فيها.	
13-	في مؤسستي، يقضي معظم الموظفون وقتا في بناء الثقة مع بعضهم.	
14-	في مؤسستي، يمنح الفريق الفرصة لتحديد أهدافه و تكييفها حسب الاحتياجات.	
15-	في مؤسستي، يعامل الفريق أعضائه بشكل متساو بغض النظر عن المرتبة الوظيفية أو الثقافة أو أي فروق أخرى.	
16-	في مؤسستي، يركز الفريق على مهماته و على كيف سيتم العمل لهذا الفريق.	
17-	في مؤسستي، يراجع الفريق أفكاره بناء على نتائج المناقشات و المعلومات التي تم جمعها.	
18-	في مؤسستي، يتم تعويض الفريق على انجازاتهم كفريق.	
19-	في مؤسستي، يثق الفريق بأن المؤسسة سوف تعمل بالتوصيات التي صدرت عن الفريق.	
20-	توظف المؤسسة كل وسائل التواصل بأنواعها المختلفة بناء على أسس ثابتة (منتظمة)	
21-	تساعد المؤسسة موظفيها في الحصول على المعلومات التي تلزمهم بسرعة و بسهولة.	
22-	تحافظ المؤسسة على حداثة قاعدة بياناتها المتعلقة بمهارات موظفيها.	
23-	تقوم المؤسسة على عمل نظام لجسر الهوة (الفجوة) بين الأداء الحالي و الأداء المأمول.	
24-	تجعل المؤسسة من تجاربها التي تعلمت منها ، أن تكون متوفرة لجميع الموظفين.	

25-	تقيس المؤسسة نتائج الوقت و المصادر التي تم صرفها على التدريب.
26-	تشجع المؤسسة أعضائها على الإبداع و الابتكار.
27-	تعطي المؤسسة الفرص و الخيارات لموظفيها لكيفية انجاز أعمالهم.
28-	تدعو المؤسسة أعضائها (موظفيها) للمشاركة في وضع رؤيتها.
29-	تعطي المؤسسة موظفيها (تحكم) سيطرة على المصادر اللازمة لتنفيذ أعمالهم.
30-	تدعم المؤسسة الموظفين الذين يقومون بالمخاطرة المحسوبة.
31-	تبني المؤسسة عدة رؤى متوافقة عبر كل المستويات الإدارية و مجموعات العمل المختلفة.
32-	تساعد المؤسسة موظفيها على تحقيق توازن بين حاجات العمل و حاجات الأسرة.
33-	تساعد المؤسسة موظفيها على التفكير من منظور عالمي.
34-	تشجع المؤسسة كل موظفيها على استحضار آراء المستفيدين في عملية اتخاذ القرارات.
35-	تأخذ المؤسسة في الاعتبار آثار القرارات المتخذة على مبادئ و أخلاق العاملين.
36-	تقوم المؤسسة بالعمل مع مؤسسات المجتمع المحلي و المؤسسات الأخرى لتلبية الحاجات المتبادلة.
37-	تشجع المؤسسة موظفيها بالحصول على الإجابات (المعلومات) اللازمة لحل المشاكل من كافة مستويات المؤسسة.
38-	يدعم المسئولون في المؤسسة (بشكل عام) طلبات الموظفين بالحصول على فرصة للتعلم و التدريب.
39-	يشرك المسئولون في المؤسسة الموظفين بأحدث المعلومات حول منافسين المؤسسة، و توجهات السوق (الصناعة) و توجهات المؤسسة.
40-	يدعم المسئولون في المؤسسة أعضائها في تبني رؤية المؤسسة.
41-	يقوم المسئولون في المؤسسة بمراقبة و تدريب الموظفين الذين يرأسونهم.
42-	يقوم المسئولون في المؤسسة بالبحث عن فرص تعلم لهم بشكل مستمر داخل و خارج المؤسسة و اكتساب خبرة من العمل .
43-	يتأكد المسئولون في المؤسسة بأن أفعال المؤسسة تنسجم مع قيمها.
44-	سرعة انجاز العمل في المؤسسة أكبر من العام السابق.
45-	معدل الإنتاجية للفرد في المؤسسة أكبر من العام السابق.
46-	زمن الاستجابة (الرد) لشكاوي الموظفين أفضل من العام السابق.
47-	مقدار المشاركة الفعالة من قبل الموظفين أكبر من العام السابق.
48-	تكلفة الأنشطة في المؤسسة أقل من العام السابق.
49-	رضا المستفيدين من المؤسسة أكبر من العام السابق.
50-	عدد الاقتراحات التحسينية التي تم تنفيذها أكبر من العام السابق.
51-	حجم الخدمات المقدمة في المؤسسة أكبر من العام السابق.

	عدد الموظفين المدربين بالنسبة لعدد الموظفين الكلي أكبر من العام السابق.	-52
	نسبة ما تم إنفاقه على التقنيات الحديثة و المعلومات أكبر من العام السابق.	-53
	عدد الأفراد الذين يتعلمون مهارات جديدة أكبر من العام السابق.	-54
	الرضا الوظيفي لدى العاملين أكبر من العام السابق.	-55

Organizational Learning Style Inventory

الجزء الرابع

هذا الجزء من الاستبيان يحتوي على سبع جمل غير مكتملة كل واحدة منها تتضمن 5 جمل تكميلية محتملة. لكل جملة غير مكتملة يوجد لديك 12 نقطة، لتوزيعها على الجمل الخمس التكميلية المحتملة اعتمادا على مدى اعتقادك بمستوى تطبيق ذلك على مؤسستك. عليك توزيع النقاط الاثنى عشر على الجمل الخمس التكميلية المحتملة، معطيا أكبر عدد من النقاط للجملة التي تمثل الوصف الملائم حسب ما يحدث فعلا في مؤسستك، مع تخصيص عدد أقل من النقاط أو عدم إعطاء أي نقطة للجملة التي لا تمثل أو لا تحدث في مؤسستكم.

I في مؤسستكم أنتم حقا جيدون في:

- 1- العمل طبقا لإجراءات التشغيل القياسية(حسب النظام و البروتوكول). -----
- 2- جمع وتخزين البيانات و المعلومات والمعرفة. -----
- 3- القياس والاختباس لأفضل الممارسات من مؤسسات أخرى وقياس أداء مؤسستك طبقا لذلك. -----
- 4- التجديد والإبداع والابتكار وإيجاد سبل جديدة لتسيير الأمور. -----
- 5- الانتباه الدقيق لما يجري حولنا و في محيطنا. -----

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مجموع النقاط

II الأشخاص الأكثر احتراما وقديرا في المؤسسة هم:

- 1- الذين يقومون بالأعمال طبقا لنظام العمل المكتوب. -----
- 2- الذين يعرفون الكثير عن مجال عمل المؤسسة. -----
- 3- الذين جلبوا أفكار جديدة من مؤسسات أخرى. -----
- 4- الذين يطورون أفكارا وممارسات جديدة في العمل. -----
- 5- الذين هم دائمي التساؤل ومناقشة الطرق التي نستخدمها في العمل. -----

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مجموع النقاط

III على الأرجح يمكن أن نقول عن أنفسنا أننا نمتلك:

- 1- نظام تشغيل من الطراز الأول. -----
- 2- قواعد بيانات ومعلومات احتياطية لا مثيل لها في المؤسسات الأخرى التي في نفس مجال عملنا. -----
- 3- علاقات وتشبيكات ممتازة مع المؤسسات الأخرى. -----

----- 4- سمعة رائدة بأننا مؤسسة إبداعية تحب التجارب والإبداع.

----- 5- رؤية واسعة ذات نظرة إستراتيجية بعيدة.

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مجموع النقاط

IV ما لا نرغب في قوله عن مؤسستنا:

----- 1- لا احد يغني نفس المقطوعة باستمرار "لا نعتمد نفس المرجعية أو التوجه".

----- 2- التاريخ السابق لا فائدة منه(لا نعتمد على التجارب السابقة).

----- 3- لا يوجد ما نتعلمه من الأشخاص الذين يخالفوننا الرأي.

----- 4- "إذا لم تنكسر فلا تصلحها"(اترك ما هو شغال ولا تصلحه حتى يعطل).

----- 5- "نذهب إلى الطريقة السريعة للإصلاح في كل مرة"

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مجموع النقاط

V عند حدوث أزمة:

----- 1- نبقى هادئين ونستمر بالعمل حسب الإجراءات الصحيحة.

----- 2- نبحث عن بيانات وتجارب سابقة يمكن التعلم منها.

----- 3- نبحث عن أشخاص معتمدين لدينا ونسألهم النصيحة والاستشارة.

----- 4- ندع كل شيء آخر جانبا ونتعلق بالأزمة لدرجة الاندماج فيها وحبها.

----- 5- نتخذ الإجراءات والقرارات بعد دراسة شاملة ووعي دقيق.

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مجموع النقاط

VI أكبر نقطة ضعف عندنا هي:

----- 1- نحن دائما ملتزمين بطرق ثابتة ومحددة عند استجابتنا للمعطيات.

----- 2- نعتمد على الأشياء التي تم تجربتها و عملت بشكل جيد ونجحت في الماضي.

----- 3- الاعتماد إلى حد كبير على أفكار واقتراحات الناس الآخرين(خارج مؤسستنا).

----- 4- إعادة اختراع الحلول ، وتجاهل الحلول السابقة حتى لو كانت ناجحة.

----- 5- نفقد التركيز على القضايا الواضحة ، قصيرة المدى.

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مجموع النقاط

الأولوية الملحة للتغيير في مؤسستنا هي :-		VII
-----	تخفيف الشد عن الجميع ومنحهم المزيد من التقدير والمسؤولية.	-1
-----	تطوير توجه و رؤية مستقبلية.	-2
-----	تشجيع الناس داخل المؤسسة ليطوروا أفكارهم.	-3
-----	تعزيز إجراءات التشغيل وآليات العمل المحددة المخصصة لغرض التجارب فقط	-4
-----	التركيز على خلق توازن بين الأهداف قصيرة و طويلة الأمد	5

Annex (14): Questionnaire (English)

Questionnaire

Applicability of the Learning Organization Concept to the Ministry of Health: Managers' Perspectives.

Serial No:.....

Code No:.....

Dear participant:

You are invited to be in the above mentioned research study.

This study is conducted as a part of the requirements for Master program in Public Health at Al-Quds University School of Public Health, Palestine.

The purpose of this study is to identify if MOH is applying the concept of Learning Organization in its departments in Gaza strip. Which in turn will identify the factors that promote and/or hinder the development of MOH to be a Learning Organization.

Your participation is voluntary, you have the right to refuse to answer the questions.

If you agree to be in this study, you need to answer the interviewer questions that will be filled.

The data from this study will be kept confidential.

It is your decision whether or not to participate in this research study.

Statement of consent

I have read / know the above information. I have asked question and received answers. I understand that by answering the interviewer questions, I give consent for participation in this study.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Researcher

Arwa Shalabi

Mobile: 0599739010

Part (2): The Five Disciplines of Senge

Please answer all the following questions, there is no right or wrong answer, put the point you see it is most related depending on how typical of your organization you think it is. Number (1) means least accurate, and number (10) means most accurate.

No	Item Statement	(1 -10)
1	Staff at the organization engage in continuous learning and reflection activities to achieve personal growth	
2	Staff continually work to clarify their professional goals.	
3	Staff view the current reality more clearly in terms of targeting their career goals.	
4	Staff have learning opportunities in their jobs.	
5	At the organization, staff continually learn to bridge the gap between their current reality and the desired future	
6	Staff strive to supplement their lack of skills and knowledge in their career.	
7	Staff often reflect on assumptions of organization activities with each other to ensure they are in line with work principles.	
8	Staff inquire about the appropriateness of their own work with respect to the goals of organization.	
9	Staff change their own pattern of working style to implement new approaches.	
10	Staff actively explore their assumptions and ideas with each other about work practices.	
11	Staff often use the significant events at work to think about their beliefs.	
12	Staff are very aware of how their beliefs and assumptions affect their practices.	
13	Staff can effectively explain their assumptions underlying their reasoning.	
14	Staff and management together build the organization's vision and goals.	
15	Staff develop their personal goals to align with the whole organization vision or goals.	
16	Staff feel comfortable in sharing ideas with others about the organization vision.	
17	Staff are committed to a shared vision for the future of the organization.	

18	Staff agree on principles necessary to achieve organization vision.	
19	When changing work practices, staff consider the impact on the organization vision and goals.	
20	Staff feel free to ask questions of others regardless of gender, age, and professional status at the organization.	
21	In our organization, group or team activities are used in professional development activities.	
22	Staff are treated equally in team activities.	
23	Staff share information across courses, sessions, etc., with other colleagues.	
24	Staff believe that sharing information or knowledge through team activities is useful for solving organization problems.	
25	Staff respect other colleague's ideas and opinions by viewing them from their colleague's perspective.	
26	Staff participate in open and honest conversations to share their best practices.	
27	When developing plans, staff consider the different needs and abilities of others.	
28	When changing work practices, staff consider the impact on their results to the inside and outside of the organization.	
29	Staff regard organizational issues as a continual process rather than with a snapshot or event.	
30	When changing and creating organizational rules, consistency with the policy of the governments and the ministry is considered.	
31	Staff consider the effect on others when dealing with organization challenges.	

Part (3): Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire

No.	Learning Organization: Individual Level	(1 – 10)
1.	In my organization, people openly discuss mistakes in order to learn from them.	
2.	In my organization, people identify skills need for future work tasks.	
3.	In my organization, people help each other learn.	
4.	In my organization, people have internal potential to learn and acquire new skills	
5.	In my organization, people can get money and other resources to support their learning.	
6.	In my organization, people are given time to support learning.	
7.	In my organization, people view problems in their work as an opportunity to learn.	
8.	In my organization, people are rewarded for learning.	
9.	In my organization, people give open and honest feedback to each other.	
10.	In my organization, people listen to others` views before speaking.	
11.	In my organization, people are encouraged to ask ' why' regardless of rank	
12.	In my organization, when ever people state their view, they also ask what others think.	
13.	In my organization, people spend time building trust with each other.	
No.	Learning Organization: Team/Group Level	(1 – 10)
14.	In my organization, teams / groups have the freedom to adapt their goals as needed.	
15.	In my organization, teams / groups treat members as equals, regardless of rank, culture, or other differences.	
16.	In my organization, teams / groups focus both on the groups' task and on how well the group is working.	
17.	In my organization, teams / group revise their thinking as a result of group discussions or information collected.	
18.	Organization, teams / groups are rewarded for their achievements as a teams / groups	
19.	In my organization, teams / groups are confident that the organization will act on their recommendations.	

No.	Learning Organization: Organizational Level	(1 – 10)
20.	My organization uses two – way communication on a regular basis, such as suggestion system, electronic bulletin boards, or town hall / open meetings.	
21.	My organization enables people to get needed information at any time quickly easily.	
22.	My organization maintains an up–to date data base of employee skills.	
23.	My organization creates systems to measure gaps between current and expected performance.	
24.	My organization makes its lessons learned available to all employees	
25.	My organization measures the result of the time and resources spent on training.	
26.	My organization recognizes people for taking initiative	
27.	My organization gives people choices in their work assignments.	
28.	My organization invites people to contribute to the organization's vision.	
29.	My organization gives people control over the resources they need to accomplish their work	
30.	My organization supports employees who take calculated risks	
31.	My organization builds alignment of visions across different levels and work groups	
32.	My organization helps employees balance work and family.	
33.	My organization encourages people to think from a global dimension.	
34.	My organization encourages everyone to bring the customers` views into the decision making process.	
35.	My organization considers the impact of decision on employee morale.	
36.	My organization works together with the outside community to meet mutual needs.	
37.	My organization encourages people to get answers from across the organization when solving problems.	
38.	In my organization, Leaders generally support requests for learning opportunities and training.	
39.	In my organization, Leaders share up to date information with employees about comp treads, challenges organizational direction.	

40.	In my organization, Leaders empower others to help carry out the organization's vision.	
41.	In my organization, leaders mentor and coach those they lead.	
42.	In my organization, leaders continually look for opportunities to learn.	
43.	In my organization, leaders ensure that the organization's actions are consistent with its values.	
No.	Learning Organization: Performance of The Organization	(1-10)
44.	In my organization, the time needed to achieve the work is greater than last year.	
45.	In my organization, average productivity per employee is greater than last year.	
46.	In my organization, response time for employee complaint is better than last year.	
47.	In my organization, amount of effective share of member is greater than last year.	
48.	In my organization, the cost of activities is less than last year.	
49.	In my organization, customer satisfaction is greater than last year.	
50.	In my organization, the number of suggestions implemented is greater than last year.	
51.	In my organization, the number of new product and services is greater than last year.	
52.	In my organization, the number of skilled workers compared to the total workforce is greater than last year.	
53.	In my organization, the percentage of total spending devoted to technology and information processing is greater than last year.	
54.	In my organization, the number of individual learning new skills is greater than last year.	
55.	In my organization, the employee job satisfaction is greater than last year.	

Part (4): Organizational Learning Style Inventory

هذا الجزء من الاستبيان يحتوي على سبع جمل غير مكتملة كل واحدة منها تتضمن 5 جمل تكميلية محتملة. لكل جملة غير مكتملة يوجد لديك 12 نقطة، لتوزيعها على الجمل الخمس التكميلية المحتملة اعتمادا على مدى اعتقادك بمستوى تطبيق ذلك على مؤسستك. عليك توزيع النقاط الاثنى عشر على الجمل الخمس التكميلية المحتملة، معطيا أكبر عدد من النقاط للجملة التي تمثل الوصف الملائم حسب ما يحدث فعلا في مؤسستك، مع تخصيص عدد أقل من النقاط أو عدم إعطاء أي نقطة للجملة التي لا تمثل أو لا تحدث في مؤسستكم.

I	في مؤسستكم أنتم حقا جيدون في:
1	العمل طبقا لإجراءات التشغيل القياسية(حسب النظام و البروتوكول).
2	جمع وتخزين البيانات و المعلومات و المعرفة.
3	القياس و الاقتباس لأفضل الممارسات من مؤسسات أخرى و قياس أداء مؤسستك طبقا لذلك.
4	التجديد و الإبداع و الابتكار و إيجاد سبل جديدة لتسيير الأمور.
5	الانتباه الدقيق لما يجري حولنا و في محيطنا.

12

مجموع النقاط

II	الأشخاص الأكثر احتراما و قدرا في المؤسسة هم:
1	الذين يقومون بالأعمال طبقا لنظام العمل المكتوب.
2	الذين يعرفون الكثير عن مجال عمل المؤسسة.
3	الذين جلبوا أفكار جديدة من مؤسسات أخرى.
4	الذين يطورون أفكارا و ممارسات جديدة في العمل.
5	الذين هم دائمي التساؤل و مناقشة الطرق التي نستخدمها في العمل.

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مجموع النقاط

III	على الأرجح يمكن أن نقول عن أنفسنا أننا نمتلك:
1	نظام تشغيل من الطراز الأول.
2	قواعد بيانات و معلومات احتياطية لا مثيل لها في المؤسسات الأخرى في نفس مجال عملنا.
3	علاقات و تشبيكات ممتازة مع المؤسسات الأخرى.

4 سمعة رائدة بأننا مؤسسة إبداعية تحب التجارب والإبداع. -----

5 رؤية واسعة ذات نظرة إستراتيجية بعيدة. -----

12

مجموع النقاط

IV ما لا نرغب في قوله عن مؤسستنا:

1 لا احد يغني نفس المقطوعة باستمرار "لا نعتمد نفس المرجعية أو التوجه". -----

2 التاريخ السابق لا فائدة منه(لا نعتمد على التجارب السابقة). -----

3 لا يوجد ما نتعلمه من الأشخاص الذين يخالفوننا الرأي. -----

4 "إذا لم تنكسر فلا تصلحها"(اترك ما هو شغال ولا تصلحه حتى يعطل). -----

5 "نذهب إلى الطريقة السريعة للإصلاح في كل مرة" -----

12

مجموع النقاط

V عند حدوث أزمة:

1 نبقى هادئين ونستمر بالعمل حسب الإجراءات الصحيحة. -----

2 نبحث عن بيانات وتجارب سابقة يمكن التعلم منها. -----

3 نبحث عن أشخاص معتمدين لدينا ونسألهم النصيحة والاستشارة. -----

4 ندع كل شيء آخر جانبا ونتعلق بالأزمة لدرجة الاندماج فيها وحبها. -----

5 نتخذ الإجراءات والقرارات بعد دراسة شاملة ووعي دقيق. -----

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مجموع النقاط

VI أكبر نقطة ضعف عندنا هي:

1 نحن دائما ملتزمين بطرق ثابتة ومحددة عند استجابتنا للمعطيات. -----

2 نعتمد على الأشياء التي تم تجربتها و عملت بشكل جيد ونجحت في الماضي. -----

3 الاعتماد إلى حد كبير على أفكار واقتراحات الناس الآخرين(خارج مؤسستنا). -----

4 إعادة اختراع الحلول ، وتجاهل الحلول السابقة حتى لو كانت ناجحة. -----

5 نفقد التركيز على القضايا الواضحة ، قصيرة المدى. -----

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مجموع النقاط

الأولوية الملحة للتغيير في مؤسستنا هي :-		VII
-----	تخفيف الشد عن الجميع ومنحهم المزيد من التقدير والمسؤولية.	1
-----	تطوير توجه و رؤية مستقبلية.	2
-----	تشجيع الناس داخل المؤسسة ليطوروا أفكارهم.	3
-----	تعزيز إجراءات التشغيل واليات العمل المحددة المخصصة لغرض التجارب فقط	4
-----	التركيز على خلق توازن بين الأهداف قصيرة و طويلة الأمد	5
	مجموع النقاط	

Annex (15): Names of Experts

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Dr. Majed El-F.arra | Islamic University – Gaza |
| 2. Dr. Mohammad El-Kashif | MOH – Gaza |
| 3. Dr. Mohammed El-Madhoun | Islamic University – Gaza |
| 4. Dr. Yehia Abed | Al-Quds University |
| 5. Dr. Younis Awadallah | MOH – Gaza |
| 6. Mr. Ibrahim Mansour | MOH – Gaza |
| 7. Mr. Mahmoud El-Da'amah | MOH – Gaza |
| 8. Mr. Sadi Abu Awwad | Al-Quds University |

Annex (16): Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by last academic certificate

LO concepts	Last academic certificate	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Under graduate and below	57	5.2	1.6	0.384	0.706
	Bachelor	392	5.3	1.9		
	Post graduate	213	5.4	2.0		
Mental Models	Under graduate and below	57	5.1	1.8	1.820	0.167
	Bachelor	392	5.6	1.8		
	Post graduate	213	5.5	1.9		
Shared Vision	Under graduate and below	57	5.4	2.4	0.422	0.656
	Bachelor	392	5.5	2.0		
	Post graduate	213	5.4	2.3		
Team Learning	Under graduate and below	57	5.7	1.9	0.596	0.556
	Bachelor	392	6.0	1.9		
	Post graduate	213	6.1	2.2		
Systems Thinking	Under graduate and below	57	5.8	2.0	1.287	0.277
	Bachelor	392	6.2	1.9		
	Post graduate	213	6.1	2.1		
Total	Under graduate and below	57	5.4	1.6	0.683	0.505
	Bachelor	392	5.7	1.6		
	Post graduate	213	5.7	1.9		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		
2. LO Dimensions						
Learning at individuals level	Under graduate and below	57	5.2	1.6	1.436	0.239
	Bachelor	392	5.4	1.6		
	Post graduate	213	5.2	1.8		
Learning at team / group level	Under graduate and below	57	4.8	1.9	0.891	0.411
	Bachelor	392	5.2	2.0		
	Post graduate	213	5.1	2.1		
Learning at organizational level	Under graduate and below	57	4.8	1.7	0.792	0.453
	Bachelor	392	5.0	2.0		
	Post graduate	213	5.2	2.1		
Performance of the organization	Under graduate and below	57	4.7	2.1	2.259	0.105
	Bachelor	392	5.4	2.2		
	Post graduate	213	5.2	2.5		
Total	Under graduate and below	57	4.9	1.6	0.937	0.392
	Bachelor	392	5.2	1.7		
	Post graduate	213	5.2	2.0		
	Total	662	5.2	1.8		

Annex (17): Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by type of specialization

LO concepts	Type of specialization	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Medicine	140	5.4	2.1	1.126	0.345
	Pharmacy	69	4.8	1.7		
	Nursing	244	5.3	1.8		
	Administration	102	5.3	2.0		
	Paramedical	89	5.5	1.8		
	other	16	5.1	1.9		
Mental Models	Medicine	140	5.5	2.0	1.162	0.362
	Pharmacy	69	5.4	2.1		
	Nursing	244	5.4	1.8		
	Administration	102	5.7	1.7		
	Paramedical	89	5.9	1.7		
	other	16	5.4	2.2		
Shared Vision	Medicine	140	5.2	2.4	3.222	0.007
	Pharmacy	69	5.3	2.3		
	Nursing	244	5.2	2.1		
	Administration	102	6.1	1.9		
	Paramedical	89	5.7	1.9		
	other	16	5.5	2.4		
Team Learning	Medicine	140	6.1	2.3	1.208	0.304
	Pharmacy	69	6.1	2.2		
	Nursing	244	5.8	1.9		
	Administration	102	6.1	1.9		
	Paramedical	89	6.2	1.6		
	other	16	6.4	1.6		
Systems Thinking	Medicine	140	6.1	2.2	1.782	0.114
	Pharmacy	69	6.2	2.0		
	Nursing	244	5.9	1.9		
	Administration	102	6.5	1.8		
	Paramedical	89	6.2	1.9		
	other	16	7.0	1.9		
Total	Medicine	140	5.7	2.0	1.319	0.254
	Pharmacy	69	5.6	1.7		
	Nursing	244	5.5	1.7		
	Administration	102	5.9	1.6		
	Paramedical	89	5.9	1.5		
	other	16	5.8	1.6		
	Total	660	5.7	1.7		

Annex (18): Differences in perceptions about LO concepts by type of provided education

LO concepts	Items	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
1. Five disciplines						
Personal Mastery	Continuous edu.	146	5.5	1.9	2.623	0.050
	In services edu.	216	5.4	1.8		
	On job training	251	5.2	2.0		
	other	49	4.7	1.8		
Mental Models	Continuous edu.	146	5.7	1.7	0.960	0.411
	In services edu.	216	5.6	1.9		
	On job training	251	5.5	1.9		
	other	49	5.2	1.9		
Shared Vision	Continuous edu.	146	5.5	2.0	1.416	0.237
	In services edu.	216	5.5	2.2		
	On job training	251	5.6	2.2		
	Other	49	4.9	2.2		
Team Learning	Continuous edu.	146	5.9	2.0	0.333	0.802
	In services edu.	216	6.1	1.9		
	On job training	251	6.0	2.0		
	other	49	5.8	2.1		
Systems Thinking	Continuous edu.	146	6.0	2.1	1.050	0.370
	In services edu.	216	6.3	1.9		
	On job training	251	6.2	1.9		
	other	49	5.9	2.2		
Total	Continuous edu.	146	5.7	1.7	0.981	0.401
	In services edu.	216	5.7	1.7		
	On job training	251	5.7	1.7		
	Other	49	5.3	1.8		
	Total	662	5.7	1.7		

تطبيق مفهوم المنظمة المتعلمة على وزارة الصحة من منظور المدراء

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ملخص:

يعتبر مفهوم المنظمة المتعلمة مفهوماً جديداً نوعاً ما، حيث بدأ مع بداية تسعينات القرن الماضي، ويعود الفضل إلى (Peter Senge) الذي أثار الاهتمام بالتعلم التنظيمي من خلال كتابه الرائد (The Fifth Discipline)، حيث يرى أنه من خلال التعلم لا يتم اكتساب المعلومات الجديدة فحسب، إنما توسيع القدرة على إنجاز الأهداف. وقد عرف (Senge) المنظمة المتعلمة بأنها المنظمة التي يوسع فيها الأفراد باستمرار من قدراتهم على خلق النتائج التي يريدونها فعلاً والتي يجري فيها تنشئة أنماط جديدة وشاملة من التفكير، ويعبر فيها عن الطموحات الجماعية بحرية، وحيث يتعلم الأفراد باستمرار كيف يمكن أن يتعلموا معاً.

وقد حدد (Senge) سمات هذه المنظمات، وهي كالتالي: البراعة الشخصية، النماذج الذهنية، بناء الرؤية المشتركة، بناء فريق العمل (تعلم الفريق)، و التفكير النظمي. وأكد (Senge) أيضاً على ما أسماه التعلم التكيفي من خلال الاستجابة للأحداث التي تواجه المنظمة والعاملين، وهو يمثل الخطوة الأولى نحو المنظمة المتعلمة، ولكن الأهم من ذلك التعلم الابتكاري الذي هو بنظر سينج يدعم المنظمة ويساعدها في عملية التغيير عموماً وتغيير افتراضاتها وأسس عملها. وذلك لا يمكن حصوله بدون النظرة المتفتحة للعاملين وقدراتهم في تطوير المنظمة. وتسعى المنظمات دائماً لتطوير عاملها من خلال التدريب واكتساب المهارات بالإضافة إلى التعليم. ولكن هناك الشكل الأكثر أهمية هو التعلم.

وتهدف هذه الرسالة إلى معرفة مدى تطبيق مفهوم المنظمة المتعلمة على وزارة الصحة الفلسطينية (محافظات غزة) من وجهة نظر المدراء. واعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج المسحي الوصفي التحليلي وقد تكون مجتمع الدراسة الحالية من جميع الموظفين الإداريين في وزارة الصحة الفلسطينية وتشمل: "مدير عام – مدير – مشرف – رئيس قسم" والموجودين على رأس عملهم في فترة إجراء الدراسة في جميع أقسام الوزارة من رعاية أولية ومستشفيات وإدارة الوزارة المختلفة في جميع محافظات غزة الخمسة "محافظة شمال غزة – محافظة غزة – المحافظة الوسطى – محافظة خان يونس – محافظة غزة". وقد بلغ عدد ما تم استكماله من استبيانات 662 بنسبة استجابة 74,9%. و اعتمدت الدراسة الحالية في جمع بياناتها على نموذج (DLOQ)، نموذج (Five Disciplines of Senge)، واستبيان نمط التعلم (Learning Style Inventory)، بالإضافة إلى المعلومات الديموغرافية المتعلقة بالمبجوثيين.

و بعد جمع البيانات، تم تفرغها و معالجتها إحصائيا باستخدام البرنامج الإحصائي (SPSS) بتطبيق مجموعة من الأساليب و المعاملات الإحصائية المناسبة لطبيعة أسئلة الدراسة مثل النسب المئوية، المتوسطات الحسابية، الانحراف المعياري (SD) ، اختبار (t-test) و اختبار (one-way ANOVA). و خلصت الرسالة إلى تقديم تقييم شامل لإمكانات وزارة الصحة الفلسطينية ذات الصلة بممارسة التعلم التنظيمي و تطبيق مفهوم المنظمة المتعلمة في مختلف أقسام الوزارة، وفيما يلي أهم النتائج التي أسفرت عنها الدراسة:

أوضحت الدراسة أن المتوسط الحسابي للأنظمة الخمسة (Senge) كانت 5.7 (من إجمالي 10)، و أعلى متوسط كان لصالح التفكير النظمي (6.1) و أقل متوسط كان للبراعة الشخصية. أما بالنسبة لـ (DLOQ) إجمالي المتوسط الحسابي (5.2) الأعلى لصالح التعلم على المستوى الفردي (5.3)، و الأقل للتعلم على المستوى الجماعي و المنظمي (5.1). و من هذه النتائج نستخلص أن أداء وزارة الصحة الفلسطينية ضعيف فيما يتعلق بممارسات التعلم التنظيمي و تطبيق مفهوم المنظمة المتعلمة، ولهذا لا يمكن أن تعتبر وزارة الصحة كمنظمة متعلمة بشكل عام.

ومن ناحية أخرى فقد كشفت نتائج التحليل الإحصائي وجود فروقات ذات دلالة إحصائية بين آراء الموظفين من حيث توفر عناصر المنظمة المتعلمة تبعا للمتغيرات التالية: مكان العمل بحيث كانت لصالح العاملين في مراكز الرعاية الأولية، و من حيث المكانة الوظيفية وكانت أكثر ايجابية لمن يعمل كمدير عام و مدير، وكذلك كانت الفروقات الإحصائية لصالح من يعمل بوظيفة إدارية و مالية. بالإضافة إلى أن الذكور سجلوا ايجابية أعلى من الإناث. أما فيما يخص المتغيرات المرتبطة بالمنظمة كتوفر خطة إستراتيجية للمنظمة، و خطة إستراتيجية للتدريب و التعليم، و متابعة التدريب أثناء و بعد التطبيق، وكذلك توفر هيكلية واضحة للمنظمة، فقد أظهرت كلها فروقات ذات دلالة إحصائية. وقد كشفت الدراسة عن نمط التعلم الذي تتبعه الوزارة و هو نمط التعود الذي يعتمد على تكرار الأعمال و عدم استكشاف حلول جيدة أو الإبداع.

وقد استخلصت الدراسة إلى وجوب الاهتمام بالأفراد باعتبارهم اللبنة الأساسية لبناء أي منظمة، و كذلك الاهتمام بالتعلم الجماعي، و اعتماد الخطط الإستراتيجية كأساس للتحويل إلى منظمة متعلمة.