

**THE EFFECTS OF THE LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS ON THE INSTITUTION  
CULTURE**

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**Abstract:** This research has been conducted in order to examine the use of education service of different secondary school teachers, the reason why they are satisfied with the school, in the phase of institution culture, learning organization's role and its reflections in Izmir, Gaziemir. The subjects of the study are 132 teachers from 7 schools in Izmir-Gaziemir. First of all, it has been established whether the organizations have got the quality of a learning organization and then whether it has got institution culture or not. As a learning organization it has been examined that the school's effect on the development institution culture.

This research has got four parts. It has been accepted that the research on the secondary schools' personnel in Izmir, Gaziemir learning organizations have got a positive effect on the institution culture. In order to search whether this assumption is true or not, a survey has been conducted on the managers and teachers of the organization. The results of the statistics have been analyzed with the help of SPSS 16 program. It has been tried to prove the assumption of accuracy level for this sample.

Finally, it has been determined that learning organizations have got positive effects on the institution culture.

**Key Words:** Learning organizations, Institution culture

**Introduction:**

In general 'learning' can be defined as, "a process that creates changes on the behavior of the person and as a process of getting new information and understanding", or "the process of getting information and skills."

This definition of the term 'learning' includes two different aspects:

1 - Obtaining information about a skill or how something is done (know-how) and as a result of this the skill of realizing it.

2 - Obtaining information about the aim of doing something (know-why), that is to say an experience or understanding and conceptualizing the results of this experience. (Yazıcı, 2000)

Organisational culture; comes to existence by organization members' interpreting themselves and their behavior based on some norms, values and rules. Thus, the understanding level of the organisations about 'the shared vision' and 'the organizational aims and values' are in different levels. (Khatri, 1999)

Greene (1995) defines organizational culture as one of the key elements of the organisation's inner realities. Mainiero (1993) defines it as the organisation's norms, standards, the worker's contribution to the organization at any field or as the worker's motivation to work continually for the organization as the headstone of the organization.

The organizational culture consists of some elements shared by the members of the organization like; basic theories, beliefs, values, manifestations, symbols, and etc.

The basic values, because they are formed jointly and shared, and because they affect the behavior of the persons may be seen as belonging to all the organization. (Akdemirve Çuhacı, 2005) The most important component of the organizational learning term can be said to be consisting of attitudes and values that affect the person's attitude and behavior and these in general form the organizational culture. (Pemberton, 2000)

The learning organization possesses an organizational culture that promotes learning. In this kind of an organizational culture there is openness to experience, risk taking, accepting failure and benefitting from all of these in the learning process. In the organizational culture of the learning organizations the administration, the workers, clients, suppliers, and all the involved in persons in short feel the existence of opportunities for learning and development.

Furthermore, learning and development opportunities may be perceived differently by the members. This situation is the answer for the differences in the level of organizational learning levels and organizational culture. (Akdemirve Çuhacı, 2005)

Because of the very fast changes, nowadays organizational learning is a very important process that affects all organizations. In order to survive organizations have to learn new ways. (Jones, 2001)

The five activities that the learning organizations are to master of are listed as follows:

- Systematic problem solving
- Creating new knowledge
- Learning from experience and past
- Learning from others' experiences
- Learning from good practices and learning from clients

In-house knowledge transfer (Garvin, 1998)

‘Learning’ does not mean attaining more knowledge. It is the ability to develop the skills that we need to reach our aims. Senge (1990) says that the organizations that want to keep up with the speed of changes need to be efficient in five disciplines of learning. By mentioning the five disciplines of learning Senge defines the term ‘discipline’ as ‘the way of understanding and applying’. This is a life-long productive learning. In his book “The Fifth Discipline” Senge (1990) explains the five basic disciplines that turn the organisation into a learning organization and have a role in reaching the desired goals of the organizations.

These are; personal craftsmanship, thinking, models, learning as a team, shared vision and system. Learning insufficiencies are the elements that hinder the workers’ learning; like wrong thought forms.

Some learning insufficiencies are as follows: (Öneren, 2008)

- Sticking to the duty
- Keeping others responsible for the problems
- Anxiety of taking responsibility
- Sticking to the problems
- Not having a high opinion of the value of slow changes
- Misunderstanding learning by experience
- Problems with the managing teams

In the learning school model the questions and problems are not avoided or closed down; transparency and publicity are the most effective principles. There is a faith-based publicity about operation and applications. Because the aim is being solution based there is fast and effective effort. The learning school also requires new and innovative management perception.

In a horizontal formation; a wider authority and sharing of responsibilities is the norm. it is desired that the administrative organism possesses some managerial leaders. The educational manager has the features of being a pioneer, leader, designer, applier, director, model and teacher. They are responsible of the organizations’ learning, understanding the complexity, expressing their thoughts, discussing the problems and developing some skills and models to reach common ideas.

In this respect the head person listens his assistants, teachers, school staff and all the people involved in the process, makes use of their suggestions, directs the process, motivates his team and partners, grants them power and assures their effective participation in the

decision making process. The school accepts a democratic structure and operations in all of its activities and reflects this in its practices. In a learning school the administrators, teachers, students, parents, the civil social organizations, and etc. show willingness in sharing what they have acquired through participation processes with each other. The learning school with this mutual interaction differs from the centralized management type of the traditional schools. In this kind of school the ingenuity lies not on the seal but on the minds of the persons.

Effective Schools have a strong culture that consists of the following: (Wayne and Miskel, 1991)

- the shared values about how the work is done and consensus
- the school administrators as the heroes of embodying basic values
- customs to embody shared believes
- the workers as situational heroes
- cultural renovation
- important customs that celebrate and change basic values
- an equilibrium among innovation, traditions and autonomy
- a wide participation in cultural customs

The findings from this study reveal that there is a positive relationship between the learning organization level of the schools and the teachers' perception of school culture.

As regards to the question "Does the learning organizations have a positive effect on the school culture? The most important factors that affect the organizational learning were found to be:

- a - School Structure
- b - Team work and Collaboration
- c - Policies and Resources
- d - School Leadership
- e - Knowledge and Skills

In this respect the sub-problems have been determined as follows:

1. Does the school structure as being a part of the organizational learning have an effect on the teachers' perception of the school culture?
2. Does the team work and collaboration level as being part of organizational learning affect the teachers' perception about the school culture?
3. Does school policy and resources as being part of the organizational learning affect the teachers' perception about school culture?

4. Do school administrators as school leaders as part of organizational learning have an effect on the teachers' perception of school culture?
5. Do the skills and knowledge of the school participators as part of organizational learning have any effect on the teachers' perception about the school culture?

This study is conducted by correlational scanning method. Scanning models are approaches that describe an existing event or an event that happened in the past as it is.

The 'organizational learning' scale used in this study was developed by Kale (2003) and used in his doctorate study named "Liselerin Örgütsel Düzeylerinin Belirlenmesi. (Determining the Organizational Learning Levels in Lycees)" And the other scale on the teachers' perception about school culture was developed by Şimşek (2003) and used in his doctorate study named "Okul Müdürlerinin İletişim Becerileri ile Okul Kültürü Arasındaki İlişki - (The Relationship Between the School Administrators' Interaction Skill and School Culture)"

Having taken specialist opinion, some changes in the structure of the statements to make them more comprehensible for the subjects of the study have been made on the scale and applied to teachers.

In this study the aim was to determine whether there was a relationship (correlation) between the organizational learning level of schools and the perception of teachers about school culture. In this respect the study is a descriptive study.

The population of the study consisted of teachers working in private and state schools in Izmir-Gazimir district in the 2013-2014 school year.

The subjects of the study are 132 teachers selected by random selection method from 7 schools namely: Nevvar Salih İşgören Secondary School, Atatürk Secondary School, Yahya Kemal Bayatlı Secondary School, Gazi Umurbey Secondary School, Mevlüt-Aysun Özer Secondary School, Aslanlar Secondary School and Remzi Doğan Secondary School.

The regression for the school culture score, multiple correlation (R), multiple specification coefficient (R<sup>2</sup>) and the F statistics showing the model's level of significance are given on the table below:

**Table 1:**

**Regression analysis about the school culture score**

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Corrected r <sup>2</sup>	Standart Deviation	F	Sd1	Sd2	P
1	0,873	,762	0,752	11,80017	0,620	5	26	0,000

Dependent variable: School Culture

In the analyzed model the scores are  $R=0,873$  ,  $R^2=0,152$ , and  $F(5,216)=0,620$ . These results show that the five techniques included in the model can explain the change in the school culture scores to % 75,2. When the F value is analyzed, it is seen that the independent variables are meaningful interpreters of the school culture.

**Table 2:**

**The contribution of the variables in the model to the school culture**

Dependent variable: School Culture

Model	$\beta$	Standart Deviation	Standart $\beta$	t	p	Correlation	
						Binary	Partial
Invariant	50,937	5,703		8,932	0,000	0,795	0,161
School Structure	0,356	0,194	0,166	1,836	0,069	0,836	0,437
Team Workand Collaboration	1,118	0,205	0,478	5,447	0,000	0,761	0,186
PoliciesandResources	0,357	0,168	0,182	2,120	0,036	0,757	0,245
School Leadership	0,445	0,157	0,274	2,832	0,005	0,617	-0,203
Knowledge andSkills	-0,527	0,227	-0,187	-2,325	0,022	0,795	0,161

As it is understood from the regression equation school structure, team work, policy and resources, and school leadership scores are on the increase and as the scores of knowledge and skills decreases the school culture rises. The school structure total score constitutes %17 of the total change explanation ratio;  $\beta$  (standart) = 0,166. The related t statistics is ( $t=1,836$ ,  $p=0,069$ ) and this is seen as significant. One unit rise in the school structure variable causes 0,356 unit change in the school structure. This data shows that they have a parallel relation with each other. The variables are directly proportional to each other. The elements forming the school structure have a positive effect on the school structure.

Team work scores constitute % 48 of the total change explanation ratio;  $\beta$  (standart)=0,478. The related t statistics is ( $t=5447$ ,  $p=0,000$ ) and this is seen as significant.

One unit rise in the team work variable causes 1,118 unit rise in the school structure. This data shows that they have a parallel relation with each other. The variables are directly proportional to each other.

Policy and resources scores constitute % 18 of the total change explanation ratio;  $\beta$  (standart)=0,182. The related t statistics is (t=2,120, p=0,036) this is seen as significant. One unit rise in the team work variable causes 0,357 unit rise in the school structure. This data shows that they have a parallel relation with each other. The variables are directly proportional to each other.

School leadership scores constitute about %27 of the total change explanation ratio;  $\beta$  (standart)=0,187. The related t statistics is (t=2,325, p=0,022) this is seen as significant. One unit rise in the team work variable causes 0,445 unit rise in the school structure. This data shows that they have a parallel relation with each other. The variables are directly proportional to each other.

The knowledge and skills variable scores constitute about % 19 of the total change explanation ratio;  $\beta$  (standart) = -0,187. The related t statistics is (t=2,325, p=0,022) This is seen as significant. One unit rise in the team work variable causes - 0,527 unit decrease in the school structure. This data shows that they have confronting relation.

School culture is formed as a result of various organizational variables coming together. These variables' interaction causes differences in the school culture. Positive school cultures have important impacts on school participants.

This study shows that learning organizations have a positive effect on the teachers' perception of the school culture. Schools have to be considered as continuous organizations.

The school participants' accepting and internalizing the process is very important issue for the formation of the school culture.

### **Suggestions:**

As a result of the data obtained from the research the following suggestions are made:

- It is evident that studies have to be conducted about strengthening school culture. For this, to develop the school, parent and all the participants' collaboration a participatory management model has to be accepted.
- In a learning school the administrators, teachers, students, parents, civil society institutions, and etc. are willing to share the knowledge they have gained through various participation processes.
- The learning school because of this mutual interaction differs from other centralized

management based traditional schools.

- The ingenuity does not lie on the seal but on the minds of the people involved. The learning done with an organizational identity rather than personal or team identity will certainly have a positive effect on the school culture.
- In order to turn schools into learning organizations on the local and central basis project based educators have to be trained and put into action. In this respect the Ministry organizations have to start pilot applications about learning organizations.

The following suggestions are made in the light of the data obtained from the study:

- In order to be able to generalize the results of this study, similar research on different subjects have to be conducted.
- In order to be able to generalize the results of this study, similar research on different school levels should be conducted.
- In order to be able to generalize the results of this study, similar research has to be conducted in different settings.
- By using quantitative research techniques such as observation and interviews, the features of school culture can be determined better and more detailed information obtained.
- The ratio of change in the school culture can be determined by comparing the statistics year by year (years following the other).

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