

ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING AT REGIONAL GENERAL HOSPITALS
OF CENTRAL SULAWESI PROVINCE

Yoberth Kornelius, Syahir Natsir, Bakri Hasanuddin, Sudirman

Doctoral Degree Program in Economics, Universitas Tadulako, Indonesia

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Abstract: This study aims to identify organizational learning in the Regional General Hospital (RSUD) of Central Sulawesi Province. This study used quantitative methods. The population of this study was all health workers in general hospitals of Central Sulawesi Province (Undata Palu Hospital and Anuntaloko Parigi Hospital) with a total of 1,478 people. It used the Slovin formula to draw the sample to get a total of 265 sample sizes. The sample was selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected by direct observation, questionnaires, and documentation. Then, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results showed that the dimension that had the highest cumulative mean value was knowledge transfer and integration, while the dimension with the lowest mean value was the system perspective. It means that the activities of the regional general hospital of Central Sulawesi Province have not been oriented to the existing system as health workers have a less clear view of the purpose of the hospital. Meanwhile, on the dimension of knowledge transfer and integration, health workers showed that they always work together and learn as a team.

Keywords: organization, organizational learning, hospital, government

Introduction

Currently, organizational learning has become an increasingly important topic of study (Jerez-Go´mez et al., 2005). Studies on organizational learning have been carried out in various objects like companies, government organizations, even hospitals. The studies are based on the desire of organizations to change, especially in terms of performance. Organizational learning is a strategy to improve performance carried out by managers and leaders in hospitals (Lyman et al., 2018). Concerning this issue, type B Regional General Hospitals (RSUD) of Central Sulawesi have not used organizational learning as a strategy in improving its performance as there are many complaints about the provided services.

A study revealed that if the organizational learning level is high, the positive relationship between qualifications and performance is weaker. It implies that with affective commitment and performance, in terms of organizational learning, it may be better for employees to have sufficient qualifications than to be overqualified (Zheng & Wang, 2017). Therefore, to apply organizational learning, the determination of the necessary qualifications will be better than those that are too high. It creates a gap in the context of organizational learning as expectations for implementing organizational learning can be carried out by determining too high qualifications, but a study by Zheng & Wang (2017) proved otherwise. It is in contrast with the condition in some hospitals, especially type B hospitals in Central Sulawesi which still apply such high qualifications for employees as the qualification can support their performance in hospitals.

Then Bontis, Crossan, and Hulland explained that the literature creates confusion, and Friedman, Lipshitz, & Popper stated that many researchers still doubt whether organizational learning is beneficial for an organization or not (Sampe, 2012). Lyman et al., (2018) suggested conducting further studies to develop knowledge about organizational learning in hospitals.

Considering the explanation above and to address the gap between theoretical studies, research findings, and reality in the field, this present study tries to use theoretical studies as a basis for analyzing problems to find new models for assessing hospital performance through the application of effective and efficient knowledge management.

Results of previous studies can be used as a basis for directing this present study. Besides, showing the gap, the researcher also points out some problems related to the health services of type B hospitals in Central Sulawesi. In

general, hospitals experience many problems in providing health services. Indeed, some problems cannot be tolerated by patients, such as alleged malpractice, patient refusal, inadequate health facilities, health insurance, and human resource that still need more learning to run their main duties and functions in hospitals. Therefore, this study aims to identify the organizational learning at regional general hospitals of Central Sulawesi Province.

Literature Review

Organizational learning is considered important and has been recognized since the early 1960s (Chapman et al., 1959); (Cyert & March 1963); (Cangelosi & Dill, 1965); and (Grinsven & Visser, 2011). Organizational learning is a concept found in 1970 and is defined as an effort to find mistakes and how to correct them (Çömlek et al., 2012), and to look for opportunities and win those opportunities (Argyris, 2004). Efforts made in finding mistakes and then correct them are for organizational members to learn to correct mistakes made. Errors made by members of the organization indirectly indicate weaknesses that should be immediately solved through opportunities such as responding to opportunities for changes in all aspects of the organization and its members. Therefore, organizational learning of mistakes has to be considered as a strategic goal of human resource development (Putz et al., 2013).

Organizational learning is an organizational process in creating and correcting mistakes and is part of the management concept. Organizational learning is a process and a key point in the discussion in the management literature (Çınar & Eren, 2015). Currently, organizational learning has become an increasingly important topic of study (Jerez-Gómez et al., 2005). It has been increasingly getting more attention from researchers and practitioners (Crossan et al., 1995). Various interesting premises continue to emerge regarding organizational learning, especially related to how individuals learn and how organizations can benefit from the results (Gorli, 2003). In the early literature on organizational learning, Argyris and Schon defined organizational learning as the individual's acquisition of information, knowledge, analytical skills, and communication skills. Senge (1990) added that an individual can think of the organization as a system. Referring to Senge's view, individual thoughts are considered as a container, while knowledge and skills as content and learning are the processes of transferring or adding substance to our thoughts. This view is metaphorized as acquisitions (Elkjaer, 2004). The importance of individual thoughts has been explained by experts as individual actions always have a cognitive basis reflected on the norms, strategies, and assumptions used.

Organizational learning plays a vital role in complementing knowledge management to become an intermediary for knowledge resources (Wu & Chen, 2014). Through organizational learning, existing resources, especially human resources, have to be able to take advantage of their potential to use their knowledge for organizational progress. Thus, organizational learning is considered important to be studied by everyone in the organization and requires a long-term commitment to build and develop strategic resources in dealing with competitors.

Organizational learning is considered a highly decisive intermediary for knowledge resources and business processes (Wu & Chen, 2014). Organizational learning is a place to develop individuals within the organization. Without organizational learning, the organization cannot maintain consistent growth and development to generate and create values that are beneficial to the organization through various methods and strategies.

Creating a learning strategy within the organization is an effort to bring out the individual's potential effectively. Effective organizational learning can be created through creating learning strategies and institutionalizing them (Garad & Gold, 2019). The designed learning strategy was carried out through good planning and socializing the planning strategy. In this case, individuals within the organization will follow and carry out the determined strategies and plans.

The strategy carried out by the organization is a method to defend against the competition. Organizational learning is an effort made by showing a commitment to learning to maintain and improve oneself (Absah, 2008). It means that with organizational learning, individuals in the organization have to show a strong attitude or commitment to learning. Learning here refers to maintain what is currently owned, such as the ability to manage an organization that should be maintained. Then the willingness to improve individual abilities by learning will make individuals get new things which can be used as a way to improve abilities or knowledge.

Based on the elaboration above, it is important to implement or apply organizational learning at all levels of the organization. In the last few decades, studies on organizational improvement through individual capacity, individual learning, and organizational learning has developed well (Argyris, 2004). Individual and organizational development is highly determined by the individual's ability to improve knowledge through the learning process obtained from the organization. Organizational learning is fully measured and defined into four dimensions of managerial commitment, system perspective, openness and experimentation, and knowledge transfer and integration (Jerez-Go'mez et al., 2005).

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that organizational learning is a process that provides and creates new knowledge for organizational members to deal with changes through knowledge that encourages organizational change to produce novelty. It means the ability of an organization to continuously carry out the learning process so that the organization can think and act in response to various changes soon.

Methods

This study used quantitative methods. Quantitative methods describe and provide explanations of phenomena using numbers based on observations in the field (Watson, 2015). The population of this study was all health workers at regional general hospitals of Central Sulawesi Province (Undata Palu Hospital and Anuntaloko Parigi Hospital). The total population was 1,478 people and the size of the sample was determined using the Slovin formula with a sample size of 265 respondents. It used a simple random sampling technique meaning that any health worker in the regional general hospital of Central Sulawesi Province has the opportunity to become the sample.

Data were collected by direct observation, questionnaires, and documentation. Then, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. The descriptive statistical analysis aims to describe the research variables (George & Mallery, 2003). In this study, the descriptive statistics were based on the mean value.

Results

The results of this study cover descriptive statistics on organizational learning variables consisting of the dimensions of managerial commitment, system perspective, openness and experimentation, and knowledge transfer and integration (see table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Organizational Learning Variable

No.	Variable	Dimensions	Item	N	Mean	Cumulative Mean	
1.	Organizational Learning	Managerial Commitment	Q01	265	4.6792	4.3060	
			Q02	265	4.0340		
			Q03	265	4.3887		
			Q04	265	4.0453		
			Q05	265	4.6830		
		System Perspective	Q06	265	4.3509		3.9585
			Q07	265	3.7887		
			Q08	265	4.1434		
			Q09	265	3.5509		
		Openness and Experimentation	Q10	265	4.7660		4.4830
			Q11	265	4.5547		
			Q12	265	4.1547		
			Q13	265	4.2453		
			Q14	265	4.6943		
		Knowledge Transfer and Integration	Q15	265	4.6868		4.4868
			Q16	265	4.6302		

Q17	265	4.3509
Q18	265	4.2792

Source: SPSS

The organizational learning variable has 4 dimensions of managerial commitment, system perspective, openness and experimentation, and knowledge transfer and integration. These dimensions were developed into 18 indicators. The results of descriptive statistics showed that the dimension that has the highest cumulative mean value is knowledge transfer and integration (mean value = 4.4868). It indicates that the hospitals always work as a team in serving patients; do team learning; have knowledge derived from their culture, and transfer knowledge individually and in groups.

Meanwhile, the lowest dimension of the organizational learning variable is system perspective (mean value = 3.9585). It means that the activities of the hospitals have not been fully oriented to the existing system; and the health workers do not have a clear view of the organization's goals. The results of descriptive statistics as a whole showed that the lowest mean value of the organizational learning variable is item number 9 (mean value = 3.5509), while the highest is item number 10 (mean value = 4.7660). Therefore, the activities of the hospitals have not been fully oriented to the existing system in the hospital. However, the employee/health workers are open-minded to new ideas, both from inside and outside of the hospitals.

Discussion

Organizational learning is a concept in a dynamic organizational environment and a strategy for organizational success. The organizations in this study refer to Undata Palu Hospital and Anuntaloko Parigi Hospital. The results of the descriptive analysis showed that the hospitals have not fully ensured their members about the importance of learning, but the hospital leaders were involved in the learning process. It means that the hospital is carrying out organizational learning but still in the learning process showed by leaders who are still involved in learning. It indicates that all things can be learned to improve the overall performance of the hospital.

The results of a previous study (Jerez-Go´mez et al., 2005) focusing on organizational learning in a competitive perspective emphasized knowledge as the main resource. It means that the main resources in the organization, in this case, human resources have to know to be able to compete and show their performance within the organization.

Each organization always wants a satisfactory performance in achieving its vision and mission. This requires creativity, integrity, and commitment of the team in the organization to maximize their competencies to jointly achieve the predetermined organizational goals.

Good performance will produce satisfactory results, while poor performance will produce poor results. Thus, the Undata Palu hospital and Anuntaloko Parigi hospital need to concern about how to achieve their organizational goals effectively through good performance. The results showed that organizational learning had a significant effect on the performance of health workers in the hospital. It means that organizational learning can explain the performance of health workers in the hospital. It proves that organizational learning is vital for the performance of employees and hospitals, so that they always prioritize learning, both from internal and external. Organizational learning is a strategy to improve performance performed by managers and leaders in hospitals (Lyman et al., 2018). The results of this study are in line with Lyman et al. (2018) in which organizational learning can improve performance and further research is needed for the development of organizational learning in hospitals. The results of this study and a previous study by Lyman et al. (2018) strengthened the theory that organizational learning can affect organizational performance and organizational learning can also be applied by hospitals. Further, the results of this present study strengthen the results of previous studies that organizational learning needs to be developed in hospitals to improve employee performance.

Good performance will produce satisfactory results, while poor performance will produce poor results. Thus, health care providers like hospitals have to consider the achievement of organizational goals effective through good performance. Performance problems have become a benchmark for the success of government institutions or organizations.

The results of the hypothesis analysis provide revealed that organizational learning affects performance. Therefore, it can be concluded that performance is directly influenced by organizational learning. Increased organizational learning will result in increased performance. The results of this study indicate that organizational learning has a relationship with performance and strengthen the results of previous studies by Jiménez-Jiménez & Cegarra-Navarro (2007); Akhtar et al. (2011); and Jain & Moreno (2015).

The existence of this relationship indicates that organizational learning and performance are important in hospitals as they can support the hospital's success. Hospitals need to learn to improve their performance. Learning has a moderately positive effect on performance in which employees who acquire more knowledge and skills tend to have higher levels of performance (Colquitt et al., 2013). Organizational learning can be said as a process of acquiring knowledge and using the information to gain success, change a situation. And learning also can be said as a change of behavior resulting from an experience.

Conclusion

The results of descriptive statistics show that the dimension of knowledge transfer and integration has the highest cumulative mean value, while the system perspective has the lowest mean value. It means that the activities of the regional general hospital in Central Sulawesi Province have not been oriented to the existing system as health workers do not have a clear view of the hospital's goals. In terms of knowledge transfer and integration, health workers show that they always work together and learn as a team.

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