

## Conference Paper

# Factors Influencing Academicians' Organizational Learning and Its Impact on Job Performance

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### Abstract

This research aims at studying academicians' organizational learning, the factors influencing it, as well as its impact on their job performance. Organizational development is often depending on organization's capabilities to adapt with rapid process of creating, retaining, and transferring knowledge which often called organizational learning. To identify the factors contributing towards organizational learning this research focuses on two contextual factors, namely, communication technology and networking. These factors are believed to have a significant impact on developing a conducive organizational learning. As the outcome of the study, this paper raised the potential of organizational learning influence on job performance within the working environment. Based on these assumptions, the hypotheses are formulated and conceptual framework is developed and proposed. To validate its model, this research was set to investigate this particular phenomenon on the context of higher learning institutions on two similar, yet distinctive working environments, such as, in Indonesia and Malaysia. As part of its methodological approach, this research employs a quantitative research design and applies inferential statistics as its data analysis. Based on the questionnaire filled by 237 lecturers, the findings validated the significant influence of both contextual factors on the organizational learning, as well as the impact of organizational learning on job performance. A comparative analysis was also used to indicate differentiations between lecturers from both countries.

**Keywords:** Academicians, Organizational Learning, Communication Technology, Networking, Job Performance

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## 1. Introduction

In the current fast-moving and competitive business environment, every single organization is required to enhance their competitive edge by at least maintaining their ability to develop. Organizational development is often depending on organization's

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capabilities to adapt with rapid process of creating, retaining, and transferring knowledge which often called organizational learning. The knowledge of modern technology, environment, and complexity of business competition enables organization to reform its operation and to increase its competitiveness in a sustainable way which, eventually, modernizes the organization to cope with changing environment (Sungkhawan, 2008).

Members of an organization are predominantly seen as the functional mechanisms for organizational learning by creating knowledge through interaction and experience. However, individuals' knowledge only facilitates learning within the organization as a whole if it is transferred, and therefore, the knowledge can be retained. Organizations can retain knowledge in many ways, including using knowledge repositories such as communication tools, processes, routines, networks, and transactive information system (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Such organizational learning activities are even more important in an educational working environment environments, for instance, universities, among their organization members, the lecturers.

Realizing the importance of organizational learning on these settings, therefore, a number of researches and publications have been conducted on this particular field. Despite its extensive literature, this current research aims at strengthening the empirical proves which showcase the role of the contextual factors in forming sought after organizational learning. With this regard, this research was set to obtain several specific objectives, which are, (1) to empirically validate the influence of communication technology, and (2) networking towards organizational learning, as well as (3) to prove the impact organizational learning on job performance. In order to examine and to fulfill these objectives, this study particularly select and compare lecturers in two developing countries, namely, Indonesia and Malaysia.

## 2. Literature Review

As part of its literature review, this paper elaborates all four variables involved in this study before drawing a proposed model and formulating its hypotheses. Organizational learning serves as the core concept of the study, while communication technology and networking are regarded as the independent variables, additionally, job performance is treated as the outcome in such model.

Learning organizations are organizations that actively work to optimize retaining knowledge. Learning organizations use the active process of knowledge management to design organizational processes and systems that concretely facilitate knowledge creation, transfer, and retention (Alipour, Idris, & Karimi, 2011). The most common way to

measure organizational learning is the learning curve. Learning curves are a relationship showing how as an organization produces more of a product or service, it increases its productivity, efficiency, reliability and quality of production with diminishing returns. Learning curves vary due to organizational learning rates which are affected by individual proficiency, improvements in an organization's technology, and improvements in the structures, routines and methods of coordination.

While learning processes depend on the context for optimizing knowledge transfer, the implementation of knowledge management systems incorporates information communication technology into these processes. Knowledge management systems are technologies that serve as a repository, communication, or collaboration tool for transferring and retaining knowledge. Information technology helps organization and its members to respond to change and increases working effectiveness which eventually leads to organizational development (Thianthai, 2007). Embedding knowledge in the technology can prevent organizations and its members to lose knowledge and allow knowledge transfer across numerous barriers, such as, time, distance, cost, and inconvenience. Communication technology promotes learning organization since it is employed for improving work, sharing knowledge, promoting self-learning and self-improvement for members of the organization (Koonsri, 2005).

The utilization of communication technology also serves as a crucial tool of mediation during networking process among the employees within the working environment. Networking, in an organizational context, reflects the relationships and interactions that an employee has with the people in his/her working surroundings. Networking requires proactive attempts by individuals to develop and maintain personal and professional relationships with others for the purpose of mutual benefit in their work or career (Forret & Dougherty, 2001). According to Janasz and Forret (2008), developing and maintaining such relationships for the purpose of mutual benefit can help individuals to search for and to secure numerous employment opportunities. Good networking ties with people at either lower and higher ranks may help an employee to gain practical benefits, for example, seeking technical help, professional opinion, and guidance. These aspects of networking hold a significance role in determining the development of organizational learning especially at the individual level, thus enhancing their job performance.

Based on the reviewed literature, this paper proposes a conceptual framework (see Figure 1). In this framework, communication technology and networking are assumed as influential factors in developing organizational learning at the workplace. Furthermore, organizational learning is believed to have a significant influence towards job performance.



**Figure 1:** The proposed model.

Based on the proposed model, this research has formulated its hypotheses which assume that (H1) There is a significant influence of communication technology on organizational learning, (H2) There is a significant influence of networking on organizational learning, and (H3) There is a relationship between organizational learning and job performance.

### 3. Research Methodology

To fulfill the objectives and to test the hypotheses of the study, the researcher has adopted a quantitative research design by employing a cross-sectional survey. Cross-sectional survey is a research method where data are collected at one point of time from selected samples representing a larger population (Sincero, 2012). In term of the population of study, a proportional number of lecturers from Indonesia and Malaysia are chosen to be the respondents of the study. The research adopted a stratified random sampling where the lecturers of the university will be categorized by their academic position to ensure it adequately reflect the actual size of the population. In total, over 237 lecturers from both countries are chosen to participate in this study which profile as displayed on Table 1 below:

With regards of the data analyses, the researcher applied both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics help the researcher to describe the standings of the variables selected by the study on both universities. This analysis involves the frequency, percentage, mean, maximum, minimum, standard deviation, and variance which are displayed using figures, graphs, and statistical tables. While on the application of inferential statistics, the researcher used the correlations, regression, t-test, and the analysis of variance. These analyses help the researches to test hypotheses as well to validate the proposed model.

TABLE 1: Profile of the Respondents.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Nationality:</b>		
Indonesian	108	45.6
Malaysian	129	54.4
<b>University:</b>		
Public	199	84.0
Private	38	16.0
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	122	51.5
Female	115	48.5

#### 4. Findings and Conclusions

There are four main variables included and analyzed in this study, namely, communication technology, networking, organizational learning, and job performance. Each variable was measured by 10 adapted statements which employed 5-Likert item. The results of the descriptive analysis found that lecturers based in the Malaysian Universities utilize the communication technology (80.1%) better than lecturers based in the Indonesian Universities (75.4%). While, lecturers based in the Indonesian Universities are more satisfied with their networking ties (78.8%) as compared to the lecturers based in the Malaysian Universities (75.0%). In terms of organizational learning both Malaysian (75.8%) and Indonesian (75.6%) based lecturers perceived to have an almost equal organizational learning abilities. Last but not least, lecturers based in the Indonesian Universities are more satisfied with their job performance (76.2%) as compared to the lecturers based in the Malaysian Universities (72.8%).

On the overall, all four variables are considered satisfactory where Communication Technology has the highest score which is 78.0%, followed by Networking (76.8%), Organizational Learning (75.6%), and Job Performance (74.2%). The details are shown on Table 2 below:

TABLE 2: Comparative and Overall Analysis of the Variables.

Variable	Indonesia Mean (%)	Malaysia Mean (%)	Overall Mean (%)
Communication Technology	3.77 (75.4%)	4.01 (80.1%)	3.90 (78.0%)
Networking	3.94 (78.8%)	3.75 (75.0%)	3.84 (76.8%)
Organizational Learning	3.78 (75.6%)	3.79 (75.8%)	3.78 (75.7%)
Job Performance	3.81 (76.2%)	3.64 (72.8%)	3.71 (74.2%)

To validate the model proposed by this study, the researcher used correlation and regression data analyses to test the influence existed between the variables of this study.

The results show that both of the independent variables (communication technology and networking) are positively and significantly correlated with the mediating variable, organizational learning. Specifically, communication technology has shown a strong and positive relationship with organizational learning ( $r=.604$ ,  $p=.000$ ). While networking has shown a moderate and positive relationship with organizational learning ( $r=.593$ ,  $p=.000$ ). The results also indicate that there is a significance influence of the mediating variable towards the dependent variable. In this regards, organizational learning has shown a moderate and positive relationship with job performance ( $r=.563$ ,  $p=.000$ ). The details are shown on Table 3 below:

TABLE 3: Results of Correlations Analyses.

		<b>ComTech</b>	<b>Networking</b>	<b>OrganLearn</b>	<b>JobPerform</b>
<b>ComTech</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.604**	.709**	.508**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	234	234	234	234
<b>Networking</b>	Pearson Correlation	.604**	1	.593**	.528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	234	237	237	237
<b>OrganLearn</b>	Pearson Correlation	.709**	.593**	1	.563**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	234	237	237	237
<b>JobPerform</b>	Pearson Correlation	.508**	.528**	.563**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	234	237	237	237

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Furthermore, this study compare the influence of communication technology and networking on organizational learning. The results of regression analysis showed that communication technology ( $b=.538$ ) has higher influence on organizational learning as compared to networking ( $b=.270$ ). The details are shown on Table 4 below:

As the results of the analyses, this study concludes that communication technology and networking are significantly contributing towards organizational learning of the lecturers at their respective working environment. Their ability to learn at organizational

TABLE 4: Regression Analysis of the Factors on Organizational Learning.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.650	.195		3.332	.001
	ComTech	.538	.054	.552	9.928	.000
	Networking	.270	.057	.261	4.689	.000

a. Dependent Variable: OrganLearn (F= 139.022, p=.000).

settings also found to significantly affect their job performance at the workplace. Hence, the results supported all of the hypotheses formulated by the study, and therefore, also validate the model proposed by the study. The finalized model of the study are displayed on Figure 2 below:

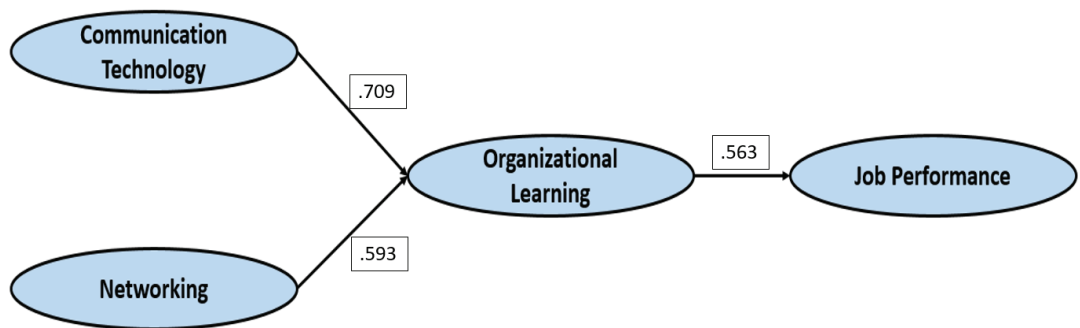


Figure 2: The Finalized Model of the Study.

The model indicate that the proper utilization of suitable communication technology as well as conducive networking ties between the lecturers influence their organizational learning processes, which in turn significantly affect their job performance. The model emphasizes the crucial role of organizational learning on bridging numerous factors towards achieving higher job performance of the employees in their working environment.

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