

Organizational Learning as a Contributor to Work Performance in Airlines Industry, Malaysia

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Abstract

Purpose: To investigate the relationship between organizational learning and work performance among employees in the Airlines Industry of Malaysia.

Design/methodology/approach: Quantitative research reveals 194 employees in Malaysia's Airline Industry. Purposive sampling was used to collect data, and SPSS 26.0 and SmartPLS 3.0 were used to analyze the results.

Findings: 1. There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and task performance with $\beta=0.696$, $t=9.857$, and $p<0.05$, 2. There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and contextual performance with $\beta=0.776$, $t=11.902$, and $p<0.05$.

Research limitations/implications: The study sample includes employees from MAB, AirAsia, Firefly, and Malindo Air. The study's research methodology can guide an academician interest in discovering knowledge in similar areas, such as the Airlines Industry.

Practical implications: The study's findings will help organizations improve their ability to alter and learn to improve their performance. It will also assist the organization in better understanding organizational learning that should be implemented in the organization. The outcome will help the organization become a baseline or a set of guidelines for future organizational learning strategies.

Originality/value: The paper establishes a link between organizational learning and work performance in the Malaysia Airlines industry. It will assist top management in developing their strategic plans and policies, particularly in training and development.

Keywords: *Organizational Learning, Task Performance, Contextual Performance*

Introduction

Malaysia ranked fourth in the South and Southeast Asia region in terms of air passenger traffic, behind China, India, and Indonesia. According to the Ministry of Transportation Portal (2019), Malaysia has a domestic and international airport network, modern and fully equipped. The airport in Malaysia has world-class facilities and the capacity to accommodate additional passengers and airlines operation either locally or abroad. In 2018, was a trying year for Malaysia's airline industry, set against a few uncertain backdrops. According to a 2018 report

by Malaysia Airlines Holdings Berhad, these challenges, which included a temporary rising in fuel prices, Trade disputes between the United States and China, as well as a few natural disasters, and an aircraft tragedy in the region, all had a substantial impact on the region's growth momentum. 2018 passenger volume growth of 2.5 percent, or 99.0 million passengers, was less than anticipated. While this is a slower growth rate than the 8.6 percent recorded in 2017, the lower figure is partly attributed to domestic carriers repurposing airline seat capacity to overseas markets, which resulted in considerable domestic growth in the first half of 2018 (MAHB, 2018).

Employee performance is a vital tool for success in any organization, especially in the Airlines Industry. Even though this industry has many challenges, many strategies and systems may be developed to tackle this modern era's challenges. The success of an organization is frequently linked to internal and external factors, each of which plays a different role and contributes considerably to the total success (Ebonkeng, 2018). On the other hand, organizational learning will be critical in enhancing their employability skills and knowledge, ultimately improving performance. Organizational learning encompasses both individual and group learning components that are critical to assist the organization in achieving its objectives and remaining competitive in today's highly competitive airline industry. Thus, the study tries to investigate the relationship between organizational learning and work performance in the Airlines Industry of Malaysia.

i. Research Problem

Eight hundred twenty-one complaints were received between July 1 and December 31 in 2018, with 810 on airlines and 11 on the airport (Malaysia Aviation Commissioner, 2019). The complaints increased 11.7% compared from July 1 to December 31, 2017, when MAVCOM registered 735 complaints. According to the MAVCOM report (2019), baggage mishandling, refund processing, and flight delays account for 51.6% of the types of complaints received by MAVCOM during this period. The researcher conducted a survey in August 2018 on two management staff in Malaysia Airlines (MAS) and AirAsia and found that the previous system they were using to perform the job is outdated. It's harsh for them to perform their job effectively, especially when it comes to multiple jobs at one time. A study conducted by Fonkeng (2018) shows that 31.25% of the employees in selected cast doubt on their relationship with the organization. They complain that their work seems so dull that they will prefer working elsewhere than where they are at the same time. The researcher believes that organizational learning is critical for improving employee work performance based on this problem.

ii. Research Objectives

Two research objectives have been investigated: i) the relationship between organizational learning and task performance ii) the relationship between organizational learning and contextual performance.

Literature Review

i. Organizational Learning

According to Dixon (1999), organizational learning is defined as the deliberate application of processes at the individual, group, and system levels to transform an organization to improve stakeholder satisfaction. Learning also entails acquiring knowledge, sharing knowledge, utilizing knowledge, and achieving new success. A collection of organizational members provides organizational learning. Lead can help organizations improve the process and outcome of their learning activities. In organizational learning, Leaders must cultivate an environment that encourages the development of all organizational members. Leaders must

foster an environment conducive to the flourishing of all organizational members as learners, teachers, and leaders to maximize what they choose, do, and are capable of as students, teachers, and leaders to maximize what they choose, do, and are capable (Gilaninia, 2013). Pokharel and Hult (2010) assert that the learning environment influences organizational learning, and the penetration rate quantifies its variation within the local department.

There are two variables involved in organizational learning: individual learning and group learning. Individual learning can be a deliberate or unintentional process. Individuals acquire new knowledge through the transformation of information, by altering their internal perspectives and occasionally their behavior, by expanding their abilities and cognitive abilities, and by improving their behavior as a result. It lays the groundwork for higher-level activities like group and organizational learning assistance (Martinez and Ruiz, 2002).

On the other hand, Team learning encourages collaboration, involves all stakeholders collectively rather than individually, and develops great ideas. This discipline is critical because the team, not the individual, is the basic learning unit (Martin and Reinders, 2016). This discipline is critical because the team, not the individual, is the fundamental unit of learning (Martin and Reinders, 2016). Organizational Learning may contribute to learning within an organization and among all employees. It is the result of organizational members engaging in interaction and knowledge sharing. Thus, organizations must promote a "bottom-up" philosophy in which suggestions for change begin at the bottom and ascend to the top.

ii. Work Performance

Work performance is divided into two dimensions: task performance and contextual performance; the contextual scale contains measures assessing leadership, teamwork, and good conduct in addition to task performance, all of which are consistent with the contextual performance dimension of interpersonal facilitation, whereas the items on the task performance scale assessed technical knowledge and problem-solving abilities. (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993). Task performance entails patterns or behaviors associated with the production of goods or services, as well as activities that support the organization's core technical processes in an indirect manner (Borman, 2004). By converting raw materials to finished products or performing essential service and maintenance functions such as replenishing raw material supplies and distributing, coordinating, and supervising staff (Kiker and Motowidlo, 1999). Individual efforts unrelated to their primary job function are important because they define the social and psychological backdrop of the organization, which serves as a crucial catalyst for task activities and processes. (Werner, 2003). According to Van Scotter, Motowidlo, and Cross (2000), Employees demonstrate contextual performance when they assist others with tasks, communicate because of their supervisor, or make recommendations on how to improve organizational procedures. Researchers have identified the most critical aspect of work behavior, which has been equated with overall job performance at times. Performance can be defined as virtually any behavior aimed at completing a task or achieving a goal.

iii. Resource-Based View

The resource-based perspective theory's theoretical basis influenced the study's direction. In strategic management, this is an extension of Porter's Five Forces theory (Wernerfelt, 1984). According to the resource-based concept, a firm's long-term competitive advantage can be achieved by using internal resources to protect against competitors and other external market pressures that could affect performance (Porter, 1980). Physical capital, human capital, and organizational capital are all resources that contribute to an organization's long-term efficiency and effectiveness, according to the resource-based view. These resources must possess four characteristics: they must be valuable, scarce, imperfectly imitable, and cannot be substituted

by competitors with another resource (Barney, 1991). These resources and capabilities address how the organization might improve and enhance employee performance in response to organizational change issues. It emphasizes learning that could directly influence the individual performance by applying what they've learned during their training and what they've learned during their training and on the job without mechanism intervention.

iv. The linkage between organizational learning and work performance

Wanza and Nkurur (2016) discussed the relationship between this variable. They discovered that organizational change has a more significant influence on organizational learning than innovation and that it indirectly affects work performance. According to Alas, Vadi, and Sun (2009), one of the critical success factors during the organizational change phase is the employee's attitude toward organizational learning and change. Additionally, Pokharel and Hult (2010) believe that the learning environment influences organizational learning, and the penetration rate quantifies its variation within the local department. According to Levitt and March (1998), organizational learning is based on routines that vary according to history and aim to achieve results, with subunits encoding historical inferences into behavior-guiding routines. Rani Gujar (2017) has discovered that organizational learning will improve the quality, quantity, timeliness, and knowledge of work performed in an organization. Holton *et al.* (2007) also discovered that organizational learning could enhance task performance but learning to change behavior is highly variable. Other than that, the study conducted by Maryam *et al.* (2016) discovered that in 13 public sector organizations in Malaysia's complex C, Putra Jaya, a statistically significant relationship exists between organizational learning and task performance. Daryoush *et al.* (2016) found that individuals who believe hardworking, reliable, and organized perform better than those who believe they lack these characteristics.

Hypothesis Development

H1: There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and task performance
According to Rani Gujar (2017), organizational learning will improve the quality, quantity, timeliness, and knowledge of work performed in an organization. Holton *et al.* (2007) also discovered that organizational learning could enhance task performance but learning to change behavior is highly variable. Even the relationship between organizational learning and task performance is widely accepted in organizations, according to Chughtai and Buckley (2011). Nonetheless, only a few research have investigated the effect of a particular variable on this relationship.

H2: There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and contextual performance

Jimenez and Vela (2011) stated that organizational learning positively impacts the organization and work performance. It is also supported by Lopez *et al.* (2005), who found the same finding, demonstrating a positive and strong correlation between organizational learning and performance. The employee should be ready to learn new things and solve problems to enhance their contextual performance. Thus, Organizational learning has a big impact on gaining a competitive edge for the company and, as a result, has a substantial impact on job performance. (Martin, 2016).

Methods*i. Research design*

The research design for this study is quantitative, where it investigates the link between organizational learning and work performance in Malaysia's airline industry. The target population is the employee working in AirAsia Berhad, Malaysia Airlines Berhad, Firefly, and Malindo Airlines.

ii. Sampling methods

Purposive sampling is used in this investigation. The researcher gathers the necessary data and then searches for others who are capable and ready to share their knowledge or experience. The benefits of this method include the ability to save time and money while gathering data. The sample size was determined using G*Power tools to be 194 employees.

iii. Survey Instrument

The data was gathered via a questionnaire. It is designed precisely to enable respondents to respond quickly to the questions. Data collection was accomplished using a questionnaire. It is specifically designed to allow respondents to respond quickly to questions. Each respondent will receive a questionnaire by hand. The questionnaire on organizational learning is adapted from DellaNeve's (2007) study, and the questionnaire on work performance is based on Borman and Motowidlo (1993). The survey questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to agree (5) strongly.

iv. Data Analysis Method

The data collected from Malaysia Airline Industry is loaded into SPSS version 26 for further analysis by coding the data. For descriptive and basic data, this study will employ two software programmes: SPSS version 26 and Excel. Path modeling using partial least squares (PLS) will create measurement and structural models to react to the conclusions. The following stage is to describe the data, and descriptive statistics will be utilized to do so. The appropriate process will be described in detail. Later the normality of the data will be measured and penned down accordingly. The correlation among latent variables will be tested using Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression analysis to check the relationship between variables.

Findings*i. Response rate*

The researcher distributed two hundred thirty questionnaires directly to Airlines Staff in Malaysia from May 2020 until December 25, 2020. This study's response rate is 85.65 % (n = 197). As a result, the total questionnaires analyzed were 194 from the sample size.

ii. Demographic profile

Table 4.1 below represents the respondent's demographic profile, and the overall total of the respondents is 194. The information includes job status, gender of respondents, age, education level, working experience, and job status. Again, descriptive statistics are used to present the respondents' profiles.

Table 1: Demographic profile

	Items	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent
Gender	Male	105	54.1	54.1
	Female	89	45.9	45.9
	Total	194	100	100
Age Range	25 and below	15	7.7	7.7
	26 – 35 years old	121	62.4	64.2
	36 – 45 years old	41	21.1	21.1
	46 – 55 years old	11	5.7	5.7
	56 and above	6	3.1	3.1
	Total	194	100	100
Education	SPM	50	25.8	25.8
	STPM/Diploma	83	42.3	42.3
	Bachelor Degree	46	23.7	23.7
	Master Degree	10	5.2	5.2
	Other	5	2.6	2.6
	Total	194	100	100
Working Experience	Less than one year	6	3.1	3.1
	2 – 5 years	118	60.8	60.8
	6 – 10 years	49	25.3	25.3
	11 – 20 years	6	3.1	3.1
	More than 20 years	15	7.7	7.7
	Total	194	100	100
Job Status	Full-time	155	79.9	79.9
	Part-time	11	5.7	5.7
	Contract	24	14.4	14.4
	Total	194	100	100

iii. Measurement Models

The measurement model should consider convergent validity, discriminant validity, and cross-loading item. The term "convergent validity" refers to the degree to which numerous variables are measured inside the same idea in a study. Hair et al. (2010) argue that factor loading, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) data are all required to conduct this convergent validity analysis. The result suggests that this study's composite reliability range is between 0.833 to 0.927. The extracted average variance (AVE) is between 0.525 to 0.716. According to the data, this is acceptable.

The degree of correlation between items related to distinct constructs was determined using discriminant validity. In discriminant validity, Items from the same construct will correlate more strongly than items from other constructions, which are not expected to correlate at all. (Adriana and Elena, 2011). The value denotes that discriminant validity has been established. For example, the latent variable of technology, the AVE, is 0.650; hence, the square root becomes 0.806. The square root of all latent variables ranges from 0.724 to 0.846.

Additionally, any sign of cross-loading, which occurs when an item has coefficients larger than 0.5 on multiple factors, is examined. Cross-loading is when something loads at .32 or higher on two or more variables (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Five items were deleted due to the item loading on its construct being lower than its cross-loadings.

iv. Hypotheses Testing

For H1, the result suggests that the relationship between organizational learning and task performance was significant with $\beta=0.696$, $t=9.857$, and $p<0.05$, indicating that organizational

learning directly influences task performance. Thus, H1 was supported. For H2, the result suggests that the relationship between organizational learning and contextual performance was significant with $\beta=0.776$, $t=11.902$, and $p<0.05$, indicating that organizational learning directly influences contextual performance. Thus, H2 was supported.

Table 2: Summary of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	SE	t-value	Decision
H1	Organizational Learning -> Task Performance	0.696	0.071	9.857	Supported
H2	Organizational Learning -> Contextual Performance	0.776	0.065	11.902	Supported

Discussion and Conclusion

The study investigates the relationship of organizational learning toward work performance among airport staff in the Malaysia Airline Industry. Organizational Learning consists of individual and team learning. At the same time, the work performance factor includes task performance and contextual performance.

H1: There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and task performance. For hypothesis 1, the study investigates the relationship between organizational learning and task performance. The result indicates that organizational learning has a significant relationship with task performance. The result was with $\beta=0.696$, $t=9.857$, and $p<0.05$, indicating that organizational learning significantly influences task performance in Malaysia's Airlines Industry. Thus, hypothesis 1 is supported.

The finding is supported by Rani Gujari (2017), who found that organizational learning will contribute to the work performed in an organization in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, and knowledge. Holton *et al.* (2007) also discovered that organizational learning could improve task performance but learning to change behavior is highly variable. Even in organizations, the link between organizational learning and task performance is well established., according to Chungtai and Buckley (2011).

Organizational learning by individual or group learning can improve how an employee performs their job. Employees can improve how they arrange their working schedule and reduce mistakes if they have learned new things and solved problems in the organization. They agreed that to remain competitive, organizations must strike a balance between efficiency and productivity and allow employees to adapt to problems and opportunities.

H2: There is a significant relationship between organizational learning and contextual performance.

For hypothesis 2, the study investigates the relationship between organizational learning and contextual performance. The result indicates that organizational learning has a significant relationship with contextual performance. The result was with $\beta=0.776$, $t=11.902$, and $p<0.05$, which indicates that organizational learning significantly influences contextual performance in the Airlines Industry of Malaysia. Thus, hypothesis 2 is supported.

It is supported by Lopez *et al.* (2005), who found the same finding, proving a substantial and positive link between organizational learning and contextual performance. The employee should be ready to learn new things and solve problems to enhance their contextual performance. According to Van Scotter, Motowidlo, and Cross (2000), employees engage in contextual performance when they assist others with tasks, communicate with their boss, or

offer methods to improve the company's operations. Individual efforts unrelated to their primary job function are important because they define the social and psychological backdrop of the organization, which serves as a crucial catalyst for task activities and processes. (Werner, 2003)

Organizational learning has a significant influence on obtaining a competitive edge for the company and, as a result, has a substantial impact on work performance (Martin, 2016). Thus, if the airline industry of Malaysia provides open space for new ideas and empowered employees, they will encourage situations where organizational learning will improve contextual performance. Employees should be willing to learn new skills and enhance their contextual performance. The employee is open to new experiences and can give suggestions and help another employee perform their task.

Theoretical Implications

The research contributes to our understanding of organizational behavior. Learning and work performance provide a better understanding of these variables' concepts. The continual change of the organization through the utilization of processes at the person, group, and system levels is what organizational learning, also known as deliberate learning, implies (Dixon, 1994). The study also provides a generalization of the findings by applying the findings to the airline industry. The study sample includes employees from MAB, AirAsia, Firefly, and Malindo Air. The study's research methodology can guide an academician to discover knowledge in similar areas, such as the Airlines Industry.

Practical and Social Implications

The study's findings will help organizations improve their ability to alter and learn to improve their performance. It will also assist the organization in better understanding organizational learning that should be implemented in the organization. The outcome will function as a baseline or concept for future learning strategies in organizations. Furthermore, the study may aid the airline industry in recognizing the importance of organizational change and learning, which will aid in management and performance improvement. Additionally, the study's findings suggest that organizational learning affects job performance. The findings indicate that organizational learning, which includes both individual and group learning, has a more significant impact on employee job performance in Malaysia Airlines. This result has implications for managers and supervisors in developing a sound strategy for their learning process and activities.

Suggestions for Future Research

The researcher would like to make recommendations to another researcher who wishes to conduct a similar study or continue this research. Future researchers may focus on a broader area, such as ASEAN or Asia. The worldwide organization will profit from expanding the scope of the study to improve their management process and job productivity. In addition, a future researcher could continue this investigation by using a new research methodology to improve the data and results' trustworthiness. A qualitative method or alternative sample procedures, such as probability sampling, may be used by the future researcher. In the future, the survey instrument can be improved by incorporating additional data sources.

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