

THE APPLICABILITY OF THE DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS IN PHILIPPINE UNIVERSITIES: THE CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERPETUAL HELP SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

This study explored on the seven (7) dimensions of learning organizations to Philippine universities and colleges and their applicability to the case of the University of Perpetual Help Systems DALTA Las Piñas campus. Anchoring on the model and theory advanced by Watkins and Marsick (1996, 1997, 2003), the study answered four (4) research questions which are: (1) What is the profile of respondents classified as managerial employees and faculty members grouped according to: (a) Position held; (b) Gender; (c) Length of service?; (2) To what extent do employees apply the seven (7) learning organization dimensions in the management of work-related responsibilities in both individual and team levels, as perceived by faculty members and managerial employees, in the dimensions of: (a) Continuous learning (b) Dialogue and Inquiry (c) Team learning and collaboration? (3) To what extent is UPHS operating as a learning organization University as perceived by its Managerial employees and Faculty in the dimensions of: (a) Embedded system; (b) Empowerment; (c) System connection (d) Strategic leadership?; and (4) What framework for learning organizational development can be designed and applied to UPHSD?

The Dimension of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DOLQ) was used as the instrument to gather data where participants were asked to rate twenty-one (21) perceived by them as never to almost always experienced or practiced with the organization at the individual, group/team or organizational levels. These statements described the seven (7) learning organization dimensions, namely: (1) continuous learning (2) Dialogue and Inquiry (3) Team learning and collaboration (4) Embedded Systems (5) Empowerment (6) Systems connection, and (7) Strategic leadership. Data gathered were analyzed and interpreted and results were used as basis for formulating a framework for learning organization applicable to UPHSD. Results revealed that participants' profile were substantial enough to be able to provide data needed to formulate a general perception of the practices of the University and that their responses are indicative of the status of the University as a learning organization. Based on the perceptions of participants, it showed that all of the learning organization dimensions are interpreted as often practiced or experienced by employees, in the individual, team or organizational levels.

The learning organization dimension in systems connection obtained the highest cluster mean ($\Sigma 4.46$) while the dimension in empowerment got the lowest mean of ($\Sigma 4.27$). This showed that empowerment at the organizational level are less felt, practiced or experienced by the employees although there is understanding of the overall environment, how the organization is linked to its communities and how people are helped to see the effect of their work on the entire organization. While the University's systems and procedures are in place, the data likewise indicated that there is less involvement across the organization on direction setting and implementing a shared vision that would result to high motivating factors to learn what employees are held accountable to do.

Based on the results, a framework for the development of a learning organization that could be made applicable to the case of UPHS was formulated anchoring on Garvin's (2003) theory and model. Five (5) imperatives are emphasized on the model which are (1) the application of systematic problem solving (2) experimentation with new approaches (3) learning from own experience and past history (4) learning from the experiences and best practices of others, and (5) transferring knowledge. This imperatives capture the essence of becoming a learning organization coupled with actions at the individual, team and organization that make their systems and procedures aligned and matched with continuous learning and improvement.

Keywords learning organization, university

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The world in the twenty-first century has consistently been described as fast-paced, dynamic, and characterized by turbulent change and aggressive competition attributable to advancements in technology and the shaping of the knowledge-based economy. Its current levels of change of any type in organizations and communities, becomes a compelling need for organizations of today to spare no effort in building and instilling a culture of learning organization. This calls for building a culture of creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights (Garvin, 1993, 2000). Song, et. al (2009) cited that absent a culture that supports learning in the organization, the efforts invested in individual learning and development would not produce the expected outcomes. Given this, organizations must strive to create an environment that yields high individual learning and development by encouraging a culture of organizational learning.

Learning organization has become an interesting area in the fields of human resource and organization development and its application is beginning to increase and has widely spread to varying degrees even in the school systems (Egan, Yang & Barlette, 2004). Its interest, has been considered as a source of organizational success and competitive advantage (Ellinger et al., 2002), anchored on the belief that learning better and faster and adapting to change, is critically important for organizations. The concept of the learning organization is explained as “one that learns continuously and transforms itself, considering that learning is a continuously, strategically used process, integrated with or in parallel to work. Its embedded systems capture and share learning to enhance organizational capacity for innovation and growth (Watkins and Carsick (1993). Learning organizations focus more on system approach regarding workplace applications and supportive environmental factors that promote persistent learning processes. Based on the concepts of Senge (1990) and Watkins & Marsick (1996), learning organizations can be commonly characterized by its organizational learning process being the key of the learning organization and that the bases of a successful learning organization include working together of people, human competencies and collective thinking. They further stressed that a learning organization is the systematic environment in which continuous learning could take place by way of connections with organizational components.

In the historical concepts of learning organizations, it was earlier believed that such concepts would be applicable only to business organizations.

However, education in the twenty-first century manifest that the outdated manner in which schools are operated is tied to a reality that no longer exists. Preparing students for the twenty-first century demands a shift towards schools being transformed into learning organizations in both structure and culture (Williams, et.al., 2012). Sillins, et.al. (2002) concluded that schools that are learning organizations are those that: employ processes of environmental scanning; develop shared goals; establish collaborative teaching and learning environments; encourage initiatives and risk taking; regularly review all aspects related to and influencing the work of the school; recognise and reinforce good work; and, provide opportunities for continuing professional development.

The Colleges and Universities of the Philippines currently face various challenges attributable to differentiated factors that call for change in probably all aspects such as culture, people, structure, systems and processes, and others. With the basic education reform in K to 12 and higher education reforms, school organizations are now up to the challenge of changing their directions where raising the bar and sustaining elevated quality in education become primordial concern. Quality and excellence however, requires a great amount of continuous learning for continuous improvement and such requirement must be embedded in the school system.

As the fast-paced changes are felt all over the world today, human learning in the twenty-first century has become different from human learning in the twentieth century. As articulated by Silins, Zarins and Mulford (2002, citing Deal, 1990), the scope and pace of change in the new millennium must be moved with it or ahead of it if only not to be left behind. Schools feel this tidal wave of change in ways that has left many educators - consciously or otherwise - confused, exhausted and disillusioned.

Thus, the need to explore and examine the practices of colleges and Universities in the Philippines as to whether they are moving with or ahead of the twenty-first century education, by becoming Learning Organizations, has become imperative. Watkins and Marsick (1993) suggested that the design of the Learning Organization requires six action imperatives. These are: (1) empowering people toward a collective vision, (2) promoting inquiry and dialogue, (3) encouraging collaboration and team learning, (4) creating continuous learning opportunities, (5) connecting the organization to the environment, and (6) establishing systems to capture and share learning. They further stated that these action imperatives are expected to occur at four different levels for an organization to have the capacity of continuous learning and change: individual (continuous learning and

dialogue and inquiry), team (collaboration and team learning), organization (empowerment and systems), and societal levels (connection to environment).

Based on these action imperatives, Watkins and Marsick (1997) developed and published the Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DOLQ) which was designed to measure seven (7) dimensions of the learning organization. The seven (7) dimensions included continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, empowerment, system to capture learning, system connection and leadership for learning. The questionnaire is based on the Learning Organization model advanced by Watkins and Marsick (1993,1996,1997) which applied a general systems theory that can operate in organizations, including school organizations.

Thus, using the DOLQ, this study examined the extent of applicability of the seven (7) Dimensions of Learning Organization to Universities, specifically the case of the University of Perpetual Help System, anchoring on the principles and model of learning organizations advanced by Marsick and Watkins (2002, 2003). As subject of the study, the University of Perpetual Help Systems (UPHS) is located in Las Piñas City, Philippines with other branches located in Molino, Cavity and Calamba City in Laguna. It subscribes to the institutional philosophy that national development and transformation is predicated upon the quality of education of its people. It is committed to the ideas of teaching, community service and research, with "Character Building is Nation Building" as its guiding principle. It is continuing in its efforts to achieve its objective of maintaining and sustaining excellence in education and has instituted an extensive network of national and international linkages in Higher Education and Business. The University positions itself to ensure high quality education to make students more competent and make their learning experiences enriching through their comprehensive curriculum(<http://perpetualdelta.edu.ph/history>).

Related Literature and Studies

Concepts of Learning Organizations

The concept of learning organizations emerged from the theoretical foundations advanced by Schon (1973) linking the experience of living in a situation of an increasing change with the need for learning. He mentioned that the loss of the stable state means that our society and all of its institutions are in continuous process of transformation and people must learn to understand, guide, influence and manage these transformations. This means that people, organizations

and societies must become adept at learning to enable them not only to transform the institutions in response to changing situations and requirements, but to also enable them to invent and develop institutions which are "learning systems." These systems must be those that are capable of bringing about their own continuing transformations which are "learning systems", that is to say, systems capable of bringing about their own continuing transformation. He suggests that the movement towards becoming learning systems and how these systems could be enhanced is one of necessity (Schon, 1973).

This theory was further developed with Argyris, C., & Schön, D. (1978, 1996) stressing further that many companies no longer have a stable base in the systems built around them or in the technologies of particular products. They developed a number of more important concepts with regard to organizational learning focusing their interest of the significance of feedback and single-loop and double-loop learning.

Various leading theorists in learning organizations have defined and described the concepts of learning organizations in various literature and studies but with certain commonalities. Gavin (1993) defined a learning organization as an organization that is skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. He further stressed that organizations that do pass the definitional test become adept at translating new knowledge into new ways of behaving. These companies actively manage the learning process to ensure that it occurs by design rather than by chance. Distinctive policies and practices are responsible for their success; they form the building blocks of learning organizations. He stressed that learning organizations are skilled at five main activities: systematic problem solving, experimentation with new approaches, learning from their own experience and past history, learning from the experiences and best practices of others, and transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently throughout the organization.

Watkins and Marsick (1997) summarized that learning organizations are characterized by total employee involvement in a process of collaboratively conducted, collectively accountable change directed towards shared values or principles.

Pedler and Boydell (1995), on the other hand, defines a learning organization as an organization which facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself.

Dimensions of Learning Organizations

Watkins and Marsick (1997) in their learning organizations model described seven (7) dimensions of

learning organizations. These are: (1) Continuous learning (Opportunities for ongoing education and growth are provided; learning is designed into work so that people can learn on the job); (2) Inquiry and dialogue (the organizational culture supports questioning, feedback, and experimentation; people gain productive reasoning skills to express their views and the capacity to listen and inquire into the views of others); (3) Team learning (Work is designed to use teams to access different modes of thinking; collaboration is valued by the culture and rewarded; teams are expected to learn by working together); (4) Embedded system (Necessary systems to share learning are created, maintained, and integrated with work; employees have access to these high- and low-technology systems); (5) Empowerment (People are involved in setting and implementing a shared vision; responsibility is distributed so that people are motivated to learn what they are held accountable to do); (6) System connection (The organization is linked to its communities; people understand the overall environment and use information to adjust work practices; people are helped to see the effect of their work on the entire organization); and (7) Strategic leadership (Leadership uses learning strategically for business results; leaders model, champion, and support learning).

Hague (2008) conducted an empirical study on the relationship between the learning organization and organizational readiness for change using the seven constructs of learning organization based on the model of Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996), namely: create continuous learning opportunities, promote inquiry and dialogue, encourage collaboration and team learning, create systems to capture and share learning, empower people toward a collective vision, connect the organization to its environment, and provide strategic leadership for learning. Organizational readiness for change was identified on the basis of employees' perceptions of their organizations readiness for change by utilizing the attitudes toward change concept by Dunham, Grube, Gardner, Cummings and Pierce (1989). The research site chosen for the study is a service-oriented, for profit organization located in Southern California with a total of 93 participants in the study.

Using the Dimensions of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DOLQ), the results of the study of Hague (2008) showed that the participants' highest perceived level of the action imperative for the learning organization was providing leadership, whereas system connection was the lowest. The results also suggested that the participants' level of each of the seven action imperatives of the learning organization were positively and significantly related to their perceptions of organizational readiness for change. There were no

statistically significant differences found between the participants' perceived effects of the learning organization and their demographic characteristics.

Schools as Learning Organizations

Williams, et al. (2012) conducted a study among 50 schools analyzing the strengths and barriers identified in becoming a professional learning community. They based their theoretical foundations on literatures that emphasise that the organizations of the future will be networks driven by individual and collaborative learning - learning organizations that continually re-invent themselves. Thus, they based their purpose of the study with the professional learning community approach (PLC) to transform schools into learning organizations. They identified attributes in the PLC approach as: (a) supportive and shared leadership, (b) collective creativity (c) shared values and vision (d) supportive conditions (e) shared personal practice (f) Continuous inquiry focused on the improvement of student learning, (g) teachers who share norms and values and engage in reflective dialogue (h) identification of essential curriculum (i) use of common formative assessments, and (j) systemic interventions.

Using four (4) constructs on leadership, culture, teaching, and professional growth and development, with a total of 20-item questionnaire, the results of the study showed that leadership and culture were the key concerns rather than strengths. It likewise particularly showed that leadership and culture would pose as barriers in transforming schools into becoming learning organizations.

Erdem and Ucar (2013) conducted a study to determine the degree of correlation between the learning organization and organizational commitment based on perceptions of primary school teachers. It was found out that there was a significant relationship between organizational commitment dimensions and the dimensions of learning organization perception scale. These dimensions were shared vision, team learning and personal mastery.

Nazari and Pihie (2012) likewise assessed the learning organization dimensions and demographics in Technical Vocational Colleges in Iran. Using the DLOQ, the results of the study revealed that collaboration, embedded system, empowerment and system connection were rated moderate giving the conclusions that these dimensions can be improved. Dialogue and inquiry yielded the highest mean scores which pointed to both the individual and organizational levels. It concluded that technical-vocational colleges are successful in creating and developing the dimension reflecting an

organization's efforts in creating a culture of questioning, feedback and experimentation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework of learning organization as espoused by Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996, 1997, 2003) served as the theoretical foundation for this current study. Redding (1997) reviewed several assessment tools of learning organizations and suggested that the framework created by Watkins and Marsick (1996) was among the few that covered all learning levels (individual, team and organizational) and system areas. The concepts on learning organizations as espoused likewise by Senge (1990) and Garvin (1993, 2003) were adapted and referred to as supporting concepts to design the framework.

The theoretical framework of Watkins and Marsick (1996, 1997) shows several distinctive characteristics, to wit: (1) it has a clear and inclusive definition of the construct of the learning organization, (2) it includes dimensions of a learning organization at all levels, (3) the model not only identifies main dimensions of the learning organization in the literature but also integrates them in a theoretical framework by specifying their relationships, and (4) it defines the proposed seven dimensions of a learning organization from the perspective of action imperatives and thus has practical implications.

According to Watkins and Marsick (1997, 1999), a learning organization is one that learns continuously and transforms itself. Learning is a continuous, strategically used process — integrated with and running parallel to work. Its hallmark is in the emphasis on building and utilizing collective and continued knowledge of individuals to create and improve quality and performance within organizations. Fritz (1999) supported this in saying that this continued knowledge is believed to help individuals to understand reality, objectively analyze how organizational structures create or contribute to patterns of behavior that limit growth, and discover root of problems and help in identifying solutions to recreate more effective systems and supporting structures.

Marsick and Watkins (2003) further emphasized that if an organization is to become globally competitive, good foundations in structures presented in a learning organization may prove to be important keys to success. They stated that a culture oriented towards supporting learning can lead to improved performance and that learning in the learning organization is highly social and individuals help other individuals learn (Watkins and Marsick, 1993). The theory is based on informal and incidental learning at the individual level which explains

how people shape their climate and culture of learning. The process builds from the individual to the group or teams and from the group to the organization and eventually, external of the organization. Figure 1 illustrates this theory.

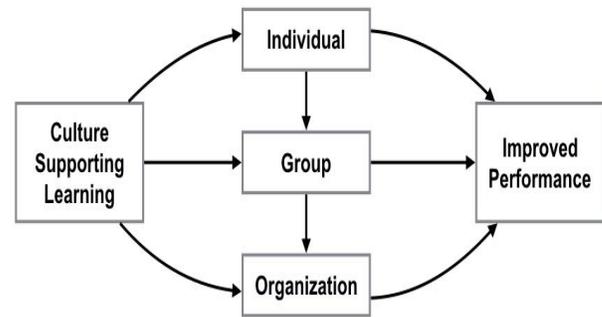


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Based on these interactions, Marsick and Watkins (2003) designed a model of learning organization defining seven action imperatives. Table 1 shows this model.

Table 1. Descriptors of Action Imperatives, Learning Organization Model (Marsick and Watkins (2003)

Action Imperative	Definition
Create continuous learning imperatives	Learning is designed into work so that people can learn on the job; opportunities are provided for ongoing education and growth
Promote inquiry and dialogue	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 collaborative and team learning	Work is designed to use groups to access different modes of thinking; groups are expected to learn together and to 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 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

Table 1. Descriptors of Action Imperatives, Learning Organization Model (Marsick and Watkins (2003))

Action Imperative	Definition
Provide strategic leadership for learning	Leaders model, champion, and support learning; leadership uses learning strategically for business results

Illustrating the relationships of the seven (7) dimensions to improved organizational performance leading to success, Figure 02 presents the theoretical framework based on Watkins and Marsick’s model.

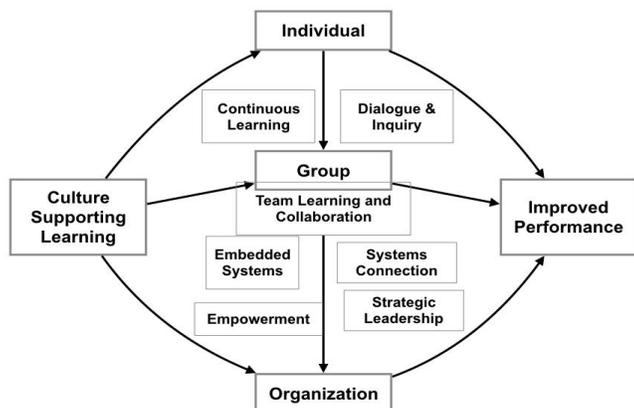


Figure 02. Theoretical Framework

Senge (1990), on the other hand, states that the dimension that distinguishes learning from more traditional organizations is the mastery of certain basic disciplines or ‘component technologies’. He emphasized that the systemic thinking approach is the conceptual cornerstone for learning organizations. He states that the system’s theory of comprehending and addressing whole and examining the interrelationship between the parts provided are the means to integrate five (5) disciplines for learning organizations. These five (5) disciplines are: (1) systems thinking, (2) personal mastery, (3) team learning, (4) mental models, and (5) shared vision.

Systems thinking involves a way of thinking about, and a language for describing and understanding forces and interrelationships that shape the behaviour of systems. This discipline helps managers and employees alike to see how to change systems more effectively, and to act more in tune with the larger processes of the natural and economic world. In personal mastery, individuals learn to expand their own personal capacity to create results that they most desire. Employees also create an organisational environment that encourages all fellow employees to develop themselves toward the goals and purposes that they desire.

Mental models on the other hand, involves each individual reflecting upon, continually clarifying, and

improving his or her internal pictures of the world, and seeing how they shape personal actions and decisions. In shared vision, individuals build a sense of commitment within particular workgroups, developing shared images of common and desirable futures, and the principles and guiding practices to support the journey to such futures. Team Learning involves relevant thinking skills that enable groups of people to develop intelligence and an ability that is greater than the sum of individual members’ talents.

Conceptual Framework

Anchoring on the model of Watkins and Marsick (1997, 1999) and Marsick and Watkins (2003), this research explored the variables of learning organization as applicable to the University of Perpetual Help Systems, through the perceptions of its faculty and managerial employees. Figure 03 below shows the conceptual framework of the study.

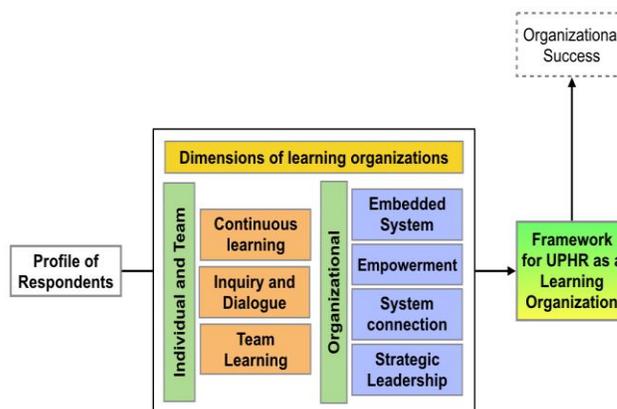


Figure 03. Conceptual Framework

Based on the seven (7) dimensions, the dimensions of continuous learning, inquiry and dialogue, and team learning are those that pertain to individual and team/group levels. In the individual level, continuous learning involved how employees help each other to learn, giving time to support learning and rewarding employees for learning. Dialogue and inquiry involved open and honest feedback, seeking views from others and what others think of their respective views, and spending time to build trust with each other.

Team learning and collaboration involved the freedom to adapt individual goals as needed, the ability to revise thinking as a result of group discussions or information needed, and the confidence that the organization will act on their recommendations.

The dimensions of embedded system, empowerment, system connection, and strategic leadership are those that pertain to the organizational level. Embedded system refers to where the organization creates systems to measure gaps between

current and expected performance, makes lessons learned available to all employees, and where it measures the results of the time and resources spent on training.

The empowerment dimension is manifested in organization actions of recognizing people for taking initiatives, giving control over the resources they need to accomplish the work, and supporting employees for taking calculated risks.

Systems connection is shown where the organization encourages employees to think from a global perspective, works together with the outside community to meet mutual needs, and encourages people to get answers from across organizations when solving problems.

The strategic leadership dimension referred to where the organizational leaders mentor and coach those that they lead, continually look for opportunities to learn, and ensures that the organization's actions are consistent with its values.

Statement of the Problem

As colleges and universities face developmental changes to meet the demands of the twenty-first century, there is a need to explore specifically the extent of capabilities of the University of Perpetual Help Systems (UPHS) to transform itself into a Learning Organization as perceived by its managerial employees and faculty members, based on the principles and model advanced by Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996, 1997) and Marsick and Watkins (1999, 2003).

Specifically, the study answered the following questions:

1. What is the profile of respondents classified as managerial employees and faculty members grouped according to:
 - a) Position held
 - b) Gender
 - c) Length of service
2. To what extent do employees apply the seven (7) learning organization dimensions in the management of work-related responsibilities in both individual and team levels, as perceived by faculty members and managerial employees, in the dimensions of:
 - a) Continuous learning
 - b) Dialogue and Inquiry
 - c) Team learning?
3. To what extent is UPHR operating as a learning organization University as perceived by its Managerial employees and Faculty in the dimensions of:
 - a) Embedded system

- b) Empowerment
 - c) System connection
 - d) Strategic leadership?
4. What framework for learning organizational development can be designed and applied to University of Perpetual Help Systems?

Significance of the Study

The study will bear significance to the University of Perpetual Help Systems particularly in its organizational development and human resource development in the following areas:

The study can contribute theoretical and empirical contributions to the body of knowledge particularly on learning organizations in Philippine schools as it prepares the University administration and management with useful information in the implementation of educational programs. The data can also help the leaders be aware of the current organizational situation in order to improve their respective colleges.

The study likewise contributes to improved understanding of the learning organization theory and may be useful for other researchers to explore relevant areas of the field applicable to education.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study made use of the descriptive research as it described data existing at the time of the study and attempted to find out the perceptions of respondents towards the subject at hand and the current state of the University of Perpetual Help Systems as a learning organization. Through the use of a validated questionnaire, the DOLQ, in the collection of data, results were analyzed and interpreted for further use. It likewise utilized the elements of a quantitative research as it involved collections of quantitative information that were tabulated along a continuum in numerical form, representing degree of applicability among categories of information (Borg & Gall, 1989) and made use of numeric description of perceptions or opinions of a designated population by looking into a sample of that population.

This study likewise is an exploratory research as it examined different variables that led to the formulation of an appropriate framework for a learning organization for the University. It is of quantitative design as it would make use of numeric description of perceptions or opinions of a designated population by looking into a sample of that population.

Sampling Design

The simple random sampling was used in the study obtaining a sample size of 100 respondents. A total of 42 or forty-two per cent (42%) were taken as samples for the faculty category while 21 or 21 percent (21%) represented the managerial employees category.

Research Instrument

The research instrument consists of two (2) parts. Part I of the Questionnaire referred to the individual profile of respondents that derived data and information on the respective respondent's position in the University, gender, and length of service.

Part II of the Questionnaire, the "Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DOLQ) designed by Carsick and Watkins (2003) was adapted. The instrument consisted of twenty-one (21) items intended to elicit data and information on the extent of the application of the dimensions of a Learning Organization in the management of the work-related responsibilities of chosen participants. The instrument likewise was intended to reveal the extent to which the University is operating as a Learning Organization, as perceived by respondents. The results of the Questionnaire were made as basis in formulating a Learning Organization framework best suited and applicable to the University.

In the same questionnaire, respondents were made to rate each item in a continuum of 1-6, to indicate the frequency of the practice or experience, where 1 indicated that the item statement is almost never practiced or experienced and where 6 indicated that the item statement is almost always practiced or experienced, specified as follows:

1 (.01-1.00)	-	Never
2 (1.01-2.00)	-	Almost Never
3 (2.01-3.00)	-	Rarely
4 (3.01-4.00)	-	Sometimes
5 (4.01-5.00)	-	Often
6 (5.01-6.00)	-	Almost Always

To interpret the degree of application of the action imperatives within the seven learning organization dimensions, the values were assigned the following interpretative equivalents, to wit:

1 (Never to Almost Never)-	Very low
2 - 3 (Rarely) -	Low
4 - 5 (Sometimes - Often)-	Moderate
6 (Almost Always)-	High

Validation and Reliability of Instrument

The Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire has become a standard instrument and has been subjected to construct validation in different contexts and in different research locale. Various researches show evidence that the research instrument is valid and reliable in many organizations (Song, J., et. al, 2009) in terms of construct validity. However, the instrument was still subjected to content validity, in terms of whether the statements can be fairly understood according to the use and meaning in the English language based on its clarity and concise construction.

Three (3) content validators who are experts in the field of research instrumentation, learning organization and development management were tapped to purposely go through the instrument and provide comments and suggestions as to applicability of the content and language of the instrument within the Philippine education setting. Two (2) of the validators are professors in Graduate Education from a private University while the other one (1) is a development management practitioner and expert in Learning Organizations from a public University.

The Respondents

The respondents of the study are the faculty and employees of the University of Perpetual Help System who come from both the College and Basic Education departments. Respondents were categorized as: (1) managerial employees or those occupying administrative or supervisory positions such as Principals, Director, College Dean, and others, and (2) faculty members or those who are assigned with the functions of teaching or facilitators of learning.

Statistical Tools

The calculation tools of frequency, percentage and mean were used to determine the needed data for the study. The frequency was used to determine the number of respondents who provided the answers to the items such as in the demographics of the participants. The percentage was used to determine the proportion of respondents who answered the items in the same manner while the mean was used to determine the average number or the average score for each item based on the population.

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of results, based on the data gathered from the questionnaires.

Research Question No. 1: What is the profile of respondents classified as managerial employees and faculty members when grouped according to: (a) Position held, (b) Gender, and (c) Length of service?

Results revealed that of the 100 respondent-participants, forty-two (42) or 42 per cent (42%) were categorized as managerial employees while 58 participants or fifty-eight per cent (58%) were faculty members. Of the 42 participants who are categorized as managerial employees, twenty-one (21) of them or fifty (50%) per cent are Coordinators while one (1) holds the position of Principal and another one (1) as Department Chair, comprising 2.38 per cent of the distribution, respectively.

Table 2. Distribution of Categories of Respondents

Category	f	%
Managerial Employees	42	42.00%
Faculty Members	58	58.00%
Total	100	100.00%

Table 3. Distribution of Participants (Managerial Employees) as to Positions Held

Position Held	f	%
Director/Manager	8	19.05
College Dean	6	14.29
Department Chair	1	2.38
Department Head	5	11.90
School Principal	1	2.38
Coordinator	21	50.00
Total	42	100.00%

Table 4. Distribution of Participants (Faculty Members) as to Positions Held

Position Held	f	%
Faculty Member, College	48	82.76
Faculty Member, Basic Educ.	10	17.24
Total	58	100.00%

For the faculty member category, forty-eight (48) of the respondents are faculty members of the College while 10 or 17.24% are faculty members of the Basic Education.

Table 5. Distribution of Participants as to Gender

Gender	f	%
Male	55	55.00
Female	45	45.00
Total	100	100

As to the gender of the participants, it was recorded that a total of fifty-five (55) or 55 per cent of the respondents are male while 45 of them or 45% are female. For the length of service, the categories were divided as: 0-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years and more than 20 years. Results showed that 42 of the respondents or 42 per cent are employed with UPHS from 0-5 years while 18 of them or 18 per cent have been with the University for more than 20 years now. Tables 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, present these distributions.

Table 6. Distribution of Participants as to Length of Service

Length of Service	f	%
0-5 years	42	42.00
6-10 years	15	15.00
11-15 years	18	18.00
16-20 years	7	7.00
more than 20 years	18	18.00
Total	100	100.00

In summary, it could be seen that participants are almost equal in the distribution of those exercising managerial functions and those who are exercising the functions of classroom instruction. The same pattern of distribution (55m-45f) can also be seen in the gender distribution. Participants are relatively young in job experience with the University showing a total of 57% within the 10 years and below bracket and a total of 43% in the 10 years and above bracket.

Research Question No. 2: To what extent do employees apply the seven (7) learning organization dimensions in the management of work-related responsibilities in both individual and team levels, as perceived by faculty members and managerial employees, in the dimensions of:

- a) Continuous learning
- b) Dialogue and Inquiry
- c) Team learning?

The learning organization dimensions of “continuous learning” and “inquiry and dialogue” pertain to the individual level, consisting of three (3) item statements each. Participants were asked to rate

each item in a continuum of 1-6 where 1 (.01-1.00; 5.01-6.00) is interpreted as “Never” and 6 as “Almost Always.” The values of 2 - 5 (1.01-2.00; 2.01-3.00; 3.01-4.00, 4.01-5.00) were verbally interpreted as “Almost Never,” “Rarely,” “Sometimes,” and “Often,” respectively. Table 7 shows the distribution of mean scores for the dimension in “Continuous Learning” at the individual level. It can be shown that none of the 3 statements within this dimension got a mean score higher than 5.00 (5.01-6.00) or almost always. The item statement on “people helping each other to learn” ranked highest for this dimension and got a mean score of 4.72 or Often while the item statement that indicates that “people are rewarded for learning” got a mean score of 4.21 or Often, ranking third in the cluster.

In learning dimensions 1 (continuous learning), people in the University, in many occasions or oftentimes, have experienced helping each other or being helped by others, and have felt or experienced that there is time provided to support their learning. It can be seen though that there is a slight decrease in the mean score when it comes to rewarding people for their learning. This can be seen in practice where people are awarded incentives or merit pays for continuous learning or professional development or in the upgrading of competencies. Overall, the results show that the action imperatives for the continuous learning dimension are moderately applied in the University.

Table 7. Distribution of Mean Scores for Continuous Learning Dimension (Individual Level)

Dimension	#	Item Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
LO Dimension 1: Continuous Learning	1	In my organization, people help each other to learn.	4.72	Often	Moderate	1
	2	In my organization people are given time to support learning.	4.24	Often	Moderate	2
	3	In my organization, people are rewarded for learning.	4.21	Often	Moderate	3
		Continuous Learning Cluster Mean	4.39	Often	Moderate	

Table 8 on the other hand, presents the distribution of mean scores for the learning organization dimension of Dialogue and Inquiry pertaining to the individual level.

Table 8. Distribution of Mean Scores for Dialogue and Inquiry LO Dimension (Individual Level)

Dimension	#	Item Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
LO Dimension 2: Dialogue and Inquiry	4	In my organization, people give open and honest feedback to each other.	4.27	Often	Moderate	3
	5	In my organization, whenever people state their view, they also ask what others think.	4.37	Often	Moderate	2
	6	In my organization, people spend time building trust with each other.	4.42	Often	Moderate	1
		Dialogue and Inquiry Cluster Mean	4.35	Often	Moderate	

The data shows that the item statement indicating that “people spend time building trust with each other” obtained a mean score of 4.42, ranking first in the cluster while the item statement stating that “people give open and honest feedback to each other,” ranked third in this dimension, having a mean score of 4.37. Within this dimension, it can be safely said that expressing one’s views and asking the views of others in the organization are oftentimes experienced and practiced. Spending time to build trust obtained a higher mean score of 4.42 compared to experiencing “giving open and honest feedback to each other,” although obtaining the same verbal rating of “oftentimes.” The cluster mean can be interpreted that the action imperatives for this learning organization dimension are moderate in application which further means that there is a need to still work on open and honest feedback-giving within the organization. This can easily be traced at the University’s monitoring and evaluation systems as well as looking into policies on evaluation that are already in place. While the data for the “dialogue and inquiry” dimension are indicative that the University in one way or the other, supports a culture of questioning, feedback and experimentation that allows people within to gain productive reasoning skills to express their views and enhance their capacities to listen and inquire into the views (Watkins and Marsick, 1996), the cluster mean of 4.35 suggests bigger rooms for improvement for the University to be a representative of a learning organization.

The learning dimension for “Team Learning and Collaboration” is a dimension that pertains to the group or team level in the organization. Three (3) item

statements for this cluster were rated by the participants as oftentimes practiced or experienced by them. The item indicating that groups have freedom to adapt their goals as needed ranked first in this cluster obtaining a mean score of 4.44 while the items stating about their confidence that the organization will act on their recommendations obtained a mean score of 4.30. Table 8 below reveals the distribution of mean scores for “Team learning and collaboration.”

Table 9. Distribution of Mean Scores for Team Learning and Collaboration (Team Level)

Dimension	#	Item Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
LO Dimension 3: Team Learning and Collaboration	7	In my organization, teams/groups have the freedom to adapt their goals as needed.	4.44	Often	Moderate	1
	8	In my organization, teams/groups revise their thinking as a result of group discussions or information collected.	4.39	Often	Moderate	2
	9	In my organization, teams/groups are confident that the organization will act on their recommendations.	4.30	Often	Moderate	3
		Team Learning and Collaboration Cluster Mean	4.38	Often	Moderate	

The data points out that the participants’ work in the University are designed to use groups or teams to access different modes of thinking and that collaboration is valued by the culture. It likewise suggests that “working together” is part of the culture, although having obtained only a mean score of 4.38 for the cluster mean, which can be said as being moderately applied by the employees. This again amplifies that there is still room for improvement to become a learning organization.

Research Question No. 3: To what extent is UPHR operating as a learning organization University as perceived by its Managerial employees and Faculty in the dimensions of: (a) Embedded system, (b) Empowerment (c) System connection and (d) Strategic leadership?

The dimensions of embedded system, empowerment, system connection, and strategic leaders all pertain at the organizational level based on Watkins and Marsick’s model (1996, 1997). Table 10 presents the distribution of mean scores for the dimension in “embedded systems.” Three (3) item statements were included as indicative of the practices within this dimension. As revealed in this Table, the item statement stating that lessons learned within the organization are made available to all employees obtained a mean score of 4.40 or often, while the item referring to creating systems to measure gaps between current and expected performance was ranked third or last in the cluster with a mean score of 4.25.

Table 10. Distribution of Mean Scores for Embedded Systems (Organization Level)

Dimension	#	Item Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
LO Dimension 4: Embedded Systems	10	My organization creates systems to measure gaps between current and expected performance.	4.25	Often	Moderate	3
	11	My organization makes its lessons learned available to all employees.	4.40	Often	Moderate	1
	12	My organization measures the results of the time and resources spent on training.	4.35	Often	Moderate	2
		Embedded Systems Mean	4.33	Often	Moderate	

The cluster within the embedded systems dimension obtained a cluster mean of 4.33 suggesting that the statements within the dimension are only often experienced or practiced by University employees and more efforts need to be done in order that it can fully develop as a learning organization. Its degree of applicability is placed only in moderate level. It is worthwhile to focus on necessary systems that create and maintain shared learning integrated with work and that all employees have access to high and low technology systems.

The fifth learning dimension of Empowerment yielded a cluster mean of 4.27 with the statement referring to “people having control of the resources needed to accomplish work,” being ranked first. This obtained a mean of 4.35 suggesting that this particular

action is oftentimes experienced by employees. On the other hand, the statement referring to “support given to employees who take calculated risks” obtained a mean score of 4.22 and was ranked third in the cluster by respondents. Table 11 below shows the distribution for the Learning dimension in Empowerment.

Table 11. Distribution of Mean Scores for Empowerment (Organization Level)

Dimension	#	Item Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
LO Dimension 5: Empowerment	13	My organization recognizes people for taking initiatives	4.23	Often	Moderate	2
	14	My organization gives people control over the resources they need to accomplish their work.	4.35	Often	Moderate	1
	15	My organization supports employees who take calculated risks.	4.22	Often	Moderate	3
		Empowerment Mean	4.27	Often	Moderate	

The empowerment dimension describes that environment where people are involved in setting and implementing a shared vision and where responsibility is distributed so that people are motivated to learn what they are held accountable to do (Watkins and Marsick, 1996, 1997). The cluster mean of 4.27 obtained for this learning dimension suggests a moderate application hence, there is still a need for all University employees to be involved in implementing a shared vision and to be motivated to learn based on their accountabilities.

Table 12 presents the distribution for the learning dimension of Systems Connection. The data reveals that the item statement referring to where “people are encouraged to think from a global perspective,” got a mean score of 4.60 ranking first among the statements within the cluster. In comparison, the item statement referring to “people being encouraged to get answers from across the organization to solve problems,” obtained a lower mean score of 4.28 and

was ranked third among the statements in the cluster. Overall, the sixth learning dimension on systems connection got a cluster mean score of 4.46 suggesting that this dimension is oftentimes experienced or practiced while its degree of applicability can only be at a moderate level thus, still has a long way to go for the University to become a learning organization.

Table 12. Distribution of Mean Scores for Systems Connection (Organization Level)

Dimension	#	Item Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
LO Dimension 6: Systems Connection	16	My organization encourages people to think from a global perspective.	4.60	Often	Moderate	1
	17	My organization works together with the outside community to meet mutual needs.	4.51	Often	Moderate	2
	18	My organization encourages people to get answers from across the organization when solving problems.	4.28	Often	Moderate	3
		Systems Connection Mean	4.46	Often	Moderate	

As described by the model of Watkins and Marsick (1996,1997), systems connection is linked to its communities and generate a culture where people understand the overall environment. There is systems connection when people in the organization use information to adjust work practices and are helped to see the effect of their work on the entire organization. This is also what Senge (1990) emphasized that “systems thinking” is the conceptual cornerstone of learning organizations and that as a discipline, it integrates the other disciplines into a coherent body of theory and practiced. It speaks of the ability to address the whole and to examine the interrelationship between the parts, allowing people to look beyond the immediate context and appreciate impact of their actions upon others.

The seventh and last learning organization dimension is Strategic Leadership. This is described as that dimension where leadership in the organization uses learning strategically for business results and creates and develops an environment where leaders model,

champion and support learning. Table 13 below shows the data revealed from the participants. As it could be noted, the statement referring to “leaders continually look for opportunities to learn,” got a mean score of 4.61, ranking first among the statements within the cluster. The statement referring to “leaders mentor and coach those they lead,” obtained a mean score of 4.36 ranking third among the statements of the same cluster.

Table 13. Distribution of Mean Scores for Strategic Leadership (Organization Level)

Dimension	#	Item Statement	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
LO Dimension 7: Strategic Leadership	19	In my organization, leaders mentor and coach those they lead.	4.36	Often	Moderate	3
	20	In my organization, leaders continually look for opportunities to learn.	4.61	Often	Moderate	1
	21	In my organization, leaders ensure that the organization’s actions are consistent with its values.	4.48	Often	Moderate	2
	Strategic Leadership Cluster Mean		4.38	Often	Moderate	

The same Table reveals that the cluster mean for strategic leadership learning dimension was computed at 4.38 which is interpreted as often experienced or practiced by University employees with a degree of applicability at a moderate level. This means that a culture of mentoring and coaching employees as well as placing organization’s actions as consistent with the organizational values still need to be worked into within the University.

The summarized data for the seven (7) learning dimensions is revealed in Table 13 below.

Table 13. Summary Distribution of Mean Scores for the 7 LO Dimensions

#	Learning Organization Dimension	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
1	Continuous Learning	4.39	Often	Moderate	2
2	Dialogue and Inquiry	4.35	Often	Moderate	5
3	Team Learning and Collaboration	4.38	Often	Moderate	3.5

Table 13. Summary Distribution of Mean Scores for the 7 LO Dimensions

#	Learning Organization Dimension	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Degree of Application	Rank
4	Embedded Systems	4.33	Often	Moderate	6
5	Empowerment	4.27	Often	Moderate	7
6	Systems Connection	4.46	Often	Moderate	1
7	Strategic Leadership	4.38	Often	Moderate	3.5

When ranked according to each dimension’s perceived weight and importance in the organization, it would appear that “Systems connection” ($\Sigma = 4.46$), ranked first having higher weight than all the other dimensions. The dimension of “Empowerment” ($\Sigma = 4.27$) on the other hand registered the lowest weight of importance although yielding the same verbal interpretation of “often” practiced or experienced by employees. It is also worthy to note that the dimensions of “team learning and collaboration” and “strategic leadership” both the same cluster mean /weight ($\Sigma = 4.38$), ranking 3.5 among the seven (7) dimensions. All of the seven (7) dimensions were interpreted to mean as having a moderate level of application and still way below the “high” degree of application to indicate full characteristics and qualities of a learning organization.

The results are slightly in contrast with the results of the study of Hague (2008) where the highest perceived levels of the action imperative was on providing leadership, while system connection was ranked the lowest. On the other hand, the results of this study conformed with the results of the study of Williams et. al (2012), that leadership was a key concern and would pose as barriers in transforming schools into becoming learning organizations. It likewise matched the results of the study of Nazari and Pihie (2012) where the team learning and collaboration, embedded systems, empowerment and system connection were rated as moderately applied.

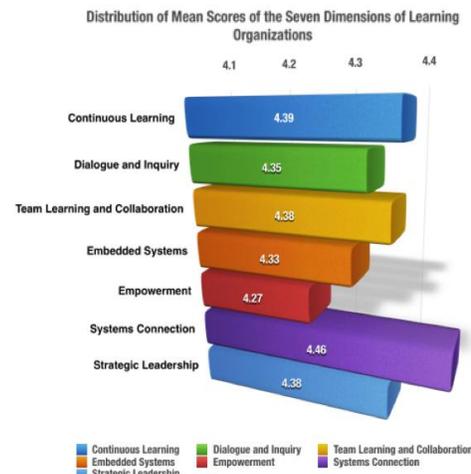


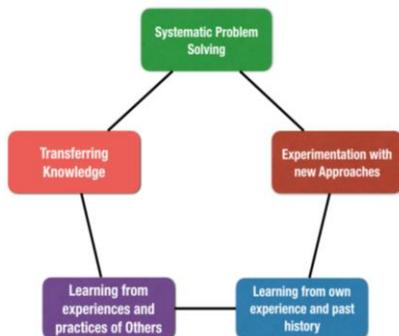
Figure 04. Distribution of Mean Scores of the Seven

Looking closely at the weights of importance of the seven (7) dimensions as shown in Figure 04, the figures indicated in the column bars likewise indicate to what extent efforts would be needed for the University to become a learning organization. It likewise shows that certain practices described of learning organizations are already present or in place at the subject University. This shows strong indication that indeed, the principles and theories of learning organizations as advanced by Watkins and Marsick, (1996), Marsick and Watkins (2003), Williams, et.al. (2012), Silins, H., Zarins, S., & Mulford, B. (1998), Senge (1990) are applicable to Universities and colleges, in general, and to the University of Perpetual Help Systems, in particular. The results likewise strongly indicate that all of the action imperatives as described in the 7 dimensions need to be worked out in order that it becomes integrated into the culture of the University. This further indicates that based on these results, a framework for development as a learning organization can be applied for the University of Perpetual Help Systems.

Research Question No 4: What framework for learning organization development can be designed and applied to University of Perpetual Help Systems (UPHS)?

The development of learning organizations in the context of UPHS can spring from Garvin's (1993, 2003) definition that a learning organization is one that is skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. While new ideas are essential if learning is to take place, they cannot by themselves create a learning organization. These new ideas, however can trigger for potential organizational improvement that require accompanying changes in the way that the work gets done.

Based on this basic theory, five (5) main activities that support the skills of learning organization advanced by Garvin (2003), can be made applicable for the subject University. These are: (1) systematic problem solving (2) experimentation with new approaches (3) learning from own experience and past history (4) learning from the experiences and best practices of others, and (5) transferring knowledge.



Each of these activities is accompanied by a distinctive mind-set, tool kit, and pattern of behavior. In addition to this, it is necessary that systems and processes are created to support these activities in such a manner that they can be integration into the fabric of the daily operations of the University. Taken in whole, the five (5) main activities can serve as the building blocks towards working, developing and becoming a Learning Organization. Within this context, and in consideration of policies and practices, the University can actively manage the learning processes to ensure that they occur by design rather than by chance and guesswork.

Figure 06 illustrates the visual presentation of this framework followed by a narrative and discussion of its description for a better understanding.

Systematic problem solving is founded on the philosophies of quality and excellence in education and is driven by scientific methods (such as the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle) rather than guesswork. To heighten a culture of learning within the organization, the University can deepen the active skills on problem solving with all its employees (managerial and faculty alike) focusing on techniques and practical experiences. The mind-set for problem solving at all levels requires discipline among employees in their thinking and being attentive to details. Interventions such as trainings on problem solving skills, both at individual and team levels, can be stepped up but should also focus on the skills of pushing beyond obvious symptoms to assess underlying causes and collecting evidences to support claims.

Experimentation activity involves the systematic searching for and testing of new knowledge using scientific methods. This is motivated by opportunity and expanding horizons. Through on-going programs, a series of small experiments can be designed to produce incremental gains and knowledge. In schools, this can be realized through action research to ensure a steady flow of new ideas, and continuous improvement programs in all aspects of operations.

Learning from the school's past experiences entails a review of success and failures and assessing them systematically and consequently recording the lessons in a form that employees find them open and accessible. Past experiences need to be reflected and lessons and knowledge gained from failures should be instrumental in obtaining subsequent successes.

Learning from the experiences and practices of others, on the hand, is a powerful insight in order to gain a new perspective. Not all learning come from reflection and self-analysis thus it is important for Universities/schools to seek fertile sources of ideas from outside and become catalysts for creative thinking. In practice, this can be achieved through benchmarking as

an ongoing investigation and learning experience that ensures the best practices of the education industry. Through benchmarking, practices of others are uncovered, analyzed, adopted, and implemented based on an external perspective.

According to Garvin (2003), transferring knowledge involves the quick and effective lay out and sharing of knowledge throughout the organization. New and creative ideas carry maximum impact when they are shared broadly rather than held in a few hands. This can be realized through a variety of mechanisms including written, oral, and visual reports, and interventions such as visits and tours, personnel rotation programs, education and training programs and standardization programs, whichever is applicable or works best for the University.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the results, the following can be formed as conclusions, to wit:

1. The principles and theories of learning organization as advanced by Watkins and Marsick (1996,1997,2003) and the seven (7) learning organization dimensions based on the model, as perceived by respondents, are indicatively practiced and experienced to a certain degree and frequency (often) by both University managerial employees and faculty members in both college and basic education;
2. These learning organization dimensions showing that they are being practiced and experienced at a certain degree or frequency (often) conclusively indicate that the dimensions are applicable to the case of the University;
3. The seven (7) dimensions have not reached or obtained the level of frequency of almost always practiced indicate that there is a need to increase and strengthen these practices so as to sustain the development of becoming a learning organization;
4. A framework for development of learning organization can be made applicable to the University of Perpetual Help Systems based on a 5-point action imperatives , which are (1) the application of systematic problem solving (2) experimentation with new approaches (3) learning from own experience and past history (4) learning from the experiences and best practices of others, and (5) transferring knowledge.

Recommendations

The results of the study raise the following recommendations:

1. The formulated framework of development in becoming a learning organization be applied, instilled and practiced, across the University and in all aspects of operations such as in governance, management, instruction, student services, research and community extension, using new interventions and programs that address areas of improvement or that contribute to increasing, enhancing and /or expanding skills of both managerial employees and faculty members to transform towards having a mindset for a learning organization;
2. A focal body be created or an existing office be tasked to ensure that practices of a learning organization be institutionalized towards instilling a culture of learning imbued with the passion and commitment of all employees in all levels, to continue to grow, develop, and be transformed;
3. A follow-up action research and data-gathering processes, be made by other researchers or practitioners in the University, to work out the details of the action imperatives within the framework, test out the details and cascade the actions down and across all levels of the organization,

Given the conclusions and recommendations for practice, the research, overall, showed that the University of Perpetual Help Systems have great potentials to be the model among Universities and Colleges for learning organizations within the Philippine education setting. It showed that it can very well become the model University that captures what Garvin (1993, 2003), and Watkins and Marsick, (1996, 1997, 2003) described as engaged in “a culture of creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights.”

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