

Opinions of Primary School Teachers on Learning Organizations

Ergün Recepoğlu

Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education,
Kastamonu University, Kastamonu, Turkey

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Abstract: The aim of this research is to analyze primary school teacher's opinions on learning organizations in terms of different variables. This is a descriptive research in the survey model. The population of the study is teachers who work in primary schools in Kastamonu. The sample of this study was 157 primary school teachers. "Learning Organization Assessment Scale" developed by Celep, Konaklı and Recepoğlu [1] was used as a data collection instrument. According to findings of the study, teachers' opinions on organizational learning don't change according to gender, tenure of office and principals' use of position power while teachers' opinions change according to their ages, teachers' opinions about whether teachers are inclined to team work and teachers' opinions about following innovations related with education technology closely.

Key words: Learning organization • Primary school • Teacher

INTRODUCTION

Technological and scientific progress in 21st century leads to transformations in organizations. The necessity of transformation of organizations to learning organizations is inevitable in rapidly changing and developing world. Organizations are now obliged to become learning organizations for adaptation to rapid changes in every field.

Organizations have learning capacity like living organisms. Organizations change their behavior types according to the changing conditions like other living organisms, that is, organizations develop their learning capacity [2]. We can mention about learning organization only if we stop thinking organizations like a machine.

Learning organization approach which has been on the agenda and has been gaining more and more importance since the last quarter of the twentieth century was mentioned for the first time in the studies of Chris Argyris and Donald Schön (cited from 1978 by [3]) and this approach was analyzed in detail and systematically in Peter Senge's book of "Fifth Discipline" which was published in 1990. Learning organization notion is based on the system thinking. The system thinking which was characterized as a fifth discipline evaluates management as a whole which differentiated pieces that influence each other constantly and which includes more than the total

of these pieces [4]. The keystone of the learning organization is a learning individual. The one who will create learning teams and finally learning organization is the learning individual [5]. Senge[4] states that learning organizations learn by means of learning individuals and defines learning organizations as dynamic structure which continuously changes, evolves and renews itself. Calvert, Mobley and Marshall [6] also defines learning organization as a "living organisms which renew themselves, which aim to enable organization-group consistency and individual's accommodation to the changes, which prepare every kind of environment for the learning that supports necessary individual experiences and which motivate individuals. The shortest definition is that learning organization is an organization which expands its capacity continuously [7].

Social and political developments, technological innovations, continual and rapid changes in environment and developing possibilities of access to information also force educational organizations to change. The number of researches on educational organizations in Turkey is insufficient. Therefore, it is of great importance to search organizational learning potential of schools and their needs to become learning organizations.

The aim of this research is to analyze primary school teacher's opinions on learning organizations in terms of different variables. In order to realize this aim, educational

practices, supportive leadership, communication and education technology, information sharing and cooperation dimensions of organizational learning are analyzed in terms of teachers' opinions. In this context, answers were sought to these following questions.

- Do teachers' opinions on learning organizations show a meaningful difference in terms of teachers' gender, age and tenure of office?
- Do teachers' opinions on learning organizations show a meaningful difference in terms of school principals' use of position power?
- Do perceptions of teachers on learning organizations show a meaningful difference in terms teachers' opinions about whether teachers are inclined to team work?
- Do perceptions of teachers on learning organizations show a meaningful difference in terms of teachers' opinions about following innovations related with education technology closely?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a descriptive research in the survey model. The population of the study is teachers who work in primary schools in Kastamonu. The study sample of this study was 157 primary school teachers working in central province of Kastamonu. Teachers were selected randomly from 16 primary schools.

Participants: 250 questionnaires were delivered to the teachers and 157 questionnaires were used in data analysis. 33,1% of the teachers were 22-30 ages, 37,6% of the teachers were 31-40 ages, 26,1% of the teachers were 41-50 ages and 3,2% were 51-60 ages. The split between genders was in favor of female with 57,3 % female and 42,7% male. In terms of tenure, almost 40% of the participants had more than 5 years of experience as an educator and almost 60% of the participants had 0-5 years of teaching experience.

Data Collection and Data Analysis: As a data collection instrument "Learning Organization Assessment Scale" developed by Celep, Konaklı and Reçepoğlu [1] was used. In the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Reçepoğlu [1], Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample efficiency test and Barlett test were carried out and as KMO value was above 0,50 and Barlett test was meaningful (0,05 importance degree). Data set was found suitable to the factor analysis (KMO=0,922, χ^2 Barlett test (528)= 4854,09, $p=0,000$). Five-point Likert type survey ranging from 1 (strongly

disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) has been used for the purpose of measuring teachers' opinions regarding organizational learning. According to the result of the factor analysis of this survey, it was seen that Eigen value of 33 items was classified under 4 factors which are bigger than 1. It was determined that the first of the these factors explains 25,3% of the variance, the second factor explains 17,2% of the variance, the third factor explains 10,3% and the fourth explains 9,2% of the variance. It was determined that four factors explain 62% of the variance. Considering the contents of the questions in factors, dimensions were entitled as educational practices, supportive leadership, communication and educational technologies, information sharing and cooperation. In instructional practices dimension, factor loadings change between ,66 and ,76; Cronbach's Alpha value is ,83. In supportive leadership dimension, factor loadings change between ,42 and ,78; Cronbach's Alpha value is ,80. In communication and educational technologies dimension, factor loadings change between ,49 and ,78; Cronbach's Alpha value is ,93. In information sharing and cooperation dimension, factor loadings change between ,46 and ,67; Cronbach's Alpha value is ,88. The general reliability of the scale is ,89. and for this study it is ,94.

The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) 16 program was used for statistical analysis of the data collected by the surveys filled in correctly and fully according to the explanations in the frame of the general aims of the study. The frequency, percentage, arithmetical mean and standard deviation of the answers were calculated. Independent t-Test and One-Way ANOVA were performed to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

T-test was done in order to determine whether teachers' opinions about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference or not according to teachers' gender. T-test results according to teachers' gender are shown in Table 1 in terms of Organizational Learning Assessment Scale dimensions.

According to the results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools do not show a meaningful difference according to gender. In other words, male and female teachers have same opinions in all dimensions of organizational learning in their schools. The findings are similar with the research done by Bal [8], Celep, Konaklı and Reçepoğlu [1] and Coşkun [9].

Table 1: T-test results about teachers' opinions on organizational learning according to gender

Dimensions	Gender	N	s	sd	T	p
Instructional practices	Female	90	4,08	,99	1,13	,25
	Male	67	3,92	,69		
Supportive leadership	Female	90	3,75	1,02	,94	,34
	Male	67	3,89	,84		
Communication and educational technologies	Female	90	3,80	,77	155	,55
	Male	67	3,72	,85		
Information sharing and cooperation	Female	90	3,91	,84	155	,34
	Male	67	3,87	,75		

Table 2: ANOVA results for organizational learning according to teachers' tenure of office

Dimensions	Tenure of office	N	\bar{X}	s	sd	F	p	Mean. Difference
Instructional practices	1. 1-5 years	113	3,98	,68	3	1,90	,131	
	2. 6-10 years	23	4,26	1,46				
	3. 11-15 years	12	3,62	,75				
	4. 16 year and over	9	4,33	1,15				
Supportive leadership	1. 1-5 years	113	3,76	,91	3	2,01	,114	
	2. 6-10 years	23	4,20	,61				
	3. 11-15 years	12	3,46	1,22				
	4. 16 year and over	9	3,86	1,40				
Communication and educational technologies	1. 1-5 years	113	3,74	,83	3	,31	,817	
	2. 6-10 years	23	3,91	,65				
	3. 11-15 years	12	3,77	,64				
	4. 16 year and over	9	3,69	1,03				
Information sharing and cooperation	1. 1-5 years	113	3,86	,84	3	,65	,581	
	2. 6-10 years	23	4,10	,60				
	3. 11-15 years	12	3,79	,65				
	4. 16 year and over	9	3,92	,93				

ANOVA results according to teachers' tenure of office in their schools are shown in Table 2 in terms of Organizational Learning Assessment Scale dimensions.

According to the results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools do not show a meaningful difference according to teachers' tenure of office. In other words, teachers' tenure of office does not affect their opinions in all dimensions of organizational learning in their schools. The findings are similar with the research done by Uysal [10]. The findings are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1] except supportive leadership dimension of organizational learning. According to the results of the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1], opinions of teachers about supportive leadership dimension show a meaningful difference according to teachers' tenure of office. Opinions of teachers about whether principals show supportive leadership behavior or not and principals support organizational learning in their schools or not change according to their tenure of office. The mean of teachers who have 6-10 years of tenure of office ($\bar{X} = 4.3$) is higher than the mean of teachers who have 1-5 years of tenure of office ($\bar{X} = 3.68$).

ANOVA results according to teachers' ages in their schools are shown in Table 3 in terms of Organizational Learning Assessment Scale dimensions.

According to the results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about supportive leadership dimension of organizational learning [$F_{(3-153)} = 1,74$, $p > .01$] do not show a meaningful difference according to their ages. The findings are similar with the research done by Bal [8] and Banoğlu (2009). The findings aren't similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1]. According to the results of the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu (2011), teachers' opinions about supportive leadership dimension show a meaningful difference according to their ages.

According to the results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about communication and educational technologies dimension of organizational learning [$F_{(3-153)} = ,56$, $p > .01$] do not show a meaningful difference according to their ages. The findings are similar with the research done by Bal [8], Banoğlu [11] and Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1].

Table 3: ANOVA results for organizational learning according to teachers' ages

Dimensions	Age	N	\bar{X}	s	sd	F	p	Mean. Difference
Instructional practices	1. 22-30 ages	52	3,96	,65				
	2. 31-40 ages	59	4,21	1,03	3			
	3. 41-50 ages	41	3,75	,82	153	,046		2-3*
	4. 51 age and over	5	4,42	,51				
Supportive leadership	1. 22-30 ages	52	3,73	,88				
	2. 31-40 ages	59	4,00	,92	3			
	3. 41-50 ages	41	3,59	1,03	153	1,74	,160	
	4. 51 age and over	5	4,00	1,00				
Communication and educational technologies	1. 22-30 ages	52	3,65	,76				
	2. 31-40 ages	59	3,80	,81	3			
	3. 41-50 ages	41	3,86	,85	153	,56	,642	
	4. 51 age and over	5	3,77	,79				
Information sharing and cooperation	1. 22-30 ages	52	3,71	,78				
	2. 31-40 ages	59	4,12	,73	3			
	3. 41-50 ages	41	3,74	,85	153	3,68	,013	1-2*
	4. 51 age and over	5	4,40	,63				

According to the results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about instructional practices dimension of organizational learning show a meaningful difference according to their ages [$F_{(3-153)} = 2,73$, $p < .01$]. This finding shows that the opinions of teachers about instructional practices change according to teachers' ages. Tukey HSD test was done in order to determine the groups which have a meaningful difference between them. There is a meaningful difference between teachers at 31-40 ages and teachers at 41-50 ages. According to Tukey HSD test, it is determined that the teachers at 31-40 ($\bar{X} = 4,21$) stated more positive opinion than the teachers at 41-50 ages ($\bar{X} = 3,75$). While the teachers at 41-50 ages stated most negative opinion ($\bar{X} = 3,75$), the teachers at 51 age and over ($\bar{X} = 4,42$) stated most positive opinion about organizational learning in instructional practices dimension. The results of this research have similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1]. According to the results of the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1], teachers' opinions about instructional practices dimension show a meaningful difference according to their ages. It is determined that the teachers at 31-40 ($\bar{X} = 4,19$) and 51-60 ages ($\bar{X} = 4,4$) stated more positive opinion than the teachers at 20-30 ages ($\bar{X} = 3,74$).

According to the results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about information sharing and cooperation dimension of organizational learning show a meaningful difference according to their ages [$F_{(3-153)} = 3,68$, $p < .01$]. In other words; opinions of teachers about whether information sharing and cooperation exist in organizational learning environment in their schools change according to their ages. Tukey HSD test was done

in order to determine the groups which have a meaningful difference between them. There is a meaningful difference between teachers at 22-30 ages and teachers at 31-40 ages. According to Tukey HSD test, it is determined that the teachers at 31-40 ($\bar{X} = 4,12$) stated more positive opinion than the teachers at 22-30 ages ($\bar{X} = 3,71$). While the teachers at 20-30 ages stated most negative opinion ($\bar{X} = 3,71$), the teachers at 51 age and over ($\bar{X} = 4,40$) stated most positive opinion about organizational learning in instructional practices dimension. Findings are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1]. According to the results of the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Receptoğlu [1], opinions of teachers about information sharing and cooperation dimension show a meaningful difference according to their ages. It is determined that the teachers at 51-60 ages ($\bar{X} = 4,38$) stated more positive opinion about information sharing and cooperation dimension of organizational learning than the teachers at 20-30 ages ($\bar{X} = 3,77$).

Finally, it can be asserted that opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference according to their ages and the more they get older, the more they state a positive opinion about organizational learning environment. But it mustn't be disregarded that this finding may stem from the fact that young teachers' expectations are higher than the others.

T-test was done in order to determine whether teachers' opinions about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference or not according to principals' use of their position power. T-test results according to principals' use of their position power are shown in Table 4 in terms of Organizational Learning Assessment Scale dimensions.

Table 4: T-test results about teachers' opinions on organizational learning according to principals' use of their position power

Dimensions	Use of position power	N	\bar{X}	s	sd	T	p
Instructional practices	Yes	98	3,91	,76	155	1,96	,052
	No	59	4,19	1,02			
Supportive leadership	Yes	98	3,70	,97	155	1,88	,061
	No	59	3,99	,88			
Communication and educational technologies	Yes	98	3,78	,85	155	,19	,84
	No	59	3,75	,73			
Information sharing and cooperation	Yes	98	3,83	,83	155	1,25	,21
	No	59	4,00	,74			

Table 5: T-test results about teachers' opinions on organizational learning according to their opinions about following innovations related with education technology

Dimensions	Following innovations related with education technology	N	\bar{X}	s	sd	T	p
Instructional practices	Yes	119	4,03	,90	155	1,16	,248
	No	38	3,79	,67			
Supportive leadership	Yes	119	3,92	,87	155	3,69	,001
	No	38	2,93	1,09			
Communication and educational technologies	Yes	119	3,86	,77	155	4,08	,000
	No	38	3,07	,74			
Information sharing and cooperation	Yes	119	3,99	,74	155	4,02	,000
	No	38	3,21	,93			

According to the results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools do not show a meaningful difference according to principals' use of their position power. In other words; analysis shows that opinions of teachers about organizational learning do not change according to principals' use of their position power in all dimensions of organizational learning. The results of this research are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı and Reçepoğlu [1] except supportive leadership dimension of organizational learning. According to the results of there search done by Celep, Konaklı and Reçepoğlu [1], teachers' opinions about supportive leadership dimension show a meaningful difference according to principals' use of their position power.

t-Test was done in order to determine whether opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference or not in terms of their opinions about following innovations related with education technology closely. t-Test results according to opinions of teachers about following innovations related with education technology closely are shown in Table 5 in terms of Organizational Learning Assessment Scale dimensions.

According to t-Test results of the analysis, opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference according to their opinions about following innovations related with education technology closely except instructional practices

dimension. In other words; analysis shows that opinions of teachers about organizational learning change according to principals' use of their position power in supportive leadership, communication and educational technologies, information sharing and cooperation dimensions of organizational learning.

According to the results of the research, opinions of teachers about instructional practices dimension do not show a meaningful difference according to teachers' opinions about following innovations related with education technology [$t_{(155)} = 1,16$, $p > .01$]. However; research findings show that the mean of the teachers who state that technological innovations related with education are followed closely ($\bar{X} = 4,03$) is higher than teachers who state that technological innovations related with education are not followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,79$). The results of this research are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı & Reçepoğlu (2011). Opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools do not show a meaningful difference according to teachers' opinions about following innovations related with education technology in instructional practices dimension. According to this research findings the mean of the teachers who state that technological innovations related with education were followed closely ($\bar{X} = 4,01$) is higher than teachers who state that technological innovations related with education were not followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,77$).

Table 6: T-test results about teachers' opinions on organizational learning according to their opinions about whether they are inclined to team work

Dimensions	Teacher's tendency to team work	N	\bar{X}	s	sd	T	p
Instructional practices	Yes	124	4,10	,88	152	3,39	,001
	No	20	3,40	,64			
Supportive leadership	Yes	124	3,90	,91	152	3,10	,002
	No	20	3,22	1,02			
Communication and educational technologies	Yes	124	3,87	,75	152	3,90	,000
	No	20	3,15	,90			
Information sharing and cooperation	Yes	124	3,97	,78	152	2,32	,021
	No	20	3,52	,88			

According to research findings, it is determined that opinions of teachers about supportive leadership dimension show a meaningful difference in terms of following innovations related with educational technology [$t_{(155)} = 3,69$, $p < .01$]. Research findings showed that the mean of the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology are followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,92$) is higher than mean of the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology aren't followed closely ($\bar{X} = 2,93$). The results of this research are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı&Recepoğlu [1]. Opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference according to teachers' opinions about supportive leadership dimension. According to this research findings the mean of the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology are followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,93$) is higher than the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology aren't followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,08$).

According to research findings, it is determined that opinions of teachers about communication and education technology dimension show a meaningful difference according to the state of education technology is being followed [$t_{(155)} = 4,08$, $p < .01$]. The mean of the teachers who think that innovations related with education technology are followed ($\bar{X} = 3,86$) is higher than other teachers ($\bar{X} = 3,07$). The results of this research are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı&Recepoğlu [1]. Opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference according to teachers' opinions about communication and education technology dimension. According to this research findings; the mean of the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology are followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,98$) is higher than the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology aren't followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,04$).

According to research findings, opinions of teachers about information sharing and cooperation dimension change according to the state of education technology is being followed [$t_{(155)} = 4,02$, $p < .01$]. It is determined that the

mean of the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology are followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,99$) is higher than the the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology aren't followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,21$). The results of this research are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı&Recepoğlu [1]. Opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference according to teachers' opinions about information sharing and cooperation dimension. According to this research findings; It is determined that the mean of the teachers who think that innovations related with educational technology are followed closely ($\bar{X} = 4,02$) is higher than the eachers who think that innovations related with educational technology aren't followed closely ($\bar{X} = 3,47$).

Finally, it can be said following innovations related with education technology closely is a significant factor on opinions of teachers about organizational learning. Following innovations related with education technology closely affects opinions of teachers positively.

T-test was done in order to determine whether opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference or not in terms of their opinions about whether they are inclined to team work. T-test results according to teachers' opinions about whether teachers are inclined to team work are shown in Table 6 in terms of Organizational Learning Assessment Scale dimensions.

According to t-Test results, opinions of teachers about educational practices [$t_{(152)} = 3,39$, $p < .01$], supportive leadership [$t_{(152)} = 3,10$, $p < .01$], communication and education technology [$t_{(152)} = 3,87$, $p < .01$], information sharing and cooperation [$t_{(152)} = 2,32$, $p < .01$] dimensions of organizational learning show a meaningful difference according to opinions of teachers about whether their colleagues are inclined to team work. The mean of the teachers who think that their colleagues are inclined to team work in terms of instructional practices ($\bar{X} = 4,10$), supportive leadership ($\bar{X} = 3,90$), communication and education technology ($\bar{X} = 3,87$), information sharing and

cooperation ($\bar{x}=3,97$) dimensions is higher than other teachers who think that their colleagues aren't inclined to team work. The results of this research are similar with the research done by Celep, Konaklı & Receptoğlu [1]. Opinions of teachers about organizational learning in their schools show a meaningful difference in all dimensions of organizational learning. The mean of the teachers who think that their colleagues are inclined to team work in terms of educational practices ($\bar{x}=4,08$), supportive leadership ($\bar{x}=3,97$), communication and education technology ($\bar{x}=3,16$), information sharing and cooperation ($\bar{x}=4,04$) dimensions is higher than other teachers who think that their colleagues aren't inclined to team work.

As a conclusion, it can be said that whether teachers are inclined to team work is a significant factor on opinions of teachers about organizational learning. If teachers are inclined to team work, opinions of teachers are affected positively.

When we analyze the research findings, it can be concluded that motivating individuals in schools to work and learn collaboratively and collectively and to follow technological advancements about education can be effective in transforming schools to learning organizations.

Individuals must be encouraged to build team spirit, learn, share and collaborate collectively for schools to acquire the ability of learning organization [12]. In the process of organizational learning, the basic role and mission of the school administrator, teacher and the student at school is to work and learn with collective intelligence in order to build learning schools.

When research findings were analyzed, it was found out that principals' use of their position power affects perceptions of teachers positively. This finding is remarkable. It can be said that if principals use their position power, perceptions of teachers about organizational learning will be affected positively.

Leaders in learning organizations are also a designer, administrator and teacher [4]. Today, management of the knowledge is the basis of management art. Therefore, leaders have the most active role in achieving the vision of a learning organization [13]. Leader's role in creating a learning organization begins with a curious and creative leadership which is ready to create a vision and ready to start a dialogue about the gap between current reality and the vision. Leader is open to employees who want to try new ideas, is the creator of a suitable environment and supervisor of learning process, changing attitudes, behaviors and work process [14].

Building a learning school and learning society should be the basic vision of education system and the school administrator must be a leader administrator who builds a culture of learning, designs, develops and creates a continuous learning environment [15]. School administrators have an important role and duty as instructional leader in transforming schools to a learning organization in the process of organizational learning.

It is impossible for schools to give sufficient knowledge that will be adequate throughout their lives to the graduates. Instead, students have to acquire the ability to learn knowledge they need to; in other words, the ability of learning to learn. Teachers must teach to learn rather than the traditional teaching approach [16]. New philosophy and approaches in education and the implementation of these require educators see themselves as supportive and guide person rather than a person who see themselves as judgmental and knowledge transmitter [17].

New values about teaching and learning require adjustment of learning as student-centered. The emphasis is not on the transfer of knowledge but on the student. The important thing is to use knowledge and produce new knowledge from it rather than acquiring knowledge. For this, teachers must transform themselves from the position which reproduces knowledge to the person who learns when teaching [17]. Learning is of great importance in building a learning school. The most significant thing that we must achieve for students in learning school is to establish desire and enthusiasm for learning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a conclusion, opinions of teachers on organizational learning don't change according to gender, tenure of office and principals' use of position power while opinions of teachers change according to their ages, opinions of teachers about whether teachers are inclined to team work and opinions of teachers about following innovations related with education technology closely.

Opinions of teachers on organizational learning can be analyzed with new and different data collection instruments. Future studies and discussions can be carried out on learning organizations. Besides opinions of teachers; opinions of students, principals and managers about learning organizations can be analyzed in different provinces and countries. It can be suggested that educational researchers should explore shortcomings and problems in each country and should seek out, discuss and design effective methods to improve organizational learning and to build learning organizations.

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