

THE APPLICATION OF THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION AT NATIONAL
SOCIAL SECURITY FUND

By:

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DECLARATION

This Research Project is my original work and has never been presented in any other university or college for the award of degree, diploma or certificate.

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This Research Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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ACRONYMS

NSSF	- National Social Security Fund
The Fund	- National Social Security Fund
HRD	- Human Resource Development
EC	- European Community

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my husband Benjamin, our children Joy, Andrew, Javan, Ariel and my Niece Emma, for their material, emotional and spiritual support in the course of my studies. It is also dedicated to my father, Kibet Cheptarus who impressed on me the importance of hard work in my studies from an early age and my mother Leah Kibet, for her love, prayers and sacrifice to ensure that I attained the highest level of education. My father-in law, Joshua Chesire who is 100+ years as at 2010 and his late wife Ruth Chesire are recognized for their love, prayers, encouragement and support in the course of my studies. My Sisters, Linah, our late sister Rebecca, Esther and Lornah are recognized for their support, encouragement and unfailing love throughout my studies. Last but not least are my classmates in the MBA classes between 2007 and 2009 for their encouragement and motivation to complete this course successfully.

ABSTRACT

My desire to study the concept of learning organization started when we were given a class presentation to research and present in 2008 during our HRD lesson. I was fascinated by the contribution this concept can make to improve performance of an organization especially in today's competitive world. The European Community's white paper (1996), on education and training in Wilson (2005) highlights the impact of the information society on work and organization, the impact of internationalization on the need for competitiveness and the impact of scientific technological knowledge on industry, growing competition, technological changes, new work methods, financial constraints, globalization, reorganizations, mergers and the like gave rise to the need for organizations to learn and adapt more quickly to changing circumstances. In the words of McCarthy 1997 in Wilson (2005), these processes necessitated continuous improvement both in people and organizations. This can be achieved easily if organizations adopted the learning organization tenets. The research question was therefore to determine the application of learning organization at National Social Security Fund.

The research project is a case study of National Social Security Fund. The data analyzed and presented were obtained using self administered questionnaires. Population sample was identified using simple stratified sampling technique. This was because the population was heterogeneous. Questionnaires were distributed to one hundred and twenty eight (128) employees and only ninety (90) questionnaires which formed 70% were returned. The return rate was higher among staff from head office at 68.9% than field offices which were at 31.1%. The data was presented in tables for ease of analysis. Responses from Respondents were tabulated and presented in Percentages for ease of comparison.

The research study concluded that National Social Security Fund is not a learning organization. This is because it has scored many negative results on most of the dimensions of a learning organization such as on continuous learning, dialogue and

inquiry, team learning, empowerment, leadership and embedded systems. The overall scores for all these dimensions were negative. Case studies should be carried out in other organizations to determine whether this is the trend or a unique case for NSSF. This is because past survey studies conducted in the Insurance and the Banking sectors had indicated that they were learning organizations. Case studies involve more participants in an organization than surveys where the Human Resource Manager or the Chief Executive are involved. Major challenges encountered by the researcher included limited financial resources and time.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Learning is an essential ingredient if organizations are to survive, that learning at the operational, policy and strategic levels needs to be conscious, continuous and integrated. Management is responsible for creating an emotional climate in which all staff can learn continuously. A learning organization is capable of learning from past experiences, learning across parts of a company and learning from other companies. Through continuous change, a learning organization creates sustainable competitive advantage in its industry. Learning and change occur at the organizational level as well as at the individual employee level, supported by a culture of partnership, empowerment and appropriate human policies.

Senge (1990) defined Learning organizations as organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together. The basic rationale for such organizations is that, in situations of rapid change only those that are flexible, adaptive and productive will excel. For this to happen, it is argued, organizations need to discover how people tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels. The dimensions that distinguishes learning organizations from traditional ones is the mastery of certain disciplines or component technologies. These are Systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision and team learning. All the disciplines are concerned with a shift of mind from seeing parts to seeing wholes, from seeing people as helpless reactors to seeing them as active participants in shaping their reality, from reacting to the present to creating the future.

Beardwell, Holden and Claydon (2004) noted that the concept of learning organizations has gained popularity in recent years because of the turbulent and increasingly competitive business environment. The impact of new technology and changing organizational forms that cater for customer needs mean dealing with continual change. The ability to respond swiftly to product and market developments is crucial. There has also been an increasing recognition of the importance of

utilizing not just the physical abilities of employees but also their mental powers. Senior managers are becoming aware that their people are their greatest resource. they are also the source of any longer-term competitive advantage. This realization has led to increased competition for skilled, flexible, adaptable staff and the development of organizational programmes that attempt to fully utilize the talents and knowledge of the workforce. It is also being recognized that international competitiveness means raising the standards of training to world class levels. Failure to meet these pressures leads to organizational stagnation and ultimately organizational death.

1.2 National Social Security Fund

The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) also referred to as the Fund, was established in 1965 by an Act of Parliament (CAP 258 of the Laws of Kenya) in order to administer a provident national social security fund scheme for all workers in Kenya. The mandate of NSSF is to register members, collect contributions from members, prudently invest the contributions and pay specified benefits as stipulated in the Act. To this end, the Fund was intended to serve as the 1st pillar of social security for Kenyan workers. Initially, the NSSF operated as a government department under the Ministry of Labour but as its membership grew and its operations became complex, the NSSF Act was amended in 1987 to transform it into an autonomous State Fund. Since 1988, the Fund has been operating under a Board of Trustees, which is constituted by representatives of three key stakeholders: the government, workers and employers. The Fund has employed about one thousand six hundred (1600) employees to enable it achieve its mandate.

1.3 Learning Organization

Price (2007) stated that learning is a permanent change of behaviour as a result of past experience. Learning is taken to mean more than acquiring knowledge. It encompasses the way in which outmoded values and techniques are shed in favour of new ones. At an organizational level, this requires a collective process of change in its shared world view including perceptions of the company and markets. Senge (1990). Cole (2002) noted that at the heart of the concept of learning organization is a perspective that sees work organizations as needing to become collaborative in the way they perceive problems and opportunities and how they attempt to answer them or exploit them.

Thus everyone throughout the organization is expected to reflect on practice, raise alternative (better) ways of doing things, and find the will to work together to achieve results more effectively. The underlying philosophy of the learning organization is to enhance the achievement of collective goals by harnessing the reservoir of knowledge, skills and insights of all members of the organization. The goals of the business will include increasing revenue and or market share and establishing a base of satisfied customers who return for repeat business. Arising out of this attention to group goals, individual employees may find opportunities for personal development, increase job satisfaction and even enhanced career prospects. Depending on the level of commitment of top management to the idea of a learning organization, the benefit for employees may be regarded as central to the exercise or merely by-product of it.

The European Community's (1996), white paper on education and training in Wilson (2005) highlights the impact of the information society on work and organization, the impact of internationalization on the need for competitiveness and the impact of scientific technological knowledge on industry, growing competition, technological changes, new work methods, financial constraints, globalization, reorganizations, mergers and the like gave rise to the need for organizations to learn and adapt more quickly to changing circumstances. In the words of McCarthy 1997 in Wilson (2005), these processes necessitated continuous improvement both in people and organizations. Poel and Tijmensen (1998) in Wilson 2005 noted that literature on learning organizations implicitly proposes a redefinition of the organization of work into team-based structures, so as to allow for an integration of learning and work. Every work activity can also become a learning activity. Work is performed in multifunctional teams, thus thinking and doing are integrated into jobs and workers are empowered to participate in team decision-making process Tjepkema (2003) in Wilson 2005.

Poell, Tijmensen and Van der Krogt (1997) in Wilson (2005) in a literature review concluded that although there are many definitions of a learning organization, a number of issues keep recurring such as continuous learning on individual, group and system level and single and double loop learning processes. Swieringa and Wierdsma (1994) in Wilson 2005 even conceived of triple loop learning, which is not just doing things well, not just doing things better but also doing better things; creation and distribution of information and knowledge, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) in Wilson

2005; inquiry and dialogue in groups sharing learning experiences; increasing the learning capacity of members (learning to learn) Senge (1990); integration of work and learning, informal learning, learning on the job Watkins and Marsick (1993); shared vision, theory of action Senge 1990 and Hodgkinson (2002) in Wilson 2005); coaching by manager in self managed teams Tjepkema (2003) in Wilson 2005; transformation and innovation; learning tied to business objectives but also for personal development. Senge (1990) in Wilson 2005 presents his five disciplines for learning organizations as personal mastery, ensuring individual innovation, mental models creating an openness to misconception, shared vision, building long term commitment in people, team learning, developing group skills like cooperation, communication and so forth. Systems thinking which constitutes the most important discipline, integrates the other four together. All disciplines are to be practiced alongside each other and they have an impact on one another as well.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Learning is key to success; some would even say for survival. In today's organizations, knowledge should be continuously enriched through both internal and external learning. For this to happen, it is necessary to support and energize organizations, people and technology for learning. Darwin (1859) in his book, Origin of Species wrote that "it is not the strongest of the species who survive, or the most intelligent, rather it is those most responsive to change". A learning organization values the role that learning can play in developing organizational effectiveness. It demonstrates this by having an inspiring vision for learning and a learning strategy that will support the organization in achieving its vision. The leadership of a learning organization is committed to the importance of learning and clearly demonstrates that learning is critical to organizational success. Leadership recognizes the importance of providing the motive, means and opportunity for learning. Adequate resources are allocated for learning in terms of time, space, specialists, support staff, budgets for knowledge management and learning infrastructure. Garvin (1993) indicated that learning organizations are skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights. Garvin (2008), while studying how companies pursue improvement and change through efforts to stimulate organizational learning found the following activities to be common in learning organizations; intelligence gathering, experimentation, learning from experience, learning from the best practice of others, systematic problem solving, and transferring

knowledge internally. The most successful organizations have developed a wide range of mechanisms and tools to support these activities, including after-action reviews, demonstration projects, simulations, lessons learned units, and incentive systems that encourage risk-taking, as well as innovative approaches to measuring learning.

Studies on the learning organization are limited. Previous studies were done by MBA students of the University of Nairobi, Amulyoto (2002), Kirimi (2006), Wandera (2008) and Omolo (2009). Amulyoto sought to establish the extent to which donor agencies in Nairobi embraced features of the learning organization. The study concluded that knowledge acquisition, information distribution and information interpretation had a great extent been embraced. However, process of organization memory was not found to be well grounded, Amulyoto (2002). A survey of organizational learning in private recruitment agencies along similar lines was conducted by Kirimi. She sought to establish the extend to which private recruitment agencies in Nairobi embraced organizational learning as well as determining the factors that influence the adoption of organizational learning in the recruitment firms. She concluded that the concept had been adopted but needed improvement in some aspects, Kirimi (2006).

Wandera undertook a survey study to determine the relationship between learning organizations and organizational performance in Kenya reinsurance and insurance companies. Research results indicated that teamwork, discussions, and exchange of ideas are important in promoting learning. Findings indicated that supportive learning environment such as psychological safety, appreciation, openness and time reflection to allow for creativity and analytical thinking was practiced. Wandera concluded unequivocally that organizational financial performance is leveraged by organizational learning. He also recommended that case studies be done in the same organizations since they have unique challenges with respect to organizational learning. Detailed case studies will shed light on concrete learning practices. Wandera (2008)

Omolo carried out a survey to establish the extent to which, if any that the concept and practice of the learning organization has been adopted in Kenyan Commercial Banking sector as a response to changes and if so whether it has had any impact in regard to performance for the organizations concerned. Omolo established that most Kenyan Commercial Banks have most of the tenets of

learning organization as prescribed by Pedler in Wanton (1999) such as adopting a learning approach to strategy, participative policy making, informing, formative accounting and control, external control, reward flexibility, enabling structures, intercompany learning, nature of leadership and boundary workers acting as environmental scanners. The study established without doubt that Kenyan Commercial Banks have to a large extent adopted the practice of the learning organization. It also established that there is a relationship between the practice of learning organization and organization performance, Omolo (2009).

National Social Security Fund puts in substantial amount of resources in terms of financial and time to ensure that its staff acquired additional knowledge and skill for improved work performance. The training budget has been growing substantially for the last five years. NSSF commissioned a consultant to draw up its Strategic Plan for 2009/2014 with the help of an internal committee. The organization has received a new chief executive every three years since 1998 to help it achieve its mandate. The Fund has put in place measures to encourage staff to pursue private learning. These include refund of 30% of tuition and examination fees for all staff who acquire professional qualifications. Promotion is given on merit based on academic qualifications and satisfactory job performance. Where there is no vacancy to which an officer may be promoted to, they are awarded two incremental credits on the salary scale where they are upon successful completion of a professional course lasting about one year. These measures have contributed to the rapid increase in the number of staff pursuing evening classes at all levels.

There is express need to develop people at key levels in human resource management and make connection between the learning organizational members and the survival and effectiveness of the organization. Organizations today want to employ people who have the ability to learn new skills and adapt to changing circumstances by taking responsibility for their own learning, keeping their skills up to date and learning new processes. The learning organization concept may not be misinterpreted as a new management fad rather considered as a sound business strategy which makes lots of sense. By promoting a learning culture, an organization will greatly enhance their competitive edge. At the heart of the concept of learning organization is a perspective that sees work organizations as needing to become more collaborative in the way they perceive problems and opportunities and how they attempt to answer them or exploit them. The benefits of learning

organizations are enormous to both large and small organizations/businesses, Senge (1990). It is important therefore for organizations to commit resources for creating learning organizations.

Case studies on the application of the learning organization concept at NSSF or any other organization has not been carried out by any student for education purposes. A case study of National Social Security Fund is different from the other studies which were done on private and profit making institutions. NSSF is a public institution formed to provide the first pillar social protection for Kenyan workers. The operating environment is therefore different from the listed cases, because competition is limited since it is the only one offering this kind of service. It also operates on a shielded environment because it has a legal backing that requires other organizations to contribute and failure to comply attracts penalties or even prosecution. This research project is different from the above four studies, being a case study it will carry out an in-depth study on the application of the learning organization concept in one organization. The basic rationale for learning organizations is that, in situations of rapid change, only those that are flexible, adaptive and productive will excel. For this to happen, it is argued, organizations need to discover how people tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels. The dimension that distinguishes learning organizations from traditional ones is the mastery of certain disciplines or component technologies. The study will therefore seek to establish the extent to which, if any that the concept and practice of the learning organization has been adopted by National Social Security Fund.

1.5 Research Objective

To determine the application of learning organization at National Social Security Fund.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study will be of great value to Human Resource and Administration Manager and the entire NSSF management in its attempt to make it a learning organization and improve work performance. Other students who will want to carry out a similar or a related research in other organizations in future will benefit from this research project. It will also be useful to other organizations who may wish to transform their organization into learning organizations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Concept

Learning is the acquisition of knowledge or skill through study, experience or being taught, Nonaka (1995). Learning is not a one-off activity where an ultimate answer is found, but is a cumulative process, which progresses at a pace dictated by the environment, maintaining a balance between reflection, learning and action. While there are many sources of learning, it is useful that attempts are made to exploit an organizations' experience and actions as main source of learning, at times even to learn from mistakes made along the way. Learning is therefore seen as a proactive activity where one is always looking for a different and hopefully better way of doing something. It is the basis for discovery as with creativity; individuals always seek to improve what has been the status quo.

Kim (1993) in Armstrong defines learning as the process of increasing one's capacity to take action. Reynolds (2002) in Armstrong explains that it should be distinguished from training. Learning is the process by which a person acquires new knowledge, skills and capabilities whereas training is one of several responses organizations take to promote learning. Argyris & Schon (1978) distinguished between single-loop and double-loop learning, related to Gregory Bateson's concepts of first and second order learning. In single-loop learning, individuals, groups, or organizations modify their actions according to the difference between expected and obtained outcomes. In double-loop learning, the entities (individuals, groups or organization) question the values, assumptions and policies that led to the actions in the first place; if they are able to view and modify those, then second-order or double-loop learning has taken place. Double loop learning is the learning about single-loop learning.

Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) developed a four stage spiral model of organizational learning. They started by differentiating Polanyi's concept of "tacit knowledge" from "explicit knowledge" and describe a process of alternating between the two. Tacit knowledge is personal, context specific, subjective knowledge, whereas explicit knowledge is codified, systematic, formal, and easy to communicate. The tacit knowledge of key personnel within the organization can be made explicit,

codified in manuals, and incorporated into new products and processes. This process they called "externalization". The reverse process (from explicit to implicit) called "internalization" because it involves employees internalizing an organization's formal rules, procedures, and other forms of explicit knowledge. They also use the term "socialization" to denote the sharing of tacit knowledge, and the term "combination" to denote the dissemination of codified knowledge. According to this model, knowledge creation and organizational learning take a path of socialization, externalization, combination, internalization, socialization, externalization, combination in an infinite spiral.

Peddler, Boydell and Burgoyne (1991) in Wanton (1999) defined learning company as "an organization which facilitates the learning of all members and continually transforms itself." People want to develop the learning company so as to improve quality, become people oriented in relation to both staff and customers, because of the need to encourage active experimentation and generally to cope with competitive pressure in order to survive. Senge (1990) defined learning organizations are where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together, Senge (1990). A number of leading authorities on learning in organizations, Honey (1998) in Armstrong (2001) have declared that 'learning is complex and various, covering all sorts of things such as knowledge, skills, insights, beliefs, values, attitudes and habits'. Individuals learn for themselves and learn from other people. They learn as members of teams and by interaction with their managers, co-workers and people outside the organization. People learn by doing and by instruction. The ways in which individuals learn differ, and the extent to which they learn depends largely on how well they are externally motivated or self motivated.

Wanton (1999) stressed that learning organization is seen as the key to unlock the learning potential of individuals and groups which will, above all else, contribute to sustainable competitive advantage of a given organization or even to sustainability itself. It is held to provide an overarching framework for shaping processes and generating a culture that will enhance an organization's readiness and capacity for change. Organizational effectiveness will be enhanced by the realization of a set of characteristics which together represent the learning organization. Furthermore, these features will not emerge by chance; it is only through disciplined action and planned interventions

that the many forces that constrain learning can be overcome. The developmental perspective treats learning organization as a particular phase reached in an organization's life circle or evolution. Thus for some it is the final stage of an HRD journey of discovery originating some years ago in menu driven provision of training courses and resulting in an environment where learning is more self managed, continuous and broad based.

Wanton (1999) explained that the achievements of a learning organization is usually held to be a manifestation of organizational learning. This connection has led some to argue that the very notion of a learning organization is fundamentally flawed. Individuals can learn, they contend, but not organizations. An organization is not an entity. The concept of a learning organization is at best a helpful metaphor, trying to establish some sort of parallels with individual learning processes. But it should not be stretched too far. Organizations only exists through individuals who are their members, while at the same time we use an individual human being as a metaphor for the organization as a whole. Doving 1994 in Wanton (1999). The interest in learning organization has been stimulated by the need to be competitive, as learning is considered to be the only way of obtaining and keeping a competitive edge. Edmonson and Moingeon in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) say that to remain viable in an environment characterized by uncertainty and change, organizations and individuals alike depend upon an ability to learn.

2.2 Processes of Organization Learning

Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) suggest that the concept of learning organization was a response to poor organizational performance. Organization Learning according to Popper and Lishitz (1998) in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) is the process of collecting, analyzing, storing, disseminating and using systematically information that is relevant to their members' performance. Argyris and Schon (1978) in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) describe different levels, or loops, of organization learning, which others have developed on. The first level is the single loop learning. The single loop learning occurs when error detection and correction enables the organization to continue with current policies and objectives. This, they contend, is a sort of lower level, reactive learning that is inadequate in itself to confront the challenges that organizations now have to face. Wanton (1999). Nevertheless, such operational learning is important. Operational learning forms the

foundation of any work organization. It springs from an organization's efforts to improve its basic work processes (Broersma 1995) in Wanton 1999. Broersma considers that the attempt by Motorola, the USA based electronics manufacturer, to achieve six-sigma – a quality standard of less than 3.4 defects per million opportunities for error – is an example of operational or single loop learning. Burgoyne (1995) in Wanton (1999) calls this level of learning 'habitual' learning and argues that habits once learned, can be hard to unlearn. He however stresses that an emphasis on single loop learning can inhibit future learning.

The second level according to Argyris and Schon (1978) is the double loop learning, which is generated by detection and correction activities which modify and change the organization's fundamental norms and aims, often through challenging traditional norms and values and resolving subsequent conflict. Thus Argyris and Schon in Wanton (1999) argue that while many organizations can and do achieve single loop learning, the more valuable and insightful learning which occurs through the double loop process is rather more difficult. It is clearly more problematic to challenge, or even to think about challenging, accepted orthodoxies and strategies, than to engage in crisis and management – which is essentially a time serving process leading to cure rather than pre

Broersma (1995) in Wanton (1999) refers to this as systematic learning because the learning not only addresses the work itself but focuses on evaluating the complex interacting systems and activities that constitute the entire organization. People are encouraged to think holistically and to challenge fundamental assumptions that underpin the organization's systems and procedures. Error detection and correction goes beyond modifying work procedures and practices and encompasses values, policies and objectives. Redefining organization mission and core values could be an outcome of systemic or double loop learning. Burgoyne (1995) in Wanton (1999) suggests that level two learning equates to the position of an adaptive organization which has discovered how to adjust to, and take advantage of, contextual changes. It is dynamic and customer driven. It is the level at which issues concerning corporate strategy and the management of change is located. In many people's minds it represents the sort of learning the 'learning organization' engages in.

Level Three learning according to Argyris and Schon (1978) in Wanton (1999) is a form of higher-level learning, 'learning to learn' activity. Organizations discover what they did that facilitated or

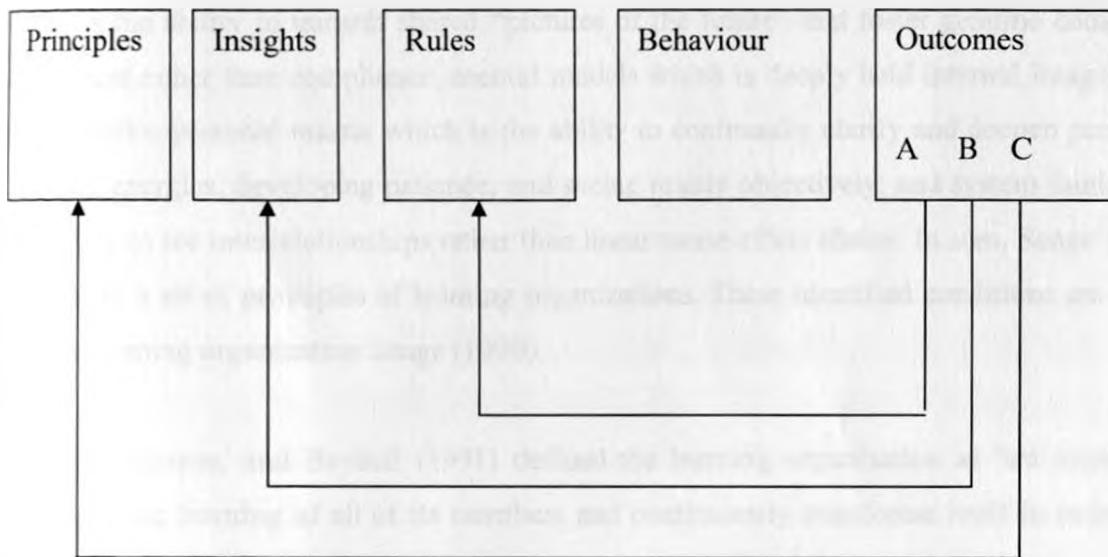
inhibited learning, they invent new strategies for learning, and they produce these strategies, evaluate and generalize what they have produced. The results become encoded in individual images and maps and are reflected in organizational learning practice. This learning involves reviewing and reflecting on previous learning experiences and using such experiences as a basis for the formation of new learning activities and insights. Broersma calls such learning 'transformational learning' which he sees as the process of continuous development of the whole organization. Transformative learning incorporates operational and systemic learning into an ongoing process of evolutionary change. Burgoyne suggests that level three learning represents the position of a 'sustainable organization, which has discovered the art of creating its environment as much as adapting to it, being able to maintain core values as opposed to being swept away by change. There is a paradox entailed in this. Some of the most long-established organizations are notoriously conservative in their practices – take, for example the Catholic Church.

A key argument of Argyris and Schon (1978) is that organizations learn through the agency of individuals working therein. However, in anthropomorphic vein, they contend that individual learning is an insufficient condition for organizational learning, since the learning experienced by individual may not become transferred or encoded into the memory of the organization, there are many cases where the organization knows less than its members. This level of learning is the hardest of all to achieve as it is focused on the purpose or principles of the organization, challenging whether these are appropriate, and is sometimes described as learning at the level of will or being.

Argyris and Schon (1978) argue that very few organizations are involved in either double loop or deutro-learning, although it is possible for an organization to move towards this state if it is able to show more tolerance for perceived error, enabling members to acknowledge jointly and publicly the mismatch of outcome to expectation, and to identify and be aware of events which are not or no longer relevant to the organization's theory -in - use, be able to disseminate more widely the aims and objectives of the organization and make clear the logic which governs its existence so that members know their own organization and encourage members to share than internalize experiences of conflict and resolution. It should increase internal challenges to the organization's theory in use by the use of collaborative review, enquiry and reflection, that is, to encourage double – loop learning and share awareness of the learning which the organization has already experienced and

encourage further enquiry and reflection. These levels of organization learning are connected as shown on figure 1.

Figure 1: Three levels of organization learning.



Source: Derek Torrington, Laura Hall, Stephen Taylor (2005), Human Resource Management, 6th Edition by Pearson Education Limited, page 245

- A: Single loop improvement outcome
- B. Double Loop renewal outcome
- C. Triple loop development outcome

Organizational learning involves a deep learning cycle and its good in enhancing five tasks: First, systematic problem solving which rests heavily on the philosophy and method of the quality movement, secondly, experimentation, which includes systematic search for the testing of new knowledge, thirdly, learning from past experience by reviewing their success and failures, fourthly, learning from others which involves looking outside and immediate environment to gain new perspective and fifthly, transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently throughout the organization.

2.3 Characteristics of Learning Organizations

Senge (1990) defines the learning organization as an organization that possesses not only an adaptive capacity but also “generativity”, that is, the ability to create alternative futures. Senge identifies the five disciplines that a learning organization should possess; team learning which puts emphasis on the learning activities of the group rather than on the development of team process; shared vision which is the ability to unearth shared “pictures of the future” that foster genuine commitment and enrollment rather than compliance; mental models which is deeply held internal images of how the world works; personal master which is the ability to continually clarify and deepen personal vision, focusing energies, developing patience, and seeing reality objectively; and system thinking which is the ability to see interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect chains. In sum, Senge’s approach is to identify a set of principles of learning organizations. These identified conditions are necessary to build a learning organization Senge (1990).

Pedler, Burgoyne, and Boydell (1991) defined the learning organization as “an organization that facilitates the learning of all of its members and continuously transforms itself in order to meet its strategic goals”. They identified eleven areas through which this occurs: a learning approach to strategy, participative policymaking, informing, formative accounting and control, internal exchange, reward flexibility, enabling structures, boundary workers as environmental scanners, inter-company learning, learning climate, and self-development for everyone. This learning perspective provides comprehensive aspects of learning at all organizational levels. The traditional elements of management are incorporated to support learning.

The strategic approach to the learning organization states that a learning organization requires an understanding of the strategic internal drivers necessary for building learning capability. Garvin (1993) defines a learning organization as “an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights”. Having synthesized the description of measurement of the learning organization, management practices and policies related to this construct in the literature. Goh (1998) contends that learning organizations have five core strategic building blocks: clarity and support for mission and vision, shared leadership and involvement, a culture that encourages experimentation, the ability to transfer

knowledge across organizational boundaries, and teamwork and cooperation. Further, the strategic building blocks require two main supporting foundations. The first is an effective organization design that is aligned with and supports these building blocks. The other consists of the appropriate employee skills and competencies needed for the tasks and roles described in these strategic building blocks. The strategic perspective of the learning organization posits that certain managerial practices or strategic building blocks are prerequisites for becoming a learning organization. These strategic building blocks can serve as practical guidelines for operational and managerial practice, and along with the two supporting foundations they can also provide advice for management and organizational consultants.

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) provided an integrative model of a learning organization. They identified dimensions of learning organizations which include continuous learning, which represents an organization's effort to create continuous learning opportunities for all of its members; Inquiry and dialogue, which refers to an organization's effort in creating a culture of questioning, feedback, and experimentation; Team learning which reflects the "spirit of collaboration and the collaborative skills that under gird the effective use of teams; Empowerment which signifies an organization's process to create and share a collective vision and get feedback from its members about the gap between the current status and the new vision; Embedded system which indicates efforts to establish systems to capture and share learning; System connection which reflects global thinking and actions to connect the organization to its internal and external environment; Strategic leadership which shows the extent to which leaders "think strategically about how to use learning to create change and to move the organization in new directions or new markets". The learning organization is viewed as one that has the capacity to integrate people and structures in order to move toward continuous learning and change.

Garvin (1993) in Price (2007) gave some of the characteristics of a learning organization to include the ability to create, acquire and transfer knowledge and modify behaviour to accommodate new knowledge and behaviour. The organization shows evidence of learning from others through systematic problem solving, experimentation and internal transfer of information such as job rotation. The organization possesses mechanisms that assess the rate and level of learning. By taking practical aspects of its key functions such as quality and innovation, managers can ensure that gains

are made from the learning process within an acceptable time scale. Senge (1990) in Price 2007 stated that learning organizations create capacity of people to create results they truly desire and is continually expanding, new and open minded ways of thinking. People are given freedom to develop their collective aspirations and individuals continually learn how to learn together. Pedler, Boydell and Burgoyne (1989) in Price 2007 stated that learning organizations is simply an organization which carries out extensive training and facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself

Watkins and Marsick (1993) in Wilson 2005 emphasized that systems to capture and share individual learning must be put in place before organizations can learn. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) in Wilson 2005 describe such a system of knowledge creation in companies. They distinguish four types of knowledge conversion among people, which can be combined to form processes in time; socialization, which is tacit knowledge reproduced as tacit knowledge. People learn from each other by sharing experiences, imitations and trial and error; Externalization which is tacit knowledge made explicitly. People learn by systematizing and codifying their implicitly knowledge making visible what is hidden inside them. People learn by using materials and other resources specifically aimed at teaching people; Internalization, explicit knowledge is made tacit. People learn by practicing skills automatizing procedures, acquainting themselves with tasks by doing them.

Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) identified eleven (11) characteristics of learning organizations, grouped into five general themes. The first theme is the Strategy which has two characteristics within it. The first characteristic requires that a learning approach to strategy should be taken. Strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation and improvement are deliberately structured as learning experiences by using feedback loops. Secondly, participative policy making infers that this is shared with all in the organization and even further, suppliers, customers and the total community have some involvement. The aim of the policy is to delight customers and the differences of opinion and values that are revealed in the participative process are seen as productive tensions. Senge (1990) shared similar ideas in his discipline of shared vision. The development of a shared vision is important in motivating the staff to learn, as it creates a common identity that provides focus and energy for learning. The most successful visions build on the individual visions of the employees at all levels of the organization, thus the creation of a shared vision can be hindered

by traditional structures where the company vision is imposed from above. Therefore, learning organizations tend to have flat, decentralized organizational structures. The shared vision is often to succeed against a competitor. Senge states that these are transitory goals and suggests that there should also be long term goals that are intrinsic within the company. To create shared vision, all members of the organization must understand, share and contribute to the vision for it to become a reality. With shared vision, people will do things because they want to, not because they have to.

Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) identified his second theme as looking-in, which has four characteristics. The first being informating, which involves using technology to empower and inform employees and is made widely available. They note that such information should be used to understand what is going on in the company, and so stimulate learning, rather than used to reward, punish or control. Garvin (1993) stressed the need to transfer knowledge acquired quickly and efficiently throughout the organization. This is done through seconding people with new expertise or by education and training programmes and linking them with implementation. Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) listed formative accounting and control, as the second characteristic, which involves designing accounting, budgeting and reporting systems to assist learning. Thirdly is internal exchange, which involves all internal units seeing themselves as customers and suppliers of each other. The fourth characteristic in this theme is reward flexibility, which implies that the question of why some receive more money than others is a debate to be brought into the open. They recommend that alternatives are discussed and tried out, but recognize that this is the most difficult of the 11 characteristics to put into practice.

Senge (1990) in his first discipline of team learning stressed on the need for the group to suspend their assumptions and freely think together (different views and perspectives come together); it means going beyond personal defensiveness and presenting ideas openly. The benefit of team or shared learning is that staff grows more quickly and the problem solving capacity of the organization is improved through better access to knowledge and expertise. Learning organizations have structures that facilitate team learning with features such as boundary crossing and openness. Team learning requires individuals to engage in dialogue and discussions. Team members therefore, must develop open communication, shared meaning, and shared understanding. Learning organizations typically have excellent knowledge management structures, allowing creation, acquisition,

dissemination, and implementation of this knowledge in the organization. Virtually all important decisions occur in groups. Teams not individuals are fundamental learning units. Unless a team can learn, the organization can not learn. Team learning focuses on the learning ability of the group. Adults learn best from each other by reflecting on how they are addressing problems, questioning assumptions, and receiving feedback from their results. With team leaning, the learning ability of the group becomes greater than the learning ability of any individual in the group.

Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) identified the third theme as The Structures in an organization. This theme requires that roles are loosely structured in line with the needs of internal customers and suppliers, and in a way that allows for personal growth and experimentation. Internal boundaries can be flexible, for example, project groups and transient structures help break down barriers between units, provide mechanisms for spreading new ideas and encourage the idea of change. Elikjaer (2001) in Price(2007) described a Danish learning organization that did not last very long and suggested that its short life had been due to the emphasis placed on changing individual employees while the organization itself, its structures and work practices had remained fully constant. Therefore, there must be change in structures for a learning organization to succeed.

Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) identified the fourth theme as looking-out. Boundary workers as environmental scanners implies that part of the role of all workers in contact with suppliers, customers and neighbors of the organization should be to participate in data collection. Garvin (1993) also expressed the need to learn from others (Bench Marking), stating that sometimes the most powerful insights come from looking from surrounding to gain a new perspective. This involves identifying best practice from organizations in the same industry. A second feature in this theme is inter-company learning which entails joining with customers, suppliers and possibly competitors in training experiences, research and development and job exchanges. They also suggest that benchmarking can be used to learn from other companies.

Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) in his fifth theme, learning opportunities, included a learning climate as an important tenet of a learning company. It should be one that encourages experimentation and learning from experience, questioning current ideas, attitudes and actions and trying new ideas. Mistakes are allowed because not all new ideas will work. There is a focus on

continuous improvement, and the involvement of customers, suppliers and neighbors in experimentation is suggested. A learning climate suggests that feedback from others is continually requested, is made available and is acted upon. Secondly, self-development opportunities for all requires resources and facilities for self development for employees at all levels in the organization, and coaching, mentoring, peer support, counseling, feedback and so on must be available to support individuals in their learning. Garvin (1993) gave a similar characteristic of adopting experimentation approach to learning. This involves systematic search for and testing of new knowledge by learning organizations. Continuous improvement programmes using "Kaizen" methods are important features in learning Organizations.

Garvin (1993) stated that systematic Problem Solving must be adopted by the organization. This rests heavily on the philosophy and methods of the quality of movement and relying on scientific method rather than guesswork, for diagnosing problems, use the Deming Circle, of Plan – Do – Check – Act cycle and others referred to as hypothesis testing technique. Data rather than assumptions are required as the background to decision making. This is what quality practitioners called "fact based management" and it involves use of simple statistical tools such as histograms. He stressed that organizations must learn from experience. The organization reviews success and failures, asses them systematically and record the lessons learned in a way that employees find open and accessible. This process has been called "Santayana Principle" quoting the philosopher George Santayana who coined the phrase "those who can not remember the past are condemned to repeat it" Senge (1990) expressed a similar view in his theme of personal mastery. This is the process of continually clarifying and deepening an individuals' personal vision. This is a matter of personal choice for the individual and involves continually assessing the gap between their current and desired proficiencies in an objective manner, and practicing and refining skills until they are internalized. This develops self esteem and creates the confidence to tackle new challenges. There is a competitive advantage for an organization whose workforce can learn quicker than the workforce of other organizations. Individual learning is acquired through staff training and development, however learning can not be forced upon an individual who is not receptive to learning. Research shows that most learning in the workplace is incidental, rather than the product of formal training, therefore it is important to develop a culture where personal mastery is practiced in daily life.

Senge (1990) in Wikipedia (May 2010), in his third discipline, the mental models stated that the assumptions held by individuals and organizations must be challenged. Individuals tend to espouse theories, which are what they intend to follow and theories-in-use, which are what they actually do. Similarly, organizations tend to have memories which preserve certain behaviours, norms and values. In creating a learning environment it is important to replace confrontational attitudes with an open culture that promotes inquiry and trust. To achieve this, the learning organization needs mechanisms for locating and assessing organizational theories of action. Unwanted values need to be discarded in a process called unlearning or 'triple loop' learning.

Senge (1990) in Wikipedia (May 2010), in his discipline of systems thinking, which is the ability to see the bigger picture, to look at the interrelationships of a system as opposed to simple cause-effect chains; allowing continuous processes to be studied rather than single snapshots. Essential properties of a system are not determined by the sum of its parts but by the process of interactions between those parts. System thinking discipline integrates the other four disciplines to form a whole system, a system whose properties exceed the sum of its parts. Therefore systems should be viewed as interrelationships rather than isolated parts. Systems thinking is a conceptual framework that allows people to study businesses as bounded objects. Learning organizations use this method of thinking when assessing their company and have information systems that measure the performance of the organization as a whole and of its various components. Systems thinking state that all the characteristics must be apparent at once in an organization for it to become a learning organization. If some of these characteristics are missing, then the organization will fall short of its goal. This review of the conceptualizations of the learning organization reveals that there are as many definitions as there are different perspectives on this organizational construct. Garvin (1993) contends that although organizational theorists have studied this concept for many years, a clear definition remains elusive.

Wikipedia (May 2010) tabulated the characteristics listed below of a Learning Organization and the associated best practices, adapted from the work of Senge (1990), Argyris and Schon (1996), Argyris (1991), and Schon (1983) as important characteristics in determining whether an organization has reached the learning organization stage.

Characteristic	Definition	Associated Best Practices	Positive Byproducts
Self mastery-individual	The ability to honestly and openly see reality as it exists; to clarify one's personal vision	1. Positive reinforcement from role models/managers 2. Sharing experiences 3. More interaction time between supervisory levels 4. Emphasis on feedback 5. Balance work/non-work life	Greater commitment to the organization and to work; less rationalization of negative events; ability to face limitations and areas for improvement; ability to deal with change
Mental models - individual	The ability to compare reality or personal vision with perceptions; reconciling both into a coherent understanding	1. Time for learning 2. Reflective openness 3. Habit of inquiry 5. Flexibility/adaptability	Less use of defensive routines in work; less reflexivity that leads to dysfunctional patterns of behavior;
Shared vision - group	The ability of a group of individuals to hold a shared picture of a mutually desirable future	1. Participative openness 2. Trust 3. Empathy towards others 4. Habit of dissemination 5. Emphasis on cooperation 6. A common language	Commitment over compliance, faster change, greater within group trust; less time spent on aligning interests; more effective communication flows
Team learning - group	The ability of a group of individuals to suspend personal assumptions about each other and engage in "dialogue" rather than "discussion"	1. Participative openness 2. Consensus building 3. Top-down and bottom-up communication flows; 4. Support over blame; 5. Creative thinking	Group self-awareness; heightened collective learning; learning "up and down" the hierarchy; greater cohesiveness; enhanced creativity
Systems thinking - group	The ability to see interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect; the ability to think in context and appreciate the consequences of actions on other parts of the system	1. Practicing self mastery 2. Possessing consistent mental models 3. Possessing a shared vision 4. Emphasis on team learning	Long-term improvement or change; decreased organizational conflict; continuous learning among group members; Revolutionary over evolutionary change

Figure 2. Characteristics of learning organizations and associated best practice.

Source: Wikipedia (May 2010)

2.4 Leading the Learning Organization

Learning organizations require a new view of leadership. This is because the traditional view of leaders (as special people) who set the direction, make key decisions and energize the troops as deriving from a deeply individualistic and non-systemic worldview. The traditional view of leadership is based on assumptions of people's powerlessness, their lack of personal vision and inability to master the forces of change, deficits which can be remedied only by a few great leaders. Senge (1990) in Wikipedia (May 2010) sets a 'new' view of leadership against this traditional view, that centers on 'subtler and more important tasks'. In a learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards and teachers. They are responsible for building organizations where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models. Taking this stand is the first leadership act, the start of inspiring (literally 'to breathe life into') the vision of the learning organization. Senge (1990) in Wikipedia (May 2010).

Leaders in learning organizations are designers. The functions of design are rarely visible, Peter Senge argues, yet no one has a more sweeping influence than the designer. The organization's policies, strategies and 'systems' are key area of design, but leadership goes beyond this. The first task entails designing the governing ideas – the purpose, vision and core values by which people should live. Building a shared vision is crucial early on as it 'fosters a long-term orientation and an imperative for learning'. Other disciplines also need to be attended to, but just how they are to be approached is dependent upon the situation faced. In essence, 'the leaders' task is designing the learning processes whereby people throughout the organization can deal productively with the critical issues they face, and develop their mastery in the learning disciplines'. Senge (1990) in Wikipedia (May 2010).

The Leader is also a steward in the learning organization. One of the important things to grasp here is that stewardship involves a commitment to, and responsibility for the vision, but it does not mean that the leader owns it. It is not their possession. Leaders are stewards of the vision; their task is to manage it for the benefit of others. Leaders learn to see their vision as part of something larger. Leaders have to learn to listen to other people's vision and to change their own where necessary. Leaders in learning organizations are also teachers. The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality, while leaders may draw inspiration and spiritual reserves from their sense of stewardship.

much of the leverage leaders can actually exert lies in helping people achieve more accurate, more insightful and more empowering views of reality Senge (1990) in Wikipedia (May 2010). Leader as teacher is not about teaching people how to achieve their vision but is about fostering learning, for everyone. Such leaders help people throughout the organization develop systemic understandings. Accepting this responsibility is the antidote to one of the most common downfalls of otherwise gifted teachers – losing their commitment to the truth. Senge (1990) in Wikipedia (2010).

Bob Garratt in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) concentrates on the role that directors of an organization have in encouraging a learning organization and in overcoming learning blocks. First, the top team concentrates on strategy and policy and hold back from day today operational issues. Secondly, thinking time is needed for top team to relate changes in the external environment to the internal working of the organization. Thirdly, the delegation of problem solving to staff close to the operation and fourthly, acceptance that learning occurs at all levels of the organization, and that directors need to create a climate where this learning flows freely. Senge and Garrett (1990) in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) have high expectations of leaders of organizations. The literature of learning organizations has a clear unitarist perspective – the question of whether employees desire to be involved in or united by a vision of the organization needs to be addressed.

2.5 Reasons for Adopting Learning Organization Concept

According to Senge (1990) and Gerard (2008) in Wikipedia (May 2010), organizations adopt the learning organization concept to gain superior performance. Learning organization concept will make workforce energized and committed hence employers must learn how to extend mastery and self-determination disciplines throughout the organization. Learning Organizations adopt this concept to improve quality. Quality management companies are seeking to improve existing products and services (continuous improvement) and innovation (breakthrough strategies). This has resulted in such initiatives as TQM (Total Quality Management) and BPR (Business Process Reengineering). However, companies are finding that such programmes succeed or fail depending on human skills, attitudes and organizational culture. With the pace of change ever quickening, the need to develop mechanisms for continuous learning and innovation is greater than ever.

Organizations adopt the learning organization concept to gain competitive advantage. The only sustainable source of competitive advantage is the organization's ability to learn faster than its competitors so as to meet needs of the community hence gaining competitive advantage through organization learning. Organization learning helps people to embrace and manage change. People in learning organizations react more quickly when there are environmental changes because they know how to anticipate changes that are going to occur and how to create the changes they want. Changes and learning are inextricably linked. Adoption of the learning organization concept can help breakdown traditional communication barriers. The old hierarchical communication barrier between manager and worker has devolved into more of a coach – team member scenario. Leaders support the team, not dictate to it. The team appreciates this which in turn helps them to be highly motivated. All workers have an increased awareness of the company's status, and all that goes on in other departments. Communication between and across all layers of the company should give a sense of coherence, making each individual a vital part of the whole system. Workers perform better as they feel more a part of the company; they are not just pawns in a game.

Customer relations are improved when the organization adopts the learning organizations concept. A company's first priority is its customer's needs. A learning organization cuts the excess bureaucracy normally involved with customer relations allowing greater contact between the two. If customers require change, learning organizations can adapt faster and cope more efficiently with this change. Learning organizations build up information resources over time in the form of libraries and human expertise. This pool of knowledge within learning organizations is greater than average. New problems and challenges can be met faster using this increased resource. Learning organizations have greater innovation and creativity. As more people in every level of a company engage in continual learning, a valid contribution can come from any member of the company, and from any part of the company. Being innovative and creative is the responsibility of the whole workforce and allows learning organizations to adapt to changes in the state of the market, technology and competition efficiently. Moreover, this creativity gives rise to an increased synergy. The interaction between high performing teams produces a result which is higher than was planned or expected of them.

2.6 Barriers to the Achievement of a Learning Organization

Wikipedia (May 2010), listed several barriers to the achievement of the learning organization status by many organizations, even within a learning organization, problems can stall the process of learning or cause it to regress. Most of them arise from an organization not fully embracing all the necessary facets of the learning organization. Once these problems can be identified, work can begin on improving them. Some organizations find it hard to embrace personal mastery because as a concept it is intangible and the benefits can not be quantified, personal mastery can even be seen as a threat to the organization. This threat can be real, as Senge points out, that to “empower people in an unaligned organization can be counterproductive”. In other words, if individuals do not engage with a shared vision, personal mastery could be used to advance their own personal visions. In some organizations, lack of a learning culture can be a barrier to learning. An environment must be created where individuals can share learning without it being devalued and ignored, so more people can benefit from their knowledge and the individuals becomes empowered. A learning organization needs to fully accept the removal of traditional hierarchical structures.

Resistance to learning can occur within a learning organization if there is not sufficient buy-in at an individual level. This is often encountered with people who feel threatened by change or believe that they have the most to lose. They are likely to have closed mind sets and are not willing to engage with mental models. Unless implemented coherently across the organization, learning can be viewed as elitist and restricted to senior levels. In that case, learning will not be viewed as a shared vision. If training and development is compulsory, it can be viewed as a form of control, rather than as personal development. Learning and the pursuit of personal mastery needs to be an individual choice, therefore enforced take-up will not work.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research is a case study on the application of the learning organization concept at National Social Security Fund. Descriptive research design will be used to carry out this research. This is because there is information on learning organizations available in books, research work by other students and in the web. The researcher will gather all the important tenets necessary for an organization to be considered as a learning organization from past research and compare it with the current situation in the Fund. The research will seek to undertake an in-depth analysis of the application of the learning organization concept at NSSF. The researcher will also seek to determine whether the increase in budgetary allocation, incentives and changes in management have contributed in any way in the development of a learning organization.

3.2 Population

The target population will be employees of National Social Security Fund. The research units will consist of 8% of one thousand six hundred (1600) employees, both in Management and Union. The case study will cover staff in Branch offices and Head office. The sampling units will be made of one hundred and twenty eight (128) employees. The reason for this sample is to lower costs, greater accuracy of results, greater speed of data collection and availability of population elements. The sample represents the characteristics of the population under study which is fairly uniform.

NSSF Staff Distribution

POPULATION	NO. OF STAFF	% SAMPLE	RESEARCH SAMPLE
Headquarters	690	8	55
Branches	910	8	73
Total population	1600	8	128

Source: NSSF staff roll, 2010

NSSF Staff Distribution

POPULATION	NO. OF STAFF	% SAMPLE	RESEARCH SAMPLE
Management	645	8	52
Union	955	8	76
Total population	1600	8	128

Source: NSSF staff rolls 2010

Simple stratified sampling will be used to determine the research units because the population is heterogeneous. This sampling technique will make it possible to get responses from both management and unionisable employees. Staff list containing grade and location of staff will be used to ensure equal representation among management and unionisable employees. Random sampling will be used to identify research units. Staff employment numbers will be written on small pieces of paper and put in separate baskets for management and unionisable employees. Numbers will be picked from different baskets until all required research units are picked out. Structured questionnaires will be distributed to the employees based in head office by hand and mail through post office printed questionnaires to staff in field offices.

3.3 Data Collection

Primary and secondary data will be used during the study. Primary data will be collected with the aid of structured questionnaires with both open and closed ended questions which will be self administered by the respondents. Section A will collect information on Bio Data while section B will collect information of learning organization concepts. Secondary data will be obtained from published books, Internet, publications and reports from the National Social Security Fund.

3.4 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the data obtained and presented in form of charts, tables and narrations. Frequency distribution will be used to examine the distribution of responses of each of the factors.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This research project sought to determine the application of learning organization concepts at National Social Security Fund. The data analyzed and presented on this chapter were obtained using the instruments listed on chapter three of this research project. The research project is a case study of National Social Security Fund. Questionnaires were distributed to one hundred and twenty eight (128) employees and only ninety (90) questionnaires which formed 70% were returned. The return rate was higher among staff from head office at 68.9% than field officers which were at 31.1%. This is because it was easier to distribute and pick physically from staff in head office than those posted which missed the personal touch of the researcher.

The research questionnaires were tabulated to determine respondents' responses per question. The responses were then converted to percentages to give a better view and ease of analysis. The responses of strongly agree and agree were combined to give a positive response, while the responses of strongly disagree and disagree were combined to give the total negative response. Indifferent responses were not useful for decision making.

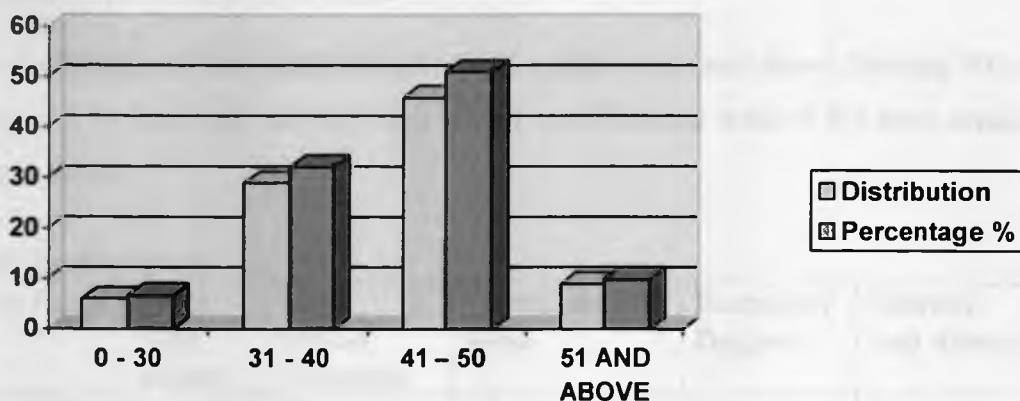
4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.1.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

The age distribution shows that the majority of the respondents (83.4%) were between 31 and 50 years of age. Ten (10) percent of respondents were above fifty (50) years while 6.7% are thirty (30) years and below.

Table 1: Age Distribution

AGE	0 - 30	31 – 40	41 – 50	51 AND ABOVE	
Distribution	6	29	46	9	90
Percentage %	6.7	32.2	51.1	10	100



Source: Author (2010)

4.1.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

The male population of respondents formed 53.3% while the females formed 46.7% of the respondents.

Table 2: Gender Distribution

Gender	Male	Female	Total
Distribution	48	42	90
Percentage	53.3	46.7	100

Source: Author (2010)

4.1.3 Respondent's Position in Organization

Management staff formed 57.8% of the population while unionisable staff formed 42.2% of the research population.

Table 3: Work Position of Respondents

Position	Management	Union	Total
Distribution	52	38	90
Percentage %	57.8	42.2	100

Source: Author (2010)

4.1.4 Work Station of Respondents

Employees from Headquarters formed the majority of the respondents at 68.9% while the field staff formed 31.1% of the total respondents.

Table 4: Work Station

Work Station	Headquarters	Branch Office	Total
Distribution	62	28	90
Percentage %	68.9	31.1	100

Source: Author (2010)

4.1.5 Education Level of Respondents

Majority of respondents have attained high school qualifications and above, forming 90% of the total population. 2.2 % have not attained high school qualifications while 7.8% have attained masters degrees and above.

Table 5: Education Level

Education Level	Below High School	High School Graduate	Certificate/Diploma	Bachelors Degree	Masters and Above
Distribution	2	27	25	29	7
Percentage %	2.2	30	27.8	32.2	7.8

Source: Author (2010)

4.1.6 Promotion data of Respondents

Table 6: Promotion

Years served in current position	1 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 15	16 and above
Distribution	46	12	18	14
Percentage	51.1%	13.3%	20%	15.5%

Source: Author (2010)

The respondents' responses indicate that 51.1% of staff was promoted in the last 1 – 5 years, while 15.5% have not been promoted in the last 16 years and above.

4.2 Dimensions of Learning Organizations

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses on the tenets of a learning organization

The results are discussed under factor categories, namely continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, embedded systems, empowerment, systems connections and provision of leadership. The responses of strongly agree and agree were combined to give a positive response, while the responses of strongly disagree and disagree were combined to give the total negative response. Indifferent responses were not useful for decision making.

A Continues Learning

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses

Learning Organization Concepts	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	% Positive Results	% Negative Results
Continues learning							
Fund Employees openly discuss mistakes in order to learn from each other	6	19	28	23	14	40	60
Fund Employees identify skills they need for future work tasks	13	29	20	19	9	60	40
Fund Employees help each other to learn	4	30	25	22	9	52	48
Fund Employees can get money and other resources to support their learning	17	29	17	14	13	63	37
Fund Employees view problems in their work as an opportunity to learn	12	17	32	16	13	50	50
Fund Employees are given time to support learning	5	25	22	21	17	44	56
Fund Employees are rewarded for learning	6	16	27	19	22	35	65

Poel, Tijmensen and Van der Krogt (1997) in Wilson (2005) in a literature review concluded that continuous learning on individual, group and systems level are important for an organization to be considered as a learning institution. Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) identified continuous learning which represents an organization's effort to create continuous learning opportunities for all its members as one of the dimensions of a learning organization. The data from respondents indicates that staff identifies skills they need for future work tasks at 60% positive results. Staff also helps each other to learn at 52% positive results. Fund employees can get money and other resources to support their learning at 63% positive results. However, Employees do not discuss mistakes in order to learn from them at 60% negative responses and staff is not rewarded for learning at 65% negative response. The findings of this research indicates that the organization encourages continues learning and it meets most of the recommendations on continuous learning given by Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996). The organization can build on these positive aspects to transform itself into a learning company.

B: Dialogue and Inquiry

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses

Learning Organization Concepts	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	% Positive Results	% Negative Results
Dialogue and Inquiry							
In the Fund, staff work in teams/groups	8	27	31	16	8	59	41
In the Fund, staff give open and honest feedback to each other	5	21	25	30	9	40	60
In the Fund, staff listen to each others' views before speaking	1	14	35	26	14	27	73
In the Fund, staff are encouraged to ask why regardless of rank	1	11	27	26	25	19	81
In the Fund, whenever staff state their views, they also ask what others think	3	14	28	27	18	27	73
In the Fund, staff treat each other with respect	4	28	29	20	9	52	48
In the Fund, staff spend time building trust with each other	0	14	24	33	19	21	79

Senge (1990) in the discipline of Mental Models stated that learning organizations should provide time for learning and staff must develop the habit of inquiry. The data from respondents indicate that staff work in teams/groups at 59% positive response and they also treat each other with respect at 52% positive response. The respondents however indicated that staff is not encouraged to ask why regardless of rank, staff do not spend time to build trust with each other and they do not listen to each others' views before they speak at 81%, 79% and 73% negative responses respectively. The findings of this research indicate that the overall respondents' response on dialogue and inquiry is negative. This is contrary to the dimensions of a learning organization as given by Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996), who indicated that inquiry and dialogue is an important dimension. The organization must create a culture of questioning, receiving feedback and experimentation to become a learning company.

C: Team Learning

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses

Learning Organization Concepts		Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	% Positive Results	% Negative Results
Team Learning								
In the Fund, teams/groups have freedom to adapt their goals as needed	5	12	26	28	19	27		73
In the Fund, teams/groups treat members as equals regardless of rank, culture or other differences	4	10	18	28	30	19		81
In the Fund, teams/groups focus both on groups task and how well the group is working	4	16	30	28	12	33		67
In the Fund, teams/groups revise their thinking as a result of group discussions or information collected	4	18	24	27	17	33		67
In the Fund, teams/groups are rewarded for their work achievement as a team/group	6	6	18	22	38	17		83
In the Fund, teams/groups are confident that the organization will act on their recommendations	0	13	20	27	30	19		81

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996), gave Team Learning as one of the dimensions of a learning organization. This is the spirit of collaboration and collaborative skills that under gird the effective use of teams. The respondents' responses on team learning are all negative, teams/groups have no freedom to adapt goals as needed at 73% negative response, teams do not treat each other as equals at 81% negative response, teams are not rewarded for their work achievement as a group at 83% negative response, and teams are not confident that the organization will act on their recommendations at 81% negative response. The findings of this research therefore, is contrary to Senge, (1990)'s fourth discipline of Team Learning where participative openness, consensus building, top-down and bottom-up communication flows, support over blame and creative thinking should be encouraged.

D: Embedded Systems

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses

Learning Organization Concepts	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	% Positive Results	% Negative Results
Embedded Systems							
The Fund uses two way communication on a regular basis such as suggestions systems, electronic bulletin, boards or open meetings	14	25	26	17	8	61	39
The Fund enables people to get needed information at any time quickly and easily	7	22	26	22	13	45	55
The Fund maintains an up to date database on employee skills	6	23	29	18	14	48	52
The Fund creates systems to measure gaps between current and expected performance	4	19	27	23	17	37	63
The Fund makes its lessons learned available to all employees	4	13	30	25	18	28	72
The Fund measures results of the time and resources spent on time	6	12	27	27	18	29	71

The respondents indicated that staff uses two way communication on a regular basis such as suggestions systems, electronic bulletin, boards or open meetings at 61% positive response. However, the Fund does not enable people get needed information at any time quickly and easily, it has no systems to measure gaps between current and expected performance, does not make lessons learned available to all employees and does not measure results of time and resources spent on time at 55%, 63%, 72%, and 71% negative responses respectively. The findings of this research indicate that the overall score on embedded systems is negative and does not meet the requirement on embedded systems as given by Watkins and Marsick (1993,1996),which indicates that efforts should be made to establish systems to capture and share learning.

E: Empowerment

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses on the tenets of a learning organization

Learning Organization Concepts	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	% Positive Results	% Negative Results
Empowerment							
The Fund recognizes people for taking initiative	3	19	19	23	26	31	69
The Fund gives people choices in their work assignments	2	10	24	24	30	18	82
The Fund invites people to contribute to organization vision	2	25	25	20	18	42	58
The Fund gives people control over the resources they need to accomplish their work	2	18	26	23	21	31	69
The Fund supports employees who take calculated risks	3	3	25	26	33	9	91
The Fund builds alignments of visions across different levels and work groups	1	14	33	24	18	26	74

The respondents' responses on empowerment were all negative. The Fund does not recognize people for taking initiative, does not give people choices in their work assignments, people are not given a chance to contribute to the organization vision, employees who take calculated risks are not supported, and it does not align its vision across different levels and work groups at 69%, 82%, 58%, 69%, 91%, and 74% negative responses respectively. The findings therefore indicate that the organization is acting contrary to dimensions of empowerment which is an important tenet of learning organization as advocated by Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996). Empowerment signifies an organization's process to create and share a collective vision and get feedback from its members about the gap between current status and the new vision. The lack of staff empowerment is a great impediment in the organizations' attempt to create a learning organization.

F: Systems Connections

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses

Learning Organization Concepts	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	% Positive Results	% Negative Results
Systems Connections							
NSSF helps employees balance work and family	18	31	18	16	7	68	32
NSSF encourages people to think from a global perspective	9	22	25	22	12	48	52
NSSF encourages everyone to bring customer's views into decision making process	11	17	24	26	12	42	58
NSSF considers impact of decisions on employee morale	5	13	23	28	21	27	73
NSSF works together with the outside community to meet mutual needs	7	28	24	21	10	53	47
NSSF encourages people to get answers from across the organization when solving problems	11	20	24	20	15	47	53

Systems connection reflects global thinking and actions to connect the organization to its internal and external environment, Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996). The respondents' indicated that the Fund helps staff to balance work and family at 68% positive response, this is in line with Senge's (1990) first discipline of self mastery in which the employee should be assisted to balance work and non-work life. Respondents also indicated that staff works with outsiders to meet mutual needs at 53% positive response. The Fund however does not encourage people to think from a global perspective, it does not consider impact of decisions on employee morale, and it does not encourage everyone to bring customers' views into decision making process at 73%, 58% and 52% negative responses respectively. The findings of this study does not meet Senge (1990)'s assertion that

Learning institutions should have structures that facilitate team learning with features such as boundary crossing and openness and that individuals should engage in dialogue and discussions.

G: Provide Leadership

Tabulation and analysis of respondent's responses

Learning Organization Concepts	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	% Positive Results	% Negative Results
Provide Leadership							
NSSF leaders generally support requests for learning opportunities and training	7	31	20	16	16	54	46
NSSF leaders share up to date information with employees about competitors, industry trends and organization direction	8	19	20	28	15	39	61
NSSF leaders empower others to help carry out organization vision	8	25	17	23	17	45	55
NSSF leaders mentor and coach those they lead	4	16	24	20	26	30	70
NSSF leaders continually look for opportunities to learn	4	16	24	20	26	30	70
NSSF leaders ensure that the organization actions are consistent with values	4	16	24	20	26	30	70

The respondents indicated that leaders generally support requests for learning opportunities and training at 54% positive response. The leadership however does not share up to date information with employees about competitors, industry trends and organization direction, Leaders do not mentor and coach those they lead, leaders do not continually look for opportunities to learn, and they do not ensure that the organization actions are consistent with its values at 55%, 70%, 70%, and 70% negative responses respectively. The findings of this research is contrary to views held by Garratt in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) who stated that learning occurs at all levels of the organization, and that directors need to create a climate where learning flows freely.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

Management is responsible for creating an emotional climate in which all staff can learn continuously. A learning organization is capable of learning from past experiences, learning across parts of a company and learning from other companies. Through continuous change, a learning organization creates sustainable competitive advantage in its industry. Learning and change occur at the organizational level as well as at the individual employee level, supported by a culture of partnership, empowerment and appropriate human policies. The European Community's white paper (1996), on education and training in Wilson (2005) highlights the impact of the information society on work and organization, the impact of internationalization on the need for competitiveness and the impact of scientific technological knowledge on industry. Growing competition, technological changes, new work methods, financial constraints, globalization, reorganizations, mergers and the like gave rise to the need for organizations to learn and adapt more quickly to changing circumstances. In the words of McCarthy 1997 in Wilson (2005), these processes necessitated continuous improvement both in people and organizations.

Senge (1990) defined learning organizations as organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create results they truly desire; where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured; where collective aspirations are set free; and where people are continually learning to see the whole together. Learning is an essential ingredient if organizations are to survive, that learning at the operational, policy and strategic levels needs to be conscious, continuous and integrated. Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) provided an integrative model of a learning organization. They identified dimensions of learning organizations which include continuous learning, which represents an organization's effort to create continuous learning opportunities for all of its members. The second dimension, inquiry and dialogue, refers to an organization's effort in creating a culture of questioning, feedback, and experimentation. The third dimension, team learning, reflects the "spirit of collaboration and the collaborative skills that under gird the effective use of teams. The fourth dimension, empowerment, signifies an organization's process to create and share a collective vision

and get feedback from its members about the gap between the current status and the new vision. The fifth dimension, embedded system, indicates efforts to establish systems to capture and share learning. The sixth dimension, system connection, reflects global thinking and actions to connect the organization to its internal and external environment. The seventh dimension, strategic leadership, shows the extent to which leaders “think strategically about how to use learning to create change and to move the organization in new directions or new markets”. The learning organization is viewed as one that has the capacity to integrate people and structures in order to move toward continuous learning and change. This research project is based on Watkins's and Marsick dimensions.

The research questionnaires were tabulated to determine respondents' responses per question. The responses were then converted to percentages to give a better view and ease of analysis. The responses of strongly agree and agree were combined to give the total positive response, while the responses of strongly disagree and disagree were combined to give the total negative response. Indifferent responses were not useful for decision making.

5.1.1 Continues Learning

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) identified continues learning as an important characteristic for learning organizations. This represents an organization's effort to create continues learning opportunities for all members. Senge (1990) stated that learning organizations create capacity of people to create results they truly desire and is continually expanding new and open minded ways of thinking. From the data collected, 65% of staff indicated that staff is not rewarded for learning and that mistakes are not discussed openly. Respondents however noted that staff gets money to support learning at 63%. The overall score for continues learning is a mixed.

5.1.2 Dialogue and Inquiry

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) named inquiry and dialogue as an important characteristic of a learning organization. This refers to an organization's effort in creating a culture of questioning, feedback and experimentation. Garvin (1993) in Price (2007) stated that one of the characteristics of a learning organization is the ability to create, acquire and transfer knowledge. The organization

Shows evidence of learning from others through systematic problem solving, experimentation and internal transfer of information. Respondents noted that staff does not ask why regardless of rank at 91% negative responses. Staff does not give honest and open feedback at 60%; Staff does not spend time to build trust at 79% negative response. The overall score for dialogue and inquiry according to the respondents is negative.

5.1.3 Team Learning

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) identified team learning as an important dimension of a learning organization. This dimension reflects the “spirit of collaboration and the collaborative skills that under gird the effective use of teams. Senge (1990) identified team learning which puts emphasis on learning activities of the group rather than on the development of team processes as an important feature in creating a learning company. Pedler, Burgoyne, and Boydell (1991) emphasized that there must be a learning approach to strategy, inter company learning, learning climate and self development for everyone. Respondents noted that teams have no freedom to adapt goals as needed at 73% negative response. Team members do not treat each other as equals regardless of rank, culture or other differences at 81% negative responses. Teams are not rewarded for their work as a group at 81% negative responses. The overall respondents' response on team learning was negative.

5.1.4 Embedded Systems

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) identified Embedded Systems, which indicates efforts to establish systems to capture and share learning. Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) stressed the need to use technology to empower and inform employees and is made widely available. Such information should be used to understand what is going on in the company, and so stimulate learning rather than used to reward, punish or control. Garvin (1993) stressed the need to transfer knowledge acquired quickly and efficiently throughout the organization. This is done through seconding people with new expertise or by education and training programmes and linking them with implementation. Respondents noted that staff uses two way communication on regular basis such as suggestion systems, electronic bulletin, boards or open meetings at 60% positive responses. The fund does not measure time and resources spent on time at 71% negative responses. Lessons

learned are not made available to all employees at 71% negative responses. The overall respondents' response on embedded systems was negative.

5.1.5 Empowerment

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) identified empowerment as an important dimension for a learning organization. This signifies an organization's process to create and share a collective vision and get feedback from its members about the gap between the current status and the new vision Senge (1990) identified shared vision as an important characteristic for a learning organization. This is the ability to unearth shared pictures of the future that foster genuine commitment and enrollment rather than compliance. To create shared vision, all members of the organization must understand, share and contribute to the vision for it to become a reality. With shared vision, people will do things because they want to, not because they have to. Goh (1998) states that some of the characteristics of a learning organization include clarity and support for mission and vision, shared leadership and involvement, a culture that encourages experimentation, the ability to transfer knowledge across organizational boundaries, teamwork and cooperation. Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) in his fifth theme, learning opportunities which include a learning climate should be one that encourages experimentation and learning from experience. He stated that mistakes are allowed because not all new ideas will work. The focus is on continuous improvement. From respondents, the Fund does not recognize staff for taking initiative at 60% negative responses. The Fund does not give people choices in their work assignments at 81% negative responses. The respondents also noted that the Fund does not support staff who take calculated risks at 90% negative responses. The Fund does not build alignments of vision across different levels and work groups at 74% negative responses. The overall respondents' response on empowerment was negative.

5.1.6 Systems Connections

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) identified systems connection as an important characteristic of learning organization. This reflects global thinking and actions to connect the organization to its internal and external environment. Garvin (1993) also expressed the need to learn from others (benchmarking). He noted that sometimes the most powerful insights come from looking from surrounding to gain a new perspective. This involves identifying best practices from organizations in

the same industry. Senge (1990), in his discipline of team learning stressed that learning organizations have structures that facilitate team learning with features such as boundary crossing and openness. Team learning requires individuals to engage in dialogue and discussions, therefore team members must develop open communication, shared meaning, and shared understanding. Pedler in Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) noted that a learning organization must have enabling structures to function well. It requires that roles are loosely structured in line with the needs of internal customers and suppliers, and in a way that allows for personal growth and experimentation. The respondents noted that the organization helps employees balance work and family at 68% positive responses. Customers' views are not used in decision making process at 57% negative responses. The organization does not consider impact of decisions on employee morale at 73% negative responses. There was a mixed response on this item by respondents.

5.1.7 Provide Leadership

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) indicated that strategic leadership is an important characteristic for learning organizations. This concept shows the extent to which leaders think strategically about how to use learning to create change and to move the organization in new directions or new markets. Senge (1990) noted that leaders of learning organizations should be designers, stewards and teachers. As designers, they design governing ideas that provide purpose, vision and core values by which people should live. Stewardship involves a commitment to, and responsibility for the vision, but it does not mean that the leader owns it. As teachers, they foster learning for everyone. They help people throughout the organization develop systematic understanding. Respondents noted that leaders generally support requests for learning opportunities and training at 54% positive responses. The leaders do not share up to date information with employees about competitors, industry trends and organization direction at 61% negative responses. The leaders do not mentor and coach those they lead at 69% negative responses. There was mixed response on this item by respondents.

5.2 Conclusions

Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996) provided an integrative model of a learning organization. They identified dimensions of learning organizations which include continuous learning, which represents

an organization's effort to create continuous learning opportunities for all of its members. The second dimension, inquiry and dialogue, refers to an organization's effort in creating a culture of questioning, feedback, and experimentation. The third dimension, team learning, reflects the "spirit of collaboration and the collaborative skills that under gird the effective use of teams. The fourth dimension, empowerment, signifies an organization's process to create and share a collective vision and get feedback from its members about the gap between the current status and the new vision. The fifth dimension, embedded system, indicates efforts to establish systems to capture and share learning. The sixth dimension, system connection, reflects global thinking and actions to connect the organization to its internal and external environment. The seventh dimension, strategic leadership, shows the extent to which leaders "think strategically about how to use learning to create change and to move the organization in new directions or new markets". The learning organization is viewed as one that has the capacity to integrate people and structures in order to move toward continuous learning and change. This research project is based on Watkins and Marsick dimensions.

There are several positive aspects which the organization needs to build on to create a learning organization such as funding of training programmes to support learning; Staff work in teams and that the organization leaders support learning and training of staff. The research findings indicate that National Social Security Fund is not a learning organization. This is because it has scored many negative results on very important tenets of a learning organization such as on continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, empowerment, leadership and embedded systems. Wikipedia (May 2010) listed several barriers to the achievement of learning organization status by many organizations and that even within a learning company; problems can stall the process of learning or cause it to regress. The main problems arise from an organization not fully embracing all the necessary facets of the learning organization. The organization may lack a learning culture, or the environment does not encourage sharing of learning and resistance to learning by staff.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Study

This research project was a case study of National Social Security Fund. From the analysis, the research findings indicated that the organization is not a learning organization because it has many negative responses on many tenets of learning organization. This is a remarkable difference from

past research findings of surveys carried out by Wandera (2008) and Omolo (2009) who concluded that the organizations researched on were learning organizations. There is need to carry out case studies in the same organizations to determine whether the results would be different if more staff within the same organization are involved in the study. There is also need to conduct separate studies for staff in field offices and those based in head office and also separate studies for staff in Management and Unionisable employees. This will help determine whether results will be consistent across heterogeneous levels.

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APPENDICES

Introduction Letter to Respondents

Rose J. Kibet
P O Box 76632 00508
NAIROBI
20th September 2010

Dear Sir/Madam

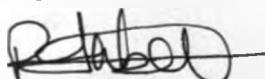
RE: DATA COLLECTION FOR MBA RESEARCH PROJECT

I am an MBA student at the University of Nairobi pursuing a Master of Business Administration. I am conducting research on the learning organization concept in the Fund in partial fulfillment for the award of the Master of Business Administration of the University of Nairobi.

I would be grateful if you could please provide the information sought by the questionnaire provided accurately without fear or favour. Your responses will be treated in strict confidence and this research is carried out for academic purpose only.

Yours faithfully

Signed:



Rose J. Kibet
Student

Confirmed by:

S. N. M. Nzuve
Supervisor, University of Nairobi

Questionnaire for Learning Organization Research Project

Please indicate on the scale of 1 to 5 below to what extent you agree with the application of the following tenets of learning organization in the Fund. Use the following key as your guideline.

- (5) Strongly Agree
- (4) Agree
- (3) Indifferent (neither agrees nor disagrees)
- (2) Disagree
- (1) Strongly Disagree

SECTION A

Bio Data

Tick the appropriate box

Please indicate your gender

Male

Female

Please indicate your age bracket

0 - 30

31 - 40

41 - 50

51 and above

What is your position at NSSF?

Management

Non Management

Indicate work station

Headquarters

Branch office

What is your educational experience?

Did not complete high school

High school graduate

Certificate/Diploma graduate

Bachelors Degree

Masters Degree and above

How many years have you worked for NSSF?

1 – 10 years

11 – 20 years

21 – 30 years

31 years and above

How many years have you served in your current position?

1 – 5 years

6 – 10 years

11 – 15 years

16 years and above

Indicate your department _____

How many training programmes sponsored by NSSF have you attended since you were employed

How many training programmes have you sponsored yourself fully since you joined NSSF

How many training programmes have you attended that are co – sponsored by yourself and NSSF /other sponsor

SECTION B

Learning Organization Concepts

A	Continues learning	5	4	3	2	1
	Fund Employees openly discuss mistakes in order to learn from each other					
	Fund Employees identify skills they need for future work tasks					
	Fund Employees help each other to learn					
	Fund Employees can get money and other resources to support their learning					
	Fund Employees view problems in their work as an opportunity to learn					
	Fund Employees are given time to support learning					
	Fund Employees are rewarded for learning					

		5	4	3	2	1
B	Dialogue and Inquiry					
	In the Fund, staff work in teams/groups					
	In the Fund, staff give open and honest feedback to each other					
	In the Fund, staff listen to each others' views before speaking					
	In the Fund, staff are encouraged to ask why regardless of rank					
	In the Fund, whenever staff state their views, they also ask what others think					
	In the Fund, staff treat each other with respect					
	In the Fund, staff spend time building trust with each other					
C	Team Learning					
	In the Fund, teams/groups have freedom to adapt their goals as needed					
	In the Fund, teams/groups treat members as equals regardless of rank, culture or other differences					
	In the Fund, teams/groups focus both on groups task and how well the group is working					
	In the Fund, teams/groups revise their thinking as a result of group discussions or information collected					
	In the Fund, teams/groups are rewarded for their work achievement as a team/group					
	In the Fund, teams/groups are confident that the organization will act on their recommendations					
D	Embedded Systems					
	The Fund uses two way communication on a regular basis such as suggestions systems, electronic bulletin, boards or open meetings					
	The Fund enables people to get needed information at any time quickly and easily					
	The Fund maintains an up to date database on employee skills					
	The Fund creates systems to measure gaps between current and expected performance					
	The Fund makes its lessons learned available to all employees					
	The Fund measures results of the time and resources spent on time					
E	Empowerment					
	The Fund recognizes people for taking initiative					
	The Fund gives people choices in their work assignments					
	The Fund invites people to contribute to organization vision					
	The Fund gives people control over the resources they need to accomplish their work					
	The Fund supports employees who take calculated risks					
	The Fund builds alignments of visions across different levels and work groups					

		5	4	3	2	1
F Systems Connections						
NSSF helps employees balance work and family						
NSSF encourages people to think from a global perspective						
NSSF encourages everyone to bring customer's views into decision making process						
NSSF considers impact of decisions on employee morale						
NSSF works together with the outside community to meet mutual needs						
NSSF encourages people to get answers from across the organization when solving problems						
G Provide Leadership						
NSSF leaders generally support requests for learning opportunities and training						
NSSF leaders share up to date information with employees about competitors, industry trends and organization direction						
NSSF leaders empower others to help carry out organization vision						
NSSF leaders mentor and coach those they lead						
NSSF leaders continually look for opportunities to learn						
NSSF leaders ensure that the organization actions are consistent with values						