

ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING IN IGANGA PARENTS' SECONDARY SCHOOL

BY

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PLAN B

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DECLARATION

I, Monicah Nabuule hereby declare that this dissertation under the title “**Organizational Learning in Iganga Parents Secondary School**” is my original work and has never been submitted for academic award in any institution or University of learning.

Signature Monicah Nabuule

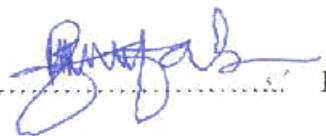
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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research report has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of master's Degree of Business Administration with our approval as university supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my Husband Emmanuel Kizito Luyombya, who has stood by my side and encouraged me through my studies my son Phillip Kizito, my Parents, brothers and sisters especially Dr. Justine Bukenya for supporting me through this Master's program, my employer especially my supervisor for the time off given to me to carry out my research and ALL my friends May the good Lord bless you abundantly.

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To my dearest Husband Emma Kizito Luyombya thank you so much. May the good Lord bless you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|---|
| AGM | Annual General meeting |
| IPSS | Iganga Parents Secondary School |
| K/N | K is Number of items considered relevant and N is number of items considered in the instrument. |
| MUBS | Makerere University Business School |
| SD | Standard Deviation |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Scientists |

ABSTRACT

The research study attempts to examine Organizational learning at Iganga Parents secondary school (IPSS); Nature of organizational learning, challenges associated with Organizational learning at IPSS and strategies to manage challenges associated with organizational learning at the IPSS.

The researcher used a quantitative research design and selected 56 respondents. Convenient sampling was used in the study, close ended questions were used in collecting data. The researcher further analyzed data using SPSS to compute frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation in relation to the study objectives. The study findings revealed that Organizational learning is relatively good. Most respondents agreed that holding meetings to discuss its activities, using teamwork for learning purpose, encouraging employees to create synergy by sharing knowledge and ideas, trying out new ways of working with employees, identifying, gathering, and applying new knowledge all the above improves organizational learning at Iganga Parents secondary school. The study represents challenges related to organizational learning at Iganga Parents secondary school such as; Employees are not sufficiently involved in decision making, employees are not aware of the learning values, negative attitudes towards learning for change, lack of strategic leadership, this has hindered organizational learning at the school, lack of organizational support at the school, there is no room for staff to express their ideas, organizational learning is lacking because of poor communication all are challenges of Organizational learning at Iganga Parents secondary school. The study findings identify strategies. IPPS should implement to manage organizational learning in the school; such as promoting participatory decision-making, monitoring and evaluation of the school, flexibility through giving employees autonomy, tolerating their mistakes among others, developing a culture of shared vision and mission among its staff to promote organizational learning. Management of schools should provide support to their staff to promote organizational learning through trainings for further education, allowing employees time to study, rewarding innovative ideas among others, effective communication among staff to promote and sustain organizational learning.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction.

This chapter shows the back ground of the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, scope of the study and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

The concept of organizational learning is believed to be crucial for organizational performance improvement (Friedman et al., 2005) and its competitive value is widely advocated (Smith et al., 1998; Hamel & Rahalad, 1994). Organizational learning is a well-documented determinant of desirable organizational outcomes such as financial performance, innovation capacity and customer value (Baker and Sinkula, 2002; Davis and Daley, 2008; Ellinger et al., 2002, 2003; García-Morales et al., 2012; Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle, 2011; Santos-Vijande et al., 2012; Valencia et al., 2010; Yukl, 2009). The rationale for attempting to improve these outcomes via improving organizational learning is that the subsequent development of new knowledge can reduce the likelihood that an organization's human capital will become outdated, thus enabling the skills and knowledge to remain dynamic, and improving organizational performance (García Morales et al., 2012).

Organizational learning is often defined as a change in the organization's knowledge that occurs as a function of experience (Argote, 2011). This knowledge can manifest itself in changes in cognitions, routines and behaviors (Argote, 2011). Individual employees are the mechanisms through which organizational learning takes place as individual learning processes become embedded in organizational functions (Argote, 2011; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Learning and knowledge generated by individuals cannot be sustained in an organization unless they are supported by actions. To develop sustained learning, ideas need to be shared, actions taken, and common meaning developed (Argyris and Schon, 1996; Huber, 1991). Thus, organizational learning takes place via the social processes and group dynamics that govern individuals' interactions (Crossan et al., 1999).

According to the Headmaster's Annual General meeting report, 2014, Organizational Learning in Iganga Parents Secondary School has not yielded the expected teacher behavior. The school found in Eastern Uganda, Iganga District is a Private Boarding and Day Mixed Secondary School founded in 1999. The school's total student enrollment is over 1500 and teaching staff workforce of over 50 teachers. The school has since its initiation got a deliberate policy aimed at achieving organizational learning through its individual teachers. Teacher retention is encouraged to ensure that the acquired knowledge and experience is not lost. The school also has a policy of recruiting its former students with excellent grades and sponsor them to attain more knowledge and skills, Teachers in the school undergo training to improve on their knowledge and skills which they can use for better service delivery to the students. All measures are aimed at increasing the capacity of teachers for effective organizational action through knowledge and understanding. However, according to the report mentioned above the learning process at the school is not a complete cycle of reflection and action, that is, teachers do not change their thinking about task related challenges. the knowledge they acquire is not put to good use like enabling the organization to develop novel and more effective strategies for competing within the business environment. There is limited change in teachers' cognition and teachers' work behavior. Leaders do not set direction for team members and teachers don't feel like working with strict bosses, Communication is less effective, and teachers feel left out and teachers work in isolation, no interaction with each other. This makes what is being learned less effective and Individual teachers who have learned do not share knowledge with other teachers.

Schools should put in place measures to improve organizational learning in order to achieve their set goals and objectives.

1.2 Problem statement

Organizations that have embraced organizational learning are said to achieve their set goals and objectives. This is however different for Iganga Parents' Secondary School. This may be attributed to poor organization learning practices that may affect the strategic plan for the school. Whereas the concept of organizational learning continues to attract significant interest from both academics and business managers alike (Bapuji and

Crossan, 2004; Chiva and Alegre, 2005; Fleenor, 2008), it is not clear as to why Organizational Learning in Iganga Parents' Secondary School remains poor.

1.3 Purpose of study

The purpose of the study is to examine Organizational Learning in Iganga Parents' Secondary School.

1.4 Research Objectives

- i. To examine the nature of organizational learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School
- ii. To examine the challenges related to Organizational Learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School
- iii. To examine the strategies for improving Organizational Learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School.

1.5 Research questions

- i. What is the nature of organizational learning in a school?
- ii. What are the challenges related to Organizational learning in a school?
- iii. What are the strategies for improving Organizational Learning in a school?

1.6 Scope of the study

1.6.1 Content/Subject scope

The study focused on examining organizational learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School

1.6.2 Geographical scope

The study was conducted at Iganga Parents secondary school in Iganga District, located along Iganga-Nakigo Road, 2 kilometers from Iganga town. Little has been achieved in relation to organizational learning in the school despite the school's attempt to ensure that Organizational learning takes place.

1.6.3 Time Scope

The study was conducted in one year.

1.7 Significance

- i. The study is useful for managers to appreciate the role of organizational learning in achieving set goals and objectives in the Organization.
- ii. The study is important in promoting team work among employers and employees within the organization
- iii. The study is key for enhancing effective communication such as information sharing within the organization.
- iv. The study can be used to create a positive environment within the organization. Employees will be able to work freely with their bosses.
- v. The findings of the study can be used to improve on productivity of employees within the organization since there will be knowledge sharing among staff.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher gives a review of the literature about organizational learning as published by different researchers and scholars.

2.1 Nature of organizational learning

Organizational learning is a well-documented determinant of desirable organizational outcomes such as financial performance, innovation capacity and customer value (Baker and Sinkula, 2002; Davis and Daley, 2008; Ellinger *et al.*, 2002, 2003; García-Morales *et al.*, 2012; Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle, 2011; Santos-Vijande *et al.*, 2012; Valencia *et al.*, 2010; Yukl, 2009). The rationale for attempting to improve these outcomes via improving organizational learning is that the subsequent development of new knowledge can reduce the likelihood that a company's human capital will become outdated, thus enabling the skills and knowledge to remain dynamic, and improving organizational performance (García-Morales *et al.*, 2012).

Organizational learning is often defined as a change in the organization's knowledge that occurs as a function of experience or Organizational learning is a process of creating, retaining, and transferring knowledge within an organization. An organization improves over time as it gains experience. From this experience, it is able to create knowledge (Argote, 2011). This knowledge can manifest itself in changes in cognitions, routines and behaviors (Argote, 2011). Thus, organizational learning is a process that involves continuous change in individuals' cognitions and behaviors (Argote, 2011). Individual employees are the mechanisms through which organizational learning takes place as individual learning processes become embedded in organizational functions (Argote, 2011; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Learning and knowledge generated by individuals cannot be sustained in an organization unless they are supported by actions. To develop sustained learning, ideas need to be shared, actions taken and common meaning developed (Argyris and Schon, 1996; Huber, 1991). Thus, organizational learning takes place via the social processes and group dynamics that govern individuals' interactions (Crossan *et al.*, 1999).

Organizational learning is a process of increasing the capacity for effective organizational action through knowledge and understanding. The learning process is a cycle of action and reflection, that is, doing and thinking, performing and conversing. What is being learned, made more effective, and disseminated are routines for conducting work that accomplishes goals. Routines evolve over time as individuals get experience with tasks, people come and go, technologies change, priorities and policies shift, and best practices are shared (Davis & Daley, 2008).

Valencia *et al.*, (2010) noted that in this ever-changing climate, the organizations that succeed are those which can continuously transform and adapt to the new circumstances, that is, those which can adopt characteristics of a learning organization, this is equally true for a school. For the school in particular, the ability to learn is essential since knowledge and skills can rapidly become obsolete due to the continuous evolution in curriculum. This is crucial for both employee satisfaction and the overall quality of education. The transformation of enterprises and organizations into learning organizations has been proposed as a key strategy for improving their effectiveness and efficiency.

There are a multitude of definitions of what constitutes organizational learning, but there are also a few major convergent factors among them. Continuous learning and improvement have been put forward as important themes, and Garvin and Lewis, 2005 propose the importance of creation, acquisition, and transfer of knowledge. Senge and Molainen, (1995), mention individual, team, and organizational learning anchored in concrete values, visions, and goals, as well as change and transformation.

Armstrong and Foley, (2002) refer, in turn, to the appropriate processes and cultural and structural facets that support learning and development. In line with these themes, there is a growing understanding that the dimensions of a learning organization encompass some basic elements of leadership, strategy, participative policymaking, continuous learning,

dialogue and inquiry, team learning, empowerment, and facilitating processes and structures.

Scholars have suggested that organizational learning occurs at three levels: the individual, the group and the organization (Crossan *et al.*, 1995, 1999; Marsick and Watkins, 2003). Correspondingly, seven distinct but interrelated dimensions of a learning organization have been proposed (Marsick and Watkins, 2003; Yang, 2003; Yang *et al.*, 2004). The individual level is composed of two dimensions: continuous learning represents an organization's effort to create learning opportunities for all of its members. Dialogue and inquiry refers to an organization's effort to create a culture of questioning, feedback and experimentation. These two dimensions represent learning at the individual level. Team Learning is reflected in work processes related to teams' goal setting, information sharing and collaboration, and reflects the organization's efforts in relation to these aspects.

Embedded systems indicate efforts to establish systems to capture and share learning. System connections reflect the connection between the internal and external environments. Empowerment signifies an organization's process to create and share a collective vision and use feedback from its members on the gap between the current status and the new vision. Providing leadership for learning deals with leaders' strategic thinking about how to use learning to create change and to move the organization in new directions. These four latter dimensions represent organizational-level learning. The development of organizational learning requires strength in all these aspects (Marsick and Watkins, 2003; Yang, 2003; Yang *et al.*, 2004).

According to Marsick and Watkins, 2003 a learning organization has two components; the first represents the people who comprise an organization, and the second represents the structures and culture created by the social institution of the organization. There are four levels of a learning organization: I) the individual level, which is composed of two dimensions of organizational learning, namely continuous learning and dialogue and inquiry; ii) the team or group level, which is reflected by team learning and collaboration; iii) the organizational level, which has two dimensions of organizational learning, namely embedded systems and empowerment; and iv) the global level, which consists of two

dimensions of organizational learning, namely systems connection and strategic leadership. In order to move towards the desired goal or outcome, an organization has to both work with people at the individual and group level, as well as create facilitative structures to support and capture learning

According to Yang *et al.*, 2004, although individual human beings are naturally programmed to learn, organizations are not. For example, learning may be inhibited by adherence to traditions or bosses who insist that “this is the way we do things around here”. Most learning that goes on in organizations is local, as individuals or groups perfect their skills and cope with the constraints and costs of dealing with other groups or the system. Local learning is often hard to verbalize, is closely tied to the details of the work, and is difficult to transfer (often requiring apprenticeship or moving people).

Organizations learn by creating opportunities for information flow and knowledge creation using a wide range of learning mechanisms such as after-action reviews, audits, problem investigations, performance appraisals, simulation, and benchmarking. Some of these learning mechanisms are embedded in the work routines as staff give each other verbal and non-verbal feedback. Other learning can be carried out by participants after performing a task, or by outside auditors or researchers who report their observations and insights. Organizations typically use the results of these activities to standardize work practices, make knowledge more explicit, and control learning (Marsick and Watkins, 2003).

The relationship between individual learning and organizational learning has remained a central issue for organizational Learning scholars. With regard to “who” learns, some favour a multi-level perspective, linking individual, group, and organization (Crossan *et al.*, 1999; Probst and Buchel, 1997). Approaches that yield different social perspectives on the levels debate have also been highlighted in order to provide a more multi-faceted picture of organizational Learning in work contexts Easterby-Smith *et al.*,(2000).

Examples include the “theory of situated learning” (Brown *et al.*, 1989; Lave and Wenger, 1991) which emphasizes the interaction between individual learning, practice and every-day work tasks and the theory of “communities of practice” (Brown and Duguid, 1991; Wenger, 1999) which stress the term community and social relationships

around the learner. The individual as the agent of learning has been widely apparent in Organizational learning research (Argyris and Schön, 1978) and proponents suggest that organizations learn only through individuals who learn (Hayes and Allinson, 1998; Kim, 1993; Senge, 1990). This view is shared by Simon (1991, p. 125) who asserts that “All learning takes place inside individual human heads; an organization learns in only two ways: (a) by the learning of its members, or (b) by ingesting new members who have knowledge the organizations didn’t previously have”. Indeed, for the proponents of the cognitive perspective of organizational learning, the focus of “who” learns is firmly the individual. It is individuals who learn via cognitive processes and when this learning is shared, it contributes to organizational learning. The concept of organizational learning has flourished and been defined in a wide range of literature (Levitt and March 1988; Senge, 1990; Cohen and Sproul, 1991; Argyris and Schon, 1996). However, the definitions bear some concurrent criticism. First, the concept of organisational learning is

“excessively broad, encompassing merely all organisational change ... and from various other maladies that arise from insufficient agreement among those working in the area on its key concepts and problems” (Cohen and Sproul, 1991, p. 1). Similar criticism has been raised by many other authors such as Daft and Huber (1987), Huber (1991), Dodgson (1993), Garvin (1993), Hawkins (1994), Miller (1996), and Popper and Lipshitz (2000). Second, most of the definitions appear to be complementary rather than fundamentally original or conceptually different (Matlay, 2000). The influx of literature provides overwhelming, but unclear information to both researchers and practitioners. Finally, the prevailing concept of organizational learning and learning organization bears a strong bias towards the traditional scientific approach to management and stresses the importance of system thinking and continuous improvement. A few researchers have identified the limitations of the existing framework in current industrial contexts (Lorentet *al.*, 1999; Kim and Mauborgne, 1999; Wang and Ahmed, 2001). There is a need to review the existing literature to explicate understanding of the organizational learning concept and practices and essentially upgrade the concept to conform to the requirements of current industrial developments.

There are two factors which seem to have moved organizational learning from being a subject for serious academic study to a hot board room topic in the West: the pace of change and the competitive threat posed by globalization.

There appears to be almost universal agreement that the pace of change is accelerating as never before and that organizations have to chart their way through an increasingly complex environment. Organizations are having to cope with social and economic changes, rapid developments in technology, situations where customers and suppliers can be both competitors and allies, and a change in emphasis from quantity to quality and from products to services. To cope with this growing complexity, organizations are recognizing the need to acquire and utilize increasing amounts of knowledge if they are to make the changes necessary to remain competitive (Chawla and Renesch, 1995; Lam, 2000). As Pautzke (1989, p. 2, quoted in Probst and Buchel, 1997, p. 5) states: "Careful cultivation of the capacity to learn in the broadest sense, i.e. the capacity both to acquire knowledge and to develop practical abilities, seems to offer a realistic way of tackling the pressing problems of our time".

The second and very much related factor which has generated such interest in organizational learning is the increase in competitive pressures brought about by globalization. In the 1970s and 1980s, this was epitomized by penetration of Western markets by Japanese corporations. In attempting to explain and/or combat their success, many commentators argued that one of the main strengths of Japanese companies was the speed with which they could gather information on markets and competitors and disseminate and act upon this information internally (Nonaka, 1988; Pascale and Athos, 1982). This ability to learn, adapt and develop also extended to their commitment to continuous improvement, in processes as well as products, both internally and jointly with customers and suppliers (Laage-Hellman, 1997; Sako and Sato, 1997). It was this ability to translate a commitment to individual learning into organizational learning which gave the Japanese such a fearsome reputation for producing the right product, in the right time and at the right price (Hedlund and Nonaka, 1993; Nonaka, 1988; Ouchi, 1981; Whitehill, 1991). This idea, that the promotion of collective learning is crucial to organizational success, has not only led to the upsurge in interest in organizational

learning, but, by combining Western and Eastern concepts, it provides a new approach to managing organizations. For these reasons, Probst and Buchel (1997, p. 1) argue that:

“Organizational learning offers an alternative paradigm by which systems can change, thus permitting us to redefine the economy and society”.

Argyris (1999), Easterby-Smith (1997), Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2000) and Tsang (1997), and others have argued that there are major disagreements and divisions between those advocating and/or studying organizational learning. Nevertheless, there are also four common propositions that underpin the concept of organizational learning. These include:

P1. In order to survive, an organization must learn at least as fast as its environment changes. That is to say, an organization’s ability to keep pace with changes in its environment is dependent on its ability to learn.

P2. The degree to which an organization needs to move away from traditional forms of learning to organizational learning is dependent on the degree of instability (change) in its environment.

P3. In the past, maintaining alignment with the organization’s environment was the responsibility of a few senior managers; however, the environment is now changing so fast that it is beyond the ability of a small élite of managers to keep pace with the necessary changes.

P4. The entire workforce needs to be involved in identifying the need for change and implementing it, which in turn requires them to be involved in learning, if the organization is to keep aligned with its environment.

2.2 The challenges related to Organizational Learning

Many difficulties regarding the assessment of organizational learning lie in the fact that the abundance of instruments for assessing and measuring them, applied to a large number of settings, each instrument with their own theoretical background. Moreover, these instruments have mainly been developed for, and tested in, high-income settings, resulting in a lack of well-established and/or validated instruments for low- and middle-income settings (Easterby-Smith et al., 2000)

Leadership challenges, leaders face problems in schools where organizational learning practices that support individual expertise and autonomy can also inhibit information flow and collective learning (Marsick & Watkins, 2003) The task of caring for students with unique combinations of needs is complex and ever changing, the knowledge base continues to grow, technology advances, parents demand lower costs. Schools organizations are adept at local learning, but many teachers resist standards and guidelines at the organizational level as infringements on their professional standing.

Standardization also can drive out innovation. Even the best schools have ad hoc work practices that vary from department to department and tend to lionize teachers who exemplify the individualistic culture. However, the kind of standardization that is needed is not telling teachers how to operate, but rather developing systems of communication and work practices that ensure that students get the right education at the right time, Such organizational discipline has often eluded the quality of teachers' innovative nature (Easterby-Smith et al., 2000)

Schools face particular barriers to systemic organizational learning from powerful status differences that inhibit open inquiry and collaborative learning. These barriers may be surmountable when committed individuals and organizations take action on local opportunities to produce small wins. However, industry wide attention by opinion leaders to the need for and the barriers to learning may also be required to enable substantial change to occur. The trust and safety needed to engage open participation in a learning process is hard to build. It is tempting to take the advice of legal experts and try to avoid

giving out any risky information (Armstrong & Foley, 2002). The idea that organizations learn is not a new one. If we fast-forward from the Industrial Revolution to the present day, the difference between the large and complex organizations of today and the small and crude bodies that existed in the late eighteenth century is staggering. No one can doubt that our knowledge about how to run modern organizations and the knowledge that resides in them has increased enormously. However, the difference between this type of organizational learning and that identified by the organizational learning movement is significant. Since the Industrial Revolution, there have been two main characteristics of the collection and retention of knowledge within organizations: first, attempts to remove knowledge from workers, and second, the acquisition of knowledge by managers. These twin developments lay at the center of the Classical approach to running organizations (Taylor, 1911a, b; Fayol, 1949; Weber, 1946, 1947). The driving force behind it was that knowledge is power and that legitimate power, and therefore control, should reside only with managers (Rose, 1988). This is not to say that organizations have not and do not put a great deal of effort into developing their employees' skills and competencies. However, as the job design movement has shown, increasing an employee's skills and competencies does not necessarily result in a reduction in managerial power or a lessening of the tight control over what they do (Kelly, 1982; Pruijt, 1997). Many writers, particularly Argyris (1990), recognize that this traditional approach to learning is a major block to promoting organizational learning. The failings of this centralization of learning provide the rationale for organizational learning. It is argued that the environment is changing so rapidly, and the responses needed are so wide and varied, that organizations cannot wait for a few senior managers to identify what needs changing; by the time they have recognized the need for change, the opportunity will have passed (Wilson, 1992). Indeed, some writers (Bateson, 1972; Revans, 1982) contend that it is only by ensuring that the rate of learning is equal to, or greater than, the rate of change in the environment that organizations can ensure survival. This of course provides the rationale for *P1*. The issue is not solely the speed of change; it also involves the frequency and magnitude of change. It is the link between the speed, frequency and magnitude of change in the environment and the need to learn which provides the foundation for *P2*, i.e. the degree to

which an organization needs to move away from traditional forms of learning depends upon the speed and nature of change in its environment.

Nevertheless, though the above provides the rationale for organizational learning, it does not bring us any nearer to defining what it is. Perhaps the most concise and simple definition is that learning means getting everyone in the organization to accept change (Stata, 1989). However, this is somewhat simplistic. As Friedlander (1984) points out, whilst learning enables an individual to exercise choice in how and whether to change, it may not necessarily result in any observable changes in behavior. Nevis *et al.* (1995) state that the process of learning is very complex and does not occur in a linear progression but can take place in planned and informal, intentional and unintentional ways. Indeed, Nystrom and Starbuck (1984) contend that before organizations and individuals can adopt new behaviors they must first “unlearn” past behaviors and processes with which they have become familiar, in order to change established patterns. Most writers, certainly of the skeptical approach, see organizational learning as a complex process which unfolds over time, and link it with knowledge acquisition and improved performance (Garvin, 1993). However, amongst those studying the concept, there are a number of significant differences (Easterby-Smith, 1997; Tsang, 1997).

Garvin (1993), however, is as much concerned with what prevents organizational learning as with what it is. He maintains that unless there are changes to the way work is organized and performed, significant improvement or learning is unlikely to occur and organizational survival cannot be ensured. Garvin’s concerns chime with the work of

Bateson (1972), Argyris and Schön (1978) and Burgoyne (1995) in which they articulate the characteristics of single, double and triple loop learning and their potential for blocking or promoting change.

Briefly, single loop learning allows individuals to respond to changes in the internal and external environment by detecting errors and modifying strategies, but only within the existing norms of the organization. Burgoyne (1995) describes this as the lowest level of learning, in which habits are not only learned but also become resistant to change and future learning. In describing double loop learning, however, Argyris and Schon (1978)

draw a distinction between the process of learning and the progression to learning to learn. Complex systems (such as the human brain) have the capacity to reflect and inquire into previous contexts for learning or failure to learn and can question the appropriateness of their actions. They may then devise alternative approaches based on new assumptions and norms to correct error.

Under double loop learning, Garratt (1995) maintains, people act as learning agents by reading and understanding the environment, developing appropriate responses suited to new requirements, thereby enabling the organization to be adaptive and to manage change effectively. Though this allows individuals and organizations to adapt to their environment, Burgoyne (1995) suggests that with triple loop learning, an organization can create its own environment at least as much as it adapts to it. He considers that this is reflected in the ability of the organization to stabilize the context in which it operates and/or its relationship with it. It is, therefore, only at this level of learning that the concept of the learning organization can fully emerge, because it is only at this level that it is possible to challenge profoundly interpretations of existing experience, and traditional interpretations and understanding of the management of people and work organization.

Moving from a traditional approach to learning to an organizational approach is going to involve significant changes in how organizations are managed and how managers behave, and indeed changes to their authority and power. As Miller (1993) and Nystrom and Starbuck (1984) argued, managers are unlikely to find such changes straightforward, easy or painless. Garratt (1999, p. 205) makes a similar point: “A few, often senior, people can see the concept as highly challenging and unnerving. They are concerned that existing organizational power balances may be upset by too much “transparency”

2.3 Strategies for improving organizational learning

Despite these very real barriers to the development of organizational learning, its promoters, such as Grundy (1994), suggest that islands of learning can be created within organizations, which, over time, may develop into a critical mass of learning throughout the company. Grundy (1994, p. 24) argues that while the learning organization may be a distant vision for some, there are opportunities for companies committed to the approach to move forward by “developing a network of islands of strategic learning” which will contribute to individual and organizational development. Given that the degree of resistance/receptivity will vary from organization to organization, it is also likely that the process of developing organizational learning will differ from organization to organization as their circumstances differ. This is a point made by Burgoyne (1992), who noted that organizations are highly individualistic, and each will have its own interpretation of the meaning of what it is to be a learning organization. Probst and Buchel (1997) also acknowledge this point and assert that there are at least four different approaches organizations can take to promote learning: learning by developing a strategy, learning by developing a structure, learning by developing a culture and learning by developing human resources.

2.4 Improving organizational learning through leadership training

Leadership is one of the most important organizational functions that influence the conditions for collective learning (Aragon-Correa *et al.*, 2007; Beattie, 2006; Berson *et al.*, 2006; García-Morales *et al.*, 2012; Gomez and Ranft, 2003; Vera and Crossan, 2004; Yukl, 2009), as it constitutes a process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to learn and accomplish shared goals in the organization (Berson *et al.*, 2006). This influence has been suggested to be both direct and indirect, through leaders’ direct actions and communication with employees or through their role in creating favorable conditions for learning and implementing appropriate supporting activities and structures, respectively (Yukl, 2009; Yukl and Lepsinger, 2004).

Organizational support, the provision of guidance on how to integrate learning across work groups and the institutionalization of learning into the organization’s practices and policies (Berson *et al.*, 2006) Furthermore, there is evidence that leaders can increase

employees' developmental readiness, or ability and motivation for learning, by influencing the function and structure of learning networks and by actively helping to diffuse and institutionalize learning and new knowledge (Hannah and Lester, 2009).

Transformational leadership has been specifically pointed out to play a vital role in improving organizational learning (Vera and Crossan, 2004; Yukl, 2009). Transformational leadership is a vision-based approach to leadership that builds on the importance of a strong identification with the leader and the work unit where the leadership takes place (Bass and Riggio, 2006). The leader acts as a role model who inspires and motivates employees to perform beyond expectations and encourages them to go beyond their own personal goals and interests for the collective good (Bass, 1999; Bass and Riggio, 2006). The concept of transformational leadership is composed of the following four dimensions (Bass, 1985): (1) idealized influence (the leader acts as a role model and gains trust and respect of his or her followers); (2) inspirational motivation (the leader formulates a clear and attractive vision and hold high expectations that followers will achieve more than they thought possible and ultimately reach the vision);

(3) intellectual stimulation (the leader encourages followers to make their own decisions, to find new ways of working and to be creative and innovative); and (4) individualized consideration (the leader spends time coaching followers and provides personal attention to their development and achievements).

Encouraging transformational leadership, this has shown to be to significantly improve both structural (organizational learning mechanism) and cultural (organizational learning values) learning components (Amitay *et al.*, 2005). It has also been demonstrated that transformational leadership can improve organizational learning by promoting intellectual stimulation and providing inspirational motivation and self-confidence among employees (Coad and Berry, 1998). It can also generate greater awareness and acceptance of the organizational goals and foster a shared vision and re-orientate learning activities and the construction of work teams. Transformational leadership can also allow leaders to commit to learning and provide what is needed to overcome internal skepticism and external difficulties to establish learning within the organization (Wick and León,

1995). These studies offer important suggestions on how leadership training can improve learning at the individual, team and organization levels (Yukl, 2009).

According to (Yukl, 2009), it takes a combination of values, skills, and structures to support comprehensive systemic organizational learning. Organizations that value long term rather than short term performance and care about a wider range of outcomes (performance, safety, quality, environment) and stakeholders (shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, community, society) are likely to recognize the need to learn and take the time to learn. Such organizations cultivate a variety of skills or disciplines to support learning, including acknowledgement of doubt, collaborative inquiry, and personal and shared visioning, conflict management, team learning, and systems thinking. Numerous specific learning mechanisms can be used to stimulate creativity, bring in new information (for example, benchmarking, exchanges of personnel), experiment with new routines, give and discuss feedback, and disseminate new ideas. Organizations committed to learning build supportive structures including information systems, training programs, meetings, and coaching orientated managers who create psychological safety and invite feedback and participation.

The research clearly shows that the predominant conditions accounting for variations in organizational learning between secondary schools are a head teacher skilled in transformational leadership and administrators and teachers who are actively involved in the core work of the school. In brief, leadership that makes a difference to a high school having a community focus, staff feeling valued and OL is transformational and distributive. Having a community focus means that the teachers perceive the school as having productive working relations with the community and that school's administrators are sensitive to the community, work with community representatives and incorporate community values in the school (Amitayet *al.*, 2005)

Amitayet *al.*, 2005, Wick and León, 1995, Yukl, 2009 observed that the head teacher who is transformational focuses on:

Individual support, providing moral support, shows appreciation for the work of individual staff and takes their opinion into account when making decisions.

Culture, promoting an atmosphere of caring and trust among staff, sets a respectful tone for interaction with students and demonstrates a willingness to change his or her practices in the light of new understandings.

Structure, establishing a school structure that promotes participative decision making, supports delegation and distributive leadership and encourages teacher autonomy for making decisions.

Vision and goals, working toward whole staff consensus in establishing school priorities and communicates these priorities and goals to students and staff giving a sense of overall purpose.

Performance expectation, having high expectations for teachers and for students and expects staff to be effective and innovative.

Intellectual Stimulation, encouraging staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it, facilitates opportunities for staff to learn from each other and models continual learning in his or her own practice.

Burgoyne (1995) suggests that with triple loop learning, an organization can create its own environment at least as much as it adapts to it. He considers that this is reflected in the ability of the organization to stabilize the context in which it operates and/or its relationship with it. It is, therefore, only at this level of learning that the concept of the learning organization can fully emerge, because it is only at this level that it is possible to challenge profoundly interpretations of existing experience, and traditional interpretations and understanding of the management of people and work organization. This view echoes arguments put forward by social constructionists that organizations can create and modify their own environments through the interaction, reflection and learning of their members. Their perspective challenges the traditional view that learning takes place within the heads of individuals or in organizational systems and structures. Instead, they maintain that knowledge is created through conversations and interactions between people (Burnes, 2000; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2000; Wenger, 1998). It is the insights of the social constructionists and the perceived benefits of, and need for, double loop and triple loop learning that underpin *P3* – that the requirement for organizations to adapt continuously to changes in the environment is such that senior managers will be swamped if they

attempt to do it all themselves. Nor, as a number of writers have argued, is it just a matter of involving a few more people in the learning loop; instead, the nature of the challenges facing organizations is such that the responsibility for learning and change must lie with everyone in the organization, and not just a few more people (Chawla and Renesch, 1995; Probst and Buchel, 1997). It is this which provides the rationale for *P4*. Huber (1991) advocates a four-step, systemic approach to organizational learning which encompasses: knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation and organizational memory. He sees this as a process of making knowledge institutionally available, as opposed to its being the property of management and/or select groups. Senge (1990, p. 73) also stresses the systemic approach to learning. He argues that there are five inter-related disciplines which need to be fostered among individuals and groups in order to create a milieu for learning, which are as follows: personal mastery; mental models; shared visions; team learning; and the fifth and most important discipline, which is a capacity for systems thinking, “to see patterns where others see only events and forces to react to”. In a similar fashion, many writers offer their own learning systems

(see Burgoyne, 1992; Garratt, 1995; Garvin, 1993). However, Dixon (1994) places especial emphasis not only on the collection and collective interpretation of information, but also stresses that giving individuals and groups the authority to act on this collective interpretation requires changes to traditional managerial roles and the creation of a participative and empowering organizational culture.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that the researcher used for this study. It shows research design, population, the sampling procedure, sample size, measurement of variables, reliability and validity as well as the anticipated challenges during the study.

3.1 Research design

A researcher needs to adopt a research design that is suitable to acquire and analyze data (Babbie, 2010). Accordingly, a cross sectional design was adopted for this study where the researcher collected data once without going back in subsequent times. The study adopted the quantitative approach for collecting and analyzing statistical data. The cross-research design was used because of the limited time as the student had to complete the study within a short time frame.

3.2 Target population

The target population of the study included the teaching staff at Iganga Parents Secondary. The school has 70 teaching staff (Chairman, Board of Directors AGM report, 2012), Chairman, Board of Directors AGM report, 2015 who were considered for the data collection during the study.

3.3 Sampling size

The sample was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample size determination. Accordingly, 59 respondents will be selected. The researcher gave out 59 questionnaires and she was able to collect 56 questionnaires representing a response rate of 94%.

3.4 Sampling method

The researcher used simple random where respondents were randomly and proportionately selected from the population. This helped the researcher to give each respondent an equal chance of being selected so that the results are more generalizable.

3.5 Data Collection methods

The researcher used a predetermined questionnaire to collect data from the teachers at Iganga Parents' Secondary School. The research items asked the respondents to determine the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statements developed to examine the nature and challenges of organizational learning as well as the strategies to improve organizational learning.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Faculty Graduate and Research Studies, MUBS and she presented this letter together with her application letter to Iganga Parent's secondary school seeking permission to collect data from the school. Upon being given permission for data collection she used a research Assistant to collect data from the respondents.

3.7 Measurement of Variables

The study questionnaire contained statements that the respondents required to answer, stating the degree to which they agree or disagree. A five-point scale with Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, not sure=3, Agree=4 and Strongly Agree=5 will adopted for the study variables. The nature of organizational learning, challenges of organizational learning and the strategies to improve organizational learning were measured using a tool adopted from Marsick and Watkins, (2003).

3.8 Reliability and validity analysis

3.8.1 Reliability analysis

Reliability is the degree to which a research tool produces stable and consistent results (Phelan & Wren, 2005). Reliability of the questionnaire was determined by computing Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (Table 1). According to Cronbach (1951), the field results obtained for each construct can only be regarded reliable if the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha of 0.7 or better is obtained. The results are contained in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability results

| Construct | No. of items | Cronbach`s Alpha |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Organizational learning | 16 | 0.797 |
| Challenges to organizational learning | 5 | 0.755 |
| Strategies to organization learning | 8 | 0.718 |

Source: (Primary Data)

3.7.2 Validity analysis

To ensure validity, the questionnaire was designed and discussed with the supervisors and experts in the area of study. Items that were found not meaningful were deleted. Content Validity Index was used to determine the validity of instrument (Table 1). It involved designing the questions within the instrument in a response in a “YES/NO” which were the distributed to experts to express whether each question presented under each of the constructs measured the item under which it was presented. The obtained responses were computed using the CVI formula (K/N , where K =Number of items considered relevant and N = Number of items considered in the instruments). Amin (2005) highlights that for an instrument to be considered valid, the computed CVI of 0.7 (70%) or better should be obtained.

3.8 Data processing and analysis

Data was compiled, sorted, edited and coded to ensure quality, accuracy and completeness. It was then entered into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), version 20 for analysis. Descriptive statistics were obtained for the bio data of the respondents while mean and standard deviation were determined to answer objective one to three. The unit of analysis and unit of inquiry was the individual.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethics and principles are important for any research such that after the study, the respondents either remain in their original positions or in a better position than they were before the study. This called for the researcher to observe certain ethical principles such as ensuring anonymity of the participants, respect of intellectual property and authorship,

being careful to avoid errors and negligence that could have affected the study, the participants and their organization.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the findings

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Frequency tables were used to summarize demographic characteristics obtained in relation to the individuals and the organization where the study was conducted.

4.2.1 Bio data of the respondents

The study obtained information regarding gender, marital status of the respondents, age bracket, level of education, working experience of the respondents who participated in the study. The obtained results were summarized in a table and the results analyzed using frequency and percentage values as indicated below:

Table 2: Gender of the respondent

| | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Male | 40 | 71.4 | 71.4 |
| Female | 16 | 28.6 | 100 |
| Total | 56 | 100 | |

Source: (Primary data)

Table 2 indicates that majority of the respondents were male (71%) compared with 29% who were female. These findings imply that most staff employed in Iganga parents' secondary school were male. This could be attributed to the nature of work at school which require more male than female

Table 3: Marital status of the respondents

| Status | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative percent |
|---------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Single | 23 | 41 | 41 |
| Married | 33 | 59 | 100 |
| Total | 56 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

Table 3 above shows that majority of the respondents were married (59%) compared with 41% who were single. These findings imply that most teachers at Iganga parents' secondary school were married. This could be attributed to the need nature of their tasks which require that most teachers should be married, perhaps for moral reasons.

Table 4: Age of respondents

| Age bracket | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Below 30 years | 22 | 40 | 40 |
| 30 - 39 years | 17 | 30 | 70 |
| 40-49 years | 17 | 30 | 100 |
| 50 – 59 years | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 56 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Primary data

Table 4 above shows that majority of the respondents were below 30 years (40%), followed by those between 30 – 40 years (30%), those between 40 and 49 years were 17 representing (30%) and no respondent was above 50 years. This means that the school has a young, vibrant and energetic workforce which can easily embrace learn individually and translate the individual learning into organization learning.

Table 5: Education of the respondents

| Age bracket | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Diploma | 19 | 34 | 34 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 33 | 58 | 92 |
| Master's Degree | 2 | 4 | 96 |
| Others | 2 | 4 | 100 |
| Total | 56 | 100 | |

Source: Primary data

Table 5 above shows that majority of the respondents were bachelor's degree holder (58%), these were followed by diploma holders representing (34%), master's degree holders were only (4%) while respondents who held other qualifications were only (4%).

This means that the school's workforce (teaching staff) is highly educated, probably suggesting that this could be a deliberate effort by the school to promote organizational learning among its teaching staff.

Table 6: Years worked in school

| Age bracket | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Less than 5 years | 21 | 37.5 | 37.5 |
| Between 5 – 10 years | 20 | 35.7 | 73.2 |
| Above 10 years | 15 | 26.8 | 100 |
| Total | 56 | 100 | |

Source: Primary data

Table 6 above shows that majority of the respondents (38%) have spent less than 5 years teaching at the school. Those who have spent 5-10 years were 36 % while those who have spent more than 10 years were only 26%. This implies that the school could be experiencing a higher rate of staff turnover which could be the reason for the low level of organization learning.

4.3 Results relating to the set objectives

The following were the objectives of the study

To examine the nature of organizational learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School

To examine identify the challenges related to Organizational Learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School

To examine the strategies for improving Organizational Learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School

4.3.1 Nature of organizational learning

Table 7: Nature of organizational learning

| | | N | Mean | SD |
|-----|---|----|------|------|
| 1. | The school frequently holds meetings to discuss its activities | 56 | 4.48 | 0.63 |
| 2. | The school uses teamwork for learning purpose | 56 | 4.36 | 0.59 |
| 3. | The school employees are encouraged to create synergy by sharing knowledge and ideas | 56 | 4.21 | 0.83 |
| 4. | The school has been able to identify, gather, and apply new knowledge | 56 | 4.21 | 0.73 |
| 5. | The school identifies and gathers new knowledge | 56 | 4.20 | 0.77 |
| 6. | The school uses learning as a source of competitive advantage | 56 | 4.20 | 0.96 |
| 7. | The school tries out new ways of working with employees | 56 | 4.16 | 0.91 |
| 8. | The school easily copes with the changes in the environment | 56 | 4.09 | 0.90 |
| 9. | The school actively encourages employees and customers to know if they are wrong and how they can improve | 56 | 4.07 | 1.02 |
| 10. | The school employees are encouraged about new and novel ways of working | 56 | 4.03 | 0.93 |
| 11. | The school employees are encouraged to engage in new patterns of thinking | 56 | 3.65 | 1.10 |
| 12. | The school often organizes internal training for the teachers | 56 | 3.95 | 1.10 |
| 13. | The employees are encouraged to generate actions that contribute to the school's interest | 56 | 3.84 | 1.02 |
| 14. | School strategy is developed through collection of various ideas | 56 | 3.79 | 1.06 |
| 15. | There is transformation and renewal of the school goals and objectives | 56 | 3.66 | 1.03 |
| 16. | The teachers are dedicated to collecting and dissemination of improvement propositions | 56 | 3.51 | 1.22 |

Source: Primary data

The results in table 7 represent the responses from the respondents concerning the first objective.

The result on the first statement about the school frequently holds meetings to discuss its activities show a mean value of 4.48, SD of 0.63. This suggests that when there is frequency in holding meetings among staff members, organizational learning improves. Respondents also agreed to the second item that the school uses teamwork for learning purpose (mean=4.36, SD=0.59). This implies that where there is team, organizational learning takes place. Respondents also agreed that the school employees are encouraged to create synergy by sharing knowledge and ideas (Mean= 4.21, SD=0.83). This implies that sharing knowledge and ideas promotes organizational learning. Additionally, respondents agreed that the school has been able to identify, gather, and apply new knowledge (mean=4.21, SD=0.73), an implication that where new knowledge is identified, and applied there is also organizational learning. Further to the above items, respondents agreed that the school uses learning as a source of competitive advantage (4.20, SD=0.96). This suggests that for organizational learning to take place, learning should be prioritised as a source of competitive advantage. Respondents also agreed to the statement that the school tries out new ways of working with employees (mean=4.16, SD=0.91), an implication that trying out new ways of working with employees encourages organizational learning. It was also agreed by the respondents that the school easily copes with the changes in the environment (mean=4.09, SD=0.90), suggesting that coping with environmental changes encourages organizational learning to flourish. On the statement that the school actively encourages employees and customers to know if they are wrong and how they can improve, respondents agreed with a mean value =4.07, and SD=1.02. Respondents also agreed that the school employees are encouraged about new and novel ways of working (mean=4.03, SD=0.93). This implies that encouraging new ways of working is proof of organizational learning in an organization.

Respondents however were indifferent to the following items since they were not sure; the school employees are encouraged to engage in new patterns of thinking (mean=3.65, SD=1.10), The school often organizes internal training for the teachers (mean=3.95, SD=1.10), the employees are encouraged to generate actions that contribute to the school's interest (mean=3.84, SD,SD=1.02), the school strategy is developed through collection of various ideas (3.75, SD=1.06), there is transformation and renewal of the

school goals and objectives (mean=3.66, SD= 1.03), and the teachers are dedicated to collecting and dissemination of improvement propositions (mean=3.51, SD=1.22)

From the findings, it appears Organizational learning is relatively good at Iganga Parents Secondary School because most respondents strongly agreed with objective one of the study that the school holds meetings, they work in teams, employees are encouraged to share knowledge and ideas, using learning as a competitive advantage etc.

4.3.2 Challenges of organization learning

Table 8: Challenges to organizational learning

| | | N | Mean | SD |
|----|--|----|------|-------|
| 1. | Employees are not sufficiently involved in decision making | 56 | 4.89 | 0.31 |
| 2. | The school employees we are not aware of the learning values | 56 | 3.96 | 0.71 |
| 3. | The staff have got negative attitudes towards learning for change | 56 | 3.82 | 1.06 |
| 4. | Due to lack of strategic leadership, this has hindered organizational learning at the school | 56 | 3.66 | 1.06 |
| 5. | There is lack of organizational support at the school | 56 | 3.44 | 1.41 |
| 6. | There is no room for staff to express their ideas | 56 | 4.25 | 0.500 |
| 7. | Sustainable organizational learning is lacking because of poor communication | 56 | 3.75 | 0.92 |
| 8. | The school has no culture of sharing its vision and mission statement with its employees | 56 | 4.00 | 0.82 |

Source: Primary data

The results in table 8 represent the responses from the respondents concerning the second objective. The result on the first statement that employees are not sufficiently involved in decision making show a mean value of 4.89 and SD of 0.31. This suggests that employees are not involved in decision making which could have hindered organizational learning. On the second statement that the school employees are not aware of the learning values show a mean value of 3.96 and SD of 0.71, meaning that employees are not aware of the learning values of the school and this has also hindered organizational learning in

the school. On the statement that the staff have got a negative attitude towards learning for change show a mean value of 3.82 and SD of 1.06. This implies that employees agreed that their attitude towards organizational learning is negative hence hindering organizational learning. Responses on the statement that due to lack of strategic leadership, this has hindered organizational learning at the school show a mean value of 3.66 and SD of 1.06. This implies that employees agreed that there is no strategic leadership to promote organizational learning at the school. Responses about the statement that there is lack of organizational support at the school yielded a mean value of 3.44 and SD of 1.41. This implies that respondents were not sure whether the school does not support organizational learning. Responses on the statement that there is no room for staff to express their ideas, yielded a mean value of 4.25 and SD of 0.50 implying that respondents agreed that lack of room to freely express ideas is a hindrance towards organizational learning. The results also show that on the statement that sustainable organizational learning is lacking because of poor communication, respondents agreed as it yielded a mean value of 3.75 and SD of 0.92. This implies that poor communication at the school has hindered sustainable organizational learning. Responses on the statement that the school has no culture of sharing its vision and mission statement with its employees yielded a mean value of 4.0 and SD of 0.82, implying that respondents agreed to absence of a culture of sharing the school's vision and mission as a challenge towards organizational learning.

From these findings, it appears Organizational learning is affected by several factors such as employees not sufficiently being involved in decision making, employees not being aware of the learning values, the staff having a negative attitude towards learning for change and lack of knowledge about the existence of strategic leadership to promote organizational learning at the school.

4.3.3 The strategies for improving Organizational Learning

Table 9: The strategies for improving Organizational Learning

| | | N | Mean | SD |
|---|--|----|------|------|
| 1 | The school should promote participatory decision making | 56 | 4.53 | 0.54 |
| 2 | There should be monitoring and evaluation of the school performance to improve organization learning | 56 | 4.46 | 0.71 |
| 3 | The school should be flexible for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change | 56 | 4.41 | 0.76 |
| 4 | The school should develop a culture of shared vision and mission statement among its staff | 56 | 4.29 | 0.76 |
| 5 | Management should provide support to promote organizational learning | 56 | 4.30 | 0.77 |
| 6 | There should be effective communication to sustain organization leaning at the school | 56 | 4.21 | 0.78 |
| 7 | There should be role clarity for staff during organizational learning | 56 | 4.03 | 0.86 |

Source: Primary data

The results in table 9 represent the responses from the respondents concerning the third objective. The results on the first statement that the school should promote participatory decision making show a mean value of 4.53 and SD of 0.54. This suggests that respondents agreed that involving employees in decision making is a prerequisite for promoting organizational learning in the school. Responses on the second statement that there should be monitoring and evaluation of the school performance to improve organization learning yielded a mean value of 4.41 and SD of 0.71, this suggest respondents agreed that monitoring and evaluating school performance is an avenue of promoting organizational learning. Responses on the statement that the school should be flexible for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change show a mean value of 4.41

and SD of 0.76. This means that responses agreed that flexibility for freely expressing ideas will help to enhance organization learning.

Responses on the statement that the school should develop a culture of shared vision and mission among its staff show a mean value of 4.29 and SD of 0.76, implying that a culture of shared vision and mission among staff promotes organizational learning.

Responses about the statement that management should provide support to promote organizational learning yielded a mean value of 4.30 and SD of 0.77, meaning that respondents agreed to provision of support as being in enhancing organizational learning. Respondents agreed to the statement that there should be effective communication to sustain organization learning at the school with a mean value of 4.21 and SD of 0.78. Lastly, Responses to the statement that there should be role clarity for staff during organizational learning indicate that it was agreed to with a mean value of 4.03 and SD of 0.86, meaning that clarity for staff is key in promoting organizational learning.

Basing on the study , the following are the strategies management should put in place to improve organizational learning in the school; Promoting participatory decision making, monitoring and evaluation of the school performance to improve organization learning, flexibility for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change, developing a culture of shared vision and mission statement among its staff, Management providing support to promote organizational learning, effective communication to sustain organization leaning at the school, role clarity for staff during organizational learning

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings, conclusions and recommendations arising out of the findings of the study. The chapter also shows the areas for further study.

5.1 Discussion.

5.1.1 Nature of Organisational learning

The result on the first statement about the school frequently holds meetings to discuss its activities show a mean value of 4.48, SD of 0.63. This suggests that when there is frequency in holding meetings among staff members, organizational learning improves.

Respondents also agreed to the second item that the school uses teamwork for learning purpose (mean=4.36, SD=0.59). This implies that where there is team, organizational learning takes place. This finding is supported by Senge and Molainen, (1995), mention individual, team, and organizational learning anchored in concrete values, visions, and goals, as well as change and transformation.

Respondents also agreed that the school employees are encouraged to create synergy by sharing knowledge and ideas (Mean= 4.21, SD=0.83). This implies that sharing knowledge and ideas promotes organizational learning. This is in line with Davis and Daley, (2008), who said that organizational learning is a process of increasing the capacity for effective organizational action through knowledge and understanding. The learning process is a cycle of action and reflection, that is, doing and thinking, performing and conversing. What is being learned, made more effective, and disseminated are routines for conducting work that accomplishes goals. Routines evolve over time as individuals get experience with tasks, people come and go, technologies change, priorities and policies shift, and best practices are shared.

Additionally, respondents agreed that the school has been able to identify, gather, and apply new knowledge (mean=4.21, SD=0.73), an implication that where new knowledge is identified, and applied there is also organizational learning. This finding is supported by Garvin and Lewis, (2005) who propose the importance of creation, acquisition, and transfer of knowledge.

It was also agreed by the respondents that the school easily copes with the changes in the environment (mean=4.09, SD=0.90), suggesting that coping with environmental changes encourages organizational learning to flourish. This is in agreement with Valencia *et al.*, 2010 who noted that in this ever-changing climate, the organizations that succeed are those which can continuously transform and adapt to the new circumstances, that is, those which can adopt characteristics of a learning organization, this is equally true for a school. For the school in particular, the ability to learn is essential since knowledge and skills can rapidly become obsolete due to the continuous evolution in curriculum.

5.1.2 Challenges of organisational learning

The result on the first statement that employees are sufficiently involved in decision making show a mean value of 4.89 and SD of 0.31. This suggests that employees are not involved in decision making as a way of promoting organizational learning. This inhibits organizational learning yet according to Amitay *et al.*, (2005), establishing a school structure that promotes participative decision making, supports delegation and distributive leadership and encourages teacher autonomy for making decisions, resulting into organizational learning.

On the second statement that the school employees are not aware of the learning values show a mean value of 3.96 and SD of 0.71, meaning that employees are not aware of the learning values of the school and this has hindered organizational learning in the school. The implication of this study finding is that organizational learning has been hindered since employees who are aware of the learning values, vision and goals, working towards staff consensus in establishing school priorities, communicate these priorities and goals to students and staff giving a sense of overall purpose (Amitay *et al.*, 2005).

On the statement that the staff have got a negative attitude towards learning for change show a mean value of 3.82 and SD of 1.06. This implies that employees agreed that their attitude towards organizational learning is negative hence hindering organizational learning. This hinders organizational learning, strategic as well as transformational leadership has been specifically pointed out to play a vital role in improving organizational learning (Vera and Crossan, 2004; Yukl, 2009). Bass and Riggio, (2006), asserted that transformational leadership is a vision-based approach to leadership that builds on the importance of a strong identification with the leader and the work unit where the leadership takes place, absence of which hinders organizational learning.

Responses about the statement that there is lack of organizational support at the school yielded a mean value of 3.44 and SD of 1.41. This implies that respondents were in agreement that there the school does not support organizational learning. This hinders organizational learning yet the provision of guidance on how to integrate learning across work groups and the institutionalization of learning into the organization's practices and policies (Berson *et al.*, 2006) has been noted for enhancing organizational learning. It has been further observed by Hannah and Lester, (2009), that leaders can increase employees' developmental readiness, or ability and motivation for learning, by influencing the function and structure of learning networks and by actively helping to diffuse and institutionalize learning and new knowledge.

5.1.3 The strategies for improving Organizational Learning

The results on the first statement that the school should promote participatory decision making show a mean value of 4.53 and SD of 0.54. This suggests that respondents agreed that involving employees in decision making is a prerequisite for promoting organizational learning in the school. This is in agreement with Armstrong & Foley, 2002 who observed that there is a growing understanding that the dimensions of organizational learning encompass some basic elements of leadership, strategy, participative policymaking, continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, empowerment, and facilitating processes and structures.

Responses on the second statement that there should be monitoring and evaluation of the school performance to improve organization learning yielded a mean value of 4.41 and SD of 0.71, this suggest respondents agreed that monitoring and evaluating school performance is an avenue of promoting organizational learning.

Responses on the statement that the school should promote flexibility for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change show a mean value of 4.41 and SD of 0.76. This means that responses agreed that flexibility for freely expressing ideas will help to enhance organization learning.

Responses on the statement that the school should develop a culture of shared vision and mission among its staff show a mean value of 4.29 and SD of 0.76, implying that a culture of shared vision and mission among staff promotes organizational learning. This finding is in line with Davis and Daley, (2008) who asserted that the learning process is a cycle of action and reflection, that is, doing and thinking, performing and conversing. What is being learned, made more effective, and disseminated are routines for conducting work that accomplishes goals. Routines evolve over time as individuals get experience with tasks, people come and go, technologies change, priorities and policies shift, and best practices are shared.

Responses about the statement that management should provide support to promote organizational learning yielded a mean value of 4.30 and SD of 0.77, meaning that respondents strongly agreed to provision of support as being in enhancing organizational learning. This finding is in line with (Argyris and Schon, 1996; Huber, 1991) who said that learning and knowledge generated by individuals cannot be sustained in an organization unless they are supported by actions. They add that to develop sustained learning, ideas need to be shared, actions taken and common meaning developed. The finding are also supported by (Bersonet *al.*, 2006) who said that organizational support, the provision of guidance on how to integrate learning across work groups and the institutionalization of learning into the organization's practices and policies.

From the findings, the following strategies can be employed in a bid to promote organizational in the school. These include but not limited to promoting participatory

decision, instituting monitoring and evaluation measures of the school performance, exercising flexibility for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change.

5.2 Conclusion

The study aimed at examining organisational Learning at Iganga Parents' Secondary School. From the findings of the study, the following conclusions can be made:

As regards to the nature of organizational learning, the findings of the study indicate that there is a deliberate effort by management of the school to promote organizational learning. For example, frequently holding meetings to discuss the school activities using teamwork for learning purpose and encouraging employees to create synergy by sharing knowledge and ideas. Deliberate effort is further seen in the school identifying, gathering, and applying new knowledge, using learning as a source of competitive advantage trying out new ways of working with employees easily coping with the changes in the environment. There was also evidence that the school actively encourages employees and customers to know if they are wrong and how they can improve among others.

There was however uncertainty among the respondents as regards to the school's effort in promoting organizational learning through the following: encouraging employees to engage in new patterns of thinking, often organizing internal training for the teachers, encouraging staff to generate actions that contribute to the school's interest, developing the school strategy through collection of various ideas, transformation and renewal of the school goals and objectives as well as the teachers being dedicated to collecting and dissemination of improvement plans.

In regards to the challenges of organization learning, it can be concluded that organization learning in the school has been inhibited by several factors such as employees not sufficiently being involved in decision making, employees not being aware of the learning values, the staff having a negative attitudes towards learning for change and lack of knowledge about the existence of strategic leadership to promote organizational learning at the school, let alone employees are not being sure of there being organizational support at the school to promote organizational learning

Several strategies can be employed in a bid to promote organizational in the school. These include but not limited to promoting participatory decision, instituting monitoring and evaluation measures of the school performance, exercising flexibility for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change. In addition, development of a culture of shared vision and mission among the staff, provision of support to promote, allowing effective communication, and role clarity for staff during organizational learning can all help the school to improve organizational learning.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been suggested based on the findings

School should promote participatory decision-making involving employees in decision making as prequisite for promoting organizational learning in the school. Schools should allow employees to give their views in important matters that affect them and the students.

Schools put in place mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation of the school performance to improve organization learning. This should start with classroom teaching to regular assessment and evaluation exercises, to the termly examinations and final national examinations.

The school should promote flexibility for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change. This can be done through asking for their ideas on how to improve learning through meeting, suggestion boxes and open-door policy. The schools can exercise flexibility through giving employees autonomy, tolerating their mistakes among others

School should develop a culture of shared vision and mission among its staff to promotes organizational learning.

Management of schools should provide support to their staff to promote organizational through sponsorships for further education, allowing employees time to study, rewarding innovative ideas among others

Schools should encourage effective communication among staff to promote and sustain organization learning. This can be done through an open-door policy that encourages

each staff to freely walk in offices of top managers to bring out their ideas and views that they think can promote organizational learning.

5.4 Limitations of the study

- Some of the targeted respondents took a longer time to answer the questionnaires which affected the researcher from completing the study in time
- Some respondents lost the questionnaires given to them which made the researcher to incur more costs of printing more questionnaires.

5.5 Areas for further research

There is need to conduct other studies in the following areas of study because of the limitations of the current study:

- Organisational learning in government secondary schools since the current study was conducted a private secondary school

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

I am Nabuule Monicah, a student of Makerere University Business School pursuing a master's

Degree in Business Administration. I am currently conducting a study on Organizational Learning in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the MBA. You have been identified as one of the key respondents and I am requesting you to spare a few minutes of your time and fill in this study questionnaire. The information you provide will be used for only academic purpose and I assure you the information you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Back ground information of respondent

Gender: Male 1 Female 2

Marital status: Single 1 Married 2 Widow 3 Widower 4

Age bracket:

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60 and above |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Education qualification

| | | | | |
|---------|-------------------|-----------------|-----|--------|
| Diploma | Bachelor's Degree | Master's Degree | PhD | Others |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Years worked in the school

1) For how long have you been working for this school?

- 1-5 years
- 5-10 years
- More than 10 years

ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

Please use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements concerning organizational learning:

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Not Sure 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

Nature of organizational learning

Table 7: Nature of organizational learning

| # | Item | SD | D | NS | SA |
|-----|---|----|---|----|----|
| 1. | The school frequently holds meetings to discuss its activities | | | | |
| 2. | The school uses teamwork for learning purpose | | | | |
| 3. | The school employees are encouraged to create synergy by sharing knowledge and ideas | | | | |
| 4. | The school has been able to identify, gather, and apply new knowledge | | | | |
| 5. | The school identifies and gathers new knowledge | | | | |
| 6. | The school uses learning as a source of competitive advantage | | | | |
| 7. | The school tries out new ways of working with employees | | | | |
| 8. | The school easily copes with the changes in the environment | | | | |
| 9. | The school actively encourages employees and customers to know if they are wrong and how they can improve | | | | |
| 10. | The school employees are encouraged about new and novel ways of working | | | | |
| 11. | The school employees are encouraged to engage in new patterns of thinking | | | | |
| 12. | The school often organizes internal training for the teachers | | | | |
| 13. | The employees are encouraged to generate actions that contribute to the school's interest | | | | |
| 14. | School strategy is developed through collection of various ideas | | | | |
| 15. | There is transformation and renewal of the school goals and objectives | | | | |
| 16. | The teachers are dedicated to collecting and dissemination of improvement propositions | | | | |

| Challenges to organizational learning | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1. | Employees are not sufficiently involved in decision making | | | | |
| 2. | The school employees we are not aware of the learning values | | | | |
| 3. | The staff have got negative attitudes towards learning for change | | | | |
| 4. | Due to lack of strategic leadership, this has hindered organizational learning at the school | | | | |
| 5. | There is lack of organizational support at the school | | | | |
| 6. | There is no room for staff to express their ideas | | | | |
| 7. | Sustainable organizational learning is lacking because of poor communication | | | | |
| 8. | The school has no culture of sharing its vision and mission statement with its employees | | | | |
| Strategies to improve organizational learning | | | | | |
| 1 | The school should promote participatory decision making | | | | |
| 2 | There should be monitoring and evaluation of the school performance to improve organization learning | | | | |
| 3 | The school should promote flexibility for staff to express freely their ideas that bring change | | | | |
| 4 | The school should develop a culture of shared vision and mission statement among its staff | | | | |
| 5 | Management should provide support to promote organizational learning | | | | |
| 6 | There should be effective communication to sustain organization leaning at the school | | | | |
| 7 | There should be role clarity for staff during organizational learning | | | | |

Thank you for your time

God, Bless You