Learning Practices and Challenges among Thai Public, State Enterprise and Private Sectors in Delivering Public Values

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Abstract

Creating learning values in organizations with the aim of improving service delivery is a must in today's time. This study examines three dimensions of learning organization practices. The focus is on Thailand's public enterprise sector, public sector, and private sector. The study consists of three major learning organization dimensions: (1) promoting a supportive learning environment within organizations; (2) establishing concrete learning processes; and (3) positioning a leadership that supports learning. A survey was done among individuals working in state enterprises and the private and public sectors in order to determine the effects of the role played by the above-mentioned sectors' nature of business or operations, its size, and its interaction effects in the success of establishing a learning organization.

An organizational-level Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) reveals that private organizations exhibit significantly more activities across three learning organization dimensions: psychological safety, education and training, and knowledge transfer. Employees in private organizations–especially in the finance and banking sector–perceive a higher level of psychological safety under a supportive learning climate and environment. Additionally, the natures of business organizations–production, construction, and real estate–exhibit a higher level of concrete learning practices and reflection on work processes. Furthermore, the number of employees affects the process of analytical thinking within organizations. There were statistically significant interaction effects among organization sectors, the nature of business, and number of employees on the sub-dimension, psychological safety in the workplace.

Finally, this study discusses the challenges of psychological safety and leadership roles on creating learning practices, then, provides recommendations on leading roles in establishing a psychological safety environment as a fundamental ground for creating the learning organization.

Keywords: *learning practices, psychological safety and learning, learning and leadership*

Introduction

In a knowledge-based economy, wisdom and/or information is regarded as an important asset in creating competitive advantage for organizations (Nonaka, 1991; Bohn 1994; Davis & Botkin, 1994). Despite its elusiveness, the concept of learning organization is gaining attention as a useful organizational development intervention tool. Improving the learning capacity of organizational members is widely considered as crucial for development. This is why learning organization is regarded as one of the leading tools for strategic change.

However, being able to build learning organization depends on a number of factors: first, clarity of what learning organization dimensions stand for; second, the nature, process, and practice of organization help to establish the learning organization; third, critical factors for success and failure are believed to be affecting a learning organization. Thus, in seeking ways to build a learning organization, there is need to take these issues into consideration before empowering employees in work units to create, acquire, and transfer knowledge. All these critical jobs call for leadership (Garvin, Edmondson, & Gino, 2008). In building a learning organization, leaders play various roles; they sometimes work as designers, stewards, and/or teachers in order to promote creative tension via five disciplines (Senge, 1990).

Like other countries, Thailand's public sector, state enterprises, and private business organizations all have different ways of operating to be able to deliver various types of services to the public. This is because they are all found in completely different settings and contexts. Each sector has its typically unique administration style. While public service delivery operates under a number of rules and regulations, private products and services are made and delivered to make profit and compete in the market. Meanwhile, government-owned enterprises, which act like commercial arms of the public sector, have considerable flexibility in delivering public service. However, they are still somehow less effective as compared to their private sector counterpart. Their organizational strategy, leadership, and culture are all still, more or less, rigid.

The objective of this study is to compare the learning characteristics of three different entities as perceived by the employees who work in each of these sectors. The learning measure used was developed by Garvin et al. (2008). Comparisons were made across the following aspects: (1) the organization sector as a unit of analysis (public, private, and state enterprise); (2) business transaction types (service, education/research, transportation/tourism, agriculture, finance/banking, manufacturing/industry, construction/property development, trade/commerce, communications/telecommunications); and (3) the number of employees. These are the independent variables of the study; while the learning characteristics that were gathered serve as the dependent variable.

It is hoped that the empirical results of this study will shed light on describing not only the varying characteristics of learning organizations. The author also hopes these will help determine the crucial factors that contribute to the successful establishment of a learning organization. We believe that the results and the recommendations that will be made in and after this study can be used for organizational development purposes.

Theories and Concepts

Meaning of a Learning Organization

Many scholars define the meaning and nature of learning organization differently. This study mainly utilized Mullings' definition. Mullings (2007) classifies a learning organization into two types:

1. It can be understood as the end result of learning. In this regard, organizational learning can be thought of as a result of a new set of ideas or practices. All members are free to learn. Thus, it is assumed that they will be more inspired to continuously learn from their successes and failures. This approach leads to a collaborative learning process within an organization (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Cook & Yanow, 1993; De Geus, 1988; Huber, 1991; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Senge, 1990).

2. On the other hand, Mullings states that learning organizations can also be viewed as part of a bigger learning process, to which Davenport and Prusak (1998) provide insight into in their discussions on knowledge management processes in the context of organizational work covering four stages: (a) accessing, (b) generating (c) data embedding, and (d) data transferring.

Creating Learning within an Organization

Many academics have also proposed different concepts of learning organization. Boisot (1987) proposed a model for in-house organizational learning, beginning with scanning, knowledge creation, codification, diffusion and absorption. In 1990, Senge proposed five disciplines in creating a learning organization:

1. *Systems thinking:* This refers to thinking in a holistic way or the ability to see connectivity among elements within a system.

2. *Personal mastery*: In this discipline, individuals are well versed. Self-knowledge can help individuals grow/develop professionally. In possessing this, people will be more committed to do what should be done as they know what is true and what their duties are.

3. *Conceptual modeling:* Having mental models helps individuals gain the ability to manifest their views/understanding of belief systems into his/her behavioral expression. It is a process of adjusting one's comprehension according to contexts.

4. *Shared Vision:* Promoting a shared vision among members of an organization is a process of engagement between members and the organization.

5. Lastly, *team learning* is another way of turning personal vision into reality; it can be done through dialogue and/or discussion under supportive team learning. The learning organization goal is to make members within the organization work together as a team. This experience facilitates mutual learning via an exchange of knowledge experience. Team trust is enhanced by using members' strengths to resolve problems and gain competitiveness.

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), in the book, *Knowledge Creating Company*, elaborate on four approaches to transforming individual knowledge into organizational knowledge.

These are the following:

1. *Socialization:* The interaction among members creates an opportunity to exchange each person's experience with other individuals. This leads to the creation of tacit knowledge, i.e., shared mental models among members or technical skill exchange;

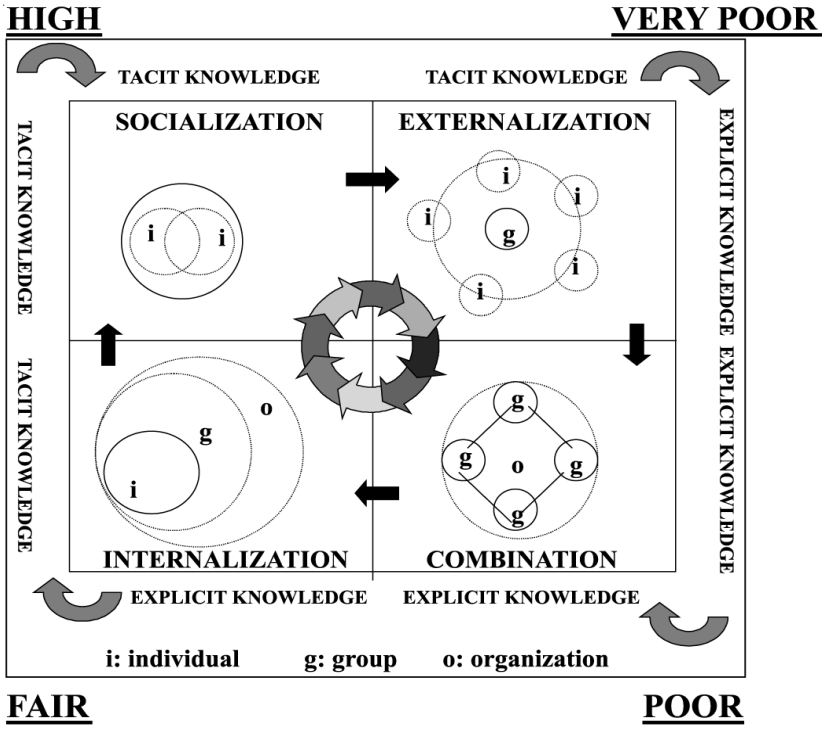
2. *Externalization*: Seeking concrete learning practices is encouraged among members;

3. *Combination*: This is a mixed process of creating a system of knowledge – e.g. the creation of prototypes or the creation of new technologies applied to work;

4. *Internalization*: This is a process of implanting one's explicit knowledge into one's knowledge schema, i.e., in learning by doing.

A well-known model of Nonaka and Takeuchi knowledge creation process is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Transformation of a Person's Knowledge into Knowledge at the Organizational Level



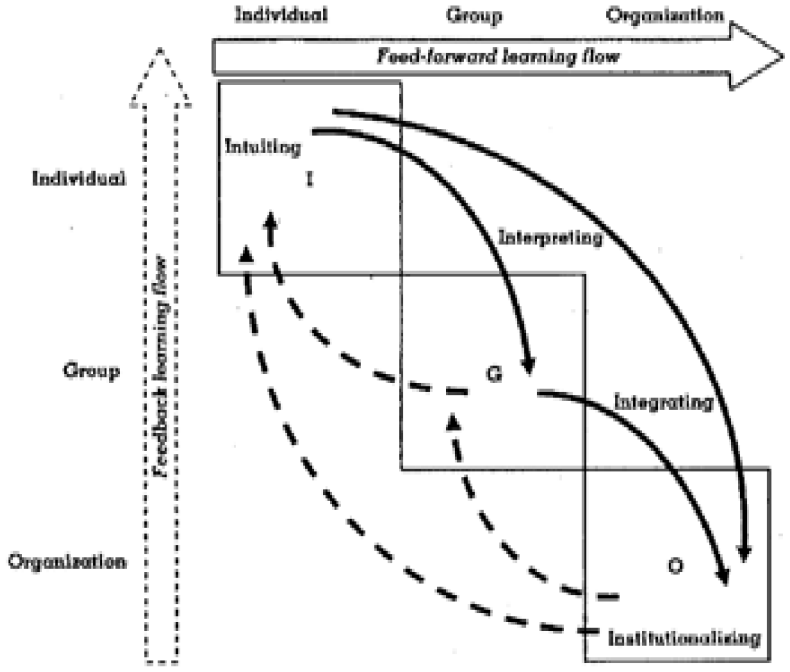
Source: Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995)

On the other hand, Argyris and Schon (1996) proposed a four-step process for building an organizational learning. It involves (1) finding theoretical knowledge which can be useful; (2) seeking new approaches; (3) creating new behaviors; and lastly, (4) applying results to the organization.

Meanwhile, Watkins and Marsick's (1996) learning model emphasizes the linking of members' learning within the organization. Their model follows nine (9) steps as follows: (1) the promotion of continuous learning opportunities; (2) provision of support to any inquiries and dialogues; (3) encouragement of collaborative and mutual learning among team members; (4) creation of proper systems to capture learning characteristics; (5) empowerment of people toward a collective vision; (6) development of a connection of the organization with its environment; (7) provision of strategic leadership for learning; 8) revelation of results of financial performance; and (9) assessment of knowledge performance.

From a different perspective, Crossan, Lane, and White (1999) introduced a general theory of organizational learning. Their model is called the 4I framework, as shown in Figure 2. Their theory argues that learning in an organization contains four related psychosocial processes and each process operates over three levels in a recursive manner. Learning occurs when one explores and exploits from what they have experienced in 4I

Figure 2
The 4I Framework of a Learning Organization



Source: Crossan et al. (1999:532)

coupled stages. The stages in this model are as follows: first, intuition and interpretation, which occur at the individual level; then, interpretation and integration stages, which occur at the group level; and lastly, integration and institutionalization of learning, which occur at the organizational level.

In contrast to the previously mentioned theories and models, Hannah and Lester (2009) proposed the variable, guidance of a leader, to the study of learning organizations in a multilevel approach that is in concert with that of Crossan et al. (1999). They hold that the role of leadership within the organization is to create a learning organization. At the micro level, leaders provide subordinates learning opportunities and promote learning through work assignment. At the meso-level, a leader is key in promoting social networking in order to enhance learning effectiveness. Lastly, at the macro-level of systems in an organization, leaders are responsible for exploring, interpreting, and enhancing new knowledge believed to be beneficial to the organizational development. Thus, leaders take center stage in motivating, managing, and monitoring learning ability in the workplace.

Measurement of Learning Organization Proficiencies

This study makes use of Garvin et al.'s (2008) diagnostic tool, the Learning Organization Survey, to measure three major learning proficiencies: (1) a supportive learning environment, (2) concrete learning processes and practices, and (3) leadership behavior that reinforces learning, each of which features their own independent sub-dimensions. The following points detail these independent sub-dimensions.

Building Block I: A Supportive Learning Environment

A supportive learning environment has four different sub-components:

1. *Psychological safety*. This is the extent to which employees feel safe to speak out their minds candidly, or without fear of being belittled or of being retaliated on.

2. *Appreciation of differences*. Learning occurs when people realize, recognize, and make use of alternative contrary viewpoints.

3. *Openness to new ideas*. Individuals grow when they keep their mind open (e.g. open to learning from one's own mistake/s, crafting innovative approaches of work, etc.).

4. *Time for reflection*. Learning organizations provide an environment where employees are allowed or given time to reflect on their responsibilities and think of ways on how to improve their work. Reflection on work-related issues happens individually or interpersonally often among members.

Building Block II: Concrete Learning Processes and Practices

The development of a learning organization occurs in a series of activities involving generation, collection, dissemination of information. Strengthening practices of learning processes within organization consists of five sub-components. They can be simplified into the following:

1. *Experimentation*. This refers to developing or testing new methods of operations and creating new products and services.

2. *Information collection*. This relates to the collection of business information of an organization or business competitors, customers, and socio-economic and technological trends.

3. *Analysis*. Analyzing involves discussing and solving problems at work and listening to customers' comments and perspectives. This also leads to sharing ideas, analyzing, and coming up with possible ways of solving problems.

4. *Education and training*. This refers to the provision of periodic education and training to both the newly hired and the long-time employees in order to enhance and update their capabilities.

5. *Information transfer*. Transferring information relates to arranging meetings and learning from both internal and external experts quickly. Regular information exchange among networks is encouraged.

Building Block III: Leadership Behavior that Reinforces Learning

In looking into leadership that promotes the institution of learning organization, Garvin et al. (2008) argues that the behaviors of organizational leadership have a significant influence on organizational learning, e.g., when leaders actively listen to employees' concerns, they promote dialogue, discussion, and debate on a problem or matter, thereby promoting the idea of learning from each other. Seeking for different opinions is also practiced.

According to Edmondson (1999), building an appropriate environment that is conducive to creativity and innovation–within an organization–is a prerequisite to establishing or institutionalizing a learning organization. Watkins and Marsick (1996) argued that creating a learning organization requires the creation of opportunities on a continuous learning basis. Leaders should actively support dialogue, debate, or discussion, and encourage collaboration and mutual learning among their team members.

Finally, many scholars agree that the leader's behavior plays an important role in promoting the learning process within an organization (Hannah & Lester, 2009; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000; Senge, 1990; Watkins & Marsick, 1996). This is in line with the learning organization survey carried out by Garvin et al. (2008). Their research also evaluated the role of leaders in promoting learning within the organization.

Research Methodology

Hypotheses of the Study

From the above literature review, a number of null hypotheses were formulated for this study as follows:

1. Research Hypothesis 1: The three major characteristics of a learning organization among Thai public organizations, private sector, and state enterprises are not statistically different.

2. Research Hypothesis 2: When compared by the nature of business transaction, the three characteristics of a learning organization among Thai public organizations, private sector, and state-owned enterprises are not fundamentally different.

3. Research Hypothesis 3: When compared by the number of organization employees, the three characteristics of a learning organization among Thai public organizations, private sector, and state enterprises are not basically different.

4. Research Hypothesis 4: Interaction effects among these three independent variables: types of organizations, transactional nature, and staff number on the learning organization characteristics are not statistically significant.

Sample and Data Collection Process

Three sample groups were selected through simple random sampling methods. The respondents from three different sectors consisted of employees from government, state enterprises, and private sectors who enrolled in (1) the Master of Public Administration program and (2) the Master in Public and Private Sector Management Program run by the Graduate School of Public Administration. Additional samples also come from the participants who attended the Management Development Program, which is organized every three (3) months by the GSPA.

In addition to this, survey questionnaires were also distributed among private agencies and state enterprises listed in Thai business directories. The data from their responses were, thereafter, collected. A total number of 600 completed questionnaires were collected, 200 respondents from each sector.

Profile of Respondents

There are more male respondents (almost 55 percent) than female respondents (about 45 percent). Some 72 percent have bachelor degrees or some college education; a substantial proportion, 28 percent, have graduate degrees or higher. In terms of business transaction characteristics, the sample subgroups can be classified as follows: some 27 percent of the respondents work in the service sector; a little more than 22 percent are in the

manufacturing/construction sector; another 13 percent are in transportation and tourism; with a little more than twelve percent in telecommunication and computer technology; a smaller proportion of about eight percent in finance and banking; and a lesser proportion, seven percent, in education and research, six percent in agriculture and livestock, and five percent in the commercial sector. The average number of employees across the three sectors in the sample organizations was approximately 7,005 persons.

Research Measure

This study uses the Learning Organization Survey constructed by Garvin et al. (2008) to assess the depth of learning organization proficiencies. The scale has a total number of 45 items rated through a 7-level Likert scale (with 1 as the lowest level and 7 as the highest). There are 12 reverse scored items of the learning organization proficiencies across three distinguishing dimensions.

1. Supportive learning environment that promotes learning has 18 items

   1.1 Five items for psychological safety
   1.2 Four items for appreciation of differences
   1.3 Four items for openness to new ideas
   1.4 Five items for time for review and reflection

2. The development of guidelines and learning processes in the organization of 19 items consists of 5 sub-elements.

   2.1 Four items for experimental ideas
   2.2 Two items for analysis
   2.4 Three items for education and training
   2.5 Five items for transfer of knowledge/information

3. Leadership that promotes learning within the organization has eight items.

The scale reliability indices for Cronbach's alpha internal consistency with the pilot group were found ranging from .68 to .91. This is regarded as considerably moderate to high reliability.

Data Analysis

This quantitative research intended to compare ten proficiencies of learning organization among three categorical types of organizations. Therefore, Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) was utilized to compare group differences formed by categorical independent variables on a set of interval dependent variables at an organization-level unit of data analysis. The independent variables consist of (1) type of organization (government, private sector, state enterprise); (2) nature of transaction (service, education/ research, transportation/tourism, finance/banking, manufacturing/industry, construction/

property development, trading/commerce, communications/telecommunications), and (3) the number of employees.

The variables type of organization and nature of transaction are measured on a nominal scale, while the number of employees is measured on an interval scale and are defined as covariate variables in MANCOVA. The dependent variables are the proficiency characteristics of learning organization proposed by Garvin et al. (2008): (1) environment that promotes learning in the organization; (2) practice/learning process in the organization. (experimentation, information collection, analysis, education and training, knowledge transfer); and (3) leadership that promotes learning. The independent variables mentioned above were averaged using a 7-level Likert scale and were assumed to be interval scale variables.

Research Results

A learning organization assumes the higher mean scores of each learning dimension. The data in Table 1 indicate a considerably moderate correlation coefficient among the learning organization dependent variables ranging from .03 to .69, while a few exhibited no statistical significance. There is a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological safety and appreciation of differences ($r = 0.43$, $p < .01$) and education/training and information transfer ($r = 0.69$, $p < .01$). Multicollinearity problem, the correlation among the independent variables, does not occur since the variance inflation factors (VIF) were not well over 5 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Huberty & Morris, 1989). Analyzing the results from the total sample, the analysis reveals that Thai organizations devote most

Table 1
Correlation Coefficient Indices of Learning Organization Proficiencies among Thai Sample

Learning Proficiencies	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Psychological safety	4.16	.91	-									
2.Appreciation of differences	4.48	.86	.43**	-								
3. Openness to new ideas	4.52	.91	.32**	.43**	-							
4. Time for reflection	4.09	.95	.15**	.15**	.33**	-						
5. Experimentation	4.12	1.41	.30**	.39**	.36**	.10*	-					
6.Information collection	4.26	1.48	.26**	.31**	.26**	.03	.63**	-				
7. Analysis engagement	4.35	.93	.32**	.42**	.51**	.28**	.50**	.47**	-			
8. Education and training	4.66	1.26	.27**	.36**	.38**	.14**	.56**	.56**	.43**	-		
9. Information transfer	4.23	1.29	.30**	.36**	.36**	.10*	.62**	.65**	.52**	.69**	-	
10.Leadership promotes learning	4.50	.86	.26**	.29**	.27**	.07	.39**	.44**	.42**	.49**	.51**	-

Note: n = 600. * p < .05.; ** p <.01

not well over 5 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Huberty & Morris, 1989). Analyzing the results from the total sample, the analysis reveals that Thai organizations devote most of their resources on concrete education and training activities for building a learning organization. While employees took less time for reflection, this may be due to a heavy workload and a tight schedule that does not permit for much thinking. Leaders of Thai organizations appear to reinforce the value learning well.

It appears in Table 2 that the results of the comparison of the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) of learning organization show that private organizations exhibit the characteristics of learning organization at a higher level than government organizations and state-owned enterprise organizations. This conclusion can be attributed to the following evidences: (1) supportive learning environment (M = 4.34, SD = .55), (2) concrete learning practices (M = 4.68, SD = .89), and (3) leadership that promotes learning (M = 4.67, SD = .86). When considering the variable of business transaction, it can be found that the rate that organizations engaged in financial and banking transactions are much higher than that of other types of transaction organizations The results are as follows: learning environment (M = 4.44, SD = .59), leadership promoting learning (M = 4.76, SD = 1.08), and learning processes and practices (M = 4.74, SD = .85) which were higher than those of other types of business transactions.

The results of MANCOVA analysis shown in Table 3 concludes that no significant statistical difference among the private, the public, and the state-owned enterprise. (Wilk's Lambda = .93, (20, 878) = 1.55, ns, h^2 = .03). However, the univariate analysis indicates that there is a statistically significant difference among the level of organization types on (1) psychological safety (F = 5.37, p <.01), (2) education and training (F = 3.11, p <.05), and (3) information transfer (F = 3.95, p <.05).

The post-hoc analysis found that employees of private organizations have a higher level of psychological safety than that of public sector employees. In addition, private organizations also provide more education and training services to their employees. The private organizations also encourage information transfer more compared to public organizations and state-owned enterprises. Therefore, the first research null hypothesis is rejected.

The results of the MANCOVA analysis were not statistically different (Wilk's Lambda = .85, F(70, 2567) = 1.03, ns, h^2 = .02). However, the post-hoc univariate analysis by transaction, organizations in trading and commerce business bare a statistically significant difference in the level of time for reflection (F = 2.05, p <.05). Thus, the second research null hypothesis is also rejected. When the number of employees in the sample organization is applied as a covariate in the MANCOVA analysis, it may be said that the number of employees in the organization influence the analysis engagement (F=4.45, p <.05). Therefore, the third research null hypothesis is also rejected.

The interaction among these three independent variables: organization type, transaction nature, and number of employees indicate no statistical influence on the proficiencies of a learning organization (Wilk's Lambda = .79, F(110, 3299) = .94, ns, h^2 = .02). Thus, the fourth research null hypothesis is likewise rejected.

Table 2
Comparison of the Mean (*M*) and Standard Deviation (*SD*) of Learning Organization Characteristics

Characteristics of Learning Organization	Types of Organization						Types of Business Transaction													
	Public (*n* = 200)		Private (*n* = 200)		State–owned Enterprises (*n* = 200)		Services (*n* = 162)		Education/ Research (*n* = 43)		Transportation/ Tourism (*n* = 78)		Agricultur/ Livestock (*n* = 35)		Finance/ Banking (*n* = 46)		Manufacturing/ Industry/ Construction/ Land Development (*n* = 133)		Trading/ Commercial (*n* = 29)		Communication/ Telecom (*n* = 74)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Supportive Learning Environment	**4.29**	**.65**	**4.34**	**.55**	**4.26**	**.66**	**4.28**	**.61**	**4.46**	**.74**	**4.22**	**.69**	**4.24**	**.53**	**4.44**	**.59**	**4.32**	**.55**	**4.35**	**.58**	**4.18**	**.68**
Psychological safety	4.17	.88	4.23	.84	4.09	1.00	4.21	.91	4.20	.87	3.98	1.07	4.21	.64	4.45	.98	4.12	.81	4.41	1.09	4.04	.83
Appreciation of differences	4.44	.91	4.51	.72	4.51	.95	4.51	.88	4.60	1.04	4.91	.91	4.24	.73	4.83	.81	4.32	.72	4.66	.71	4.55	.95
Openness to new ideas	4.54	.92	4.66	.83	4.36	.96	4.50	.86	4.61	1.01	4.93	.93	4.71	.84	4.56	.87	4.74	.88	4.50	.64	4.24	1.06
Time for Reflection	4.09	.93	4.05	.97	4.14	.95	3.99	.88	4.44	.87	4.92	.92	3.81	1.13	4.02	.92	4.13	.97	3.93	.85	4.01	1.01
Concrete Learning Practices/Processes	**4.18**	**1.01**	**4.68**	**.89**	**4.07**	**1.00**	**4.19**	**.91**	**4.52**	**1.33**	**3.77**	**1.01**	**4.19**	**.81**	**4.61**	**1.02**	**4.74**	**.85**	**4.33**	**.81**	**4.10**	**1.03**
Experimentation	3.95	1.39	4.65	1.26	3.77	1.43	4.01	1.23	4.44	1.82	3.41	1.41	3.82	1.26	4.47	1.47	4.72	1.24	4.26	1.11	3.75	1.43
Information collection	3.99	1.39	4.82	1.47	3.98	1.43	4.09	1.39	4.50	1.50	3.49	1.49	4.02	1.30	4.61	1.71	4.83	1.37	4.36	1.11	4.01	1.47
Analysis Engagement	4.38	1.00	4.49	.85	4.17	.91	4.31	.96	4.61	1.13	4.97	.97	4.28	.87	4.51	.79	4.58	.89	4.13	.60	4.18	.88
Education & Training	4.50	1.30	4.98	1.14	4.49	1.26	4.52	1.13	4.70	1.57	4.29	1.29	4.90	1.15	4.71	1.31	5.01	1.03	4.53	1.39	4.31	1.43
Information Transfer	4.04	1.30	4.68	1.15	3.97	1.30	4.05	1.16	4.30	1.65	3.37	1.37	4.09	1.09	4.61	1.28	4.71	1.13	4.44	1.08	4.14	1.30
Leadership that reinforces learning	**4.44**	**.79**	**4.67**	**.86**	**4.39**	**.89**	**4.47**	**.80**	**4.46**	**.79**	**4.92**	**.92**	**4.48**	**.75**	**4.76**	**1.08**	**4.62**	**.79**	**4.50**	**.67**	**4.51**	**.94**

Remark: 1 = Least agreed, 7 = Strongly agreed Likert's scaling; Twelve items were reversely scored.

From the data shown in Table 2, it can be said that the means of learning proficiencies across three sector organizations are moderately different (3.77 – 5.09). The private sector tends to exhibit higher levels of leadership and organizational environment supportive to learning, especially higher scores on concrete learning practices and processes.
Leadership across three sectors primarily promotes learning practices in organizations especially those in finance and banking.

Table 3

Analysis of MANCOVA for Testing the Proficiencies of Learning Organization Characteristics Classified by Three Types of Independent Variables

	Multivariate				Univariate *F*										
Source	*Wilks' Lambda*	*F*	*df*	η^2	Psychological Safety	Appreciation of Diferences	Openness to new ideas	Time for Reflection	Environmnt that promotes org. learning	Experiment	Information Collection	Analysis Engagement	Education Training	Information Transfer	Learning Practices/ Processes	Leadership Promotes learning
Organization (O	.93	1.55	20, 878	.03	5.37**	.05	.51	.52	1.67	.69	2.57	.84	3.11*	3.95*	2.37	1.92
Transaction (T)	.85	1.03	70, 2567	.02	1.87	.53	.85	2.05*	1.02	1.04	.51	1.05	.99	.87	.90	.32
Employee (E)	.98	.84	10, 439	.02	.05	.04	.00	.00	.02	1.23	1.59	4.45*	.12	.82	2.00	1.75
O × T	.76	1.14	110, 325	.03	1.80	.30	1.19	1.28	.66	.99	.70	1.26	1.03	.82	.77	.36
O × E	.94	1.32	20, 878	.03	2.02	.03	.38	1.36	1.04	.98	1.69	2.87	1.49	2.94	2.50	1.58
T × E	.87	.92	70, 2567	.02	.87	.20	.98	1.59	.86	.84	1.22	.89	.63	1.12	1.01	.67
O × T × E	.79	.94	110, 3299	.02	1.75	.23	.73	1.34	.78	.75	1.03	.81	.81	1.44	1.05	1.00
Mean square error (*MSe*)					.82	.78	.80	.85	.40	1.89	2.04	.84	1.62	1.56	.96	.74
NA																

Remark: $n = 600$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. NA = not applicable. Define that Employee (E) as a covariate variable

Conclusion

The results of this study found that there are statistically significant differences in some sub-dimensions of organizational learning among government organizations, state-owned enterprises and private sectors. The conclusions will be made according to the three building blocks.

Building Block I: Supportive Learning Environment

The results indicate that private organizations have a significantly higher level of psychological safety than that of the public and the state enterprises. One of the strategies for business survival is to create a competitive advantage in terms of price or differentiation (Porter, 1990). Innovations that contribute to businesses' competitive advantage come from the work climate which employees are in. This environment makes employees feel psychologically safe from confrontation on brutal facts. Collins (2001) mentioned that a major leadership role is about creating a climate where the truth may be heard and where brutal facts may be confronted. Thai public management still manifests hierarchy of control. Thai public employees do not feel safe if they embrace radical candor. The reality in their current work is that they tend to engage in generative dialogue, which means different points of view cannot easily be heard. In addition to this, a case of increasingly heavy workload imposed by a boss makes public employees more easily stressed. They regularly make defensive excuses in order to not cooperate in any knowledge management activities or they generally ignore opportunities for reflection. This erodes workplace learning and work improvement.

Building Block II: Concrete Learning Processes and Practices

Whether an organization is classified by its sphere of influence or its operational functions, learning activities gain tangible attention due to the fact that it is always associated with high cost and is time consuming. Ideally, knowledge must be shared continuously–and even informally–in systematic work practices. The results of this study show that the private sector organizations tend to promote education and training for its employees more. In addition to this, information transfer within this type of organization is significantly higher than that of public organizations and state enterprises. These findings reflect a relationship between business competition and internal learning capabilities of the organization. In consonance with the findings of Tawichsri (2010), severe competition among the banks has made many Thai commercial banks suffer. Priority is given to improving the skills and knowledge of employees through education and training. Information transfer by channeling information from the Bangkok headquarters to the provincial branches and creating information exchange networks among branches are widely practiced.

Building Block III: Leadership that Reinforces Learning

Leadership can significantly improve psychological safety of employees at work. This can be enhanced in several ways through proper day-to-day management practices–e.g.

establishing rules of engagement among colleagues and bosses, value active listening, motivating people to feel confident to demand what they deserve, being an example of taking action when confronted with conflict. Senge (1990) believes that visible conflict of ideas helps a team continually learn and stay productive. Edmondson (1999) explains that team leader coaching and context support under optimal environment within an organization is conducive to creativity and innovation within the organization. In addition, several empirical studies from the Eastern countries have confirmed that shared transformational leadership under team psychological safety enhances employee involvement and learning behavior both at the individual level and at the team level (Camps & Rodríguez, 2011; Intuluk, 2017; Liu, Hu, Li, Wang, Lin, 2014). The effects of transformational leadership on performance are mediated by the organizational learning capability of faculty members. Team psychological safety mediates the relationships between shared leadership and (a) team learning and (b) individual learning. However, in terms of the Eastern functioning leadership paradigm (Blunt & Jones, 1997), cultural conditioning, as a major software of the mind has, inevitably, direct influence over performance (Hofstede, Hofstede, Minkov, 2010).

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

A major limitation of this study is that it focused mainly on categorical organization variables which ignore some psychological, technological, and leadership factors, i.e., trust, digital learning, and leadership styles as the independent variables. Additionally, the author of this study recommends that future studies look into employee psychological safety as a mediating variable on team learning or workplace effectiveness as an individual level and a group-level phenomenon.

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Biosketch

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