

# Creating a Culture of Learning in the Workplace: An Exploratory Study

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*This study attempts to assess the employees' perceptions of learning culture prevailing in different organizations in India. The data collected from 236 human resource and training and development professionals working in different organizations form the basis for the study. The study found that there is moderate level of learning culture existing in the organizations. 36.50% of the organizations demonstrated a high or very high learning culture. There is no significant difference in the learning culture prevailing in the organizations based on the nature of business, organizational size, and their geographical orientation. Integrating talent management system with learning and development, increased support of learning and development function and organizational leaders would help in enhancing the learning culture.*

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## Introduction

The world's economic order is changing. Technical advancements, dynamic customer demands, increasing globalization, blurring of organizational boundaries, and increasing competition are all combining to produce organizational environments more turbulent and volatile than ever before (Parry & Proctor-Thompson, 2003). Organizational leaders and employees have to be ready to learn to cope with the changing expectations of their organizations, based on the changes taking place so that organizations can survive and grow in the changing economic environment. Learning strengthens individual performance which would help to enhance organizational performance. Employees learn new knowledge, skills and abilities on a continuous basis provided learning culture of their organizations supports it. A learning culture is one which continuously seeks, shares, and applies new knowledge and skills to improve individual and organizational performance. The importance of the pursuit and application of learning is expressed in organizational values and has permeated all aspects of organizational life. Building a culture of learning is the foun-

dation of a successful organization. Robust cultures of learning are distinct hallmarks of organizations that consistently produce the best business results (ATD, 2016). The present paper attempts to assess learning culture prevailing in Indian organizations.

### Literature Review

*Meaning of Learning Culture:* Learning culture is a concept that reflects organizational behavior from the perspective of learning and development. Similar to many other concepts in organizational studies such as motivation and job satisfaction, the concept of learning culture is a construct that represents an abstract variable that can be derived from either theory or observation (Yang, 2003). The terms 'culture' and 'climate' are sometimes used interchangeably in relation to learning in the workplace (Littlejohn et al., 2014). However, some studies have delineated these terms such that culture embodies values, beliefs and underlying assumptions, whereas climate describes the perceptions of the workforce in relation to the organizational 'ambiance' (González-Romá et al, 1999; Flin et al., 2000). This means that culture is a relatively stable, overarching feature of an organization. Climate, on the other hand, is measured through

workforce attitudes and perceptions that evolve and can be different when measured at any given point in time. A learning culture is identified by openness to new ideas, experimentation and openness to errors, empowerment and participation of employees in decision making and dialogue (Santa, 2015). It is identified with the learning opportunities or organizational learning interventions to facilitate learning in the workplace (Gil & Mataveli, 2017). It is a collective, dynamic system of basic assumptions, values and norms which direct the learning of people within an organization (Hester, et al, 2016).

*Indicators of Learning Culture:* Review of literature shows that there are certain broad indicators of learning culture such as open communication, employee empowerment, collaboration, alignment of espoused and enacted priorities, internal system alignment, and senior management's commitment. There are many open channels of communication to allow for effective communication flow. Organizations put some systems in place to store and share relevant knowledge across its members (Pedler et al., 1996; Marsick & Watkins, 2003; Cegarra-Navarro & Rodrigo-Moya, 2007; Westerberg & Hauer, 2009). They empower employees to exercise their ability to actively engage in learning and development activities (Pedler et al., 1996; Mikkelsen & Grønhaug, 1999; Marsick & Watkins, 2003; Clarke, 2005). There are opportunities in an organization for collaboration, within and outside of it, and opportunities for employees to develop their teamwork skills (Pedler et

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al., 1996; Marsick & Watkins, 2003; Clarke, 2005; Westerberg & Hauer, 2009). An alignment of espoused priorities for learning and development and learning behaviors of individuals exists in an organization with learning culture (Clarke, 2005; Leung, 2006; Bourne & Franco-Santos, 2010). Internal systems, policies, procedures and practices are aligned to encourage effective learning of employees (Leung, 2006; Westerberg & Hauer, 2009). Senior management staff have the commitment and competencies to support employee learning and development activities (Pearn et al., 1995; Popper and Lipshitz, 2000; Sambrook and Stewart, 2000; Clarke, 2005; Westerberg & Hauer, 2009). An organic structure, an approach to total quality principles, and highly educated employees, could act as facilitators of the development of a learning culture in organizations. On the other hand, quality certification, firm dimension and age, as well as workers' age, could act as inhibitors of this type of cultural orientation (Rebelo & Adelino, 2011). Characteristics that define learning culture can vary, but talent development leaders describe such traits as closely aligned business and learning strategies, organizational values that affirm the importance of learning, and an atmosphere in which learning is so integrated that it simply becomes 'a way of life' (ATD, 2016).

*Outcomes of Learning Culture:*

Learning culture leads to improved financial outcomes and employee attitudes towards work, innovation, adaptation to change, motivation to transfer knowledge to others, and organizational commitment

(Ellinger et al., 2002; Egan et al., 2004; Kontoghiorghes et al., 2005; Wang, 2007; Joo & Lim, 2009; Song et al., 2011). Organizations can enhance performance when they foster and promote learning (Cooper et al., 2016). But learning initiatives take time to yield positive results, and existing performance measures often lag their indicators. A learning culture enables learning transfer significantly. It is more efficient compared to transfer supporting measures such as refresher days and follow up sessions (Blume et al., 2010). Organizational learning culture and learning transfer climate accounts for a significant variance in organizational innovation (Bates, et al., 2005). There is a very strong positive relationship between organizational learning culture and innovative culture, and an indirect relation between organizational learning culture and innovations via innovative culture (Cerne et al., 2012). The type of innovation the firm uses is influenced by its learning culture and its perception of external threat (as imminent vs non-existent/distant). Effective innovation cannot occur without higher learning abilities, and disparate learning cultures within the same organization will inhibit innovation (Tran, 2008). Learning culture has a large, statistically significant relationship with disgruntlement and medium, statistically significant relationships with job-security concerns, accommodation, informal learning, and formal learning (Reardon, 2010). There is a positive relationship between organizational learning culture and workplace spirituality, partially mediated by knowledge-sharing behaviors (Sorakraikitikul. et al, 2014).

*Measuring Learning Culture:* Watkins and Marsick (1997) created a measurement scale known as the Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) for assessing organizational learning culture with seven dimensions such as: creating continuous learning opportunities, promoting inquiry and dialogue, encouraging collaboration and team learning, creating systems to capture and share learning, empowering people toward a collective vision, connecting the organization to its environment, and providing strategic leadership for learning. An examination conducted by Moilanen (2001) on a variety of organizational learning instruments (Mayo & Lank, 1994; Redding & Catalanello, 1994; Pearn et al., 1995; Tannenbaum, 1997; Watkins & Marsick, 1997) has revealed that the DLOQ has sufficient statistical analysis. Association for Talent Development (2016) conducted a survey using a questionnaire. It consisted of various measures of learning culture such as essential characteristics of learning culture, organizational leaders' support, employee and organizational practices' support, and learning and development function's support. The respondents of the survey have represented organizations of various sizes and industries, worldwide. The study found that 31% of the organizations have a culture of learning. Having a culture of learning is a hallmark of high-performance organizations. In high-performance organizations em-

**Having a culture of learning is a hallmark of high-performance organizations.**

ployees share knowledge with their colleagues at a rate four times greater than that of workers in low-performance firms. Learning culture is rooted in the hiring process. These organizations regularly update personalized learning plans for employees. Employees are accountable for the learning specified in those plans. There is a system of non-financial rewards and recognition for employee learning. Leaders in these organizations are responsible for reinforcing the importance of learning. The learning and development function's participation in talent planning activities is linked to better market performance.

### **The present study**

The present study is a replica of ATD study (2016) in the Indian context. It is aimed at assessing the extent of learning culture prevailing in various types of organizations in India. A questionnaire was designed based on the study of ATD (2016) covering various dimensions of learning culture such as: essential characteristics of learning culture, connecting learning with business results, learning as a way of life, organizational leaders' support, talent management process support, learning function's support, measurement of learning, and employees' support. There were some more items added pertaining to benefits from learning culture and barriers to it. A sample item of the questionnaire is: to what extent do the employees of your organization demonstrate eagerness to learn? Corresponding to each item was a five-point Likert-type scale used to measure the perception level of employees. The

response options of the scale ranged from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a very high extent). The targeted population of the study was human resource/learning and development professionals working in different organizations. The questionnaires received from 236 professionals were considered for analysis. The data collected was subjected to reliability test. Overall reliability value was .881 (Cronbach's alpha value). Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentages, mean scores, standard deviations, and paired *t*-tests and one-way ANOVA tests were utilized for analysis.

### The Respondents

The respondents of the study consisted of human resource/learning and development professionals with an average experience of seven years, representing different types of organizations

across India. As presented in Table 1, 55.08% of the sampled respondents belonged to large organizations that employed more than 1000 people. 31.78% of them represented small organizations that employed less than 500 personnel. The remaining 13.14% belonged to the organizations that consisted of employees ranging from 500 to 1000. With respect to nature of business, 36.44% of the respondents belonged to the manufacturing sector, whereas 48.73% represented the service sector. The remaining 14.83% of the respondents represented the IT& IT enabled services. As far as the geographical orientation of the organizations is concerned, 38.56% of the respondents worked for the Indian private sector; 30.93% represented the Indian multinational companies; and 30.51% of the respondents represented the foreign multinational companies operating in India.

**Table 1 The Respondents' Information**

	Respondents	Percentage
<i>Size of Business</i>		
Less than 500	75	31.78
500-1000	31	13.14
Above 1000	130	55.08
<i>Nature of Business</i>		
Manufacturing	86	36.44
Service	115	48.73
IT/ITES	35	14.83
<i>Geographical Orientation</i>		
Indian MNC	73	30.93
Foreign MNC	72	30.51
Indian private sector	91	38.56

### The Essential Characteristics of Learning Culture

The respondents were asked to rate to what extent they viewed the essential

characteristics of learning culture in their respective organizations. Fig. 1 shows the statements relating to these characteristics and percent of respondents who indicated a high or very high extent. 64%

of the respondents viewed that their organizational learning strategies are closely related with business strategies. 55% of them felt that their organizations' is a learning culture. According to 55% of the respondents, the learning function in their respective organizations is staffed by qualified learning professionals. Learning is an integral component of organizational talent management as per the perception of 52% of the respondents. 51% of the respondents were of the opinion that their organizational values specifically refer to the importance of learning and development. Every alternative respondent asserted that the organizational technologies support effective design and delivery of learning. However, less than 50% of the respondents felt that their organizational learning function designs and delivers learning programs effectively; their organizational communication reinforces the importance of

learning and learning is delivered when and where it is needed. The respondents expressed concerns about learning budget to address current and future learning needs and position and responsibilities of Chief Learning Officer or Learning and Development Head. The mean score of all 12 items together was calculated as 3.37 indicating that the essential characteristics of learning culture in India were 'moderate'. But interestingly, 48.91% of the organizations had these essential characteristics of learning culture to the extent of high or very high.

**The respondents expressed concerns about learning budget to address current and future learning needs and position and responsibilities of Chief Learning Officer or Learning and Development Head.**

Fig. 1 Essential Characteristics of Learning Culture (%)



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

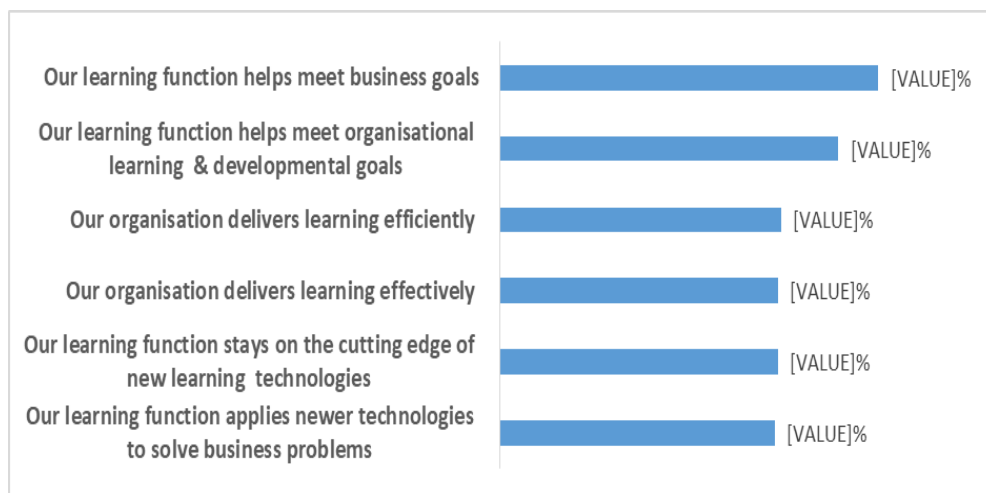
### Connecting Learning with Business Results

Learning and development activities are expected to support achievement of business goals. The learning and development plan is developed based on the learning needs of the employees to perform their functions effectively so that they can contribute to achieve business results. As indicated in fig. 2, 48% of the respondents felt that their learning and development function helps meet business goals. According to 43% of them, their learning and development function helps meet organizational learning and developmental goals. With respect to delivery of training programs efficiently, 36% of them gave a high rating. When it comes to delivering learning and development programs effectively, 35% of them were positive. The same percent of the respondents of the survey were of the opinion that the learning function in their respective orga-

nizations stays on the cutting edge of new learning technologies and applies newer technologies to solve business problems. Thus, it seems that the respondents of the survey were not that much positive with respect to linkage of learning and business in their respective organizations. Not a single item of this aspect received at least 50% of the respondents' rating. The overall mean score of this dimension of learning culture was calculated as 3.25 indicating that connecting learning with business results was 'moderate'. However, 38.66% of the organizations could connect learning and development with their business results to the extent of high or very high levels.

**38.66% of the organizations could connect learning and development with their business results to the extent of high or very high levels.**

Fig. 2 Connecting Learning with Business Results (%)



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

### Learning as a Way of Life

Learning is an ongoing process for employees in their organizations. With respect to this aspect of learning culture, six items were included in the survey to find out the respondents' viewpoint (fig. 3). 54% of the respondents felt that their organizational culture provides a safe environment for open communication. 53% of them viewed that their organizational values address the importance of learning and development. 43% of them asserted that employees seek opportunities to share knowledge with others. According to 42% of them, learning and development leaders of their organizations regularly participate in strategic planning. 39% of the respondents were of the opinion that employees exhibit a growth mind-set by seeking opportunities to learn and apply. 37% of them considered that learning is a way of life in their respective organizations. The overall mean score of this aspect was found to be 3.32 showing moderate rating. But 44.66% of the respondents perceived the learning as a way of life in their respective organizations to a high and very high extent.

39% of the respondents were of the opinion that employees exhibit a growth mind-set by seeking opportunities to learn and apply. 37% of them considered that learning is a way of life in their respective organizations. The overall mean score of this aspect was found to be 3.32 showing moderate rating. But 44.66% of the respondents perceived the learning as a way of life in their respective organizations to a high and very high extent.

**37% of them considered that learning is a way of life in their respective organizations.**

Fig. 3 Learning as a Way of Life (%)



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

### Leaders' Actions that Support Learning Culture

Leaders' actions of an organization help build and expand learning culture. Leaders with strong conviction in and commitment to learning drive both individual and organizational performance.

When they lead by example, others follow so that the learning culture is strengthened. High-performance companies make leaders responsible for actively demonstrating the importance of learning. There is a strong correlation to market performance associated with leaders serving as teachers (ATD&ICP, 2015).

When the leaders teach, learning culture will be strengthened. With regard to this dimension, six items were included in this survey (fig. 4). According to 40% of the respondents, leaders in their respective organizations reinforce importance of learning by teaching others. 37% of the respondents were of the opinion that their leaders regularly share lessons learned/new knowledge with employees. The same percent of respondents also felt that their leaders self-direct their own learning and show eagerness to learn. 36% of them stated that their leaders' model learning behavior and another 34% viewed that their leaders are held accountable for dem-

onstrating the importance of learning. In this way, it seems that there is not much leaders' actions that support learning culture in the respective organizations of the respondents. The mean score of this dimension was calculated as 3.09, which makes the leaders actions to support learning culture just moderate. However, the organizational leaders' support for learning culture was high or very high in 36.83% of the organizations.

**There is not much leaders' actions that support learning culture in the respective organizations.**

**Fig. 4 Leaders' Actions that Support Learning Culture (%)**



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

### Talent Management Process Support

There is a tremendous impact of the talent management policies, programs and practices of an organization on its learning culture. 12 talent management practices were included in this study to find out the support of talent management for building learning culture. According to 39% of the respondents, learning op-

portunities are made available to all employees during workdays. 34% of them stated that learning and development opportunities are used to support employee engagement. According to 32% of them, learning and development opportunities are used for talent retention. 30% of the respondents mentioned that career paths specify knowledge and skills required for career advancement in their respective organizations. 28% of them viewed that

learning and development opportunities are included in performance expectations in their respective organizations. One-fourth of them were of the opinion that their organizations use learning and development opportunities to attract top talent. Another one-fourth of them felt that sharing knowledge with others is included in performance expectations. According to 23% of the respondents, learning and development opportunities are included in the job description. 22% of them felt that reward and recognition programs include learning-related rewards. 19% were under the impression that advancement in their organizations is linked to successful application of new skills and knowledge learned. According to 17% of the respondents, compensation is linked to successful application of new knowledge and skills. Lastly, 16% opined that commitment to on-going learning is discussed in pre-hire interviews in their respective organizations.

The mean score of all 12 items put together was calculated as 2.77 indicating that the support of talent management process to learning culture was lesser than moderate. When asked as to what constituted a part of essential characteristics of learning culture, 52% of them perceived that learning is an integral component of organizational talent management. This clearly indicates that there is a talent management system in place in these organizations. But its support for enhancing learning culture is not that great. Consequently, overall, only one-fourth of the organizations had high or very high support of talent management process for building a learning culture.

**Only one-fourth of the organizations had high or very high support of talent management process for building a learning culture.**

Fig. 5 Talent Management Process Support (%)



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

### **Learning & Development Function's Support**

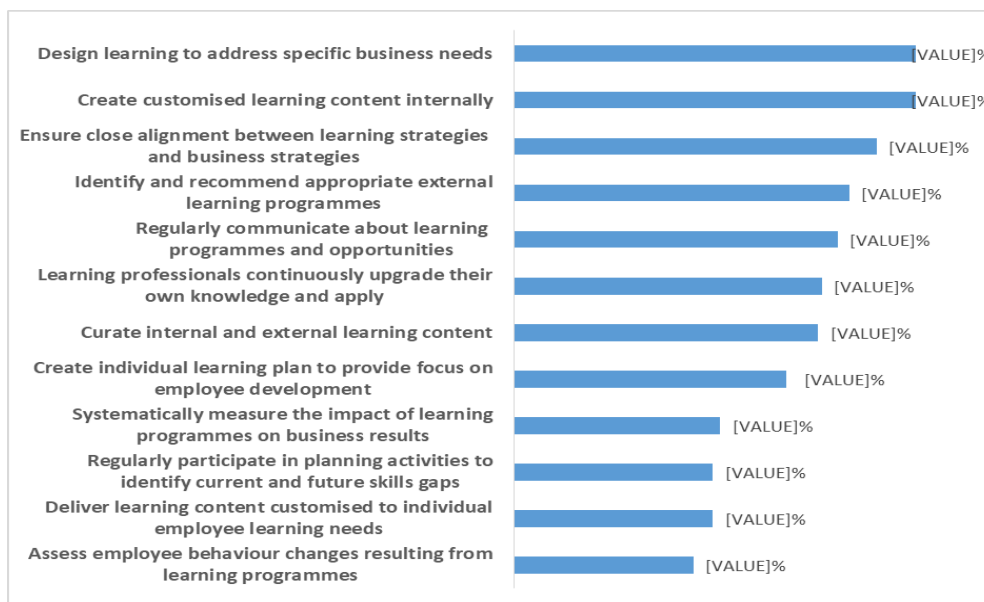
Learning and development department most often support learning cultures through proper design and delivery of various programs. 12 items were included in the survey to assess the support of learning and development department in creating a learning culture. According to 44% of the respondents, their learning and development departments design learning to address specific business needs. Again, 44% of the respondents opined that their learning and development departments create customized learning content internally. 39% of them were under the view that their learning and development departments ensure close alignment between learning strategies and business strategies. 36% of them felt that their learning and development departments identify and recommend appropriate external learning programs. 35% of the respondents felt that their learning and development departments regularly communicate about learning programs and opportunities. Learning professionals are expected to be modeling professional development by continuously upgrading their own knowledge and its application. But only 33% of the respondents gave better rating to this item in the study. Again, 33% of the respondents felt that their learning and development professionals curate internal and external learning content. 30% of them stated that their learning professionals create individual learning plan to provide focus on employee development. Only 22% of them felt that their learning function systematically measures the

impact of learning programs on business results. The same percent of them asserted that learning and development professionals in their respective organizations regularly participate in planning activities to identify current and future skill gaps and deliver learning content customized to individual employee learning needs. 19% of them mentioned that their learning and development departments assess employee behavior changes resulting from learning programs. The means score of all 12 items put together was calculated as 2.99 indicating that the learning and development support to learning culture was moderate. It is important to note that 31.58% of the respondents asserted that there was a high or very high support of learning and development function in their respective organizations to create a learning culture.

### **Measurement of Learning**

Measuring effectiveness of learning and development efforts is critical to learning culture. There are models available in the literature to assess the effectiveness of various learning and development programs. Good analytics can be used to measure the impact of learning on individuals and the organization. The attempt here is to assess the respondents' viewpoint on measuring learning in their respective organizations using 7 items. It could be seen from fig. 7 that 32% of the respondents mentioned that their learning and development department measures alignment of learning strategy to business strategy. The same percent of the respondents were under the opinion that learning programs in their orga-

Fig. 6 Learning & Development Function’s Support (%)



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

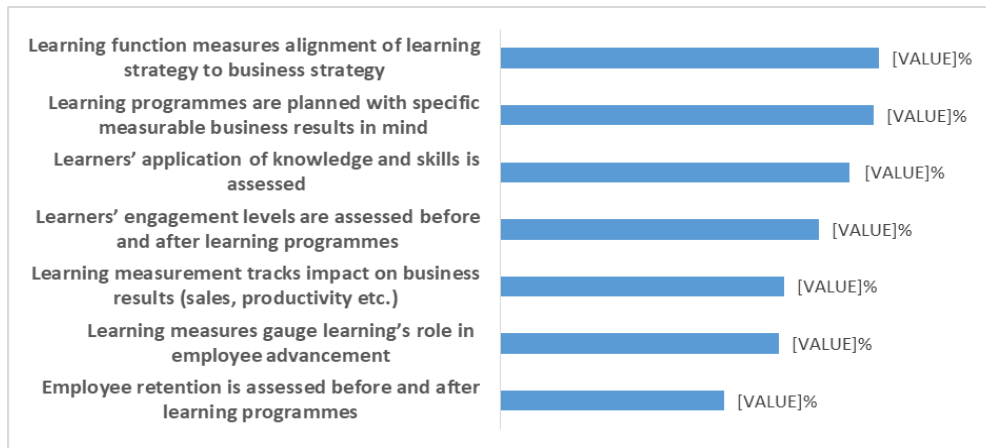
nizations are planned with specific measurable business results in mind. 30% of them perceived that learners’ application of knowledge and skills is assessed in their organizations. 27% of them felt that learners’ engagement levels are assessed before and after learning programs in their organizations. 24% of them said that learning measurement tracks impact on business results (sales, productivity etc.).The same percent of the respondents stated that learning measures gauge learning’s role in employee advancement. Finally, 19% of the respondents mentioned that employee retention is assessed before and after learning programs in their organizations. Overall, the mean score was found to be 2.86 indicating that the learning measurement was prevailing in the organizations at the less than moderate level. It is interesting to

note that 26.85% of the respondents said that measuring effectiveness of learning and development programs was high or very high in their respective organizations.

### Employees’ Support

Employees in an organization understand their roles and responsibilities and discharge them for producing results. They may make use of every learning opportunity available in their organization and contribute to the learning culture. We attempted to assess the employees’ support for building learning culture with the help of 8 items. As presented in fig.8,54% of the respondents mentioned that employees demonstrate eagerness to learn. According to 47% of them, employees understand how

Fig. 7 Measurement of Learning (%)



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

learning facilitates their career growth. 46% of them felt that employees understand how their jobs contribute to organizational results. 37% of them opined that employees share their knowledge with their colleagues. The same percent of them mentioned that employees self-direct their own learning. 33% of them viewed that every employee has an updated personalized development plan. According to 29% of the respondents, employees are held accountable for learning specified in their development plan. 27% of them felt that employees receive non-financial rewards and recognition for learning achievement. Overall, the mean score was found to be 3.16 indicating the employees' support as 'moderate'. However, it is significant to note that 38.75% of the respondents perceived that employees in their respec-

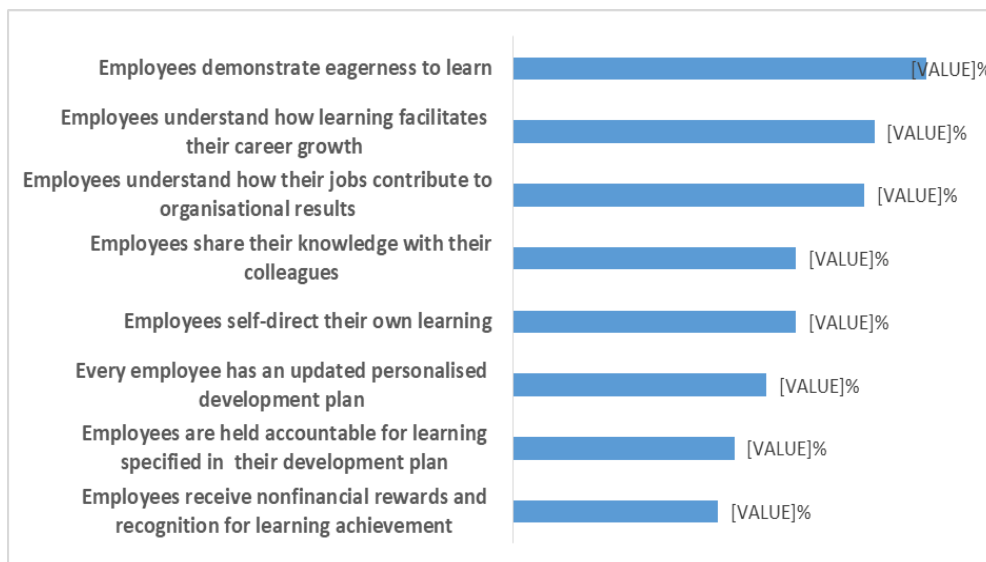
**Employees are held accountable for learning specified in their development plan.**

tive organizations extend their support to the extent of high or very high for building a learning culture.

### Benefits from Establishing a Learning Culture

Organizations make use of learning culture for attracting, retaining and engaging talent for the benefit of achieving overall business goals by putting people upfront. This study included 8 items relating to the benefits to find out the extent of the respondents' expectations with respect to benefits from establishing a learning culture. As presented in fig. 9, 64% of the respondents said that higher levels of overall organizational performance can be achieved through building a learning culture. The same percent of the respondents viewed that greater levels of employee engagement can be achieved through learning culture. Again, the same percent of the respondents mentioned that organizations can derive higher levels of individual employee

**Fig.8 Employees' Support (%)**



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

performance through learning culture. 62% of them opined that the organization's ability to meet current needs for talent with skills required to achieve business goals is possible through learning culture. 59% of them felt that learning culture can enhance the ability of an organization to effectively respond to changes. 54% of them asserted that the learning culture can enhance the ability to retain valued talent. 53% of them mentioned that the learning culture is useful for enhancing an organization's ability to compete for top talent. Finally, 48% of the respondents were of the opinion that an organization's ability to meet future needs for talent with skills required to achieve business goals can be enhanced through learning culture. Overall, the mean score was found to be 3.64 indicating the respondents' perception of expected benefits of

learning culture was above moderate level. However, it is significant to note that a majority (58.5%) of the respondents perceived the extent of benefits from establishing learning culture at a high or very high level.

**Barriers to Build Learning Culture**

Building learning culture is a challenge. An organization, particularly, the learning and development department, encounters both financial and non-financial issues to build a learning culture. An attempt is made to find out the challenges faced by the organizations in building a learning culture by including 11 items (fig. 10). 39% of the respondents mentioned that insufficient learning budget is the major obstacle to create a learning culture. 33% of them felt that organizational culture encourages a knowledge-is-

Fig. 9 Benefits from Establishing a Learning Culture (%)



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

power mind-set, which does not allow a learning culture. 32% of them mentioned that learning and development department's staff in terms of their qualifications and competencies is a barrier to creating a learning culture. In case of 26% of them, the barrier is the senior leaders of the organization who do not model learning behaviors. One-fourth of the respondents perceived that learning function is not represented in strategic business planning processes, without which building a learning culture is difficult. According to 24% of them organizational communication does not reinforce importance of learning. 22% of

**When learning is not integrated with other systems of talent management, it is difficult to create a learning culture.**

them mentioned that senior leaders do not champion learning. 21% of them said that learning is not an element of talent management processes such as performance management system, rewards etc. When learning is not integrated with other systems of talent management, it is difficult to create a learning culture. 19% were of the opinion that organization culture does not encourage questions and curiosity; organizational values do not include learning; and knowledge is hoarded in the organization. Overall, the mean score was calculated as 2.74 indicating that the barriers to create learning culture were less than of moderate level. In fact, this is the overall lowest mean compared to various other aspects of learning culture covered in this study. Overall, one-fourth of the respondents were concerned about the challenges to build a learning culture in their respective organizations. Though

the percent of the respondents who had concerns about the challenges was less, the challenges should not be ignored. A close look at issues such as budget, mindset, learning professionals' qualifications and competencies, communication, role modeling of senior leaders by champion-

ing learning, reveal that most of the issues are related to organizational leaders' actions or non-actions. If leaders show real concern about these challenges, they can formulate policies and can work towards for building an effective learning culture in their organizations.

**Fig. 10 Barriers to Build a Learning Culture (%)**



Percent of respondents indicating high and very high extent

### Comparative Analysis

Nature of business, organizational size, and their geographical orientation were considered for comparative analysis of overall learning culture. A comparative analysis of mean scores of overall learning culture pertaining to the manufacturing, service and IT&ITES organizations indicated that the service sector secured relatively better score than that of its counterparts. However, the results of one-way ANOVA test did not reveal any statistically significant difference based on the nature of the business the organizations carry out. With respect to size of the organizations, it was found that small organizations with a headcount of

less than 500, secured relatively better overall means score than the large ones. However, in this case also, the results of one-way ANOVA test did not show statistically a significant difference. As far as geographical orientation of the organizations is concerned, no difference was found in overall learning culture among the Indian private sector companies, Indian and foreign multinational companies.

### Overall Picture

The mean scores of all eight dimensions of learning culture ranged from 2.42 to 3.64. The overall mean was calculated as 3.08. It is interesting to note that the respondents of the study per-

ceived that their organizations have essential characteristics of learning culture, more than the moderate level. It may be noted that this dimension got relatively the highest mean score when compared to other dimensions of learning culture. This is followed by the dimensions of learning as a way of life and connecting learning with business results. However, relatively weak support from talent management process and measurement of learning, which secured a mean score of less than three, are the major areas of concern for enhancing a culture of learning in the organizations.

The top 15 and bottom 15 items were selected for further examination. The mean scores of the top 15 items ranged from 3.34 to 3.64. They represented four dimensions of learning culture such as characteristics of learning culture, employees' support, learning as a way of life and learning function's support. It is significant to note that out of 15 top scored items, nine items were related to a single dimension that is characteristics of learning culture. Three items pertained to the dimension of employees' support, two items pertained to the dimension of learning as a way of life and one item pertained to the dimension of learning function's support. The mean scores of bottom 15 items ranged from 2.42 to 2.84. It is significant to note that out of 15 bottom scoring items seven items pertained to a single dimension of learning culture that is talent management process support. Four items pertained to measuring learning, three items pertained to learning function's support and one pertained to employees' support. This

**It was found that the overall learning culture was moderate.**

examination confirms the commonality in perceiving the essential characteristics of learning culture positively and the lack of enough support from the talent management process for building a culture of learning. It was found that the overall learning culture was moderate. However, it is interesting to note that, on the whole, in 36.50% of the organizations learning culture was at a high or very high level.

### **Conclusion**

The analysis presented earlier leads to the conclusion that employees perceived that their organizations demonstrate moderate learning culture, irrespective of the organizations' nature of business, size and geographical orientation. The main reasons for this situation are lack of enough support of talent management process, and learning measurement practices. If there is an integrated talent management system in place, it can enhance learning culture by creating proper rewards and recognition programs that include learning-related rewards. It links compensation with successful application of new knowledge and skills. It includes learning and development opportunities in job descriptions and gain commitment for on-going learning in pre-hire interviews. It integrates career advancement with the successful application of new knowledge, skills and abilities gained in learning programs. It also integrates learning and development in performance management system.

Learning and development department also, to some extent, is responsible for this situation. There is a concern for qualifications and competencies of learning professionals. If there are qualified professionals with appropriate competencies in the learning and development department, it is easier for the department to deliver the learning content customizing to individual employee learning needs. The department can assess employee behavioral changes resulting from learning programs. It can measure the role of learning in employee advancement. Employee retention also can be assessed before and after learning programs. All these efforts go a long way in creating a learning culture in an organization.

Leaders' support is also a concern here. These are executives who are responsible for providing budget and non-financial resources such as staff, technologies and other resources required to build a learning culture in an organization. They have to display an eagerness for learning and be held accountable for demonstrating the importance of learning. These leaders model learning behaviors that include participation in learning programs, sharing their new knowledge and expertise through leaders-as-teachers programs. They have to demonstrate how new knowledge, skills and abilities translate into organizational changes. It does not absolve the responsibility of employees for building a proper learning culture in their respective organizations. Employees are accountable for learning. They have to self-direct their own learning that is required to perform their present jobs and to grow in their career. They must be

willing to share their knowledge with their colleagues. In high-performance companies, employees share knowledge with their colleagues at a rate four times higher than that of workers in low-performance companies (ATD, 2016). Having built a learning culture, they should leverage from it in talent acquisition, engagement and retention. This in turn, will lead to a significantly stronger organization and enhance the value of learning culture.

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