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The impact of learning organization on job satisfaction in Vietnamese enterprises

Tuyen Quang Bui

Viettel Academy, Hanoi, Vietnam

Thinh Nguyen-Duc

PG Bank, Hanoi, Vietnam

Hanh Thi Hien Nguyen

Foreign Trade University, Hanoi, Vietnam

Tam To Phuong¹

Foreign Trade University, Hanoi, Vietnam

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Abstract

The relationship between learning organizations and job satisfaction is a compelling area of research due to its potential impact on organizational performance. This study aims to investigate how the seven dimensions of a learning organization affect job satisfaction among employees. The research utilized a sample of 729 responses from employees of Vietnamese enterprises. Using partial least squares structural equation modeling, this study finds that three of the seven learning organization factors (i.e., establishing systems to capture and share learning, empowering people toward a collective vision, and providing strategic leadership for learning) significantly and positively impact job satisfaction. In contrast, the other four factors (i.e., creating continuous learning opportunities, promoting dialogue and inquiry, encouraging collaboration and team learning, and connecting the organization to its environment) do not show a significant impact. Based on these findings, several practical implications are suggested, including embedding learning organizations to enhance employee learning and job satisfaction, addressing the workforce's low productivity, and supporting the government's advocacy for lifelong learning in Vietnamese organizations. Several important limitations are acknowledged, including potential methodological constraints or contextual factors. By addressing these limitations, the paper clarifies the impact of learning organizations on job satisfaction and provides recommendations for future research, thereby significantly contributing to the literature on organizational learning.

Keywords: Learning organization, Organizational learning culture, Job satisfaction, Dimensions of learning organization questionnaire (DOLQ), Vietnamese enterprises

¹ Corresponding author: phuongtotam@ftu.edu.vn

1. Introduction

The changes in the business environment nowadays, rooted in the continuous advancement of technology and ever-shifting market demand, have laid several critical challenges that go beyond the knowledge bases of organizations. To address the above challenges, it is critical for businesses to mobilize organizations and individuals' efforts in learning and creating knowledge (Chikweche and Bressan, 2018). With the recognition of knowledge as a fundamental driver of organizational success (Jain and Moreno, 2015), a learning organization is a strategic approach to cultivate the flexibility needed to navigate these dynamic landscapes (Hung *et al.*, 2010). This learning organization culture fosters the creation, acquisition, and transfer of knowledge among organizational members, serving as a platform for collaborative learning and adaptive capacity (Sidani and Reese, 2018; Watkins and Marsick, 2023). The positive outcomes of a robust culture in a learning organization extend to building adaptive capacity, fostering innovation and collaboration, and aligning organizational goals effectively (Marsick, 2013; Watkins and Marsick, 2023), ultimately leading to employee satisfaction (Egan *et al.*, 2004; Dirani, 2009).

The impact of a learning organization on job satisfaction is profound, as fostering a learning culture within organizations significantly enhances individual competencies, sparks innovation, and boosts overall job satisfaction. As Garvin *et al.* (2008) noted, environments prioritizing learning and development result in higher employee engagement and motivation, as they feel valued and empowered. Similarly, Song *et al.* (2009) found that employees in learning organizations report greater job satisfaction due to increased opportunities for personal and professional growth. Malik and Garg (2017) also demonstrated that supportive learning environments enhance employee engagement and intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, Tosten *et al.* (2018) highlighted that the collaborative nature of learning culture promotes a sense of community and shared purpose, further contributing to job satisfaction. Finally, learning organizations, characterized by their ability to adapt, innovate, and continually improve (Senge *et al.*, 2006), have been linked to enhancing job satisfaction globally (Dekoulou and Trivellas, 2015; Erdem *et al.*, 2014).

While Vietnamese enterprises share commonality with those globally, the Vietnamese business landscape contains some unique features that may affect this impact. Consequently, there is a strong need for empirical research on learning organizations on job satisfaction in Vietnam, given that a scarcity of studies on this relationship has been found in the body of literature. This study significantly contributes to research and practice in promoting learning organization culture in Vietnamese businesses. First, in the context of Vietnam's rapid economic transformation, this empirical study offers valuable insights into the interplay between workforce skill development and employee satisfaction. These insights can assist businesses in devising strategies to enhance both employee learning and satisfaction. Second, addressing Vietnam's relatively low workforce productivity on a regional and global scale, the study's findings offer implications for organizations that prioritize in-house learning initiatives, skills development, and job satisfaction for their workforce. Third, the study provides research-based evidence

supporting the government's advocacy for lifelong learning across various contexts, including businesses (GoV, 2022). Finally, this study enriches national and international literature by highlighting specific factors within learning organizations that impact employee satisfaction, unlike previous research, which has predominantly treated the learning organization as a single construct, this study digs deep into specific factors, offering a better understanding of their effects.

To achieve the study's main objective of assessing the impact of learning organization's factors on employee job satisfaction, we utilized the multi-level learning organization concept by Watkins and Marsick (1993), specifically employing the dimensions of the learning organization questionnaire (DLOQ) (Watkins and Marsick, 1997). This approach was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, the DLOQ is a reliable instrument consisting of seven dimensions, allowing for the precise measurement of each factor's impact on individual work performance. Secondly, among the various tools for assessing learning organizations, the DLOQ by Watkins and Marsick (1997) stands out as the most widely cited and validated. Finally, the Vietnamese-translated version of the DLOQ (Watkins and Marsick, 1997) has been validated for use in the context of Vietnamese small- and medium-sized enterprises (Nguyen-Duc *et al.*, 2023), making it a reliable and valid tool for research and practical applications within this specific local setting.

The remainder of this paper is structured into several sections. Section 2 presents the literature review and formulates the hypotheses. Thereafter, section 3 details the research methods and techniques utilized. The research findings are elaborated upon and discussed in sections 4 and 5. Subsequently, sections 6 and 7 offer practical recommendations and propose avenues for future research. Finally, section 8 concludes the study.

2. Literature review

2.1 Learning organization

The concept of learning organization

The idea of the learning organization is not a recent concept; it has gained increasing attention over time. The initial mention of a learning organization (LO) concept is attributed to Peter Senge. His seminal contribution in 1990 delineated learning organizations as entities wherein individuals consistently enhance their ability to generate desired outcomes, nurturing innovative thinking, collective aspirations, and shared learning experiences. Similarly, Watkins and Marsick (1993) defined learning organization as “one that learns continuously and transforms itself... Learning also enhanced organizational capacity for innovation and growth. The learning organization has embedded systems to capture and share learning”. Similarly, a learning organization is defined by Dowd (1999) as a group committed to perpetual learning and improvement and by Lewis (2002) as an environment where employees continuously acquire, share, and apply new knowledge. These definitions emphasize the importance of individual learning for organizational performance. However, Poell and Van der Krogt (1997) argued that learning must occur at individual, group, and system levels to create a true learning organization. Örtenblad (2018) and Bratianu (2015) suggested that organizations themselves

can evolve as learning units. A comprehensive approach involves continuous learning at all levels and sharing knowledge across the organization, enhancing capacity and adaptability (Senge, 1990; Pedler *et al.*, 1991; Armstrong and Foley, 2003; James, 2003). Thus, while individual learning is essential, the organizational structure, culture, and learning environment are also crucial.

In Vietnam, the concept of a learning organization is gaining momentum across various sectors. Previous studies have examined the role of learning organization as a mediator between transformational leadership and nurses' innovative behavior in healthcare (Nguyen, 2024), factors influencing training and development in the hospitality industry (Han *et al.*, 2023), the role of technology in creating learning organizations for Vietnamese enterprises in the digital age (Bui, 2021), and the transition of higher education system to online and blended learning formats following the COVID-19 pandemic (Ta Trung, 2022). These studies underscore the importance of continuous learning, teamwork, innovation, and technological integration in organizational processes to boost competitiveness and adaptability in Vietnam's evolving business landscape.

Factors of the learning organization

Learning organization has fundamental characteristics encompassing five factors. Firstly, systems thinking is the cohesive element that unifies the five disciplines coherently. Secondly, personal mastery involves the continuous refinement and deepening of personal vision, the focused concentration of energies, the cultivation of patience, and the objective perception of reality. Thirdly, mental models require individuals to influence their actions by aligning their positions, career paths, and professions with the standards and influence of their mental metaphors. Fourthly, shared vision encourages corporate leaders, business managers, and employers to cultivate congruent business perspectives, fostering diligence and strategic planning. Finally, team learning encourages employees to collaborate in teamwork.

Following Senge, Garvin (1993) provided a toolkit for organizations to self-assess the extent of learning within their structure. He also evaluated each small unit within the organization, proposing matching standards for each learning element based on a survey of 100 senior managers from various fields. Consequently, Garvin proposed a model of a learning organization comprising five fundamental factors: (i) creating a learning environment within the organization, (ii) gathering information, (iii) learning from experience, (iv) providing opportunities for experimentation, and (v) developing learning leaders.

To identify the factors of a learning organization, Watkins and Marsick offered an inclusive framework drawing on various approaches, such as (a) systems thinking – organizational level (Senge, 1990), (b) a comprehensive understanding of learning from a learning perspective (Pedler *et al.*, 1991), and (c) strategic perspective (Garvin, 1993; Goh, 1998). Taking a broader theoretical approach, Watkins and Marsick (1993, 1996, 1997) introduced a comprehensive model for a learning organization, encompassing seven-dimensional factors in both people-oriented and structure-oriented components. These factors are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Watkins and Marsick’s model of the seven-dimensional factors of the learning organization

Factors	Definition
Create continuous learning opportunities	Learning is incorporated into job tasks to facilitate on-the-job learning; continuous education and growth opportunities are offered.
Promote inquiry and dialogue	Individuals acquire effective reasoning abilities to articulate their perspectives, alongside the capacity to actively listen and inquire about the opinions of others. The organizational culture undergoes a transformation to endorse questioning, encourage feedback, and foster a spirit of experimentation.
Encourage collaboration and team learning	Work is crafted to leverage groups, enabling access to diverse modes of thinking. These groups are anticipated to engage in collective learning and collaborative efforts, with the organizational culture placing value on collaboration and providing recognition for such collaborative endeavors.
Create systems to capture and share learning	Both advanced and basic technological systems for disseminating knowledge are developed and seamlessly integrated into work processes. Accessibility is ensured, and the maintenance of these systems is upheld.
Empower people toward a collective vision	Individuals actively participate in formulating, embracing, and executing a shared vision. Responsibility is decentralized, bringing it closer to the decision-making process, thereby motivating individuals to acquire the knowledge necessary to fulfill their assigned responsibilities.
Connect the organization to its environment	Individuals are guided to recognize the impact of their contributions on the entire enterprise. They actively survey the environment, utilizing information to adapt work practices. Additionally, the organization establishes connections with its communities.
Provide strategic leadership for learning	Leaders exemplify, advocate for, and support a culture of continuous learning. Leadership strategically employs learning initiatives to drive business outcomes.

Source: Watkins and Marsick (1997)

Along with these seven-dimensional factors, they also devised the DLOQ to measure organizational learning activities. This tool has been widely utilized to assess the characteristics of learning organizations. The questionnaire is structured into five sections, evaluating learning at the individual, team, and organizational levels. The original version of DLOQ includes 43 items to measure the seven factors of the learning organization. Ultimately, the DLOQ can be used in two forms: one with 43 items and another with 21 items, measuring the learning organization’s seven aspects (Yang *et al.*, 2004).

2.2 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a vital topic in organizational and management research, with various definitions emphasizing different aspects. Taylor and Tashakkori (1995) described it as employees’ feelings towards their jobs, while Schultz (1982) viewed it as a psychological disposition toward work. Essentially, job satisfaction reflects how favorably individuals

perceive their roles within an organization and influences outcomes such as health, quality of life, commitment, motivation, productivity, absenteeism, and turnover (Fenwick, 2006; Kwong *et al.*, 2010). It includes intrinsic and extrinsic factors like pay, promotion, and autonomy, and is affected by how well job expectations are met (Porter and Steers, 1973). Unmet expectations reduce satisfaction and increase withdrawal behaviors (Pearson, 1991). Although job satisfaction impacts turnover, its predictive power may be less than expected (Agho *et al.*, 1993; Hom and Griffeth, 1991). Job satisfaction varies notably between employees in the private and public sectors (Chapagain, 2021). Personality traits, such as extraversion and conscientiousness, are key indicators of job satisfaction among civil servants (Subedi, 2019). In the banking sector, lower-ranked employees find rewards satisfying, while higher-ranked employees value training and job security (Pantha, 2020). For doctors, factors like older age, being male, and having over five years of experience contribute to job satisfaction (Bhattacharjee *et al.*, 2016). Among engineers, job satisfaction is linked to being male, holding a higher rank, and working in an office rather than on-site (Paudel *et al.*, 2020). Job satisfaction impacts various aspects of work behavior, including task performance, citizenship behaviors, absenteeism, and turnover. Notably, it is a strong predictor of turnover intention (Yukongdi and Shrestha, 2020).

2.3 Learning organization and job satisfaction

Research across various sectors and regions consistently supports the positive impact of learning organizations on job satisfaction. The studies by Dekoulou and Trivellas (2015) support earlier research findings (Chang and Lee, 2007; Dirani, 2009; Egan *et al.*, 2004), which suggest that learning organizations significantly improve job satisfaction. Nyukoron's (2016) research in the Ghanaian telecommunications industry reinforced this positive association, attributing it to the escalating demands on knowledge workers and managerial shortcomings in conventional leadership approaches. Additionally, Nyukoron's study not only reaffirmed the positive link but also identified learning organization as a significant predictor of job satisfaction, aligning with earlier empirical works (Erdem *et al.*, 2014; Lee-Kelley *et al.*, 2007; Mirkamali *et al.*, 2011; Nyukoron, 2016; Rose *et al.*, 2009; Rowden and Conine, 2005).

In learning organizations, employees' attitudes toward work can undergo positive transformations through flexible experimentation and continuous learning, leading to intrinsic job satisfaction (Gardiner and Whiting, 1997). Resources and learning opportunities provided abundantly enable employees to acquire knowledge and soft skills, enhancing workplace performance and boosting morale while reducing absenteeism and turnover rates (Hong, 2001). With a sense of personal mastery, employees take greater responsibility for their work, leading to increased dedication and professional advancement opportunities (Senge *et al.*, 2006). Additionally, employees exhibit higher job satisfaction when companies foster vibrant learning environments and provide appropriate tools and technology (Varshney, 2019).

Learning organizations promote idea generation, knowledge sharing, and dialogue among members, fostering self-motivation and empowerment (Senge, 1990; Watkins and Marsick, 1993). In the Ghanaian telecommunications industry, shared vision and personal mastery emerged

as significant components directly related to job satisfaction (Nyukoron, 2016). Similarly, Varshney (2019) confirmed this relationship in India's manufacturing sector, emphasizing the importance of deeply involving staff in their jobs to increase engagement and job satisfaction. Practical research by Chang and Lee (2007) further supports the notion that promoting learning organizations can improve job satisfaction by encouraging continuous learning and changing employees' attitudes toward their work. As evidenced by the literature, learning organizations significantly enhance employee job satisfaction, warranting further investigation into their dimensions' relationship with job satisfaction, particularly in educational settings.

Ongoing learning activities, such as training programs and skill development initiatives, enhance employees' knowledge and skills (Gardiner and Whiting, 1997; Hong, 2001; Varshney, 2019). Such improvements in competence and confidence are likely to lead to higher job satisfaction among employees. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H1: Creating continuous learning opportunities has a positive and significant direct effect on job satisfaction.

Fostering open communication and encouraging employees to voice their ideas and concerns promotes a supportive organizational culture (Senge, 1990; Watkins and Marsick, 1993). Employees who feel their opinions are valued and heard will be more satisfied with their job. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

H2: Promoting dialogue and inquiry has a positive and significant direct effect on job satisfaction.

Collaborative environments that facilitate teamwork and mutual support enhance job satisfaction by promoting camaraderie and shared success (Senge, 1990; Watkins and Marsick, 1993). When employees work together effectively, it fosters a sense of belonging and satisfaction with their roles. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Encouraging collaboration and team learning has a positive and significant direct effect on job satisfaction.

Organizations benefit from systematically capturing and sharing knowledge and insights, which enhances transparency and fosters a culture of continuous improvement (Watkins and Marsick, 1993; Chang and Lee, 2007). Employees who have access to shared learning resources and best practices are more likely to feel informed and satisfied in their roles. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H4: Establishing systems to capture and share learning has a positive and significant direct effect on job satisfaction.

Organizations that maintain strong connections with external stakeholders and industry trends enhance job satisfaction by creating a sense of relevance and alignment with broader organizational goals (Senge, 1990; Varshney, 2019). Employees feel more engaged and motivated when they perceive their work as contributing to the organization's success and adaptability. Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:

H5: Connecting the organization to its environment has a positive and significant direct effect on job satisfaction.

Empowering employees to embrace and contribute to a shared organizational vision fosters a sense of purpose and commitment (Senge, 1990; Nyukoron, 2016). When individuals feel aligned with the organization’s mission, it positively impacts their satisfaction and dedication to their work. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: Empowering people to adopt a collective vision has a positive and significant direct effect on job satisfaction.

Leadership behaviors that prioritize and support organizational learning initiatives contribute to a positive work environment and increased job satisfaction (Senge, 1990; Chang and Lee, 2007). When leaders demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and provide resources for learning and development, employees are more likely to feel valued and motivated in their roles. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H7: Leaders who model and support learning at the individual, team, and organizational levels have a positive and significant direct effect on job satisfaction.

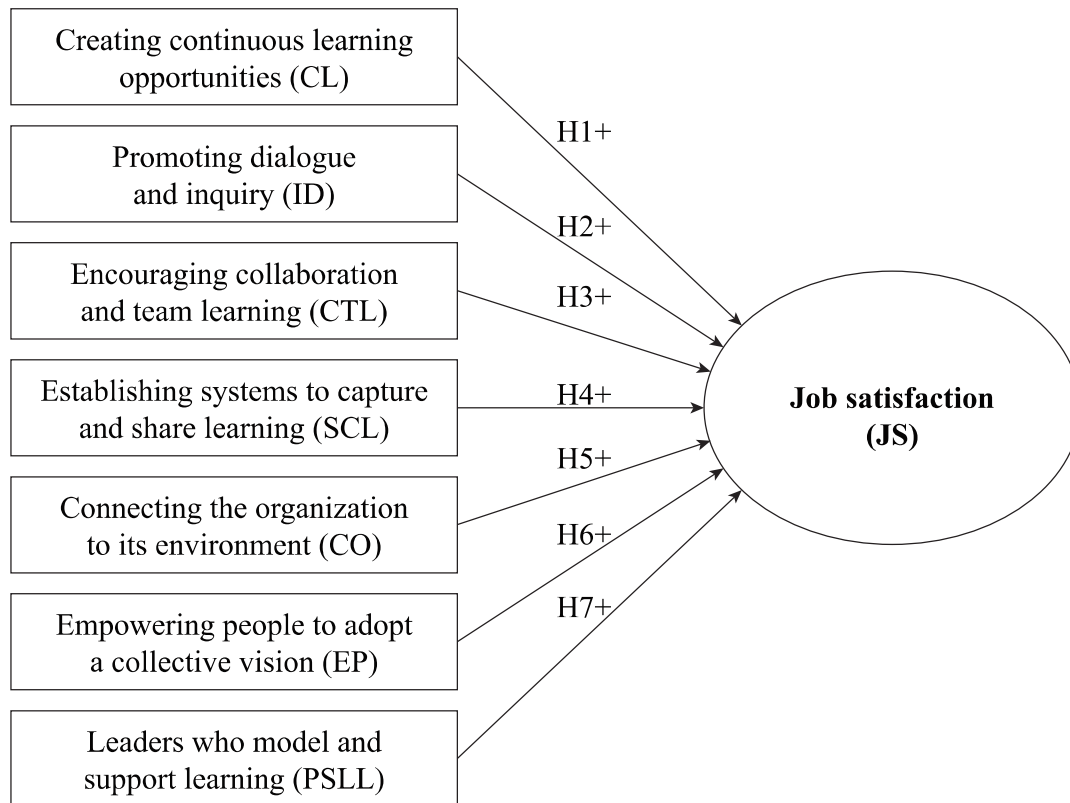


Figure 1. The proposed research model

Source: Authors’ suggestion

3. Research methods

3.1 Instruments

To achieve the above objective, DLOQ developed by Watkins and Marsick (1997) is utilized. The original version of DLOQ comprising 43 items has undergone rigorous refinement, resulting in two additional versions: a 21-item short form and a 7-item single-construct measure. Yang *et al.* (2004) shared the viewpoint in their study on the validity of the DLOQ, with findings suggesting that the original 43-item version serves best as a diagnostic tool, the 21-item version is suitable for serving as a research instrument to determine theoretical relationships of the learning culture and other variables, and the 7-item version is recommended for use alongside other assessment tools in comprehensive studies. Similarly, the study validating the three versions of DLOQ in Vietnamese businesses (Nguyen-Duc *et al.*, 2023) has shown that while the 43-item version provides detailed information on the extent of organizational learning, the 21-item version is more aligned with the collected data in the Vietnamese context. For those reasons, we decided to employ the validated 21-item version in Vietnamese as an evaluation tool in this study.

3.2 Data collection

The study employed a 21-item survey in Vietnamese, utilizing a five-point Likert scale, to gather data. Initially, managers and HR executives from various enterprises were approached to introduce the study and request their assistance in distributing the survey. The survey was distributed either online via *surveymonkey.com* or in hard copy form to employees. However, only a few managers and HR executives agreed to assist, citing reasons such as unfamiliarity with research work, refusal from top management, and concerns about internal information leakage. To enhance participation, surveys were also directly sent to employees through personal and professional networks using the snowball method. The study aimed to encompass various types of enterprise ownership (state-owned, private, foreign-invested) and sizes (large corporations, small- and medium-sized enterprises). Participation was voluntary with no incentives, and participants had the option to withdraw at any point. Consequently, the study could not regulate the number of employees who received the survey or the response rate.

Out of the 1,060 responses collected, 729 were retained for analysis. The resulting sample exhibited a balanced gender distribution, with males constituting 47.60% and females comprising 52.40%. Most participants, 69%, have a bachelor's degree or higher, with university bachelor's degrees being the most common at 54.32%. Nearly half of the participants, 42.52%, have less than five years of work experience, followed by those with five to ten years at 28.40% and eleven to twenty-five years at 27.02%. The majority, 49.25%, hold staff positions, with middle managers representing 29.63% and official workers 10.15%. Over 60% of participants are from state-owned enterprises at 61.18%, followed by 31.69% from private enterprises and 7.13% from foreign direct investment (FDI) enterprises. Large enterprises dominate the sample at 65.29%, with medium enterprises at 20.44% and small enterprises at 13.03%.

3.3 Analytical methods

Data were analyzed using SmartPLS version 3.2.9 (Ringle *et al.*, 2015). This research employed variance-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) rather than covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) due to its proficiency in estimating causal relationships among latent constructs concurrently while accommodating measurement errors in the structural model (Farooq, 2016; Hair *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, given the explanatory nature of our study, PLS-SEM was deemed the most suitable approach (Farooq and Radovic-Markovic, 2017).

According to Hair *et al.* (2017), a sample size of at least 10 times the maximum number of paths directed at a latent construct is recommended for PLS-SEM. With a sample size of 729, our study exceeds this recommendation, ensuring robust and reliable results. Several tests were conducted before the PLS-SEM analysis to ensure data quality and the consistency of the structural model. These tests included common-method variance bias, non-response bias, and data screening for missing values. Following the guidelines suggested by Hair *et al.* (2017), measurement models were assessed separately before evaluating the structural model. Additionally, validity and reliability checks were performed to ensure the robustness of the data.

The measuring scale used in this study encompassed seven factors of a learning organization (LO), namely creating continuous learning opportunities (CL), promoting dialogue and inquiry (ID), encouraging collaboration and team learning (CTL), establishing systems to capture and share learning (SCL), connecting the organization to its environment (CO), empowering people to adopt a collective vision (EP), and leaders who model and support learning (PSLL). Each factor was measured using multiple items adapted from established scales, ensuring content validity. Responses were captured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Job satisfaction (JS) was measured using three items designed to capture key aspects of overall job satisfaction, also on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This comprehensive approach ensures reliable and valid measurements for analyzing the relationship between LO factors and job satisfaction.

4. Results

4.1 Common-method variance bias test and non-response bias test

To ascertain the potential presence of common-method variance bias among the variables, Harman's (1996) one-factor test was utilized. This study adhered to the guidelines and methodology outlined by Podsakoff *et al.* (2003) to conduct this test. Accordingly, all items from the measurement scale were subjected to a principal component analysis with varimax rotation to detect any indications of a single factor emerging from the factor analysis. The results revealed eight distinct factors from the 24 items of the measurement constructs (i.e., CL, ID, CTL, SCL, CO, EP, PSLL, JS), with the rotation converging in ten iterations. Based on these findings, it is concluded that this study does not exhibit issues related to common-method variance bias.

Moreover, this study uses the extrapolation method to evaluate non-response bias. This method, widely recognized as the most common approach, involves comparing early and late respondents to identify any differences in demographics and mean values of key constructs (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). To this end, an independent sample t-test was applied to compare the responses from the first 50 and the last 50 questionnaires received. The results of this t-test demonstrated that there were no significant differences at the 0.05 level between the mean values of the two groups (i.e., initial 50 respondents versus final 50 respondents). Consequently, it was determined that the responses from both groups were not significantly different, indicating that non-response bias is not an issue in this study.

4.2 Analysis of measurement model

Following the guidelines of Hair *et al.* (2017) and Henseler *et al.* (2016), constructs with measurement models (i.e., CL, ID, CTL, SCL, CO, EP, PSSL, JS) were analyzed individually. To evaluate these reflective measurement models, each construct was examined for reliability and validity. The results indicated that all constructs exhibited satisfactory factor loading values, ranging from 0.755 to 0.940. Additionally, all constructs were assessed for composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha values, both of which exceeded the 0.70 thresholds recommended by Cohen (1988). The average variance extracted (AVE) values for all constructs were also above the critical value of 0.50, as suggested by Hair *et al.* (2017). Detailed results of the validity and reliability assessments for all constructs are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Validity and reliability of latent constructs

Latent constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
CL	0.728	0.845	0.646
ID	0.783	0.872	0.695
CTL	0.795	0.879	0.709
SCL	0.890	0.932	0.820
CO	0.876	0.924	0.802
EP	0.836	0.901	0.752
PSSL	0.910	0.943	0.847
JS	0.902	0.939	0.837

Source: Authors' calculation

Furthermore, the Fornell-Larcker criterion was employed to evaluate discriminant validity, as illustrated in Table 3. The bold values in Table 3 represent the square root of the AVE, which exceeds the corresponding inter-construct correlation values, thereby confirming the discriminant validity of the constructs within the proposed measurement models (Farooq and Hairs, 2016; Hair *et al.*, 2017). Overall, these findings meet all the necessary criteria for establishing the validity and reliability of the measurement models.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion

	CL	ID	CTL	SCL	CO	EP	PSLL	JS
CL	0.804							
ID	0.695	0.833						
CTL	0.674	0.737	0.842					
SCL	0.558	0.606	0.662	0.906				
CO	0.586	0.615	0.694	0.789	0.895			
EP	0.587	0.620	0.716	0.804	0.836	0.867		
PSLL	0.558	0.615	0.661	0.789	0.811	0.776	0.920	
JS	0.425	0.468	0.494	0.534	0.526	0.541	0.541	0.915

Source: Authors' calculation

4.3 Analysis of the structural model

The structural model's path analysis was conducted to evaluate the direct effects of the proposed hypotheses on job satisfaction. Since PLS-SEM does not produce overall goodness of fit (GoF) indices, the R-squared value is used as the primary metric to evaluate the model's explanatory power. The adjusted R-squared value for the model is 0.347, indicating that the model explains 34.7% of the variance in job satisfaction. Additionally, the inner VIF values of the latent variables ranged from 1.411 to 3.728, and the outer VIF values of the observed variables ranged from 2.236 to 4.529. As all inner VIF and outer VIF values are below 5, they fall within the acceptable threshold, indicating no clear signs of multicollinearity.

Table 4. Hypothesis assessment

Hypothesized path		β	T-value	P-value	Decision
H1	CL → JS	0.038	0.802	0.422	Rejected
H2	ID → JS	0.093	1.641	0.101	Rejected
H3	CTL → JS	0.076	1.288	0.198	Rejected
H4	SCL → JS	0.131	2.178	0.030	Supported
H5	CO → JS	0.034	0.451	0.652	Rejected
H6	EP → JS	0.136	2.009	0.045	Supported
H7	PSLL → JS	0.176	2.551	0.011	Supported

Source: Authors' calculation

The path analysis results reveal that three of the seven hypotheses are supported at a 95% confidence level. Establishing systems to capture and share learning (H4) has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. Empowering people to adopt a collective vision (H6) also shows a significant positive impact on job satisfaction. Additionally, leaders who model and support learning at various levels (H7) significantly enhance job satisfaction.

In contrast, the hypotheses H1, H2, H3, and H5 were not supported, as their p-values exceeded the 0.05 threshold. Specifically, creating continuous learning opportunities (H1) did not significantly influence job satisfaction. Promoting dialogue and inquiry (H2) also lacked a significant effect. Encouraging collaboration and team learning (H3) was not significant, and connecting the organization to its environment (H5) did not significantly impact job satisfaction. The detailed results are shown in Table 4.

In summary, the structural model highlights the significance of systems to capture and share learning (H4), empowering people to adopt a collective vision (H6), and leaders who model and support learning (H7) as key factors positively influencing job satisfaction.

5. Discussion

The findings from the structural model offer significant insights into the determinants of job satisfaction within organizations. The model's adjusted R-squared value of 0.347 underscores its explanatory power, explaining 34.7% of the variance in job satisfaction. This highlights the relevance of the included variables in understanding employee satisfaction. Furthermore, the assessment of multicollinearity indicated that all VIF values were below the threshold of 5, affirming the reliability of the relationships observed in the model.

Three key hypotheses (H4, H6, and H7) were supported, indicating the pivotal roles of specific organizational practices and leadership behaviors in influencing job satisfaction. Establishing systems to capture and share learning (H4) demonstrated a significant positive effect on job satisfaction (estimated coefficient of 0.131 and a significance level of 0.030), consistent with Garvin *et al.* (2008), who emphasized on structured learning systems in fostering organizational learning cultures. This finding suggests that organizations benefit from systematic approaches to knowledge dissemination, enhancing job satisfaction by promoting continuous learning.

Empowering individuals to adopt a collective vision (H6) positively impacted job satisfaction (estimated coefficient of 0.136 and a significance level of 0.045), supporting Conger and Kanungo's (1988) assertion that empowerment enhances motivation and satisfaction by aligning employees with organizational goals. Similarly, leaders who model and support learning (H7) were found to significantly influence job satisfaction (estimated coefficient of 0.176 and a significance level of 0.011), consistent with Bass's (1985) transformational leadership theory. Such leaders foster environments where employees feel valued and supported, contributing to higher satisfaction and performance levels.

Conversely, hypotheses H1, H2, H3, and H5 were not supported, indicating that creating continuous learning opportunities (H1), promoting dialogue and inquiry (H2), encouraging collaboration and team learning (H3), and connecting the organization to its environment (H5) did not directly enhance job satisfaction in this study. These results suggest that while these factors may contribute positively to organizational dynamics, their direct impact on job satisfaction may be mediated through other unexplored variables or contextual factors.

To contextualize these findings within contemporary management theories, our results align closely with transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1985), which emphasizes the role of leaders in shaping organizational culture and employee satisfaction through inspirational and supportive behaviors. Our study challenges assumptions regarding the direct influence of certain organizational practices on job satisfaction, suggesting that their effects may be indirect or contingent upon specific organizational contexts.

6. Implications and recommendations

The findings of this study provide several practical and theoretical implications for managers and leaders aiming to enhance job satisfaction within their organizations. The significant positive effects of establishing systems to capture and share learning (H4), empowering employees to adopt a collective vision (H6), and leaders who model and support learning (H7) suggest critical areas where managerial focus can yield substantial improvements in employee satisfaction.

First, organizations should invest in robust systems that facilitate the capture and sharing of knowledge. Such systems can include formal knowledge management platforms, regular training sessions, and informal knowledge-sharing practices. Organizations can foster an environment of continuous improvement and innovation by ensuring that employees have access to the information and learning resources they need. This enhances job satisfaction and can lead to better overall organizational performance.

Second, empowering employees by involving them in creating and pursuing the organization's vision can significantly enhance their job satisfaction. Managers should focus on participative leadership styles, where employees are encouraged to contribute ideas and take ownership of their roles. Creating a sense of shared purpose aligns individual goals with organizational objectives, which can improve motivation and satisfaction. This approach requires clear communication, trust-building, and opportunities for employees to engage in meaningful decision-making process.

Third, leaders who actively model and support learning behaviors at all levels of the organization play a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction. Leadership development programs should emphasize the importance of transformational leadership qualities, such as inspiring, mentoring, and facilitating employee growth. Leaders who demonstrate a commitment to learning and personal development can create a culture that values and supports continuous improvement, leading to higher employee satisfaction and retention.

The study's results also contribute to the broader understanding of organizational behavior and job satisfaction by highlighting the importance of learning and empowerment in the workplace. Future research should consider the potential mediating variables that might influence the relationship between the unsupported hypotheses and job satisfaction. For example, the indirect effects of promoting dialogue and inquiry (H2) or encouraging collaboration and team learning (H3) on job satisfaction through improved communication or team cohesion could be explored. Besides, the unsupported hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H5) suggest that the direct effects of creating

continuous learning opportunities, promoting dialogue and inquiry, encouraging collaboration, and connecting the organization to its environment might be context-dependent. Organizations operating in different industries or cultural settings may experience varying impacts of these factors on job satisfaction. Future studies should investigate these variables in diverse contexts to better understand the conditions under which they significantly affect job satisfaction.

Moreover, longitudinal studies are essential to understand the dynamic nature of the relationships identified in this research. Examining these relationships over time can provide deeper insights into how continuous learning, empowerment, and supportive leadership impact job satisfaction in the long run. Such studies can also identify any delayed effects or changes in the significance of these factors, offering a more comprehensive understanding of their roles in enhancing job satisfaction.

In summary, the study underscores the critical role of learning systems, empowerment, and supportive leadership in fostering job satisfaction. By implementing strategies that focus on these areas, managers can create more engaging and satisfying work environments. Future research should further explore these relationships and consider the context-specific and temporal dynamics to enrich the understanding of job satisfaction determinants.

7. Limitations

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, several limitations must be acknowledged, which may affect the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. Regarding the methodological aspect, the use of PLS-SEM presents certain limitations. While PLS-SEM is a powerful tool for exploratory research and theory development, it does not provide overall GoF indices. This limitation means that while the explanatory power of the model can be assessed through R-squared values, the overall fit of the model to the data cannot be rigorously evaluated. Consequently, the absence of GoF indices may affect the robustness of the model's validation and the confidence in its structural relationships.

Concerning sample bias, the sample used in this study exhibits a significant bias towards large corporations. Out of the 729 responses, 476 were from employees of large corporations. This disproportionate representation limits the generalizability of the findings to smaller organizations and potentially overlooks the unique dynamics present in different organizational sizes. The experiences and determinants of job satisfaction in small- and medium-sized enterprises may differ significantly from those in large corporations, and thus, the findings may not be fully applicable to all organizational contexts.

Besides, the cross-sectional nature of the study restricts the ability to draw causal inferences from the data. While significant relationships between variables were identified, the temporal order and causality cannot be established. Longitudinal studies are needed to determine how these relationships evolve over time and to confirm whether the identified predictors of job satisfaction have sustained effects.

In terms of context-specific factors, the study does not account for potential context-specific factors that might influence job satisfaction. Variables such as organizational culture, industry type, and regional differences were not explicitly controlled for, which could impact the generalizability of the results. Future research should consider these factors to provide a more nuanced understanding of the determinants of job satisfaction across different contexts.

Moreover, while the study included several important predictors of job satisfaction, it did not encompass all possible factors. The model did not include other significant variables, such as compensation, work-life balance, and job security. Including a broader range of variables in future research could provide a more comprehensive picture of what influences job satisfaction.

In brief, while this study offers important insights into the factors affecting job satisfaction, particularly the roles of learning systems, empowerment, and supportive leadership, these findings should be interpreted with caution due to the limitations discussed. Future research addressing these limitations could provide a more robust and generalizable understanding of job satisfaction determinants.

8. Conclusions

This study aims to examine the impact of various dimensions of a learning organization on job satisfaction among employees of Vietnamese enterprises. Utilizing PLS-SEM, the research analyzed responses from 729 employees to determine how the seven factors of a learning organization influenced their job satisfaction.

The results indicate that establishing systems to capture and share learning, empowering employees to adopt a collective vision, and having leaders who model and support learning significantly enhance job satisfaction. These findings highlight the critical role of structured learning environments, employee empowerment, and supportive leadership in fostering job satisfaction. Conversely, factors such as creating continuous learning opportunities, promoting dialogue and inquiry, encouraging collaboration and team learning, and connecting the organization to its environment did not show a significant direct effect, suggesting that their impact may be context-dependent or mediated by other variables.

The practical implications of these findings are clear. Organizations should develop robust knowledge management systems, foster employee empowerment, and cultivate supportive leadership to enhance job satisfaction. These strategies can create a more engaging and satisfying work environment, ultimately benefiting both employees and the organization. Nevertheless, the study is not without its limitations. The use of PLS-SEM limits the ability to evaluate the overall model fit, and the sample is biased towards employees from large corporations, which may affect the generalizability of the results.

To summarize, this research highlights key areas where organizations can focus their efforts to improve job satisfaction through the principles of a learning organization. This study offers valuable insights into the interplay between workforce skill development and employee satisfaction within Vietnam's rapid economic transformation, aiding learning organizations in enhancing both areas. It also addresses Vietnam's low workforce productivity by providing

implications for organizations that prioritize in-house learning initiatives and skills development. Furthermore, the study supports the government's advocacy for lifelong learning across various contexts and enriches literature by exploring specific factors within learning organizations that impact employee satisfaction, providing an understanding absent in previous research. Future studies should address the identified limitations and explore additional mediating factors and context-specific conditions to build on these findings.

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