

## The Situation of Learning and Prospects for Improvement in a Tourism Organization

**Biruta Svagzdiene, Edmundas Jasinskas, Vilija Bite Fominiene, Rimantas Mikalauskas**

*Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education*

*Sporto st. 6, LT-44221 Kaunas, Lithuania*

*e-mail: b.svagzdiene@gmail.com, edmundas.jasinskas@gmail.com, v.fominiene@lkka.lt, Rimantas.Mikalauskas@lsu.lt*

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*A learning organization is an organization that attends to the ability of individuals to participate in a continuous learning process and ensure flexible and effective adaptation to changes. Positive response to changes is one of the ways to ensure successful operation and therefore learning organizations become the leading companies. They experiment more and encourage their members to be innovative. So, the modern society and modern organizations are focused on an ongoing change.*

*The change in needs and wishes is especially felt by service companies because the quality of services is perceived individually and is subject to personal needs and wishes of each customer. The success of companies providing other than essential services, such as a tourism organization, depends on the ability to adapt and learn.*

*Recently great attention has been paid to the improvement of organizational performance and the transformation of a traditional organization into a learning organization is seen as one of the possibilities for better performance. It has been generally accepted that correct learning of the organization is a key factor that ensures a rapid improvement of the organization and a quick response to the changing environment.*

*Presumably, organizational learning is very important for a tourism company. Firstly, the environment in this sector undergoes constant changes; the sector develops rapidly and offers new products to the market. Secondly, the employees of a tourism company maintain regular relations with the end-users of the services and therefore a big number of tourism company's employees have access to external sources of learning.*

**Keywords:** *learning organization, knowledge management, tourism organization.*

### Introduction

The organization acknowledging the model of learning organization and as a result of this, being able to effectively manage up-to-date knowledge in order to realize its strategic objectives, may attain several achievements in today world. First of all, however, to perceive and assess the formation of a new type of organizational structure, i.e., the learning organization, in a particular social-economic environment, it is necessary to analyse the preconditions for learning of both an individual, and of entire organization. Many authors (Stukalina, 2010; Serafinas, Ruzevicius, 2009; Ginevicius & Gineviciene, 2009; Grundey, 2008; Zafiroopoulos & Vrana, 2008; Jasinskas, 2008; Neverauskas & Stankevicius, 2008) share the opinion that evaluation of individual and organizational learning is complicated. (Ortenblad, 2001; Stewart, 2001; Phillips, 2003; Aksu & Ozdemir, 2005) emphasize the essence of a learning organization and argue that implementing the model of a learning organization in practice is difficult. In their papers the researchers pay great attention to the transformation of a traditional organization into a learning organization.

Scientific studies have shown that a learning organization and organizational learning are not the same. (Ortenblad, 2001; Aksu, Ozdemir, 2005) distinguish the main difference: a learning organization is a form and organizational learning is a process, however these two concepts are often understood synonymously. Studies have been performed to determine the characteristics of a

learning organization in many institutions (Phillips, 2003; Aksu & Ozdemir, 2005) internationally and in Lithuania (Simonaitiene, 2007). Such studies are impossible without a deep analysis of the concept of a learning organization (Morgan, 1998; Stewart, 2001; Aksu & Ozdemir, 2005). Although all papers describe the concept of a learning organization and report the results of research in this field (Stewart, 2001) there is no consensus on the definition of a learning organization and the learning methods that transform a traditional organization into a learning organization. (Phillips, 2003; Simonaitiene, 2007) present different characteristics of learning, most often supplemented by the five disciplines essential for a learning organization identified by (Senge, 2008). The authors have also analysed such aspects as: atmosphere and culture that encourage learning (Aksu & Ozdemir, 2005), the learning process (Stewart, 2001; Aksu, Ozdemir, 2005; Juceviciene, 2009) where single-and double-loop learning is distinguished, whereas D. Stewart (2001) introduces another level of learning, namely triple-loop learning. Individual vs. Organizational learning is also analysed (Stewart, 2001; Andrzejczak, 2004; Aksu, Ozdemir, 2005; Phillips, 2003). Some authors have analysed the structure of a learning organization (Simonaitiene, 2007; Sakalas, Venskus, 2007) and the benefits of the structure seen in teaching and learning outcomes (Jewell, 2002; Balezentis, 2008). Yasin & Zimmerer (1995) have proved that adequate organizational structure ensure higher quality of services.

(Hopeniene *et al.*, 2009; Malakauskaite & Navickas, 2010; Aivaz & Vancea, 2009; Savrina *et al.*, 2008; Koneenik & Ruzzier, 2008) have noted the growing demand in tourism and sport services. Further growth of this sector requires good knowledge management and professional specialists (Auruskeviciene *et al.*, 2010; Kazlauskaite *et al.*, 2009; Urban, 2009; Kersiene & Savaneviciene, 2009; Kilijoniene *et al.*, 2010).

Knowledge of organization's employees have a direct effect on the company's competitiveness and the quality of services (Martinkus *et al.*, 2009; Snieska & Bruneckiene, 2009; Navickas & Malakauskaite, 2009; Liepe & Sakalas, 2008; Jasinskas & Simanaviciene, 2008; Snieska, 2008; Melnikas, 2008).

The *scientific problem* raised in the article is the evaluation of the learning situation in a tourism organization and the prospects for development.

The reviewed research papers mainly analyse IT companies, however organizational learning in a tourism organization is equally important. It should be noted that the learning process in a service company is different from that in an industrial company; therefore the *originality of research* presented in this paper is the assessment of a learning situation in a tourism organization and development of the model for improving learning prospects in a tourism organization.

The *goal of the article* is to evaluate the learning situation and prospects for improvement in a tourism organization.

The *objective of the article* is to analyse learning in a tourism organization.

The following tasks were set forth to reach the goal:

1. Distinguish the ways of learning in a learning organization.
2. Evaluate the learning situation in a tourism organization.
3. Show the prospects of improving learning in a tourism organization

Research methods: critical analysis of scientific literature (to distinguish learning methods in a learning organization), questionnaire survey (among employees of a tourism organization), descriptive statistics (to evaluate the learning situation and prospects for improvement in a tourism organization).

In 2009 Lithuanian State Department of Tourism issued 140 licences for tour operators, therefore the potential respondents were 140 managers of tour operator businesses. To ensure the validity, reliability, objectivity and representativeness of the study the questionnaires were sent to all 140 managers of organizations providing tour operator services. Part of the respondents refused to participate in the survey for the following reasons:

- a) intensive work schedule and lack of time;
- b) too often requests to participate in various surveys (by master and doctoral students, institutions, such as Department of Statistics, Tax Inspectorate and the like).

The sample size was calculated from the equation.

$$n = \frac{1}{\Delta^2 + \frac{1}{N}} \quad (1)$$

where n is the sample size with the estimated standard error  $P = 0.954$ ; N is population size;  $\Delta$  is margin error ( $\Delta = 0,05$ ).

$$n = 1 / (0.0025 + 1/140)$$

$$n = 103.70 \approx 104 \text{ (respondents)}$$

The sample size determined by using V. I. Paniott's formula has shown that the survey with 104 respondents will give conclusions with 5 per cent margin error and confidence level at 0.954.

### Ways of learning in a learning organization

The organization acknowledging the model of learning organization and as a result of this, being able to effectively manage up-to-date knowledge in order to realize its strategic objectives, may attain several achievements in today world. First of all, however, to perceive and assess the formation of a new type of organizational structure, i.e., the learning organization, in a particular social-economic environment, it is necessary to analyse the preconditions for learning of both an individual, and of entire organization.

A learning organization can be defined by using two concepts:

- learning/developing;
- live and changing organization.

The terms 'learning'/'developing' describe the continuity of development or learning, permanent development.

When different notions typical for a learning organization are connected they reveal the significance of an individual (employee, manager) in and for the organization. Therefore, the essence of a learning organization can be discerned only through the prism of the organization as such and a learning organization.

Description of a learning organization. Learning individual is not the same as learning organization. It should be noted that a learning organization is not the aggregate of its learning members.

Theoretical approach to a learning organization. The term 'learning organization' conveys the attitude, the atmosphere. Learning takes place in individuals, teams, systems and structures. Learning in a learning organization is the key value. Changes should be sought, not avoided in the current environment.

Jucevicius (1997) has noted that practical implementation of the aspirations of a learning organization require adequate organizational culture that, first of all, would accept a permanent development, transformation and, secondly, would abandon habitual forms of operation and stereotypical thinking. Development of such a culture, however, requires an appropriate performance philosophy that would provide the logical basis and sense to such approach as well as organizational structure that would offer conditions for team work, collaboration and learning at the same time. With regard to the structure we should also consider organization's boundaries which cannot be rigid. The boundaries mean not only the physical size of the organization but also the awareness of the organization and its members.

In scientific literature various conceptions of learning organization are found. Some authors (Tereseviciene, Zemaityte, 2000), understand the learning organization as the opposite to non-learning organization. This is the organization featuring by the ambition of unquenchable interest and learning, which enable to survive and to work successfully. In the organization of such type, people seek after expansion of their ability to pursue the desirable results, to involve new ways of thinking and collective aspirations, and also there a continuous learning to learn together takes place (Senge, 2008). And though it has not been agreed about one description yet, since some name a learning organization as motivating learning of its

members (Pedler *et al.*, 1991), as being able to create, acquire and transfer the knowledge, to alter under the influence of new knowledge and attitude (Garvin, 1993), as providing conditions to all its members to learn and improve personally (Beck, 1992) or facilitating the learning of all its members (Balciunas & Balvociute, 2005), however all agree that learning is useful not only for an individual, but also for the organization, which is continuously changing, improving.

A review of the conceptions of a learning organization allows distinguishing the different features of learning organization as well (see Table. 1).

Table 1

**Ways of learning of the organization**

Author	Learning ways of the organization
Senge (2008)	Personal skill, models of thinking; common vision; team learning; systemic learning.
Bukantaite (2006)	Flexibility and openness of organization; Learning climate characteristic to organization; Learning of individuals, team/group and organization and their linkage; Systemic thinking; The participation of organization members in the formation of vision, mission, strategy, climate; Free access to information when forming the policy of the organization, overt and clear system of informing; evaluation and motivation of personal abilities; communication and cooperation; Alternation of information; analysis of outer environment; evaluation, motivation of personal abilities, their maximal application; Self-education; Risk inducement; Knowledge management
Zuzeviciute (2006)	Socialisation and adaptation of organization; Clear mission and vision of organization; Absence of hierarchy; Learning of individuals, groups, and teams, continuous analysis of own activities; Openness to alteration and experimentation; Pursue of a common goal of organization members; positive learning environment; accentuation of participation; ability of constant change and adaption; constant monitoring and treatment of external environment
Davenport & Prusak (1998)	Enterprises interact with the environment; they gather information, turn it into the knowledge and use this new knowledge together with their experience, values and internal rules.
Bhatt (2001)	People having knowledge and abilities which strongly affect organizational learning are considered to be the basic element of the learning organization.

Source: created by the authors

Collaboration and encouragement of learning are Characteristics of a learning organization. Definitions reveal the typical features of a learning organization:

1. Specific learning:
  - Generating learning;
  - Collective learning;
  - Ability to reproduce knowledge and acquire new skills;
  - The importance of communicating the specificity of learning.
2. Providing conditions for learning:
  - Permanent development transforming into organizational development;
  - Very high adaptability to changes;
  - Development and improvement of new constructive thinking;
  - The need for access to information.
3. Features of a modern organization:
  - Developing goal seeking abilities in employees;
  - Ensuring free flow of information and clearing channels for information exchange;
  - Organizational development, dynamics, openness as an expression of quality.

It should be noted that information plays an important role in a developing organization. Information is a fundamental feature. As Neergaard (1999) argues, not every feature distinguished by researchers may be useful for a specific organization, however from a holistic point of view that does not contradict the notion of a learning organization. It is important to note that a learning organization is not the same as an aggregate of learning

individuals because due to the holistic effect it exceeds the summative result.

We may argue that a learning organization is an organization the goal, strategy and development of which is focused on a continuous learning of its members (Jucevicius, 1997), however an extensive review of this notion gives a wider understanding of the concept. P. Senge (2008) notes that by developing new mental models, such as system thinking, a learning organization reaches a higher level of quality. This organization in the process is able to acquire both the most advanced features of modern organization, and other ways of application of up-to-date theories being created and advanced technologies, which ensure the ability of organization to function effectively (Coutinet, 2002; Filloi, 2004).

When analysing the organizational learning in the context of a learning organization the latter is understood as a complicated process bringing problems, both theoretical, i.e., how to understand, and practical, i.e., how to model the learning (Garreau, 2006). In order to perceive this process better it is also necessary to analyse wider the structure of organization's learning process comprising:

- Individual learning in the context of the organization;
- Collective learning;
- Organizational learning.

Since in the process of organization's learning the thinking is combined with practice (Lunkamba, 2005), the learning of individuals becomes quite important.

Individual learning in the context of organization. The planned process of individual learning is very favourable

for the improvement of organization, since managers may plan this process and prepare for various changes of the organization, which are related to the improvement of individual qualification. Individual learning in the context of organization may take place by arranging the courses, training programs and so forth. Individual learning is mostly well defined, based on psychology and described as the process of individual behaviour alteration (Neergaard, 1999). As a result of this process the learning of individuals appears which shows up through the experiences, occurring when interacting with other members of organization (Lunkamba, 2005). Discussing about the individual learning it is necessary to mention the conditions, which should be established for the successful implementation of this process.

Speaking about the conditions the organizational structure should be mentioned, which helps an individual to attain information, to interpret, accumulate and distribute it, i.e., to realise learning at "the medium of human brain" (Bollecker & Durat, 2005). Besides, it is denoted, that in order to reach effective learning a certain reflection of organizational experience, the individuals are learning from, is compulsory among the members of the organization. We may presume that individuals exchanging the collective experience are able to think rationally: understanding what has been done (for the realisation of action), may repeat the actions once more, if the latter have brought the positive results. Thus, each member of organization is enabled to make a decision in respect of his future actions. The benefit of a feedback is noticeable both to individuals, and organization, and external environment: the organization involves an individual into learning-friendly environment, the individuals apply this in teaching each other, what results in decisions favourable to organization's activity. These decisions raise the level of organization's competencies in regard to other organizations, together contributing to the advance of society's welfare (qualitative services). Thus in such a case it should be accepted that the attainment, processing, accumulation, transfer of knowledge in the organization come through the collective discussion of individuals, through sharing of experience about the results of accomplished tasks committed to them (Garreau, 2006).

In conclusion we may state that organization provides a context for individual learning. If in the self-directed learning an individual views him/herself as a personal teacher, during individual learning in the context of the organization an individual views him/herself not only as a teacher seeking personal goals but also seeking goals that are in line with the goals of other employees in the organization.

Besides the aforementioned description the manager must see the organization as a whole in organization's environment. Here organizational learning begins. Organization is made of people and as a whole is not a homogeneous structure. Collaborative or collective learning unites members of an organization into the whole.

Collective learning. The organization members may learn individually and to practice the experience of other members of organization, to learn lots of things by interacting in a group. The collective learning being both formal and informal (Neergaard, 1999) leads to the

changes of collective behaviour. As a result the harmony of the group is formed, i.e., inside the organization the collective process of purport construction makes background for the formation of collective structure, conditioning the abilities to interpret the facts collectively and to make decisions (Garreau, 2006).

Then new collective learning inside the organization is constructed throughout the collective interpretations of situations, as well as implementation of innovative collective works.

However neither such learning often is able to ensure effective activities of the organization (Coutinet, 2002). Different and complicated changes of external environment push the organizations into the new situations more and more often, which force the organization to mobilise all available competencies (Boiral, 2000). In the moments of solution of such new problems the organizational learning should be constructed. Such learning takes place in a particular context assuming a systemic character. The source of this system is individuals. First of all people when learning individually raise their qualification, and this increases the effectiveness (of intelligence and material). As a result the qualification of entire organization increases. In the communication process of higher qualification the organization needs more qualified members, therefore the Individuals trying to correspond to organization's needs, raise their qualification.

Consequently the individuals are constantly providing knowledge to the organization, which it modifies and adjusts to the solution of continuously emerging tasks. Then, any organizational learning is possible without interaction with an individual and the environment surrounding it, and its value is created throughout the relation of individual, collective and organizational learning.

Apparently, knowledge of one member of the organization enhances the knowledge of the whole organization. This process is continuous. Organizational learning, as well as individual learning, can be defined as an increased capacity of the organization to operate effectively.

Organizational learning. The outcome of collective, as well as individual, learning is the possibility for the organization to develop through organizational learning. It should be noted, however, that individual learning cannot be directly equated to organizational learning, i.e. the sum of the learning of individuals is not equal to organizational learning (according to the synergy effect). Organizational learning relates to all types of learning within the organization and obtains a new quality. Organizational learning is the result of individual, collective and system learning. All the three types of learning take place simultaneously (Dixon, 1993):

1. Individual learning occurs each time when a human being uses information, experiments and evaluates his/her performance looking for a feedback from the milieu. The feedback can be active (somebody appreciates his/her achievements) or passive.

2. Team learning occurs when two or more individuals learn while acting together. This type of learning can disclose new ways of sharing responsibility between team members and new points of interaction (communication).

3. System learning occurs when the organization starts obtaining, using and communicating knowledge systematically (Dixon, 1993).

Systemic learning is common in learning organizations where the learner carefully selects what needs to be learned and what not, can forget information, which does not meet the requirements of changed conditions and establish the need for the new information, find the required information. As literacy is the ability to use sources of information (Resnick, 1991) this process can be metaphorically called organizational literacy. The following differences between the types of learning will give a better explanation:

1. Individual learning in a learning organization can be equalled to self-directed learning;
2. Collective learning is the interaction of learning individuals in the groups within the organization;
3. Systemic learning is the interaction between the learning groups within the organization, communication,

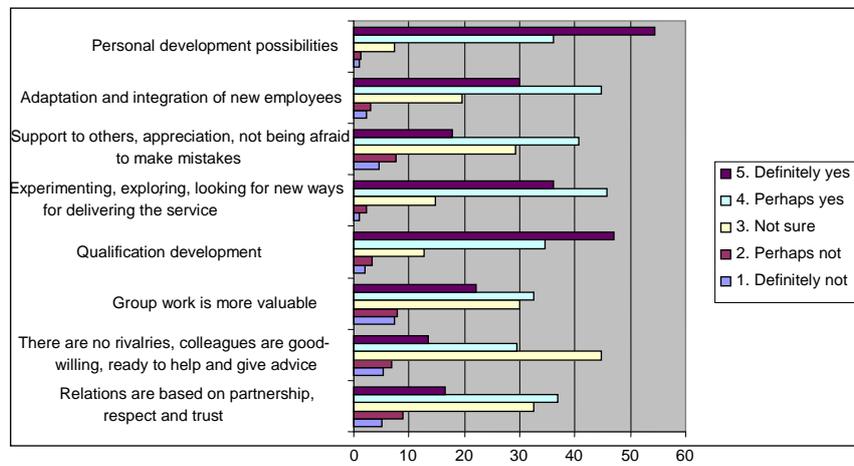
ability to use the organization's information system, free access to information;

4. Organizational learning has the features of all the three types of learning in the organization.

**The learning situation in a tourism organization**

Employees indicate that a tourism organization is focused on activity, so the activity must be strengthened and developed. According to the answers of employees to questions related to activities in their organization we may state that tourism organizations are learning organizations. They have characteristics typical for a learning organization, but some of them are stronger while others are weaker, i.e. they distribute unevenly.

Flexibility of a tourism organization and its openness to innovations is an important factor for determining whether the organization is a learning organization. The distribution of results is illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Distribution of a tourism organization as a learning organization  
*Source: created by the authors*

Collaboration and encouragement of learning are important factors in a learning organization. Almost all employees of a tourism organization (90.4) have stated that employees collaborate, respect each other, take care of new employees, there are conditions for experimenting, but on the other hand they are not sure about the absence of rivalries and whether a good-willing atmosphere always prevails. A tourism organization is a business entity and competition encourages continuous learning of the staff. Services in a learning tourism organization can be rendered by using educational processes where knowledge, abilities and values are regarded as the most important measures used to improve the tourism service. Therefore, it is important to know how employees view these measures. The organization pays great attention to the professional development of the staff, and that means that employees have all opportunities to learn. The results of employees' attitude towards knowledge and evaluation of personal skills are presented. The survey results have indicated that knowledge is regarded as a value in the organization, employees show personal initiative to gain knowledge and develop, employees have good practical competencies which are important in the organization, the organization retains and educates its customers by offering new tours

and updating the existing ones. In general we may state that knowledge in the organization is an important value.

Theoretical and practical knowledge required for performance is an input into the new and changing profile of a learning organization, where organization's values, work process and performance competencies, are combined. There is a need for compatibility with new educational aspects moving from traditional teaching to the new quality teaching, where emphasis is given to the learning-based experience and where workplace, leisure and recreation activities become a learning environment. Education process involves teaching theory and acquisition of practical skills.

**Prospects for learning improvement in a tourism organization**

Theoretical training must provide the employees with the possibility to acquire or develop:

- general cultural education,
- knowledge about the sector (social, economic, legal, psychological, medical aspects),
- general theoretical basis (including ICT) for professional activity and individual sphere of activity,

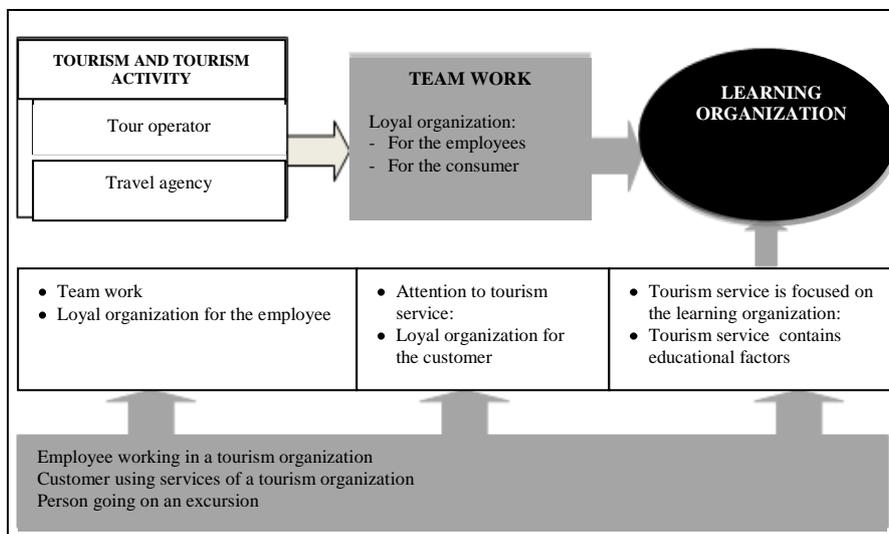
- knowledge related to specific professional activity in tourism business (in the context of the article).

N. Dixon (1993) highlights the nature of practical knowledge taking into consideration the social context where knowledge is gained, developed and applied. The most important part of knowledge is perceived as the interpretation of expertise based on exceptional structure that gives benefit and at the same time limits personal cognition processes (Resnick, 1991). Cognition is the situation where cognitive actions occur and cognitive thoughts reveal. The latter introduce a complex information structure (information exchange, attention to cases and events, collaboration etc.), which in the course of time draws limits of personal knowledge and establishes the social structure of knowledge. The awareness of this method balances the knowledge theory and knowledge practice. Actually, it is related to close interdependence and to the general compilation of theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge.

Human, structural and consumer capitals have to support each other to get the synergy effect. Synergy is a state in which two or more things work together in a particularly fruitful way that produces an effect greater than the sum of their individual effects. The value of knowledge created in a tourism organization exceeds the value created by another activity. This value is, however, unnoticeable as knowledge is intangible.

Personality development must be directed towards the final outcome, i.e. the educated individual has to be able to act independently and responsibly.

The model of learning improvement prospects in a tourism organization shows that all active teaching and learning methods are suitable for development in a tourism organization: collaborative learning, team work, projects method, problem solving methods etc. (see Fig. 2). The variety of these methods may influence the synergy of learning because different methods affect different learning levels (individual, collective and systemic).



**Figure 2.** Model of learning improvement prospects in a tourism organization  
 Source: created by the authors

Problem solving abilities must be developed in a tourism organization. First of all it involves planning, decision making and interpersonal skills. The survey has revealed that communication competence is especially important for learning and this competence has to be developed continuously. Employees of a tourism organization have to uphold self-esteem and motivation, show personal initiative, be active and creative.

### Conclusions

A learning organization is the aggregate of individuals learning under favourable conditions, where the learning process involves individual learning within the context of the organization, collective learning and organizational learning. People learning individually raise their qualification, and this increases the effectiveness of individual work. The collective learning inside the organization is constructed through the collective interpretations of situations, implementation of innovative collective works. The need of organizational learning

results from the changes of outer environment, which force the organization to mobilise the organization's knowledge. The organizational learning takes place in a certain context and is assuming a systemic character in it.

The survey has revealed that learning in a tourism organization is a value; the employees show initiative to gain knowledge and develop personally; employees have practical competences, which are very important in a learning tourism organization; the organization retains and educates its customer by offering new tours and auditing the existing ones. Referring to the research results the main factor preventing from a successful learning of organization in a tourism organization, i.e., the competition among employees, resulting in decrease of goodwill, mutual assistance and confidence, may be accentuated.

All active teaching and learning methods are suitable for development in a tourism organization and the variety of methods affects different levels of learning (individual, collective and systemic), and has a synergic learning effect. Communication competence shall receive special

attention in a learning tourism organization, since often when providing tourism services to a customer simultaneously his education takes place. The perspectives

of learning improvement in a tourism organization are related to the decrease of individual competition among employees, mutual assistance and increase of confidence.

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Biruta Švagždienė, Edmundas Jasinskas, Vilija Bitė Fominienė, Rimantas Mikaluskas

## **Mokymosi situacija ir tobulinimo perspektyvos turistinėje organizacijoje**

### **Santrauka**

Besimokanti organizacija yra būtent tas organizacijos modelis, kuris leidžia ugdyti individus, gebančius nuosekliai dalyvauti nuolatinio mokymosi procese ir užtikrinti organizacijos gebėjimą lanksčiai ir efektyviai reaguoti į aplinkos pokyčius. Kadangi viena iš organizacijų sėkmingos veiklos prielaidų – palankiai priimami pokyčiai, besimokančios organizacijos yra puikiai dirbančios kompanijos. Jos eksperimentuoja ir skatina savo narius daugiau mėginti naujoje veikloje. Taigi šiuolaikinė visuomenė ir modernios organizacijos yra nukreiptos į nuolatinę kaitą.

Visuomenės poreikių bei norų kaita ypač svarbi paslaugų sferoje veikiančioms įmonėms, nes paslaugų kokybė yra suvokiama subjektyviai, priklausomai nuo kiekvieno vartotojo poreikių ir norų. Įmonių, teikiančių ne pirmo būtinumo paslaugas ( turistinės organizacijos), verslo sėkmė tiesiogiai priklauso nuo gebėjimų prisitaikyti ir mokytis.

Pastaruoju metu didelis dėmesys skiriamas organizacijos veiklai tobulinti. Visuotiniai pripažįstama, jog tinkamas organizacijos mokymasis yra lemiantis sėkmę veiksnys, užtikrinantis spartų organizacijos tobulinimą, bei greitą prisitaikymą prie kintančios aplinkos.

Örtenblad (2001), Stewart (2001), Phillips (2003), Aksu, Özdemir (2005), akcentuoja besimokančios organizacijos esmę ir teigia, kad besimokančios organizacijos modelį įdiegti praktikoje yra labai sunku. Minėtų mokslininkų darbuose didelis dėmesys skiriamas tradicinės organizacijos tapimui besimokančia organizacija. Moksliniais tyrimais įrodyta, kad besimokanti organizacija ir organizacinis mokymasis nėra tapatūs, Örtenblad (2001), Aksu, Özdemir (2005), išskiria pagrindinį skirtumą, kad besimokanti organizacija yra forma, o organizacinis mokymasis – procesas, tačiau daugelis šias sąvokas laiko sinonimais. Tyrimai atliekami nustatant besimokančios organizacijos požymių raišką įvairiose institucijose (Phillips, 2003; Aksu, Özdemir, 2005), taip pat ir Lietuvoje (Simonaitienė, 2007). Tokie tyrimai yra neįmanomi be išnagrinėtos besimokančios organizacijos koncepcijos (Morgan, 1998; Stewart, 2001; Aksu, Özdemir, 2005). Nors beveik visuose darbuose yra paminima besimokančios organizacijos samprata ir yra atlikti išsamūs jos tyrimai (Stewart, 2001), nėra vienodo, besimokančios organizacijos apibrėžimo, neišku kokie mokymosi būdai sukelia tradicinės organizacijos tapimą besimokančia organizacija.

Phillips (2003), Simonaitienė (2007) pateikia skirtingas mokymosi charakteristikas, dažniausiai papildytas autorės Senge (1990) išskirtas penkias, besimokančiai organizacijai būtinas, disciplinas. Autoriai taip pat analizavo tokius aspektus: klimatą ir kultūrą kaip mokymąsi skatinančią aplinką (Aksu, Özdemir, 2005), mokymosi procesą (Stewart, 2001; Aksu, Özdemir, 2005; Jucevičienė, 2009), kur išskiriamas vienos ir dviejų kulpų mokymasis. Stewart (2001) pateikia dar vieną mokymosi lygmenį – trijų kulpų mokymąsi. Be to, nagrinėjamas individualus ir organizacinis mokymasis (Stewart, 2001; Andrzejczak, 2004; Aksu, Özdemir, 2005; Phillips, 2003). Taip pat nagrinėta besimokančios organizacijos struktūra (Simonaitienė, 2007; Sakalas, Venskus, 2007), bei jos privalumai, nauda, pasireiškianti per mokymo-mokymosi rezultatus (Jewell, 2002; Baležentis, 2008). Tinkama organizacijos struktūra, kaip įrodo Yasin, Zimmerman (1995), skatina kelti paslaugų kokybę.

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama mokslinė problema - kaip įvertinti mokymosi situaciją ir tobulinimo perspektyvas turistinėje organizacijoje. Aptartuose mokslininkų darbuose daugiau buvo tirtos IT įmonės, tačiau organizacijos mokymasis tai pat labai svarbus ir turistinėje organizacijoje. Atkreiptinas dėmesys, kad mokymosi proceso specifika paslaugų ir pramonės įmonėse labai skiriasi, todėl šio straipsnio mokslinis naujumas - mokymosi situacijos nustatymas turistinėje organizacijoje, bei mokymosi tobulinimo perspektyvos turistinėje organizacijoje modelio sudarymas. Straipsnio tikslas – įvertinti mokymosi situaciją ir tobulinimo perspektyvas turizmo organizacijoje. Straipsnio objektas – mokymasis turistinėje organizacijoje.

Tikslui pasiekti suformuluoti uždaviniai:

1. Išskirti mokymosi būdus besimokančioje organizacijoje.
2. Įvertinti mokymosi situaciją turistinėje organizacijoje.
3. Atskleisti mokymosi tobulinimo perspektyvas turistinėje organizacijoje.

Naudoti metodai. Mokslinės literatūros analizė (siekiant išskirti mokymosi būdus besimokančioje organizacijoje), anketinė apklausa (apklausiant turistinės organizacijos darbuotojus), aprašomosios statistikos analizė (siekiant įvertinti mokymosi situaciją ir tobulinimo galimybes turistinėje organizacijoje). 2009 m. Valstybinis turizmo departamentas buvo išdavęs 140 kelionių organizavimui skirtų veiklos pažymėjimų. Siekiant tyrimo validumo, objektyvumo ir reprezentatyvumo, anketos buvo pateiktos visiems – 140 Lietuvoje kelionių organizavimo paslaugas teikiančių organizacijų vadovams. Dalis respondentų atsisakė dalyvauti tyrime. Naudojantis Paniotto formule, nustatytos imties dydis rodo, kad apklausus 104 respondentus, bus galima daryti išvadas esant 5 proc. paklaidai su 0,954 tikimybe.

Darbuotojai nurodo, jog turistinėje organizacijoje svarbi yra veikla, todėl būtina ją stiprinti ir plėtoti. Remiantis organizacijos, kaip besimokančios organizacijos veiklos diagnostiniame bloke darbuotojų nuomonės tyrimo rezultatais, galima teigti, kad turistinės organizacijos yra besimokančios, jose vyksta besimokančiai organizacijai būdingi bruožai, tačiau vieni išryškėja stipriau, kiti mažiau, t. y. pasiskirsto nevienodai. Turizmo organizacijos, kaip besimokančios organizacijos lankstumas ir atvirumas naujovėms, yra laikytinas svarbiu veiksmu nustatant ar organizacija yra besimokanti. Besimokančioje organizacijoje svarbūs bendradarbiavimą ir mokymąsi skatinantys veiksniai. Beveik visi turizmo organizacijos darbuotojai (90,4 proc.) nurodo, kad organizacijoje darbuotojai tarpusavyje bendradarbiauja, gerbia vieni kitus, taip pat yra palankios sąlygos eksperimentuoti, rūpinamasi naujai atėjusiais darbuotojais. Tačiau išryškėjo ir kiti dalykai: suabejota ar organizacijoje yra konkurencinė kova, ar visada juntamas geranoriškumas. Turizmo organizacijoje (kaip verslo organizacijoje), konkurencinė kova sustiprina darbuotojų nuolatinio mokymosi skatinimą. Besimokančioje turizmo organizacijoje paslaugos gali būti teikiamos išnaudojant edukacinius procesus, kur žinios, gebėjimai ir vertybės yra laikomi svarbiausiomis turizmo paslaugas stiprinančiomis priemonėmis. Todėl svarbu, kaip šias priemones vertina patys turizmo organizacijos darbuotojai. Kvalifikacijai kelti organizacija skiria didelį dėmesį, nes tam yra visos galimybės.

Gauti tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad žinios, kaip vertybė, organizacijoje reiškiasi, darbuotojai rodo iniciatyvą asmeniškai kaupti žinias ir tobulėti, ypač išryškėjo darbuotojų praktinės kompetencijos ir jų svarba organizacijoje. Organizacija išlaiko ir brandina savo vartotoją, siūlydama naujų maršrutų, atnaujinama turimus. Apibendrinant galima teigti, kad organizacijoje žinios yra svarbi vertybė. Veiklos procesui reikalingų žinių teorija ir praktika yra įnašas naujam ir pakitusiam besimokančios organizacijos formavimo profiliui, kai derinamos organizacijos vertybės, darbo proceso ir organizavimo, veiklos kompetencijos. Kyla suderinamumo su naujais edukaciniais aspektais poreikis, pereinant nuo tradicinio mokymo į naują mokymo kokybę, taip pat akcentuojant patirtį, paremtą mokymusi, kartu įtraukiant darbo vietas bei laisvalaikio ir poilsio organizavimo panaudojimą, kaip mokymosi aplinką. Ugdymo procesas apima teorinį mokymą ir gavimą praktinių įgūdžių. Galima daryti prielaidą, kad organizacijos mokymasis yra labai svarbus turistinėje organizacijoje. Pirmą: šiame sektoriuje veikiančių organizacijų aplinka nuolat kinta, o jis pats greitai plečiasi ir rinkai pateikia naujų paslaugų. Antra: turistinėje organizacijoje darbuotojai nuolat bendrauja su vartotojais. Tai leidžia daugeliui turistinės organizacijos darbuotojų naudotis išoriniais mokymosi šaltiniais. Tyrimo metu nustatyta, kad turizmo organizacijose žinios laikomos vertybe, darbuotojai rodo iniciatyvą asmeniškai kaupti žinias ir tobulėti. Ypač išryškėjo darbuotojų praktinės kompetencijos ir jų svarba besimokančioje turizmo organizacijoje. Organizacija išlaiko ir brandina savo vartotoją, siūlydama naujų maršrutų, atnaujinama turimus. Mokymosi turizmo organizacijoje tobulinimui tinka visi aktyvūs mokymo metodai, nes jų įvairovė veikia skirtingus mokymosi lygius: individualų, kolektyvinį ir sisteminių bei sinerginį mokymosi efektą. Ypač didelis dėmesys besimokančioje turizmo organizacijoje turi būti skiriamas mokėjimo bendrauti kompetencijai.

Raktažodžiai: *Besimokanti organizacija, žinių valdymas, turistinė organizacija.*

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