LEARNING ORGANIZATION PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCE OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to explore the effects of learning organizations practices on the performance of International Humanitarian organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study specific objectives were to investigate the effect of shared Vision, team learning, personal mastery and mental models on International Humanitarian organizations. This study embraced the resource-based, organizational learning and constraints theories. It adopted the descriptive research approach while targeting a population of 15 (category two) International Humanitarian organizations based in Nairobi. One hundred and fifteen employees were selected from the International Humanitarian organizations by using the stratified random sampling technique. The sampled participants were surveyed through self-administered questionnaires. Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to assess the reliability of the research instrument at the 0.7 threshold. Data were analysed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of the SPSS software. The findings were summarized and presented by use of tables and graphs. The regression results observed that mental models considerably improve the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The findings demonstrated that team learning, shared visions, mental models, and personal mastery all significantly enhance the organizational performance of IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya, although team learning had a smaller impact. To enhance employee skills, management should establish guidelines that encourage IHOs to regularly hold internal and external training sessions. To improve employees' abilities and self-efficacy, management should create policies that motivate IHOs to conduct regular internal and external training programs. Additionally, the study suggests that IHOs adopt social technical systems that combine people and technology to facilitate learning. It is recommended that management implement a top-to-bottom communication strategy to communicate a shared vision and encourage employee commitment to priority areas.

Key Words: Mental Models, Personal Mastery, Team Learning, Shared Vision

INTRODUCTION

The International environment is becoming increasingly unstable and organizations continuously learn to deal with changing dynamics (Kalkan *et al*., 2014) Organizations continuously learn about new opportunities and trends by measuring, monitoring and evaluating their performance in todays' volatile, unpredictable, yet dynamic environment. measure, monitor, and evaluate their performance in today's volatile, unpredictable, yet dynamic environment. The needs of global markets have gradually shifted to the demands of consumers, leading to challenging decisions for organizations to explore alternative strategies to meet those multilateral sectors. Improved organizational performance and survival are primarily determined by an organization's ability to understand and make effective, proactive and informed decisions. Reducing costs, eliminating unresponsiveness and efficient delivery of quality products and services underpins the overall goal of various organizations; thus, organizations must transition to learning organizations to achieve these goals. Bhaskar and Mishra (2017) argued that a learning organization plays a vital role in improved organizational performance.

Poell (2017) noted that the concept of learning organization (LO) in literature emphasizes ideas such as shared vision, shared values, shared data, continuous development, making clear information more precise, and engaging in discussions. Problems such as conflict, power, or interests are addressed because they are often at the heart of conversations about learning organizations. If a learning organization starts with individual learning, everyone has the right to be taken seriously in what they learn and how they learn. Performance awareness of the current situation in the organization's learning program is the starting point for a real learning organization. Santos-Vijande *et al.* (2012) argued that organizations that incorporate these values and processes ultimately improve the organization's performance because employees will be more motivated and give their

best results. Organizations that embrace the culture of learning tend preserve every relevant information about the prevailing and anticipated trends in the market for timely and proper alignment. The learning organizations are in the Intelligence Capital (IC) sector, which is in a better position because their capacity is being developed to respond more quickly to strategic change.

Performance is the construction of multiple cases that aim to achieve results and strongly connect to the organization's strategic objectives. Organizational performance includes output or outcomes evaluated on the basis of proposed goals and objectives. There seems to be a general agreement on organizational performance (Bhaskar & Mishra, 2017; Kalkan *et al.*, 2014; Lall, 2017) that balancing organizational performance is an important agenda. Various emerging (non-traditional) strategies have recently been established to assist international organizations in selecting and implementing performance measures. IOs performance is a very complex and multidimensional construct. Some obvious performance measures include policy output, service delivery, client response to new products, agenda orientation, and sustainability. However, individual interests and policy independence that these institutions enjoy are critical. In this study, organization performance was measured by policy output, agenda orientation, and service delivery.

According to Senge (1990), a learning organization is a setting where people continuously increase their capacity to produce desired results, where collective aspiration is free, thinking patterns are fostered and broadened, and people constantly learn to learn. Davis and Daley (2008) highlighted that a learning enterprise has open communication, cares about all stakeholders, is prepared to unlearn and relearn, is willing to recognize, accept, and learn from previous mistakes, has facilitative leadership, fosters a culture of learning, and has a flexible organizational structure. Song *et al.* (2013) noted that since the concept of "learning organization" was first used about three decades

ago, the academic community and practitioners from a wide range of fields have given it significant attention. Watkins and Marsick (2003) indicated that learning organizations can better identify opportunities and detect industry trends and events, resulting in better products and services, increased market performance, and satisfied customers. Their study concentrated on the four aspects of learning organizations: inquiry and dialogue, team learning, employee empowerment, and continuous learning. Senge (1990) noted that a learning organization practices mental modeling, systems thinking, team learning, personal mastery, and shared vision. This study adopted the measures that Senge (1990) suggested.

International humanitarian organizations (IHOs) draw membership in at least three active countries in several provinces, and a formal agreement holds their members together. Many IHOs are playing prominent roles in globalized economies. According to Ullah (2023), government officials, advocacy groups, and experts have argued about the advantages and disadvantages of using IHOs to promote international cooperation and to address many of the issues at the crossroads of globalization that encourage change, prosperity, and sustainability. The growing concern of climate change and the ongoing threat of global terrorism, global epidemics, the resurgence of ethno-nationalism, and memories of the financial market meltdown of 2008, are matters that concern international organizations. The other hefty concerns that IHOs deal with include the dangers of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, major humanitarian crises and unprecedented conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, the persistence of extreme poverty, the continued growth of both legal and illegal immigration, and failed nations (Väyrynen, 2023).

Statement of the Research Problem

While the performance of International organizations varies extensively, the International humanitarian Organizations in category two are performing dismally as it relates to policy output,

service delivery, and agenda orientation (Tallberg *et al.*, 2018; AUSAID, 2021). Dismal performance is occurring in the learning organization era. Numerous studies about the IHOs have been conducted, and several academicians have devoted time and effort to studying those organizations and their performance (Art *et al.*, 2021). While examining the performance of IHOs over time, no study has linked it with the learning Organization approach. IHOs make their organizations a learning environment to improve performance (Kim *et al.*, AUSAID, 2021). Therefore, this study sought to determine the effects of the learning organization concept on the performance of international organizations, focusing on those with headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. Studies have concluded that there is a need to create a paradigm for combining organizational learning, strategic planning, and performance measurement in international humanitarian organizations. Kalkan *et al*. (2014) argued a positive relationship exists between professional capital (IC), new strategic and organizational strategies, and robust performance. Bhaskar and Mishra (2017) concluded that the current organization is on track to learning organization status, and empirical results are needed to link learning culture and organizational performance. Lall (2017) also argues that diverse sources in the functioning of the Learning Organization have incentives to pursue joint interests before creating a learning organization.

Study Objectives

Generally, the study sought to investigate the effects of learning organization practices on the performance of international humanitarian organizations that are operating in Nairobi. The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

▪ To assess the effects of mental models on the performance of the international humanitarian organizations.

▪ To ascertain the effects of personal mastery on the performance of the international humanitarian organizations.

- To determine possible links between team learning and performance of the international humanitarian organizations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Learning Theory (OLT)

The OLT model was developed by Chris Argyris (in 1978 (Azadegan *et al.*, 2019). The OLT model posits that successful organizations can learn earlier, faster, and better than their competitors and apply that learning to their daily operations and, ultimately, their performance. In his work, the theorist developed the ideas of single-loop and double-loop learning (1978). Single-loop learning is used to correct errors by applying alternative tactics or procedures to provide different and beneficial results (Argyris & Schön, 1997). They highlighted that single and double-loop learning processes can be found in organizations. Single-loop learning occurs when institutions find problems, solve them, and continue their current goals and strategies. Azadegan *et al.* (2019) argued that organizations engage in double-loop learning when recognizing flaws and changing their goals before taking corrective action. For instance, program managers may look for the cause of a fall in intended outcomes and alter their strategies to increase the desired outcomes per the predetermined targets. This theory was pertinent to the current study because it guided the analysis of adopting varying techniques for learning organization dimensions. The model served as a foundation for investigating the learning organization aspects that positively affect performance in the investigated IOs in Kenya. Moreover, it aided in evaluating the role of personal mastery, shared vision, and team learning in the overall performance of international organizations.

Learning Organization Theory

The learning organization theory was developed by Senge (1990). According to the theory, learning is a continuous process. Organizations are bound to perform better, improve and even succeed on their activities in the long run if they continuously learn and adapt to the variations in their immediate

- To find out whether shared vision among members of the international humanitarian organizations affects their performance.

environment (Senge, 1990). The theory draws on diverse aspects such as system thinking, team learning, shared vision, mental models, and personal mastery. Under system thinking, the theory posits that an organization comprises complex yet interconnected systems instead of parts that exist in isolation. Therefore, the theory asserts that for organizational success, the various systems or facets must operate in tandem with an increased harmonization (Zhao et al., 2023). Besides, they call for increased individual commitment regarding learning and improving one's skills for the overall improvement of organizational activities (Hamidi et al., 2018). The theory also encourages individuals and employees alike to challenge their mental faculties and develop flexible and open-thinking patterns that support organizational learning and innovation. This theory was a foundation for the current study, which attempted to assess the aspects of learning organization that are likely to affect IOs' performance. The theory supported the independent variables, which include mental models, personal mastery, and team teaching, in determining their impact on the performance of IHOs.

Resource Based Theory

It was introduced in 1959 by Edith Penrose as a model for achieving the mentioned objectives (Sousa et al., 2021). The theorist initially conceptualized organizations as collections of coordinated resources that can be strategically harnessed to work towards realization of a desired goal (Purnomo, 2024). The RBT is fundamentally driven by two assumptions explaining the possible strategic use of organization's resources to outshine the market competitors through a sustained competitive edge from the firm-based resources (Kizito, 2023). The number one assumption of the theory is that different organizations own unique bundle of resources (Barney et al., 2021). The

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implication is that resources are heterogeneous across organizations, even those that operate in similar industry. As such, the uniqueness of an organization's competencies and resources brings about differential advantage among the organizations in which those with superior resources dominates their peers. An example is a case of an organization with uniquely qualified personnel to deliver exemplary service or product would have such a resource as a competitive advantage in the market since such resources are presumably immobile. The immobility concept of resources holds that there are substantial hurdles impeding exchange of resources among organizations and such hurdles ensures sustained inequality with regard to resources among the organizations. This theory sheded light on the role of shared vision, personal mastery, and mental models in the performance of international organizations.

Empirical Review

Mental Models and Organizational Performance

De Ávila Dias and De Toni (2020) examined mental models and their impact on organizational performance. This study examined how entrepreneurs' mental models affect how well organizations work. The following dimensions — creativity and innovation, relationship, linear mind, emotional skills, strategy, knowledge, vocation, and communication — have been recognized in the literature as contributing to the formation of mental models. The study adopted Structural Equation Modeling for the quantitative descriptive study utilizing multivariate statistics as an analysis method. Entrepreneurs' mental models were found to account for 27.1 percent of organizational performance, according to the coefficient of determination (R2) test. The three factors of creativity and innovation, emotional intelligence, and communication had the most incredible effects on organizational performance. The study had two contributions: validating the scale to assess the dimensions of entrepreneurs' mental models against its impact on organizational1performance

and the comprehension of how and to what extent the dimensions affect organizational performance. The study explored mental models with regard to how they impact performance of the metal-mechanic business in Caxias do Sul, leaving a gap to explore non-business sectors in other areas.

Team Learning and Organizational Performance

Mak'Anyengo and Maina (2019) used the hospitality industry to study performance and organizational learning. They mainly focused on evaluating performance effects of organizational learning in Sarova Whitesands, with specific emphasis on team learning and overall performance of the hotel. The study's target population was Sarova Whitesands Beach Resort and Spa staff. In total, 171 out the 300 employees were selected via stratified sampling to provide data for the study by help of structured questionnaires. The field1data was then examined using regression analysis and descriptive statistics. Team learning had favorable and statistically significant impacts on the hotel's performance. However, it was investigated at the local level, leaving a gap in using global data to examine the topic of investigation.

Shared Visions and Organizational Performance

Mak'Anyengo and Maina (2019) examined organizational performance and learning in the hospitality industry, through a descriptive research approach. The goal was to determine how performance of Sarova Whitesands hotel might have been impacted their practices of organizational learning. Among other aspects of learning organization, they specifically examined the link between organizational performance and shared vision. They targeted a population comprising of 300 Sarova Whitesands Beach Resort and Spa workers. Stratified sampling approach was deployed in selection of 171 participants for the study. To collect data from participants, questionnaires were employed. Descriptive statistics and regression analyses facilitated statistical exploration of the data whose results shared vision as a unifying factor that positively affects overall performance. It pointed out that

employees tend to derive a sense of desired direction for self and organization from a vision that is shared across the organization. The research examined the social phenomenon using local evidence, leaving a gap in understanding the problem on the global stage.

Personal Mastery and Organizational Performance
Hamidi et al. (2018) investigated the association between improving quality, organizational productivity, and personal mastery. This study aimed to determine how personal mastery, productivity, and quality improvement at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences. This research was analytical and descriptive. Through random sampling, 295 managers and specialists from university employees were chosen. Two surveys were used to get the information. Using the SPSS software version 16, data were analyzed using regression analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient and t-tests in addition to descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that personal mastery had a mean score of 23.1 and a statistical significance and positive link among the variables and the outcomes of raising quality and productivity (p 0.001). The study revealed that productivity or performance significantly depends on human resources. Fateh et al.'s (2021) study also had a similar observation. The study focused more on using Iran's local data to elaborate organizational performance under personal mastery, leaving a gap in using international evidence. Equally, the study concentrated on university data, leaving a gap in understanding the research area using non-education sector evidence.

Conceptual Framework
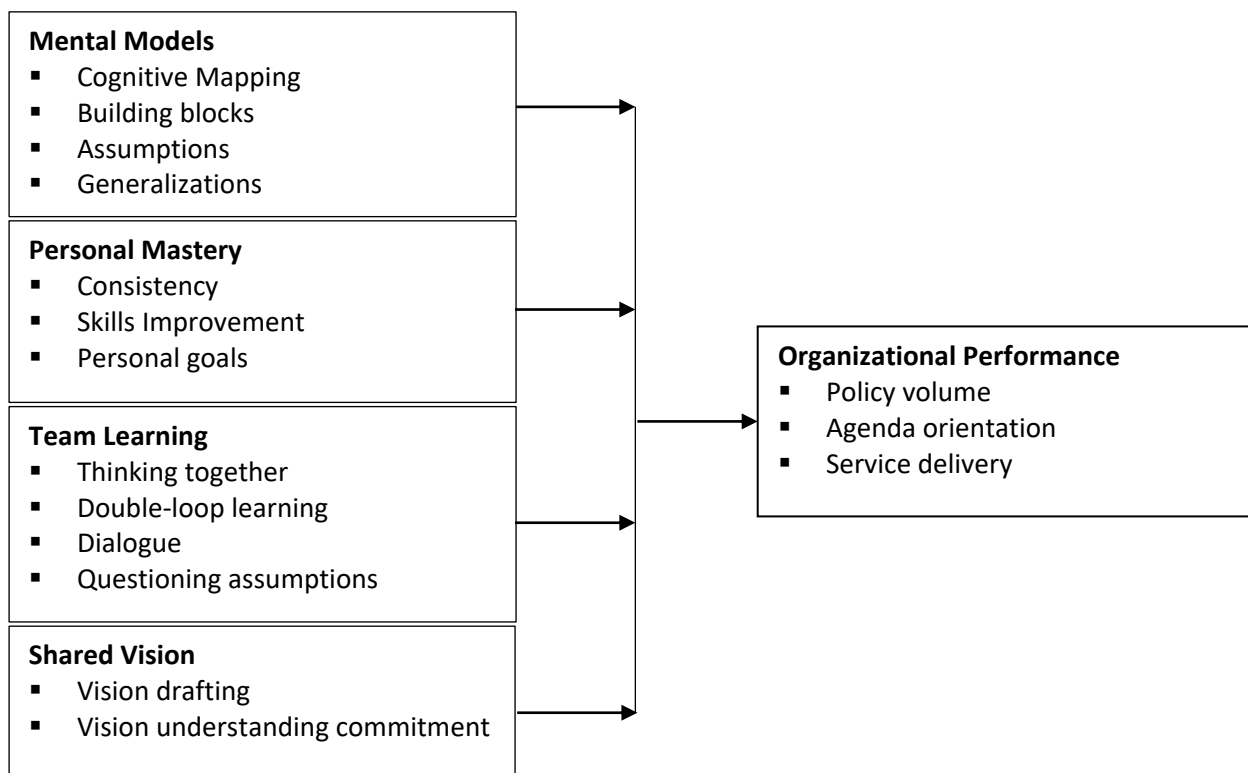
Independent Variables   Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2021)

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research approach was adopted in pursuing the research objectives in a well guided manner. The target population were 15 category two IHOs in Nairobi, Kenya. The unit of observation were employees at the operational, functional and senior levels of management within the tier two locally operating international humanitarian organizations. These IHOs have 230 employees. The organization was the unit of analysis, while individual employees was the unit of observation.

Stratified sampling approach was adopted to get the most representative of the participants for the study. As such, 115 participants were sampled from the 230 employees of the targeted IOs across all the three management levels.

Collection of the required data was done through semi-structured questionnaires. The questionnaires were sent to 12 selected staff which were (10% of the 115 sample) to complete. The 12 were not part of the final study sampleContent validity was measured by the expert opinion method. Cronbach's alpha was used to ascertain questionnaire reliability, whereby 0.70 and above were the acceptable values, as noted by Cronbach (1951).

Data was collected from 12 respondents, including 2 senior managers, 5 functional/departmental managers and 5 operational staff members. The data was recorded in form of numbers in the Excel worksheet before being transported to the SPSS software.

The researcher downloaded and coded the data that was gathered from the questionnaires. Then, they were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 for in-depth analyses by descriptive measures such as frequencies (percent), mean as well as standard deviations. Findings were illustrated in graphs pie charts and tables. Regression analysis was run to identify variable associations, and conclusions were presented in tables and diagrams.

FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

The researcher successfully collected data from 14 senior managers, 32 functional/departmental managers and 57 operational staff members totaling to 103 responses. Basically, 89.57% response rate was achieved. This meant that out of the targeted sample size of 115 respondents, the researcher managed to study 103 of them. The response rate was undoubtedly acceptable and reliable for inferences to be made concerning learning organizational practices and the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya. It was also noted that the study suffered a non-response rate of 10.43% which denoted the 12 respondents who had been subjected through the pilot test exercise. These respondents were not allowed to participate in the main data collection exercise for the purposes of avoiding familiarity bias.

Descriptive Results

Descriptive analysis through SPSS was carried out and presented in the sub-sections that follow. Mean scores and standard deviations were used in the analysis.

Mental Models

The descriptive results concerning mental models were presented in Table 1 below. Mental models were measured by the following indicators; cognitive mapping, building blocks, assumptions and generalizations.

Table 1: Descriptive Results Concerning Mental Models

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Our organization successfully applies cognitive mapping as a learning organization to find and incorporate new abilities into diverse organizational practices.	4.282	0.901
2.	In order to verify that organization programs and courses align with corporate goals and objectives, our organization frequently assesses them using cognitive mapping exercises while evaluating our assumptions and beliefs to increase the efficacy and applicability of our work.	4.204	0.890
3.	By actively integrating client feedback and cognitive mapping during service delivery, our organization is committed to learning and improving.	4.204	0.890
4.	Our organization cultivates an environment of candid communication and teamwork to improve our mental models.	4.117	0.878
5.	The firm investigates concepts and underlying presumptions about successful organizational practices through conversations and cognitive mapping activities with others.	4.107	0.907
6.	In my organization, the employees understand how assumptions and building blocks influence the tactics and choices we make as an organization.	4.049	0.984
Overall Score		**4.161**	**0.908**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The descriptive results observed that the IHOs in Nairobi City County successfully apply cognitive mapping as a learning organization to find and incorporate new abilities into diverse organizational practices (Mean = 4.282; Standard Deviation/SD = 0.901). The findings agreed with Wang, Wu, Kirschner and Spector (2018) that cognitive mapping improves deeper learning of complex problems by identifying and incorporating new capabilities in the organizational setup. The findings also agreed with Senge (1990) who observed that mental models are deeply rooted assumptions, generalizations, visuals, and imagery that shape individuals' perception of reality and course of action. The findings also observed that in order to verify that organization programs and courses align with corporate goals and objectives, the IHOs frequently assesses them using cognitive mapping exercises while evaluating their assumptions and beliefs to increase the efficacy and applicability of our work (Mean = 4.204; SD = 0.890). The findings agreed with the assertions made by Roy and Lipp (2007) that cognitive mapping formulates thoughts

and expresses them in a way that corporate programs align with the corporate goals.

The descriptive results also observed that by actively integrating client feedback and cognitive mapping during service delivery, the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya are committed to learning and improving (Mean = 4.204; SD = 0.890). The findings agreed with the observations made by Furnari, S. (2015) that cognitive mapping based on client feedback identifies cause and effect relationships in an organization system that are instrumental in creating value to the services offered by a given organization. The findings also agreed with Faster-Capital (2024) that cognitive mapping is a very essential instrument of identifying gaps in service delivery to the customers, conflicts and inconsistencies of their views concerning a certain product which provides a leeway for the given organization to improve their services. It was also observed that most IHOs cultivates an environment of candid communication and teamwork to improve their mental models (Mean 4.117; SD = 0.878). The findings also noted that the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya investigates concepts and underlying

presumptions about successful organizational practices through conversations and cognitive mapping activities with others (Mean = 4.107; SD = 0.907).

Finally, the descriptive results also observed that most of the employees at the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya understands how assumptions and building blocks influence the tactics and choices they make as an organization (Mean = 4.049; SD = 0.984).

Personal Mastery

The descriptive results concerning personal mastery were presented in Table 2 below. Personal mastery was measured by the following indicators, namely; consistency, skill improvement and personal goals.

Table 2: Descriptive Results of Personal Mastery

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard. Deviation
1.	We actively assess the gap between my current skills and those required to achieve my personal goals and vision.	4.301	0.815
2.	We continuously improve our skills and abilities by regularly practicing and refining our skills to enhance our personal mastery.	4.146	0.933
3.	Our organization supports personal mastery and professional development by providing sufficient learning and professional opportunities to help me to achieve my personal and career goals.	4.029	0.985
4.	We actively seek opportunities for learning and development to enhance our abilities in serving others when faced with gaps in skills and knowledge.	4.019	1.000
5.	We regularly evaluate our work frequently and modify my tactics to meet professional goals.	3.990	0.965
Overall Score		**4.097**	**0.940**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The descriptive results observed that the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya actively assess the gap between the current skills of their employees and those required to achieve their personal goals and vision (Mean = 4.301; SD = 0.815). The findings of the study agreed with Dahkoul (2018) that matching the employee's skills with the corporate goals makes their talents to glow and improve organizational performance thus leading to their contribution to be valued. Conversely, the findings of the study disagreed with the observations made by Mbuthia (2018) that personal mastery involving the improvement of the skills of the employees to address the existing gaps does not have any considerable impact on organizational performance.

The descriptive results also observed that the employees of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya continuously improve their skills and abilities by regularly practicing and refining their skills to enhance their personal mastery (Mean = 4.146; SD = 0.933). The findings agreed with Cabrera and Cabrera (2023) that personal mastery sharpens one's professional skills and competencies that are vital in improving organizational productivity. The findings also agreed with the observations made by Montazeralfaraj, Bafghi, Bahrami, Ranjbar, Kiani and Khanjankhani (2018) that personal mastery nurtures both personal, professional and mental excellence of the employees in a given organization thus making them to be effective and productive. The descriptive findings also observed that most IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya support personal mastery and professional development by providing sufficient learning and professional opportunities to help their employees to achieve their personal and career goals (Mean = 4.029; SD = 0.985). The findings agreed with the observations made by Garcia-Morales et al. (2007) that personal mastery

injects new innovative ideas to a given organization and enables it to recognize new opportunities and exploit them for its own benefits. The descriptive results also noted that the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya actively seek opportunities for learning and development to enhance it' employees' abilities in serving others when faced with gaps in skills and knowledge (Mean = 4.019; SD = 1.000).

Finally, the descriptive results observed that the employees working at the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya regularly evaluates their work frequently and modify their tactics to meet professional goals (Mean = 3.990; SD = 0.965).

Team Learning

The descriptive results concerning team learning were presented in Table 3 below. Team learning was measured by the following indicators, namely; thinking together, double-loop learning and dialogue.

Table 3: Descriptive Results on Team Learning

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	The teams in my organization collaborate to adapt goals based on evolving circumstances or insights gained through collective discussions and reflections.	4.252	0.763
2.	The organization prioritizes equality within teams, ensuring that all members have an equal opportunity to contribute and participate in team learning processes.	4.097	1.015
3.	Teams in my organization are recognized and rewarded for their achievements and contributions to collective learning and improvement efforts.	4.049	1.023
4.	Teams in my organization are encouraged to engage in open and constructive dialogue.	3.961	0.917
5.	The management in my organization supports and encourages teams to engage in double-loop learning, with questioning underlying assumptions and strategies to improve outcomes.	3.952	0.994
	Overall Score	**4.062**	**0.942**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The findings as presented in Table 3 above noted that the teams working in the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya, collaborate to adapt goals based on evolving circumstances or insights gained through collective discussions and reflections (Mean = 4.252; SD = 0.763). The findings of the study agreed with Chuang (2021) who posited that people tend to learn better from one another through reflections on how to challenge assumptions, handle issues, and get feedback from their team. The results also noted that most IHOs prioritizes equality within teams, ensuring that all members have an equal opportunity to contribute and participate in team learning processes (Mean =

4.097; SD = 1.015). Equality in team learning boosts organizational effectiveness since when the team members are allowed to share their insights and ideas indiscriminately, they can be easily transferred for implementation to the other organizational units thus improving organizational performance (Rupcic, 2022).

The results also noted that organizational teams in the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya are recognized and rewarded for their achievements and contributions to collective learning and improvement efforts (Mean = 4.049; SD = 1.023). The findings agreed with Cerdeira (2022) that rewarding team members for successful outputs

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motivated the team groups and the individual employees to be more committed and passionate in executing organizational goals since they feel that they are recognized and appreciated. The findings also observed that the organizational teams in the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya are usually encouraged to engage in open and constructive dialogue (Mean = 3.961; SD = 0.917). The findings agreed with Galbusera and Kyselo (2018) who observed that open and constructive dialogue breeds enrichment in personal perspectives, clarifying differences and discovering a common ground with regard to solving organizational problems and enhancing innovation for increased organizational performance.

The descriptive results also observed that the management in the IHOs in Nairobi City County,

Kenya supports and encourages teams to engage in double-loop learning, with questioning underlying assumptions and strategies to improve outcomes (Mean = 3.952; SD = 0.994). The findings agreed with Rubi0 (2023) that double-loop learning makes a team member to reflect on the mistakes and errors he or she engineered in a given task that led to goal failure so that potential causes can be identified and solutions be made that can help to prevent such a failure from occurring in the future.

Shared Vision

The descriptive results concerning shared vision were presented in Table 4 below. Shared vision was measured by 3 major indicators, namely; vision drafting, vision understanding and commitment.

Table 4: Descriptive Results of Shared Vision

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	We are encouraged to develop shared visions about the organization.	4.291	0.859
2.	Top to bottom communication is embraced when conveying goals and visions.	4.252	0.837
3.	We are comfortable sharing about the vision with other workers.	4.204	0.833
4.	We align personal goals with the vision.	4.204	0.833
5.	We agree as teams on the principles necessary to achieve the shared vision.	4.194	0.886
Overall Score		**4.229**	**0.850**

Source: Researcher (2024)

The findings as presented in Table 4 above observed that most employees at the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya are usually encouraged to develop shared visions about their organizations (Mean = 4.291; SD = 0.859). The findings of the study concurred with the assertions made by Cabrera and Cabrera (2023) that every member of the organization is expected to understand and embrace the organization's vision since they are agents that should work toward realization of the same. The findings also agreed with the observations made by Martin, Mc Cormack, Fitzsimona and Spirig (2014) that a shared vision helps team members to sharply focus their commitment and passion in areas of priority in the

organization in unison for improved organizational performance to be realized.

The findings also observed that top to bottom communication is usually embraced when conveying goals and visions (Mean = 4.252; SD = 0.837). The results agreed with the assertions of Cheponis (2023) together with Urbancova, Vrabcova, Pacakova and Janku (2023) that when communication flows from the top management to the staff members, it plays a fundamental role in aligning the employees to be committed and focused in achieving the given corporate goals.

The descriptive results also observed that most of the employees at the IHOs in Nairobi City County, are comfortable about sharing the organizational

vision with the other workers (Mean = 4.204; SD = 0.833). The findings also observed that the employees working at the IHOs in Nairobi City County align their personal goals with the organizational vision (Mean = 4.204; Mean = 0.833). Marrying the individual goals to the organizational goals makes it easy for corporate priorities to be effectively addressed thus leading to organizational excellence (Lapusan, 2023). The descriptive results also noted that the employees working at the IHOs in Nairobi City County, always agree as teams on the principles necessary to achieve the shared vision (Mean = 4.194; SD = 0.886).

Organizational Performance

The descriptive results concerning the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya were presented in Table 5. Organizational performance was measured by 3 major indicators, namely; policy volume, agenda orientation and service delivery. The results observed that numerous policies have been developed and implemented by the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya with regard to alleviating poverty, food shortages and improving health care (Mean = 4.437; SD = 0.859). Besides that, it was also noted that the services provided by the stakeholders of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya are effective and efficient (Mean = 4.340; SD = 0.774).

Table 5: Descriptive Results of Organizational Performance

No.	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Numerous policies have been developed and implemented is regard to alleviating poverty, food shortages and improving health care.	4.437	0.859
2.	The services provided to our stakeholders are effective and efficient.	4.340	0.774
3.	The organization has been able to successfully contribute cash, tools, land, materials and labor for community development.	4.291	0.914
4.	The organization has been able to clearly develop and implement its agenda orientation revolving around self-help groups, charity, service delivery and empowerment.	4.262	0.928
5.	The organization has been able to distribute food, clothing or medicine, shelter, transport and education to people who have suffered both natural and manmade disasters.	4.233	0.962
6.	Services are provided equitably to all the people who are in need.	4.213	0.893
Overall Score		**4.296**	**0.888**

Source: Researcher (2024)

Moreover, the descriptive results observed that the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya have been able to successfully contribute cash, tools, land, materials and labor for community development (Mean = 4.291; SD = 0.914). Interestingly, the findings observed that the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya have been able to clearly develop and implement their agenda orientation revolving around self-help groups, charity, service delivery and empowerment (Mean = 4.262; SD = 0.928).

The descriptive results noted that most IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya have been able to distribute food, clothing or medicine, shelter, transport and education to people who have suffered both natural and manmade disasters (Mean = 4.233; SD = 0.962). Finally, the descriptive results observed that services are provided equitably to all the people who are in need by the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya (Mean = 4.213; SD = 0.893).

Multiple Linear Regression Results

The regression results that addressed the effects of mental models, personal mastery, team learning and shared vision on the organizational performance of the international humanitarian organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya have been displayed in Tables 6, 7 and 8 respectively. Table 6, which has been presented below delivered the model summary results. The model summary results realized an R-Value of 0.827[a] which made us to believe that 82.7% of the entire data set consisting of all the responses of the 4 independent variables and the dependent variable were statistically explained by the regression model. This proved that our regression model had an admirably stout predictive power that could be relied on for inferences to be made.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.827[a]	0.684	0.672	0.42755	1.586
a. Predictors: (Constant), Shared Vision, Team Learning, Personal Mastery, Mental Models					
b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance					

Source: Researcher (2024)

The R Square value of the model was 0.684, which indicated to us that 68.4% change caused in the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County was statistically explained by the 4 independent variables, namely; mental models, personal mastery, team learning and shared vision. The standard error of the estimate gave us a value of 0.42755 which made us to understand that the data closely fitted along the regression line since the error value was small. This showed that the goodness of fit of our regression model was excellent. Table 4.16 in the next page provided the output of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings showed that the R-Value of the model was statistically significant (F-Value = 53.144; *p*-value = 0.000[b] < 0.05).

Table 7: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	38.859	4	9.715	53.144	0.000[b]
	Residual	17.915	98	0.183		
	Total	56.774	102			
a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Shared Vision, Team Learning, Personal Mastery, Mental Models						

Source: Researcher (2024)

This meant that the 68.4% change caused in the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County was significantly explained by all the 4 independent variables, namely; mental models, personal mastery, team learning and shared vision.

Far from that, Table 8 presented below, gave us the results of the regression coefficients for each particular independent variable in line with addressing the specific objectives.

Table 8: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.357	0.276		1.295	0.198		
	Mental Models	0.209	0.095	0.204	2.193	0.031	0.373	2.680
	Personal Mastery	0.234	0.086	0.233	2.741	0.007	0.447	2.237
	Team Learning	0.066	0.089	0.067	0.735	0.464	0.392	2.552
	Shared Vision	0.436	0.087	0.434	4.997	0.000	0.427	2.342

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

Source: Researcher (2024)

The study was able to construct the following regression model based on the coefficients of the variables provided in Table 8;

$$Y = \alpha + 0.209X_1 + 0.234X_2 + 0.066X_3 + 0.436X_4$$

Whereby;

Y = Organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya as the dependent variable

X_1 = Mental models as the first independent variable

X_2 = Personal mastery as the second independent variable

X_3 = Team learning as the third independent variable

X_4 = Shared vision as the fourth independent variable

The regression results as posted in Table 8 posted a constant value of 0.357. This meant that in the absence of mental models, personal mastery, team learning and share vision when all the other factors are held constant, then the level of the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya will drastically go down to 0.357 which is a very low level of performance. This indicates how important mental models, personal mastery, team learning and share vision are to the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The regression coefficients of the four independent variables are discussed in line with each specific objective in the following subsections.

The Effect of Mental Models on the Performance of the International Humanitarian Organizations

The first specific objective of the study was to assess the effects of mental models on the performance of the international humanitarian organizations. The regression coefficient of mental models was used to address the given objective. The regression coefficient posted a value of 0.209. This actually confirmed that a unit increase of mental models would considerably increase the performance of the international humanitarian organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya by 0.209 units (β = 0.209; *p*-value = 0.031 < 0.05). Therefore, mental models involving cognitive mapping and cultivating an environment of candid communication and teamwork among the employees improves the organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The findings concurred with the Organizational Learning theory that mental models through cognitive mapping can be used to identify and correct future problems that an organization can face, thus, in the long-run leading to that organization to perform better.

The findings also agreed with the proposition of the Learning Organization theory that the employees of the IHOs in Nairobi City County, Kenya uses their mental faculties to develop flexible and open-

thinking patterns for the effective and efficient running of the organization's activities. The findings also concurred with the Resource-Based theory that mental models are unique and non-replicable resources that the IHOs uses to develop their competitive edge in order to realize sustained positive organizational performance. The findings of this study agreed with the observations made by De Ávila Dias and De Toni (2020) who observed that mental models involving emotional skills, communication, creativity and innovation improves organizational performance. Cognitive mapping is a very essential instrument of identifying gaps in service delivery to the customers, conflicts and inconsistencies of their views concerning a certain product which provides a leeway for the given organization to improve their services (FasterCapital, 2024).

The findings also agreed with the observations made by Silva et al. (2021) that mental models as a continuous restructuring of the manager's decision-making leads to improved organizational performance of business start-ups in Brazil. Finally, the regression results were inconsistent with the research outcomes of Zhao et al. (2023) who observed that mental models reduce the level of individual performance.

The Effect of Personal Mastery on the Performance of the International Humanitarian Organizations

The second specific objective was to ascertain the effects of personal mastery on the performance of the international humanitarian organizations. The regression coefficient of personal mastery was used to address the given objective. The regression coefficient posted a value of 0.234. This actually confirmed to us that a unit increase of personal mastery would considerably increase the performance of the international humanitarian organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya by 0.234 units (β = 0.234; p-value = 0.007 < 0.05). The findings showed that personal mastery involving continuous improvement of skills and abilities and the modification of strategies to achieve professional goals leads to improved organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County Kenya. The findings also agreed with the proposition of the Learning Organization theory that personal mastery involving learning from professionals, experiences and from other colleagues sharpens one's skills and capabilities to be productive and effective thus leading to improved organizational performance. The findings also concurred with the Resource-Based theory that personal mastery is a unique and a non-replicable resource that the IHOs uses to develop their competitive edge in order to realize sustained positive organizational performance.

The regression results of this particular study were congruent with the observations made by Hamidi et al. (2018) that personal mastery improves the quality and the productivity of the services offered by the employees working at Hamadan University of Medical Sciences. The findings also agreed with the research outcomes of Mak'Anyengo and Maina (2019) that personal mastery improves the organizational success of SarovaWhitesands Beach Resort due to enhanced employee productivity. The findings were also consistent with the observations made by Montazeralfaraj et al. (2019). Moreover, the research results also agreed with the findings made by Otieno and Maina (2019) at G4S Kenya ltd that personal mastery involving the refinement of skills through learning improves organizational performance. Personal mastery sharpens one's professional skills and competencies that are vital in improving organizational productivity (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2023). Personal mastery injects new innovative ideas to a given organization and enables it to recognize new opportunities and exploit them for its own benefits (Garcia-Morales et al., 2007).

The Effect of Team Learning on the Performance of the International Humanitarian Organizations

The third specific objective of the study was to evaluate possible links between team learning and performance of the international humanitarian organizations. The regression coefficient of team learning was used to address the given objective.

The regression coefficient posted a value of 0.066. This actually confirmed to us that a unit increase of team learning would insignificantly increase the performance of the international humanitarian organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya by 0.066 units (β = 0.066; *p*-value = 0.464 > 0.05). This meant that team learning involving constructive dialogue, prioritizing equality within the teams and providing rewards have no considerable role on the performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County though it improves it to a small extent. People tend to learn better from one another through reflections on how to challenge assumptions, handle issues, and get feedback from their team (Chuang, 2021). Equality in team learning is supposed to boost organizational effectiveness since when the team members are allowed to share their insights and ideas indiscriminately, they can be easily transferred for implementation to the other organizational units thus improving organizational performance (Rupcic, 2022).

The regression results were not ideally consistent with the observations made by Mbuthia (2018) which noted that team learning considerably improves the organizational performance of the commercial banks in Rongai, Kenya. The findings also disagreed with the observations made by Mak'Anyengo and Maina (2019) that team learning considerably improves the organizational performance of SarovaWhitesands Beach Resort. Besides that, the findings also disagreed with the observations of Keter (2021) who noted that team learning significantly improves the performance of banks in Kenya.

The Effect of Shared Vision on the Performance of the International Humanitarian Organizations
The fourth specific objective of the study was to find out whether shared vision among members of the international humanitarian organizations affects their performance. The regression coefficient of shared vision was used to address the given objective. The regression coefficient posted a value of 0.436. This actually indicate that a unit increase of shared vision would considerably increase the

performance of the international humanitarian organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya by 0.436 units (β = 0.436; *p*-value = 0.000 < 0.05). The findings confirmed to us that shared vision through the top to bottom communication strategy of conveying the goals and visions of the firm together with aligning the personal goals to the vision of the given IHO in Nairobi City County, Kenya would consequently lead to improved organizational performance. A shared vision helps team members to sharply focus their commitment and passion in areas of priority in the organization in unison for improved organizational performance to be realized (Martin et al., 2014).

The findings also concurred with the Resource-Based theory that a shared vision that is unique and non-replicable can be used by the IHOs to develop their competitive edge since it improves their organizational performance. The regression results of this study agreed with the observations made by Mak'Anyengo and Maina (2019) that shared vision improves the organizational performance of Sarova Whitesands Beach Resort. The findings also agreed with the observations made by Urbancova et al. (2023) that a shared vision that is systematically communicated from the top management to the staff members, plays a fundamental role in aligning the employees to be committed and focused in achieving the given corporate goals thus leading to improved organizational performance. The findings also agreed with the research outcomes made by Toroitich (2021) that shared vision has helped the SMEs in Elgeyo-Marakwet and Baringo Counties to develop competitive strategies that considerably boosts their organizational performance. The findings were also congruent with the observations made by Otieno and Maina (2019) that shared vision improves the organizational performance of the G4S security firm in Kenya.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The study, in line with the first specific objective concludes that mental models involving cognitive mapping and cultivating critical thinking are a proper way for learning organizations to improve

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performance. Mental models are used to provide discipline and allow people to break free from these patterns and assumptions.

The study, in line with the second specific objective concludes that personal mastery involving continuous improvement of skills and abilities and the modification of strategies to achieve professional goals leads to improved organizational performance of the IHOs in Nairobi City County Kenya.

On the third specific objective of the study, team learning involving constructive dialogue, prioritizing equality within the teams and providing rewards was noted to have considerable role on the IHOs' performance even though it improves it to a small extent.

Finally, the fourth specific objective concludes that shared vision through the top to bottom communication strategy of conveying the goals and vision of the firm together with aligning the personal goals to the vision of the IHO in Nairobi City County, Kenya would consequently lead to improved organizational performance

Recommendations

The management that includes the directors and the senior managers of the IHOs should create policies that will encourage their organizations to focus on personal growth and development of employees and self- efficacy for the purposes of achieving personal mastery. This helps in the development of human capital. This will enhance the employee productivity of the IHOs in Kenya and will also enable them to recognize new opportunities and exploit them for their own benefits.

It is also recommended that IHOs to use cognitive mapping to enhance the mental models of their employees in identifying gaps in service delivery to the customers, conflicts and inconsistencies of their views to improve their services .The management of IHOs should also make it a culture for the team members in the organizations to embrace constructive dialogues since it allows them to share their insights and ideas indiscriminately, so that they can be transferred for implementation thus improving organizational performance. It is also recommended that that IHOs should consider the development of social-technical systems that integrate people with technologies for faster learning.

Finally, IHOs should embrace a policy of conveying their shared vision through the top to bottom communication strategy so that the employees would in unison and be committed in areas of priority which would boost organizational effectiveness and performance.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study was limited to ascertaining the effects of learning organization practices on the performance of international humanitarian organizations that are operating within Kenya.

Future studies can be done on other sectors such as the NGO sector or the private sector. Learning organization concept is very crucial to the social and economic development of organizations. Moreover, this study was limited to primary data obtained from the questionnaires to address its objectives, future studies should explore qualitative methodologies.

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