Exploring the relationship between organizational learning and career resilience among faculty members at Qatar University

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Abstract
Purpose – Two main purposes guide this study. The first is to assess the level of individual, group, and organizational learning at Qatar University (QU), and the level of career resilience among its faculty members. The second is to explore the relationships between these levels of learning at QU and the career resilience of its faculty members.

Design/methodology/approach – This study is quantitative in nature and was conducted using a survey methodology as its research design. A variety of statistical techniques were utilized in this research. A multiple regression model, the Pearson production-moment correlation coefficient (r), means, and standard deviations were used as the main statistical techniques.

Findings – The findings of this study indicated that faculty members at QU practice three different levels of learning – i.e. individual learning, departmental learning, and university learning – separately or combined in a moderately high way. Further, the results clarified that faculty members at QU perceived themselves to have a moderately high level of career resilience. In terms of the relationship between career resilience and the three different levels of learning, the results of the Pearson production-moment correlation coefficient (r) and the coefficient of determination, R², statistically confirmed the positive, modest, and significant relationship between career resilience and the three levels of learning combined.

Originality/value – A hypothesized correlation between career resilience and organizational learning is affirmed. The results of this study confirm the feasibility of connecting two emerging frameworks, i.e. organizational learning and career resilience. Therefore, studying the organizational learning of faculty members is a device that can be used to predict the possibility of faculty members adopting the characteristics and values of a learning organization in their academic life individually or organizationally, while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior through their career resilience.

Keywords Organizational learning, Career resilience, Universities, Teachers, Qatar

Introduction
In 2003, Qatar embarked on ambitious reform initiatives recognizing the need for a strong educational system to prepare young Qataris for increasingly demanding careers and for playing leading roles in the future development of their own society.
As Qatar University (QU) is the first and only national institution of higher education in Qatar, it has been the focal point of discussion and decision-making in attempts to reform this sector to bring the quality of higher education to a level that is universally recognized. At the same time, however, QU has been on the receiving end of rapid changes brought about by the combined forces of knowledge, globalization, communications, and the technology explosion. It needs to deal with the challenges stemming from environmental changes and the major challenges that confront its structure, governance, finance, admission practices, and students' attendance.

In this context, some organizational theorists suggest that the adoption of a learning organization approach represents a positive management strategy that educational institutions, in Qatar and other countries, can use to navigate successfully the myriad change and reform movements they confront (Duffy, 1997; Fullan, 1993; Weller and Weller, 1997). Turbulent environments, changes, and reform calls require knowledge-intensive universities to apply forms of learning that allow faculty members and thus the entire university to adapt to the rapidly changing environmental conditions and to generate new knowledge about the handling of contingencies (Andresen, 2007). The learning and change process is key to transforming traditional universities into developmental and reformed universities, and bringing about opportunities that are essential for continuous renewal and improved performance capacity (Gilley and Maycunich, 2000).

However, other organizational theorists suggest that universities have historically been rigidly hierarchical, vigorously protect the status quo, structurally stable, and resistant to change (Lick and Kaufman, 2000-2001). They operate as bureaucracies where social learning is an espoused ideal rather than actual practice. According to Levin and Greenwood (2001) universities that claim the position of the premier and most advanced knowledge producers in society frustrate learning and social change in most of their interactions with the surrounding society. They appear to be unable to establish internal networks and to respond properly to external and public demands. Therefore, it is questionable whether universities can be learning institutions (Albrecht et al., 2007).

In the case of faculty members, most educators agree with White and Weathersby (2005) on characterizations of higher education institutions as “non-learning” institutions. They often experience conflicts between their ideals of creating learning-oriented institutions and the institutional obstacles inherent in doing so. The culture of universities is full of examples of competitive ratings and rankings, acceptances and rejections, and authoritarian and hierarchical structures that shape their lives. Whether they teach, write, or do research, except for collaborative projects and committees, they generally fly solo in their work.

To summarize this debate, in spite of the need for Qatar university to adopt a learning organization approach as a management strategy to successfully navigating the innumerable change and reform movements they confront, there is abundant evidence that it requires the investment of great deal of time, research, and resources before it can be modified. The combined effect of a quantum leap in organizational change and the inability of management to understand and orchestrate the cultural infrastructure to support the change may generate problems of crisis proportions (Conner, 1992).
This being the case, one can argue that Qatar University must adapt to increasingly competitive external environments, foster learning, and continually expand its capacity to shape the future as it becomes a learning organization (Patterson, 1999). In other words, changing the university from a traditional, authoritarian, and controlling university to a learning university depends on the way it builds and organizes knowledge and routines, uses the broad skills of their workforce, discovers how to tap capacity to learn at all levels in a university, and constructs structures and strategies so as to maximize individual learning, team learning, and organizational learning (Senge, 1994; Nutley and Davis, 2001).

**Individual learning**

Learning at individual level is “the way in which people make meaning of situations they encounter, and the way in which they acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to act in new ways” (Watkins and Marsick, 1999, p. 81). Individual learning is vital for any university. Universities learn only through individuals who learn. Although individual learning does not guarantee university organizational learning, without individual learning no university organizational learning occurs (Senge, 1994).

However, this idea has received a mixed reception somewhere between skepticism and enthusiasm. The prevailing view is that faculty members only learn when they first come into the university. Only new and inexperienced instructors can ask how they should deal with something. If an experienced instructor does, this is seen as a sign of incompetence (Karsten et al., 2000). Consequently, universities can foster individual learning by creating continuous learning opportunities and promoting inquiry and dialogue throughout the university’s culture (Watkins and Marsick, 2003). Continuous learning opportunities include self-managed learning, learning from coworkers, computer-assisted learning, daily work experiences, special assignments on projects, and personal insights (Marquartdt, 2002). However, continuous learning requires workers to be willing to change, adapt, grow, and take control of work-related decisions (Watkins and Marsick, 2003). Universities can create continuous learning opportunities through more effective planning for informal learning, learning how to learn, on-the-job learning experience or coaching, action learning, reflective planning, and classroom training (Marquartdt, 2002).

In the case of inquiry and dialogue, universities can promote dialogue and questioning through creating a “culture in which people ask questions freely, are willing to put difficult issues on the table for discussion, and are open to giving and receiving feedback at all levels” (Watkins and Marsick, 1999, p. 82). Dialogue and inquiry are driven by an experimental mindset, and this cannot occur unless there is a climate supporting a developmental approach to learning (Watkins and Marsick, 1993). According to Watkins and Marsick (1993), inquiry is based on open-minded curiosity, which enables people to suspend presuppositions and judgments in the interests of seeking truth and better solutions to problems. Universities should encourage discussions between members that are genuine, spontaneous, and enthusiastic. In the practice of dialogue, the focus of the inquiry is on bringing underlying assumptions and patterns of thinking to the surface in order to enable individuals in a university to examine and change their assumptions or theories behind their action (Beeby and Booth, 2000).
Group learning

There continues to be a variety of arguments proposed that individuals’ learning within a university is maximized through opportunities to share individual knowledge and experience with others. “Individual talent is great, but it walks out the doors […] Interdisciplinary teams capture, formalize, and capitalize talent, because it becomes shared, less dependent on any individuals” (Stewart, 1997, pp. 163-4). At some level, individual learning does not lead to university organizational learning. Individuals might learn all the time and yet there is no university organizational learning. By contrast, if teams learn, they become a microcosm for learning throughout the university (Senge, 1994).

Group or team learning in a university should be encouraged and enhanced because teams not individuals are the fundamental learning unit in any university (Senge, 1994). Team learning is enhanced when teams learn the skills of framing, reframing, experimenting, crossing boundaries, and creating an integrative perspective. Through teams, people learn how to work collaboratively, extending the university’s capacity to achieve a unified action on common goals (Watkins and Marsick, 2003).

One caution is in order, however. Group or team learning is a challenge in a university campus. Educators are accustomed to defining learning as an individual phenomenon. So, most universities have no time, structural arrangement, cultural norms, or language to promote group or team learning. Most staff development programs only support the learning of individuals (Isaacson and Bamburg, 1992). The process of learning how to learn collectively is unfamiliar with university people. In fact, collegial, cooperative, and interdependent relationships are the least common types of relationships among faculty members (Barth, 1991). The problem is that university officials do not draw parallels between students’ learning and the faculty members’ collective learning. University activities that are not directly concerned with students are ranked at the bottom on a scale of attractiveness (Karsten et al., 2000).

However, research reveals that the most successful learning does, in fact, occur in universities where faculty members find solutions together (Boyer, 1995). The educational literature also suggests that a number of outcomes may be associated with group or team learning, including better decision making, higher levels of morale and trust among faculty members, and faculty members’ learning is more likely to be sustained. And “[t]here is even some evidence that motivation of students and their achievement rises, and evidence that when [faculty members] share and cooperate, students tend to do the same” (Barth, 1991, p. 31).

Organizational learning

Although learning associated with individuals, teams or departments, and universities are interrelated, university organizational learning is seen as greater than the sum of individual and team learning (Marquardt, 2002; Senge, 1994). Learning by individuals is necessary for the university to change, but not sufficient by itself. Individuals and groups are the agents through which university organizational learning takes place, but the process is also influenced by a broad set of social, political, and structural variables (Chajnacki, 2007). At this point, Nutley and Davies (2001) clarified that “an organization as a whole may, on some matters, knows less than the individuals who comprise it. Conversely, the organization can also be viewed as more than the sum of its parts. Individuals come and go, but the organization endures” (p. 36). It might be
acceptable that organizations do not have brains, but they do have, memories and cognitive systems. As individuals develop their personalities and beliefs over time, organizations, similarly, develop their worldviews and ideologies (Hong, 1999).

In another argument, some writers believe that for universities to learn they must be able to acquire new knowledge and update their memory with that knowledge (Robey and Sales, 1994). Universities learn, through creating, acquiring, and transferring new ideas and knowledge. The new knowledge must be updated, shared, and applied to improve the performance of the university’s activities in a changing environment (Patterson, 1999; Venugopal and Baets, 1995). Other writers, on the other hand, assure that learning in universities does not mean acquiring only more information, but expanding the ability to produce the results that universities truly want through lifelong generative learning (Senge, 1994). For those universities, the process of learning rather than what is learned might be more important in creating competitive advantage than the specific knowledge gained (Schendel, 1996). Organizational learning shows up in a university when improvements are made in standard operating procedures, policies, the culture, work processes, and the information systems that maintain the memory of the university (Watkins and Marsick, 1999).

In this context university organizational learning is defined as “the ability of the institution as a whole to discover errors and correct them, and to change the organization’s knowledge base and values so as to generate new problem-solving skills and new capacity for action” (Albrecht et al., 2007, p. 404). University organizational learning is the way the university builds and organizes knowledge and routines, and uses the broad skills of their workforce to improve university performance (Nutley and Davies, 2001).

According to Watkins and Marsick (1999), there are four action imperatives that pertain to this level of organizational learning, namely:

1. create systems to capture and share learning;
2. empower people toward a collective vision;
3. connect the organization to its environment; and
4. provide strategic leadership for learning.

By establishing systems to capture and share learning, universities build organizational capacity for new thinking that is then embedded and shared with others. At the same time, empowering people toward a collective vision means that everyone in the organization has an idea of what the whole picture looks like, knows how to get something done, has a budget with which to take action, and has knowledge of how to influence others. Everyone has access to information about how to plan learning and how to assess their needs in relation to the needs of the organization (Watkins and Marsick, 2003).

Furthermore, when the organization is connected to its environment, interdependencies between the organization and its internal and external environment are acknowledged and worked through. Being connected to the internal environment is being responsive to members of the organization and their work-life needs (Watkins and Marsick, 1999). Finally, learning in an organization is difficult to create without supportive and appropriate leadership in the organization. Leaders provide strategic direction for using learning to leverage change and to move the organization in new directions (Watkins and Marsick, 2003).
In this context, there is simply no way to accomplish the previous four actions to promote organizational learning in a university where the traditional way of viewing the structure of a university is by observing the organization chart (Morey and Frangiioso, 1998). The structure of a university as a learning organization should be viewed as a pattern of interrelationships among key components of the system. These components might include, but are not restricted to, the hierarchy and process flows. They include attitudes and perceptions, the ways in which decisions are made, and hundreds of other factors (Senge et al., 1994). This new definition of organizational structure invites university members to use different templates and mental models, especially those generated by systems thinking to create new capacities through which universities can extend their ability to create the future. Wheels of learning or single-loop and double-loop learning encourage university members to understand key organizational components from the standpoint of a new frame (Morgan, 1997).

However, the challenges presented to educational institutions from restructuring are perceived as being far from easily managed (Abu-Tineh, 2010). For some, restructuring is perceived as threatening, whereas for others it is seen as unwelcome (Leithwood, 1996). Under these circumstances, single-loop learning systems are reinforced and might serve to keep a university on the wrong course (Morgan, 1997).

Career resilience

White and Weathersby (2005) stated that a surprising number of values of academic life are antithetical to the values and ethos of a learning organization community. Values of a learning organization, which would in its ideal have many of the same characteristics as a community, include growth and development, openness, risk-taking, innovation, change, flexibility, collaboration, and interdependence are rarely practiced by faculty members. Rather than operating as a community of scholars, most universities operate as bureaucracies where social learning is an espoused ideal rather than actual practice.

My point here is that whether or not one becomes convinced about the possibility of the learning organization emerging as a force for personal, group, and organizational development, the adoption and diffusion of a learning organization is not a quick fix, nor another fad. Indeed, according to Franklin et al. (1998) in a methodological sense, it is about a different way of looking at the possible behavior of university. Normally, it is about nurturing a different culture – a different way of behaving and a different way of judging what is important. Obviously then, studying the career resilience of faculty members is critical. It is a devise we can use to predict the possibility of faculty members to adopt the characteristics and values of learning organization in their academic life individually or organizationally, while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior. When a change enters into a person’s life, “the individual’s traits (e.g. optimism) and skills (e.g. time management) interact with environmental and situational factors (e.g. the necessity to relocate quickly and efficiently). This interaction produces behaviors that increase the likelihood of a successful adaptation to change” (Bryant, 1995, p. 6). However, it is no longer enough to adapt to new demands, cope with the stress of uncertainty, or merely adjust to disruption in the workplace. Resilience is the force that allows people to go beyond survival and to actually prosper in environments that are becoming increasingly complex (ODR, Inc., 1995). It is “the ability to absorb high level of disruptive change while displaying
minimal dysfunctional behavior” (Conner, 1992, p. 6). Career resilience, here, is defined as a faculty member’s ability to actively manage his or her work life and adapt to the changing workplace even when the changes cause career disruption (ODR, Inc., 1995). Resilient faculty members are flexible, goal-driven, optimistic, and high in self-esteem, and they understand that to make effective change takes time and provides new learning opportunities for implementation (Wang et al., 1998). The manner in which faculty members handle change is demonstrated by various characteristics related to one’s confidence and sense of self. Faculty members with confidence are capable of reaching goals and dealing with change with minimum anxiety. Through reliance on their own power, faculty members who successfully handle change believe they have the capacity to do so. Faculty members’ sense of self includes psychological constructs that contribute to their capacity to deal with change (Floden et al., 1995).

In this study resilience is viewed as dynamic developmental process rather than as a personal trait. If resilience is perceived only as a personal trait, this might lead to a conclusion that some people just do not have the right trait to overcome adversity. According to the change expert Conner (1992), resilient people tend to both increase their total assimilation capacity available (impact of change) and minimize the quality of assimilation needed for an individual change. Although resilient people face no less of a challenge than others when they engage change, they often regain their equilibrium faster and maintain a higher level of productivity. They also achieve more of their objectives and tend to rebound from the demands of change even stronger than before. So, their speed of change is not the space at which things around them are changing, but the rate at which their resilience allow them to recover from disrupted expectations (ODR, Inc., 1995).

Purpose of the study and research questions
Two main purposes guided this study. The first purpose was to assess the level of individual, group, and organizational learning at Qatar University and the level of career resilience among its faculty members. The second purpose was to explore the relationships between these types of learning at QU and career resilience of its faculty members. In more detail, this investigation attempted to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. To what degree is individual, departmental, and organizational learning practiced by faculty members at QU?

RQ2. To what degree do faculty members at QU relate the level of their career resilience to the imperative changes underway in their university?

RQ3. What is the magnitude of the relationship between career resilience and the three different levels of learning combined?

RQ4. What is the magnitude of the relationship between career resilience and of individual, departmental, and university learning, respectively?

RQ5. What is the overall strength of the relationship between overall learning at QU and career resilience among its faculty members?

RQ6. Which level of learning has the most significant effect on career resilience as perceived by faculty members?
Importance of the study

Qatar University and its colleges are going through major reform and accreditation. Reform and accreditation are profoundly affecting the work of its faculty members. They are reshaping the process of teaching and learning, redefining the role and authority of faculty members in organizing and overseeing the curriculum, and altering the bases for evaluating students and faculty performance. In short, reform and accreditation affect the vision and the mission of the university. Therefore, this study provides empirical insight into the ability of faculty members to actively manage his or her work life and adapt to the changing in the vision and mission of the college and university even when the changes may cause career disruption.

Moreover, unfamiliar major reform almost always generates fear and anxiety in faculty members, often requiring them to radically shift their thinking, feelings, beliefs, and behaviors. Consequently, the more faculty members understand and learn about a reform, the more comfortable and resilient they tend to become. Such understanding gives faculty members a sense of control over the reform, contributing to their sense of comfort and security, and lessening their resistance to reform. A university will benefit from the learning of its individuals who, in turn, will contribute to enhance the organization’s capacity to create the future of the university as a whole.

Furthermore, the institutions of higher education are vigorously resistant to major change and highly protective of the status quo. Qatar University is no exception. Therefore, QU requires the investment of a great deal of time, research, and resources before its reform can be succeeded. The combined effect of a quantum leap in organizational reform and the inability of management to understand and orchestrate the organizational learning to support the reform may generate problems of crisis proportions. One important strength of this study is that it has potential implications for managers and decision makers at QU to investigate the relationship between organizational learning at QU to meet reform demands and the level of career resilience of its faculty members in terms of their ability to absorb high level of disruptive change comes along with university reform while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior.

Finally, the timing of this study is but one of several reasons that is significant and important. Currently, there are both internally and externally increasing pressure being placed upon Qatar University to enact reform and accreditation. Thus, the importance of increasing our understanding of the magnitude of learning at individual, departmental, and university level and determining the level of resilience of its faculty members seems to have particular merit at this time.

Methodology

Sample and data collection

Participants of this study were faculty members of all colleges and programs at Qatar University. Proportional stratified sampling techniques were applied to draw a specified number of participants randomly from each college and program. According to Ary et al. (2002), “In this kind of sampling you may either take equal numbers from each stratum or select in proportion to the size of the stratum in the population” (p. 167). Of 400 assistant, associate, and full professors at QU, 100 participated voluntarily from different colleges and programs. The data collection method was a self-administered paper-based questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed to participants at the workplace for completion at their own convenience to provide them...
with anonymity when disclosing personal information about themselves and their perception of learning and resilience.

**Instrumentation**
The survey instrument used in this study compromised two sections:

1. the Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) (Watkins and Marsick, 1999); and
2. the Measure of Career Resilience (Liu, 2003).

**Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ).** The DLOQ instrument (Watkins and Marsick, 1993, 1999) was used to collect data for this study. The original DLOQ instrument had seven dimensions, with 43 items on a six-point Likert scale (1 = almost never; 6 = almost always). The instrument has been used with personnel at more than 200 companies and has proved consistently reliable, with all scales greater than 0.70 (Watkins and Marsick, 2003). Yang *et al.* (1998) found strong evidence of construct validity and high reliability for the DLOQ. The reliability of the instrument range from low of 0.71 to a high score of 0.86.

The DLOQ was shortened to include only 29 items encompassing the dimensions that measure OL on the individual, team, and organizational university-wide level. Determining Financial Performance, Provide Leadership, and Knowledge Performance were beyond the scope of the present study. All questions on Financial Performance, Knowledge Performance, Empowerment, System Connection, and Provide Leadership were eliminated. The instrument was reduced to 29 items to measure degrees of OL on three levels:

1. individual;
2. team; and
3. organizational.

**The Measure of Career Resilience.** The Measures of Career Resilience consisted originally of 28 items. Based on the results of factor analysis (Liu, 2003), 20 career resilience items were selected. These items seemed to measure willingness to change, risk-taking, network building, self-confidence, achievement, self-awareness, awareness of the demands/trend in the workplace, adaptability, autonomy, employability, and active learning. However, total score of the 20 items was used to indicate the degree of one’s career resilience. The Cronbach’s $\alpha$ for the 20 items overall in the current study was 0.81.

**Results and discussion**
A variety of statistical techniques where utilized in this research. A multiple regression model, the Pearson production-moment correlation coefficient ($r$), means, and standard deviations were used as the main statistical techniques to analyze the data.

**RQ1. To what degree is individual, departmental, and organizational learning practiced by faculty members at QUP?**
This question addresses the degree to which faculty members at Qatar University practice individual, departmental, and university learning. As shown in Table I, the
overall learning at Qatar University was 3.87. This result indicates that faculty members at Qatar University practice, on average, moderately high overall learning. To further elaborate on results of this question, the mean of practicing learning on university level was lowest (3.77). However, the mean of practicing learning at the departmental level was highest (3.99). Finally, the mean of individual learning was (3.93). To summarize, faculty members at QU practice, learning at the individual, departmental, and university levels moderately highly. Further, standard deviations around the mean values were quite small, suggesting consistency in the responses.

RQ2. To what degree do faculty members at QU relate the level of their career resilience to the imperative changes underway in their university?

To answer this question the mean and standard deviation of career resilience as perceived by faculty members at QU were calculated. As shown in Table II, faculty members of QU perceived their career resilience to be, on average, moderately high. The mean of career resilience was 4.84.

RQ3. What is the magnitude of the relationship between career resilience and the three different levels of learning combined?

To answer this question, the Pearson coefficient (r) for the overall learning at QU was computed. As shown in Table III, the correlation value (0.343) is low, positive, and significant (p = 0.007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table I. Means and standard deviations of the three levels of learning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dimension</td>
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<td>Individual learning</td>
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<td>Departmental learning</td>
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<td>University learning</td>
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<td>Overall learning</td>
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Note: n = 100

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<tr>
<th>Table II. Means and standard deviations of faculty members’ career resilience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dimension</td>
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<td>Career resilience</td>
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Note: n = 100

<p>| Table III. Correlations between career resilience and the overall learning |
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Pearson’s r</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<td>Overall learning</td>
<td>0.343</td>
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Note: n = 100
RQ4. What is the magnitude of the relationship between career resilience and of individual, departmental, and university learning, respectively?
To determine the magnitude of the relationship between faculty members’ scores on career resilience and their scores on individual learning, departmental learning, and university learning, the Pearson coefficient ($r$) was computed. Table IV shows that the correlation between career resilience and individual learning was the lowest in magnitude (0.261), but positive and significant ($p = 0.044$). In terms of the relationship between career resilience and departmental learning, Table IV indicates that the relationship is 0.358, which is positive, low, significant ($p = 0.005$), and higher than other correlations. Finally, the relationship between career resilience and university level is 0.354, which is low, positive and significant ($p = 0.006$).

RQ5. What is the overall strength of the relationship between overall learning at QU and career resilience among its faculty members?
To answer this question, a multiple regression model was used to compute the overall strength of the relationship, $R^2$, between career resilience of faculty members at QU and their individual, departmental, and university learning combined. According to Tate (1998) “When a regression model has multiple IVs [independent variables], the coefficient of determination, $R^2$, represents the strength of relationship between the dependent variable and all of the IVs [independent variables], and is interpreted as the portion of $Y$ variability explained by the model” (p. 80).
As shown in Table V, the model $R^2$ of 0.117, reflecting the overall strength of the relationship between practicing the three levels of learning together and career resilience, was statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.007$). Furthermore, the model $R^2$ of 0.117 reflects a relatively positive, low, and significant overall strength of the relationship at the 0.05 level. The model $R^2$ also indicated that about 12 percent of the variability of faculty members’ career resilience was explained by individual, departmental, and university learning combined as an independent variable.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson’s $r$</th>
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<tr>
<td>Individual learning</td>
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<td>Departmental learning</td>
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<td>University learning</td>
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Note: $n = 100$

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<tr>
<th>$R$</th>
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Note: $n = 100$
Research question 6: Which level of learning has the most significant effect on career resilience as perceived by faculty members?

To answer this question, the hierarchical entry of the independent variables technique was used to extract the variance of the variable included first, and we continued to build up the regression solution by adding portions of variances of other independent variables, uncorrelated with independent variables already included. The results in Table VI indicate that the effects of individual learning ($p = 0.044$) and departmental learning ($p = 0.049$) on career resilience were significant and accounted for 0.068 and 0.062 of the variances in career resilience, respectively. Therefore, individual and departmental learning were the best predictors of career resilience. However, university learning was the worst predictor of career resilience ($p = 0.17$), and was found to have less effect on career resilience and was insignificant ($p = 0.17$).

Conclusions and implications

Learning and resilience in a university context represent two rich lines of research. This study is an attempt to connect both concepts to emerge with a new concept in the discipline of educational management and affords a research-based guide to practice. Although this study does not allow causal links between dependent and independent variables, a correlation that was hypothesized between career resilience and organizational learning is affirmed. The results of this study have confirmed the feasibility of connecting the two emerging frameworks of organizational learning and career resilience. Studying the organizational learning of faculty members is a device we can use to predict the possibility of faculty members adopting the characteristics and values of a learning organization in their academic life, individually or organizationally, while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior by their career resilience.

The findings of this study indicate that faculty members at QU practice the three different levels of learning – i.e. individual learning, departmental learning, and university learning – separately or combined in moderately high way. Means of overall learning and each level of learning are greater than the midpoint on a six-point scale. This result suggests a good common level of practice of the different levels of learning among faculty members at QU. At the same time, however, this level of practice can be increased and supported. The belief that staff development programs should be directed to new hiring instructors and only support the learning of newcomers must be discouraged. All must learn. In the words of Karsten et al. (2000), the prevailing view is that instructors only learn when they first come into the university, and only new and inexperienced instructors can ask how they should deal

<table>
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<th>Dimension</th>
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<td>University learning</td>
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<td>0.398</td>
<td>0.158</td>
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<td>1.91</td>
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</table>

Note: $n = 100$
Another finding revealed that departmental learning was higher than the other two levels of learning. This result is encouraging and very promising for policy and decision makers at QU. In the context of reform that is undergoing in QU, it has never been a greater need for mastering departmental learning in the university than these days. This is so because almost all important decisions are now made in teams in direct or indirect ways. When department people become more aligned, a commonality of direction emerges, individuals’ energies harmonize, less energy wastes, and synergy develops (Senge, 1994).

However, learning at the university level was the lowest level of learning to be practiced at QU. This result could be justified. The process of learning at the university level is influenced by a much broader set of social, political, and structured variables than learning at the individual and departmental levels. Further, According to Barth (1991), the process of learning how to learn collectively is unfamiliar to people in educational institutions. In fact, collegial, cooperative, and interdependent relationships are the least common types of relationships among adults in these institutions. Therefore, several strategies as stated by Marquardt (2002), may help illuminate what QU can do to support learning at the university level. First, increase the ability of faculty members to learn how to learn collectively. Second, develop the discipline of organizational dialogue. Third, encourage and practice systems thinking. Universities that focus on snapshots of isolated parts of its system will never get its deepest problems solved or make a real change happen. Fourth, utilize scanning and scenario planning to prepare for future changes that are most likely to affect the university. Finally, change the mental model of learning by changing the mindset that equates learning with the schoolroom and replace it with one that envisions learning as an exciting, collaborative, highly rewarding enterprise. At the same time, QU is encouraged to maintain expanding multicultural and global mindsets and learning, establish self-development programs, building team learning skills, and design a career development plan for instructors.

In the case of career resilience, the results clarify that faculty members at QU perceive themselves to have a moderately high level of career resilience. This result suggests that faculty members at QU are able to meet the demands of reforms and able to absorb the moderate highly level of disruptive change that comes with university reforms while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior. At the same time, for career resilience among faculty members at QU to be enhanced to deal with the requirements of the reform process, the following strategies as stated by Conner (1992) can be suggested. First, faculty members should all learn to be better prepared to manage their change resources by demystifying the dynamics of resilience, and learning to understand how it functions. Further, by being better equipped to manage the transition process of reform, decision makers can increase their capacity and that of others to absorb change. With proper education and practice, major changes can be accomplished by drawing the minimum points from faculty members’ assimilation accounts. Therefore, workshops and training courses to increase the level of awareness of the principles, disciplines, and mechanisms of the reform process should be conducted. Providing institutional training and support would certainly increase individual and organizational effectiveness and enhance the resilience of faculty
members. Finally, answering faculty members’ questions about reform process decreases ambiguity, reduces anxiety, and restores a measure of control. “People have such a deep need for control that being able to anticipate and understand even a negative change can be regarded as a source of comfort” (Conner, 1992, p. 227).

In terms of the relationship between career resilience and the three different levels of learning, results of the Pearson production-moment correlation coefficient ($r$), and the coefficient of determination, $R^2$, statistically confirmed the positive, modest, and significant relationship between career resilience and the three levels of learning combined. Although a direct causal relationship cannot be drawn from these results, the positive and significant relationships between the career resilience of faculty members and their levels of learning combined suggest that the more faculty members practice individual, departmental, and university learning the more they are able to meet reform demands and to absorb the level of disruptive change that comes along with university reform while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior. They may also achieve more of their objectives and tend to rebound from the demands of change even more strongly than before (ODR, 1995).

Finally, there is still much to be learned about career resilience and organizational learning in higher education institutions. Hopefully, the current study opens the door for future research regarding additional factors that may be related to the concepts under discussion.

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