

The Effect of Organizational Forgetting on Organizational Learning: A Study on Menoufia University Hospitals in Egypt

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Abstract

Purpose: The concepts of Organizational Forgetting (OF) and Organizational (OL) Learning are considered somehow opposite. But are we able to learn without forgetting?. So, the purpose of this research is to study the relationship between OF and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt .

Design/methodology/approach: The present study is conducted by descriptive-survey method and its population consists of employees at Menoufia University Hospitals in Egypt. 240 standard questionnaires were distributed of which 200 questionnaires (83%) were returned. To gather data, OF questionnaire devised by Fernandez & Sun, (2009) and Moshabbeki et al., (2012), and OL questionnaire devised by American Society for Training and Development (2002) are used.

Findings: The research confirmed a conceptual model for OF. Moreover, research results showed that there is a meaningful relationship between OF and OL. The researcher has found that the study subjects do agree that OF directly affects the dimensions of OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt .

Research limitations/implications: This research helps to stimulate scientific research, particularly in terms of testing the model content, as well as studying the study variables and the factors affecting them. This study also has some limitations. First, this paper just focuses on organizations to find new perspective for the OF literature. Second, because of the scope of this research, interviewees are limited to individuals who have knowledge or take any seminars related to field of this sector. Other sectors also must be considered to attain detailed knowledge related to OF because case-specific studies will bring new dimensions to the literature of OF.

Originality/value: First, this study makes a research contribution to the field of OF because studies related to OF consist of conceptual papers. Second, I have introduced two new perspective to the concept of OF through this research paper. Third, forgetting is the necessary counterpart of learning, and that attempts to manage knowledge must also include attempts to manage forgetting.

Keywords: organizational forgetting, organizational learning

1. Introduction

Organizations of different types and sizes face many risks, as they seek to survive in a changing environment (Chong et al., 2009). Perhaps the most dangerous thing facing them is what is known as Organizational Forgetting (OF) which significantly affects the organization's competitiveness. Therefore, organizations are in an urgent need to know the causes and factors affecting them, as well as ways of prevention and treatment. This means that Organizations must manage OF well in order to determine which type of knowledge, whether old or new, must be disposed or retained. In this case, absorption capacity of organizational memory as well as the way of making benefit of it must be taken into account to keep up with constant changes in surrounding environment (Holan et al., 2004).

OF is a metaphor to understand how knowledge decay occurs in organizations (Holan & Phillips, 2004a, 2004b; Tsang & Zahra, 2008). However, it has been ignored by the theoretical literature (Holan, 2011; Besanko et al., 2010), yet organizations have an ability to create new knowledge, retain this knowledge and transfer knowledge to the whole organizations (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Rao & Argote, 2006) and forgetting is another important perspective because organizations are able to forget knowledge (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2003).

Many studies and applied researches, which tried to identify the OF, have shown that this variable is among the most important factors affecting functional innovation and learning. (Zeng & Chen, 2010; Esfahani et al., 2012; Mehrabi et al., 2013).

Organizational Learning (OL) is recognized as an essential element to increase the organization's efficiency. Therefore, OL has found an amazing position in management literature. Studies show that OL is simply identification and correction of the error system to reach a predetermined standard in each performance. OL involves an identification process and discarding obsolete and daily beliefs. OL is a key strategic capability of successful companies to surpass their rivals (Wong et al, 2012).

OF and OL are very important subjects for organizations to reach the desired objectives. Our study focuses on the relationship between OF and OL. The study is structured as follows: Section one is introductory. Section two presents the literature review. Section three discusses the research methodology. Section four presents the hypotheses testing. Section five explains the findings. Research recommendations will take place at section six. Conclusion will be provided at the last section.

2. Organizational Forgetting

2.1. Organizational Forgetting Concept

Forgetting valuable information, techniques and knowledge of the organization can lead to lose competitive advantages while in some cases (De Holan, 2004; Fernandez, & Sune, 2009).

Forgetting has been studied as an essential process for change management (Akgun, et al., 2007). Forgetting can be divide into two planned and unplanned forms. Planned forgetting is an intentional and active initiative in which existing organizational information and knowledge is put aside. On the other hand, unplanned forgetting is a passive and unintentional activity by which organizational critical knowledge and information are forgotten (De Holan & Philips, 2004; Azmi, 2005). Forgetting is able to add a new and important aspect to our conception on organizational knowledge dynamism although it needs a special broad plan. Forgetting means to put aside old knowledge to create a new room in order to acquire new knowledge before, during and after

learning processes. Forgetting has an important impact on effectiveness of organizational learning processes (Holan & Philips, 2004).

Forgetting has the potential of adding new important dimensions to our mind. Conditions such as environmental disturbance cause existing memory to be a challenge for information management. Therefore, shattering and renewing some parts of organizational memory is necessary. Forgetting is a main part of organizational dynamism and the relationship between OF and its dynamism is clear and obvious. Furthermore, forgetting play a key role in effectiveness of learning in an organization (De Holan & Philips, 2003, 2004).

Forgetting means to forget old knowledge to create a new environment to acquire new knowledge during and after learning processes. Also, forgetting has an important impact on the effectiveness of learning processes in the organization (Halen & Phillips, 2004).

The way to unlearn during an organizational crisis is by removing top managers as a group. This is because top managers are bolstered by previous successes and adamantly cling to their beliefs and perceptions therefore rationalizing their organizations' failures. Change in ownership is often another trigger of forgetting (Markoczy, 1994). Forgetting is a process necessary to remove former ideas to accept more recent ideas. Before organizations try for new ideas and thoughts, they should put aside old ideas by revealing their faults (Nystrom & Starbuck, 1984). Forgetting is a general process of putting useless and ambiguous knowledge aside (Hedberg, 1981).

OF is critical for three reasons (1) simply being able to create new knowledge in an organization, or transfer needed knowledge from another organization, is not enough. Instances in which new knowledge disappears before it has been successfully transferred to the organization's memory have been documented. Avoiding forgetting acquired knowledge is therefore a critical part of OL (Day, 1994), (2) organizations sometimes forget things that they need to remember. Despite being transferred to memory, organizational knowledge decays over time and critical pieces of organizational knowledge may eventually be forgotten (Darr, et al., 1995), and (3) forgetting is sometimes an organizational necessity, such as when a new dominant logic needs to replace an old one. In this case, a failure to forget prevents new knowledge from being put into practice and reduces organizational effectiveness (Bettis & Prahalad, 1996, Lyles, 1992).

OF has three contexts (1) researches indicate that creating or transferring knowledge is not enough because knowledge is able to disappear before transmission to long-term memory via documentary (Day, 1994), (2) organizational memory decays over time and knowledge can be forgotten if the memory is not maintained (Holan & Phillips, 2004a, 2004b; Benkard, 1999, Argote, 1999), and (3) some writers emphasize forgetting is an organizational necessity to adapt organizational changes (Lyles & Schwenk, 1992; Prahalad & Bettis, 1986).

OF basically as lack of ability in benefiting organization's knowledge and experiences. In other words, OF is the failure of organization in benefiting learning which have happened in the past (Kransdorff, 1998).

OF is incapability in benefiting knowledge and past experiences of the organization. The most important subject which leads organization toward forgetting is inability in learning and spreading it in organization. The lack of applying knowledge as the result of learning, inability of the company in coding and documenting knowledge and not having stimulation to share it are the most important reasons of forgetting knowledge in companies (Synder, & Cumming, 1998).

OF isn't a lack of organization's ability in learning, sometimes it's necessary for the organization to put its present knowledge aside strategically and knowingly (Othman & Hashim, 2002). OF is the intentional or unintentional loss of organizational knowledge at any level (Martin & Phillips, 2003).

OF is a concept of numerous and varied effects negatively and positively. It may be an intentional forgetting which seeks change acquisition, re-acquisition of knowledge, and abandonment of unneeded knowledge by the organization or in other words, reconstructing some parts of organizational memory. It is a positive loss of organizational knowledge (Holan et al., 2004).

OF lead to increase competition and to eliminate unfruitful elements of knowledge (Holan, 2004).

OF might be unintentional in terms of losing part of the knowledge. Therefore, an organization would become unable to carry out some of the activities which it has been able to do previously. This kind of forgetting is often detrimental to the organization as it happens when the Organization is unable to retain a portion of new knowledge in its own memory system. OF is the voluntary or involuntary loss of organizational knowledge. In other words, OF is loss of organizational knowledge voluntary or involuntary which can lead to changes in the organization capabilities (Halen & Phillips, 2004).

OF is an important and critical phenomenon which is not conceived well and is not as simple as learning. Overall, forgetting can be categorized into two groups: random (unintentional) forgetting which is damaging and objective (intentional) forgetting which can be profitable (Martin de Holan, 2004).

OF is the basic need for learning new organizational knowledge. This kind of forgetting requires design and time. Organizational performance can be a direct or indirect function of OF. An organization will not learn new knowledge without forgetting previous knowledge (Holan, Philips & Lawrence, 2004).

OF includes voluntary or involuntary loss of organizational knowledge can lead to change in organizational capabilities (Moshbeki, et al 2007).

OF is an important phenomenon in organizations. One strategy of successful managers for achieving and keeping competitive priority is paying attention to knowledge capitals of their staff. OF can be explained as losing organizational knowledge (Lin & Kuo, 2007).

OF isn't a lack of ability in learning organizational subjects, but forgetting is a process which happens after learning. It means that an organization first learn knowledge and then forgets it knowingly or unknowingly. OF is the outcome of inter organizational and intra organizational actions in which an organization loses a part of the organization's present knowledge aware or unaware. This knowledge includes some cases such as skills, methods, processes, experiences, documents and techniques being used in the organization. OF is the consequence of a complex of activities which could have root in inter

organizational and intra organizational actions and decisions. Organizations should look at OF systematically, aware and with plan to finally achieve some positive results (Besanko, et al., 2007).

OF has been studied mainly from two standpoints. The first standpoint sees accidental or unwanted forgetting as a degradation of the stocks of organizational knowledge. The second standpoint considers forgetting as an intentional process of unlearning preceding organizational learning (Fernandez & Sune, 2009).

OF is a powerful tool for the management of organizational knowledge by gaining appropriate knowledge and discarding the inappropriate ones. OF is necessary in organizations regarding to the turbulent environment (Jiang, et al., 2010; Bagherzadeh et al, 2010).

OF is the process of transformation from old to new knowledge within the organization (Jiang, et al., 2010).

Although the concept of OF is easy to understand, but it is not recognized well how its mechanism occurs. As OF can effect on organization competitiveness, organization needs processes to ensure that whether knowledge it is forgotten and whether knowledge is useful, it is not forgotten (Hosseini et al, 2010).

OF often leads a great amount of expenses on the organization and many countries spend a lot of sources annually to gain knowledge and information (Ozdemir, 2010). OF is a changing learning process and learning in organizational memory, one process of leaving deliberated memory and a process of destroying and rebuilding some parts of organization. In last years the OF took attention of many researchers (Jian & fu, 2010).

OF is the challenge for managers in the new age of business. The most important subject which leads to the forgetfulness, inability to obtain and disseminate learning organization. Failure to apply the knowledge gained from learning disabilities to participate in coding and documentation, and lack of motivation for sharing knowledge, it is the most important OF (Saynder & Keming, 1998; Jalali & Khosravani, 2010).

OF is the organization's inability to accomplish some of the activities it was previously accomplishing, because of losing some of its organizational knowledge which would considerably affect its competitiveness (Moshabbeki et al., 2011).

OF is removing routines and understanding this subject that these routines would not be useful for a long time and create problems towards learning more needs of organization. OF includes process that organizational delete old regulations and behaviors by them and create opportunity for new knowledge (Akhavan and et al, 2011).

OF has been examined as loss of organizational knowledge which is not planned or intended (Easterby-Smith & Lyles, 2011).

OF is the loss of gained organizational knowledge intentionally or unintentionally. This depends on absorptive capacity of organizational memory and organization desire to become more competitive. Thus, the simple notion of organizational forgetting is the intentional or unintentional loss of organizational knowledge. This significantly affects the organization's status and competitiveness. OF is the loss of a portion of current organizational knowledge in terms of the methods, processes, expertise, documents and traditional techniques used in the organization (Esfahani et al., 2012).

OF is the loss of retained knowledge (Holland et al., 2004). It is the process of avoiding ancient unnecessary knowledge in order to acquire new knowledge (Besanko et al., 2007). OF is a purposeful or unintentional loss of knowledge at any organizational level (Fernandez & Sune, 2009). OF is the process of transformation from old knowledge to new knowledge. In other words, OF means that the organization does consciously or unconsciously lose part of knowledge which has been previously retained (Moshabbeki et al., 2011). OF is the organization's inability to take advantage of knowledge available in its organizational memory (Esfahani et al., 2012). It is a voluntary or involuntary loss of organizational knowledge. (Jain, 2013).

OF is an attempt for directing of values, organizational treats by use of changing the subjective structures, mental models, logical structures and main theories that direct treats, (Goudarzvand, 2014).

OF is an important and vital phenomenon that is not realized well and is not simple same learning (Jena et al, 2014).

OF means throwing away the old routine to accept the new ones. According to this definition, first, it is assumed that forgetting is an essential principle for new learning, and secondly, it has the features of targeted forgetting, thirdly, the new routine is superior to old ones. Finally, to accept that forgetting does not occur after teach (Tsang & Zahra, 2008; Salvati et al, 2014).

2.2. Organizational Forgetting Dimensions

2.2.1. Intentional Organizational Forgetting (IOF)

Purposeful OF is a preliminary step to the process of organizational learning, as learning cannot happen unless there is a purposeful forgetting of the new organizational knowledge. Therefore, forgetting is a necessary process for the management of change that is no less important than functional learning in order to achieve the organization's competitive advantage (Zeng & Chen, 2010). OF can be divided into:

1. Removing old knowledge in the organizational memory deliberately or purposefully, because of being unneeded by the organization or obstacles its development. This can be achieved through the staff efforts (Fernandez & Sune, 2009; Esfahani et al., 2012).
2. The ability to acquire new and useful knowledge and keep them in the organizational memory, as this leads to the competitive advantage of the organization (HoIan et al., 2004).

2.2.2. Unintentional Organizational Forgetting (UOF)

This kind of forgetting happens when the organization is unable to retain new knowledge in its memory system. It also happens in terms of losing knowledge stored in organizational memory with the passage of time. In this case, the OF is unintentional and is often harmful to the organization as it reduces its competitive advantage. (Holan et al., 2004) Unintentional OF can be divided into:

1. Organizational memory deterioration, or in other words forgetfulness of some of the knowledge that has been previously kept in the organizational memory. This does affect the organization's competitiveness. To face this problem, the organization incurs substantial costs to develop its forgotten knowledge and regain its competitiveness. (Holan et al., 2004).
2. Inability to retain new knowledge in the organizational memory system. To face this problem the organization incurs substantial costs to add the new knowledge to that existing in the organizational memory. (Holan et al., 2004).

3. Organizational Learning

3.1. Organizational Learning Concept

OL is the process of intense interaction around an organization in which learning is aimed at changing or developing old knowledge. It is the process of developing the skills and capabilities of the staff of the organization, which achieves its distinction and adapts to environmental changes. This requires ensuring continuity of learning process (Döös et al., 2015).

OL is the process of acquiring, interpreting and disseminating information, bringing the Organization to an advanced stage of improvement and organizational growth, or the planned vision for the survival and growth of the Organization, by taking advantage of its expertise and experience and solving its problems to reach it and its members to the level that ensures its policies and future goals, resulting in the highest degree of efficiency and competition, sound decision making and improved organizational performance (Mohan, et al., 2015).

OL is the process of knowledge creation, acquisition, interpretation, transfer, and retention. In other words, it aims to provide employees with information that allows them to deal with and adapt to different situations and to benefit from them to the extent that contributes to improving the behavior of the employees of the organization. OL is a process of interaction between the organization and its members, which leads to the development of their capabilities and the strengthening of the competitive position of the organization and adaptation to the environment (Islam, et al., 2014).

OL can be described as the process that reflects the organization's ability to access information and the process of storing and retrieving new information. In other words, it is a process of searching for information, translating it in order to achieve the objectives of the organization, and developing the center for competition (Lilien & Gerwal, 2012).

There are four conditions are necessary for establishment and development of OL capability, first, organization management must provide firm backing for OL and support from OL plans. Second, the existence of one collective intelligence for system-viewing of organization and common landscape between employees in organization is necessary. It means employees must view whole organization and its problems comprehensively. Third, organization needs to develop organizational knowledge, transferring and integrating obtained individual knowledge, and forth, just compatibility and adaptation with the performed changes in environment isn't suitable so that learning is a source for establishment of competitive advantage, but we must move beyond adaptive learning that is just compatibility with environment changes and reach to creative environment so that organization can change in environment with change of its values and beliefs and this learning needs open-mind and empirical behavior (Gomez, 2005; Afshani et al, 2011).

OL is a process of inquiry through which members of organization develop shared values and knowledge based on their own past experience and that of others (Mitki & Herstein, 2011).

OL is the organizational capability to preserve improving performance according to the past experiences and know this capacity the ability of acquisition and using rapid and implicit knowledge for sharing knowledge and using knowledge in the organization. It is the method that organizations establish, complete or organize to coincide and develop routine streams and knowledge about their activities inside their cultures and also efficiency of organization by improving applying wide skills of their work force (Nazem & Matlabi, 2011).

OL is the ability to acquire and use knowledge to share and use in the organization, in order to develop the skills of its employees. It is the organization's planned change process, through the effective use of knowledge in an organizational culture based on the shared vision of the members of the organization, and encouraging continuous learning, which helps the organization achieve its goals (Nazem & Matlabi, 2011).

OL is the ability to study and adopt new ideas and transform them into policies and action plans to survive under competitive conditions. It is the process of improving the organization's capabilities and developing them, activating their relations with the environment, and adapting them to their internal and external variables (Van Grinsven & Visser, 2011).

Many organizations found one solution to increase OL capability and to perform ability-making plans and they have tried to overcome on the internal and external obstacles by using learning and ability-making in addition to improvement of effective variables on the sense of people and establish necessary fields for flourishing skillful employees (Dastgerdi et al , 2010).

OL process is to find errors and wrongs and remove or modify them. OL is obtained through common insight, knowledge and mental patterns and is based on the past experiences and awareness and events. OL is a process that it occurs by acquisition knowledge and improving performance during time (Alvani, 2007).

OL is a set of organizational actions, such as acquiring, distributing, and interpreting knowledge. It is a process in which efforts interact to enable staff to develop knowledge and use it to solve problems. This means that OL is the process of building, organizing, and improving knowledge in order to solve the problems faced by the organization (Sharifi & EOLamieh, 2008).

OL is the process of creating and acquiring knowledge, with the aim of benefiting from it in developing its resources in a way that contributes to improving organizational performance. It is the process of correcting errors through the development and development of workers through the relationships that link behavior with the results achieved; namely, the ability of the organization to learn through experience and the desire to learn from all experiences (Lopez et al., 2005).

OL is the capacity or internal organizational processes to maintain or improve organization performance according to the experiences. In the other words, it is collective process of acquisition and creation of merits that has changed in method of managing situations and will evolve the conditions (Akoff, 2003).

OL has been described as the internal capacity of organizations in terms of getting information from experience, examining and adapting new ideas and transforming them into policy and action plans to survive in the stiff competition (Lipshitz et al., 2007; Mitki, 2003).

OL is a repetitive process of action and reaction, and it is evaluated from time to time by its administrators (Edmonson, 2002).

OL is the process of achieving benefits that contribute significantly to the achievement of the Organization's goals (Williams, 2001). OL as a system includes vision, strategy, culture, leadership, structure, systems, and processes (Stratigos, 2001).

OL is the process of improving the capacity of the organization's members in a way that helps them better understand the vision and mission of the organization and the environment in which they are handled (Jones, 2000).

OL includes five processes which are creating, acquiring, interpreting, transferring and retaining knowledge (Gravin, 1993).

OL in one process and a set of activities that leads to employee learning and includes certain organizational behaviors that is implemented in learner organization at such organizations, all learning conditions are provided for members and people attempt to apply what have learned (Orr, 1990)

There are concepts of OL; namely old OL and new OL (Ortenblad, 2001; Dixon, 1994; Kim, 1998, March, 1991; Simon, 1991).

According to old view, OL is mostly related to organizational memory and having knowledge through routines, rules, procedures, documents and culture (Ortenblad, 2001).

Thus, knowledge is provided by individual level and transferred to organizational memory. Also, new OL has been introduced as a social approach to learning (Brown and Duguid, 1991; Cook and Yanow, 1993).

The new learning trend states learning means participation, not acquisition of information and learning is able to occur collectively (Ortenblad, 2001). Old OL emphasizes knowledge is storable; however, new trends accept changes, so knowledge is able to store with changes (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

3.2. Organizational Learning Dimensions

There are five dimensions of OL. They are as follows (American Society for Training and Development, 2002):

1. **The Dynamics of Learning:** The ability of the senior management of the organization to encourage the workers in the process of learning, listen to their ideas, pay attention to their training, their ability to learn from the performance of their work, and the need of the attention of the senior management of the Organization all employees.
2. **Conversion of the Organization:** The importance of senior management to the vision of the learning organization and providing an organizational climate that is concerned with the learning process, the interest of the management of the organization learning failure and learn from success, and the need to take into account the processes and programs in the organization as a great opportunity to learn, ease of communication.
3. **Employee Empowerment:** The importance of the management of the organization in the process of empowerment of employees, following the management of the organization of the method of decentralization and delegation of authority, attention by the senior management of the organization in the process of training and development of staff, attention of the senior management of the organization of the need to share their ideas and the importance of the senior management of the Organization of the process of learning from associations and universities.
4. **Knowledge Management:** The importance of senior management to monitor what others do outside the organization, the interest of employees to identify the best practices in their work, the attention of senior management to the skills of creative thinking of employees, and the attention of senior management to identify new ways of work, knowledge, and senior management's interest in developing strategies for the learning process.
5. **Application of Technology:** The attention of senior management to the need for a good information system, the attention of senior management of the need to provide information quickly, the attention of senior management to provide electronic means in the training process, the attention of senior management of the system of real-time processing and the attention of senior management of electronic systems in the learning process.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Model

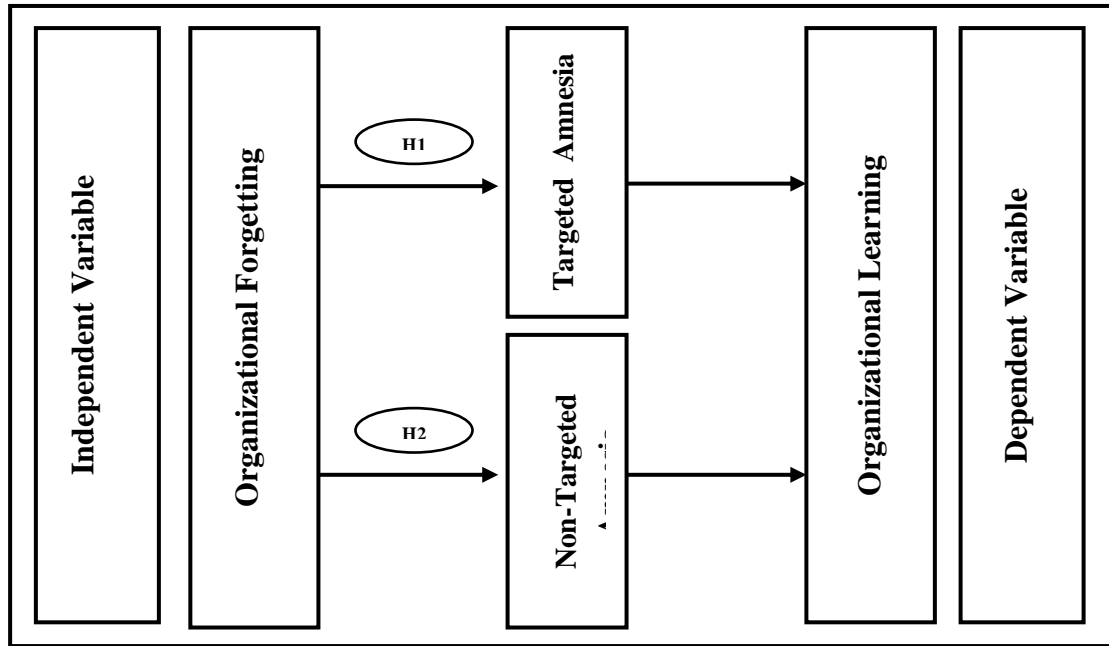
The proposed comprehensive conceptual model is presented in Figure (1). The diagram below shows that there is one independent variable of OF. There is one dependent variable of OL. It shows the rational link between the two variables.

The research framework suggests that OF plays a significant role in affecting OL. So, investigating the relationship between OF and OL is attractive to test it at the Egyptian environment.

OF is measured in terms of targeted amnesia and non-targeted amnesia (HoJan et al., 2004; Fernandez & Sun, 2009; Zeng & Chen, 2010; Moshabbeki et al., 2011; Esfahani et al., 2012).

OL as measured consisted of the dynamics of learning, conversion of the organization, employee empowerment, KM, and the application of technology (American Society for Training and Development, 2002).

Figure (1)
Proposed Comprehensive Conceptual Model



4.2. Research Questions and Hypotheses

The researcher found the research problem through two sources. The first source is to be found in previous studies, and it turns out that there is a lack in the number of literature reviews that dealt with the analysis of the relationship between OF and OL. This called for the researcher to test this relationship in the Egyptian environment. The second source is the pilot study, which was conducted in an interview with (30) employees in order to identify the relationship between OF and OL. The researcher found several indicators; notably the important and vital role that could be played by OF. As a result of the discussions given above, the research questions are as follows:

- Q1: What is the nature and extent of the relationship between OF (IOF) and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt.
- Q2: What is the nature of the relationship between OF (UOF) and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt.

There are studies in literature that study OF and OL factors separately and within the frame of bilateral relation, there is no study that examines these factors collectively at the Egyptian environment. This study aims to contribute to the literature by examining the research variables collectively and revealing the interaction between the research variables. As a result of the discussions given above, the following hypotheses were developed to test the effect of OF and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt.

- H1: OF (IOF) of employees has no statistically significant effect on OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt.
- H2: OF (UOF) of employees has no statistically significant impact on OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt.

4.3. Population and Sample

The research population included 3307 employees at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt. The stratified random sample was used to collect primary data from the different categories of employees. The following equation specifies the size of the sample (Daniel, 1999):

$$n = \frac{N \times (Z)^2 \times P(1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + (Z)^2 \times P(1-P)}$$

The number of samples obtained by 344 employees at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt is presented in the following table.

Table (1) Distribution of the Sample Size on the Population

Job Category	Number	Percentage	Size of Sample
Physicians	488	15%	344X 15% = 52
Nurses	2141	65%	344 X 65% = 224
Administrative Staff	678	20%	344 X 20% = 68
Total	3307	100%	344 X 100% = 344

Source: Personnel Department at Menoufia University, 2018

Table (2) Characteristics of Items of the Sample

Dimorphic Variables		Number	Percentage
1- Job Title	Physicians	100	33%
	Nurses	150	50%
	Administrative	50	17%
	Total	300	100%
2- Gender	Male	230	76%
	Female	70	24%
	Total	300	100%
3- Marital Status	Single	130	43%
	Married	170	57%
	Total	300	100%
4- Age	Under 30	100	33%
	From 30 to 45	125	42%
	Above 45	75	25%
	Total	300	100%
5- Period of Experience	Less than 5 years	50	17%
	From 5 to 10	200	66%
	More than 10	50	17%
	Total	300	100%

4.4. Procedure

The present study has drawn on the questionnaire method for collecting primary data necessary for the study. The questionnaire list is interested in recognizing OF and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt .

The questionnaire used in the questions list included four pages, besides the introductory page addressing informants. It aims at introducing them to the nature and aims of the study, besides gaining their cooperation for answering the questions in the list. The questionnaire included three questions, relating to OF, OL and biographical information of employees at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt. Data collection took approximately two months. About 344 survey questionnaires were distributed by employing diverse modes of communication, such as in person and post. Multiple follow-ups yielded 300 statistically usable questionnaires. Survey responses were 87%.

4.5. Data Collection Tools

4.5.1. Organizational Forgetting Scale

The present study has investigated OF as an independent variable. The researcher will depend on the scale developed by HoIan et al., 2004; Fernandez & Sun, 2009; Zeng & Chen, 2010; Moshabbeki et al., 2011; and Esfahani et al., 2012 in measuring OF, which has been divided into two elements (IOF and UOF).

The 19-item scale OF section is based on HoIan et al., 2004; Fernandez & Sun, 2009; Zeng & Chen, 2010; Moshabbeki et al., 2011; and Esfahani et al., 2012. There were twelve items measuring IOF and seven items measuring UOF. The survey form is used as the main tool for data collection in measuring OF at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt .

Responses are categorized using a 5-point Likert Scale for each statement, ranging from (1) “very ineffective”, (2) “ineffective”, (3) “neither effective nor ineffective”, (4) “effective”, and (5) “very effective”.

4.5.2. Organizational Learning Scale

The researcher will depend on the scale developed by American Society for Training and Development (2002) for measuring OL. The 26 item scale OL section is based on American Society for Training and Development (2002). There were five items measuring the dynamics of learning, five items measuring conversion of the organization, five items measuring employee empowerment, six items measuring knowledge management, and five items measuring the application of technology.

OL has been measured by the five- item scale of Likert of agreement or disagreement where each statement has five options. The informant should select the answer that suits his choice, where (5) indicates full agreement while (1) indicates full disagreement, with neutral degrees in- between.

4.6. Data Analysis

The researcher has employed the following methods: (1) Cronbach's alpha or ACC, (2) (MRA), and (3) F- test and T-test. All these tests are found in SPSS.

5. Hypotheses Testing

5.1. Evaluating Reliability

Before testing the hypotheses and research questions, the reliability of OF and OL were assessed to reduce errors of measuring and maximizing constancy of these scales. To assess the reliability of the data, Cronbach's alpha test was conducted. The reliability results for OF and OL is presented in the following table.

Regarding Table (3), the 19 items of OF are reliable because the ACC is 0.9846. IOF, which consists of 12 items, is reliable because ACC is 0.9530. UOF, which consists of 7 items, is reliable because ACC is 0.9392. Thus, the internal consistency of OF can be acceptable.

Table (3) Reliability of OF and OL

Variables	The Dimension	Number of Statement	ACC
OF	Intentional Organizational Forgetting	12	0.851
	Unintentional Organizational Forgetting	7	0.882
	Total Measurement	19	0.709
OL	The Dynamics of Learning	5	0.915
	Conversion of the Organization	5	0.665
	Employee Empowerment	5	0.815
	Knowledge Management	6	0.827
	The Application of Technology	5	0.881
	Total Measurement	26	0.923

Regarding Table (3), the 19 items of OF are reliable because the ACC is 0.709. Intentional organizational forgetting, which consists of 12 items, is reliable because ACC is 0.851. Unintentional organizational forgetting, which consists of 7 items, is reliable because ACC is 0.882. Thus, the internal consistency of OF can be acceptable.

According to Table (3), the 26 items of OL are reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.923. The dynamics of learning, which consists of 5 items, is reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.915. The 5 items related to conversion of the organization, are reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.665 while the 5 items of employee empowerment are reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.815. KM which consists of 6 items, is reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.827. The 5 items related to the application of technology are reliable because the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.881. Thus, the internal consistency of OL can be acceptable.

Accordingly, two scales were defined, OF (19 variables), where ACC represented about 0.709, and OL (26 variables), where ACC represented 0.923.

5.2. Correlation Analysis

Mean and standard deviation values and correlation coefficients between the variables are given in the following table:

Table (4) Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix of Constructs

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3
1. Intentional Organizational Forgetting	3.05	0.861	1		
2. Unintentional Organizational Forgetting	3.60	0.775	0.391**	1	
3. Organizational Learning	3.58	0.777	0.812**	0.410	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

According to Table (4), the first issue examined was the different facets of OF. Among the various facets of OF, those who responded identified the presence of IOF (M=3.05, SD=0.861). This was followed by UOF (M=3.60, SD=0.775).

The second issue examined was the different facets of OL (the dynamics of learning, conversion of the organization, employee empowerment, knowledge management, and the application of technology). Most respondents identified the overall OL (M=3.58, SD=0.777).

According to Table (4), OF have a significant relation with OL. The correlation between OF (IOF) and OL is 0.812. For OF (UOF) and OL, the correlation value is 0.410. Finally, Table (4) proves that there is a significant correlation between OF and OL. So our hypothesis is supported and it can be said that there is a significant and correlation between OF and OL.

5.3. Organizational Forgetting (Intentional Organizational Forgetting) and OL

The relationship between OF (IOF) and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt is determined. The first hypothesis to be tested is:

There is no relationship between OF (IOF) and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt .

Table (5) MRA Results for OF (IOF) and OL

The Variables of OF (IOF)	Beta	R	R ²
1. The possibility of change lies in the cognitive abilities of workers.	0.077*	0.110	0.012
2. The possibility of change lies in the laws and regulations that govern work in the organization.	0.068	0.501	0.251
3. There is relative stability in service delivery methods, in the short term.	0.150**	0.661	0.436
4. There is a tendency to continue actions being performed without any change in working methods.	0.004	0.221	0.048
5. Possibility of change is available in the organizational culture on a regular basis.	0.035	0.304	0.092
6. There is a possibility of change in the organizational structure.	0.097*	0.667	0.444
7. The knowledge capacity of workers is utilized in order to make fundamental changes in the organization.	0.281**	0.674	0.454
8. Internal innovation is often used to assess or develop services.	0.019	0.613	0.375
9. always walk or consistency on effective ways that lead to success.	0.239**	0.770	0.592
10. The ability to change the working methods of the organization is available.	0.070	0.471	.221
11. Working methods that previously led to failure are avoided.	0.242**	0.709	0.502
12. There is no culture of fear of leaving the old unsuccessful methods of work.	0.135*	0.330	0.108
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MCC ▪ DC ▪ Calculated F ▪ Degree of Freedom ▪ Indexed F ▪ Level of Significance 		0.873 0.763 76.822 12, 287 2.18 0.000	
** P < 0.01 * P < 0.05			

Table (5) proves that there is a relationship between OF (IOF) and OL at significance level of 0,000.

As a result of the value of R², the 12 independent variables of IOF can explain 76% of the total differentiation in OL level. For the results of a structural analysis of the MRA, the direct effect of OF (IOF) and OL is obtained. Because MCC is 0.873, it is concluded that there is enough empirical evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

5.4. Organizational Forgetting (UOF) and OL The relationship between OF (UOF) and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt is determined. The second hypothesis to be tested is:

There is no relationship between OS (UOF) and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt .

Table (6) MRA Results for OF (UOF) and OL

The Variables of OF (UOF)	Beta	R	R ²
1. External innovation is often adopted to provide or develop services.	0.085	0.348	0.121
2. Losing of knowledge stored in databases leads to serious results.	0.452*	0.427	0.182
3. Dates of the training programs of personnel development are often spaced.	0.588**	0.134	0.017
4. Knowledge gained by employees from the training programs is not used.	0.312**	0.183	0.033
5. Workers who have knowledge often leave the organization unexpectedly.	0.236	0.348	0.121
6. There is a decrease in the number of times of using the existing knowledge of workers.	0.055	0.423	0.178
7. Work methods are often changed without drawing on previous experiences.	0.045	0.382	0.145
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MCC ▪ DC ▪ Calculated F ▪ Degree of Freedom ▪ Indexed F ▪ Level of Significance 		0.569 0.324 19.979 7, 292 2.63 0.000	
** P < 0.01 * P < 0.05			

As Table (6) proves, the MRA resulted in the R of 0.569. This means that OL has been significantly explained by the 7 independent variables of OF (UOF).

Furthermore, the R^2 of 0.324 indicates that the percentage of the variable interprets the whole model, that is, 32.43%.

It is evident that the seven independent variables justified 33% of the total factors of OL.

Hence, 67% are explained by the other factors. Therefore, there is enough empirical evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

6. Research Findings

The present study on analyzing the relationship between OF and OL at Menoufia university hospitals in Egypt has revealed the following results:

1. The results revealed that the relationship between OF and OL is attractive to researchers. This is consistent with the finding that OL has benefits for the organization. OL is dependent to process that organizations add them to their capacities and knowledge resource. KM makes processes that help learning and saving necessary knowledge and also avoids of insignificant knowledge. This result is consistent with a study carried out by Brunsson, 1998; De Holan & Philips, 2004a; Lehesvitra, 2004.
2. This study concluded that OF and OL are considered somehow opposite. But we are not able to learn without forgetting. This is consistent with the finding that OF and OL are different in terms of science and economic but they are connected to each other and do not have negative effect on one another. Using a compound algorithm of both of them can cause organization's development. This result is consistent with a study carried out by Besanko et al, 2007.
3. The results revealed that OF significantly related with OL. This is consistent with the finding that OF has an important impact on effectiveness of OL processes. OF is an important and vital phenomenon that is not realized well and is not simple same learning. So, OF is a changing learning process (Holan & Philips, 2004; Jian & fu, 2010; Jena Abadi et al, 2014).
4. This study concluded that OF plays an important role in influencing OL. This result is consistent with a study by Hallen & Phillips, 2004, which concluded that OF is consider a step before OL. This point of view offers a particular procedure, rules, tasks, roles, policies, values or strategies that must be forgotten in order to achieve and assimilate new organizational knowledge through new programs, rules, tasks, roles, policies, values or strategies.
5. The results revealed that the OF is consider a step before OL. This result is consistent with a study by Lei et al., 1999, concluded that the academic stream examines intentional forgetting as a preliminary step to OL. Learning often cannot occur until after there has been unlearning (Starbuck, 1996). This view argues that certain routines, rules, tasks, roles, policies, values and strategies need to be forgotten before new organizational knowledge can be acquired and assimilated.
6. This study concluded that OL is an important and vital phenomenon in the organization. This result is consistent with a study carried out by Holan & Phillips, 2004, concluded that OF is considered the opposite of the much more common OL. Learning is a characteristic of an adaptive organization and so is forgetting. Learning organizations are better able to create new knowledge, to innovate more effectively and to adapt to changing environmental conditions more quickly and efficiently, gaining competitive advantage over firms that cannot.
7. The results revealed that OL is extremely important in all organizations. This result is consistent with a study carried out by Kransdorff, 1998, concluded that organizations that can acquire more organizational knowledge will be successful. Therefore, OL is extremely important. Organizations should attain the level of adequacy in which they are able to forget useless and ineffective knowledge before learning new useful knowledge. OF can bring considerable expenses for organizations but it should be managed to be successful in OL improvement.
8. This study concluded that OF significantly and influences OL. Overall findings from this study suggested that forgetting and learning as two-ends of a spectrum. Forgetting is the necessary condition of OL. When the relationship between learning and forgetting remains as the controversial issue, this issue emphasizes on the necessary of recognizing OF and how in occurs (Hasanpour et al, 2012).
9. The results revealed that OF is important as OL. This result is consistent with a study by Martin & Phillips, 2003; Tsang & Zahra, 2008, which concluded that OF is just as important as the OL for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. OL must be complemented with an understanding of how and under what circumstances organizations must intentionally forget. This kind of intentional loss of knowledge should be considered as unlearning, to distinguish it from the concept of forgetting. Since IOF discarding of routines and UOF loss of routines involve different mechanisms and generate different consequences, for clarity, we define the former as unlearning and the latter forgetting, respectively.
10. This study concluded that OF is not disability in learning. This result is consistent with a study by Hosseine et al, 2010, concluded that OF is the failure of organizational in exploitation of learning that has occurred in the past, we must note that OF is not disability in learning organizational topics, but in is process that occurs after learning. This means one organization first must learn knowledge then forget consciously or unconsciously.
11. The results revealed that OF is important role in affecting OL. This result is consistent with a study by Sedeahian et al, 2012, and concluded that OF is one important from of learning but it completes learning and leads to the new process of OL. Theorists define OF as one process of learning change and relearning in memory, organization, one process of giving up intentional process and one process of reconstruction of some section of organization.
12. This study concluded that forgetting is an important tool to complete OL. This result is consistent with a study by Hassanpour & Memari, 2011; Moshbeki et al, 2012 found that the concept of OF is deductible from OL. Furthermore, some researchers have failed to distinguish these two concepts in their empirical studies. Therefore, forgetting is an important tool to complete OL that successful manages apply it to shape organizational knowledge.

7. Recommendations

1. Managers should develop their KM in order to improve their organizational performance. This improvement will be obtained when learning process had been done through OF.
2. Organizations should attain the level of adequacy in which they are able to forget useless and ineffective knowledge before learning new useful knowledge. OF can bring considerable expenses for organizations but it should be managed in order to be successful in organizational performance improvement. So, OF is a weakness in utilizing previous knowledge and experiences.
3. Managers should put telling leadership style aside in organizations so that the positive outcomes of strategic OF help organizations reach their policies.
4. Managers should start presenting appropriate explanation and reinforcing employees and encourage them to do a planned and knowing effort to review their strategic orientations so that employees forget a part of their knowledge for more efficiency of the organization.
5. Managers should help employees to recognize bad habits, instructions. Deeds, beliefs and values, which are harmful for the effectiveness, by creating mutual relations and cooperation based on trust so that they forget such knowledge before stabilizing and institutionalizing in organizational memory.
6. It is necessary that forgetting process is managed well so that the former information, which is barrier for beneficial changes, removes from organizational memory. So, leaders should give employees the authority to set aside inefficient and old thoughts so that they could apply better new methods.

8. Conclusion

Organizations that can acquire more organizational knowledge will be successful. Therefore, OL is extremely important (Kransdorff, 1998). Organizations should attain the level of adequacy in which they are able to forget useless and ineffective knowledge before learning new useful knowledge. OF can bring considerable expenses for organizations but it should be managed in order to be successful in OP improvement. Kransdorff (1998) explained OF as a weakness in utilizing previous knowledge and experiences.

Results of this research show that OF has direct impact on OL. The relationship is confirmed in researches of De Holan and Philips (2004). However, OF has impact on organizational performance by influencing on OL and KM. It is shown that OL have direct impacts on KM and organizational performance. This direct impact is confirmed by results of other researchers (Lin & Kuo, 2007; Santos-Vijande et al, 2011; Ku, 2011).

KM is one of the most important organizational components which need to establish a system for learning, gathering, stocking and distributing the knowledge inside an organization. In addition to disseminating OL, this system should be able to prevent necessary and fruitful knowledge forgetting on the one hand and to put aside unfruitful knowledge (OF) on the other hand. Despite of needs to develop OL, studies indicate that organizations do not learn easily.

Overall, when organizations manage their knowledge capacities, OL ground is paved and it is likely to see OF. When organizations can manage OF actively, they will be able to avoid bad habits as well unnecessary and surplus knowledge which would impact on their position against their rivals.

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