# Constraints in Organizational Learning, Cognitive Load and Its Effect on Employee Behavior

*Sidharta Chatterjee\**

*Traditionally, learning organizations face certain constraints related to both exogenous and endogenous factors. This paper models three well-established constraints that employees face while being part of their organizations. One is an explicit constraint on their natural behavior, and two implicit constraints on their endeavor to acquire new knowledge and perform new actions. The implicit constraints, which are elaborated, are related to their relative performance in acquiring new knowledge and by their consecutive actions based on the new knowledge gained. Therefore, this paper attempts to underline such limitations which the agents face under organizational culture and suggest possible strategic initiatives that would effectively counteract such binding limitations to stimulate positive performances from their end.*

## Introduction

> *…they chatted, they communicated ideas…*
>
> **– Voltaire (1759), from *Candide***

Organizations as hub of all activities are bounded by different categories of constraints. These constraints arise out of the increasing complexity of the dynamic environment in which they operate due to advances in technology and globalization. The 'constraint factor' proposed by Goldratt and Jeff (1984) states that organizational performance is often impaired by some form of 'constraints' which evolve as bottlenecks on account of the complementarities of complexity of organizational tasks and routines that gradually become more complex (Tucker *et al.*, 2003), along with their diversity of culture as varied as they are. In response to such environmental complexities and to cope with such dynamicity, organizations adopt innovative learning strategies with an aim to adapt (Carley, 2000) and empower their agents (employees) with cutting-edge market information which facilitate them to compete with confidence in the global marketplace. According to Prasad (1998), organizations are complex adaptive systems (Bar-Yam, 1997) whose dynamicity reflects similar complexity of other complex systems. Organizations involve human factors as being part of the complex dynamic environment in which they operate. As such, they learn to adapt to this ever-changing

---

\* Visiting Researcher, Department of Social Work, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India. E-mail: sidharta123@yahoo.com