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# EXAMINING THE ANTECEDENTS OF LEARNING AGILITY: A STUDY OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING AND ADAPTIVE PERFORMANCE AMONG SEMARANG LECTURERS

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the relationship between learning culture, transformative learning, learning agility, work engagement, and adaptive performance among private university lecturers in Semarang. Using a quantitative approach with a sample of 184 respondents, this study applies Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for data analysis. The research results show a significant relationship between the variables studied. Learning culture has a positive effect on transformative learning and work engagement. Transformative learning and learning agility contribute significantly to adaptive performance. These findings emphasize the importance of transformative learning in increasing learning agility and adaptive performance of lecturers. This study provides valuable insight for developing strategies for improving lecturers' adaptive performance in facing the VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) era. Future research is recommended to expand the scope and use a longitudinal approach for a more comprehensive understanding

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The VUCA era (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity) marks the 21st century, requiring organizations to adapt quickly and make important decisions (Ciceklioglu, 2020). Private Universities (PTS) in Semarang face major challenges in this context. This research examines the relationship between learning culture, transformative learning, learning agility, and its impact on the adaptive performance of private university lecturers in Semarang. Even though these concepts have been researched separately, there is still a gap in understanding the interactions between variables in the context of Indonesian higher education, especially PTS Semarang.

Adaptive performance is defined as an individual's ability to adapt to dynamic work situations (Nandini, et al., 2022). Employees demonstrate adaptive performance by quickly adapting behavior to the requirements of work situations and new events (Pulakos and Kantrowitz, 2019). Successful adaptive performance implies that employees are able to efficiently handle uncertainty and unpredictability in new work situations. This requires employees to adapt quickly and easily and make decisions in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity. Pulakos, (2015) developed two dimensions for adaptive performance, namely the ability to handle emergencies and handle work stress, considering the constantly changing work environment.

The foundational framework of this study is rooted in a number of fundamental concepts, specifically learning agility, which embodies organizational agility at the individual level according to (Jo, 2022), transformative learning, which is intricately linked with learning agility as noted by Fleming, (2022), and adaptive performance, which signifies employees' capacity to adjust to swiftly evolving work environments, as highlighted by Pulakos, (2015). The cultivation of a learning culture within the realm of education stands out as a crucial element in addressing the complexities of the VUCA era. However, several studies show resistance to change in the

academic world (Córica, 2020). This illustrates the importance of understanding the factors that can encourage learning agility and adaptive performance among lecturers.

The selection of Private Universities (PTS) in Semarang City as a research location was based on several important considerations, namely that Semarang as the capital of Central Java is one of the centers of higher education in Indonesia with a significant number of private universities. PTS in Semarang face unique challenges in competition not only with fellow PTS, but also with State Universities (PTN) in this city. As a city that is developing rapidly in various sectors, Semarang reflects the dynamics of change that are relevant to the VUCA context, making it an ideal laboratory for studying learning agility and adaptive performance.

PTS in Semarang are diverse in terms of institutional age, size, and academic focus, which allows this research to obtain a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon under study. Even though many private universities in Semarang show positive developments, there are still performance gaps between institutions that are interesting to study from the perspective of learning culture and adaptive agility . By focusing research on private universities in Semarang, it is hoped that the results of this research can provide applicable and relevant insights for the development of higher education in this city and more broadly in Indonesia.

The research inquiry posited in the present study revolves around the following question: What is the influence of the educational environment on transformative learning and adaptability in learning, and what is the correlation with the adaptive capabilities of educators in privately-owned academic institutions situated in Semarang.

## 2. METHODS

This research is fundamental research with a population of lecturers in the city of Semarang. Determining the number of samples uses the rule of minimum number of samples in the use of the Structure Equation Model (SEM). The sampling technique is conventional sampling. The questionnaire was distributed to 230 respondents via Google form which was sent via WhatSapp to lecturers, then 184 respondents were obtained and tested fit, so the response rate was 80%, this percentage was declared worthy of obtaining responses from respondents.

Adaptive performance measurement adopts (Albarrán-Arriagada *et al.*, 2018). Measurement of learning agility (De Meuse, 2017). Measurement of transformative learning (Mezirow, 2012), Measurement of learning culture (De Meuse, 2017). A 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to; 7=Strongly Agree) was used as a measurement scale (Pulakos et al., 2000). Hypothesis testing using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) is used to test Confirmatory Factor Analysis, namely testing indicators against the construct (Ghozali, 2021). CFA testing conditions with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's, with test conditions if the correlation between variables is greater than 0.5 and the research significance level is less than or equal to 0.05, then the data is declared reliable. Hypothesis testing uses path coefficients which are tested via the t test and p value, if t > 1.96 and/or p value < 0.05, then the hypothesis is declared supported, and for mediation testing via

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

Before carrying out the Exploratory Factor Analysis analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was carried out to measure the adequacy of sampling and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to investigate data capability factors. The resulting KMO has a high value of 0.872 > 0.60 and is significant, this implies the suitability of the data for EFA and the test statistic is declared significant as indicated by Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p <0.001). EFA identifies relationships between indicator variables. The loading factor shows the grouping of indicators. Convergent validity was demonstrated by significant factor loading (p<0.01). Latent variable reliability >0.7 and EVA >0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Validity measures the accuracy of the instrument, reliability

shows consistency. A mean above the midpoint indicates a positive response, a standard deviation >0 reflects variation in responses

**Tabel 2**. Measurement Statistics of Construct Scales

| Consept | Dimention and Indicator | Item | Loading Faktor | EVA | Reliability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learning culture | Teamwork | TM | 0.721 | 0.607 | 0.900 |
| | Sharing information | SI | 0.672 | | |
| | Has a high response | RT | 0.682 | | |
| | Understand work standards | SK | 0.777 | | |
| | Joint decision making | KB | 0.777 | | |
| | Dialog | DI | 0.715 | | |
| | Mutual support | SM | 0.701 | | |
| | Performance improvements | PK | 0.768 | | |
| Learning Transformation | Learn by facilitating | BM | 0.708 | 0.574 | 0.824 |
| | Studying together | BB | 0.674 | | |
| | Learn through dialogue | BD | 0.662 | | |
| | Learn by relying on yourself | BS | 0.712 | | |
| | Learning through social environments | BL | 0.720 | | |
| Learning Agility | Self-Awareness Agility | KK | 0.686 | 0.577 | 0.792 |
| | Interpersonal Agility | KI | 0.730 | | |
| | Mental agility | KM | 0.685 | | |
| | Change agility | KP | 0.691 | | |
| Kinerja adaptif | Handling emergency and crisis problems | PM | 0.736 | 0.578 | 0.827 |
| | Able to handle work pressure | MM | 0.722 | | |
| | Solve problems creatively | MP | 0.680 | | |
| | Able to handle work situations | MS | 0.671 | | |
| | Want to learn new jobs, technology | MB | 0.686 | | |

Testing of the convergent validity coefficient illustrates that all indicators have adequate or significant factor loading values (p value <0.01). Likewise, the reliability value, the coefficient value is above 0.7 (Hair *et al.*, 2014). The EVA value obtained is above 0.5. The average value describes the respondent's response to the instrument, showing a positive response because it is above 0.5, and a standard deviation above zero explains that the respondent's answers are quite varied.

**Goodness of fit test**

Figure 1 Model results show that the data fit well. Chi-square was significant: Df = 203; p =.106; $\chi 2$= 227.241; CMIN/df is 1.645, well below the maximum limit of 2.0, GFI = .932 ,and AGFI = .897, TLI = .932; CFI = .943 is above .95, RMSEA = .037 is also suitable because it is below .05. From Figure 1, it can be concluded that the structural assessment model is fit with the data.

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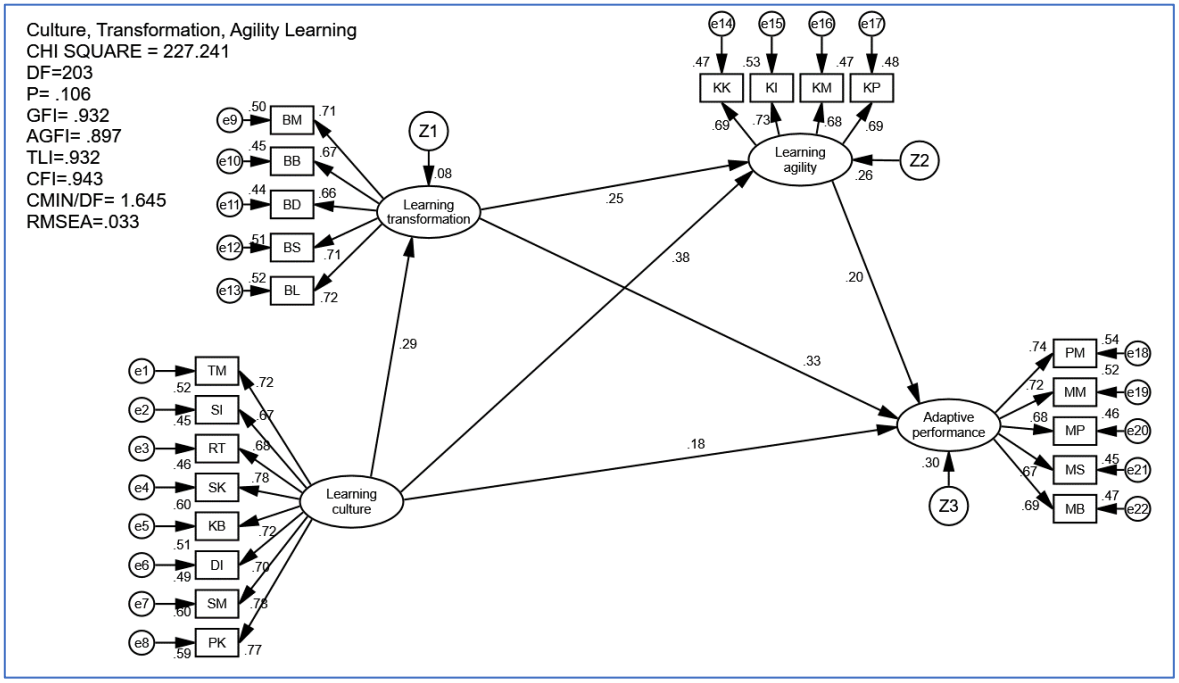


**Gambar 1 :** Model struktural

Hypothesis testing in this research is based on the CR value and p-value produced during data processing with AMOS software. The causal relationship between the concepts built in the model framework is determined in the test if the p-value is <0.05, then the causality in this research design is concluded to be accepted or significant.

**Tabel 2.** : Standardized Regression Weights

| Path | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learning transformation | ← | Learning_culture | .290 | .050 | 4.475 | *** |
| Learning_agility | ← | Learning_transformation | .245 | .064 | 3.616 | *** |
| Learning_agility | ← | Learning_culture | .379 | .050 | 5.550 | *** |
| Adaptive_performance | ← | Learning_transformation | .329 | .087 | 4.712 | *** |
| Adaptive_performance | ← | Learning_culture | .184 | .065 | 2.736 | .006 |
| Adaptive_performance | ← | Learning_agility | .204 | .099 | 2.723 | .006 |

The findings of this research show a significant relationship between exogenous variables and endogenous variables. Specifically, the results from the structural model show a significant relationship between learning culture and transformation learning (β=0.290, p=***); there is a significant relationship between learning culture and Learning transformation (β=0.379, p=***); there is a significant relationship between transformation learning and learning agility (β=0.245, p=***); between learning agility and adaptive performance (β=0.204, p=0.006), there is a significant relationship between transformation learning and adaptive performance (β=0.329, p=***). between learning culture and adaptive performance (β=0.184, p=0.006),

The R-square value and predictive relevance of the model or R2 value of the adaptive performance latent variable is 47.5%. This shows that the exogenous latent variables learning agility, transformative learning and work engagement explain 47.5% of the variance in adaptive performance. Meanwhile, transformative learning was 4.2%, work engagement was 10.4% and learning agility was 70.3%. Chabot, et al, (2021) suggest that R2 values above 10% be stated as the minimum acceptable level. Following Falk and Miller's recommendations, it can be concluded that adaptive performance, learning agility and work engagement have adequate R-squared values, while transformative learning is less than 10%.

## Discussion

The empirical findings of this research emphasize the importance of transformative learning in increasing learning agility and adaptive performance in accordance with (Duarte, 2010) that transformative learning is seen as an important antecedent of employees' willingness to learn and share knowledge (Almahamid, et al., 2010). Agile means nimble, nimble, or nimble. Agile lecturers are lecturers who can adapt quickly, are able to respond appropriately and flexibly to follow the dynamics of environmental changes through proactive, productive and efficient steps without sacrificing quality, so they can become competent lecturers.

The willingness of lecturers to use their competencies obtained from the learning process can be interpreted as encouragement and motivation to implement them in completing work. (Mezirow, 2012) emphasizes that transformative learning is adult learning that requires fundamental changes, this has the potential to improve performance. This fundamental change is related to the stagnation of human resources in the cognitive-emotional dimension, so that the difficulties that arise for lecturers in developing their own potential can be resolved.

Lecturers must be creative in planning, implementing and evaluating the learning process well, and this concept has received widespread attention (Faridah and Asrori, 2021), because it is not only in the context of formal, non-formal and informal learning, but also involves various subjects and different social groups (Cranton, et al., 2012). In this research, the level of learning agility of lecturers was tested in various variables. Based on research results, learning agility is generally at a fairly high level; change agility, results agility, and mental agility are at high levels. Based on these findings, it can be said that lecturers are individuals who learn quickly from personal experience and the experiences of others and have high performance management potential.

Transformative learning relates to the process of acquiring knowledge through an individual lens, with a focus on fostering personal growth and development, leading to an increased sense of maturity, wisdom, and criticality in cognitive reasoning and behavioral responses, encompassing rational, affective, and social aspects of communication. (Chakravarty, et al., 2013), also explained by (Cranton, et al., 2012) that adults, when facing something new, will reflect and talk or discuss with others about the accuracy of new insights and the adequacy of assumptions so that they are able to change attitudes, behavior, and beliefs. In transformative learning, individuals learn to re-evaluate and attempt to repeat past stories based on their experiences. So to increase understanding of one's experiences by adult human individuals, facilitating the discovery of new identities is essential. This implies that transformative learning contributes to the cultivation of new perspectives in individuals, encouraging the development of wisdom and critical thinking abilities. This process is supported by emotional, cognitive-rational, and communicative-social dimensions, shaping individual actions and thoughts.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Transformative learning and learning agility are significantly correlated with adaptive performance, which is described by strong motivation in completing tasks according to the targets expected by the institution even though faced with obstacles and obstacles, and can be improved through achievement oriented activities by describing expectations for work, career development, training, finance, and job security. Concrete efforts to achieve these goals require internal improvement steps in the quality of human resources for lecturers and education staff as well as campus infrastructure that supports learning activities. Through the reconstruction process, learning objectives can be achieved. So the constructive paradigm of transformative learning will actualize individuals, thereby building individual knowledge through experience. This has an impact on the internalization process of individuals or groups that are socially constructed. The advantage of transformative learning is that it makes students more responsible independently. This independence is built from experiential learning using inductive sequences, where students become the center of learning and are activity-oriented. The emphasis in learning

strategies through experiential learning is on the learning process rather than on learning outcomes. This research is limited to private universities in Semarang and uses a cross-sectional approach. For future research, it is recommended to conduct a longitudinal study and expand the scope to non-religious higher education institutions as a comparison. It is also necessary to test differences in demographic characteristics related to learning agility and adaptive behavior, and refine the model by adding moderating or mediating variables between learning agility and adaptive performance. This will increase accuracy in assessing long-term lecturer human resource development.

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