

WORKFORCE AGILITY AND ADAPTIVE PERFORMANCE IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK ENGAGEMENT

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Abstract

In government institutions, there had been several significant changes, such as the equalization of structural to functional positions and changes in the work system. The state apparatus must have the ability to overcome differences and manage them. This research aimed to determine whether workforce agility predicts adaptive performance mediated by work engagement. The research was conducted quantitatively using a set of questionnaires. Participants in this study were 191 state apparatus in a government institution. The mediating function of work engagement was examined using Andrew Hayes' analysis of the mediation model 4 Hayes process v4.0. The mediation test showed that work engagement mediated the relationship between workforce agility and adaptive performance. This research provided benefits in enriching knowledge in the field of human resources management, especially regarding factors that affected adaptive performance. Based on this study, government institutions need to create employee development programs that can increase workforce agility and work engagement to improve the adaptive performance of state apparatus.

Keywords: Adaptive performance, workforce agility, work engagement, state apparatus.

Introduction

To ensure that the organization survives as a society and information technology evolve, it is necessary to deal with the various changes that arise in the workplace due to both internal and external factors. Changes in work systems, work facilities, and organizational structure are some examples of changes that can occur. As technology continues to develop, workers in government institutions must also be able to adapt to change.

In government institutions, there have been some significant changes. One of them is the simplification of bureaucracy which is one of the five work priorities of the President and Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia for 2019–2024. Until June 2021, bureaucratic simplification in 90 ministries and institutions has been conducted (Public Relations of the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021).

Bureaucratic simplification is done through stages of simplifying the organizational structure, equalizing positions and adjusting work systems. Adjustment of work mechanisms for bureaucratic simplification is carried out in three ways: determining the position of functional and executive officials, assigning functional and executive positions, and adjusting and accountability of task implementation. Furthermore, simplifying bureaucracy turns a work

unit into an agile team. This was part of the performance improvement that resulted from changing the previously tiered and compact work system to a collaborative and dynamic work system (Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). Because the state apparatus needs to prepare to deal with organizational restructuring, the state apparatus's condition in the middle of these changes needs to be a concern (Marthalina, 2022).

One of the triggering factors for changes in the work system for government officials happens during the Covid-19 pandemic. The implementation of a working-from-home system requires the need to make alternative work system arrangements (Wardhana & Hakiki, 2021).

In the future, adjustments to the planned work mechanism will be made to the state apparatus, namely the flexible working arrangement (FWA) system, to support the realization of governance system 4.0. FWA in the state apparatus is carried out in the form of a flexible workspace and flexible work schedule (Wibisana, 2022). One of the FWA policy formulations is by surveying the state civil apparatus in October–November 2022. A digital governance system must fully support this FWA system.

The state apparatus is expected to change following public demands and core values. Public

services are implemented quickly, easily, and cheaply. This demand makes government institutions need to continue to adapt to the development of information technology and socio-culture (President Republic Indonesia, 2009).

New core values applied to government institutions are BerAKHLAK which stands for service-oriented, accountable, competent, harmonious, loyal, adaptive, and collaborative. Adaptive means continuing to innovate and being eager to move and face change. Core values are fundamental values that every state civil apparatus must own, so the state civil apparatus needs to show adaptive performance to adapt to changes that occur in the work environment (Minister State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021). Core values are one way to build a work culture, and Sumiati (2021) stated that work culture affected employee performance.

Simplification of bureaucracy influences employee motivation and performance (Tumanggor & Wibowo, 2021). Good performance of the state apparatus is important to form good corporate governance. In the draft bureaucratic reform 2010–2025, the state apparatus is supported to continue to show high and adaptive performance. Bureaucratic reform aims, among other things, to create a professional public administration bureaucracy with adaptability, integrity, and performance characteristics (President Republic Indonesia, 2010).

A few studies have discussed the relationship between performance, especially adaptive performance, with workforce agility and work engagement. Though in an era full of changes, workers, including the state civil apparatus, need to have the ability to be able to cope with change well so workers can show good performance. In government institutions where many changes occur such as changes in organizational structure, ways of working, work culture, and to meet the demand of public service, it is necessary to find what factors can affect a worker's performance in dealing with change. This study raises questions about whether workforce agility and work engagement influence adaptive performance, and whether work engagement act as a mediator in the relationship between workforce agility and adaptive performance.

The next part of this article consists of a literature review of the three variables: adaptive performance, workforce agility, and work engagement, hypothesis development, research methods, result and discussion, and conclusion and implications.

Adaptive Performance

Kadarisman (2018) stated that performance is the quantity and quality of an individual or group's work

(output) in each workplace due to natural abilities or abilities acquired through learning and the desire to achieve. The act of achieving and carrying out a task in the way it's required is referred to as performance (Pangarso, Saragih, & Nuriz, 2021). Meanwhile, Setiawan (2015) stated that performance is the result that an employee can achieve within a certain period through his duties that lead to an organizational goal.

Borman and Motowidlo (1993) separated the concept of performance into two types, task performance, and contextual performance. Further, work environmental changes and their impact are the ideas of adaptive performance (Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012).

Hesketh and Neal (1999) developed adaptive performance as an employee's capacity to adjust to rapidly transforming workplace conditions, while Pulakos developed the global concept of adaptive performance which has been used in several articles (in Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, & Plamondon, 2000; Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012; Park & Park, 2019;).

To complement the traditional static concept of performance, adaptive performance research is conducted to produce a deeper understanding of employee performance in changing and ambiguous dynamic conditions (Jundt, Shoss, & Huang, 2015). Adaptive performance is shown by modifying work environments and conditions (Pulakos *et al.*, 2000).

Adaptive performance shows the requirement to explain employees' capacity to adjust to changes in the workplace (Park & Park, 2019). In conditions where every organization faces various changes, it is necessary to ensure that employees can demonstrate adaptive performance to support the company to survive.

Factors that influence adaptive performance include organizational citizenship behavior (Aamoum & Nejari, 2020), psychological and social capital (Luo, Tsai, Chen, & Gao, 2021), work engagement and active learning (Nandini, Gustomo, & Sushandoyo, 2022), emotional intelligence and organizational learning (Pradhan, Jena, & Singh, 2017), organizational support, job crafting and work engagement (Park, Lim, Kim, & Kang, 2020).

Workforce Agility

One of the essential factors in adaptive performance is workforce agility. Previous studies suggested that workforce agility was an intervening variable to predict performance from various predictors (Goodarzi, Shakeri, Ghaniyoun, & Heidari, 2018; Varshney & Varshney, 2020; Wahjunianto, 2022).

Although contextually, adaptive performance and workforce agility associate human resources with their ability to deal with change, Park and Park (2021) stated their differences. Adaptive performance emphasizes the performance shown by employees due to adaptation to the change process. While workforce agility focuses on a personal initiative to adapt and how to overcome difficulties during the adaptation process.

Tessarini and Saltorato (2021) defined workforce agility as the ability of employees to adapt to rapid change, flexibility, and uncertain work environments, through knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that are proactive and adaptive. They suggested that this also helps to gain benefits from those changes.

The agile workforce is important in forming agile organizations (Sherehiy & Karwowski, 2014). Kidd (1994) mentions two elements of workforce agility. First is the workforce's ability to respond to a change in the right way and at the right time. Second, the workforce's ability to take benefit and opportunity from change.

Work Engagement

Work engagement is another influential factor in adaptive performance. Characterized by its vigor, dedication, and perseverance, work engagement is defined as a condition that can promote a positive and fulfilling mind associated with employment (Schaufeli, Martínez, Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002).

Work engagement is one of the behaviors that favor the optimal adaptation process of the individual at work (Nandini *et al.*, 2022). Individuals who are more engaged at work will focus more energy on work and be better prepared for the dynamics of change (Park *et al.*, 2020).

Hypothesis Development

Some research investigated the relationship between workforce agility and performance (Goodarzi *et al.*, 2018; Varshney & Varshney, 2020; Wahjuni-anto, 2022). Work engagement is a mediator variable between adaptive performance and high-performance practice variables (Karatepe, 2013), adaptive performance with organizational support (Park *et al.*, 2020), transformational leadership with task performance (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, Sleebos, & Maduro, 2014), and adaptive performance with person environment-fit (Shahidan, Hamid, & Ahmad, 2018). The link between employee engagement and workforce agility has been mentioned in Azmy (2021).

Although prior research has proven a relationship between workforce agility and performance, limited studies investigated adaptive performance. The present

research seeks to explore further whether work engagement has any mediator role in the relationship between workforce agility and adaptive performance. If employees have agility in responding to changes and build engaging feelings for their jobs, it can influence employee performance to face changes in the work environment. A hypothesis is proposed based on the above discussion:

H: Work engagement mediates the relationship between workforce agility and adaptive performance.

Research Methods

This correlational study aims to see how work engagement variables affect mediating the correlation between workforce agility and adaptive performance.

Data was collected in January 2023 by filling out online questionnaires. This research used purposive sampling to consider specific factors (Sugiyono, 2018).

The respondents in this study were state apparatus in a government institution. The age range of respondents was 22–59 years. This study did not have a minimum education limit for respondents. The total number of respondents in this research is 191 people.

This study has three variables: adaptive performance, workforce agility, and work engagement. Measurement of adaptive performance variables uses a translated English-to-Indonesian questionnaire from Charbonnier-Voirin and Roussel (2012). It consists of 19 items with five dimensions, creativity, reactivity in the face of unexpected circumstances, interpersonal adaptability, training and learning efforts, and managing work stress. One example of an item in this measuring tool is "I am on the lookout for the latest innovations in my job to improve the way I work". Its reliability coefficient on the measuring instrument was 0.93.

The variable workforce agility uses a measuring instrument developed by Muduli (2016) consisting of seven items. It has seven sub-scales; adaptive, flexible, developmental, collaborative, competent, speed, and informative. An example of an item in this questionnaire is "I am flexible to quickly change from task to task, job to job, and place to place". The alpha coefficient value of this measuring instrument is 0.79.

The work engagement variable uses a short version of The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) measuring instrument consisting of nine items adapted into Indonesian by Hidayati and Etiekariena (2018) and used by Sa'adah (2019). This measuring instrument consists of three dimensions, namely spirit (*vigor*), which means a person has energy and mental resilience when working and constancy in facing

challenges at work; dedication shows that a person feels essential, enthusiastic, proud, and challenged; and perseverance (*absorption*) is a dimension that indicates high focus and concentration, awareness, and pleasure that comes from within him (Sa'adah, 2019). One example of an item in this measuring instrument is "I am enthusiastic about my work". This measuring equipment has a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.94.

The statistical methodology utilized IBM SPSS Statistic 26 to assess the research hypothesis using Andrew Hayes' analysis of the mediation model 4 Hayes process v4.0. Meanwhile, the study used Pearson's correlation in the IBM SPSS 26 program to test the correlation between the three variables.

Results and Discussion

This present research uses statistical analysis to make a descriptive test of demographic data from 191 samples.

The percentage of respondents' gender was almost balanced, where male respondents numbered 96 people and female respondents numbered 95. According to age, the biggest category of participants was in the 31–40-year age group (27.7%), next followed by the 51–60-year range (26.7%), the 41–50-year age range (24.1%), and the less than 31-year age range (21.5%). The respondents' working period with the highest proportion was 11–20 years (31.9%), less than 11 years (29.8%), 21–30 years (25.1%), and more than 30 years (13.1%).

Pearson Correlation Test Results

Further statistical analysis is carried out to determine the standard deviation (SD) and mean value in each variable. The value used in statistical analysis is the scale mean of each score. Then reliability tests were also carried out on each measuring instrument. The Pearson Correlation Test determined the relationship between each research variable.

Table 1 shows the reliability and correlation between variables investigated in this study. The reliability test results of each variable showed an alpha coefficient value above 0.7, showing that the measuring instruments used in this study have good

internal consistency. The three research variables have a positive relationship based on the Pearson correlation test.

Adaptive performance and workforce agility have a positive relationship value at an *r-value* of 0.585; $p < 0.05$. These results showed that agile people tend to be adaptive in doing their work, which improves their performance.

The correlation results on adaptive performance and work engagement variables have a positive value of 0.541; $p < 0.05$. This value means that the higher a person's engagement in his work, the higher the adaptive performance shown.

The variables workforce agility and work engagement have a positive value of 0.381; $p < 0.05$. These results show that the higher the engagement in their work, the higher a person's agility to deal with changes in their work.

Mediation Test Results

The mediated test of work engagement variables on the relationship of workforce agility to adaptive performance was analyzed using Hayes' PROCESS macro on IBM SPSS Statistics 26. Hypothesis testing using the Hayes concept (2018) looks at the indirect effect of predictor variables on outcomes. A mediation effect occurs if the confidence interval range of bootstrap results does not include zero values. The mediation test's result is shown in Table 2. Figure 1 shows an overview of the mediation test result model.

Table 2 shows how significant the total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect of workforce agility variables are on adaptive performance. To see whether or not there is a mediation effect, it can be seen at the indirect output and confidence interval (CI) of the bootstrapped results output and confidence interval (CI) of the bootstrapped results in 5000 samples.

Mediation analysis shows the indirect effect of workforce agility (WA) on adaptive performance (AP) (< 0.001), with the value of LLCI (lower level for CI) stated at 0.1448 and ULCI (upper level for CI) at 0.4471 at the level of 95%. The range does not include zero (0) values. It shows that work engagement (WE) variables have a mediating effect (Hayes, 2018).

Table 1
Pearson Reliability Test and Correlation Test Result

Variable	SD	Mean	Coef. Alfa	Pearson correlation	
				WA	WE
Adaptive Performance (AP)	0.76	5.56	0.93	0.585**	0.541**
Workforce Agility (WA)	0.39	2.38	0.79	-	0.381**
Work Engagement (WE)	0.96	4.52	0.94	0.381**	-

Table 2
Mediation Test Results

	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Total effect	1.1450	0.1154	9.928	0.0000	0.9174	1.3726
Direct effect WA-AP	0.8675	0.1134	7.6524	0.0000	0.6438	1.0911
Indirect effect WA-WE-AP	0.2775	0.0788	-	-	0.1448	0.4471

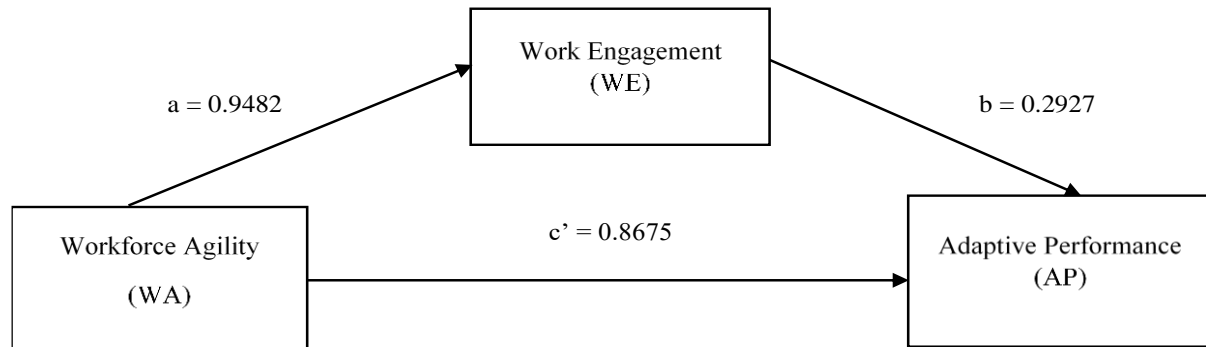


Figure 1. Mediation test result model

In Figure 1, path “a” shows the effect of workforce agility variables on work engagement. The value of the path coefficient “a” is 0.9482 and is significant at the level of $p < 0.05$. This value shows that 94.8% of work engagement is influenced by workforce agility.

Path “b” is a path that shows the effect of work engagement variables on adaptive performance with a coefficient value of 0.2927 at a significant level of $p < 0.05$. These results show that the effect of work engagement on adaptive performance is 29.27%. The values on path “a” and path “b” indicate significance, so it can be concluded that there is a mediating role by the variable of work engagement to the relationship of workforce agility to adaptive performance.

Path “c” shows the effect of workforce agility on adaptive performance or a path that shows a direct effect of X to Y. The coefficient of path “c” is 0.8675 and is significant with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. To find out the indirect effect of the variable X on Y, a multiplication of the path $a * b$ can be used and the result is 0.277. The total effect of XY can also be calculated by adding the indirect effect with the direct effect, or by adding the path “c” and path “a”*“b”, with the result being 1.145 and significant at $p < 0.05$.

The direct effect is bigger than the indirect effect. It shows that workforce agility can still affect adaptive performance even though work engagement variables do not occur. However, when the variable of work engagement appears in total effect, it has a bigger impact on the development of adaptive performance for our participants.

These results show that work engagement significantly mediates workforce agility and adaptive performance. It can be concluded that employees with

workforce agility will support the formation of feelings of engagement in their work and will influence adaptive performance.

Discussion

Our results suggest that work engagement mediated the relationship between workforce agility and adaptive performance. This is consistent with prior studies which state that work engagement is a mediator for several variables (Karatepe, 2013; Shahidan *et al.*, 2018; Park *et al.*, 2020).

Based on this study, work engagement serves as a mediator. It can be claimed that the construction of adaptive performance is influenced by workforce agility that forms work engagement.

In detail, employees with high workforce agility, seen in the ability to adapt well and quickly to change, be flexible, collaborate, and have competence, will form a feeling of engagement in their work. This form of engagement in work can be seen in the enthusiasm, dedication, and perseverance carried out in doing their work.

The existence of an attitude of enthusiasm, dedication, and perseverance will increase adaptive performance, which is seen in the ability of the employees to be able to show good creativity and reactivity in facing changing conditions, as well as being able to adapt personally and be able to find solutions to deal with problems in the workplace.

The finding of this study is consistent with the previous statement, individuals who are more engaged at work will have a more optimal adaptation process, focus more energy and be better prepared for the

dynamics of change at work (Park *et al.*, 2020; Nandini *et al.*, 2022).

In government institutions, efforts to improve state apparatus performance in dealing with change can be done by increasing workforce agility and work engagement. Practically, one of the most effective efforts can be done by providing training for state apparatus by delivering subjects that promote agility and attachment to work (Taran, 2019; Varshney & Varshney, 2020; Kumar & Kumar, 2022).

Increasing human resource agility is essential because workforce agility is important to making organizations more agile (Taran, 2019).

Conclusion and Implications

Various changes that occur in the work environment in government institutions make state apparatuses must be able to show performance in coping with changes well. In addition to encouraging information technology advancements, managing human resources is essential to optimize the change process.

According to the findings of this study, work engagement serves as a mediator in the relationship between workforce agility and adaptive performance. State apparatus that can be agile in dealing with changes in the work environment will promote a sense of engagement in their job. In the end, feelings of engagement to work will shape the ability to cope well with change and make a good performance.

Adaptive performance in government institutions needs to be improved to make the organization able to survive with changes in organizational structure and work systems, follow the development of information technology and meet the demands of public services.

This study confirmed that workforce agility and work engagement positively and significantly correlate with adaptive performance. Therefore, for government institutions to prepare their employees to face various changes in their work environment, it is necessary to create employee development programs related to increasing workforce agility and work engagement to increase employee performance in facing and managing changes. To increase the agility of the employee workforce, training can be carried out (Taran, 2019; Varshney & Varshney, 2020; Kumar & Kumar, 2022).

The present study was only conducted in one government institution, so the results cannot be generalized to the entire state civil apparatus. Thus, future research should use more sample respondents from various government institutions. The questionnaire

used in this study is a questionnaire that contains respondents' personal opinions about themselves (*self-assessment questionnaire*). Other researchers can then use other types of questionnaires to see the diversity of results. Furthermore, the variables discussed in further research can be more diverse to enrich further the information on what factors can influence the formation of adaptive performance.

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