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LEARNING AGILITY AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS AMONG MOTORCYCLE TIRE COMPANY X EMPLOYEES IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: The objectives of this study were to examine the relationship between learning agility and leadership skills among motorcycle tire company X employees in Indonesia. There were 149 respondents with a minimum position is Team Leader selected through purposive sampling. The instruments of this research consist of 34 items for learning agility (De Meuse, 2015) with $\alpha = .868$ and 16 items for leadership skills (Katz, 1955) with $\alpha = .796$. Data analysis uses descriptive statistics and inference analysis. The result showed a positive and significant relationship between learning agility and leadership skills ($r = .619$, $p < .05$). It means that the higher the learning agility an employee has, the higher his leadership skills. On the other hand, there is a positive and significant relationship between self-insight and leadership skills ($r = .577$, $p < .05$), as well as interpersonal acumen and human skill ($r = .541$, $p < .05$).

Keywords: Learning Agility, Leadership Skills, & Employee

INTRODUCTION

Leadership skills are essential for a leader in an organization or company, including motorcycle tire company X in Indonesia. The emergence of new motor tire companies or old competitors makes business more competitive. This situation needs to be considered by the company and requires readiness in human resources and other supporting resources. In carrying out its functions, a leader has influenced to bring the survival organization in today's business competition. If all elements of the organization including the leaders do not have enough skills needed to deal with the situation, then it will potentially harm the performance and reputation of the company. Some research suggests that 70 percent of organizational

changes are experiencing failures in obtaining their goals just because of poor leadership (Khan, Ajaz, Khan, Khan, & Fatima, 2016).

President Director of the motorcycle tire company X revealed that in a deal with competition in the automotive industry, human resources, especially leaders, must be prepared to face changes. They must also continue to improve their competencies so that the company can survive and remain competitive. Leaders who occupying structural positions formally have a role in bringing organizations to achieve organizational goals. A leader who has the ability and strength will affect the success of an organization (Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015). So every organization's internal leaders need to continue to develop their leadership skills. Leadership skills are the ability to use the knowledge and competencies that a person has to achieve the goals or objectives of the organization to develop continuously (Northouse, 2016). Basic skills that can be developed on the leader, namely the technical skill, human skills, and conceptual skill (Katz, 1955). These skills differ from the nature of a leader. Skills are what leaders can work on and accomplish, while traits are the innate characteristics that leaders have. Skill is the ability to carry out tasks and work competently (Elias & McKnight, 2001).

Skills determine directly influenced by one's motivation and experience. Motivation generates a desire in one's self to perform various actions. Experience strengthens a person's ability to perform an action that makes him have skills (Widayatun, 2005). A leader has a strong and continuous motivation to learn in developing himself. Along with his experience as a leader will make him have the necessary leadership skills. This, because a leader learned leadership skills through his work Experience (McCall, 2010). It is beneficial for a leader for the development of himself and the organization. For a leader it benefits himself and the organization's progress (Mardhatillah, et al, 2017).

Motivation arises from a leader when they facing with a task or a challenging job. They can set clear goals with effective measures to complete the work or purpose. As a result, they can produce extraordinary results in new jobs that they have never done before. These behaviors describe individuals who have high learning agility (De Meuse, 2015).

Individuals who have high learning agility continually seek new challenges, actively seek feedback from others to grow and develop, and evaluate their experiences, and can make practical conclusions (De Meuse & Hallenbeck, 2010). Learning agility is an ability and willingness to learn quickly and to apply the learning outcomes in new and challenging leadership situations (De Meuse, 2015). So that leaders who have learning agility can adapt to situations or changes that occur within the organization.

A system in the X Motor Tire Company with a hierarchical structure is experiencing dynamic changes in certain periods in the event of a mutation or promotion position. Leaders who have learning agility are more potential to get promoted compared to other co-workers (Swisher, 2013). New jobs often require different knowledge and skills than ever before. It encourages agile leaders to learn continually in acquiring the necessary knowledge and technical skills. A leader who controls a specific field of technical skills can evaluate the work of his followers whether they are doing and completing his work most effectively. So that individuals with high learning agility will acquire a useful technical skill in building high team member performance.

Building a team's performance means creating a cooperative work environment among leaders with subordinates. An agile leader can see from a wide variety of other people's perspectives. They understand how individuals behave in certain situations, adjusting to situational demands, and managing conflicts well (Swisher, 2013). They can adapt themselves to the needs of others to get feedback in taking a decision (Katz, 1955). This illustrates that individuals with learning agility have the skill to relate to others in carrying out their functions as leaders.

In addition to leaders with learning agility they are experts in certain fields of work and can build relationships with others, they can also overcome complex problems. They can deal with diverse and adaptable situations and can solve problems with their critical thinking and analytical abilities (De Meuse, 2015). Agile individuals are able to form relationships between old and new information and to solve complex problems effectively (Yadav & Dixit, 2017). Conceptually, you can look at problems from various perspectives and find the right solution. This means that someone with learning agility is predicted to have high conceptual skills.

Thus, explanation theoretically gives a big picture of the relationship between learning agility and leadership skills. In his research, De Meuse (2017) revealed that learning agility is the most widely used criterion for measuring leadership potential. Yadav and Dixit (2017) present a conceptual model of the linkage between learning agility and authentic leadership development with a moderation effect from learning goal orientation and organization culture.

Another study by Dai, De Meuse, & Tang (2013) revealed that learning agility relates to leadership competence. These competencies include "Dealing with Ambiguity", "Business Acumen", "Innovation Management", "Strategic Agility", and others. The research was conducted against executive managers in the running of his organization. In addition to the level of executive managers, other internal leaders at the middle and low management also play an important role in the sustainability of the organization. Sufficient competencies relevant to these levels are the three basic skills of the leader called Leadership Skills (Katz, 1995).

Some research on learning agility with leadership Scope has been done, both empirically and in the form of conceptual models. However, there has been no research on leadership using the skilled approach. Therefore, this study aims to empirically examine the relationship between learning agility and leadership skills of employees in the Tire X company in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning Agility

Learning Agility is more than just an abstract concept. It is behavior-based, so it can be observed and developed (Swisher, 2013). Agile leaders like new challenges, seek feedback from others actively, evaluate their experiences to grow and develop continuously, and be able to conclude practically. A total of 19 field studies investigated the empirical relationship between *learning agility* and leadership success. The study also revealed that successful leaders or managers can learn from the experience (De Meuse, 2017).

Learning agility emerges as the most valid predictor of knowing potential individuals to become leaders, and even more important than intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, or education level. Nowadays learning agility as one of the most important construction because it makes the individual more prepared to learn new abilities and behaviors that can bring success in diverse situations (Swisher, 2013).

Learning Agility is an ability and willingness to learn quickly and to apply the learning in a new situation that is seen through seven factors, namely Cognitive Perspective, Interpersonal Acumen, Change Alacrity, Drive To Excel, Self-Insight, Feedback Responsiveness, and Environmental Mindfulness. (De Meuse, 2015).

Leadership Skills

An effective leader must perform detailed actions, such as formulating a vision and setting goals. The characteristics of leadership enable one to acquire the leadership skills necessary to become effective leaders. Leadership skills are the ability to become effective leaders by doing real actions well. They are the relationship between personal characteristics and actions in leadership practices (Holtkamp, 2014).

Leadership skills are defined as the ability to use one's knowledge and competence to achieve the objectives or goals of the organization (Northouse, 2016). In leadership, skills are needed. According to Katz (in Northouse, 2016), leadership skills refer to competencies learned and demonstrated by leaders in their performance that include technical skills, human skills, and conceptual skills. Technical skill is a knowledge of something and proficiency in certain types of work or activities, while human skills are knowledge of and ability to work with others. Where technical skills relate to something, and human skills relate to others, conceptual skills include the ability to work with ideas and concepts.

The relationship between Learning Agility and Leadership Skills

Swisher (2013) said that learning Agility is one of the "X" factors that are able to identify and develop a future leader. They learned from the work they had done and did not underestimate the possibility of something new from every challenge they faced. They have an active learning pattern and can learn quickly, not because of their intelligence intellect but because they have learning skills and more effective strategies (Ferry, 2015).

Individuals with learning agility love the challenge and will usually look for various ways with his or her thoughts and choose the right people to cooperate in completing the hardest tasks. They explored a wide range of experiences and were able to gain many lessons from the experience. Individuals with learning agility have the ability and willingness to learn from experience, and then apply the learning to succeed in a new situation (Lombardo & Eichinger, 2000).

A leader who is able to learn from experience will make him more skilled as a leader. As McCall (2010) stated that a leader learned leadership skills through his work experience. So that leaders with learning agility make it possible for him to develop his leadership skills.

The research conducted by Dai, De Meuse, & Tang (2013), showed a positive and significant relationship between learning agility and leadership competence (R =. 29, P <. 01). Individuals with learning agility are more successful in dealing with a rapidly changing business environment, as they are agile and easy to get. They have the ability to learn from experience and develop new skills (Dragoni et al., 2009; Dries et al., 2012). So the will and ability to continue to learn an agile leader implicates the leadership skills he possesses.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research used quantitative approaches with correlational techniques to see the relationship between learning agility and leadership skills. A total of 149 people with a minimum structural position of Team Leader were obtained into samples in this study through purposive sampling techniques (purposive sampling).

Study Instruments

Measuring instruments used in measuring learning agility and leadership skills using a Likert scale with five alternative answer choices, namely "Strongly Disagree (1)", "Disagree (2)", "Sometimes Agree (3)", "Agree (4)", and "Strongly Agree (5)". The Learning Agility Scale in this study used modified measuring instruments based on theoretical frameworks expressed by De Meuse (2015) as many as 34 Items with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of. 868. As for the Leadership Skills Scale measured using measuring instruments made through the process of adaptation and

modification based on the theory proposed by Katz (in Northouse, 2016), 16 Items with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of. 796.

Data Analysis

Analysis of this research data used SPSS for Windows Software help. Data analysis includes descriptive data and inference analysis to test the relationship between learning Agility and leadership skills using the Spearman-Rank correlation technique.

RESEARCH RESULTS

A total of 149 subjects in this study were 20 – 40 years old (53%), and 41 – 60 years (47%), responsible for manufacturing (77.9%), and non-manufacturing (22.1%), being in the structural office of Team Leader (51.7%), followed by Leader (36.2%), Section Head (10.1%), and Sub Dept. Head (2%). The subject education level consists of junior high school (2.7%), SMA/SMK (87.2%), Diploma-3 (4.1%), and Bachelor-1 (6%) With a working period < 25 years (67.8%) and > 25 years (32.2%).

Table 1: Subject Descriptive Demographic Data

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
20 – 40	79	53%
41 – 60	70	47%
Department		
Manufacturing	116	77.9%
Non-Manufacturing	33	22.1%
Position		
Sub Dept. Head	3	2
Section Head	15	10.1%
Leader	54	36.2%
Team Leader	77	51.7%
Education level		
Junior	4	2.7%
SMA/SMK	130	87.2%
Diploma-3	6	4.1%
Bachelor-1	9	6
Employment Period		
< 25 years	101	67.8%
≥ 25 years	48	32.2%

The results of analysis of Learning Agility and Leadership Skills

Table 2: The Relationship Between Learning Agility and Leadership Skills

Independent variables	Dependent variables	(R)	Sig.
Learning Agility	Leadership Skills	.619	.000

There was a positive and significant relationship between learning agility and leadership skills (r =. 619, P <. 05), which means the higher learning agility employee the higher the leadership skills. Similarly, the lower learning Agility employees have, the lower the leadership skills.

Table 3: Correlation Factors for Learning Agility with Leadership Skills

	Variable	Leadership Skill (r)
Learning Agility (r)	Cognitive Perspective	.426
	Interpersonal Acumen	.554
	Change Alacrity	.447
	Drive to Excel	.391
	Self-Insight	.577
	Feedback Responsiveness	.380
	Environmental Mindfulness	.377

Note: The significance of the above correlation test result is $p <. 05$

Table 4: Matrix Correlation Between Factors Leaning Agility and Leadership Skills

Variables/factors		Leadership Skills (r)		
		Technical Skill	Human Skills	Conceptual Skills
Learning Agility (r)	Cognitive Perspective	.335	.396	.346
	Interpersonal Acumen	.387	.541	.410
	Change Alacrity	.336	.454	.343
	Drive to Excel	.386	.343	.271
	Self-Insight	.445	.485	.483
	Feedback Responsiveness	.356	.321	.250
	Environmental Mindfulness	.330	.307	.331

Note: The significance of the result of the correlation test is $p <. 05$

The results in Table 3 showed that self-insight has a strong positive and significant relationship with leadership skills (r =. 577, p <. 05). Whereas

table 4 indicates that overall, both variables have a positive and significant relationship. However, the overall results of the analysis have a stronger positive relationship, namely interpersonal acumen with human skill (r =. 541, p <. 05).

DISCUSSION

Table 1 showed empirical research data based on the age of the subject in the range of 22 – 56 years and divided into two age groups according to Hurlock's developmental theory, which is age 20 – 40 (early adult) and age 41 – 60 (Mature). Subjects aged 20 – 40 years as much as 53% and 47% were in the age range of 41 – 60 years. More than half of the total respondents worked in the manufacturing department, which is 77.9%. While the other 22.1% was responsible for non-manufacturing. When it was reviewed based on the position that the frequency was gradual, namely from Sub Dept. Head to Team Leader. Respondents with the position of Sub Dept. Head of 2%, Section Head 10.1%, Department of Leader 36.2%, and for the position of Team Leader 51.7%. The frequency is to describe as the form of the hierarchy system in the organizational structure, the higher the position of structural positions will be less number of personnel at the level of the structural position. The level of education of the majority respondent is at the level of education of SMA/SMK, which is 87.2%. While the number of students with undergraduate education-1 6%, Diploma-3 education as much as 4.1%, and as many as 2.7% are only taking junior high education level. The working period is grouped by the limits of the giving of award recipients that apply in the internal company, which is 25 years of employment. More than half of the respondents served for < 25 years, which is 67.8%. While the number of respondents with a working period of ≥ 25 years is 32.2%.

The results of the study in table 2 indicated a positive and significant relationship between learning agility and leadership skills. That means the higher learning agility leader, the higher the leadership skills. Leaders who have learning agility continue to seek new challenges, actively seeking feedback from others to grow and thrive. They will continue to develop their leadership skills in carrying out their responsibilities as leaders.

People who have learning agility realize their capabilities and limitations when interacting in a dynamic working environment. The situation makes them encouraged to learn something that he thinks will bring a positive

impact on achieving the target work. Leaders who have high learning agility will learn from their work experience and continually develop new skills (Dai, De Meuse, & Tang, 2013). Specifically, these skills relate to his role as a leader. This is what will encourage a leader with high learning agility will have high leadership skills. As the research conducted by Dai, De Meuse, and Tang (2013), it says that learning agility has a positive relationship with leadership competence and as the initial indicator of leadership competence.

Leaders with learning Agility have the opportunity to increase their leadership skills. For them, the experience was an important part of his development because they were able to take lessons from those experiences. The progress is very beneficial for himself and the organization. This happened because a leader learned their leadership skills through his work Experience (McCall, 2010). A study showed that managers learned critical competencies through their work experience (McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott, & Morrow, 1994).

McCall (2010) says that there is no miracle to find what is in that experience which is essentially logical. The difficulty that arises is in determining whether a leader is able to learn what experience has to offer. Because not all leaders are able to find learning points from Pengalamnnya during their duties as leaders in the organization. Agile leaders have a high learning orientation, so they are able to take lessons from the experience and are able to use them appropriately in new situations. This will have an impact on improving its leadership competence. It is supported by research conducted by Dragoni, Tesluk, Russell, and Oh (2009), that leaders who have high learning orientation are more likely to achieve a high level of competence from his experiences.

Other analyses resulted in this study obtained that one of the factors of learning agility, namely self-insight has a significant positive relationship with leadership skills. That means the higher self-insight a leader, the higher the leadership skills. Leaders who have self-insight can understand themselves, their capabilities and weaknesses, beliefs, values, and what they feel (De Meuse, 2015). They can evaluate the extent of their self-effectiveness in carrying out his role as a leader. The result of self-reflection on his lack of effort prompted him to try to learn to improve his competence as a leader. This is backed by the research conducted by Reilly

and Dominick (2014), that self-awareness is the predictor of leadership behavior that implicates the development of a leader.

On the other hand, interpersonal acumen has a strong relationship with human skills. That means a leader with interpersonal acumen has good skills in terms of dealing with others. So that leader who has interpersonal acumen can move his subordinates to work cooperatively in achieving the goal. This is because the leader with interpersonal acumen can interact with various types of people in the work. They even understood the values, objectives, motivations, strengths, and limitations that the members of the group have (De Meuse, 2015).

Swisher (2013) says that learning agility is more than just an abstract concept, but it can be observed. Unlike intellect intelligence (IQ), learning agility is not something static and can be developed. Highly motivated people have the opportunity to be able to improve their learning agility. That is to improve learning agility in a leader, as in this research will increase its leadership skills. Of course, this is a positive point for organizations in general to have competent resources.

CONCLUSION

Findings in the study of the relationship between learning agility and leadership skills showed a strong and significant relationship between the employees of the X Motor Tire Company in Indonesia. That means the higher learning agility, the higher the leadership skills of learning agility are a behavioral-based concept that can be observed. Quite a lot of research reveals that learning agility can be known through measurement or assessment and can be developed. This good information can be a consideration for the management of the company in conducting training plans for the company's internal leaders to become more agile to improve their leadership skills.

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