

BUILDING A GLOBAL CAREER: LEARNING AGILITY AS A KEY FACTOR BETWEEN SELF EFFICACY AND CAREER PLANNING OF VILLAGE YOUTH WITH PLS ANALYSIS

Meisya Agustawati Bachtiar^{1*}, Sarofah Ari Fitriani², Dita Rahayu Utami³, and Hari Dwidana⁴

¹⁻⁴ Department of Magister Management, Universitas Siliwangi, Indonesia

*Email corresponding author: meiswabachtiar@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze the role of learning agility as a mediating variable in the relationship between self-efficacy and career planning in rural youth who participated in overseas internship training. In facing the challenges of the global job market, psychological readiness is an important aspect besides technical skills. With a quantitative approach and Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis method, this study involved 201 training participants from *LPK Seiko* Tasikmalaya. The instruments used have been validated and include measurements of self-efficacy, learning agility, and career planning. The results showed that self-efficacy has a significant positive effect on career planning, and learning agility partially mediates the relationship. These findings indicate that youth with high self-efficacy tend to have better learning agility, which in turn improves the quality of their career planning. This study provides a theoretical contribution to the career development literature, especially by raising the context of rural youth which is still rarely studied. Practically, the results of this study can be the basis for developing a job training curriculum that not only focuses on technical skills but also pays attention to psychological readiness to increase global competitiveness. Simultaneous enhancement of learning agility and self-efficacy can be an effective strategy to expand rural youth access to the international labor market.

Keywords: self-efficacy, learning agility, career planning, rural youth, PLS-SEM

INTRODUCTION

In the era of global competition and labor migration, rural youth in developing countries are increasingly encouraged to seek international career opportunities. One path is through overseas internship programs such as those organized by *LPK Seiko* Tasikmalaya, which prepares young Indonesians for work placements in Japan and South Korea. However, entering the global job market requires more than just technical skills; psychological readiness and career planning are also crucial. Two psychological constructs that influence career development are self-efficacy and learning agility.

Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1977), is an individual's belief in their ability to perform a task, and has been shown to positively influence career decision-making, goal setting, and persistence. On the other hand, learning agility—the ability to learn from experience and adapt to new situations—has emerged as a critical competency in the global workplace. Individuals with high learning agility tend to be more open to feedback, better at managing complexity, and more responsive to change (De Meuse et al., 2010). Although these two constructs have been extensively researched in corporate or urban contexts, little is known about their role in shaping the career planning of rural youth preparing for international internships.

This study examines the relationship between self-efficacy and career planning in rural youth, with learning agility as a mediating variable. Using Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis, we surveyed final-stage training participants from *LPK Seiko Tasikmalaya*, a job training institution known for overseas internship placements. The results showed that self-efficacy had a significant positive effect on career planning and learning agility partially mediated the relationship.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the career development literature by introducing learning agility as a mediator in the context of rural youth—a relatively under-researched demographic group. Practically, the findings provide insights for training institutions and policy makers to integrate psychological readiness into skills training curricula. The novelty of this study lies in the context-specific integration of psychological variables with a structural modeling approach to analyze the career readiness of rural youth aspiring to global careers. The practical implications suggest that simultaneously enhancing self-efficacy and learning agility can enhance youth readiness to face international career challenges, while expanding inclusive access to the global labor market.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Career planning is an important process in human resource development, especially among rural youth who have limited access to information and global work experience. One of the key factors that influences career planning is self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to organize and carry out the actions needed to achieve certain results. Previous research has shown that self-efficacy contributes significantly to career goal clarity and persistence in the face of obstacles (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002; Nauta, 2010).

However, in a dynamic global context, the ability to learn and adapt quickly becomes increasingly relevant. The concept of learning agility has emerged as an important competency that bridges the gap between individual potential and the demands of a changing work environment. Learning agility is defined as the ability to continuously learn from experience and apply it to new situations (De Meuse et al., 2010). Individuals with high levels of learning agility are better able to read new challenges, are open to feedback, and tend to be proactive in their career development (Gravett & Caldwell, 2016).

Several studies have shown that learning agility can strengthen the influence of self-efficacy on various career behaviors, such as decision-making and future planning (Bedford, 2015; Jafari et al., 2022). Therefore, in the context of rural youth preparing for overseas internships, it is important to understand how learning agility acts as a mediator in the relationship between self-efficacy and career planning.

Based on the theoretical basis and results of previous research, the hypothesis developed in this research is as follows:

H1: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on career planning.

H2: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on learning agility.

H3: Learning agility has a positive effect on career planning.

H4: Learning agility mediates the influence of self-efficacy on career planning.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory design to test the causal relationship between the variables studied, namely self-efficacy, learning agility, and career planning. The purpose of this

approach is to test the mediating role of learning agility in the relationship between self-efficacy and career planning of students participating in internship training to Japan and Korea.

The population in this study were all participants of overseas internship training at *LPK Seiko* Tasikmalaya during the period of January to April 2025. The sampling technique was carried out by census, because the number of available population was relatively limited and affordable, which was 201 students. This number also meets the minimum requirements for PLS-SEM analysis according to Hair et al. (2017), which is more than 10 times the number of the densest indicators in one construction.

Data were collected using a questionnaire compiled based on a 5-point Likert scale, with indicators adapted from previously validated literature. The self-efficacy instrument refers to the scale developed by Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995), learning agility based on indicators from De Meuse et al. (2010), and career planning based on constructs from Greenhaus & Callanan (2006). The validity and reliability of the instrument were tested using AVE, CR, and Cronbach Alpha values through SmartPLS 4.0 software.

Data analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, to test direct and indirect relationships between variables and identify mediation effects. This analysis was chosen because it is able to handle models with latent constructs and data that are not fully normally distributed.

The entire research process was conducted for three months, starting from instrument preparation, data collection directly at the training location, to data analysis and drawing conclusions. This research did not use any special tools or materials other than statistical software as an analysis tool.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

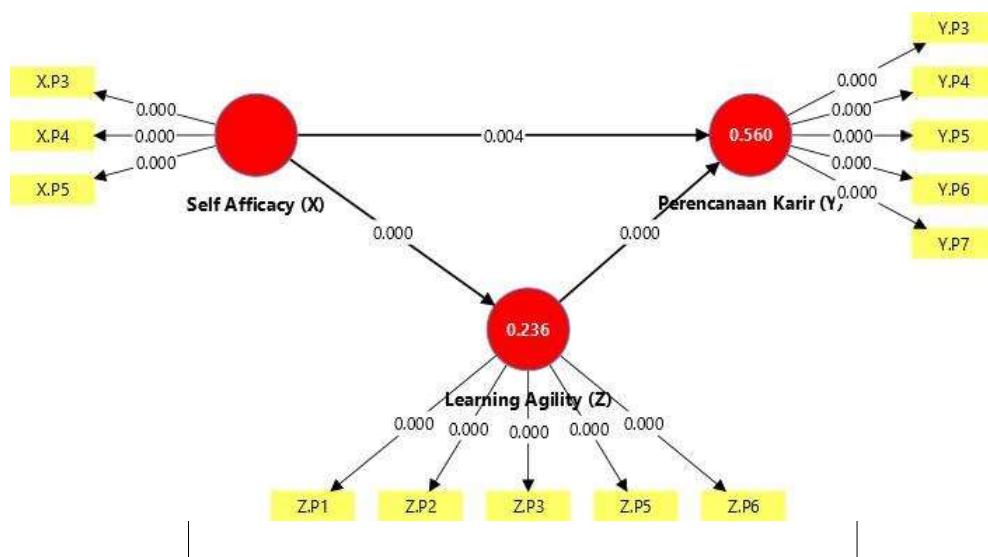


Figure 1. Measurement Model Evaluation Results

Based on Figure 1 Self Efficacy (X) has a significant direct influence on Career Planning (Y), according to the PLS-SEM model image above, with a path coefficient of 0.560 and a p value of 0.004. This shows that this relationship is statistically significant. In addition, self efficacy has a significant effect on learning agility (Z) ($p = 0.000$), and learning agility itself has a significant effect on career planning with a coefficient of 0.236 ($p = 0.000$). All indicators show high significance ($p = 0.05$), indicating that learning agility functions as a partial mediator between self efficacy and career planning. This shows that this model is valid and relevant.

Measurement Model Evaluation Results (Outer Model)

1. Convergent Validity

	Learning Agility (Z)	Career Planning (Y)	Self Affirmation (X)
X.P3			0.829
X.P4			0.865
X.P5			0.825
Y.P3		0.828	
Y.P4		0.837	
Y.P5		0.837	
Y.P6		0.738	
Y.P7		0.799	
Z.P1	0.786		
Z.P2	0.746		
Z.P3	0.738		
Z.P5	0.707		
Z.P6	0.779		

All indicators for the variables Self Efficacy (X), Career Planning (Y), and Learning Agility (Z) have a factor loading value above 0.7, according to the results of the external measurement model evaluation in the table. This indicates that the convergent validity criteria have been met by all indicators used in this study. Therefore, it can be concluded that these indicators can be used to measure their respective constructs. Therefore, the measurement model is feasible to be used in the next analysis stage.

2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Lecker)

	Learning Agility (Z)	Career Planning (Y)	Self Affirmation (X)
Learning Agility (Z)	0.752		
Career Planning (Y)	0.721	0.809	
Self Affirmation (X)	0.486	0.526	0.840

According to the results of the discriminant validity test using the Fornell-Larcker method, the AVE square root values for Learning Agility (0.752), Career Opportunities (0.809), and Self Efficacy (0.840) are higher than the correlation values between other constructs in the same row. Because each construct has the ability to distinguish itself from other constructs in the model, this indicates that each construct has good discriminant validity.

3. Reliability Test

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Learning Agility (Z)	0.808	0.814	0.866	0.565
Planning Career (Y)	0.867	0.869	0.904	0.654
Self Affirmation (X)	0.791	0.792	0.878	0.705

The results of the reliability test show that all constructs have Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7, with Learning Agility at 0.808, Career Planning at 0.867, and Self Efficacy at 0.791, indicating that they have good internal reliability. The combined reliability value for the three constructs is also > 0.7, with values of 0.866 for Learning Agility, 0.904 for Career Planning, and 0.878 for Self Efficacy, respectively, indicating that each construct has good convergent validity.

Structural Model Evaluation Results (Inner Model)

1. R Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Learning Agility (Z)	0.236	0.232
Career Planning (Y)	0.560	0.779

The adjusted R-square value for Learning Agility (Z) is 0.236, indicating that the independent variables in the model can account for 23.6% of the variation in Learning Agility. Meanwhile, the R-square value for Planning Career (Y) is 0.560, indicating that the predictor variables in the model can account for 56% of the variation in Planning Career. The adjusted R-square value for Learning Agility (Z) is 0.232. The adjusted R-square value for Overall, these findings indicate that the model is quite powerful for career planning and has moderate explanatory power for learning ability.

2. Effect Size

	Learning Agility (Z)	Career Planning (Y)
Learning Agility (Z)		0.644
Career Planning (Y)		

Self Affirmation (X)

0.309

0.092

The effect of Self Efficacy on Learning Agility is 0.309 (medium effect) and the effect of Learning Ability on Career Planning is 0.644 (large effect), respectively. The direct effect of Self Efficacy on Career Planning is 0.092, which is a small effect.

3. Hypothesis Testing table edit 4 tables

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Learning Agility (Z) - > Career Planning (Y)	0.609	0.597	0.096	6,317	0.000
Self Efficacy (X) -> Learning Agility (Z)	0.486	0.496	0.082	5.916	0.000
Self Efficacy (X) -> Career Planning (Y)	0.230	0.240	0.087	2.655	0.004
Self Efficacy (X) - > Learning Agility (Z) - > Career Planning (Y)	0.319	0.317	0.045	7.120	0.000

Each path connecting the model variables is marked as significant.

- The direct influence of Self Efficacy on Career Planning is significant, although smaller with $T = 2.655$ and $p = 0.004$.
- The path from Learning Agility to Self Efficacy also shows a strong and significant positive relationship, with a T value = 6.317 and $p = 0.000$.
- The path of Self Efficacy towards Learning Agility is significant, with $T = 5.916$ and $p = 0.000$.
- The results of the hypothesis test show that Learning Agility (Z) mediates the influence of Self Efficacy (X) on Career Planning (Y). This is evidenced by the indirect path Self Efficacy → Learning Agility → Career Planning which is statistically significant ($T = 7.120$ and $p = 0.000$)., This shows that Self Efficacy affects Career Planning both directly and indirectly through increasing Learning Agility.

Goodness of Fit (GOF)

	Average variance extracted (AVE)	R- square
Learning Agility (Z)	0.565	0.236
Career Planning (Y)	0.654	0.560

Self Affirmation (X)	0.705	
Average	0.527	0.427

$$\text{Nilai GOF} = \sqrt{\text{Rata - rata AVE} \times \text{Rata - rata R Square}}$$

$$\text{Nilai GOF} = \sqrt{0.527 \times 0.427}$$

$$\text{Nilai GOF} = 0.474$$

The Goodness of Fit (GOF) value of 0.474 indicates that the model used in this study has a moderate to strong level of feasibility. Thus indicating that this model can explain well the relationship between latent constructs in the study.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that self-efficacy significantly influences rural youth's career planning, with learning agility serving as a partial mediator. These psychological traits should be integrated into vocational training curricula to better prepare youth for global careers.

Limitations include the geographic scope and reliance on self-report data. Future research should expand the sample diversity and include longitudinal tracking of career outcomes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BEDFORD, D. (2015). LEARNING AGILITY: THE KEY TO LEADER POTENTIAL. *PEOPLE AND STRATEGY*, 38(3), 40-45.
- DE MEUSE, K. P., DAI, G., & HALLENBECK, G. S. (2010). LEARNING AGILITY: A CONSTRUCT WHOSE TIME HAS COME. *CONSULTING PSYCHOLOGY JOURNAL: PRACTICE AND RESEARCH*, 62(2), 119.
- GRAVETT, L., & CALDWELL, S. (2016). *LEARNING AGILITY: THE IMPACT ON LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE*. SHRM FOUNDATION.
- JAFARI, P., GHEITASI, M., & BABAEI, D. (2022). LEARNING AGILITY AND CAREER ADAPTABILITY AMONG YOUNG PROFESSIONALS. *JOURNAL OF VOCATIONAL BEHAVIOR*, 132, 103690.
- LENT, R. W., BROWN, S. D., & HACKETT, G. (2002). SOCIAL COGNITIVE CAREER THEORY. IN D. BROWN (ED.), *CAREER CHOICE AND DEVELOPMENT* (4TH ED., PP. 255–311). JOSSEY-BASS.
- SCHWARZER, R., & JERUSALEM, M. (1995). GENERALIZED SELF-EFFICACY SCALE. IN J. WEINMAN, S. WRIGHT, & M. JOHNSTON (EDS.), *MEASURES IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY: A USER'S PORTFOLIO* (PP. 35–37). NFER-NELSON.