

THE ROLE OF STRATEGY AGILITY AS A MEDIATION VARIABLE IS REVIEWED WITH HUMAN CAPITAL AND ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY IN INFLUENCING THE PERFORMANCE OF PT BANK SUMUT KAMPUNG LALANG BRANCH OFFICE

Rudi Ardi Anugrah Simbolon¹, Yeni Absah², Prihatin Lumbanraja³

¹⁻³ Program Studi Magister Manajemen, Universitas Sumatera Utara

Email: rudi_josua@yahoo.com ¹yeni.absah@usu.ac.id

Submitted:
21 November 2025

Revised:
29 January 2026

Accepted:
02 March 2026

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of strategy agility as a mediating variable in the relationship between human capital, absorptive capacity, and performance of PT Bank Sumut Kampung Lalang Branch Office. The method used was a quantitative approach with data collection through questionnaires distributed to 49 respondents. The results of the study show that human capital and absorptive capacity have a positive and significant effect on company performance. In addition, human capital and absorptive capacity also have a positive effect on strategic agility. Strategy agility has been proven to be able to mediate the relationship between human capital and absorptive capacity to company performance. These findings emphasize the importance of human resource management and the organization's ability to absorb new knowledge to improve performance in the competitive banking industry. This research is expected to provide insight for management in formulating more effective strategies to improve the Company's performance.

Keywords: Strategy Agility, Human Capital, Absorptive Capacity, Company Performance, PT Bank Sumut.

1. INTRODUCTION

In achieving the performance of a Company, of course, there are several problems that can hinder the Company's performance (Nur, 2021). Various internal problems that arise have the potential to hinder the achievement of the targets that have been set by the company. One of the significant problems often faced by PT Bank Sumut Kampung Lalang Branch Office is the imbalance in the number of employees between existing branches (Citra & Dirbawanto, 2022). This uneven allocation of human resources can have a substantial negative impact on operational efficiency (Dewi et al., 2021; Priliandani et al., 2022). Reysa et al., (2022) said that, If a branch experiences a shortage of employees, the greater workload will be concentrated on existing employees, thereby reducing their capacity to provide optimal service to customers. This can lead to increased response times to customer requests or complaints, which in turn has a direct impact on customer satisfaction.

In addition, problems related to segregation of duty or unclear division of duties in companies, especially at PT Bank Sumut, often affect employee efficiency and productivity (Mulang, 2023; Priyatna, 2017). In the context of banking, improper division of duties can

create potential duplication of work, overlapping responsibilities, or even confusion among employees related to their roles in the company. If the division of tasks between the operational unit and the business is not managed properly, this can lead to confusion in the workflow and harm overall performance.

Another problem is employee motivation, reward systems such as salaries, bonuses, and incentives need to be adjusted to the workload received by employees in each branch unit (Indriyani & Subowo, 2019; Teaching, 2023). A phenomenon that is often encountered is the mismatch between the workload and the rewards received by employees, both in the operational and business fields. For example, employees who are directly involved in the sale of bank products often receive larger bonuses, while operational employees who support the smooth process do not always receive the same incentives. This has the potential to reduce employee work motivation, because they feel that their contributions are not proportionately appreciated. For this reason, there needs to be a more in-depth analysis of the existing incentive and reward structure to be more fair and equitable in accordance with the role and contribution of employees to bank performance (Kompetensi et al., 2022).

Another problem is the setting of targets that do not match the conditions in the branch unit. For example, the targets set by central management are often too high or do not take into account the specific conditions in each branch, such as the number of employees, market potential, or available resources. This causes employees to feel pressured and unable to achieve the targets that have been set, which ultimately affects the overall performance of the bank. Setting unrealistic targets can also damage employees' motivation to work, as they feel that even though they have worked hard, the target is still unattainable. In addition, low employee engagement between the central division and branch unit employees is an important factor in company performance (Rizky & Ardian, 2020). When employees feel less involved in planning and implementing policies, they will be less committed to achieving company goals.

Ideally, in an efficient company, there is a clear balance between the division of tasks between operational and business units, with an integrated and flexible strategy to respond to rapid market changes (Muhammad Asir et al., 2023). Strategy agility The ability of companies to adapt to market changes and external conditions must be a key element in operational and human resource management (Cunha et al., 2020; Reed, 2020). Support from quality human capital is very important in achieving this. Human capital, which consists of employees who have the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are in accordance with the demands of the times, will be the main driver in achieving the Company's goals (Rachmawati & Jayanti, 2023; Vyas & Vyas, 2020). Banks should focus efforts on developing employee competencies, not only at the technical level but also in terms of soft skills that support adaptability and collaboration, which are important factors in the dynamics of a fast-moving company. Employees who are trained and ready to face external challenges will be better able to manage risks and provide the right solutions to customer problems.

In addition, the absorptive capacity of a company to absorb, integrate, and apply new knowledge is key in responsive human and operational management (Müller et al., 2021; Qu et al., 2022). The ability to absorb and utilize this knowledge will improve operational performance and support better strategic decisions (Pillay et al., 2021; Purwianti, 2023). For this reason, PT Bank Sumut needs to create a corporate culture that supports the exchange of knowledge and innovation in a sustainable manner.

However, in reality, PT Bank Sumut, especially in the Kampung Lalang Branch, shows various challenges that hinder the achievement of ideal performance, even though the company has made efforts to improve operational efficiency and service quality. One of the main problems faced is the imbalance in the division of duties and the number of employees between operational and business units. Based on the results of an internal survey conducted by management in 2023, around 40% of employees at the Kampung Lalang Branch reported an uneven workload, with more than 60% of operational employees feeling that their duties are more demanding compared to business units, which are often more rewarded in a sales-based reward system.

The second issue is related to strategic agility or the ability of companies to adapt quickly to market changes and external conditions. Although PT Bank Sumut strives to respond to changes, there are reports that companies are often late in implementing new strategies to respond to rapidly changing market trends or banking policies (Elali, 2021; Gomes, 2020). In addition, although PT Bank Sumut has made efforts to increase human capital and absorptive capacity, the management of human resources at the Kampung Lalang Branch is still not fully optimal. In a survey conducted in 2023, only 45% of employees felt that they were getting the opportunity to participate in training and skills development programs relevant to their work.

These limitations hinder the company's ability to adapt to market changes and evolving technological innovations, which are critical to providing better service to customers. For example, when there is a change in customer preferences for digital banking services, PT Bank Sumut is slow to respond to these needs, and it will not be until 2024 to start developing a digital banking application that can compete with its competitors. This suggests that low absorptive capacity hinders the company's ability to respond to rapid market changes and implement relevant innovations.

To overcome this problem, PT Bank Sumut needs to implement a strategy agility-based strategy that includes the ability to adjust strategies according to market dynamics and internal organizational needs. Human capital development through continuous training and education must be a top priority, so that employees in each unit can work optimally according to their respective roles. In addition, strengthening absorptive capacity should be focused on efforts to improve the organization's ability to absorb and apply relevant knowledge from the market and technology to improve operational performance and services to customers. It is important for management to ensure that the workload in each unit, both business and operational, is shared fairly, and that each employee is rewarded accordingly for his or her contribution. In this context, a better employee engagement strategy, where employees feel valued and involved in the decision-making process, will be crucial.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a research with a quantitative approach that aims to describe and analyze the influence between variables. The method used is explanatory descriptive. Descriptive research is conducted to describe or describe the research object that is systematically studied and explain how much influence the interaction relationship between predictor variables and criterion variables determined by intervening variables. Explanatory research was conducted to explain the causal relationship between hypothesis testing

variables so that a conclusion could be obtained. There are four types of variables used, including two predictor variables Human Capital (X1), Absorptive Capacity (X2), one intervening variable, namely Strategy Agility (Z), and one criterion variable, namely Company Performance (Y).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that human capital and absorptive capacity have a positive and significant influence on the performance of PT Bank Sumut. Data analysis reveals that employees who have high competence and relevant experience can improve company performance through innovation and operational efficiency. Good human capital, which includes adequate skills and knowledge, is an important foundation in achieving optimal results. In addition, the organization's ability to absorb and utilize new knowledge known as absorptive capacity serves as a reinforcer in improving performance. The study also found that strategic agility acts as a mediating variable, where strong human capital enhances the organization's ability to adapt quickly to market changes, while absorptive capacity allows companies to capture and apply new knowledge effectively.

Further discussion emphasized the importance of management in investing in human capital development through continuous training programs. This not only helps employees to update their skills, but it also encourages them to be more proactive in dealing with challenges. In addition, creating an organizational culture that supports collaboration and innovation is essential to improve strategic agility. With the support of management, employees can be more involved in the strategic decision-making process, which allows for quick responses to market dynamics.

Therefore, improving strategic agility is crucial in ensuring that companies remain competitive. Banks that are able to adapt quickly to changes, such as digitalization trends or new regulations, have the potential to improve overall performance. This research provides important insights for the management of PT Bank Sumut in formulating a more effective strategy, which not only focuses on short-term results, but also on sustainability and long-term growth in the ever-changing banking industry.

4. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that human capital and absorptive capacity have a positive and significant influence on the performance of PT Bank Sumut. Employees with high competence and relevant experience contribute to improving operational efficiency and innovation. In addition, strategic agility has been proven to function as a mediating variable, strengthening the relationship between human capital and absorptive capacity and company performance. Therefore, management needs to focus on developing human resources through continuous training and creating an organizational culture that supports collaboration and innovation. By improving strategic agility, PT Bank Sumut can be more responsive to market changes and improve overall performance. These findings provide important insights for management in formulating effective strategies to meet challenges in the dynamic banking industry.

REFERENCES

- Adriansyah, A., & Afiff, A. Z. (2015). Organizational Culture, Absorptive Capacity, Innovation Performance and Competitive Advantage: an Integrated Assessment in Indonesian Banking Industry. *The South East Asian Journal of Management*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.21002/seam.v9i1.4376>
- Altaweel, I. R., & Al-hawary, S. I. (2021). The Mediating Role of Innovation Capability on the Relationship between Strategic Agility and Organizational Performance. 1–14.
- Angrist, N., Djankov, S., Goldberg, P. K., & Patrinos, H. A. (2021). Measuring human capital using global learning data. *Nature*, 592(7854), 403–408. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-021-03323-7>
- Arefieva, O., Polous, O., Arefiev, S., Tytykalo, V., & Kwilinski, A. (2021). Managing sustainable development by human capital reproduction in the system of company's organizational behavior. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 628(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/628/1/012039>
- Castelló-climent, A. (2020). Working paper Human Capital and Income Inequality Revisited (Issue December).
- Citra, S. P. dan, & Dirbawanto, N. D. (2022). Influence of Human Capital Management and. 1(2), 239–252.
- Cunha, M. P. e., Gomes, E., Mellahi, K., Miner, A. S., & Rego, A. (2020). Strategic agility through improvisational capabilities: Implications for a paradox-sensitive HRM. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100695>
- Dewi, K. R. P., Negoro, N. P., & Rahmawati, Y. (2017). The Role of Human Capital in the Efficiency of Banking Companies in Indonesia. *ITS Journal of Science and Arts*, 6(1), 24–27.
- Doz, Y. (2020). Fostering strategic agility: How individual executives and human resource practices contribute. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(1), 100693. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2019.100693>
- Elali, W. (2021). The Importance of Strategic Agility to Business Survival During Corona Crisis and Beyond. *International Journal of Business Ethics and Governance*, 1, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.51325/ijbeg.v4i2.64>
- Gölgeci, I., & Kuivalainen, O. (2020). Does social capital matter for supply chain resilience? The role of absorptive capacity and marketing-supply chain management alignment. *Industrial Marketing Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2019.05.006> 84, 63–74.
- Hamadamin, H. H., & Atan, T. (2019). The impact of strategic human resource management practices on competitive advantage sustainability: The mediation of human capital development and employee commitment. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 11(20). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11205782>
- Hameed, K., Arshed, N., & Munir, M. (2021). Role of Knowledge Creation and Absorptive Capacity: A Panel Data Study of Innovation. *SEISENSE Journal of Management*, 4(2), 25–44. <https://doi.org/10.33215/sjom.v4i2.579>
- Hartanto, H., & Hasim, M. S. (2024). The Influence of Strategic Agility on Organizational Performance through Innovation Capability Mediation in BPVP Pangkep. Public:

- Journal of Human Resource Management, Administration and Public Service, 11(2), 673–687. <https://doi.org/10.37606/publik.v11i2.1094>
- Jaelani, D. (2021). The Influence of Organizational Agility and Organizational Culture on Company Value. SCULPTURE: Journal of Public Administration, Government and Politics, 4(3), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.54783/japp.v4i3.482>
- Juninda, N. A., Oktavia, Y., & Sanjaya, V. F. (2024). STRATEGIC AGILITY AS A COMPETITIVE STRATEGY IN THE ERA. 1, 205–216.
- Kandpal, V., & Mehrotra, R. (2019). Financial inclusion: The role of fintech and digital financial services in India. Indian Journal of Economics and Business, 18(1), 95–104.
- Kass-Hanna, J., Lyons, A. C., & Liu, F. (2022). Building financial resilience through financial and digital literacy in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Emerging Markets Review, 51, 100846. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ememar.2021.100846>
- Kim, D., & Go, S. (2020). Human capital and environmental sustainability. Sustainability (Switzerland), 12(11), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12114736>
- Kolamban, D. V., Murni, S., & Baramuli, D. N. (2020). Analysis of The Effect of Leveragem Profitability and Company Size on Firm Value in The Banking Industry Registered on The IDX. EMBA Journal: Journal of Economics, Management, Business and Accounting Research, 8(3), 174–183.
- Kusuma, A. N., & Maura, A. El. (2021). Increasing Interest in Online Business. 5(6), 4–12.
- Kusuma, A. P., Ardista, R., Nur, A., Munandar, I., & Bekasi, K. (2025). *Human Capital In Sharia Banks: Between Barokah, Turnover, And Digital Competence Barokah, Turnover, And Digital Competence*. 3(1).