



The Role of Educational Experiences in Shaping Work Adaptability in the Digital Era

Niki Novitasari

Universitas Mercu Buana, Jalan. Meruya Selatan, RT.4/RW.1, Joglo, Kembangan, Kota Jakarta Barat, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Received: April 21, 2025

Revised: March 10, 2026

Available online: June 30, 2026

KEYWORDS

Educational Experiences, Work Adaptability, Psychological Capital, Digital Era

CORRESPONDENCE

Nama: Niki Novitasari

E-mail: niki.novitasari24@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The rapid transformation of the digital workplace has intensified the need for adaptability as a core competence. Despite its importance, existing studies tend to treat work adaptability as an outcome variable and often overlook the processes through which it develops. In particular, the relationship between educational experience and psychological resources in shaping adaptability remains underexplored. This study employs a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore how individuals experience the development of work adaptability. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with five early-career professionals who had transitioned from higher education into digitally driven work environments. The data were analysed using thematic analysis to identify patterns related to educational experiences, psychological capital, and adaptive responses. Three interrelated themes emerged from the analysis: educational experiences as the foundation of workplace adaptability, psychological capital as an internal adaptation mechanism, and work adaptability as a dynamic and contextual process. The findings indicate that educational experiences involving exploration, ambiguity, and collaborative learning contribute to the development of psychological capital, including self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope. These psychological resources function as internal mechanisms that enable individuals to navigate changing work demands. Work adaptability is understood as a dynamic and ongoing process shaped by the interaction between prior learning experiences and workplace contexts. This study demonstrates that work adaptability is not a fixed competence but a developmental process rooted in educational experience and mediated by psychological capital. The findings highlight the importance of designing educational practices that foster adaptive capacity alongside knowledge acquisition, offering both theoretical and practical implications for preparing individuals in the digital era.

Introduction

Digitalisation has shifted the fundamental logic of the workplace from stability to ever-changing uncertainty. Jobs are no longer defined by predictable routines, but by individuals' ability to adapt to rapidly evolving systems, technologies, and work demands (Lytras & Şerban, 2025). This situation makes adaptability an indispensable skill. Many individuals struggle when transitioning from an educational environment to the more complex world of work, especially when faced with tasks lacking clear structure or the need to learn independently in a short period of time (Feldman-Maggor, 2023). This situation indicates that adaptability does not develop automatically when individuals enter the workforce. Previous experience plays a crucial role in shaping how individuals respond to change (Loudier, 2025). The educational environment serves as the initial setting with the potential to foster such readiness not only through knowledge, but also through learning experiences that shape the way students think and act when faced with uncertainty.

Previous studies have shown that work adaptability is related to an individual's ability to integrate cognitive, emotional, and behavioural responses when facing change. Research in the field of education highlights the importance of learning experiences that foster problem-solving and independence, while studies in organisational psychology emphasise the role of psychological capital as an internal resource (Luo et al., 2022; Tabala et al., 2025). The concept developed by Fred Luthans identifies self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope as factors that support adaptive responses (Luthans et al., 2008). Nevertheless, these two literary traditions have developed separately. Educational studies rarely link learning experiences to the formation of psychological capacities, while research on psychological capital tends to overlook the

educational context as a source of its formation. The dominant quantitative approach also limits our understanding of the adaptation process as an evolving experience. This gap indicates that the relationship between educational experiences, the formation of psychological capital, and workplace adaptability has not yet been explained in an integrated and contextual manner.

This study positions educational experiences as the foundation that shapes an individual's internal capacity to cope with change. These experiences include learning situations that involve exploration, uncertainty, and complex social interactions. This process does not end with the mastery of subject matter but contributes to the formation of mindsets and learning strategies. Within this framework, psychological capital serves as a mechanism linking these experiences to adaptive capabilities. Individuals who develop self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope are more likely to respond to change constructively (Mangundjaya et al., 2024; Nimmi et al., 2021). Work adaptability is not understood as a static end result, but rather as an ongoing process shaped by the interaction between individuals and their work environment (Zeng et al., 2022). This framework allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how adaptation occurs not merely as a response to work demands but as the result of prior learning processes.

Previous studies have predominantly examined work adaptability as an individual competency or organisational outcome, while educational experiences and psychological capital have often been investigated separately. Although research has demonstrated the importance of psychological capital for adaptive performance and work readiness, limited attention has been given to how such psychological resources are developed through educational experiences prior to entering the workforce. Furthermore, most studies rely on quantitative approaches, providing limited insight into the lived experiences through which adaptability is constructed. This study addresses these gaps by exploring how educational experiences contribute to the development of psychological capital and shape work adaptability from a phenomenological perspective.

This study aims to explain how educational experiences contribute to the development of workplace adaptability through the role of psychological capital. The research focuses on individuals' experiences in dealing with demanding learning situations, as well as how these experiences influence the way they respond to changes in the workplace. This study also explores how psychological capacities develop as a result of these experiences and how these capacities are utilised in coping with the ever-changing dynamics of work. A qualitative approach is employed to capture individuals' subjective experiences in depth, thereby enabling the identification of processes that remain unseen in quantitative approaches (Sekar & Bhuvanewari, 2024). This study focuses not only on adaptive abilities as an outcome, but also on the process by which they develop, from the educational phase through early work experience.

This study is based on the argument that adaptability in the workplace cannot be explained solely by work experience or technical skills. Variations in adaptive ability among individuals suggest that internal factors play a role in mediating responses to change. Education plays a strategic role in shaping this capacity, but current practices still tend to emphasise cognitive aspects (Ariandini & Hidayati, 2023). This situation produces individuals who possess knowledge but are not necessarily prepared to deal with uncertainty. Psychological capital offers an explanation of how individuals develop confidence, resilience, and a future-oriented mindset in the face of change (Widiarti & Baidun, 2019). The integration of educational experiences and psychological capital provides a more comprehensive perspective on understanding workplace adaptability. This approach challenges the assumption that work readiness depends solely on technical competencies, demonstrating that psychological capacities play an equally important role in shaping adaptive responses.

Methods

The unit of analysis in this study is individuals who have transitioned from education to the workforce and are currently in a digitised work context. The research focuses on individuals' subjective experiences in interpreting the process of workplace adaptation, specifically how educational experiences shape adaptive readiness through internal mechanisms in the form of psychological capital. Five participants (ADR, TSW, AAL, DRB, and LDY) were recruited through purposive sampling. Participants were selected based on three criteria: (1) completion of formal higher education, (2) current employment in digitally oriented workplaces, and (3) experience adapting to changing work demands during the transition from education to employment.

Participants were between 23 and 30 years old and represented different professional backgrounds. The unit of analysis encompasses not only observable adaptive behaviours but also the underlying cognitive and affective processes. Thus, this study positions the individual as an active agent in constructing meaning from educational and work experiences. This approach enables an in-depth exploration of the relationship between learning experiences, the formation of psychological capital, and the dynamics of workplace adaptability within a context of continuous change.

This study employs an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) to explore how individuals make sense of their educational experiences and workplace adaptation. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore the subjective meanings of educational experiences and the process of work adaptation in depth. Phenomenology emphasises how individuals experience and interpret reality, making it suitable for examining the relationship between educational experiences, psychological capital, and work adaptability. In this context, the study does not aim to test variable relationships quantitatively, but to understand how these experiences shape the way individuals think, feel, and act. This approach also allows for the identification of patterns of meaning emerging from participants' experiences, which are then interpreted within the theoretical framework of Psychological Capital. Thus, this method provides space for contextual and reflective analysis of the dynamics of individual adaptation in the digital age.

The data for this study were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews. This technique allowed the researchers to explore participants' experiences flexibly while remaining focused on the research objectives. The interview guide was structured around three main themes: educational experiences, psychological capital, and the work adaptation process. During the interviews, participants were encouraged to reflectively share their experiences, including challenging situations, how they responded to changes, and the meanings they attributed to those experiences. Interviews were conducted in person or online, depending on the participants' circumstances, and were recorded with their consent to ensure data accuracy. Additionally, the researchers also noted relevant non-verbal observations to enrich the interpretation of the data. This technique was chosen because it captures the depth of subjective experiences as well as the dynamics of the adaptation process, which cannot be measured quantitatively.

The type of data used in this study is qualitative data in the form of participants' experiential narratives obtained from in-depth interviews. This data includes descriptions of educational experiences, individual responses to workplace changes, and reflections on the adaptation processes experienced. In addition to primary data, this study also utilises secondary data in the form of relevant media articles and reports to contextualise the findings. The collected data is textual and rich in meaning, enabling an in-depth analysis of individuals' cognitive and affective processes. The primary focus of the data is on how participants interpret their experiences, rather than on the frequency or quantification of behavior. Thus, the data used enables researchers to identify patterns of meaning related to the development of work adaptability through educational experiences and psychological capital. This approach ensures that the research findings comprehensively reflect the subjective reality of individuals.

Data analysis in this study employed a thematic analysis approach conducted in several stages: transcription, open coding, categorisation, and theme development. In the initial stage, interview data were transcribed verbatim to preserve the authenticity of the meaning. Next, the researcher performed open coding to identify units of meaning relevant to the research focus. Codes with commonalities were then grouped into categories, which were subsequently developed into main themes. The analysis process was conducted iteratively by comparing data across participants to identify consistent patterns. In the interpretation stage, the resulting themes were analysed using Fred Luthans' Psychological Capital framework, enabling a deeper understanding of the internal mechanisms of adaptation (Luthans et al., 2008). This approach not only produced a description of the findings but also provided a critical theoretical interpretation of the relationship between educational experiences, psychological capital, and workplace adaptability.

Result and Discussion

1. Educational Experience as the Foundation of Adaptability in the Workplace

Table 1 presents interview data illustrating how educational experiences lay a foundation for workplace adaptability in the digital age. This data indicates that the educational process not only imparts knowledge

but also shapes ways of thinking, learning styles, and an individual's readiness to face uncertain situations. Through diverse learning experiences, individuals develop the ability to adapt to dynamic workplace demands. Thus, education can be understood as the initial environment that shapes an individual's adaptive capacity, which continues to evolve as the individual enters a complex and ever-changing professional world.

Table 1. *Educational Experience as the Foundation of Adaptability in the Workplace*

No	Informant	Interview Data	Coding
1	ADR	"During my final semester, I was assigned a project to develop a digital solution for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). At first, I was confused because I'd never done anything like that before, but my professor didn't give us a direct answer instead, we were told to figure it out on our own. That experience helped me get used to dealing with situations that aren't immediately clear. Now, at work, I often get tasks without clear guidelines, but I feel more at ease because I know, 'I've been through this before.'"	Adaptation through problem-based tasks
2	TSW	"We actually use some digital tools on campus, but not as extensively as in the professional world. The difference is that back then we could still rely on trial and error, but now we're expected to act quickly. However, since I already had a foundation, I didn't have to start from scratch. I just had to adapt to a more complex system."	The transition from learning to the demands of the digital workplace
3	AAL	"I feel that what's most useful isn't the content itself, but the learning method. Back then, we were often told to find our own journals and give our own presentations. So now, whenever there's a new skill I need to learn, I don't rely too much on company training. I take the initiative to figure it out on my own first."	Developing learning agility
4	DRB	"When working in groups, people often have very different ways of collaborating. Some are laid-back, while others are perfectionists. I used to get frustrated, but over time I learned to adapt. Now that I'm at the office, I encounter an even wider variety of people, but I'm better prepared to handle it."	Social experiences as a form of adaptation
5	LDY	"Not everything I've learned is directly applicable, but it has given me a more flexible way of thinking. So when work situations change, I don't feel like I have to start over instead, I adapt what I already have."	Reflections on the Relevance of Education

Interview data indicates that educational experiences play a significant role in shaping individuals' readiness to navigate workplace dynamics. ADR describes how problem-based tasks without direct guidance trained him to handle uncertain situations, making him better prepared to tackle ambiguous work tasks. TSW highlights that experience using technology on campus provides a foundation that facilitates adaptation to more complex work systems. AAL emphasises that self-directed learning methods foster initiative in learning, so that individuals do not rely on formal training in the workplace. DRB indicates that group work experience helps individuals understand differences in others' personalities and work styles, which is relevant in a teamwork context. Meanwhile, LDY reflects that education fosters flexibility in thinking, even though not all material can be directly applied. Overall, this data indicates that educational experiences shape a mindset and sustainable adaptation strategies.

Based on this data, there are three main trends. First, educational experiences centered on exploration and problem-solving develop individuals' ability to cope with uncertainty. Individuals become accustomed to situations that do not have a single correct answer, making them better prepared to handle the complexities of the workplace. Second, education fosters self-directed learning, or learning agility, enabling individuals to proactively seek new knowledge without relying on external guidance. Third, social experiences in education,

such as group work, contribute to interpersonal adaptability skills that are essential in the workplace. These three trends indicate that education not only equips individuals with knowledge but also fosters flexible thinking, learning strategies, and interpersonal skills that support workplace adaptability. Thus, workplace adaptability is the result of a holistic and continuous learning process.

From an educational psychology perspective, these findings can be analysed using Fred Luthans' Psychological Capital framework, which emphasises the importance of self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope as psychological resources that can be developed through learning experiences (Lin et al., 2024; Luthans et al., 2008). Data shows that educational experiences based on problem-solving and self-directed learning contribute to the development of self-efficacy an individual's belief in their ability to tackle new challenges. Furthermore, experiencing uncertainty in education also fosters resilience, enabling individuals to persevere in ambiguous situations. However, critically, these findings suggest that not all educational experiences are systematically designed to cultivate these psychological resources. Education still tends to focus on mastery of subject matter, so the development of adaptive capacity often occurs implicitly, rather than through purposeful pedagogical design. This highlights the need to reorient educational practices to be more explicit in building individuals' adaptive readiness (Manickam et al., 2025).

Furthermore, educational experiences can be understood as the primary context for building and strengthening an individual's psychological capital (Li et al., 2023; Welsh et al., 2025). These findings indicate that learning that allows for exploration, uncertainty, and reflection contributes to the development of self-efficacy and resilience. Meanwhile, experiences of success in completing tasks and the ability to connect learning with future goals support the development of optimism and hope. However, if education does not provide authentic and challenging learning experiences, the psychological capital that is formed tends to be limited and less supportive of adaptation in the workplace. Critically, this underscores that education needs to transform from a results-oriented approach to a process that emphasises meaningful learning experiences. Thus, workplace adaptability is not merely the result of work experience but also a reflection of the quality of educational experiences that shape an individual's psychological capacity (Carmeli et al., 2021; Collie & Martin, 2024).

2. Psychological Capital as an Internal Adaptation Mechanism

Table 2 presents interview data illustrating how psychological capital functions as an internal mechanism in the process of workplace adaptation in the digital age. This data indicates that an individual's ability to adapt is determined not only by technical skills but also by their psychological strengths. Through the participants' experiences, it is evident that self-confidence, resilience, optimism, and hope play a crucial role in navigating rapid and complex changes. In this context, psychological capital serves as a key factor bridging educational experiences with an individual's ability to adapt within a dynamic work environment. The theme of Psychological Capital as an Internal Adaptation Mechanism emerged through repeated references to confidence, perseverance, positive expectations, and future-oriented thinking in participants' narratives. During the coding process, these expressions were initially identified as separate categories and subsequently grouped into four dimensions consistent with the Psychological Capital framework: self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope.

Table. 2 *Psychological Capital as an Internal Adaptation Mechanism*

No	Informant	Interview Data	Coding
1	ADR	"When I was first asked to handle a project using the new system, I didn't really understand it at first. But I remembered that back in college, I was often 'forced' to try things I'd never done before. So I just thought, 'Well, I'll just give it a try.' It turned out I could do it, and that gave me more confidence when I encountered something new again."	Self-efficacy Confidence in facing new challenges
2	TSW	"Things are changing so fast at work these days sometimes systems change in the blink of an eye. At first, it was stressful having to constantly relearn things. But over time,	Resilience Withstanding the pressures of change

		I realised this is just part of the job, so I've tried to adapt rather than avoid it."	
3	AAL	"When there are technological changes at the office, I actually see it as an opportunity to learn something new. It's tiring at first, but I feel that once I master it, it will actually be an asset for me."	Optimism Seeing change as an opportunity
4	DRB	"I have a personal goal to keep growing, so whenever there's a change at work, I try to tie it to that goal. For example, when I'm learning a new skill, I think about how it can help my career in the future, which makes me more motivated to tackle it."	Hope Direction and strategy for the future
5	LDY	"In my opinion, what helps the most isn't just skill, but mindset. Sometimes we just aren't able to do something yet, but if we believe we can learn, don't give up easily, and see it as a process, we'll eventually be able to adapt."	Psychological capital integration A combination of internal strengths

Interview data indicate that individuals cope with workplace changes through various psychological responses that reflect their psychological capital. ADR participants described how their prior educational experiences built their self-confidence to try new things, even though they initially felt incapable. TSW noted that rapid change creates stress, but over time individuals learn to persevere and adapt to these conditions. AAL views technological change as an opportunity for growth, even though the process is not easy. Meanwhile, DRB demonstrated a clear future orientation, where change is viewed as part of achieving personal goals. LDY emphasised the importance of mindset as a key factor in adaptation, where the belief in continuous learning and perseverance is crucial. Overall, this data suggests that workplace adaptability is influenced by a combination of internal psychological strengths that enable individuals to navigate change constructively.

Based on this data, there are three main trends. First, workplace adaptation begins with an individual's belief in their own abilities, which is reflected in self-efficacy and fosters the courage to try new things. Second, the adaptation process involves the ability to endure pressure and uncertainty, highlighting the importance of resilience in the face of ongoing change. Third, adaptation is influenced by a positive orientation toward the future, where individuals view change as an opportunity for growth, not as a threat. These three trends indicate that workplace adaptability is not merely reactive but also proactive, as individuals actively interpret change as part of the self-development process. Furthermore, the integration of various aspects of psychological capital suggests that adaptation is the result of the interaction of multiple internal forces working in tandem.

From a psychological perspective, these findings can be analysed using the Psychological Capital framework developed by Fred Luthans, which includes self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope as positive psychological resources. The data indicate that these four components do not operate in isolation but rather reinforce one another in shaping an individual's adaptive capacity. However, these findings also reveal that education often focuses solely on cognitive aspects, while the development of psychological capital remains insufficiently integrated into the system. This creates a disparity between an individual's technical readiness and psychological readiness when entering the workforce. Critically, if education does not explicitly foster psychological resilience, individuals will rely on unstructured personal experiences to build their adaptive capacity (Guimerà Gallent et al., 2025; Salini & Ashifa, 2025). Therefore, adaptability in the workplace cannot be separated from the way education intentionally shapes and strengthens individuals' psychological resources.

Furthermore, psychological capital can be understood as a capacity that can be developed through targeted learning experiences (Youssef-Morgan et al., 2020). These findings suggest that educational experiences that are challenging, reflective, and allow room for experimentation play a crucial role in shaping individuals' self-efficacy and resilience. Furthermore, optimism and hope grow when individuals have clear goals and experiences of success that reinforce their self-confidence (Edwards & McConnell, 2024). However, if education does not allow for failure as part of the learning process, the development of resilience and optimism will be limited. Critically, this highlights the need for educational transformation toward an approach

that not only transfers knowledge but also builds psychological capacity through authentic learning experiences (Liu, 2026). Thus, psychological capital is not merely an internal factor within the individual but also the result of an educational process that is contextually designed and sustainable.

3. Work Adaptability as a Dynamic and Contextual Process

Table 3 presents data from various sources illustrating workplace adaptability as a dynamic and contextual process in the digital age. These sources indicate that changes in technology, work patterns, and industry demands drive individuals to continuously adapt. In this context, education serves not only as the initial stage of competency development but also as the foundation that shapes individuals' readiness to face change. The data presented confirms that work adaptability is inseparable from learning experiences both formal and informal which contribute to an individual's ability to respond to the dynamics of the modern work environment.

Table 3. *Work Adaptability as a Dynamic and Contextual Process*

No	Coding	Data	Description	Sources
1	Ongoing changes in the world of work		The digital workplace requires agile, critical-thinking employees because change happens rapidly and continuously	https://ui.kompas.id/baca/pasar-kerja-di-era-digital-butuh-sdm-yang-gesit-dan-berpikir-kritis/?utm_source=chatgpt.com
2	Adaptation as a process of continuous development		Education is designed to prepare the workforce to adapt to the ever-changing world of work	https://biz.kompas.com/read/2020/12/09/081156428/menilik-upaya-dunia-pendidikan-indonesia-mempersiapkan-sdm-untuk-menghadapi
3	Adaptability as learning agility		Adaptability in the workplace involves the ability to continuously learn, adapt, and respond to changing work situations	https://asana.com/resources/workplace-adaptability-skills
4	Adaptation in response to work situations		Adaptability is essential for dealing with changing situations and varying job demands	https://www.qubisa.com/microlearning/pentingnya-beradaptasi-dengan-situasi-di-tempat-bekerja

5 Adaptation as a process of time and experience

Overwhelmed di Kantor Baru: Normalnya Adaptasi Berapa Lama?



The process of adapting to the workplace isn't instant; it takes time and experience for individuals to feel comfortable

<https://dreamtalent.id/blog/overwhelmed-di-kantor-baru-normalnya-adaptasi-berapa-lama>

The data in the table shows that the digital workplace demands that individuals possess critical thinking skills and be flexible and responsive to rapid change. One source emphasises the importance of agile and adaptable human resources, indicating the need to strengthen higher-order thinking skills in education. Additionally, there are systematic efforts within the education sector to align curricula with industry needs, so that graduates are better prepared to meet workplace demands. Other data indicate that adaptability is a skill encompassing the ability to engage in continuous learning, respond to changes, and adjust to dynamic work situations. Furthermore, adaptation is understood as a process that is not instantaneous but develops through experience and over time. Overall, this data suggests that workplace adaptability is shaped by the interplay between educational experiences, workplace demands, and the need to continuously update skills in the face of change.

Based on this data, there are three main trends. First, workplace adaptability is understood as a continuous learning process that requires individuals to constantly update their knowledge and skills. This indicates that adaptability is not static but develops through lifelong learning experiences. Second, adaptability is strongly influenced by external contexts, including technological changes, organisational dynamics, and the ever-evolving demands of the industry. Individuals are required to be able to adapt not only to tasks but also to work systems and social environments. Third, education emerges as a crucial foundation in fostering adaptability, particularly through the development of critical thinking skills, flexibility, and the ability to cope with uncertainty. These three trends underscore that workplace adaptability is the result of the interaction between individual learning processes and the ever-changing dynamics of the work environment.

These findings were analysed using David Kolb's experiential learning theory, which emphasises that learning occurs through a cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualisation, and experimentation (Javahery & Bavandi, 2026). In this context, adaptability in the workplace is not merely an end result, but rather the product of an ongoing learning process as individuals interact with change. Furthermore, the concept of self-regulated learning suggests that individuals who are able to manage their own learning process tend to be more adaptable to new situations (Deshmukh & Mehta, 2025; Neves & van Dam, 2025; Rossier, 2020; Seban & Urban, 2024). However, these findings suggest a gap between education and the realities of the workplace, where education has not yet fully prepared individuals to cope with the complexities of rapid change. This indicates that learning approaches that remain focused on the transfer of knowledge need to shift toward the development of reflective and adaptive skills (Baporikar, 2021; Hanim et al., 2025). Thus, adaptability in the workplace depends not only on the individual but also on educational designs that support contextual and continuous learning processes.

Furthermore, adaptability in the workplace can be understood as the result of developing a strong learning orientation, as described in Carol Dweck's theory of the growth mindset (Baporikar, 2021). Individuals with a growth mindset tend to view change as an opportunity to learn, rather than as a threat (Baporikar, 2021). These findings reinforce the notion that educational experiences that encourage exploration, reflection, and tolerance for mistakes shape individuals' readiness to navigate workplace dynamics. Furthermore, constructivist theory asserts that knowledge is constructed through interaction with the environment, making the workplace an extension of the educational process (A. Antao & S. Morales, 2025; Lowell & Tagare, 2023). However, if education does not provide space for authentic and contextual learning experiences, the adaptability that develops tends to be superficial and reactive (Abankwa et al., 2021; Bejar

& Quispe Chambi, 2020). Therefore, an educational transformation is needed that not only emphasises mastery of subject matter but also builds individuals' capacity to learn, adapt, and develop continuously in the face of change.

Empirically, this study demonstrates that psychological capital does not emerge solely within workplace settings but is partially rooted in educational experiences. The findings extend previous research by illustrating how learning environments contribute to the development of adaptive psychological resources that later support work adaptability in digitally changing contexts. Participants' narratives indicate that experiences such as problem-based learning, independent exploration, collaborative assignments, and exposure to uncertainty played a significant role in shaping self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope. These capacities were not developed through formal instruction alone but through repeated engagement with challenging situations that required initiative, reflection, and adjustment. This finding suggests that educational experiences function as developmental contexts in which adaptive psychological resources are cultivated before individuals enter professional settings. By identifying the process through which educational experiences are translated into workplace adaptability, this study provides a more nuanced understanding of adaptation as a developmental phenomenon rather than a competency acquired only after entering the labour market.

Conclusion

This study confirms that workplace adaptability is not formed instantly in the workplace, but develops from educational experiences mediated by psychological capital. Learning experiences involving exploration, ambiguity, and social interaction foster self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope as internal capacities that enable individuals to respond to change independently. Adaptability in this context is not merely the ability to adjust, but the ability to construct new responses to changing situations. These findings shift the understanding of adaptability from a static individual attribute to a process that develops through repeated and reflective experiences. This perspective positions educational experiences as the primary foundation in shaping an individual's readiness to face workplace dynamics.

This study contributes by demonstrating that the relationship between educational experiences and workplace adaptability is mediated by psychological capital as an internal mechanism. Moving beyond previous studies that tend to separate educational and psychological factors or focus primarily on variable relationships, the findings reveal that psychological capital functions as the key process through which learning experiences are transformed into adaptive responses. This study therefore offers an integrative framework that explains how adaptive readiness is developed rather than merely assessed. The findings challenge the view of education as a system primarily concerned with knowledge transmission by highlighting its role in shaping the psychological resources that influence individuals' responses to change. These insights carry important implications for educational institutions and curriculum developers. Learning environments should incorporate project-based learning, collaborative problem solving, and reflective activities that intentionally foster self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, and hope. Adaptive capacity should be recognised as a core learning outcome alongside disciplinary knowledge, particularly in preparing graduates for digitally mediated and continuously evolving workplaces.

The implications of this study highlight the need for a shift in educational design toward the development of adaptive capacity as a primary goal. Learning experiences must be designed to incorporate challenges, uncertainty, and reflection so that psychological capital can develop systematically. Work readiness can no longer be measured solely by mastery of subject matter, but rather by an individual's ability to continuously adapt to change. A limitation of this study lies in the specific context of the participants, so the findings need to be tested in a broader context. Future research could develop a longitudinal approach to examine how adaptability evolves over time. These findings underscore that work readiness in the digital age is not determined by what is learned, but by how individuals are shaped to continuously learn and adapt.

References

- A. Antao, M., & S. Morales, J. R. (2025). Increasing the interest of students in problem-solving through authentic learning experiences: Lens from non-math enthusiast learners. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.59429/esp.v10i2.3175>

- Abankwa, D. A., Li, R. Y. M., Rowlinson, S., & Li, Y. (2021). Exploring Individual Adaptability as a Prerequisite for Adjusting to Technological Changes in Construction (pp. 601–605). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48465-1_99
- Ariandini, N., & Hidayati, A. (2023). Pembelajaran Adaptif dalam Kurikulum Merdeka: Integrasi Teori Behavioristik, Kognitif, dan Konstruktivis dalam Teknologi Pendidikan. *Jurnal Kependidikan Media*, 12(3), 158–164. <https://doi.org/10.26618/jkm.v12i3.13351>
- Baporikar, N. (2021). Reflective Teaching and Technology Integration in Management Education. In *Research Anthology on Business and Technical Education in the Information Era* (pp. 435–452). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-5345-9.ch024>
- Bejar, L. H., & Quispe Chambi, F. D. (2020). Educación constructivista: un compromiso transformador. *PUBLICACIONES*, 50(2), 73–85. <https://doi.org/10.30827/publicaciones.v50i2.13944>
- Carmeli, A., Brueller, D., & Dutton, J. E. (2021). Learning behaviours in the workplace: The role of high-quality interpersonal relationships and psychological safety. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 26(1), 81–98. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sres.932>
- Collie, R. J., & Martin, A. J. (2024). Adaptability: An Important Capacity for Effective Teachers. *Educational Practice and Theory*, 38(1), 27–39. <https://doi.org/10.7459/ept/38.1.03>
- Deshmukh, S., & Mehta, M. (2025). AI-enabled self-regulated learning: reinforcing a proactive workplace culture – a viewpoint. *Development and Learning in Organisations: An International Journal*, 39(6), 21–23. <https://doi.org/10.1108/DLO-09-2024-0277>
- Edwards, L. M., & McConnell, K. R. (2024). The Influence of Culture on Psychological Hope. In *The Virtue of Hope* (pp. 227–252). Oxford University Press New York. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190069575.003.0008>
- Feldman-Maggor, Y. (2023). Identifying self-regulated learning in chemistry classes – a good practice report. *Chemistry Teacher International*, 5(2), 203–211. <https://doi.org/10.1515/cti-2022-0036>
- Guimerà Gallent, M., March Amengual, J. M., & Arimany Serrat, N. (2025). Management of safety and health at work: Emotional intelligence in university personnel. *Intangible Capital*, 21(1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.3926/ic.2964>
- Hanim, M. A. F., Efendi, Z., & Setiyawati, F. (2025). Psychological Distress Due to Political Demonstrations in Indonesia's Democracy. *Jurnal Community: Pengawas Dinamika Sosial*, 11, 116–133. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35308/jcpds.v11i2.13936>
- Javahery, P., & Bavandi, Z. (2026). Kolb's experiential learning theory in action: fostering empathy and practical skills in language teacher education. *Reflective Practice*, 27(1), 30–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2025.2521108>
- Li, R., Che Hassan, N., & Saharuddin, N. (2023). Psychological Capital Related to Academic Outcomes Among University Students: A Systematic Literature Review. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, Volume 16, 3739–3763. <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S421549>
- Lin, Y.-J., Chen, Y.-A., Chen, M.-J., & Chiu, F.-Y. (2024). Utilising Padlet for Project-Based Learning: A Study on the Relationship Between Student Formative Self-Assessment and Psychological Capital. 2024 21st International Conference on Information Technology Based Higher Education and Training (ITHET), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ITHET61869.2024.10837610>
- Liu, R. H. Y. (2026). Experiential learning as a powerful adhesive between academic and everyday learning. In *Academic Learning vs Everyday Learning?* (pp. 72–89). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003733638-7>
- Louder, J. R. (2025). Alternative Educational Pathways: Stackable and Micro-Credentials to Bridge Education and Employment. In *The Emerald Handbook on International Higher Education* (pp. 83–95). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83549-788-320251007>
- Lowell, V. L., & Tagare, D. (2023). Authentic learning and fidelity in virtual reality learning experiences for self-efficacy and transfer. *Computers & Education: X Reality*, 2, 100017. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cexr.2023.100017>
- Luo, C.-Y., Tsai, C.-H. (Ken), Su, C.-H. (Joan), Kim, H. J., Gao, J.-L., & Chen, M.-H. (2022). How does hotel employees' psychological capital promote adaptive performance? The role of change readiness. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 51, 491–501. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2022.05.006>
- Luthans, F., Avey, J. B., & Patera, J. L. (2008). Experimental Analysis of a Web-Based Training Intervention to Develop Positive Psychological Capital. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 7(2), 209–221. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2008.32712618>
- Lytras, M. D., & Şerban, A. C. (2025). The Transformative Impact of AI: Implications for Education, Labour and Smart Systems. In *Education, Future Jobs and Smart Systems in the Age of Artificial Intelligence, Part A* (pp. 1–10). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83608-904-920251001>
- Mangundjaya, W., Arumi, M. S., & Wicaksana, S. A. (2024). Resilience Unveiled: The Transformative Power of

- Self-Efficacy in Employee Survival Amidst Challenging Termination Scenarios. *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.25217/0020247481400>
- Manickam, S., Alamelu, R., Leema Christina, J., & Purushothman, R. (2025). Pedagogical Shifts in the AI Era Toward Cultivating Critical Thinking and Transversal Skills (pp. 267–304). <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-7729-2.ch008>
- Neves, P., & van Dam, K. (2025). Facilitating Change: The Role of Adaptability and LMX for Change Support. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 61(4), 658–684. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00218863241257959>
- Nimmi, P. M., Kuriakose, V., Donald, W. E., & Muhammed Nowfal, S. (2021). HERO elements of Psychological Capital: Fostering career sustainability via resource caravans. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 30(3), 199–210. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10384162211066378>
- Rossier, J. (2020). Adaptability. In *The Wiley Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences* (pp. 1–6). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119547174.ch177>
- Salini, K., & Ashifa, K. M. (2025). The Playful Edge. In *Global Business Transformation* (pp. 113–126). CRC Press. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003480853-10>
- Seban, P., & Urban, K. (2024). Examining the Utilisation of Learning Techniques and Strategies Among Pedagogy Students: Implications for Self-Regulated Learning. *Journal of Pedagogy*, 15(1), 27–49. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jped-2024-0002>
- Sekar, D., & Bhuvaneswari, M. (2024). Exploring the Depths (pp. 267–292). <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-1726-6.ch014>
- Tabala, A., Munene, J., Kagaari, J., Mafabi, S., & Bagorogoza, J. K. (2025). The mediating role of individual adaptability in the relationship between psychological capital and psychological well-being: evidence from Uganda's small enterprises. *International Journal of Workplace Health Management*, 18(1), 118–136. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJWHM-04-2024-0076>
- Welsh, D. H. B., Avey, J. B., Mhatre, K. H., & Tullar, W. L. (2025). Academic psychological capital: Implications for organisational crises. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences / Revue Canadienne Des Sciences de l'Administration*, 42(2), 219–234. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cjas.1775>
- Widiarti, D., & Baidun, A. (2019). Pengaruh modal psikologis, komitmen organisasi dan iklim psikologis terhadap kesiapan dalam menghadapi perubahan. *TAZKIYA: Journal of Psychology*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.15408/tazkiya.v4i1.10827>
- Youssef-Morgan, C. M., Ahrens, B. L., Bockorny, K., Craig, L., & Peters, M. (2020). Applications of psychological capital in the public sector. In *Handbook of Research on Stress and Well-Being in the Public Sector*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788970358.00022>
- Zeng, Q., He, Y., Li, J., Liang, Z., Zhang, M., Yi, D., & Quan, J. (2022). Hope, future work self and life satisfaction among vocational high school students in China: The roles of career adaptability and academic self-efficacy. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 199, 111822. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2022.111822>