

Organizational Agility and Organizational Learning: Do They Accelerate Organizational Innovation and Competency?

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Abstract: This paper deliberates about the impact of Organizational Agility (OA) on Organizational learning (OL) strategy and innovative capability development process that enables organizations and business to face the challenges of technological disruption. It also determines the significant dynamic competence of OA that has a great influence on the organizational learning process. Basically, this paper demonstrates the distinctive features of OA and OL process that expedite business; to hasten their innovative capabilities through developing and integrating organizational knowledge and win today's dynamic business environment. The aim of this paper is to explore and investigate the perception of both organizational learning and organizational agility process that influence on linking disruptive technological innovation as a novel approach in order to accelerate organizational innovation and competency. It reveals the way organizational learning (i.e. human resources learning capabilities, strategies within the organization) and organizational agility (i.e. firm's quick adopting, adjusting and accepting capability with the changing environment) influence significantly disruptive technological innovation in order to enhance organizational competitiveness. In addition, this paper also determines the significant perceptions of organizational agility and its values on strategic HRM that reflects on sustainable organizational learning as well as technological innovation (i.e. knowledge development.). Essentially, this area of study is reflected as an active multidisciplinary research approach, where academicians, researchers, technocrats, engineers, management experts, policy makers and business analysts, and industrialists combine their knowledge in order to provide a better management system. On the other hand, it is necessary to mention that the implications of new emerging perspectives of organizational agility and organizational learning mostly enable firms to respond promptly and flexibly through organizational innovativeness and technological surveillance to cope up with the dynamic world.

Keywords: competency, disruptive technology, knowledge, organizational agility, organizational learning, organizational innovation

1. Introduction

The significance of organizational agility has been comprehensively with the impression of organizational knowledge and innovative capability development process that strived for in-creasing the competence of individual and organizational performance. Nowadays, the most promising and modern organizations are under great pressure to work in a dynamic environment, with continuously changing instable events, to invest their valued time and energy on creativity and knowledge sharing activities that deliver them to instant and reckonable advantage. Under these circumstances, competitiveness and innovation have become a burning topic of academic, business and managerial debates with regard to be agile and be able to sense and respond to market changes quickly and smoothly to maintain their effectiveness, i.e. organizational excellence. Wherever, organizational agility is accountable for high ability to adapt and adopt the unwanted changes in the marketplace and allocate resources, i.e. human resources to take advantage of that change. According to Dupont (2019), organizational agility can be considered as the ability of an organization that effectively immerses itself in its ecosystem, and facilitate organizations to keep pace with the technological, economic, societal and cultural challenges in an ever-changing environment. Similarly, Saha et. al, (2019a), (2019b) also emphasized that organizational learning as well as agile capacity of an organization is basically for rapid, continuous and systematic entrepreneurial innovation which gradually focused organizations to achieve their competitive advantage through organizational innovation and knowledge development). Consequently, it is necessary to mention that organizational agility can simplify firms' performance through reactive, proactive and innovative agility (Najrani 2016). On the other hand, in order to justify organizational agility and organizational learning's combined efforts several researchers stated that an organizational learning theory, mainly emphasizing the existing knowledge within the organization, i.e. exploitative and exploratory learning as well as which is vibrant for organizational innovation and knowledge development (Saha et al, 2016), (Liao et al, 2019).

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Accordingly, Chan et al. (2019) emphasized that organization agility can be reflected as an eminent components of an organization that facilitate them to cope up with the disruptive innovation that empowers firms and organizations innovative capability. Where, it enables organizations to face the challenges of hypercompetitive market conditions as well as it stimulates to be agile in order to survive and sustain their competitive advantage. Correspondingly, Hamada and Yozgat (2017) also pointed out that both the approaches organizational agility and learning capability are the most fundamental elements that play a great role on organizational survival and organizational success during techno-logical disruption. Finally, the thematic approach of this paper persuades different approaches and models concerning organizational agility (OA), organizational learning (OL) and organizational competence development approach which includes organizational innovativeness and organizational growth that enable them to develop the attitude to competently respond to the dynamic world. This paper deliberates about the influence of Organizational Agility (OA) on Organizational learning (OL) and innovative capability development process that enables organizations and business to face the challenges of technological disruption. Primarily, this paper highlights the significance of organizational agility and organizational learning process as an identical approach for the organizations of the 21st century that enable business to accelerate organizational innovativeness. It represents a conceptual model that could be useful for integrating organizational knowledge and win today's dynamic business environment.

Furthermore, the consequence of this study shows that organizational agility inventiveness in addition to organizational learning perspectives are influential instruments to foster organizational knowledge-development process, effectiveness and organizational innovativeness due to their intrinsic competence. Finally, this paper proposed some research assumptions that the added value of this knowledge development process within the organization will accentuate the way HR specialists are involved in operational matters and are progressively observed as a source of competitive advantage in order to meet the global challenges. Although, it is quite difficult to enhance firms' sustainable growth quickly due to the urge of gradual expansion of the competitive marketplace and today's rapidly-changing business world and vice-versa. Conversely, it can be said that nowadays organizational research, (i.e. managerial and operational activities) deals with both the phases that are combined as well as inter- linked and focuses primarily on the following key elements, i.e. (innovation-oriented and technology-oriented).

1.1 Contextual issues of organizational learning and organizational agility

Continuing the discussion on organizational learning and organizational agility, it is necessary to highlight that these identical approaches progressively become more and more significant mainly for improving knowledge and innovation-driven organizational competitiveness in order to sustain competitive advantage in the world market. Regarding this sizzling topic on organizational agility and organizational learning strategy and their relationship different authors, academicians, management experts, industrialists, policy-makers, researchers and technologists have various opinions. Basically, nowadays the general conceptual background of these expressions such as: organizational learning, organizational agility and disruptive technologies that mainly relating the importance of organizational learning issues on disruptive technological innovation and organizational agility development. It is essentially to put an emphasis on the contemporary economic environment that facilitating organizations to accelerate their innovation policies to reverberate organizational or business competency. In another way, it can be said that the influence of organizational learning on organizational agility development really enables organizations and its initiatives on disrupting innovations (DI) and their characteristics as well as its effects. Additionally, it extends organizational learning and organizational agility combined effort on sustainable organizational performance development, i.e. innovativeness. According to Professor Clayton M. Christensen, the notion of 'Disruptive Technological Innovation' can be reflected as an innovation that primarily creates a novel market opportunity by connecting different set of values, strategies and norms that suddenly surpasses an existing market condition Bower (1995) and Christensen, (2006). Similarly, researcher Teece, Peteraf, and Leih, (2016) also stated that the concept of organizational agility emerged as a key business imperative in order to cope up with the rapid technological turmoil carried through disruptive technological innovation. Then again, research shows that due to the presence of organizational agility perception recently firms become more capable to take the advantages of technological disruption in order to create a market niche and expand their foothold in a hypercompetitive economy (Kane, Palmer, Phillips, and Kiron, 2015); (Lyytinen and Rose, 2004); (Sambamurthy, Bharadwaj, and Grover, 2003); (Chan et al, 2019).

On the other hand, from the organizational learning perception point of view, Zirak (2015) mentioned that the concept of organizational learning has emerged initially during 1970s. Since, then within the organizations it has

been observed that spontaneous desire of individuals in order to develop their knowledge through learning within the organizations. As, they consider that it will enable them to survive in the long run by enabling their capabilities with the diversified tasks, technologies, and environments. Consequently, Khan and Wisner (2019) pointed out that organizations learning capability (i.e. external learning as well as and internal learning) enable organizations to be responsive and flexible to meet the unanticipated changes, but may not always influence positive impacts on a firm's performance (Jermisittiparserta and Wajeetongratanac, 2019). Therefore, it is necessary for organizations to work on developing new knowledge and innovation to enhance organizational performance as well as to create a learning-oriented firm. Equally, Noruzy et al. (2013) identified that organizational performance depends not only on organizational innovation and learning process, but also it depends on organizational knowledge management process. Alternatively, Saha et al. (2016) described that currently, the strategic part of HRM practices within the organization enlighten the success of the organizational performance. Moreover, it basically exists in developing positive attitudes of individuals, groups, and organizations which mainly put emphasis on enhancing individual competence as well organizational competence through organizational learning. Concerning organizational competency point of view, Rialti et al. (2020) emphasized that in order to keep pace with the dynamic business world, contemporary organisations nowadays intended to develop their organizational innovative capabilities, so that they can accomplish the competitive advantage.

1.2 Relationship between organizational agility and organizational learning as key drivers for enhancing organizational competitiveness

While addressing the relationship between 'organizational agility' and 'organizational learning' it is important to be emphasized that both approaches and their conceptual philosophies are closely related as they share various similarities in their justification. For example: (a) *The connection between organizational learning and organizational agility can only become valuable if there are some resources (i.e. human capital), some innovative system (technological up gradation) that can blow into the knowledge that has been created during this knowledge development process through research and technology;* (b) *On the other hand both the perceptions can provide the appropriate knowledge (expertise and organizational capability) in order to stimulate the innovation during the period of technological disruption that takes place and be implemented.*

Though, the two conceptions are not really comparable as there are significant differences within them. Since, organizational agility focuses specifically on innovation related intensive sectors whereas; the impression of organizational learning strategy applies to a wider set of sectors in organizational performance development. According to Saha et al. (2017a); (2017b) the effect of organisational agility (OA) on knowledge management (KM), enables organisations to survive and achieve their competitive advantage through developing and integrating the KM strategy and sustainable knowledge transfer capability. Basically, the main principle of organizational agility concept exemplifies a set of challenges, i.e. organizations responsiveness, adaptability and thrive in the changing environment through collaboration, iteration, experimentation and empowerment (Linda, 2018).

From the implementation perspective point of view, the below mentioned Figure.1 demonstrate how organizational learning and organizational agility empower organizations contribute to the development of organizational competitiveness. It shows how organizational agility strategy could be an influential instrument to foster sustainable organizational learning that allows and encourages to develop the level of organizational performance development through adaptability, accountability, openness and suppleness. Similarly, it can be said that the presence of organizational agility attributes and priorities that positively *influence on organizational competitiveness* through stimulating *Organizational Knowledge; Organizational Skills, Organizational Abilities*, i.e. *Knowledge Skills & Abilities (KSAs)* within the organization in one way which leads to promote innovative capability and business growth due to their intrinsic competences.

Furthermore, Figure.1 also depicts the significance of organizational agility that facilitate firms to compete successfully due to its initiative on innovation system with the presence of organizational learning capability. Where it specially focuses on organizational technological growth that promotes effectiveness by enhancing organizational effectiveness and increasing organizational knowledge. Confirming this matter, Lu and Ramamurthy (2011), highlighted that basically organizational agility signifies an organizations capability to deal with unexpected challenges that enable them to adopt rapid and innovative responses. Then again, Hamada and Yozgatb (2017) also pointed out that both the approaches- organizational agility and learning capability are the

most fundamental elements that play a great role on organizational survival and organizational success during technological disruption.

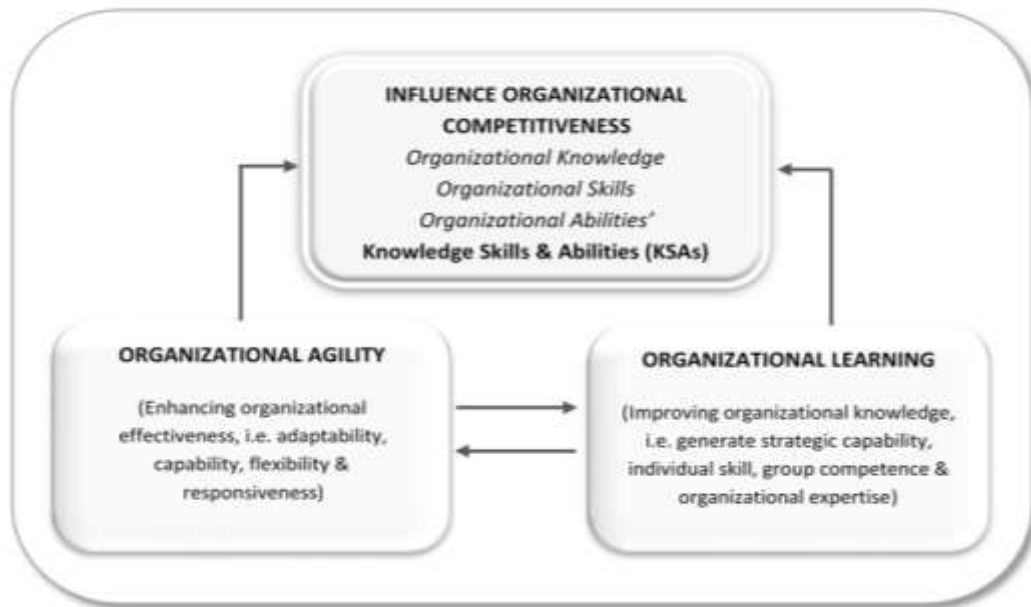


Figure 1: Relationship between organizational agility and organizational learning as key drivers for organizational competitiveness

2. Research methodology

This conceptual research predominantly articulated the amalgamation of both pragmatic evidence and inductive reasoning. Pragmatic evidence represents the methods of acquisition material and data (knowledge). Usually, inductive reasoning exhibits the degree of support in the sort of probabilistic reasoning and the groundwork of most scientific theories initiated on the contemporary approaches of organizational learning and organizational agility. This study mainly addressed the combination of both empirical evidence and inductive reasoning. Empirical argument depicts the methods of obtaining information and data (knowledge). Normally, inductive reasoning displays the degree of support in the sort of probabilistic reasoning and the foundation of most scientific theories founded on the contemporary approaches of organizational learning, agility and disruptive technological innovation.

Therefore, to understand the study within the limited time frame, the realistic phase of the knowledge about organizational agility and organizational learning capability has been done on the basis of different academic expert's, policy makers and management expert specialists opinion. Eventually, the outcomes of this study marked the development of disruptive technological initiatives and objectives of organizational learning strategies, connections between both the impressions (i.e. organizational learning and organizational agility) and their diverse priorities and characteristics that streamline the organizations technological growth and business, i.e. knowledge and innovation driven (entrepreneurial spirit and enhance 'Knowledge' for regional growth) organizational competitiveness. From global perspective point of view, organizational agility enables organizations to have prospective cooperation for potential competitive advantage.

3. Results and discussion

This study tries to investigate the prospective and convincing contribution of organizational agility as well as organizational learning priorities that stimulate organizational *knowledge and innovation capability*, that empower to gain some competitive advantages and enhance business' capacity. According to the findings of evolutionary theory of organizational learning and organizational agility process have normally given a comparative perception to us about the conceptual aspects of both the agile organizational perspectives and learning capabilities. Which show the key priorities of disruptive change and organizational development that sustain a big impact on organizational success and enhance competitive advantage.

Concerning this burning issue, it is required to accentuate that organizations innovative attitude creation is an integrated process based model of organizational learning capability and organizational agility perceptions that combines together with the technology intensive innovative learning capabilities. Equally, the challenging perception of organizational agility that has been steered in this study in order to explore the potential and its distinguishing features that enhances organizations' flexibility as well as capability and performance in relation to the implementation of organizational learning strategies through disruptive technological innovativeness (i.e. Know-what, know-why, know-how and know-who). On the other hand, from the organizational knowledge development process point of view, organizational learning can be considered as a novel approach to make changes and keep pace with the dynamically changing environment.

This impression highlights that organizational learning is a key factor in stimulating disruptive technological innovation and creativity within the organization. Therefore, the question of sustainable organizational learning and performance development becomes crucial elements in assessing and strengthening the overall development of organizational effectiveness. In order to justify, this perception of disruptive technological innovation, Schiavi and Behr (2018) specified that principally disruptive technological perception mainly influence organizations to replace their existing business models, strategies that enable them to adapt the new organizational structures that create organizational distinctive value.

3.1 The way of organizational agility and organizational learning influence on knowledge and innovation-driven organizational development

The encouraging synergetic influence of organizational agility and organizational learning capabilities (know-how) put emphasis on knowledge and innovation – driven organizational growth, i.e. (sustainable value creation process within the organization). In order to rationalize, Figure.2 illustrate whether the manifestation of organizational agility and organizational learning priorities, i.e. organizations' performance can really *influence on knowledge and innovation-driven organizational development* i.e. (the key drivers of organizational agility and Organizational learning) or not for achieving the competitive advantage; whether the distinctive features (organizational agility) and organizational learning capabilities can empower sustainable growth, social innovation and skills development support, and focus the development of innovation strategies or not; whether the organizational learning strategies (Organizational knowledge, Skills & Abilities –KSAs) can really incorporate its main novelties for enhancing organizational performance development, i.e. (technological innovation) or not.

In order to justify organizational agility and organizational learning's combined effort on organizational knowledge and capacity development, the below mentioned Figure.2 demonstrates different organizational learning phases within the organization, i.e. the priorities (individual skill, group competency and organizational expertise) relationships. This study investigates that different extents of human capital, i.e. human resources (HR) and social capital are indeed significantly influencing related to the level of organizational learning priorities. The conceptual aspects and determinant factors of both the organizational agility and organizational learning shows the key elements of organizational innovative capability development that empowers a firm's organizational competence to rapidly achieve their sustainable organizational success and enhance competitive advantage. To apprehend the significance of organizational agilities key attributes and organizational learning's key capabilities influence on disruptive technological innovation, several researchers' such as Baškarada and Koronios, (2018); Liao et al. (2019); Saha et al. (2019a) highlighted that both the approaches play a vital role on enhancing organizational knowledge development process during technological turbulence. Where, it exemplifies the best possible way an organization can meet their dynamic challenges through gaining knowledge, relationship development and presentation of knowledge, i.e. by sharing knowledge.

Furthermore, to identify the positive and negative effect of disruptive innovation within the organization, it can be said that disruptive innovations viewpoint is against the sustaining innovation which does not generate any new market rather it only facilitates to change the existing markets with higher value in association with organizational agility and organizational learning capability, which is vital for organizational development, i.e. sustainable competitive advantage. Regarding this matter, Michael Porter (1998) expresses in his 'Competitive Strategy' book that industry incumbents are always struggling in order to maintain their business with their existing customers, that influence their all existing resources, i.e. (Knowledge, skills, abilities and initiatives) in order to maintain their competitive position (Downes, and Nunes, 2013); (Minavand and Lorkojouri, 2013). On the other hand, Alegre et al (2012) also emphasized that recent study on organizations innovative capability, organisational learning process plays a great role that can deliver firms a challenging perspective with a basis to

sustain their competitive advantage. While there is an evidence in research that organisational learning affects intensively in innovation in order to evaluate its impact in organisations.

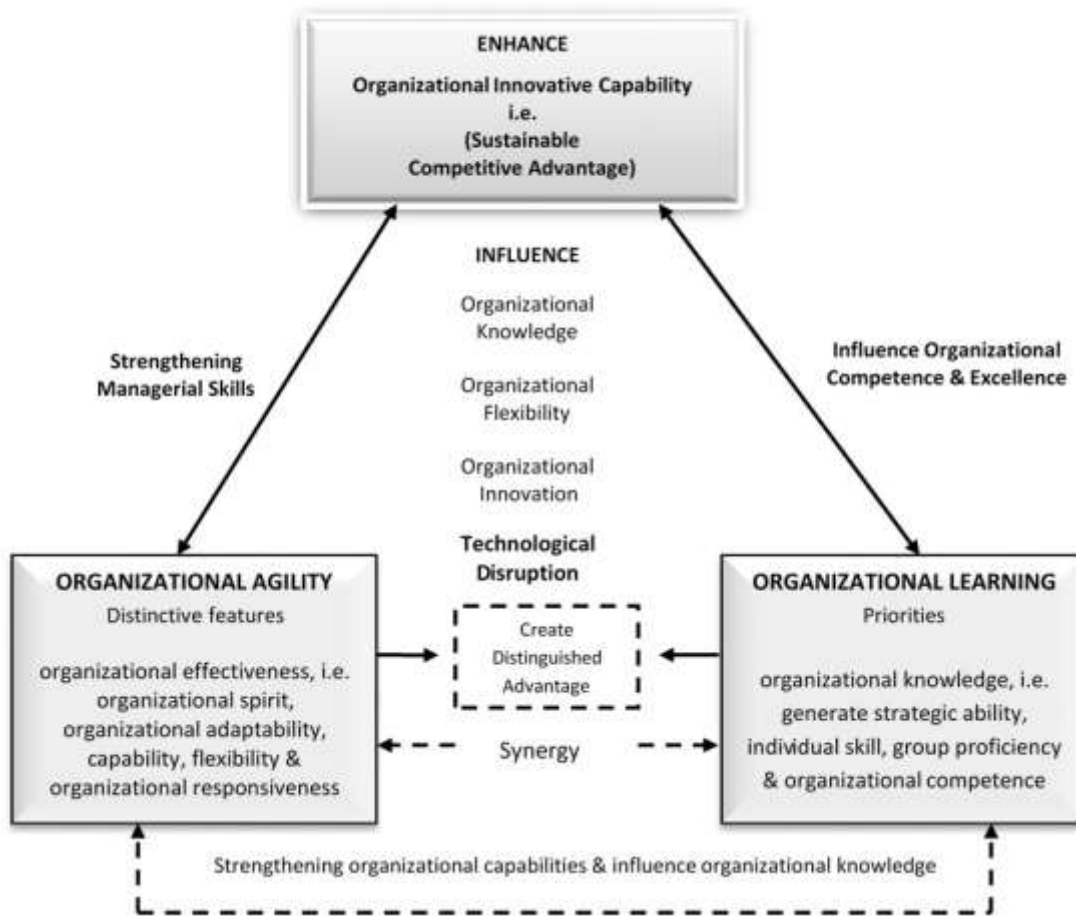


Figure 2: Thematic model of organizational agility and organizational learning influence on knowledge and innovation-driven organizational innovative capability

Simultaneously, in order to justify the significance of *organizational agility* attributes and *organizational learning* priorities influence on knowledge and innovation-driven organizational development Alexiou et al. (2019) also stated that the ability of an organization to cope with radical technological change is regarded to be heavily dependent on organizational capability, organizational knowledge development process and its driving forces that acts as an emergent phenomenon of organizational learning dynamism that creates an environment as the enabler of this combined relationship.

Therefore, it can be assumed that this study shows the way of innovation oriented organizations performance development capability with a higher impact on organisational learning capability tend to be more innovative and dynamic due to the presence organizational agility attributes.

Relating to the question of organizational agility and organizational learning strategies influence on knowledge and innovation, this study leads to recognize the following three important research propositions or RPs that enable us to comprehend the rationalization of this research intents such as:

- **RP1:** Which states that organizational agility and organizational learning are the key driving forces, priorities and stimulation of an organization to accelerate the organizational knowledge production system and its implementation, i.e. (to enrich organizational knowledge). In another way, it can be said that organizational learning can be considered as one of the main key elements of HR systems that creates value through organizational proficiency, i.e. (know-how, know-what, know-who and know-why) and individual employee’s creativity.

- *RP2:* Which indicate that organizational agility along with the key enabling factors, i.e. organizations strategic HRM perspective enable organizations to improve their existing resources (Knowledge skills and abilities) in order to survive in the long-run as well as during the turbulence period. According to authors understanding basically organizational agility is the deliberated effort of an organization to enter in to the new market condition where, they can perform their work with pleasure as well as rapidly they can update themselves with the continuously changing fragmented global environment.
- *RP3:* Which expresses that the prominence of organizational agility and implementation of organizational learning activities that reduces internal as well as external communication activities, organizations work culture, and knowledge sharing attitudes and performance-driven behaviour and their expertise gaps and deficiencies between the organizations that relieve the stress between industrialization and globalization impact through Uniqueness, i.e.(through organizational innovativeness), Responsiveness, i.e. (through organizational awareness and openness cooperative development) Motivation, i.e. through organizational commitment and urge for progress) between organizations and firms where, organizational agility and organizational learning has a significant impact on disruptive technological innovation that nowadays become a crucial factor for the successful organizational capacity and knowledge development, i.e. sustainable competitive.

In a nutshell, from the organizational knowledge development perspective point of view, organizational learning can be considered as an opportunity to make changes and keep pace with the dynamically changing environment. This impression highlights that organizational learning is a key factor in stimulating disruptive technological innovation and creativity within the organization. On the other hand, the prominence of organizational agility and implementation of organizational learning activities that reduces internal as well as external communication activities, organizations work culture, and knowledge sharing attitudes and performance-driven behaviour and their expertise gaps and deficiencies between the organizations.

4. Recommendations and conclusion

Finally, it is significant to highlight that this research suggested that the relationship between organizational learning capability and organizations flexibility eliminates the complication in organizational knowledge development. Connecting to the question of organizational learning's influence on organizational excellence and knowledge development, i.e. (Organizational innovation and competency). Precisely, this paper exposes that both organizational agility and its decision-making agile strategy play a significant role on enhancing organizational learning capability as well as innovative capability. Equally, organizational learning and organizational agility play a significant role to boost organizational innovation to adopt, accommodate and adjust themselves in a recovering way as well as in an innovative manner through an integrated focus on organizational knowledge creation, technological up gradation and knowledge distribution, i.e. through sharing knowledge.

While addressing the key positive features of organizational learning proficiency and organizational agility attributes it determines some valuable understandings and recommendations such as: organizational agility concept is a flexible process of increasing organizational knowledge and competency; organizational learning capability actually encourages to anticipate the organizational knowledge development capability that mainly depends on its existing resource (human capital); To generate the greatest effort for organizational professional capability it ensures that organization has the skilled, promised, devoted and well-motivated employees to accomplish organizational innovative capability , i.e. sustainable competitive advantage. In addition, it is necessary to mention that this paper provides an understanding of the significance of organizational learning and its effect on the occurrence of disruptive technological innovation as a novel approach. Moreover, while doing this study authors were mainly focusing and excited to study the prominence of learning at the organizational level which occurs when the firms empower to create new knowledge (i.e. innovation) enable to develop an innovative way of understanding or insight rapidly during the period of technological turbulence, (i.e. agility) that facilitates either new knowledge creation or the improvement of existing ones, (i.e. the influence of disruptive technologies up gradation or technological surveillance). Essentially, it is to be noted that organizational learning, (i.e. human resources learning capabilities, strategies within the organization) organizational agility (i.e. firm's quick adopting, adjusting and accepting capability with the changing environment) and disruptive technological innovation are significantly inter-connected.

Apart from the above mentioned discussion, this paper also intends to offer some valuable perceptions from the practical perspective point of view, where the suggested propositions might be valued for the organizations

that are assuming to anticipate themselves as a successful performance-oriented and innovation-driven organization. Wherever, they tried to accept the organizational agility concept along with organizational learning phases (exploitative and exploratory learning initiatives) in order to create organizational innovation and competency, i.e. (competitive advantage).

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