

The relation between adhocracy and change readiness of employees

MSc Business Administration
University of Twente

Supervisors

dr. J.R. Wijnmaalen
dr. J.G. Meijerink MSc

Minou Kamphuis (s2537281)
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Summary

Organizations must continuously adapt to stay competitive, with unsuccessful or absent change often leading to being outperformed by competitors. Change readiness of employees plays a crucial role in the success of organizational transformations, as it directly affects both individual and organizational performance. While adhocracy is linked to increased change readiness, the specific aspects of this structure that influence change readiness remain unclear. Therefore, the research question of this research is: "Which aspects of adhocracy influence the change readiness of employees?"

To answer this research question, a multiple case study was conducted across three different organizations with adhocracy structure, all of which were undergoing a change at the time. In each organization, three employees who were directly affected by the change were interviewed. The interviews revealed that communication, multidisciplinary teams, decentralized decision-making, and a flat structure facilitate the access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change, which positively impact the sense of appropriateness and efficacy of employees. Additionally, decentralized decision-making and a flat structure foster a sense of being valued, enhancing the sense of appropriateness of employees. Unclear job descriptions were found to increase role ambiguity, negatively affecting perceptions of management support. Personal valence, however, does not seem to be influenced by the adhocracy structure. It was also concluded that organizational culture acts as a moderator in various relationships. When examining change readiness of employees, not only the organizational structure should be considered, but also other contextual factors.

Table of contents

Summary	1
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Theoretical framework	5
2.1 Change readiness.....	5
2.2 Organizational structure	6
2.3 Mintzberg’s framework for organizational structures.....	6
2.4 The relation between adhocracy and change readiness of employees	8
3. Methods	10
3.1 Research design.....	10
3.2 Cases.....	10
3.2.1 Case selection criteria.....	10
3.2.2 Case access	10
3.2.3 Case description	11
3.2.4 Participants.....	11
3.3 Data collection.....	11
3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews	11
3.3.2 Validity and reliability	13
3.4 Data analysis.....	13
3.4.1 Data analysis method	13
3.4.2 Validity and reliability	15
4. Results	16
4.1 Access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change	16
4.2 Sense of being valued	19
4.3 Role ambiguity	20
4.4 Organizational culture.....	22
4.5 Research model.....	24
5 Discussion	25
5.1 Theoretical relevance.....	25
5.2 Practical relevance	28
5.3 Limitations.....	29
5.4 Conclusion.....	30
References	31
Appendix.....	38

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly changing world, there is an ongoing need for change. Organizations must continuously adapt and evolve to ensure their survival (Da Ros et al., 2023; Peng et al., 2020). Consequently, companies implement moderate to major changes at least every four to five years (Rafferty et al., 2012). Unsuccessful organizational change, or the absence of it, can result in being outperformed by competitors (Wang et al., 2020). Organizational change refers to a *“relatively enduring alternation of the present state of an organization or its components or interrelationships amongst the components, and their differential and integrated functions totally or partially, in order to attain greater viability in the context of the present and anticipated future environment”* (Ott, 1996, p. 81).

To ensure the success of changes, it is crucial that employees are ready for change (Da Ros et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2020). Change readiness is described as *“the extent to which an individual or individuals are cognitively and emotionally inclined to accept, embrace, and adopt a particular plan to purposefully alter the status quo”* (Holt et al., 2007, p. 235). To operationalize this, we use four components of change readiness; appropriateness, efficacy, management support, and personal valence (Holt et al., 2007). The change readiness of employees has been identified as a crucial factor in determining the success or failure of change (Zayim & Kondakci, 2014). When employees do not embrace and support change, organizations cannot succeed in implementing it (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Milella et al., 2021; Will & Mueller, 2020). Change readiness directly affects employee performance, which influences organizational performance (Indriastuti & Fachrunnisa, 2020). We know that around 40% of all changes in organizations fail (Castellion & Markham, 2012; Freisinger & McCarthy, 2024; Heidenreich & Kraemer, 2015), indicating that there is no single best approach to manage change effectively (Burnes, 1996; Sullivan-Taylor & Branicki, 2011).

As modern society is continuously changing, it necessitates organizations with an organic structure and highly decentralized decision-making, because this structure allows organizations to adapt quickly to shifting circumstances. Adhocracy meets both of these requirements (De Waal, 1993; Lazarević & Mosurović, 2023). It relies on multidisciplinary teams of highly trained experts, frequently forming new teams to tackle specific goals (Lunenberg, 2012). Besides decentralized decision-making and multidisciplinary teams, adhocracy is characterized by advanced communication, a flat organizational structure, limited regulation, and unclear job descriptions (Holt et al., 2007). Since employees often belong to multiple teams simultaneously and their responsibilities constantly shift, it is essential that they are ready for change. In addition, adhocracy requires employees to manage ambiguity and uncertainty in their dynamic and unpredictable environment (Parikh, 2016). It is crucial for employees

to be adaptable and proactive, as strategies and processes are frequently adjusted. Their change readiness is essential in navigating these continual shifts (Wang et al., 2020).

The structure of an organization tends to influence employees' behavior (Babalola, 2018). Organizational structure refers to *"the formal configuration between individuals and groups regarding the allocation of tasks, responsibilities, and authority within the organization"* (Lunenburg, 2012, p. 1). It was found that there is a positive link between adhocracy and change readiness, attributing this to the flexibility of adhocracy and its empowerment of employees to take initiative in addressing change-related issues (Haffar et al., 2013). However, it is unclear which characteristics of adhocracy influence the different components of change readiness; appropriateness, efficacy, management support, and personal valence. Moreover, it is possible that not all four components of change readiness are equally affected by the characteristics of adhocracy, raising questions about the extent and boundaries of this relationship. Understanding these nuances is essential for managers, as it enables them to make informed decisions about structural changes and tailor their approach to different facets of change readiness (Shah et al., 2017). By doing so, they can recognize employees' strengths, identify areas that require additional support, and ensure that organizational transformations are effectively managed.

This results in the following research question: "Which aspects of adhocracy influence the change readiness of employees?" To answer this research question, interviews will be conducted with three organizations that have adhocracy structure and are currently undergoing change.

This research provides valuable insights into how the different components of change readiness of employees is influenced by various characteristics of adhocracy, which is crucial for the successful implementation of change. By identifying which characteristics of adhocracy enhance the different components of change readiness of employees, managers can develop more effective strategies to prepare their workforce for change, thereby reducing the likelihood of failure in change initiatives and increasing the overall success rate of organizational transformations. This allows for an evaluation of which components of change readiness could still be improved in adhocracy.

Besides that, this study contributes to the theory of change readiness, by exploring the influence of different characteristics of adhocracy on the different components of change readiness, enriching the existing knowledge. The findings can serve as a basis for future research on change readiness, encouraging further studies on how various organizational structures impact change processes.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Change readiness

Change readiness is a multifaceted construct that has been defined in various ways across the literature, reflecting different levels of analysis and viewpoints. Eby et al. (2000) defined readiness as *“an individual’s perception of a specific facet of his or her work environment—the extent to which the organization is perceived to be ready for change”* (p. 422). Cunningham et al. (2002) expand on this by incorporating elements of self-efficacy and participation, defining readiness as *“a demonstrable need for change, a sense of one’s ability to successfully accomplish change (self-efficacy) and an opportunity to participate in the change process”* (p. 377). The definition of Jones et al. (2005) focusses on the positive views employees hold regarding change: *“The notion of readiness for change can be defined as the extent to which employees hold positive views about the need for organizational change (i.e., change acceptance), as well as the extent to which employees believe that such changes are likely to have positive implications for themselves and the wider organization”* (p. 362).

Armenakis et al. (1993) provided the most frequently cited discussion of change readiness, defining it as an individual's *“beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization’s capacity to successfully undertake those changes”* (p. 681). Although this definition does not consider the emotional aspects of change readiness, more recent discussions have recognized the importance of these components. For instance, Holt, Armenakis, Feild, and Harris describe change readiness as *“the extent to which an individual or individuals are cognitively and emotionally inclined to accept, embrace, and adopt a particular plan to purposefully alter the status quo”* (Holt et al., 2007, p. 235). This is the definition that will be used in this research.

To operationalize change readiness of employees, I use four components (Holt et al., 2007). The first component is *appropriateness*, which refers to the belief that change is necessary for the organization. Employees need to recognize that the current situation is inadequate and that improvements can only be made through change. The second component is *efficacy*, which relates to the belief that the change can be successfully implemented. This reflects the confidence employees have in their own abilities, as well as the resources available to them, to carry out the change effectively. Another important component is *management support*. This involves the belief that organizational leaders are fully committed to the change and will provide the necessary support. When employees see that management is actively involved and backing the initiative, their own readiness to participate often increases. Lastly, *personal valence* is the belief that the change will offer personal benefits. Employees are more likely to accept and support a change if they see how it will positively affect their own roles

or work experiences. By understanding and assessing these factors, managers can more effectively initiate and implement organizational change (Holt et al., 2007).

These four components can be affective or cognitive. Cognitive is based on belief, while affective is based on feeling (Verplanken et al., 1998). A study of Breckler and Wiggins (1989) show that human behavior is generally influenced by both components. However, I interpret all four components of change readiness—appropriateness, efficacy, management support, and personal valence—as being cognitive in nature. They are based on beliefs and convictions about the necessity of change, confidence in successful implementation, management support, and personal benefits. That said, efficacy can also have an affective dimension, as employees may experience emotions such as anxiety, doubt, or enthusiasm about their ability to adapt to the change. Similarly, personal valence is not purely cognitive—it can evoke emotional responses. Anticipation of benefits may lead to excitement and motivation, while concerns about potential negative consequences may trigger resistance or anxiety (Verplanken et al., 1998).

2.2 Organizational structure

Organizational structure refers to *“the formal configuration between individuals and groups regarding the allocation of tasks, responsibilities, and authority within the organization”* (Lunenberg, 2012, p. 1). The structure remains a fundamental component in defining how an organization operates and is governed (Galván, 2019). Structure also represents a sophisticated combination of the relationships among organizational elements that define the philosophy of organizational activities. From a systematic perspective, an organization’s structure consists of both tangible (such as groups and hierarchical units) and intangible (such as the relationships between these groups and units) elements (Ahmady et al., 2016).

2.3 Mintzberg’s framework for organizational structures

Mintzberg (1980) developed a framework for organizational structures, in which five different structures are discussed. These structures can be differentiated along three dimensions: (1) the key part of the organization, (2) the prime coordinating mechanism, and (3) the type of decentralization (see Table 1).

Organizational Structure	Key Part of Organization	Prime Coordinating Mechanism	Type of Decentralization
Simple structure	Strategic apex	Direct supervision	Vertical and horizontal centralization
Machine bureaucracy	Technostructure	Standardization of work processes	Limited and horizontal decentralization
Professional bureaucracy	Operating core	Standardization of skills	Vertical and horizontal decentralization
Divisionalized form	Middle line	Standardization of outputs	Limited vertical decentralization
Adhocracy	Support staff	Mutual adjustment	Selective decentralization

Table 1. Mintzberg's Five Organizational Structures (Lunenberg, 2012, p. 4).

The key parts of an organization could be: The strategic apex, known as the top management, which includes senior executives overseeing the organization's direction; The operative core, consisting of frontline workers directly involved in producing goods or delivering services; Middle management, or the middle line, comprising supervisors and lower-level managers who coordinate operations; The technostructure, which encompasses specialized analysts such as engineers, accountants, and planners embedded in functional departments like research and development, finance, and human resources; Support staff, providing indirect services such as maintenance, administrative support, legal counsel, and other essential functions that sustain daily operations (Lunenberg, 2012).

The prime coordinating mechanism includes the following: Direct supervision, one person oversees the work of others. This concept is aligned with the principles of unity of command and the hierarchical chain of authority; Standardization of work processes, occurs when the tasks are predefined or regulate; Standardization of skills, happens when the required training for a job is clearly defined; Standardization of output, is in place when the expected outcomes of work are clearly defined; Mutual adjustment, occurs when tasks are coordinated through informal communication (Lunenberg, 2012).

The third and last dimension is the type of decentralization. This includes: Vertical decentralization, the delegation of power down the organizational hierarchy, allowing both higher-level and lower-level members to share authority in decision-making; Horizontal decentralization, the degree to which decision-making is shared between non-administrative personnel (including staff), distributing authority between line managers and staff members; Selective decentralization, the distribution of decision-making authority to specific units within the organization (Lunenberg, 2012).

2.3.1 Adhocracy

Adhocracy represents a modern organizational structure that functions in an environment that is constantly changing and complex, requiring innovation of a relatively advanced level. This forces the organization to utilize multidisciplinary teams composed of highly trained experts from diverse fields (Lunenberg, 2012; Mintzberg & McHugh, 1985). New teams are frequently created to tackle specific

goals, and once those goals are achieved, the teams are dissolved. Employees often belong to multiple teams simultaneously, causing their responsibilities to continually shift as they focus on different goals. Managing such a dynamic environment necessitates advanced communication and coordination systems (De Waal, 1993). Since adhocracy is particularly effective in dynamic and complex environments that demand creativity and flexibility, it is commonly found in modern sectors such as consulting, advertising, electronics, and research and development (Lunenberg, 2012).

In adhocracy, coordination is primarily achieved through mutual adjustment, supported by semiformal structures such as intermediary roles and standing committees. The organization avoids coordination through direct supervision and standardization, as well as the formal elements that typically support these, such as hierarchy, performance controls, and strict rules. Instead, decision-making is "selectively" decentralized, meaning that influence is based on expertise rather than positional authority (Lunenberg, 2012; Mintzberg & McHugh, 1985). This approach facilitates quick and effective decision-making, with active involvement from participants in the process (De Waal, 1993).

In a rapidly changing world, characterized by constant flux both in developed and developing areas, adhocracy proves invaluable (De Waal, 1993). Naranjo-Valencia et al. (2016) observed that adaptability and flexibility are essential for fostering innovation. They concluded that adhocracy is therefore the most suitable solution for organizations focused on innovation, as it effectively supports both adaptability and flexibility. Additionally, Khurosani (2013) argued that adhocracy enhances freedom and encourages initiatives, which are crucial for creating a competitive advantage for an organization.

However, conflict is an inherent aspect of adhocracy, as confusion and ambiguity are prevalent conditions. This can arise from the lack of clearly defined job roles. Additionally, the often ambiguous authoritative relationships and frequently disorganized lines of communication contribute to uncertainty among employees within the organization (De Waal, 1993).

Thus, the characteristics of adhocracy are: communication, decentralized decision-making, flat organizational structure, unclear job descriptions, limited regulations, and multidisciplinary teams.

2.4 The relation between adhocracy and change readiness of employees

Many studies have found a positive relationship between adhocracy and change readiness (Haffar et al., 2013, 2014; Olafsen et al., 2020; Tsalits & Kismono, 2019; Vodonick, 2018). Haffar et al. (2013) attribute this connection to the nature of adhocracy, where all employees are empowered to take initiative on change-related issues. In such a structure, mistakes are tolerated, and constructive feedback is embraced, fostering a strong readiness for change. Vodonick (2018) argue that the high

level of change readiness in adhocracy is due to its inherent flexibility and its ability to respond swiftly and effectively to disruptions in the system caused by changes in the environment. Similarly, Olafsen et al. (2020) suggest that this flexibility is a key factor contributing to change readiness. De Waal (1993) further suggests that employees are able to adapt more quickly to changes because they are accustomed to working in multidisciplinary teams for short periods.

However, these studies do not specify which particular aspects of adhocracy influence the various components of change readiness. It is even possible that not every component of change readiness is influenced by the characteristics of adhocracy. This is important to know so that managers can address the different characteristics of the organizational structure during a change process (Shah et al., 2017). In this way, they can identify where the strengths of the employees lie and where extra attention is needed.

It is expected that decentralized decision-making, a flat organizational structure, multidisciplinary teams, and communication will positively influence all four components of change readiness; appropriateness, efficacy, management support, and personal valence. Appropriateness increases as employees better understand the necessity of change through open communication and diverse perspectives, while it is expected that efficacy increases when they have autonomy, access to cross-functional expertise, and reduced bureaucratic barriers, boosting their confidence in implementing change. Management support will become more visible in a transparent and participatory environment, reinforcing trust in leadership's commitment. Personal valence improves as employees recognize direct benefits from their involvement, such as growth opportunities and role enhancements.

Additionally, it is expected that role distribution has a positive impact on personal valence, as employees are given a lot of freedom in their roles, which allows them to experience personal benefits during the change. Due to the minimal regulation in an adhocracy, employees are likely to feel a great sense of creative freedom and confidence in the success of the change, which can positively impact efficacy.

3. Methods

3.1 Research design

The aim of this study is to examine the relation between the characteristics of adhocracy and the different components of change readiness of employees. To address the research question, multiple case study research is an appropriate qualitative methodology (Gustafsson, 2017). This approach allows for a deep understanding of change readiness within its real-world setting while also identifying which aspects of that setting are associated with change readiness. This method provides a comprehensive perspective that is crucial for analyzing intricate organizational dynamics (Yin, 2018). Multiple case study was chosen to enhance the generalizability of the theory. The three cases in this study represent different change processes within an adhocracy. However, not every case may exhibit all characteristics of an adhocracy. By analyzing three cases, a broader perspective is gained, allowing for stronger generalization (Yin, 2009). If only a single case were included in the study, certain characteristics of an adhocracy might remain underexplored, limiting the depth of the analysis.

This study was conducted in the Netherlands in November and December 2024. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethics committee of the BMS faculty at the University of Twente with reference number 240890.

3.2 Cases

3.2.1 Case selection criteria

Inclusion criteria for the cases are as follows:

- Classified as adhocracy, based on Mintzberg's framework
- Has a department that is undergoing an organizational change, as defined by Ott (1996)

Based on these criteria, three cases in three different organizations were selected.

3.2.2 Case access

The three organizations were contacted via existing network. When approaching organizations, it was made clear that the organizations would benefit from participating in this study. They could gain insights into what characteristics of their organizational structure positively influence the change readiness of their employees. It was also emphasized that the organization's name would remain anonymous at all times, and the study would not evaluate whether the change was implemented correctly or incorrectly.

3.2.3 Case description

The first case selected for this study focuses on an accountancy firm. This organization is selected because of their flat structure, decentralized decision-making, and multi-disciplinary teams. The department that is interviewed is currently undergoing a substantial transition. This transformation is driven by a change in management, which has led to a shift in the department's working methods.

The second case examined in this study involves a logistics and construction company. The organization is selected because of their flat structure, decentralized decision-making, and multi-disciplinary teams. This organization is undergoing a major transformation due to the merger of two companies. As a result, many roles have either been altered or discontinued, and the way of working has changed for many employees.

The third case in this study focuses on a consulting and technology company. This organization is selected because of the decentralized decision-making, flat organizational structure, multi-disciplinary teams, and unclear job descriptions. It has recently undergone a strategic shift, aiming to deliver greater value to its customers. As part of this transformation, the entire management layer has been replaced to align with the new strategic direction.

3.2.4 Participants

There are also inclusion criteria for the participants:

- The outcome of the change affects the employee
- Is able to speak Dutch, so there will be no language barriers

The researcher selected three participants per case. The three participants were from the same department and were not selected based on their role.

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Interviewing is valuable because it offers a complete overview, and delivers in-depth insights from participants, while also giving interviewees the opportunity to speak in their own voice and share their personal thoughts and feelings (Alshenqeeti, 2014). The interviews were semi-structured to inquire about the characteristics of adhocracy and the components of change readiness while also allowing the freedom to respond to the answers given by the respondents. A certain level of structure was necessary to ensure that the components of change readiness were explicitly addressed. However, a fully structured interview would have left little room to explore other relevant characteristics that might

emerge during the conversations (Zeigler-Hill & Shackelford, 2020). See Appendix A for the interview guide.

All nine interviews were conducted in person in Dutch to avoid any language barriers, allowing everyone to express themselves clearly. The interviews were conducted at the participants' workplace to minimize additional travel time. During the interview, the participant and interviewer sat across from each other with a table or desk between them, on which a visual aid was placed, see Appendix B. This visual aid presented the characteristics of an adhocracy (outlined in the Theoretical framework) in a neutral way, avoiding overly leading language. For example, instead of stating "flat organizational structure," it simply said "hierarchy." Additionally, the guide featured three bullet points, which were explained to the interviewee as placeholders for open contributions.

Before starting the interview, participants were asked to read and sign the consent form, which the interviewer provided, see Appendix C. By signing the form, participants consented to take part in the interview and agreed to have the session audio recorded. It was explicitly stated that all information would remain confidential and be processed anonymously, with the audio recordings deleted after the study and the transcripts securely stored for ten years.

The interviews started with a short introduction about the research purpose. To put the participant at ease, a casual conversation was initiated first. The audio recording was started, and verbal consent for the recording was requested. It was explained that all the questions during the interview would focus on the change that the department is currently undergoing. First, the participant was asked if they could tell something about the change. Next, the participant was asked which word from the visual aid they find most applicable during the change and what he or she could tell about it. Then, the participant was repeatedly asked which word he or she wanted to discuss. For every word, an example was requested.

The researcher monitored to ensure that the words related to the four aspects of change readiness (appropriateness, efficacy, management support and personal valence) were covered in-depth during the interview. At the end, the researcher asked if the participant had anything else to add. Finally, participants were thanked for their contributions and were asked if they would like to receive the final report of this research, and those interested provided their email addresses.

The interviews lasted between 20 and 35 minutes. Allowing for in-depth exploration of the research subjects while being considerate of employees' availability. In total, there were approximately four hours and fifteen minutes of interviews.

3.3.2 Validity and reliability

The first bias that arises is social desirability, which may affect participants' responses. In this case, they tend to answer questions in ways they believe will be viewed favorably by others. Employees may distort information due to concerns that their responses can be traced back to them, allowing their supervisor or the project owner to read their answers. This can affect their job security, performance evaluations, or relationships with supervisors, leading them to provide answers they view as more suitable or politically correct. Qualitative research is particularly susceptible to this bias, potentially resulting in distorted conclusions about the phenomenon under study (Bispo Junior, 2022). To address this problem, participants were reassured that their responses are only for research purposes and will be completely anonymized.

Due to the inclusion criterion of "Is able to speak Dutch", linguistic inclusion takes place (Gist-Mackey & Kingsford, 2020). This means that it is assumed that most of the employees' native language is Dutch, although this may not be the case. This may result in some employees being excluded from the study who could have provided valuable insights.

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Data analysis method

The recordings were transcribed using the software Amberscript. The transcriptions captured every spoken word verbatim, including 'uh' and stuttering, to preserve the exact words of the participants and facilitate detailed analysis (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). All transcripts were anonymized, removing any personal references and the name of the organization. Each participant was assigned a research number to ensure anonymity. Upon completion, the original audio recordings were deleted. The transcriptions were securely stored online at the University of Twente for ten years.

To analyze the data, the Gioia method was used in the software tool ATLAS.ti 23. This method was chosen over other qualitative analysis approaches because it provides a systematic and rigorous structure for organizing complex data while ensuring transparency and theoretical depth. It balances empirical insights with theoretical development (Magnani & Gioia, 2023). This method involves three essential stages, see table 2 for a selection of the coding. Firstly, creating analytic codes and categories that capture 1st-order (informant-centered) codes and 2nd-order (theory-centered) themes and aggregate dimensions, see Appendix D. Secondly, developing a grounded theoretical model through constant comparison of data across informants. Lastly, presenting study findings via a detailed, data-based narrative using 2nd-order themes and aggregated dimensions, supported by frequent reference to employees' quotations (Magnani & Gioia, 2023).

Interviewee	Quotes	First order codes	Second order codes	Aggregate dimensions
1	Uhm, I think we do have the resources because there's just a lot of diverse knowledge within the organization. And, uhm, we're also specialized in areas like HR or IT or things like that.	Multidisciplinary teams contribute to having extensive knowledge during the change	Through multidisciplinary teams, employees from different departments and roles interact with each other and have access to timely, accurate, and relevant information	Communication, multidisciplinary teams, a flat organizational structure, and decentralized decision-making have a positive impact on appropriateness and efficacy
6	Yes, multidisciplinary teams are definitely a thing as well. Uhm, here you work more within a different kind of structure, so from start to finish, like delivering materials, there are many teams involved, and they work more or less crisscross through each other. They're not, well, they are departments, but you need to collaborate more to reach a good decision. And what you saw in the other organization was, yeah, everyone just stuck to their own department.			
1	But I also think that within the multidisciplinary teams we have, it is possible to have shorter lines of communication, where team members can support each other through such a change. For example, a personnel and organization advisor often has a better understanding of the importance of an organizational change than a payroll administrator, who is more focused on other tasks. So, in this way, there is discussion within the teams about the importance of the change and how we are going to implement it.			
1	But I do think that within the multidisciplinary teams we have, it's possible to have shorter lines of communication, where team members can support each other through such a change. A personnel and organization advisor often has a better understanding of the importance of an organizational change, in this case, than a payroll administrator, who is more focused on other tasks. So, in this way, there is discussion within the teams about the importance of the change and how we are going to implement it.	Multidisciplinary teams facilitate communication across various roles and departments during change		
1	Yes, I think the role distribution and multidisciplinary teams are also very visible in this. Uhm, within the department, we have several different teams, which are based on the ongoing projects and also per client. For each client, there is a personnel and payroll advisor, a personnel and organization advisor, and a payroll administrator involved. And, uhm, in these changes, not everyone is equally involved. For some, it has more of an impact than for others, especially because some still have a team leader.			
3	And with the person who temporarily took over, agreements were made quite quickly about how we were going to approach it. It was just once a month, a VTO (professional technical meeting) with all the advisors together. And if the topics were more related to personnel and organization, well, you just had to deal with it, because you also had to think along about those matters. Yeah, that was just the most practical way of approaching it. And those agreements were made fairly quickly, so in that sense, it was also communicated by the new leader and the most current change.			

Table 2. Selection of the coding.

3.4.2 Validity and reliability

Audio recordings do not capture body language, emotions, and other non-verbal cues that might be important in interpreting participants' responses (Rizwan Beg et al., 2013). To ensure that these nuances were not overlooked, the interviewer specifically addressed these elements during the interview to guarantee their inclusion in the transcripts.

4. Results

4.1 Access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change

4.1.1 Communication

The results demonstrate that communication is critical in the access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change, which positively influences the appropriateness of employees. Clear and transparent communication about the change helped employees recognize that the current situation was inadequate and that improvement could only be achieved through change. Interviewees expressed that they valued understanding the rationale behind the change, the process through which it would be implemented, and the objectives set for the near future, as highlighted by one interviewee who stated:

"You must communicate why we want to create value and what we aim to achieve ..." – Interviewee 2

Employees noted that open communication also boosted their confidence in their abilities and the resources available to implement the change effectively, thereby enhancing their efficacy. They attributed this confidence to the wealth of timely and relevant information accessible through well-established communication channels. Employees highlighted that having a clear understanding of the change made them feel more prepared to navigate the transformation. It also reduced uncertainty and fostered alignment, with one participant noting:

"We weren't always surprised by, well, this happened again, that happened. No, it was communicated from higher up." – Interviewee 4

However, the results also reveal significant communication challenges, particularly due to fragmented efforts across departments or locations. Several interviewees described poor or insufficient communication, leading to confusion. For instance, one participant remarked:

"That's really the only thing that bothered me. Because, yes, imagine if communication had been there, it would have all made perfect sense." – Interviewee 7

Such shortcomings hinder employees' understanding of and engagement with the change process, highlighting the importance of cohesive and inclusive communication strategies to enhance change readiness.

4.1.2 Multidisciplinary teams

Interviewees emphasized that multidisciplinary teams play a vital role in offering a diverse range of expertise during organizational change. They noted that by bringing together employees from various functions such as HR, IT, and payroll, these teams create a wealth of timely, accurate, and relevant knowledge that becomes accessible to all. This cross-departmental collaboration enables employees to discuss the significance of the change and its broader implications, providing them with valuable insight into what is happening beyond their own department. As a result, the flow of information increases, helping employees gain a clearer understanding of the necessity of the change:

"But I also think that within the multidisciplinary teams we have, it is possible to have shorter lines of communication within your team, where team members can support each other during such a change. Because a personnel and organization advisor often has a better understanding of the importance of, in this case, an organizational change, than a payroll administrator who is more focused on other tasks. So, in that way, there is communication within the teams about the importance of the change and how we are going to implement it." – Interviewee 1

Additionally, this available information ensures that employees feel confident in their skills and the resources to successfully implement the change:

"Uh, I think we do have the resources because there is simply a lot of different knowledge available. And, um, also specialized knowledge in areas like HR or IT, or things like that." – Interviewee 6

4.1.3 Short lines of communication

The results also highlight the significant role of a flat organizational structure and decentralized decision-making in ensuring access to timely, accurate, and relevant information. Employees indicated that the absence of hierarchical barriers ensures clarity about organizational changes, as they can directly seek clarification if they do not understand certain aspects:

"For example, she had monthly check-ins, so one-on-one meetings with us as advisors. Because of that, she got to know what we were dealing with, like what we were working on." – Interviewee 3

Employees expressed that the presence of short communication lines facilitates the flow of information, supporting a better understanding of change processes as they feel encouraged to engage with management and seek the necessary information. This dynamic also emphasizes the importance of management actively participating in the change, as employees observe and align with their actions. Besides that, the results reveal that decentralized decision-making plays a crucial role in helping employees understand the change process. By involving employees directly in the decision-making

process, they gain a clearer understanding of the change and the reason behind it. This consistent engagement fosters a sense of collective commitment, as employees actively participate, observe, and encourage each other's involvement, further strengthening their connection to the process:

"And if you look at being aware of what [name of colleague] and others are working on, I regularly join in as well. Just to share my ideas, my knowledge, and what I've observed over time. And of course, I know the company [name organization] quite well too. So, it's about figuring out together how we can organize things in the best possible way." – Interviewee 8

Another key finding is the informal culture in adhocracy. Although some hierarchical layers exist, employees pointed out that the organizational culture remains highly informal, promoting openness and transparency. The flat organizational structure, and decentralized decision-making support this transparency by promoting mutual understanding and collaboration:

"Yes, yes, that also has a lot to do with the culture, because [name of the organization] is a relatively flat organization, so there are hierarchical layers, but you can easily move through them. It's not director this, director that, it's just 'hey there', and that's really nice." – Interviewee 2

Employees indicated that having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information involves not only listening, but also actively seeking out information themselves. Due to the short communication lines with management, this is possible:

"Yes, yes, you do need to gather that [information about the change] as well. You have to make sure you stay informed..." – Interviewee 2

Additionally, the direct line to management empowers employees to express their needs and concerns, ensuring that the resources and support required for successful change implementation are made available:

"And so, uh, every two to three weeks we also have a conversation about that. About how do you want it, how do you want to see your team, and uh, what do you find important, and uh, can you handle it all?" – Interviewee 4

"Uh oh. So, they really asked in detail what you needed?" – Interviewer

"Yes, yes, yes, yes. Absolutely, absolutely, absolutely." – Interviewee 4

4.2 Sense of being valued

4.2.1 Decentralized decision-making

The findings highlight that an employees' sense of being valued is closely tied to their involvement in decision-making processes. Several interviewees noted that being asked for their input, even when not directly required, made them feel that their opinions mattered and contributed to the organization. This active involvement led to a sense of added value, as employees felt that their contributions could shape outcomes and were considered in decision-making processes:

"I think that's what makes working here pleasant. It's not like when you come up with a certain point or idea, they don't appreciate it. ... I do think that you can achieve a lot if you have certain ideas or whatever, and you present them." – Interviewee 4

This involvement ensures that employees better understand and support the change. In addition to the sense of being valued, employees also expressed that decentralized decision-making fostered a greater sense of responsibility. After initial communication from management, employees were given the autonomy to shape the course of action, which made them feel valued and empowered. This autonomy supports ownership, and engagement, reinforcing their commitment to the organization and the success of the change process:

"But initially, I was asked what I would do. So, I also indicated that I feel, as a relatively junior employee, that the decision lies with me... So, uh, yes, in that sense, you are definitely included." – Interviewee 3

4.2.2 Flat structure

The findings reveal that a flat organizational structure plays a crucial role in enhancing employees' sense of being valued, as they enable direct interactions with management, creating an environment where employees feel involved in the change process:

"Yes, that's the hierarchy, but it's not so much about boss and employee, rather about the leaders and the employees. And they are still on the same page." – Interviewee 7

In addition, an innovative culture was identified as an element in making employees feel more involved and valued. This cultural shift towards innovation cultivates a more inclusive atmosphere, encouraging employees to actively participate in shaping the organization's direction, while ensuring they are treated equitably.

4.3 Role ambiguity

4.3.1 Poor communication between different departments

The interviewees revealed significant challenges stemming from poor communication between different departments, which led to a lack of alignment and mutual understanding across the organization. One key issue was the presence of distinct cultures within various departments, which often hindered the change. Employees reported that these cultural differences created friction, as what worked effectively in one department could fail entirely in another. This misalignment not only complicated the process of change but also contributed to resistance, frustration, and delays:

"And also culture, right? Culture was still the biggest issue because we went from, well, three cultures to two cultures. Yes, and those two cultures still don't work perfectly together because, let's say, [name of company] was all about building materials." – Interviewee 6

Additionally, the results highlights inconsistent management practices across departments. Interviewees indicated that while some departments operated under a structured and directive leadership style, others embraced more autonomous and flexible approaches. This inconsistency led to confusion among employees, who found it challenging to reconcile the differing expectations and management styles when collaborating across departmental boundaries:

"But [name organization] has different business units. You have, for example, society as a business unit, engineering as a business unit, and there are a few others. And now [name organization] is one company, but we are also six business units, six different business units that are not all managed in the same way from the headquarters in Paris. And for engineering, for example, [name client] is an extremely important client, so that is very important, and there is always focus on that. But for Infrastructure Services, for example, which also includes cybersecurity, [name client] is not such a big client. ... And there's tension around that." – Interviewee 2

Another significant factor contributing to the ambiguity was the existence of conflicting interests between departments. Employees indicated that many departments prioritized their own goals, often at the expense of broader organizational cohesion. This tendency to focus on individual departmental objectives resulted in fragmented decision-making and a lack of unified direction. Employees described the dynamic as one where each department was pulling in its own direction, further exacerbating communication challenges and undermining collective efforts:

"I think especially during a change, it would be better communicated with, uh. I sometimes get the feeling that it stays a bit within one department, while it needs to be supported more broadly."

– Interviewee 5

Due to the lack of consistent practices across different departments, employees perceived the management support as inadequate:

"Do you think the involvement and support of management in this case were properly handled during the change?" – Interviewer

"No. And this is related to the way all those different business units operate. In my view, it has to do with the way each of these business units is managed slightly differently." – Interviewee 2

4.3.2 Unformalized job descriptions

The lack of formalized job descriptions emerged as a significant factor contributing to ambiguity during the organizational change process. Without clear role definitions, communication between departments and employees became less effective, as it was unclear who was responsible for specific tasks.

Moreover, interviewees indicated that the flat organizational structure exacerbated this issue, as not everyone felt accountable for driving the change. They reported that the absence of defined roles created uncertainty about whether they should take the lead or defer to others, leading to disengagement and a lack of initiative. They also noted that this ambiguity in job roles contributed to their perception that management support was lacking. With vague job descriptions, employees struggled to understand who to turn to for guidance or decision-making. They even indicated that the management layer was often missing:

"But what contributes to that [poor communication about the change]? Is it the flat organizational structure?" – Interviewer

"Uhm, yes, it's that not everyone is always involved, so to speak. And that you don't have a management layer in between that can, so to speak, prepare for the material to come to us."

– Interviewee 6

On the other hand, some employees saw the lack of formalized roles as an opportunity for flexibility, enabling them to adapt to the changing needs of the organization. However, they also indicated that this flexibility is challenging to manage effectively:

"And so, there are many people within [name of organization] who are actually all just slightly on the edges of their roles. This creates a lot of dynamics, but it also makes it very difficult to manage, and that is on a personal level." – Interviewee 2

Besides that, this flexibility led to a culture of uncertainty, where employees were unclear about their long-term responsibilities. This created additional stress and confusion, which ultimately worsened the change process and hindered the organization's ability to adapt effectively. It also sometimes led to a negative culture within the organization:

"...so they didn't really know what to expect. As a result, uh, sometimes some negativity arose because they didn't agree with certain things or couldn't envision it. That's also a very logical consequence of such a change. Uh, but it didn't always make the atmosphere more pleasant. And I also noticed that, uh, a small example is, for instance, that before I could really disconnect from work during my free time or when I was lying in bed at night. But because occasionally a more negative atmosphere developed in the department, I found that during my free time and in quiet moments when I had time to think, I thought a lot about work. Yes, at some point, what stood out to me was that, uh, yes, that negativity, it did affect me." – Interviewee 3

4.4 Organizational culture

During the interviews, it became evident that organizational culture plays a pivotal role in strengthening the relationship between various organizational variables. One key finding is that organizational culture plays a role in weakening the relationship between communication and access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change, particularly when different departments or locations within the organization have distinct cultures. Interviewees highlighted that when there are distinct cultures, it can create barriers to effective communication between them, which results in reduced information provision for employees. They mentioned that some departments or location have its own way of sharing and processing information, leading to misunderstandings and inefficiencies. These cultural differences can lead employees to feel that different departments or locations within the same organization are not unified:

"What I notice is the two locations, yes, I don't perceive them as one. I don't experience them as one." – Interviewee 5

Another finding is that organizational culture enhances the connection between a flat structure and employees having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change. Even though there are still some hierarchical layers in the organization, employees underscored that an informal

culture fostered open communication and accessibility. Employees feel comfortable approaching managers to seek information about ongoing changes. This openness helps information flow smoothly and ensures that employees stay well-informed throughout the change process:

"Yes, yes, that also has a lot to do with the culture, because [name of the organization] is a relatively flat organization, so there are hierarchical layers, but you can easily move through them. It's not director this, director that, it's just 'hey there,' and that's really nice." – Interviewee 2

Additionally, when there is an organizational culture, this strengthens the relation between flat organizational structures and employees' sense of being valued. Interviewees indicated that an innovative culture creates an environment where employees feel that their new ideas are valued. This recognition encourages them to generate ideas more freely, as they sense that their contributions are appreciated. As a result, employees mentioned that they experienced a stronger sense of being valued. However, it is crucial that all employees are treated consistently when presenting their ideas. They highlighted that if some ideas are accepted while others are rejected without clear reasoning, it can lead to negative emotions and a sense of unfair treatment:

It shouldn't be the case that an employee gets a "yes" from one person and a "no" from another for the same idea. There should be no room for such discrepancies... You see, if you get a "yes" from one and a "no" from another, you automatically develop negative emotions toward the person who said "no," even though they likely had the best intentions. – Interviewee 2

Furthermore, employees expressed that a culture of uncertainty strengthens the relationship between unclear job descriptions and role ambiguity. When employees are unsure about what the change entails, they may fear that their role will also change. This lack of clarity leads to negative emotions, as employees indicated that they were left uncertain about their responsibilities and the direction of their work. The resulting negativity further intensifies the connection between unclear job expectations and role ambiguity, making it even more challenging for employees to navigate their roles effectively. One interviewee described a confusion surrounding leadership roles:

"Culture, yes, a bit of culture. Uhm, yes. After about a month or two, there was some uncertainty about whether the old service line leader was going to return, in whatever role that might be, or if she was leaving. And if she leaves, will a new one come in? Or will the temporary replacement continue? Yes, that uncertainty." – Interviewee 3

4.5 Research model

In Figure 1, the research model is presented, highlighting the relationships between the characteristics of adhocracy and the components of change readiness. A red arrow represents a negative influence, while a green arrow indicates a positive influence. Additionally, if an arrow originates from the moderator "Organizational culture" and points towards another arrow, this indicates that organizational culture strengthens (+) or weakens (-) the relation between the two components involved. The figure reveals that not all parts of the organizational structure influence all four components of change readiness.

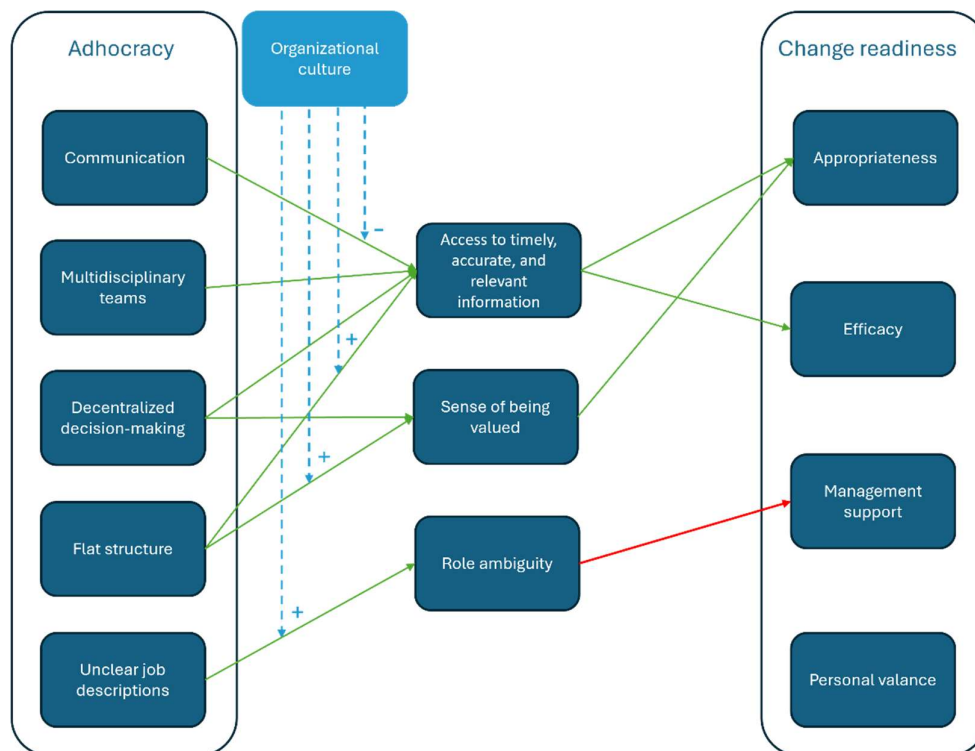


Figure 1: Research model of the relation between adhocracy and change readiness of employees.

5 Discussion

5.1 Theoretical relevance

The results indicate that having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change—such as the reasons behind the change, how it will be implemented, and the expected outcomes—positively influences appropriateness and efficacy. This finding aligns with Burke (2003), who concluded that having access to comprehensive information about the change enhances the effectiveness of the change process. Similarly, Armenakis et al. (1993) identified two key actions required to encourage change readiness of employees. The first is to effectively communicate a clear gap between the current state and the desired future state of change. Employees who are ready for change possess a strong understanding of the change and its significance to the organization. The second action involves instilling confidence in employees by assuring them that they have the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the challenges posed by this gap. These insights are in line with the results of this study, which show that having a wealth of information positively influences appropriateness and efficacy.

One key characteristic of adhocracy that enhances the access to timely, accurate, and relevant information, is communication. Karneli (2023) emphasized the importance of open communication for managers in effectively conveying the organization's overarching goals. This includes explaining the reasons for change, outlining the vision and strategies to achieve it, and fostering employees' understanding and commitment to its implementation. Clear and efficient communication ensures that vital information and perspectives flow quickly throughout the organization, allowing it to adapt seamlessly to changes in the business environment (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010).

Moreover, Nadler and Tushman (1990) highlighted that communication should be a two-way process, where employees not only listen to information but also actively seek and gather it themselves. This also follows from the results of this study. Interviewees indicated that they can independently gather information and ask questions about the change to better understand it. Due to the short lines of communication between employees and management (Lunenberg, 2012), as well as the informal culture (Stephens, 2021), employees find it easy to approach management with questions about the change (Karneli, 2023; Lunenberg, 2012). This results in the following hypothesis: **H1. Communication about the change facilitates having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change, which has a positive influence on the sense of appropriateness and efficacy of employees.**

Another key factor that contributes to the access of information about the change is the presence of multidisciplinary teams. This aligns with the results of Yin et al. (2023), who demonstrated that cross-functional teams play a crucial role in breaking down barriers between departments, leading to improved information flow across the organization. This enhanced flow of information ensures that employees from different functional areas can share insights and collaborate more effectively, creating a more unified approach to addressing organizational challenges. Similarly, Keller (2001) emphasized that cross-functional teams provide access to a broader and more diverse range of knowledge. By bringing together employees with varying expertise and perspectives, these teams foster a more comprehensive understanding of complex issues, which can be particularly valuable during periods of change. These findings lead to the following hypothesis: **H2. Multidisciplinary teams facilitate having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change, which has a positive influence on the sense of appropriateness and efficacy of employees.**

The findings of this study also demonstrate that employee engagement in the decision-making process enhances the access to timely, accurate, and relevant information, which positively influences appropriateness and efficacy. This supports Holt's (2007) assertion that active participation provides employees with access to critical information about the change and equips them with the competence needed to address new demands. Employees' participation in the change process should cultivate a sense of ownership, enabling them to recognize their critical role in the transition. Through active involvement, they can clearly grasp the strategic objectives and benefits of the change, while also developing confidence in their ability to address the challenges it brings (Armenakis et al., 1993; Armenakis & Harris, 2002). This result in the following hypothesis: **H3. Decentralized decision-making facilitates having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change, which has a positive influence on the sense of appropriateness and efficacy of employees.**

Another finding is that involving employees in the decision-making process significantly enhances their sense of being valued, which positively influences appropriateness. This aligns with Thompson (2020), who stated that collaborative decision-making fosters mutual understanding and respect between leaders and employees, strengthening employees' emotional connection to the organization. Similarly, Korsgaard and Roberson (1995) showed that when employees feel their opinions are respected, regardless of whether those opinions are actually implemented in the change process, they are more likely to support the change. Building on these insights, this study proposes the following hypothesis: **H4. Decentralized decision-making fosters a sense of being valued, which has a positive influence on the sense of appropriateness of employees.**

The findings also underscore the role of a flat organizational structure in improving access to timely, accurate, and relevant information during periods of change. This type of structure ensures that information flows through fewer layers compared to a hierarchical organization, as highlighted by Carzo and Yanouzas (1969). By minimizing the number of intermediaries, a flat structure allows employees to gain more direct and timely insights into the change process. This increased access to information not only enhances their understanding of the change but also fosters a greater sense of appropriateness and efficacy (Armenakis et al., 1993). This results in the following hypothesis: **H5. A flat organizational structure facilitates having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change, which has a positive influence on the sense of appropriateness and efficacy of employees.**

In addition to improving the access to information, the reduced hierarchical layers of a flat structure promote direct communication and collaboration across all levels of the organization (Carzo & Yanouzas, 1969). Palepu et al. (2020) highlight that a flat structure creates an environment where employees feel their voices are heard, and their contributions are acknowledged, fostering a sense of being valued. The results indicate that when employees feel their input is valued and they are involved in the decision-making process, they are more likely to see organizational changes as relevant, which leads to the following hypothesis: **H6. A flat organizational structure fosters a sense of being valued, which has a positive influence on the sense of appropriateness of employees.**

Conversely, this study reveals that unclear job descriptions enhance role ambiguity, which negatively impacts management support. While employees acknowledged that vague descriptions were intended to promote innovation and self-definition, they reported that this approach led to uncertainty instead. This aligns with Li et al. (2021), who emphasized that ambiguity should be decreased during change processes. Furthermore, Tang and Chang (2010), and Usman and Xiao (2017) identified job ambiguity as a barrier to employee creativity. For creativity to thrive, managers must set clear goals in the job description regarding creativity and innovation (Amabile, 1988; Shalley & Gilson, 2004). Tidd et al. (2004) explain that ambiguity can undermine employees trust in the management's ability to lead the change effectively. Without clear guidance, employees might perceive that management is not fully committed or prepared to support the change, leading to a lack of confidence in management. These findings suggest that while flexibility in job descriptions may aim to foster innovation, it must be balanced with clarity to avoid undermining management support. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed: **H7. Unclear job descriptions increase role ambiguity, which negatively influences management support of employees.**

Another key finding is that, although some interviewees acknowledged a certain hierarchy, they perceived the structure as flat due to the informal culture. According to Ahmed (1998), organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping the drive of employees to innovate, as it can either encourage or hinder their efforts. Similarly, Abdul Rashid et al. (2004) demonstrated a clear connection between organizational culture and employees' attitudes toward organizational change. Furthermore, Hofstede et al. (2010) argue that cultural dynamics play a crucial role in shaping how hierarchical systems function in practice. In organizations where informality is prevalent, rigid hierarchical boundaries can become less pronounced, creating an atmosphere of equality and inclusiveness. On the other hand, in cultures that prioritize authority and control, even an organization designed with a flat structure may operate with a pronounced sense of hierarchy.

Additionally, a negative culture was identified as a factor that worsened the change process. Building on these insights, it becomes evident that when researching change readiness, it is essential to consider not only the organizational structures but also the organizational culture. It extends the theoretical framework established by Mintzberg (1980) by highlighting the need to consider not only structural elements but also the dynamic interactions between these structures and employee behaviors during change processes. Without acknowledging the interplay between culture and structure, researchers and practitioners risk overlooking the factors that truly influence employee behavior and organizational outcomes. These results lead to the following hypotheses: **H8. Organizational culture strengthens the relation between flat structure and having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change, flat structure and the sense of being valued, and unclear job descriptions and role ambiguity.** **H9. Organizational culture weakens the relation between communication and having access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the organizational change.**

Another key finding is that adhocracy has no impact on personal valence. Most employees indicated that the change was not necessarily personally beneficial, although some experienced the change as personally advantageous. However, this was not influenced by the organizational structure.

5.2 Practical relevance

This study also has practical implications, as it provides managers with actionable insights to enhance change readiness of employees within their organization. By taking the structural elements into account, managers can design strategies and interventions that foster a supportive environment for change. During organizational transitions, they could focus on strengthening the elements that positively influence change readiness, such as improving communication, encouraging cross-functional collaboration, engaging employees, and promoting a flat organizational structure. This targeted

approach can help mitigate resistance and ensure a smoother adaptation to change (Armenakis et al., 1993).

While Mintzberg's framework primarily focuses on the structural aspects of organizations, it does not explicitly incorporate organizational culture as a critical component (Mintzberg, 1980). However, the results of this study indicate that culture plays a vital role in assessing the change readiness of employees. This suggests that organizations should not only consider structural elements when designing their frameworks but also pay close attention to the cultural dimensions that influence employee behavior and attitudes towards change. A strong, adaptive culture can enhance the change readiness, facilitating smoother transitions during change processes (Suwaryo et al., 2016). Furthermore, leaders and managers should recognize the interplay between structure and culture. By fostering a culture that supports innovation and flexibility, organizations can improve their overall change readiness (Do et al., 2016). This dual focus on both structure and culture can lead to more effective change management strategies, ultimately enhancing change readiness of employees.

5.3 Limitations

One limitation of this study is the number of cases included. A larger sample of cases could improve the applicability of the findings. Nevertheless, this approach remains well-suited for capturing valuable, in-depth insights into organizational dynamics (Gustafsson, 2017). By focusing on three cases within the Netherlands, this research captures in-depth nuances of adhocratic structures and their effects on change readiness, offering a solid foundation for further comparative research in different cultural or organizational settings (Yin, 2018). Additionally, the limited number of three participants per case may constrain the range of perspectives included. However, the cross-case analysis allows for the identification of recurring patterns, which strengthens the internal validity of the findings and offers a valuable starting point for further research in broader contexts (Gustafsson, 2017).

Another limitation is that this study primarily focuses on specific characteristics of adhocracy and their relationship with change readiness of employees. While this targeted approach provides valuable insights into how certain characteristics of the organizational structure impact change readiness (Eisenhardt, 1989), it inevitably excludes other potentially significant factors. The results of this study also highlighted the importance of organizational culture as a moderator in the relationship between specific characteristics of adhocracy and the components of change readiness. This finding suggests that there may be additional factors, beyond those examined here, that play a critical role in shaping change readiness of employees. However, by focusing on the aspects of adhocracy, this study offers a targeted and in-depth perspective on its role in change readiness (Eisenhardt, 1989). While this approach may not capture the full interplay between adhocracy, organizational culture, and other

influencing factors, it allows for a clearer analysis of its specific impact. Future research could build on these insights by adopting a more holistic approach that incorporates additional variables, such as leadership, personal competences, and broader cultural dynamics, to further enrich our understanding of the factors shaping change readiness (Choi, 2011).

In the research model, presented in paragraph 4.5, the relationships between the characteristics of adhocracy and the components of change readiness are fully mediated by three mediators. This implies that if the mediators are absent, the relationship between adhocracy and change readiness would not exist. However, reality is likely more complex. It is likely that, even without the proposed mediators, there are still direct or alternative pathways through which adhocracy influences change readiness. For future research, this suggests the importance of exploring alternative mechanisms that could explain the link between adhocracy and change readiness beyond the proposed mediators. Researchers should consider testing partial mediation models or examining additional mediators and moderators that may influence this relationship.

5.4 Conclusion

Communication about the change, multidisciplinary teams, decentralized decision-making, and a flat structure were found to facilitate the access of timely, accurate, and relevant information, which, in turn, positively influences the sense of appropriateness and efficacy of employees. Decentralized decision-making and a flat structure were also found to foster a sense of being valued, which positively impacts the sense of appropriateness of employees. Unclear job descriptions was found to increase role ambiguity, which negatively affects perceptions of management support. Personal valence does not appear to be influenced by the presence of adhocracy structure.

Finally, organizational culture was identified as a moderating factor, strengthening the relationships between a flat structure and the access to timely, accurate, and relevant information, a flat structure and the sense of being valued, as well as unclear job descriptions and role ambiguity. Conversely, organizational structure was found to weaken the relationship between communication and the access to timely, accurate, and relevant information.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Interview guide

Hallo, en bedankt dat u de tijd neemt om deel te nemen aan dit interview.

Mijn naam is Minou Kamphuis en ik ben een masterstudent Business Administration aan de Universiteit Twente. Ik doe onderzoek naar de veranderingsbereidheid van werknemers. Uw inzichten zullen waardevol zijn voor deze studie.

Ik zou het interview graag willen opnemen om ervoor te zorgen dat ik alles wat u zegt nauwkeurig vastleg. De gegevens worden geanonimiseerd en vertrouwelijk bewaard. Ook wordt de naam van de organisatie waar u werkt niet benoemd in dit onderzoek. De opname zal na het analyseren verwijderd worden en het geanonimiseerde transcript zal alleen voor onderzoeksdoeleinden worden gebruikt en veilig worden opgeslagen. Als u zich ongemakkelijk voelt bij een van de vragen, hoeft u deze niet te beantwoorden. Het interview zal maximaal 60 minuten duren.

Kun je wat over jezelf vertellen? Wat is je functie en hoe lang werk je hier al? Heb je het naar je zin in de organisatie?

Geeft u toestemming voor deelname aan dit interview en voor het gebruik van uw antwoorden in dit onderzoek? Geeft u toestemming dat dit interview wordt opgenomen en getranscribeerd (=woord voor woord uittypen)?

Heeft u vooraf al vragen?

Indien nee: Oké, dan zal ik nu de opname starten.

Ik heb nu de opname gestart, ter bevestiging; ga je akkoord met de opname en het gebruik van jouw antwoorden in dit onderzoek?

In dit interview gaan we het hebben over verandering X.

Kunt u iets vertellen over deze verandering?

Daarna onderstaande praatplaat uitleggen en vragen hierover stellen.

Eerste vraag: Welk woord van deze praatplaat vindt u het meeste van toepassing tijdens verandering X? Wat kunt u hier over vertellen? Kunt u hier een voorbeeld bij geven?

Daarna steeds: Over welk woord zou u nog meer wat kunnen vertellen? Kunt u hier een voorbeeld bij geven?

Is er nog iets dat u zou willen toevoegen over dit onderwerp?

Heeft u nog vragen aan mij over dit onderzoek?

Dan wil ik u enorm bedanken voor uw tijd en inzichten. Wees alstublieft gerust dat alle informatie die u hebt verstrekt vertrouwelijk zal blijven en uitsluitend zal worden gebruikt voor de doeleinden van dit onderzoek. Uw identiteit zal niet worden bekendgemaakt in rapporten of publicaties die uit deze studie voortvloeien. Alles wordt geanonimiseerd.

Heeft u interesse om het uiteindelijke verslag van dit onderzoek te ontvangen?

Indien ja: Dan zou ik graag uw e-mail adres willen noteren.

Ik zal nu de opname stoppen.

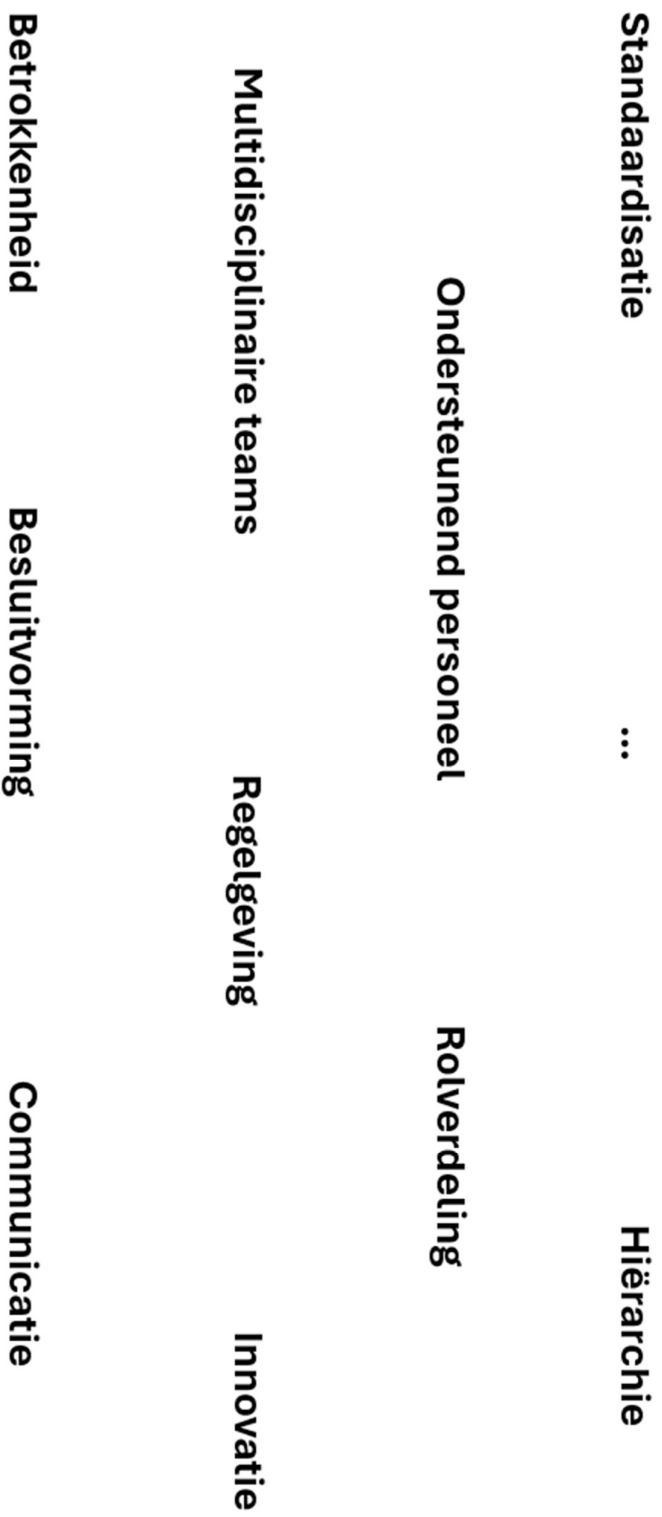
Vragen die ik erbij hou, die de deelnemer niet ziet:

Appropriateness: Hoe sterk bent u het eens dat de verandering noodzakelijk is om de huidige situatie te verbeteren?

Efficacy: In hoeverre gelooft u dat u over de vaardigheden en middelen beschikt om de verandering succesvol te implementeren?

Management support: Hoe ervaart u de betrokkenheid en ondersteuning van het management bij de verandering?

Personal valence: In welke mate denkt u dat de geplande verandering persoonlijk voordelig zal zijn voor uw werk of uw rol binnen de organisatie?



Appendix C: Consent form

Informatieblad voor onderzoek 'The relation between adhocracy and change readiness of employees'

Doel van het onderzoek

Dit onderzoek wordt geleid door Minou Kamphuis.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is om inzicht te verkrijgen in welke kenmerken van de organisatiestructuur invloed hebben op de veranderingsbereidheid van werknemers.

Hoe gaan we te werk?

U neemt deel aan een onderzoek waarbij we informatie zullen vergaren door u te interviewen en uw antwoorden op te nemen via een audio-opname. Er zal ook een transcript worden uitgewerkt van het interview.

Potentiële risico's en ongemakken

- Er zijn geen fysieke, juridische of economische risico's verbonden aan uw deelname aan deze studie. U hoeft geen vragen te beantwoorden die u niet wilt beantwoorden. Uw deelname is vrijwillig en u kunt uw deelname op elk gewenst moment stoppen.

Vergoeding

U ontvangt voor deelname aan dit onderzoek geen vergoeding.

Vertrouwelijkheid van gegevens

Wij doen er alles aan uw privacy zo goed mogelijk te beschermen. Er wordt op geen enkele wijze vertrouwelijke informatie of persoonsgegevens van of over u naar buiten gebracht, waardoor iemand u zal kunnen herkennen.

Voordat onze onderzoeksgegevens naar buiten gebracht worden, worden uw gegevens gepseudonymiseerd.

In een publicatie zullen anonieme gegevens of pseudoniemen worden gebruikt. De audio-opnamen, formulieren en andere documenten die in het kader van deze studie worden gemaakt of verzameld, worden opgeslagen op een beveiligde locatie bij de Universiteit Twente en op de beveiligde (versleutelde) gegevensdragers van de onderzoekers.

De audio opnames worden na het onderzoek verwijderd en de transcripten worden bewaard voor een periode van 10 jaar. Uiterlijk na het verstrijken van deze termijn zullen de gegevens worden verwijderd.

Tot slot is dit onderzoek beoordeeld en goedgekeurd door de ethische commissie van de faculteit BMS (domain Humanities & Social Sciences) met referentie nummer 240890.

Vrijwilligheid

Deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig. U kunt als deelnemer uw medewerking aan het onderzoek te allen tijde stoppen, of weigeren dat uw gegevens voor het onderzoek mogen worden gebruikt, zonder opgaaf van redenen. Het stopzetten van deelname heeft geen nadelige gevolgen voor u.

Als u tijdens het onderzoek besluit om uw medewerking te staken, zullen de gegevens die u reeds hebt verstrekt tot het moment van intrekking van de toestemming in het onderzoek gebruikt worden.

Wilt u stoppen met het onderzoek, of heeft u vragen en/of klachten? Neem dan contact op met de onderzoeksleider.

Minou Kamphuis: m.kamphuis-1@student.utwente.nl of 06-26690404.

Voor bezwaren met betrekking tot de opzet en of uitvoering van het onderzoek kunt u zich ook wenden tot de Secretaris van de Ethische Commissie / domein Humanities & Social Sciences van de faculteit Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences op de Universiteit Twente via ethicscommittee-hss@utwente.nl. Dit onderzoek

wordt uitgevoerd vanuit de Universiteit Twente, faculteit Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences. Indien u specifieke vragen hebt over de omgang met persoonsgegevens kun u deze ook richten aan de Functionaris Gegevensbescherming van de UT door een mail te sturen naar dpo@utwente.nl.

Tot slot heeft u het recht een verzoek tot inzage, wijziging, verwijdering of aanpassing van uw gegevens te doen bij de onderzoeksleider.

Door dit toestemmingsformulier te ondertekenen erken ik het volgende:

1. Ik ben voldoende geïnformeerd over het onderzoek door middel van een separaat informatieblad. Ik heb het informatieblad gelezen en heb daarna de mogelijkheid gehad vragen te kunnen stellen. Deze vragen zijn voldoende beantwoord.
2. Ik neem vrijwillig deel aan dit onderzoek. Er is geen expliciete of impliciete dwang voor mij om aan dit onderzoek deel te nemen. Het is mij duidelijk dat ik deelname aan het onderzoek op elk moment, zonder opgave van redenen, kan beëindigen. Ik hoef een vraag niet te beantwoorden als ik dat niet wil.

Naast het bovenstaande is het hieronder mogelijk voor verschillende onderdelen van het onderzoek specifiek toestemming te geven. U kunt er per onderdeel voor kiezen wel of geen toestemming te geven. Indien u voor alles toestemming wil geven, is dat mogelijk via de aanvinkbox onderaan de stellingen.

	JA	NEE
3. Ik geef toestemming om de gegevens die gedurende het onderzoek bij mij worden verzameld te verwerken zoals is opgenomen in het bijgevoegde informatieblad. Deze toestemming ziet dus ook op het verwerken van gegevens betreffende mijn gezondheid/ras/etnische afkomst/politieke opvattingen/religieuze en of levensbeschouwelijke overtuigingen/lidmaatschap van vakbond/seksueel gedrag/seksuele gerichtheid en/of over mijn genetische gegevens/biometrische gegevens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ik geef toestemming om tijdens het interview opnames (geluid) te maken en mijn antwoorden uit te werken in een transcript.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Ik geef toestemming om mijn antwoorden te gebruiken voor quotes in de onderzoekspublicaties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Ik geef toestemming om de bij mij verzamelde onderzoeksdata te bewaren en te gebruiken voor toekomstig onderzoek en voor onderwijsdoeleinden.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ik geef toestemming voor alles dat hierboven beschreven staat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Naam Deelnemer:

Naam Onderzoeker:

Handtekening:

Handtekening:

Datum:

Datum:

Appendix D: Coding scheme

First order codes	Second order codes	Aggregate dimensions
A different culture within various departments leads to poor communication during change	Communication ensures that employees have access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change	Communication, multidisciplinary teams, a flat organizational structure, and decentralized decision-making have a positive impact on appropriateness and efficacy
Through communication, the necessity of the change is understood		
Limited communication leads to less understanding of change	Through multidisciplinary teams, employees from different departments and roles interact with each other and have access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change	
Multidisciplinary teams contribute to having extensive knowledge during the change		
Multidisciplinary teams facilitate communication across various roles and departments during change	Direct connections ensure that employees have access to timely, accurate, and relevant information about the change	
A flat structure provides clarity about the change		
You can easily ask for clarification if you do not understand the change		
Direct connections ensure understanding of the change		
Management must embrace the change because employees can observe this		
Change is understood through involvement in decision-making		
The necessity of change is understood through good contact with management		
Despite hierarchical layers, the culture is informal		
A flat organizational structure promotes understanding of the change		
Change is personally beneficial due to direct connections with management		
Employees can inform the management about what they need to make the change successful		
Employees must be involved in the change equally because they observe this from each other		
Through involvement, employees feel that they add value	Involvement in decision-making increases the feeling that employees are being listened to and that they matter	Decentralized decision-making and a flat organizational structure have a positive impact on appropriateness
Through decentralized decision-making, employees feel that they have responsibility		

Through decentralized decision-making, employees feel that they are being listened to		
A flat organizational structure makes employees feel that they add value	A flat organizational structure increases the feeling that employees are being listened to and that they matter	
An innovative culture should ensure that employees feel valued when they bring forward ideas		
A different culture within various departments hinders the change	Poor communication between different departments increases uncertainty about the change	Uncertainty has a negative impact on management support
Different departments are managed differently		
Different departments in the organization have different interests		
Communication is less effective due to the lack of fixed job descriptions	Informal job descriptions create uncertainty about roles during the change	
Due to the flat organizational structure, not everyone feels the responsibility to take on the change		
Due to unclear job roles, management support is lacking		
Job descriptions are vague, allowing room for flexibility during the change		
A culture of uncertainty hinders the change		
Unclear job roles create uncertainty about responsibilities during the change		
Poor involvement from management creates uncertainty in the change		