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Navigating Change with Agile Leadership: Key Factors for Sustained Organizational Success

A case study of organizational agility in the
technology and innovation industry

Master's thesis in Management of Technology
Supervisor: Daniel Casoinic
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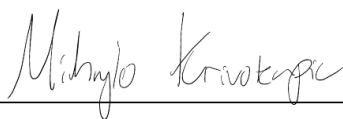
Preface

This master's thesis represents the culmination of our years as students at NTNU Business School, Trondheim. This journey has seen us, two aspiring scholars, come together to explore a topic that not only intrigued us but also resonated with the zeitgeist of our times. The process has been multifaceted and challenging. We have had to navigate through complex concepts, grapple with intricate theories, and dissect an abundance of data. Despite these trials, we have gained valuable insights and a wealth of knowledge about our chosen subject. More than the learning, it is the experiences, the stress management skills, and the sheer resilience we have developed in the course of this project that we believe will carry us forward into our professional lives.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our supervisor, Daniel Casoinic. His continuous encouragement, expertise, and insightful feedback have been invaluable throughout this endeavor. We have been profoundly influenced by his belief in our abilities and his dedication to our success. Our sincerest thanks also extend to our families and friends. Their unwavering support and understanding, especially during the most challenging periods of this project, have been our anchor. We would also like to extend our deep appreciation to both the respondents who willingly participated in our interviews and the case company that facilitated their involvement. Their combined insights and cooperation have contributed significantly to the depth and authenticity of our research. Finally, we cannot conclude without expressing our gratitude to each other. Our partnership has been marked by exceptional collaboration, mutual respect, and constant learning. We have consistently challenged and supported each other, leading to enriching exchanges and feedback.

As we present this thesis, we reflect upon this profound journey that has equipped us with more than just academic knowledge. It is our earnest hope that our work contributes meaningfully to the ongoing discourse and paves the way for further exploration in this field. Here's to lifelong learning and the next step in our professional journeys.

Trondheim, 25. mai 2023



Mihajlo Krivokapic



Marit Høiem Mathiassen

Abstract

In this master's thesis, the future of organizational agility is explored, with particular attention to the perspective of leadership in the face of constant change. The study is structured around three research questions addressing the impact of the agile mindset on leaders' decision-making, strategic agility at the team and organizational level, and key factors for sustained success with organizational agility. The research is based on an in-depth case study of a Scandinavian technology company.

Our findings highlight the significant influence of the agile mindset on leaders' decision-making, and its importance for flexibility, collaboration, and employee involvement. However, the study uncovers a challenge with a lack of structure in agile decision-making and prioritization processes. We observe that the agile mindset has a strong influence on strategic agility both at the team and organizational level. Openness, trust, communication, and flexibility are highlighted as driving forces to foster an agile mindset.

Furthermore, our research identifies key factors for sustained success with organizational agility: cultivating an agile mindset, effective management practices, and handling challenges related to leadership and teamwork. Leaders acknowledge the impact of the agile mindset on decision-making and understand that cultivating this mindset at all organizational levels is crucial to maintain organizational agility. At the same time, they recognize the need for clear guidelines and structure in agile decision-making processes. In light of these findings, leaders view their organizations as agile, adaptable, and ready to handle continuous change successfully.

Sammendrag

I denne masteroppgaven utforskes fremtidens organisatorisk smidighet, med spesiell oppmerksomhet på ledelsens perspektiv i møte med konstant endring. Studien er strukturert rundt tre forskningsspørsmål som adresserer det agile tankesettets innvirkning på ledernes beslutningstaking, strategisk smidighet på team- og organisasjonsnivå, samt nøkkelfaktorer for vedvarende suksess med organisatorisk smidighet. Forskningen bygger på en dyptgående casesstudie av et skandinavisk teknologiselskap.

Funnene våre fremhever det agile tankesettets betydelige påvirkning på ledernes beslutningstaking, og dets betydning for fleksibilitet, samarbeid og medarbeiderinvolvering. Studien avdekker imidlertid en utfordring med mangel på struktur i agile beslutnings- og prioriteringsprosesser. Vi observerer at det agile tankesettet har en sterk innflytelse på strategisk smidighet både på team- og organisasjonsnivå. Åpenhet, tillit, kommunikasjon og fleksibilitet fremheves som drivkrefter for å fostre et agilt tankesett.

Videre identifiserer vår forskning viktige faktorer for vedvarende suksess med organisatorisk smidighet: dyrking av et agilt tankesett, effektive ledelsespraksiser og håndtering av utfordringer knyttet til lederskap og teamarbeid. Ledere anerkjenner det agile tankesettets innvirkning på beslutningstaking og forstår at dyrking av dette tankesettet på alle organisatoriske nivåer er avgjørende for å opprettholde organisatorisk smidighet. Samtidig anerkjenner de behovet for klare retningslinjer og struktur i agile beslutningsprosesser. I lys av disse funnene ser ledere sine organisasjoner som smidige, tilpasningsdyktige og klare til å håndtere kontinuerlig endring på en vellykket måte.

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Glossary

Agile Coach: A mentor guiding a team or organization in agile methodologies.

Commercial Teams: Groups focused on selling products/services and promoting brand awareness/demand. We are referring to sales and marketing teams.

Company X: The case company in the research, anonymized name.

Cross-Functional Teams: Diverse teams from different departments collaborate towards a common goal.

Inter-team collaboration: Inter-team collaboration occurs when employees from diverse functions or teams within the organization, such as sales, development, marketing, and IT, collaborate to jointly address a shared project, objective, or responsibility.

OKR: Objectives and key results, a goal-setting technique for defining and tracking organizational goals and results.

Open-Door Policy: Management practice that encourages open communication between all levels of an organization.

Prioritization process: Involves the systematic ranking of potential development items based on their level of importance. Within the realm of product management, this process entails determining the placement of themes, initiatives, or features within the product roadmap and deciding which ones should be included in the upcoming product releases.

Product Backlog: A prioritized list of potential product improvements in agile development.

Product Owner: A product owner plays a crucial role within an agile team, taking responsibility for the ultimate success of the project. Their primary objective is to maximize the value of the product by efficiently managing and optimizing the product backlog.

Professional teams: Professional teams, in our case, refer to teams comprised of members with the same area of expertise.

Remote work: Working remotely from a location other than the office is often referred to

as working from a home office in the thesis.

Retrospective: A meeting at the end of each sprint to discuss what worked well and what needs improvement.

ROI: Return of investment.

Slack: a communication platform used by the case company

Sprint: A sprint refers to a brief and time-constrained period during which a (Scrum) team collaborates to accomplish a predetermined amount of work. Sprints constitute a fundamental element of agile methodologies.

Standup: Daily short meeting for agile teams to synchronize work and plan the day.

UX-design: refers to creating user-friendly and intuitive experiences for digital products or services by incorporating user research, information architecture, and interactive design principles.

VUCA: Stands for Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, representing the four key dimensions of a complex and unpredictable business environment.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The current global business environment is characterized by increased uncertainty and competition due to the rise of globalization and rapidly evolving technology. This new environment is becoming progressively defined by VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity), and the ability to respond to these challenges can determine the future success of businesses (Prats et al., 2018). The VUCA environment necessitates a different approach to managing and adapting to change, as the traditional methods may be insufficient in dealing with the rapidly changing landscape. Consequently, there is a growing recognition of the need to be more agile and for organizations to cultivate the ability to effectively navigate and respond to uncertainty (Alt et al., 2020).

Agile ways of working is based on a methodology characterized by iterative planning and execution of projects in small increments, which originated within the software industry with the formulation of the agile manifesto in February of 2001 (Pfeiffer et al., 2021). This manifesto encompasses a set of values and principles that serve as a focal point in agile work methodology, and provides guiding principles for implementation and adoption of agile methodology (Beck & Beedle, 2001). Consequently, agile methodology provides a framework and structure for implementing agile practices, which are specific techniques and activities used within the agile methodology to achieve the desired outcomes (Chan & Thong, 2009; Diebold & Dahlem, 2014). Through correct and consistent application of agile practices, individuals and teams can cultivate an agile mindset (Ozkan et al., 2020; Eilers et al., 2022). The agile mindset is a collection of attitudes, behaviors, and cognitive patterns that enhance both individual and team effectiveness, and that involves embracing the agile values and principles to deliver maximum benefit to customers (Miler & Gaida, 2019). This mindset contributes to the development of organizational agility, which is achieved through the collective adoption of agile methods and practices, and the cultivation of an agile mindset throughout the organization (Harraf et al., 2015). However, Prats et al. (2018) highlight the importance to recognize that there are other essential factors that contribute to achieving successful organizational agility, including various aspects such as leadership, team dynamics, organizational culture, and decision-making processes.

Felipe et al. (2016, p. 4625) define organizational agility as "the intentional response capability that the organization develops to enable efficient behavior in a highly turbulent environment, not only by reacting rapidly to change, but also through the organization's potential of action in anticipating and seizing opportunities, in particular through innovation and learning." Con-

sequently, achieving organizational agility becomes a means for organizations to navigate the challenges posed by the VUCA environment, which has led to a growing number of organizations embracing agile methodologies as a strategic approach to foster and attain organizational agility (Eilers et al., 2022; Appelbaum et al., 2017). Organizational agility provides the foundation for achieving strategic agility, which, according to Weber & Tarba (2014), pertains to the leadership's ability to perceive and respond to a dynamic environment by making conscious strategic decisions and steer the organization's direction in response to environmental changes.

While previous studies have provided insights into the adoption of agile methodologies by organizations, Senapathi & Srinivasan (2012) noted that there is limited knowledge regarding the utilization of agile methodologies after their adoption, as well as the long-term impact of organizational agility on the organization. Additionally, Highsmith (2002) argues that the achievement of successful organizational agility hinges on striking a delicate balance between order and chaos. Excessive order and stability can lead to stagnation, while excessive chaos results in randomness. Embracing chaos is effortless, as it entails following one's instincts, while stability is uncomplicated, as it involves adhering to predefined steps. However, finding the equilibrium requires exceptional leadership skills and presents a significant challenge (Highsmith, 2002).

As an increasing number of organizations embrace agile methodologies and successfully attain organizational agility, it becomes imperative to delve into the consequences of sustained organizational agility and its impact on different facets of the organization. The existing literature emphasizes the pivotal role of leaders in this context, highlighting their significance in effectively navigating the delicate equilibrium between order and chaos. However, further research is needed to explore the specific leadership skills required to strike this balance and examine their implications for organizational performance and success. By investigating these aspects, we can gain deeper insights into the dynamics of sustained organizational agility and its influence on various organizational outcomes.

The aim of this thesis is therefore to investigate what contributes to the continued success of organizational agility, and what pitfalls leaders should be aware of when balancing order and chaos. by looking at factors that contributes to organizational agility, including the agile mindset, the organizational culture, team dynamics and decision-making processes, from a leadership perspective, the thesis provides a holistic view on how leaders can envision their organizational agility in the future. Thus, the following research problem will be addressed:

*How do leaders envision their organization's agility in the future,
in the context of constant change?*

1.2 Case Context

The research for this thesis has been conducted within a highly mature and forward-thinking technology company based in Scandinavia, which will be addressed as Company X throughout the thesis. Almost a decade ago, Company X recognized the imperative to embrace organizational agility in response to significant industry disruptions. Faced with new competitors, emerging technologies, and disruptive ideas, they understood the need to transform their offerings and reinvent themselves. In this pursuit, the company initiated a comprehensive agile transformation that permeated every aspect of their operation, including attaining a higher focus on software development. They dismantled hierarchical structures and fostered a flatter organization that empowered individuals at all levels to contribute to the company's success. Agile principles became deeply ingrained in their corporate culture, guiding decision-making, collaboration, and innovation throughout the entire value chain. This journey has yielded results. The company has evolved into a beacon of agility, showcasing their ability to deliver an array of new services and products with remarkable speed and responsiveness. By embracing agile principles in their daily operations, they have created a dynamic and adaptable environment that enables them to seize opportunities, address market demands, and continuously improve their offerings.

Therefore, Company X has the necessary qualities to make a substantial contribution to answering the research question of this thesis. By conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews, we sought to gain a comprehensive understanding and interpretation of the essential factors that contribute to the continued success of organizational agility and what pitfalls leaders should be aware of when striving for the delicate balance between order and chaos.

1.3 Research Question

To address the research problem, three specific research questions have been formulated to provide insights into different facets of organizational agility:

- RQ 1. How does the agile mindset affect leaders' approach to decision-making, and what are the potential drawbacks and challenges associated with an agile mindset in decision-making?
- RQ 2. What is the impact of the agile mindset on strategic agility at team and organizational level?

RQ 3. What are the key factors that contribute to the continued and sustainable success of organizational agility?

These research questions states the focal points of this thesis regarding organizational agility. Given the extensive scope of the topic, it was necessary to narrow down the focus of the thesis to specific areas that allow for a more comprehensive understanding, while still providing a holistic perspective on the subject matter.

Decision-making processes are crucial in shaping organizational strategies and responses to change, especially when considering organizational agility in a constantly changing environment. Understanding how the agile mindset influences strategic agility is vital for organizations to adapt to dynamic market conditions and gain a competitive advantage. By exploring key factors contributing to sustained organizational agility, valuable insights for fostering and maintaining agility in the long term is provided.

By addressing these research questions, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of organizational agility, offering a comprehensive understanding of the topic and how leaders can envision their organizational agility in the future.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into six sections, starting with the introduction section. Section 2 presents the relevant literature that is considered most suitable for addressing the research question of this study. In section 3, the methodology is described, including the strengths and weaknesses of the methods used, as well as ethical considerations. Section 4 provides the data acquired during the semi-structured interviews. The discussion of how the findings align with the theoretical foundation of this thesis is presented in section 5. Lastly, section 6 concludes by addressing the research question, highlighting the study's contribution, discussing practical implications, acknowledging the study's limitations, and suggesting areas for future research.

2 Literature Review

In this section, we provide a comprehensive review of the existing literature relevant to the research question, focusing on the envisioning of organizational agility in the face of constant change. The literature review begins by introducing the concept and context of agility, highlighting its importance in today's dynamic business environment. We then delve into key capabilities that enable organizational agility, exploring the literature on the agile mindset, the layers of agility, strategic agility, and the culture and structure of an agile organization. Team dynamics and structure are then discussed, with an emphasis on collaboration, communication, managing roles and responsibilities, and the role of autonomous teams. Finally, we address the crucial aspect of leadership in an agile organization, exploring the literature on agile change management, the agile leader and dual leadership. Throughout the literature review, we analyze the findings, synthesize the key insights, and identify gaps that will be addressed in our thesis. The section concludes with a chapter summary, outlining the challenges and drawbacks, and finally, the success factors for succeeding with organizational agility as identified in the literature. This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge in the field and serve as a foundation for our research investigation.

2.1 Agile Methodology

Agile methodology is a flexible way of working that fosters collaboration and robust involvement from customers and employees in the decision-making process (Cohen et al., 2004; Berger & Rumpe, 2010). According to Highsmith (2002), organizations that embrace the agile methodology gain the ability to proactively embrace and respond to change in order to thrive in a volatile business environment. Unlike traditional methodologies, agile methodology avoids placing excessive emphasis on rigid processes, extensive documentation, and unwavering stability. These traditional values can hinder progress when requirements are volatile or business conditions are constantly evolving (Henninger et al., 2002). The agile methodology is a way of working that embraces iterative planning and execution of projects in small increments (Pfeiffer et al., 2021).

The methodology is underpinned by the "Agile Manifesto," crafted by a group of software development practitioners in 2001 (Beck & Beedle, 2001). The manifesto establishes four core values: "individuals and interactions over processes and tools," "working software over comprehensive documentation," "customer collaboration over contract negotiation," and "responding to change over following a plan" (Beck & Beedle, 2001). These values underscore

the importance of human interactions, customer collaboration, early and continuous software delivery, and the ability to adapt to changing requirements (Chan & Thong, 2009). Hence, the agile methodology embraces iterative planning and execution of projects in small increments (Pfeiffer et al., 2021), and emphasizes simplicity and the urgency of delivering immediate value to customers (Dievernich, 2014). Agile is not a concrete management concept or toolbox, but rather a work methodology leading to optimal organizational change and development (Dievernich, 2014).

Within agile methodologies, people play pivotal roles, with both users and developers actively participating in the development process. This collaborative environment results in more relevant and accurate system features, as consumers are directly involved alongside developers (Chan & Thong, 2009). Agile methodology recognizes that neither customers nor developers have a complete and definite understanding of system requirements at the start of an iteration, distinguishing it from traditional methodologies that assume only developers know customer requirements while customers are unaware of their own needs (Chan & Thong, 2009).

Furthermore, Agile methodology emphasizes the use of practices to accelerate project deadlines and achieve early return on investment (ROI) (Shankarmani et al., 2012). It is built on the principle of continuous improvement. Organizations are driven to consistently evaluate and refine their processes within the Agile methodology, aiming to enhance efficiency and productivity over time (Conforto & Amaral, 2010).

2.1.1 Agile Practices

Agile practices, as defined by Jorgensen (2019), are a set of flexible and iterative methods for software development that prioritize customer satisfaction and adaptability based on the agile methodology. These practices are characterized by frequent deliveries to production, a high degree of requirement changes, a focus on collaboration and frequent feedback, as noted by Jorgensen (2019). By utilizing agile practices, projects can be delivered more efficiently, allowing for quicker realization of ROI and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. These practices align with the core values and principles of the Agile Manifesto, reinforcing its effectiveness in adapting to change and delivering value.

Malik et al. (2021) identified in their study four key agile practices: iterative development, customer involvement, self-organizing teams, and frequent communication. These practices are believed to contribute to project success by promoting innovation and creativity among team members, as well as by improving overall project performance.

Agile practices improve communication, minimize waste, and enhance overall efficiency. Additionally, agile practices, as described by Berger & Rumpel (2010), involves short-term iterations typically lasting one to three weeks. The process of these iterations, illustrated in Figure 2.1, encompasses various stages. During iteration planning, customer discussions focus on determining the features to be included in the release version. Daily meetings serve as checkpoints for task updates and provide a platform for issue escalation to management or the customer. At the conclusion of each iteration, an artifact or deliverable is produced and shared with the customer, ensuring continuous progress and feedback throughout the development process.

However, van Oorschot et al. (2018) identified that planning too many short iterations have the potential of resulting in an overwhelming number of deadlines. This can lead to schedule pressure, overwork, exhaustion, and potentially impact team productivity. The study suggests that overloading the team with too many short iterations can have negative effects, such as increased errors, exhaustion, and potential turnover. van Oorschot et al. (2018) emphasises the importance to strike a balance between iteration length and workload management to avoid these issues.

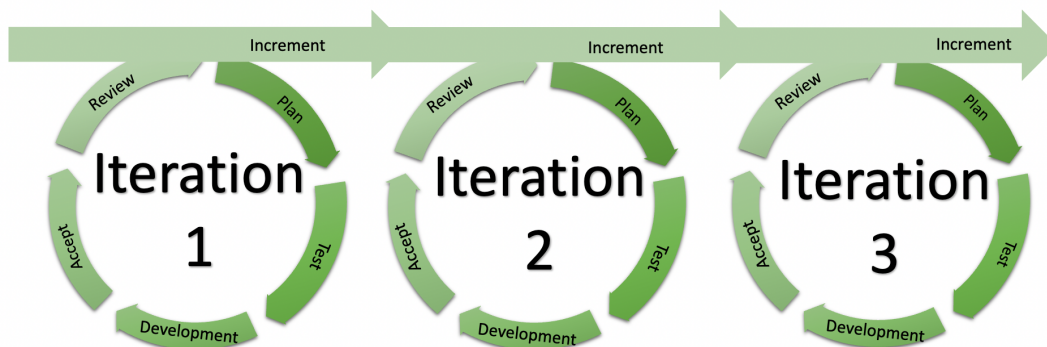


Figure 2.1: The Process of Short-Term Iterations, adapted from James & Walter, 2010

According to Rodríguez et al. (2012), the most commonly used agile practices include iteration planning, daily stand-up meetings, unit testing, active customer participation, autonomous teams, retrospectives, continuous integration, and frequent and incremental delivery of working software. Rodríguez et al. (2012) argue that they can be used independently of each other, highlighting that they can all be used as part of several methods, and are often implemented differently.

Agile practices contribute to the formation of agile methods and frameworks, and professionals frequently combine several techniques to leverage their benefits in different ways (Rigby et al.,

2016). By doing this, they can take advantage of the specific benefits of each practice in different situations, and create a customized approach that suits their needs. In other words, they are not limited to one specific practice, but can adapt and combine techniques to achieve the best results.

One form of agile framework, utilizing different agile practices, is *Scrum*, which is a popular agile framework that emphasizes collaboration, transparency, and continuous improvement. It involves cross-functional teams working in short iterations to deliver a potentially releasable product increment (Campanelli & Parreiras, 2015). The framework is founded on empiricism and emphasizes knowledge, experience, and decision-making based on what is known (Campanelli & Parreiras, 2015). Scrum is based on three key roles: the Product Owner, who is responsible for defining the product vision and priorities; the Scrum Master, who facilitates the Scrum process and ensures adherence to Scrum values and principles; and the Development Team, which is responsible for delivering the product increment (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020). The framework is designed to assist in the delivery of products that provide the greatest possible value to customers while effectively managing complex issues and situations.(Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020). Campanelli & Parreiras (2015) highlights that Scrum is widely used in software development but can also be applied to other industries and functions.

Another form of agile framework is *Kanban*, a lean tool that encourages project teams to visualize the workflow, set a limit on the amount of work-in-progress (WIP) at each stage of the workflow, and track cycle times (Campanelli & Parreiras, 2015). The Kanban board makes the software development process visible by outlining bottlenecks, communicating priorities clearly, and displaying the allocated task of each developer(Ahmad et al., 2013). It also aims to reduce work in progress, or WIP, by only developing items that are desired. As a result, consumers receive a steady stream of newly delivered work items as the developers are only concentrating on a small number of tasks at once(Ahmad et al., 2013).

2.2 Organizational Agility

Organizational agility represents a multi-dimensional concept, intricately tied to an agile mindset, and serves as a critical tool for comprehending and adjusting to varying business environments. This construct integrates five key areas: the agile mindset, layers of agility, agile culture, flat structure firms and strategic agility. Cultivating these areas seems to play a significant role in realizing organizational agility, thereby guiding leaders in envisaging their organization's future adaptability amidst continuous change. Each of these themes will be further explored

in greater detail in the subsequent parts of this section, shedding light on their interconnected relationships within the broader framework of organizational agility.

According to Felipe et al. (2016), organizational agility is the deliberate ability of an organization to effectively operate in a rapidly changing and turbulent environment. It encompasses not only reacting quickly to change but also proactively anticipating and seizing opportunities through innovation and learning. As a response to the challenges posed by the VUCA environment, many organizations have adopted agile methodologies as a strategic approach to foster and achieve organizational agility (Eilers et al., 2022).

De Smet (2015) noted that the optimal approach to organizational agility lies in striking a balance between agility and stability. Rather than viewing it as a choice between extremes, successful companies recognize the need for both. Moving too fast without maintaining stability leads to issues such as quality control, risk management, and the inability to leverage economies of scale. Conversely, being overly slow and bureaucratic hampers the ability to adapt to external changes. Effective leaders and organizations understand the importance of preserving a stable foundation while remaining flexible enough to respond to evolving circumstances.

2.2.1 The Agile Mindset

The agile mindset is a way of thinking that goes beyond procedures, techniques, and rituals. It is based on the values and principles of the agile manifesto, including trust, responsibility and ownership, continuous improvement, a willingness to learn, openness, and adaptability (Miler & Gaida, 2019 in Ozkan et al., 2020; Mordi & Schoop, 2020). This way of thinking is essential in today's digital and VUCA environments, enabling individuals, teams, and organizations to be more flexible, responsive, innovative, and better equipped to achieve strategic agility (Eilers et al., 2022).

To adopt an agile mindset, organizations need to create an enabling environment that fosters autonomy, manages uncertainty, and prioritizes customer value (Miler & Gaida, 2019 in Ozkan et al., 2020; Eilers et al., 2022). This involves shifting from traditional hierarchical structures to more flexible and adaptive ways of working (Mordi & Schoop, 2020). A culture that supports values such as transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement can empower teams to make decisions and take ownership of their work (Mordi & Schoop, 2021). This cultural shift enables organizations to be agile, rather than simply doing agile (Miler & Gaida, 2019 in Ozkan et al., 2020).

According to Weber & Tarba (2014), companies can foster an agile mindset by empowering employees to take ownership of their work and make decisions aligned with the company's strategic goals. An agile mindset can help companies overcome challenges associated with developing strategic agility, such as navigating uncertainty and ambiguity and overcoming resistance to change. Ultimately, cultivating an agile mindset is a critical component of driving innovation and growth in companies over the long term.

While adopting an agile mindset can offer significant benefits, there are also potential pitfalls to be aware of. For instance, organizations may focus too much on implementing agile methodologies without addressing underlying cultural or structural issues (Eilers et al., 2022). Another pitfall is the risk of overemphasizing process at the expense of people and collaboration (Miler & Gaida, 2019 in Ozkan et al., 2020). Resistance to change is another challenge that organizations may face when trying to adopt an agile mindset (Ozkan et al., 2020). To overcome these challenges, organizations need to focus on creating a culture that values continuous learning and improvement while also being mindful of the unique needs and perspectives of their employees (Eilers et al., 2022).

Developing the right mindset characteristics, such as openness to change, adaptability, and resilience, is fundamental to creating a foundation for building an agile culture that supports organizational goals (Eilers et al., 2022; Ozkan et al., 2020; Mordi & Schoop, 2021). Embracing an agile mindset empowers organizations to thrive in the dynamic business landscape of today, fostering customer-centricity, innovation, and adaptability (Mordi & Schoop, 2021). Ultimately, the agile mindset is not simply a set of practices or techniques, but a way of thinking, being and working that is deeply rooted in socio-cultural constructs and human interactions (Mordi & Schoop, 2021).

2.2.2 Layers of Agility

The concept of the "agile onion" has been proposed by Powers (2017) as a means of visually representing the layers of agility within an organization, as shown in figure 2.2. This depiction highlights the fundamental role of the agile mindset as the most powerful layer in the construct of organizational agility, in contrast to the inner layers of the onion that are associated with the operationalization of agile principles (Powers, 2017). Specifically, the outermost layer of the onion represents the agile mindset, which underpins the adoption of agile practices and the attainment of agility. This layer emphasizes the importance of embracing a cultural shift towards agility, which entails a focus on values such as collaboration, flexibility, and adaptability. Conversely, the inner layers of the onion, which are linked to the operationalization of agile practices, are more focused on the mechanics of agile execution, including frameworks,

techniques, and tools (Kanbanize, n.d.). The use of the agile onion metaphor thus highlights the distinction between "being agile", which stems from the adoption of an agile mindset, and "doing agile", which is more closely associated with the application of specific agile practices (Powers, 2017).

It is important to acknowledge a limitation in the existing literature regarding the Agile Onion concept. The scholarly literature specifically dedicated to the Agile Onion is relatively scarce, with the majority of available literature authored by practitioners rather than academics. However, it is our contention that the Agile Onion framework still represents a valuable and relevant foundation for addressing the research problem at hand.

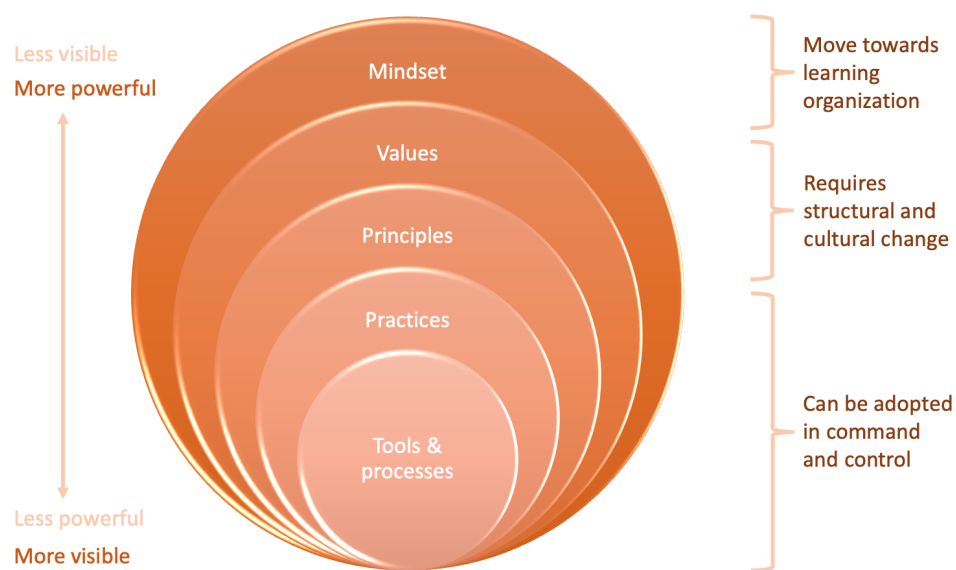


Figure 2.2: The Agile Onion, adapted from (Powers, 2017)

2.2.3 Agile Culture

According to Holbeche (2019), an agile culture is characterized by empowerment, continuous improvement, radical transparency, knowledge sharing, and open communication. Additionally, Holbeche (2019) emphasizes that the key concepts of resilience, including shared purpose, involvement, learning, employee engagement, and knowledge utilization, plays a vital role in the agile culture as this is what holds the organization together through constant change.

Agile organizational culture is different from traditional organizational culture in that it is centered around the values and principles outlined in the Agile Manifesto (Beck & Beedle, 2001).

Additionally, the significance of the agile culture lies in its ability to shape the overall mindset of the organization towards the adoption and practice of agile methodologies (Hofert, 2022).

By utilizing agile practises and frameworks, such as sprint planning and retrospectives, organizations can reinforce the agile culture (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020). Further, the agile culture is designed to facilitate collaboration and communication between team members (Kniberg & Skarin, 2010). The physical facilities are often open and collaborative spaces that promote communication and teamwork (Appelo, 2011). Agile organizations also use stories and myths to reinforce the culture, such as success stories of teams delivering value to the customer (Denning, 2018a). In addition, leaders have a crucial role to play in shaping the agile culture (Dikert et al., 2016). They must understand the values and principles of the Agile Manifesto, and communicate them to the members of the organization. Leaders must also model agile behaviors and encourage others to do the same. Leaders can reinforce the agile culture by promoting collaboration, experimentation, and continuous improvement (Denning, 2018a; Dikert et al., 2016).

While shaping an agile organizational culture has many benefits, it also presents challenges. One of these challenges is resistance to change, particularly among employees who are accustomed to traditional hierarchical structures (Cameron & Green, 2019). Agile culture values flexibility and responsiveness to change, but striking a balance between adaptability and maintaining a clear sense of purpose and direction is crucial (Wright & Snell, 1998; Lindvall et al., 2002). Another challenge lies in ensuring that employees have the necessary skills and resources to embrace agility, which may require investing in training and development programs and providing the tools and technology needed for effective collaboration and problem-solving (Karman, 2019). Additionally, organizations need to be mindful of employee well-being and work-life balance, as constantly expecting adaptability and responsiveness can lead to burnout or stress (Salmen & Festing, 2022). Leaders in agile organizations must be aware of these challenges and work to address them. This may involve providing training and support to employees who are new to agile (Stettina & Hörz, 2015), and finding ways to balance flexibility with structure (Lindvall et al., 2002). It is also important to have a clear vision and purpose for the organization, which can help to align employees around common goals and values (Appelo, 2011).

The popularity of flexible work arrangements, such as remote work and flexible schedules, has surged, particularly after the Covid-19 pandemic, with the emergence of new technologies facilitating this shift (Ferreira et al., 2021). According to Ranasinghe & Sangaradeniya (2021), offering flexible work arrangements not only enables organizations to attract and retain

top talent but also enhances employee satisfaction and productivity. However, Ferreira et al. (2021) highlight that remote work can significantly impact organizational culture. Popovici et al. (2020) also acknowledge the challenges faced by companies in cultivating a cohesive culture when employees are not physically located together, which leads to unique leadership issues specific to remote work. It is worth noting that both Ferreira et al. (2021) and Popovici et al. (2020) emphasize the limited research on the effects of a high degree of remote work on organizational culture.

(Felipe et al., 2016) noted that culture is one of the main variables that previous research has constantly ignored in research studies regarding organizational agility. This highlights the necessity to explore and examine the influence of an agile culture on the sustainability of organizational agility.

2.2.4 Flat Structure Firms

Flat organizational structure is an approach to organizational design that emphasizes collaboration and shared decision-making. According to Reitzig (2019), a flat structure can stimulate innovation by promoting creativity and diversity of thought and ideas. Denning (2016b) noted that flat structure firms have open and accessible communication channels that facilitate an interactive and inclusive communication dynamic, enabling seamless collaboration and information exchange across all organizational levels. By empowering employees to make decisions and take ownership of their work, flat organizations can enable faster adaptation to changing market conditions and technological advancements (Reitzig, 2019).

However, implementing a flat structure requires careful planning and consideration of organizational culture and employee needs (Reitzig, 2019). Effective communication channels are critical in flat organizations, as they help ensure that all team members are informed and engaged in decision-making processes. Regular feedback and performance evaluations can also help employees understand their roles within the organization and identify areas for improvement (Reitzig, 2019).

Potential drawbacks of flat organizational structures include a lack of clear lines of authority and accountability, and the removal of middle managers, which may negatively impact employee mentorship and motivation (Sorenson, 2022; Carzo Jr. & Yanouzas, 1969). Additionally, flat structures may not be suitable for larger organizations or those with complex operations that require more specialized roles or functions (Carzo Jr. & Yanouzas, 1969).

Overall, by adapting best practices to fit the unique needs of an organization, a flatter struc-

ture can support innovation, growth, and success. Petersen and Wohlin (2011) suggest that the agile development methodology supports a flat organizational structure by emphasizing self-organizing teams that are empowered to make decisions and take ownership of their work. With careful consideration of potential drawbacks and the implementation of effective communication and feedback channels, a flat structure can be a valuable organizational design approach for companies seeking to become more agile, innovative, and responsive to changing market conditions.

The Pyramid Principle

The Pyramid Principle is a theory that explains why firms tend to become taller as they grow in size. Minto (1987) suggested that when tasks involve multiple individuals, the necessity for organizational structure becomes apparent. While a flat organizational structure has its potential advantages, such as increased flexibility and faster decision-making, there are also potential drawbacks to consider. Sorenson (2022) noted that employees may struggle to understand their roles without clear lines of authority and responsibility, and senior managers may become overwhelmed with operational tasks without middle managers to oversee daily operations. Sorenson (2022) also noted that there is a tendency for companies to return to the hierarchical structure if they experience rapid growth, as a larger crew requires better organization. Therefore, middle managers are often introduced, who help to form a hierarchy. Hence, firms should carefully consider their unique circumstances before deciding whether or not to adopt a flatter structure.

However, Denning (2016b) argues that the hierarchy in an agile organization is a hierarchy of competence, not a hierarchy of authority. The performance standard is based on adding value to the customer. In agile organizations, there is an interactive communication dynamic, both horizontally and vertically, where anyone can talk to anyone. Ideas can come from anywhere, including customers. It is important to note that agile organizations are not necessarily flat or non-hierarchical. Top management still plays a crucial role in setting the direction for the organization, and managers are responsible for ensuring that individuals fulfill their job responsibilities. If anything, the drive for higher performance in an agile organization is even more relentless than in a bureaucracy, as emphasized by Denning (2016b).

2.2.5 Strategic Agility

Strategic agility has become increasingly important for organizations in today's rapidly changing business environment. Weber & Tarba (2014) pertains strategic agility to the leadership's ability to perceive and respond to a dynamic environment by making conscious strategic decisions and steer the organization's direction in response to environmental changes. Further, according to Weber & Tarba (2014), strategic agility is not just about reacting quickly to changes,

but also about anticipating them and proactively adjusting the company's strategic direction. This indicates that organizational agility is what fosters the ability to achieve strategic agility. Organizations that are not agile risk falling behind their competitors or becoming irrelevant altogether. This is especially true during times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, where organizations that were able to develop strategic agility were better equipped to respond to sudden changes in consumer sentiment and behavior, as well as breakdowns in supply chains (Elali, 2021).

However, achieving strategic agility can be challenging for organizations. Doz (2020) notes that strategic agility requires a culture that values innovation and risk-taking, which can be difficult to cultivate in some organizations. In order to develop strategic agility, organizations must find a balance between short-term responsiveness and long-term planning and vision. The ability to achieve this balance can be affected by cultural and structural factors within the organization. Ahammad et al. (2020) noted that a hierarchical organizational structure may impede the quick decision-making and idea contributions from employees across all levels of the organization. These challenges need to be addressed to successfully develop and maintain strategic agility.

Despite these challenges, there are several ways in which organizations can foster strategic agility. Doz (2020) suggests that the key to strategic agility is not just analytical strategy or organizational design, but also the set of management practices, behaviors, skills, values, and beliefs that animate senior management in making and implementing strategic commitments. To cultivate strategic agility, organizations can focus on three key capabilities outlined in the current literature: strategic sensitivity, resource fluidity, and leadership unity (Clauss et al., 2019). Strategic sensitivity refers to the sharpness of perception, intensity of awareness, and attention to strategic developments. Further, resource fluidity allows for the rapid reconfiguration of capabilities and deployment of resources. Lastly, leadership unity entails the top management's ability to make bold, swift decisions without getting entangled in win-lose politics (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). Additionally, organizations can invest in employee development and training to create a workforce that is adaptable, collaborative, skilled, knowledgeable, and aligned with the organization's vision and values (Doz, 2020; Ahammad et al., 2020).

According to the findings of Eilers et al. (2022) as presented in their article, there exists a significant correlation between an agile mindset among employees and the attainment of strategic agility in an organization. Consequently, the cultivation of an agile mindset among employees is crucial for achieving successful strategic agility. Eilers et al. (2022) noted that there appears to be a research gap in the literature regarding the impact an agile mindset has on team and

organizational level, and how this contributes to achieving both organizational and strategic agility in organizations characterized by a high degree of agile mindset.

2.3 Team Dynamics and Structure

Agile teamwork emphasizes collaboration, communication, and iterative development processes, often leading to greater ownership and engagement among team members (Santos et al., 2015). However, agile teamwork also presents several challenges that organizations must address to ensure successful project outcomes. By examining this matter, a comprehensive understanding can be gained regarding the influence of agile teamwork on organizational and strategic agility. Additionally, it provides insights for leaders on how to effectively address challenges and navigate the future of agility within their organizations.

2.3.1 Collaboration and Communication

Agile teams are characterized by their cross-functional and self-organizing nature, with members possessing diverse skills and expertise (Rigby et al., 2018). Collaboration is a crucial aspect of agile teamwork, as it enables teams to work together towards a common goal and achieve better results (Rigby et al., 2018; Santos et al., 2015). According to Burga et al. (2022), effective communication is essential for successful collaboration, with team members needing to share ideas, provide feedback, and resolve conflicts in a timely manner. According to Berntzen et al. (2022), development work is often carried out concurrently by multiple teams, and inter-team collaboration therefore plays a crucial role in agile organizations. However, inter-team collaboration is frequently constrained by dependencies that dictate the sequencing and execution of tasks. These dependencies are identified as critical factors that impact inter-team collaboration. To address these challenges and enhance collaboration, agile practices are employed, recognizing the importance of effective coordination and cooperation among teams.

To improve collaboration and communication in and between agile teams, it is crucial to develop a shared understanding of the project's goals and objectives among team members (Burga et al., 2022). Rigby et al. (2018) notes that this can be achieved by involving all team members in the planning and decision-making processes, which can lead to better alignment and commitment to the project. Additionally, organizations should encourage transparency and open communication, allowing team members to freely share their ideas, opinions, and concerns without fear of judgment or negative consequences.

Cross-functional teams, where team members possess different areas of expertise, can promote collaboration by leveraging diverse skill sets to solve complex problems (Khanagha et

al., 2022). Rigby et al. (2018) states that to maximize the benefits of cross-functional teams, organizations should ensure that team members have opportunities to interact and collaborate with colleagues from different disciplines. This can be achieved through regular cross-team meetings, workshops, and training sessions designed to foster knowledge sharing and the development of shared understanding across disciplines.

Comella-Dorda et al. (2020) noted that agile teams thrive when team members are co-located, with close-knit groups working in the same place. Co-location allows for frequent in-person contact, quick trust-building, simplified problem-solving, instant communication, and fast-paced decision-making. However, with the advent of Covid-19, remote work has been increasingly adopted, leading to a shift in work dynamics, which potentially can disrupt cohesion and introduce inefficiencies. Consequently, this shift to remote work can significantly impact the agile organizational culture, as highlighted by Comella-Dorda et al. (2020).

Creating a psychologically safe environment is essential for effective collaboration and communication in agile teams (Santos et al., 2015). Psychological safety refers to the belief that team members can openly express their thoughts, concerns, and ideas without fear of negative consequences (Edmondson, 1999). To foster psychological safety, Rigby et al. (2018) suggest that leaders should model open communication, encourage constructive feedback, and demonstrate a willingness to learn from mistakes. Additionally, organizations should provide resources and training on effective communication and conflict resolution techniques to help team members navigate difficult conversations and address issues proactively. Burga et al. (2022) noted that agile teams experience trust as a core part of their accountability. However, this trust may lead to a conceptual vagueness as to who is accountable for making decisions. The authors suggests that effective communication can help mitigate this uncertainty and ensure that everyone is on the same page.

2.3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

In agile organizations, it is essential to have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities for effective teamwork (Burga et al., 2022). Agile frameworks like Scrum and Kanban often include predefined roles such as the Scrum Master, Product Owner, and Team members, each with specific responsibilities (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020). By adopting such frameworks and clearly defining roles, organizations can ensure that both team members and leaders understand their responsibilities and how they contribute to the overall project goals.

To help team members better understand their roles and responsibilities, organizations should invest in training and development programs tailored to agile methodologies (Burga et al.,

2022). These programs can cover topics such as agile principles, team dynamics, communication, and collaboration, as well as specific responsibilities associated with each role in the agile framework. This training not only enhances the team members' understanding of their roles but also equips them with the skills needed to work effectively in an agile environment (Vishnubhotla et al., 2020).

As projects evolve and team dynamics change, it is important for agile teams to regularly review and adjust roles and responsibilities to ensure that they remain relevant and aligned with the project's objectives (Burga et al., 2022). According to Schwaber & Sutherland (2020), teams can use retrospectives or other feedback mechanisms to identify any gaps or misalignment's in roles and responsibilities and make necessary adjustments. This iterative approach to role management helps teams stay adaptive and responsive to changing project needs and priorities.

2.3.3 Autonomous Teams

Stray et al. (2018) defines autonomous agile teams as teams that have the freedom to make decisions about how they work and how they achieve their goals, without being micromanaged by a manager or supervisor. These teams are responsible for planning, executing, and delivering their work, and are empowered to make decisions about how best to achieve their objectives. A challenge in agile teamwork is striking the right balance between controlling agile teams and allowing for creative freedom (Khanagha et al., 2022). Leaders must find ways to provide guidance and support without stifling creativity or limiting autonomy. To achieve this balance, leaders should develop effective communication skills and understand how different management control mechanisms can influence the innovative output of self-managing teams (Khanagha et al., 2022). Furthermore, agile organizations should create a culture that supports experimentation and innovation while also providing structure and guidance where needed (Vishnubhotla et al., 2020).

According to Stray et al. (2018), having autonomous teams can lead to several benefits, including improved team performance, faster decision-making, better alignment with customer needs, increased job satisfaction, and improved learning and development opportunities for team members. Khanagha et al. (2022) noted that agile leaders need to understand how different management control mechanisms can influence the innovative output of self-managing teams. These mechanisms can include goal setting, performance measurement, feedback loops, and resource allocation. By implementing the right mix of control mechanisms, leaders can ensure that teams have the necessary guidance and structure without stifling creativity or limiting autonomy (Khanagha et al., 2022).

While agile teams benefit from autonomy and creative freedom, they also require some level of structure and guidance to ensure alignment with the overall project goals and objectives (Stray et al., 2018). Leaders can provide this structure by setting clear expectations, defining project milestones, and regularly reviewing progress towards project objectives (Burga et al., 2022). Stray et al. (2018) pinpointed the primary obstacles faced by autonomous agile teams as the absence of clear, shared goals, a lack of trust, an excessive number of dependencies on others, and insufficient coaching and organizational support. Furthermore, organizations can employ agile frameworks, such as Scrum or Kanban, to furnish structure and guidance with respect to roles, responsibilities, and work processes (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020).

2.4 Leadership in an Agile Organization

In the context of constant change, leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the agility of an organization. As Company X embraces agility, the demands placed on its leadership are significant. To address our research question on how leaders envision their organization's agility in the future, we delve into relevant literature on leadership. This chapter is structured to explore various aspects, starting with agile change management, followed by the characteristics of an agile leader, and finally the concept of dual leadership,

2.4.1 Agile Change Management

Agile change management, as interpreted from Franklin's definition (2021), emphasizes a dynamic approach to change, centered around the idea of delivering results iteratively and early within a project's life cycle. This focus allows for a prompt return on investment, which then serves as a catalyst for continuous deliveries and change throughout the initiative. However, despite these principles of flexibility and adaptability, resistance to change can occur when employees are confronted with alterations to their familiar routines (Denning, 2018a).

At the heart of agile change management lies the principle of employee involvement, fostering a shift towards more participatory forms of management (Bolino et al., 2010). By involving employees in decision-making processes, a greater sense of ownership over the product or service being delivered is cultivated. Research shows that such involvement can boost job satisfaction, motivation, and productivity (Wagner III & LePine, 1999). Yet, managing resistance to change demands active engagement from management during the entire change process. This interaction transforms resistance into a valuable learning experience and contributes to the overall organizational development (Denning, 2018a).

Task allocation in agile change management necessitates careful attention to balance. Overloading employees can lead to burnout, decreased productivity, and increased turnover (Mäkikangas et al., 2011). Moreover, given the sensitivity of agile organizations to changes in power dynamics and collaboration structures, these factors should be considered when implementing change to avoid fostering resistance (Appelo, 2011).

Furthermore, the role of effective communication is paramount in reducing resistance to change, fostering understanding, and enhancing the sense of security among employees (Johansson & Heide, 2008; Comella-Dorda et al., 2019). As part of this, management should strive for open, ongoing communication at all organizational levels. This open communication strategy should extend to the setting of Objectives and Key Results (OKRs), actively involving staff members from all levels and ensuring clear budget allocations (Comella-Dorda et al., 2019).

In addition to the points above, it is important to acknowledge that implementing change in agile organizations requires understanding the factors that contribute to resistance. Management should proactively develop strategies to address these factors, including conducting stakeholder analyses to identify those who will be most impacted by the change (Denning, 2018a). By understanding the unique concerns and influences of each stakeholder, management can address resistance effectively, ensuring a smoother change process.

In sum, agile change management provides a flexible and adaptable framework for managing organizational change, with built-in mechanisms to handle resistance. The successful implementation of this approach demands a commitment to active employee involvement, continuous improvement, balanced task allocation, and effective communication. With a proactive understanding of stakeholders and the factors contributing to resistance, management can develop effective strategies, paving the way for successful transformations (Denning, 2018a).

2.4.2 The Agile Leader

According to Joiner & Josephs (2007), an agile leader is someone who possesses a set of characteristics that enable them to lead effectively in complex and rapidly changing environments. These characteristics include adaptability, resilience, creativity, and a growth mindset. Agile leaders are able to quickly pivot their strategies and plans in response to changing circumstances while also remaining focused on their long-term goals. They prioritize collaboration and communication, recognizing that they cannot succeed alone and must work closely with others to achieve their objectives. By developing these competencies and progressing through the levels of leadership agility, leaders can become more effective in leading their organizations

through times of change and uncertainty (Joiner & Josephs, 2007).

One of the benefits of adopting an agile leadership approach is increased adaptability and faster response times to market changes, which enables organization to achieve and sustain strategic agility (Denning, 2018b). Agile leaders maintain an external focus on delivering value for customers through continuous innovation, rather than just focusing on internal outputs. This can lead to improved customer satisfaction and higher employee engagement (Fachrunnisa et al., 2020). Additionally, agile leadership enables organizations to differentiate offerings in the competitive marketplace and possess strategies, structures, and systems that can drive change and sustained performance (Doz & Kosonen, 2010).

However, implementing agile leadership practices can also present challenges. One of the key challenges is the need for leadership unity when striving for strategic agility (Doz, 2020). Leadership unity refers to the ability of members of the top management team to understand and trust each other, which enables them to achieve collective commitment to taking the risks necessary to venture into new business models and abandon old ones (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). Without leadership unity, strategic awareness would remain ineffective in driving business model change. Achieving leadership unity requires trust, open communication, and a willingness to put the needs of the organization above individual interests (Doz & Kosonen, 2010).

Another challenge of agile leadership is balancing autonomy and control within self-organizing teams (McPherson, 2016). Agile leaders must be able to provide guidance and support while also empowering their teams to make decisions and take ownership of their work. Additionally, agile leaders must maintain a focus on delivering value for customers while also managing internal processes and operations. They must also be able to navigate complexity and uncertainty with ease, which can require a high level of adaptability and flexibility. Finally, agile leaders must be able to communicate effectively with their teams, stakeholders, and customers in order to build trust and transparency within the organization (Denning, 2016a).

In sum, agile leadership enables organizations to adapt quickly to changing circumstances while maintaining high levels of performance. Implementing agile leadership practices can lead to increased adaptability, faster response times, improved customer satisfaction, and higher employee engagement. However, achieving leadership unity and balancing autonomy and control within self-organizing teams can be challenging. Agile leaders must also maintain a focus on delivering value for customers while managing internal processes and operations, navigate complexity and uncertainty, and communicate effectively with stakeholders.

2.4.3 Dual Leadership

Dual leadership is a dynamic team process that involves multiple individuals sharing responsibility for leading a team, which is common in agile methodology (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012). This leadership style emphasizes the distribution of leadership responsibilities and decision-making authority among multiple members of a team (Ramthun & Matkin, 2012). Researchers and practitioners have advocated for the benefits of dual leadership, which include promoting team effectiveness, innovation, and creativity through diverse perspectives and expertise (Wang et al., 2014). In agile technology projects, dual leadership can lead to increased engagement and motivation among team members, as well as better decision-making and results (Moe et al., 2009).

The Scrum framework emphasizes the importance of having a dedicated Product Owner and a Scrum Master, both of whom play essential roles in the team. In this context, dual leadership can be seen as beneficial, since both the Product Owner and Scrum Master contribute to the team's leadership (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020). To clarify, in everyday practice, the terms "agile coaches" and "scrum masters" are often used interchangeably. Henceforth, we will utilize the term "agile coach" as it aligns more appropriately with Company X.

Agile coaches play a crucial role in facilitating the adoption of agile methodologies by teams and organizations (Stray et al., 2021). They help teams understand and implement agile principles, practices, and values effectively, working at both the team and organizational levels. Agile coaches also act as mentors for team members by providing guidance on how to work collaboratively, communicate effectively, and deliver high-quality products (Stray et al., 2021). The essential traits of an effective agile coach include empathy, people-orientation, listening skills, diplomacy, and persistence.

However, Vidyarthi et al. (2014) highlights three main challenges associated with dual leadership. One of the primary challenges is maintaining clear communication channels between the two leaders and their respective team members. Unclear communication can lead to confusion, conflict, and inefficiency in the workplace. Another challenge is establishing clear lines of responsibility and decision-making processes when two leaders are involved. This can lead to ambiguity and uncertainty among team members regarding who is responsible for what tasks or decisions, and can create a lack of accountability. A third challenge associated with dual leadership is managing potential power struggles between the two leaders. This can occur when there is a lack of clarity regarding each leader's role and responsibilities, or when there are conflicting priorities or goals between the two leaders. This can create tension and conflict within the team, which can ultimately impact team performance and outcomes.

In sum, dual leadership can be an effective approach for promoting collaboration, engagement, and innovation in agile software development projects. The integration of an agile Coach into this leadership structure can provide additional support and guidance for teams adopting agile methodologies. However, it is essential to address the challenges associated with dual leadership, such as communication, role clarity, and potential power struggles, to ensure effective teamwork and positive outcomes for all involved parties.

Furthermore, there is limited research on when organizations should transition from dual leadership to single leadership. The challenges associated with dual leadership indicate that structuring a company in this manner may not always be seamless. Therefore, it is of interest to examine when dual leadership creates challenges in businesses, and the factors that need to be present for dual leadership to be suboptimal in technology companies.

2.5 Challenges and Drawbacks in Agile Methodology

There are potential drawbacks and challenges associated with agile methodology that must be considered. This section will delve into the potential challenges agile software development can encounter concerning prioritization processes, decision-making processes, and collaboration across teams in agile organizations.

Prioritization Process

Prioritization is a crucial process in software development that involves selecting the most important requirements for implementation. In agile Software Development (ASD), prioritization is challenging to maintain and requires a more formal process. The prioritization process should involve stakeholders, including customers, product owners, and development teams, to ensure that everyone's needs are considered (Borhan et al., 2019). Conflicting priorities among stakeholders can lead to disagreements about which requirements should be prioritized first. This can be addressed by using techniques such as MoSCoW (Must have, Should have, Could have, Won't have), Kano Model Analysis, Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA), Value-Based Prioritization (VBP), and Weighted Shortest Job First (WSJF) (Cockburn, 2014).

Moreover, the prioritization process should consider the potential risks and consequences of the decisions made. According to Boehm and Turner (2003), agile methods tend to focus on delivering working software quickly, which can lead to a lack of attention to other important factors such as security, scalability, and maintainability. This can result in technical debt, which

refers to the cost of fixing problems that were not addressed during development.

Decision Making

The decision-making process in prioritizing requirements can be complex due to various factors such as cost-benefit analysis, complexity, requirement dependencies, and delivery date/schedule. Understanding these decision factors can help project planners prioritize requirements to reduce risk and increase stakeholder satisfaction (Leffingwell, 2011). However, agile methodologies allow stakeholders to change project priorities throughout the project, which can have catastrophic consequences if there is poor communication and collaboration between teams and stakeholders (Boehm & Turner, 2003).

To address this challenge, decision-making in agile processes should involve collaboration and communication among team members and stakeholders. As noted by Dikert et al. (2016), communication breakdowns can lead to misunderstandings, delays, and reduced productivity. Therefore, it is important to involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process and ensure that everyone has a shared understanding of the priorities.

Collaboration Across Teams

Collaboration across teams is essential for effective prioritization of requirements in ASD. It is important to involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process and ensure that everyone has a shared understanding of the priorities. Collaboration can also help identify dependencies between requirements and ensure that they are addressed appropriately (Cohn, 2004). However, agile software development can become very chaotic and unstructured if it is not managed carefully. While an agile mindset emphasizes flexibility and adaptability, it can be challenging to maintain structure and clarity when managing complex projects.

To address this challenge, organizations need to carefully consider these challenges and develop strategies to overcome them when implementing agile practices. These strategies may include using project management tools and techniques, such as daily stand-up meetings, sprint planning meetings, and retrospectives, to ensure that everyone is on the same page and that progress is being made.

In sum, while agile methodologies offer many benefits in software development, there are also potential drawbacks and challenges associated with them. These include difficulties in prioritization processes, complex decision-making processes, and potential lack of structure and clarity in agile software development. Organizations need to carefully consider these challenges and develop strategies to overcome them when implementing agile practices.

2.6 Chapter Summary: Key Success Factors for Organizational Agility

This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge on organizational agility, with a specific focus on leadership in the context of constant change. The review explores various aspects of agility, and by analyzing the findings and identifying gaps in the literature, this review serves as a foundation for answering the research problem: How do leaders envision their organization's agility in the future, in the context of constant change? By examining relevant literature on organizational agility and its influential factors, this review provides insights into how leaders can shape their organization's agility to succeed in today's dynamic business environment.

Figure 2.3 illustrates the success factors for succeeding with organizational agility by showing how they are interconnected. The Agile Practices node is connected to Team Dynamics, which is connected to Agile Culture which is connected to Agile Mindset. Agile Mindset is directly connected to Organizational Agility, which leads to Strategic Agility. The figure illustrates that strategic agility is also a contributing factor to achieving organizational agility. Decision-Making is shown as a separate node connected directly to Team Dynamics and Organizational Culture, while Leadership is shown as a separate node connected directly to Team Dynamics and to Decision-Making, and indirectly to Organizational Culture. All factors are indirectly connected to organizational agility, and the figure highlights the importance of these interconnected factors in achieving organizational agility.

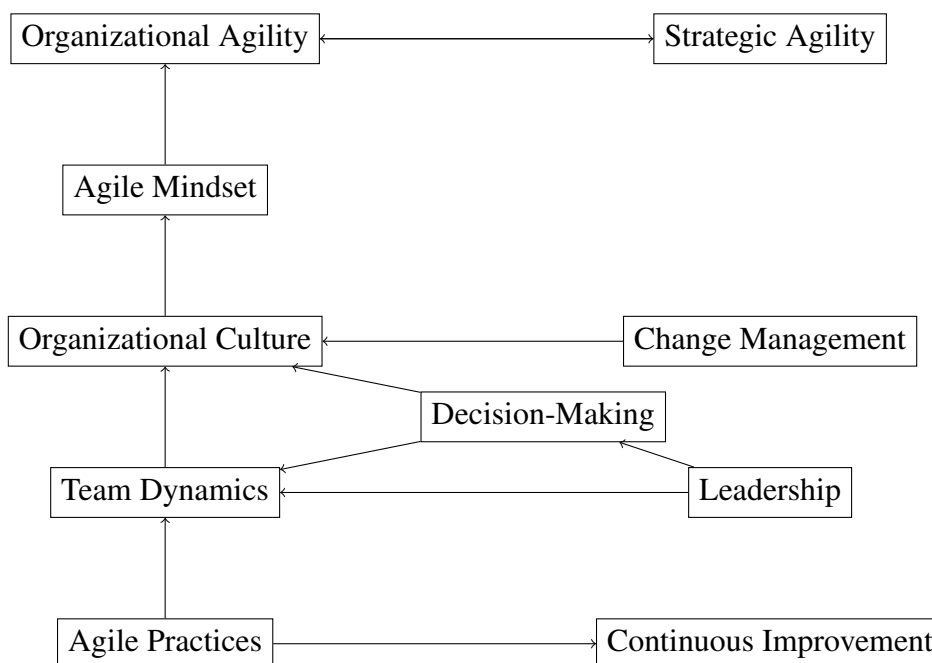


Figure 2.3: Connection of Success Factors regarding Organizational Agility

3 Research methodology

In this chapter, the methodological choices of the research project will be presented. It commences with a description of the epistemological perspective that forms the basis for the selection of the method. The following section of the chapter will detail the research design, the progression of data collection, and the data analysis. Finally, reflections on the quality of the study will be shared. This systematic approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the research process and its underpinning principles.

3.1 Scientific Framework

In the context of an academic investigation, several crucial decisions related to the research method emerged. This extends from a theoretical scientific foundation to the manner in which the gathered empirical evidence will be processed (Busch, 2013). In regard to scientific theory, certain choices were made. This section will reflect on these decisions and the theoretical foundation they provide for the thesis. Figure 3.1 shows an illustration of the choices that have been made, inspired by Saunders et al. (2019).

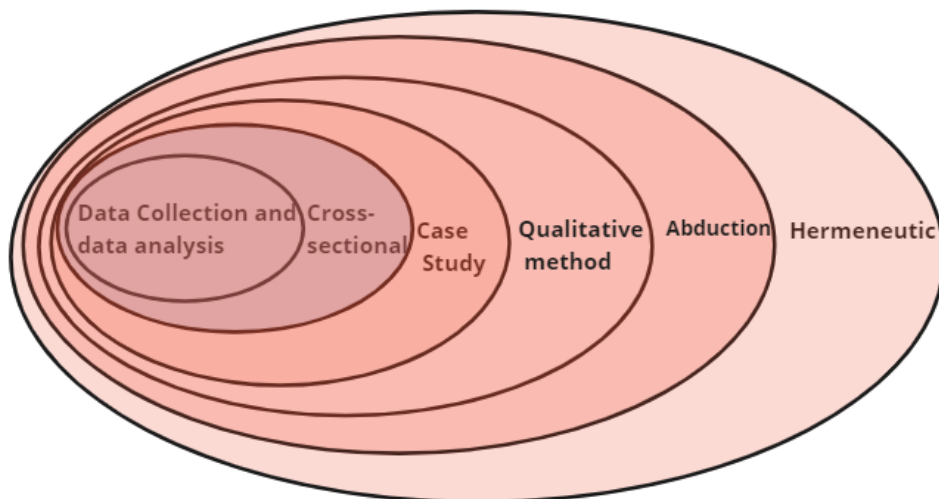


Figure 3.1: "Research onion" inspired by Saunders et al.(2019)

The scientific theory distinguishes between ontological and epistemological frameworks. Ontology involves fundamental assumptions about the social world, whereas epistemology, often called "the doctrine of knowledge" (Jacobsen, 2015), debates beliefs about the acquisition of knowledge in this world (Johannessen et al., 2011). The study at hand adopts an epistemological perspective due to the understanding that perceptions of reality may not necessarily align with the actual reality within the subject company. This perspective partly results from limited previous research experience, necessitating a critical assessment of perceived reality.

Research methodology also differentiates between hermeneutic and positivist approaches (Johannessen et al., 2011). A hermeneutic approach, as adopted in this research, aligns closely with epistemology, concentrating on interpreting responses from interviewees (Busch, 2013). This interpretative lens is crucial for the research as it facilitates the understanding of interview findings within the context of the study.

The research also navigates between inductive and deductive methodologies. While inductive research typically transitions from "empirical to theory," and deductive operates in the opposite manner (Johannessen et al., 2011). As the inductive method abstains from integrating hypotheses or theories into the task (Busch, 2013), it was immediately ruled out, leading to the adoption of an intermediary approach known as the abductive method. This method, identified as the Stepwise-Inductive Deductive (SDI) approach by Tjora (2017), involves a continuous interplay between raw data and theoretical frameworks. Given that this research incorporates both existing theories and generates new insights from data, this approach most appropriately suits the research methodology.

3.2 Research Design and Methodological Choice

The present research centers on agile organisations, specifically on the leadership's navigation of an organization in continuous change. A critical juncture in the research approach involved the choice between qualitative or quantitative research methods. This choice was inherently linked to the research problem: *"How do leaders envision their organization's agility in the future, in the context of constant change?"* The nature of this research question guided the methodological selection. Given the complexity of the research problem, an in-depth approach was seen as crucial to gather relevant information (Jacobsen, 2015). Consequently, an intensive research design was favored. One further factor influencing the decision for an intensive design was the capacity of the company under examination. It appeared more beneficial for the company under scrutiny to engage with a select group of participants rather than to conduct

extensive surveys requiring significant time investment from multiple participants.

The qualitative method differs from the quantitative approach in that it relies on linguistic data rather than numerical data. As highlighted by Johannessen et al. (2011), the qualitative method is suitable when investigating a phenomenon that lacks comprehensive understanding or when the aim is to delve deeper into its nature. The decision between qualitative or quantitative data is closely tied to the selection of an intensive or extensive research design, as mentioned earlier. Qualitative data are generally more suitable for intensive designs characterized by a limited number of participants and numerous variables (Busch, 2013). Given the intricate nature of the problem being investigated and the desire to enhance understanding of the chosen field, a qualitative design was selected.

Qualitative design presents several advantages in the research context. As noted by Mehmetoglu (2004), qualitative research is particularly suited for topics with limited previous investigation. Agile companies are a relatively recent phenomenon, so they have not been extensively researched. An initial optimism for qualitative research persisted throughout the research process, with minor adjustments made in response to empirical evidence from participants. This approach aligns with a hermeneutic starting point. Nevertheless, the decision for a qualitative design also posed some challenges. One such challenge was the requirement to link the findings not only to the specific company but also to the wider industry. Additionally, it proved challenging to meaningfully distill the findings. This process is discussed in more detail in a subsequent section.

The feasibility of integrating a quantitative design into the research was explored, driven by the potential benefits it offers. Quantitative analysis, as posited by Jacobsen (2015), can yield a broad spectrum of results, thereby providing a more realistic depiction of the company's image. Additionally, the use of anonymous surveys in quantitative analyses enhances the credibility of the collected empirical evidence. However, the complexity of the research problem necessitates assistance when employing quantitative surveys. As previously indicated, the resource-intensive nature of quantitative surveys also factored into the decision against adopting a quantitative design in this research (Jacobsen, 2015).

Based on the choices the researchers have shown earlier in the chapter, the present thesis will be classified as a case study (Jacobsen, 2015). The background is due to the choices based on scientific theory, the data collection type, and the problem.

The definition of a case study is a subject of ongoing debate; however, it is universally rec-

ognized as an in-depth investigation of one or a few research units (Jacobsen, 2015). Yin (1981) emphasizes one of the primary strengths of a case study, namely its ability to explore the researched phenomenon in relation to its contextual factors. This approach is commonly employed when using companies as research subjects to address specific problems. Furthermore, Busch (2013) suggests that comprehending a phenomenon itself is often easier than comprehending its broader context. This aspect aligns well with our research task and provides a valid justification for opting for a case study design.

3.3 Data Collection

The adoption of a qualitative method ensured that data collection evolved as a process, encompassing multiple steps. This section delves into the participant selection, the interview guide, the interview process, and the transcription of interviews.

3.3.1 Selection of the Case Study Participants

The initial step involved a meeting with the research supervisor to deliberate on the nature of data collection. Given that the research question is largely rooted in the management's handling of changes in agile businesses, it was deemed appropriate for a significant number of participants to hail from managerial positions. However, the specifics of the participant selection remained uncertain at this point, pending knowledge of the resources available from the partnering company. Therefore, a meeting was necessitated with the supervisor from Company X, who expressed readiness to provide the necessary resources.

The research then faced the challenge of determining the optimal number of participants for the study. A small number of participants could limit the scope of the findings, whereas a large number could compromise the depth of the research (Jacobsen, 2015). As a result, consultation with the supervisor at Company X led to the decision to include a sample of ten participants. This number was deemed sufficient to provide a broad representation of the business's various facets, ensuring adequate data saturation without undermining the depth of the investigation (Johannessen et al., 2011). To counter potential biases and elicit diverse viewpoints, interviews were conducted with individuals across different organizational levels (Yin, 2014).

Given the research's focus on the leadership perspective, it was logical to conduct interviews with a majority of leaders. Furthermore, the participants were drawn from a range of departments to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the business, rather than a limited view of

one or few departments. The final participant selection consisted of two individuals from management groups, three product owners, two agile coaches, and three team members. Notably, the roles of the management team, product owners, and agile coaches are in practice, fairly similar. However, due to availability constraints, a mix of these groups was necessitated. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the various participants, their respective organizational levels and the duration of the interviews. This form of strategic selection is a common practice in qualitative research (Johannessen et al., 2011).

Table 3.1: Participant Information

Participant	Role	Interview Time (in min)
P1	Employee	63:00
P2	Employee	59:00
P3	Employee	62:00
P4	Leader	51:00
P5	Leader	54:00
P6	Leader	58:00
P7	Leader	56:00
P8	Leader	62:00
P9	Leader	60:00
P10	Leader	56:00

3.3.2 Interview Guide and the Interview Process

The aim for the semi-structured interviews was to shed light on how leaders handle a company that is in constant change. An additional objective was to get an overview of the team members' views and whether they differ from the views of the leaders.

In order to address the research problem, it became necessary to divide the interview guide into two parts: one for employees and one for management. The interview guides can be found in appendix A.1 and appendix A.2. A significant portion of the questions were identical in both interview guides, but minor modifications were implemented to tailor the questions to the distinct participants. Further, the researchers concluded that five themes would need to be explored in order to adequately respond to the research question (Appendix: A.3). The five topics we aimed to explore during the interview were team collaboration, change, agility, management,

and post-Covid development. Although it might not have been necessary to incorporate all of these topics to address the research question, we included them to avoid the risk of overlooking valuable information.

Upon the identification of the central themes, the task of finalizing the interview guide was undertaken. A decision was made in favor of a semi-structured interview, a widely employed data collection method in qualitative studies (Johannessen et al., 2011). Only specific a few questions are included in the guide for semi-structured interviews, with the remainder of the questions being contingent on the informant's responses. Semi-structured interviews encourage an unrestrained and open discussion around some predetermined topics, as was executed in this study (Mehmetoglu, 2004).

During the design phase of the interview guide, collaboration with the supervisor was essential to ascertain which questions should be posed. The supervisor's assistance was instrumental in correlating the themes with the research questions, thereby ensuring that the questions would effectively address the problem. Once the supervisor had provided assistance, the questions for the interview guide were finalized and sent back for approval. The final result included over 20 questions, a considerable number for a semi-structured interview intended to last an hour. Even though it was understood that 20 questions might be excessive for a semi-structured interview, the decision was made to proceed and adjust the questions as experience was gained in conducting the interviews. A more detailed exploration of this will be provided in the subsequent section.

3.3.3 The Interview Process

The initiation of this study involved dispatching the interview guide to the participants, acknowledging potential minor modifications to this guide. The rationale behind such alterations lay in the desire for refining the fixed inquiries with accumulated experience. Conforming to Tjora's (2017) suggestion, the strategy employed included having two interviewers, especially for those with minimal prior interviewing experience. This approach split the interview process into two roles: one researcher dedicated to adhering to the interview guide, the other to posing follow-up questions. This division of labor provided a strategic advantage: the researcher adhering to the interview guide could manage time efficiently and ensure all relevant topics were discussed. Meanwhile, the researcher posing follow-up questions, unburdened by other tasks, could be a more attentive listener.

The quality of an interview, as Tjora (2017) suggests, is deeply rooted in the trust fostered between the researcher and the participant. As such, it was considered critical that participants

were made to feel safe and comfortable during the interviews. Due to the geographic distance separating the researchers and the participants, interviews were conducted in a digital format. Tjora (2017) promotes conducting on-site interviews at the participant's workplace, particularly when the study is directly related to that setting. However, in this case, it was not practicable.

Instead, the interviews were conducted remotely, utilizing the recording function of Microsoft Teams, which provided an effective and secure means of capturing the dialogue. Each of these interviews lasted approximately one hour on average, striking a balance between gathering sufficient data and respecting the participants' time constraints. Despite the lack of physical presence, the participants were able to experience a comfortable environment and conserve resources, reinforcing the benefits of digital interviews.

Each interview began with casual small talk to further foster a sense of rapport and ease. This practice served to create a relaxed atmosphere, encouraging the participants to share their experiences and perspectives openly and honestly, thereby contributing to the overall quality and richness of the data collected (Jacobsen, 2015).

Post-interview activities bear mentioning as well. The initial interview guide contained over 20 questions. However, after the first interview, the guide was reassessed for overlapping queries. This led to a gradual reduction of questions, each reevaluation removing some. The impact on interview outcomes was negligible, but the decreased number of queries simplified management. All interviews were audio recorded, reducing the necessity for extensive note-taking during the sessions.

3.4 Data Analysis

This subsection aims to outline the methodology employed in the data analysis. Firstly, an overview of the transcription process will be provided, highlighting the steps taken to accurately transcribe the in-depth interviews. Subsequently, the systematic organization and categorization of the collected data will be presented, illustrating the methodological approach used to classify and structure the findings.

3.4.1 Transcription of Interviews

Throughout all the interviews, audio recordings were utilized with the consent of the participants. This approach provided two benefits. Firstly, it eliminated the need for note-taking

during the interview, enabling complete concentration on conducting an effective interview. Secondly, it permitted a detailed transcription of the interviews owing to the availability of audio recordings afterward. Thus, a thorough transcription was undertaken subsequent to the interviews. Initially, the transcription tool in Teams was employed. Although this tool was designed to transcribe the entire interview automatically, it was observed that it often made some errors. Consequently, this tool was used as a support mechanism rather than as the primary basis for the entire transcription.

Transcription was performed as promptly as possible following the interviews. The motivation behind this was the opportunity to append comments on the immediate impressions, which could easily be lost if transcription is delayed (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). As multiple interviews occurred on the same day, it wasn't feasible to transcribe everything immediately. The Teams tool was utilized to expedite the transcription process. The adopted transcription method entailed listening to audio recordings, identifying errors in the automatic transcription, and rectifying them.

As recommended by Tjora (2017), the transcription process involved detailed recording. The objective was to retain all information, even if parts of the interview did not initially seem relevant. This was due to the uncertainty of whether certain details would become significant later in the analysis, hence all specifics were included for safety. By transcribing interviews in their entirety, a more structured methodology to interpret the results and gain a better overview is achieved. However, the benefits are not limited to the researchers alone. It also enables others to verify the raw data to ascertain if the interpretations are reasonable (Jacobsen, 2015).

Lastly, it's important to highlight that the transcription was conducted in Norwegian Bokmål, as the interviews were in Norwegian. Despite this, certain dialect words, which may bear special meanings, were not removed (Tjora, 2017).

3.4.2 Systematization and Categorization

Following the transcription, an extensive quantity of data was obtained. The transparency and manageability of this data could have potentially been improved. To mitigate the complexity inherent in the data, reliance was placed on the recommendations of Tjora (2017), featuring a step-by-step deductive-inductive (SDI) method, specifically designed to prevent an onset of "panic" during the analysis of a vast amount of unstructured data. The decision to employ Tjora's SDI model for data analysis (2017) is based on its substantial resemblance to Braun and Clarke's six-step model (2006). Furthermore, the greater familiarity with Tjora's model renders it the preferred choice for the analysis.

In the context of the SDI model, the operation is conducted with a single level of codes, adhering strictly to an inductive strategy. The coding's purpose is tripartite, as outlined by Tjora (2017): first, to distill the essence of the empirical material; second, to reduce the volume of the said material; and third, to facilitate the generation of ideas based on the empirical work's details.

The term "operating in codes" refers to the identification of significant categories and keywords capable of describing the collected empirical data. The empirical work's systematization occurred across multiple stages. Initial steps involved categorizing the data into codes, with Nvivo 20 serving as a tool for this process. Tjora (2017) underscored that the codes' categorization is developed through experience rather than theory. A practical guideline involves considering whether a code could have been established before the transcription of the interviews. If this was not possible, then the code was deemed to be of good quality. Such codes could encompass anything from quotes and paragraphs to any other standout elements from the material.

Upon reviewing and categorizing all interviews into codes, there was still a considerable amount of unstructured data remaining. The abundance of codes made it challenging to utilize the data. To address this issue, a system of code grouping was required. This process, also implemented inductively, involves the aggregation of codes with inherent thematic relationships into groups (Tjora, 2017). The ultimate categorization was done into the following themes: Decision making, agile culture, agile mindset, and team collaboration. Table 3.2 provides an overview of the themes and the number of codes contained within each theme. Additionally, a "residual group" was created, segregating codes deemed irrelevant.

Table 3.2: Overview of main categories in NVivo

Main Categories	Codes	Interviews
Decision Making	207	10
Agile Culture	158	10
Agile Mindset	124	10
Team Collaboration	172	10
Rest	27	5

The data served as a guide during the first part of the analysis, with the theory being scrutinized subsequently to identify elements from previous research that could enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study. Consequently, the data analysis evolved into a cyclical process, alternating between empirical findings and theoretical knowledge. This process signifies an abductive approach during the analysis (Bell et al., 2019).

3.5 Research Quality

In this section, the decisions made throughout the research project are outlined. This framework can be employed to evaluate the research's quality, with validity, reliability, and transferability being pivotal factors in determining its merit (Bell et al., 2019; Tjora, 2017).

3.5.1 Validity

The concept of validity, or in essence, truthfulness, pertains to the degree to which researchers' interpretation of reality aligns with the actual reality, as pointed out by Jacobsen (2015). This subsection will therefore delve into whether the findings of the research offer a credible reflection of reality (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). The sources utilized for data collection are primary, with data gathered through in-depth interviews, where respondents were given the opportunity to express their individual experiences and perceptions (Jacobsen, 2015).

The validity of this study is further reinforced by the diverse positions held by the respondents, thereby contributing to a variety of experiences within the company (Jacobsen, 2015). Additionally, these respondents were placed at different positions and levels within the organization. Such variation potentially allows for a comprehensive understanding of the company.

A limitation of the study is that the selection and recruitment of respondents were undertaken by the supervisor from Company X, who is from the company's management. This approach may have led to a potential selection bias, with respondents having a positive perception of the company or the model possibly chosen strategically. However, it should be noted that gaining insights into the experiences of working in this manner was a vital aspect of this study. Jacobsen (2015) also suggests that employees might have been hesitant to express their own views due to this recruitment method.

To minimize these weaknesses, there was consistent dialogue with the supervisor regarding the recruitment process of the respondents. The impression that the supervisor from company

X was cooperative and assisted in finding the appropriate respondents to obtain a holistic understanding of the company during the research process was perceived. A significant strength of this research lies in the anonymity of both the respondents and the company. This anonymity makes it difficult to identify the respondents, thereby adding strength to the collected data (Jacobsen, 2015).

Jacobsen (2015) also points out that the validity of information is enhanced when respondents are given the freedom to speak on a topic. To highlight this validity during the in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews were conducted. These began with open-ended questions designed to encourage respondents to reflect on the topic and what they deemed central. Care was taken to avoid guiding respondents towards any particular answer, so as not to influence the outcome of the interviews. Structuring the interviews in this way allows respondents to express what they consider important, not what they think the research team is seeking.

When it comes to the credibility of whether the respondents have provided accurate information, there is no reason to believe they have not. The variation in the empirical evidence further reinforces that the respondents have provided what they believe to be correct information. The presence of this variation strengthens the belief that the responses are honest, as the respondents held different positions and levels.

The theme of the research is not considered particularly sensitive, which could potentially strengthen the accuracy of the information provided by the respondents. Tjora (2017) also considers the fact that this research has its roots in existing research in the field as a criterion for validity. The methodology section describes and argues for the choices made, which enhances the quality of the research (Tjora, 2017). It also allows for readers to evaluate the quality of the research, thus contributing to increased quality (Tjora, 2017).

3.5.2 Reliability

Reliability pertains to the extent to which one can have confidence in the results derived (Jacobsen, 2015). This sub-section thus aims to delve into the methodology adopted for data collection and the corresponding impact on the research outcome. Jacobsen (2015) contends that researcher enthusiasm could be perceived as noise, potentially influencing the results. According to Tjora (2017), attaining complete neutrality can be challenging when one possesses prior understanding of the subject under investigation. This is attributable to the tendency among researchers to be influenced by their past experiences, which can affect the overall results.

Despite the above assertions, all possible measures have been taken to maintain neutrality during in-depth interviews, thereby mitigating the interview effect. Even though the interviews were conducted via Teams, the respondents were either in their homes or offices, possibly resulting in a more comfortable and relaxed environment (Jacobsen, 2015). Undeniably, conducting interviews online does not emulate the experience of face-to-face interactions. Nevertheless, there is no reason to believe that digital interviews would have influenced the respondents in any way that could reflect in the collected empirical data.

As all interviews were conducted digitally, they were recorded using the integrated recording software in Teams, capturing both audio and video. Tjora (2017) suggests that audio recordings bolster a research project's reliability, as they enable the use of direct quotations in the thesis. Furthermore, the audio recordings provided an opportunity to transcribe the interviews for further use in data analysis, thereby reducing the likelihood of inaccurate data registration, a factor Jacobsen (2015) considers a threat to the credibility of the thesis. The recordings were played back at a 0.5x speed during the transcription process, and the transcriptions were subsequently checked for errors by playing them back at normal speed. In light of these measures, the research methodology employed can be considered as having been effective in minimizing the risk of inaccurate data registration and thus bolstering the reliability of the thesis.

3.5.3 Transferability

The concept of transferability pertains to the extent to which findings from a given research can be generalized to contexts beyond those directly examined (Jacobsen, 2015). In this subsection, an examination is undertaken to determine the extent of generalization possible from the conducted research. To address this, three primary factors are discussed, as outlined by Jacobsen (2015): the number of participants, the distribution among the participants, and any other potential weaknesses.

A significant part of generalization depends on whether an adequate breadth, in addition to depth, has been achieved in the research. As alluded to previously, a saturation point was reached in the in-depth interviews. This was accomplished by ensuring a sufficient number of participants, as well as a broad distribution in terms of the participants' experience (Jacobsen, 2015). Theoretical generalization is generally considered a strength of qualitative methods (Jacobsen, 2015).

Despite this, it is argued that the research is to a small extent generalizable. Thomas (2011) proposes that generalization in social research is uncertain and tentative, discouraging the generalization of findings from case studies. Jacobsen (2015) concurs with Thomas's (2011) assertion

regarding case studies, arguing that they are often closely tied to a specific context. Therefore, to generalize a case study, it would be prudent to conduct the same research in different contexts.

An additional point of importance is the inherent complexity of the topic under investigation. Given that agile methods are frequently tailor-made within companies to maximize efficiency, it does not necessarily follow that what works for one company will work for another.

However, the research can provide inspiration to others. The enterprise under examination has had extensive experience and considerable success with agility. The goal of this study is not to generalize the research, but rather to achieve an analytical generalization, creating an understanding of the phenomenon that can be applied to other situations. Thus, the study may be relevant for other similar contexts, and it will be up to the readers to determine its relevance for their own circumstances.

3.5.4 Ethical Considerations

In the final section of the methodology chapter, the investigation delves into significant ethical considerations relevant to the thesis. It is an incumbent responsibility in the role of a researcher to thoroughly assess how the research may influence the subject under investigation, as well as to evaluate how findings may be interpreted and utilized (Jacobsen, 2015).

The invitation to participate in the interview ensured that the participants received sufficient information to determine their potential involvement in the research project. This is a component that Bell et al. (2019) regard as critical. Prior to the interviews, consent forms were distributed, containing comprehensive information about the purpose of the study, data handling, and audio recording. It was also emphasized that participation was voluntary, and withdrawal was possible at any time without any negative consequences. This aligns with Jacobsen's (2015) view on voluntariness as a mandatory criterion. It was observed that the respondents expressed interest in the study's topic and purpose, and there were no indications of reluctance to participate in the study.

Moreover, it is pertinent to consider ethical issues related to the participants' right to privacy. The participants and the organization they represent are kept anonymous throughout the thesis, and statements have been anonymized where necessary. Anonymization was considered suitable because certain characteristics of the organizations the participants belong to could potentially lead to the identification of individuals. Lastly, it is worth noting that the participants' personal data have been handled in accordance with the NSD's rules and guidelines, and the

project has been reported to the institution. The NSD consent form can be found in appendix A.4.

3.6 Summary

The methodology chapter encompasses descriptions and justifications for the methodological choices made in the study. The research method employed is qualitative, and the research design is a case study. A single company participated in the study, and ten semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with employees and leaders. This approach allowed the researchers to gain insights into the various perspectives and perceptions within the company, thereby addressing the research question. The data analysis was conducted in NVivo 20 using an abductive approach, inspired by Tjora (2017). Ultimately, the quality of the study was evaluated in light of the methodological choices made. The next section will present the results of the data collection.

4 Results

This chapter will present selected empirical findings from the data collection. As detailed in section 3.4.2, the data were coded into categories deemed relevant for addressing the research question, and it is these coded data that will be presented in this chapter.

The examination begins with an overview of the agility of Company X, scrutinizing its agile practices, the prioritization processes, and the organizational culture that fosters agility. Following this, the findings concerning team collaboration will be unfolded, exploring the elements contributing to effective teamwork within the company. Subsequently, the results concerning Company X's management will be introduced. Topics such as communication, involvement, and the role of autonomous teams will be delved into as these factors significantly influence how the management operates. Finally, a summary of the primary findings from the empirical data will be provided, and linked to the research questions. All findings presented in this chapter stem from in-depth interviews conducted during this study. For a more comprehensive description of the interview process, section 3.3.3 should be referred to.

4.1 Agility

During the process of data collection and analysis, we examined various facets of agility to understand how the organization adapts to agile ways of working and the strategies employed to make quick adjustments to meet market demands. Working in an agile manner has had an impact on the employees, and therefore, we will first present the results of what agility means for the employees in the company. Several of the opinions expressed by the participants were recurring, which could indicate that the company is mature in terms of agility and that the employees feel comfortable working in an agile environment. Understanding what agility means for the participants could help influence the direction the company takes in the future.

"For me, agility is all about continuous learning. It involves delegating responsibilities as much as possible, and to do so successfully, one must have maximum transparency and disseminate information throughout the organization. Additionally, the organization must be caring and generous with its people, creating a sense of security."- P8

The participant emphasized the importance of transparency and security, which is interesting as it closely relates to the organizational culture in the company, a topic that will be further explored later in this chapter. The spread of information throughout the organization, so that

decisions are made at all levels, is also crucial, and several participants have expressed their views on this.

"In our team, we don't do anything alone. I'm not particularly methodical, so I've learned most things through trial and error. Our team operates with a high degree of autonomy and a very flat structure. In my previous teams, I often had to seek approval from the CEO, so I had to work hard to ensure team autonomy. In my current team, we have more decision-making power, so that's the first thing that comes to mind when I think about agility."- P9

"To me it is the freedom to decide on one's own workday. We have a product owner who is responsible for ensuring that our team creates value, and this individual is a subject matter expert (a professional)."- P2

Another participant emphasizes that agility is about quick deliveries and having close contact with the customer.

"To me it's a way to approach problems. You don't sit down and create a detailed plan for everything that will happen in the future. You figure out what the customer needs, and make small chunks to get it out as quickly as possible. I can give an example, which is about a team being asked to create a means of transportation, and it needs to have wheels. If you work agile, you first make a skateboard. And then you sell a lot of skateboards, and while you're selling them, you make a bicycle. Then you have two things to sell. And then maybe you make a motorcycle. Then you have three things to sell. Finally, you make a car, and in maybe three years you've sold a lot of things. But if you don't work agile, you might sit down and plan the perfect, fantastic, amazing car, and not make any money for three years."- P7

However, the results still reflect significant contrasts within the company when it comes to the experience of agility. This is particularly evident when we look at specialized teams that may not have the same need for frequent changes.

"I think what we want to say is that we claim to be agile, but we are not as agile as we say we are. Agility is about tackling challenges and solving problems quickly. However, our department is not very agile. We are somewhat sidelined. But the advantage in our department is that we are a small core group that works in an agile way among ourselves. We can help each other quickly and get things done. So, perhaps it is the agility we have internally within our small team of specialists."- P1

Furthermore, the analysis reveals a clear difference in the perception of agility within the organization between professional teams and those working in cross-functional teams. There may be various reasons for this, but much of it can be attributed to the fact that agility is better suited for cross-functional teams and those working with technology. This viewpoint is also supported by the employee who believes that the company is not as agile as it claims to be.

"[...] When it comes to the next process, where change is needed and the need for change is significant, agility is lacking, and this is because everything has become a long process. Even simple things like changing sales material become a process."- P1

Agile methodology can indeed provide a driving force for employees, as changes happen frequently and employees have a greater responsibility as they can be involved in decision-making.

"The purpose is to achieve a high level of intrinsic motivation. If you are in a workplace where you are allowed to engage in things that you are passionate about in addition to your primary tasks, it helps to build up the intrinsic motivation to work there. I believe that it has a great value, being able to engage in those things. I also think that you perform better when you are satisfied."- P4

4.1.1 Agile Culture

The way the company approaches agility today is a result of trial and error. The participants express that there have been numerous obstacles along the way to reach the stage they are at now. Consequently, the company has moved away from strict agile practices to a phase where they have tailored the methodology to their own company. During the data collection, it becomes evident that agility is closely linked to culture, and that following strict agile practices can be abandoned if the culture for agile work is present.

"We are a company that is advanced when it comes to agility. You would have seen that companies face many challenges when it comes to implementing agility if you had worked with a company that is in the early stages of adoption."- P9

The organizational culture is crucial for the success of agile practices in the company. According to the participants, openness and trust are two key factors that define the culture. These values are also clearly noticeable in the work environment.

"We need to be able to share the information we have. When we're done with our Monday meeting, we share what we're going to work on this week in open channels. We use Slack for communication, so really anyone in the company can see what we'll be working on this week."- P10

By using open channels to communicate, everyone can get involved in the work. In practice, someone working in the sales department can participate in the tasks of someone who is developing the platform. The participants express that this is positive to gain an understanding of how the company works as a whole. Even more importantly, this form of openness helps to level out how much information each employee has. Several leaders express that information can be seen as a form of power. If you can share the information with the whole company, everyone has the same power. In practice, a new employee will have the same opportunity to participate in decisions as someone who has worked there for many years.

A specific example emerged repeatedly during the data collection. On New Year's Eve, a team was working on an important deal. It was very uncertain whether the deal would go through or if it would fail. All updates were continuously shared in the Slack channel. Many employees got involved and closely followed what was happening.

"It is important to lead by example. If we as leaders don't do it, the employees won't follow the culture either."- P5

"[...] It's important not to have a culture of fear, so the openness of sharing all the information we have doesn't disappear. It's much easier to make a change if you feel safe, rather than unsafe."- P7

This again highlights that culture is a key focus and closely linked to working in an agile way. Frequent changes and short-term plans often lead to changes, making culture a central factor, especially in a company that has had a good introduction and adaptation process to agile methodology.

As much as openness in the culture forms a foundation for working well with agility, trust is also a central factor. For example, the participants express that there is a low threshold for trying something new, and that it is fine to fail. One leader gave a concrete example of how they have tried, failed, and adapted.

"When we introduced OKR, we went all in without thinking about where it fit, and where it didn't. It really failed. And then we had to backtrack a lot about it. And now I think we are starting to approach where it can add value, and we still use it alot."- P5

The participants also express that it is fine to use their own ways of working within their teams. Therefore, the company does not have a defined structure for how they work today.

"[...] I find everything that's new and new ways of working exciting. If I see that others try something new, I often consider copying it in my team."- P9

It seems that the trust in the employees has led the management to move away from strict agile practices, to instead focus on what works best for the company. Additionally, it is mentioned that the management encourages trying out new methods, and emphasizes that there is nothing wrong with failing.

"[...] I would actually like us to try more crazy ideas and fail miserably, and then clean up and move on."- P6

It seems that even though there is no fixed framework, the company tends to opt for safer choices when making changes. This often results in successful changes, but the impact of the change on the company is also smaller. Additionally, the participants express that it is difficult to keep track of all the changes. This is partly due to the flat structure of the company, where everyone can participate in decision-making. The lack of structure regarding when decisions are made, and who makes the decisions, can create a sense of chaos, and it could be an alternative to tighten the structure. Several leaders believe that the main impact of a flat organizational structure is that all employees have access to a significant amount of information, which translates into having more equal amounts of power. Therefore, it may be possible to implement a tighter hierarchical solution without negatively affecting the company.

"I believe that social dynamics, such as where one sits during lunch and how they interact with colleagues, play an important role in fostering a positive workplace culture. The way in which individuals communicate and conduct themselves, such as keeping an open door policy, is heavily influenced by their personality."- P6

The findings reveal that the leadership has a significant responsibility to establish a culture that equips the company to be dynamic and to best handle change. This brings back the idea of leading by example. One of the participants mention the CEO of the organization as an agile leader who sets a very good example for the rest of the organization.

"It is worth mentioning that we have a CEO who leads by a good example. He embodies the agile values by being very open, promoting trust, and sharing a lot of himself. He is a great fit as a leader for us."- P10

4.1.2 Agile Practices

The participants express that the company can be perceived as chaotic, and much of the reason for that is because decisions are made everywhere in the organization. As we have seen earlier,

the company uses a low amount of frameworks for how to execute various processes. However, it is also evident that this has not always been the case.

"When I started to work here, the agile process was already in place. I believe we were almost more agile five years ago than we are now. We were more focused on following the methodology. We received a pretty good introduction to what the agile culture meant, and it's almost a bit more vague now."- P2

At the beginning of the adaptation of agile methodology, the company followed a stricter framework. The participants report that they now use their own methods that are customized for their own company. As mentioned earlier, the different teams have the opportunity to adapt to a framework that works well for them. In general, a central part of their approach is working in iteration and with continuous improvement, and their way of working incorporates several elements of agile practices such as Scrum and Kanban.

"A central aspect of agile is that you will deviate from any framework you start with, if you do it right, you will always change away from the initial framework to the point that it no longer resembles that framework."- P8

"My teams are utilizing a timeboxed Kanban approach, which heavily relies on Kanban principles. We plan continuously, with increasingly detailed planning as we get closer to execution."- P7

Another aspect that emerged from the interviews regarding agile practices and agility in general is the potential risk of employees becoming too comfortable with their ways of working, which may have consequences for the organization's overall effectiveness.

"Sometimes too much of a good thing can be counterproductive, causing individuals to become too comfortable and potentially complacent or chaotic. When there is too much willingness to change, it can lead to chaos as well. Similarly, if the environment is too comfortable and psychologically safe, it can lead to laziness and apathy. [...] I believe that, overall, we are doing well for now, but it may be beneficial to venture into the uncomfortable at times"- P6

4.1.3 Flexibility

An agile organization is often characterized by a high level of flexibility. Several of the participant emphasize the organizations ability to adapt in a changing environment.

"We can quickly pivot and take action in response to market changes. If something arises in the market that requires action, we don't need to wait until the next prioritization process. We can stop and react to it before it's scheduled on the calendar."- P10

Due to the need for the organization to be adaptable and flexible in a turbulent environment, it may be wise to provide employees with the opportunity to maintain the same degree of flexibility, such as through remote work and self-determined working hours. Employees in Company X have had the mandate and opportunity to make decisions since the introduction of agile methodology, but it was the Covid-19 pandemic that led to a greater degree of flexibility in their workday.

"Before COVID-19 there were hardly any [remote workers]. [...] We maybe had two employees in a different city. But now, it's a completely different everyday life. I had almost never worked from home. Now I do it one to two days a week, maybe. It's completely flexible today, so you don't really have any requirement to come into the office at all."- P10

"The transition from office to home office in Company X, for our employees who are used to having mandates and making decisions, went much better for us than it did for many others. No one panicked because there was no longer someone telling them what to do, our employees were used to standing on their own two feet and managing their workdays themselves."- P9

The participants express that this approach works well and provides great freedom, but it is noted that having many employees working from home requires additional adjustments to make it work effectively.

"[...] The approach that has worked well for us is to have a mix of employees working from home and coming to the office. Even when we have, for example, eight people sitting together in a meeting room, we make sure to use video conferencing so that everyone can participate. We all connect to the video on our laptops and use the hand-raising feature so that remote employees can join the conversation. Otherwise, if the people in the room just talk among themselves, the remote employees may never get a chance to participate in the discussion. This is a lesson we have learned from the pandemic."- P7

Although the degree of flexibility has increased, several of the participants also express the downsides that have emerged as a result of the introduction of free use of working from home. There are several things that are highlighted, primarily the difficulty of building good and secure teams. The teams in Company X should ideally be autonomous and work well together, follow up on each other, and have good relationships with each other. In addition, the teams should preferably have a good relationship between each other. The findings show that this is something that becomes more demanding when more employees work remotely, especially from a leadership perspective.

"After the pandemic, we introduced flexi office with its advantages and disadvantages. One of the disadvantages, especially for me as a leader, is that it's difficult to build a team when the team never meets physically. It requires a different type of work, and workshops always have to be on video, right? And it's so easy to sense if there's a good or bad atmosphere in the team when you're in the office, you can just go and sit next to them and hear it. But now it requires a lot more effort for me to figure out what's really going on."- P7

"What happened during the pandemic is that we functioned surprisingly well, as you probably know, and survived as one of the best companies during the pandemic. But what happened is that we got small islands, the teams work great, but collaboration across teams becomes really difficult when everything is on video."- P8

On one of the questions about whether the employees thought that a greater degree of flexibility with more use of home office affects the organizational culture, the participants had different opinions. One of the participants, a team member, believes that home office does not have a particularly negative impact on the culture. It is revealed that trust and openness play a big role in having the flexible arrangement that Company X has established, and these are important parts of the organizational culture.

"I don't really think it affects the culture in a negative way, at least not in terms of openness and trust. Because there is a lot of trust in the individuals and it requires everyone to take responsibility."- P3

Several of the leaders expressed a strong desire for employees to be more present in the office, primarily because they believe that the culture is built in the workplace. It is mentioned that the divide between those who engage and those who do not becomes greater, and that people in general are not as focused on building culture when they work outside the office.

"Regarding culture, I think there is a growing gap between those who engage and those who hide. It's much easier to hide at home now, and the culture we have depends a bit on people knowing each other. People come and go all the time, so I personally am very focused on meeting people physically as well. Then the digital will also work better."- P6

"During Covid, we pretty much tore it down because we unconsciously sat on home office and soon had more closed leadership programs in closed channels. Which we spent a lot of time on, and more and more disappeared from the regular channels. What resulted from that is that when we came back, people knew very

little about what was going on across the entire company, and they didn't care much either because they didn't really have anything like that like. [...] They were isolated. In Covid, they were isolated more in their own world."- P5

The management therefore emphasizes that they want to increase attendance at the office, but without setting specific guidelines for employees to show up, mainly to maintain flexibility. This can be seen as a very flexible leadership style, to encourage rather than using force. In addition, they point out that setting examples of how they want employees to behave is important.

"It's basically set up to be the coolest place in the world. We also do events at the office, breakfast meetings with celebrities who come and give lectures and stuff. We have a dedicated barista day on Wednesdays. A waffle maker comes up and makes waffles for us. So it's not a whip, it's a carrot, people should think it's tempting to come here."- P6

"I know that some people think that some leaders in the management team are in the office too infrequently, and that it affects how employees do things, and I actually agree with that. We have a clear responsibility to show a little bit how things should be done."- P6

4.1.4 Priorities

The empirical data showed that the Company X has prioritization processes that take place every three months. The purpose of the prioritization process is to set a set of goals that the company wants to achieve after the period is over. Today, the company uses the goal management tool OKR (objectives, keys and results) to define goals. However, the process is not straightforward. After the management comes out with the overall goal for the company, the product owners gather their teams for input on what is most important for the team in the next period. Then, the management, product owners, and agile coaches go through a workshop where they review what the team has come up with and work on it based on what the management thinks is the highest priority. After that, they go back to the teams to check if what has been set up is feasible.

"It's important to prioritize with the employees and let them have all the essential information, give them the opportunity to get involved and engage. And yes, it would have been easier to just go into the teams and say, 'Here's the goal for the next 3 months, you make this, you make that, you make that.' But that would affect the inner motivation and the significance you have in a company, and what you can contribute with. You are more than just a puzzle piece, or you are more than just a robot who is just told what to do. So agile is very good"- P4

Involving employees in decision-making is a recurring theme in the data collection. Allowing employees to have a say in their own work tasks also gives them a greater sense of ownership over the product that is delivered. It is also evident that the company has become better at involving employees in decision-making processes over the years.

"[...] We have opened up even more in the prioritization process. I would say that we are now even more involved in the concrete aspects of it - what should we actually prioritize? Not just following the process from a distance, but actually being a part of putting post-it notes on the board and voting on what we should do. [...] One contributes with the insights they have, which can justify why we should choose to prioritize something. So, the degree of involvement has actually increased over the years. And I think that's positive."- P3

Having prioritization processes every three months is frequent. The main reason to follow this plan, is that one must always be prepared to stay competitive in the market. This requires extra effort from employees. Working in an agile manner involves many meetings and time to familiarize oneself with all changes.

"I often feel that involvement is necessary. You can tell that you gain more insight by doing it, so the end result will also be better. Even though I can also feel that the process becomes a bit longer, you also get more clarity in what you're working on. That's always a good thing."- P3

One of the leaders also emphasizes the importance of having routines in order to adapt to prioritization processes and to create a better culture for change. Examples are given where there has been great dissatisfaction with unnecessary things, which again supports the idea that it is important for a company to practice what it wants to become good at when it comes to prioritization processes.

"If things are difficult, we train on them. Three years ago, we had to move places in the office. It was chaos, and people were upset. I was thinking, what's going on? You're just going to work 10 meters away from each other. So, after that, we started switching places every three months. And now, people have gotten used to it. So, they just say okay and switch places without making a fuss. This is an example of how you can train yourself to become good at something. The same goes for prioritization. We all know it's coming, and that's how we've been working for a long time."- P7

While it requires a certain amount of structure and training to maintain good prioritization processes, it is also mentioned that they are time-consuming. All participants see a benefit in

taking the time to involve employees in prioritization processes. However, there are still small adjustments that could be made to make them even more efficient.

"We have conducted prioritization processes in many different ways, and some are more effective than others. Last time, we set aside two days, where the product owners had time to work with their teams. They had to use two full days, and that made it a bit more efficient."- P7

The impression from the data collection is that much of the prioritization process is unstructured, but that it works fine. There may be several reasons for this, but it seems that agile methodology gives a sort of controlled chaos feeling. Therefore, such processes can take longer than necessary, and it may not be as noticeable to the employees. At the same time, the company is always open to trying out new things and adopting new best practice solutions. It also emerges that there are often too many tasks in the prioritization processes. This has been a recurring problem, which they have already tried to adjust, but it turns out to be more challenging than expected.

"We have a tendency to have too many tasks on our plate, and that's because there is so much that we want to do. And maybe there is a lot that needs to be done as well. But that means that we have to prioritize all of the tasks. But what about the tasks that don't get prioritized? Well, there are a lot of those too. So we always have a full plate. I don't know if it's human nature to want to show that we can do so much, but we always end up burning ourselves out. But it could also be that the tasks have become so complex that what is required to solve them is more than we can handle."- P1

4.2 Team Collaboration

Team collaboration is vital in all companies, but even more so in agile companies where changes occur frequently, and adjustments must be made constantly. The participants expressed that collaboration works well in the company. In recent years, the company has taken measures to improve collaboration and allow employees to get involved in other teams' tasks to gain a better understanding of the whole. Nevertheless, it is revealed that some aspects of team collaboration can be further improved. Under the theme of team collaboration, we will delve into how collaboration works internally within the team as well as externally with other teams.

4.2.1 Cross-functional and Professional Teams

To adapt to agile methodology, the company has introduced cross-functional teams. The idea is to be as little dependent on other teams as possible. By introducing cross-functional teams,

tasks can be solved internally within the team, as the team comprises employees with different areas of expertise.

"Having cross-functional teams strengthens the ability to deliver new features across all clients effectively. This means having expertise in insight, design, client development, and backend development to deliver for all clients."- P5

The company has two major cross-functional development teams, referred as Team A and Team B, which often collaborate with each other. All members of the cross-functional teams also belong to a professional team composed of employees with similar professional backgrounds.

"The professional teams play a significant role in the prioritization process, and the teams only split into Team A and Team B when they go out to work. [...] in the prioritization process, ownership of the goals is not solely the responsibility of one team; instead, all members should take ownership of all the goals."- P5

The participants also express that cross-functional teams are created as needed. The cross-functional teams have a goal to deliver a product, and they are established and closed down when there is no longer a need for them. It is, therefore, common for employees to frequently switch between different cross-functional teams and, with that, also switch leaders. Although the arrangement of an employee being part of both a professional team and a cross-functional team may seem complex and challenging, the employees express that they enjoy working in this way. One employee mentions some specific benefits of working in cross-functional teams.

"I think this way of working is great. I think this is actually the best way of working. There is a low threshold for showing each other what we are doing."- P3

"I communicate a lot with the developers, daily actually. We send each other both screenshots and screen recordings of what we are working on. We have close communication because we often work towards the same goal, and it's important to have close dialogue as well."- P3

Another participant explains that cross-functional teams are essential because the company is becoming increasingly a technology company. Therefore, developers must collaborate with UX designers and other fields. The professional teams also serve the purpose of providing a better understanding across the organization. For example, developers working with the same technology can be helpful to each other, even if they work in two different cross-functional teams. The participants explain that they solve tasks across the teams and that communication between them makes it easier to follow the company's goals for the period. When we asked management if there were other benefits to structuring teams into professional and effect teams, we received the following response:

"One needs to be part of a professional team because there are dimensions that are not taken into account in a effect team. And cross-functional teams are not necessarily long-lasting, so they are used to effectuate the focus we should have as an organization right now. For example, now that we are lifting the linear TV experience and making it easier to find content in the product. The major effort that we manage from our cross-functional product teams, while managing ensures that we manage the technology over a longer period of time, for example in Android. There is technology where you can now upgrade the Android TV operating system. Then you should switch from one technology to compound with new technology, so it is another, more long-term management responsibility, which naturally lies in a more long-term team of experts matter."- P5

4.2.2 Collaboration Across Teams

One of the greatest challenges arise when considering collaboration with other teams. Team A and B work very well together. However, the participants express that collaboration across teams is not always seamless.

"it is not always optimal to collaborate with other teams as it currently stands."- P8

"it can be a bit tricky at times."- P10

"a major frustration is that they are often deprioritized." -P1

The participants expressed that collaborating with other teams can be difficult due to a lack of time. One employee made an interesting claim about where the challenge often lies.

"The other team may not have prioritized what addresses our problem. So if we see that we have a need, it may be that the others do not have the opportunity to prioritize it. [...] So the actual process is fine, but the problem may be that the others do not have time. Because our priority is not relevant to them in the same way." - P3.

One of the leaders described how team interaction could feel chaotic and unstructured. The lack of structure in how collaboration should work can make it difficult to find a solution that works best for both parties. Additionally, he highlights that it can be uncomfortable to be vaguely disagreeable about things since they have such a "flat structure," and even as a leader, he has had to empower those who disagree sometimes. The leader also notes that the flat structure is very positive, but it can be frustrating when such incidents occur. Another leader emphasizes the importance of collaborating across teams in the company and that the company depends on this as they deliver one core product.

"We only have one core product, and therefore we cannot isolate the teams in such a way that one team does not have an impact and relevance for other teams."- P8

And since the company primarily has a core point, prioritizing for one team can have greater consequences for another. The participants expressed that especially two teams have greater challenges regarding external team collaboration; development teams do not work optimally with sales and marketing teams.

"We had to develop a new type of discount with a partner. However, to do so, a technical team of developers had to develop the discount. Unfortunately, the collaboration with this partner fell apart due to this. They wanted a type of discount that we were not able to deliver, and as a result, that opportunity was lost."- P10

Another employee, who works in the sales department on the traditional side of the company, states that delays often occur as they are frequently dependent on other teams, but very rarely are other teams dependent on them.

"This also creates significant frustration within our small team, as we have to chase after them."- P1

4.2.3 Team Connection

The company is constantly undergoing frequent changes and often makes minor adjustments to adapt to the market as best as possible. To ensure that everyone can keep up with what is happening, the company uses the communication tool Slack to share information.

"We want to use the open channels as much as possible so that everyone can keep up with what we are doing. Even the management often use open channels so that everyone can follow the changes happening."- P5

By staying up to date, employees also gain a better understanding of which tasks should be prioritized to achieve the company's goals. However, engagement in the Slack channel is voluntary. The company also has other initiatives that help bind the company together.

"We have open forums. For example, we have something called 'product coffee,' every other week during working hours. Anyone can come, and then we run a lean coffee variant. You come to a meeting without an agenda, and everyone is allowed to suggest what we should talk about."- P4

Holding meetings during working hours makes it easier for employees to attend and, importantly, to bring up topics they feel are relevant to discuss for the company. Another participant says that the company is also engaging in activities outside of the workplace.

"I think a lot of the budget the company saves by not having premises in the city center is used on us employees so that we can thrive. People are encouraged to meet outside of work and participate in company-sponsored activities."- P3

"[...] I think these social things are very important for getting to know people across teams, such as at the Christmas party. Then we don't sit with those we work with, but rather with completely different people. It is positive for the internal team dynamics in the organization, and employee surveys show that employees actually enjoy working here."- P8

One of the leaders also thinks this is a nice gesture but expresses that it is too naive to believe that a nice evening at the Christmas table can solve all of the company's collaboration problems. However, at the same time, the management believes that good morale also impacts teamwork and overall production effectiveness.

4.3 The management

The findings showed that leadership plays a crucial role in maintaining the organization's agility. The participants expressed distinct opinions on how agile leaders should act, and the findings indicate that there are specific ways in which leaders can promote agility in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment.

4.3.1 Organizational structure

The organization has a flat structure, with few levels separating leadership and employees. There are three levels: the leadership team, the product owners and agile coaches, and the team members. Additionally, the company has no concrete methods or frameworks for employee communication. There should be easy access to speak with leadership while also having the ability to communicate with other teams as desired. Employee involvement is also a critical point that the company emphasizes.

"I cannot say we have a specific model for how teams function internally. One of the things that characterizes the company is that it is a very flat organization."- P8

Another participant added,

"We are not very large, with around 100 employees, meaning the distance between leadership and team members is quite short. It is a very, very flat structure. There are open offices here. Nobody has their own office, not even the leadership team. We sit in an open workspace, and there are very few communication barriers."- P10

However, a flat structure and short distance to leadership may not be suitable for everyone. One of the product owners noted that the personality traits of employees can play a role in whether or not they will thrive in a company where everyone can participate in the decision-making process.

"The experience in a flat-structured organization is good for those who enjoy freedom, making decisions, and being involved in the decision-making process, and those who have enough structure for it somehow. However, this does not apply to everyone. Without mentioning names, we have employees who find it unpleasant to work with us because they are used to having a clear set of tasks when they come to work. For instance, they know they need to design this specific element. This is not the case with us, so I can say that it is perhaps the most crucial factor I focus on when interviewing people. I openly state that if you do not enjoy controlled chaos, where you have significant opportunities and a great responsibility to influence how we work towards our goals, you will not enjoy working with us. It is essential that employees are involved in decision-making, especially within their own teams, where they have the best understanding of specific challenges that may arise."- P5

4.3.2 Dual leadership

In Company X there is a dual leadership structure with an product owner and an agile coach in each team. Thus, there are two leadership roles per team. The product owner of the team is responsible for providing direction and ensuring that the team's goals are aligned with the organization's objectives. One of the participants explains their role as an project owner.

"It is basically about me being responsible for the impact that our team creates. It is my responsibility to ensure that we achieve the goals that we have set. For instance, if we have a target of achieving a certain number of sales during a specific period, I am the one who is accountable for whether or not we perform well. Therefore, I must be able to explain why we have not reached the set targets"-. P10

On the other hand, the agile coach focuses inward and is responsible for removing obstacles, facilitating the flow and good processes, and providing personnel management. The data collection also reveal that agile coaches often supervise multiple teams.

"An agile coach is responsible for identifying and addressing obstacles, whether at the individual, team, or organizational level. Essentially, the role is to grease the organization and ensure that everything runs as smoothly as possible, that everyone is as happy as they can be, and that they are performing at maximum capacity".- P5

"I am an agile coach for 5 teams".- P7

Among the participants, there are differing opinions regarding dual leadership. Several different answers were given when asked about the expertise and competence of the agile coach and the product owner. One participant highlights the significance of expertise for the product owner, whereas another participant emphasizes the importance of professional competence for the agile coach in effectively carrying out their responsibilities.

"We are initially employed in the role project owner or agile coach, but we juggle more in relation to the project owner in terms of which team the agile coach works for. I have not thought about it, but there are higher expectations for the professional knowledge of the project owner than the agile coach. However, we group agile coaches according to whether they work in commercial teams or technical teams."- P9

Another participant emphasizes the importance of professional competence for the agile coach and how it significantly contributes to performing the job effectively.

"It probably has to do with my professional background. [...] Both because I understand the subject matter well, I easily grasp what they're talking about and what they're concerned with, and because I have the entire experience of being in such teams. Many other agile coaches have worked with other things before coming in and looking at the development process with somewhat external eyes. [...] There are some things that I should "own," such as various ceremonies like Stand Up and Retro, so I have formal responsibility for those things, but that is not the really important thing. The important thing is my work to get the team to function, and it is about understanding what they are trying to create." - P8

Additionally, the findings suggest that the personal relationship between the product owner and the agile coach plays a significant role in the effectiveness of the dual leadership's team management.

"I have an Agile Coach with whom I get along well, and we work effectively together. So, I believe that the personal relationship between the Product Owner and Agile Coach may vary. I also believe that this affects the quality of our collaboration."- P10

Team members have also expressed their opinions, particularly regarding agile coaches. The findings indicate that this role is not always necessary and can sometimes be disruptive to the workday. It is emphasized that this varies depending on the performance of the individual agile coach; some succeed in their role while others do not. One of the participants who serves as a team member suggested that the function of an agile coach can often be superficial and unnecessary.

"Personally, I feel that there can be too many agile coaches. We do not have as many agile coaches now as we did before. But to be honest, I think it is still too many, and it is a bit problematic. [...] For me, I need a manager with expertise in the field. If you do not have expertise in what I do, how on earth can you make decisions about my salary, for example"- P2

"If the agile coaches cannot perform their job effectively, I think it becomes a bit of a joke. If I spend more time in a meeting because someone is struggling to open a Favero board than we spend going through the board, I get a little frustrated."- P2

Another participant who is a team member in a team without an agile coach also had opinions on the necessity of this role. The participant reflected on this and concluded that agile coaches could be valuable in some periods.

"Personally, I feel like we have managed quite well without it because we follow the same things. The same processes, regardless. We are autonomous enough to manage without them. However, as it is now, there is a bit more clutter in the machinery, but I don't think it has anything to do with agile coaching. I think it's just that the tasks that have been prioritized in my team are too vague and a bit too fluffy, which means that we have to work in a slightly different way. So the starting point may have been a bit more difficult. But it's possible that an agile coach would have done wonders to break things down and organize us better. It's possible."- P3

It is also revealed that there is a risk of having too many leaders in an organization when working with dual leadership, and that agile coaches often become involved in situations that are irrelevant to their role. This can lead to a loss of focus on agility. One of the team members points out that this role may have lost its function somewhat.

"The agile coaches lift themselves up to be like, yes, the vice presidents of the company in a way, they are raised above many others. It may be a hindrance instead of trying to work more with us and tying teams together. [...] I believe that it should be the project owner and management who should actually set the strategy for where we are going, not in collaboration with agile coaches."- P1

"As should come to light then, which is a bit of a challenge we have in the company here, I think we have 120 employees, and 45%-50% are leaders. [...] So I think that role has lost its function."- P1

Furthermore, the findings indicate that many of the agile coaches lack agile expertise, and these roles are filled through internal promotions within the organization. This has led to a decrease in the organization's agile competence, as during the process of introducing agility, they had more agile expertise to rely on.

"I don't have any agile coach background, training, or education. We have all come here through other roles, and then shown interest in team processes and cultural leadership, and become agile coaches from that. Experience and professional competence greatly influence our role, and we build competence as an agile coach on top of that." - P8"

"I think maybe I have to say that the agile competence and the agile expertise at the leadership level in the company have probably decreased. That's my personal opinion, anyway. We had a lot more subject matter experts in agile and lean startup, etc., five years ago than we do now. Part of the reason for that is that many of the talented ones have moved on to other jobs and gotten high positions, and those we have filled in with have been internal promotions, and they don't come in with as many new mindsets."- P6

One of the participants was asked if any measures were taken to increase agility competence, to which they responded negatively.

"I would say no, it's simply inadequate. But, it affects everything. We have now launched a more general leadership development program, where the focus is not only on agility, but more generally. I believe that one must have multiple methodologies to work from, and multiple tools in the belt, not just agile, agile, agile. One becomes the sum of all experiences one has, so it's not a bad idea to approach things more generally. With us, people can sometimes think that one must do agile, just for agile's sake, and that it's not allowed to say project manager. A good project manager should not be underestimated if it's a good project. So, I feel

that one must also be a little agile in the choice of methodology, not just choose agile methodology, but be agile in the choice of methodology."- P6

Some of the managers reflected on how dual leadership will work in the long run and evolve in the future. The findings suggest that one possibility is not to have dual leadership, but rather to have a leader who functions as both a project owner and an agile coach.

"What is difficult is that we have divided leadership. And as we grow now, there is a need for more and more leaders, and then it becomes a bit leader-heavy, and then we lose some of the flat structure. So, I wonder if it might be time to remove the dual leadership. We should have leaders who can be both project owners and agile coaches. It has begun to be discussed, and I know some disagree with me. But if you look at job postings and such now, they don't often ask for pure agile coaches. They want agile leaders."- P7

Another manager has similar opinions on dual leadership.

"At that time [in the adoption phase], we were a much more immature organization, so the agile coach was also supposed to teach the team agile practices. So, maybe it was right at that time due to maturity, but we have maybe come further where new employees know about agile, technologists know about agile, so the pattern has sort of settled. Then I don't know how important the agile coach role as a change agent is anymore. [...] I actually think that both as a leader and employee going forward, you must have the agile mindset more throughout the organization, rather than a top-down approach if some still practice that. [...] There are clearly different opinions, but I am one of those who believe that a little more hierarchy, not to create hierarchy to elevate or lower oneself, but simply because it actually makes it easier for people to relate to "ok, but this is my leader and his leader, and it's her leader, and if I need help, I know where to turn to, up or down or a little to the side." I talked a bit about chaos then, in other words, in the end, you're changing a model you're not quite sure about. So, I think we need more structure."- P6

4.3.3 Communication

It was revealed that two of the most important things leaders do to promote agile mindset throughout the organization are communication and employee involvement. Some key points that stand out are openness from management, trust in employees, flat structure, and delegated leadership.

"We must be able to share the information we have. It's important to mention Slack here. I don't know if you've come across Slack, but it's a communication tool."- P10

"I've spent a lot of time explaining the why and the purpose of the change. Then everyone often understands why this change is necessary. We need to spend time getting everyone to be part of the change so that we can be exceptional. So I've spent a lot of time on storytelling, constantly tying in the company's strategy and what it means for us in our team."- P9

Leaders need to communicate the purpose behind starting projects or making changes, as this creates understanding among employees about the work to be carried out. The organization prioritizes delegated leadership, where both middle managers and other employees are expected to make more significant decisions. This communication enables involvement when decisions need to be made.

"One of the foundations and premises of the type of organization we are is that the leadership is able to delegate."- P8

"I think our leadership team is very good at sharing everything they know, because if we exercise delegated leadership, we need to know almost as much as the top management. It is only then that we have a broad enough context to make the big and demanding decisions."- P8

4.3.4 Involvement

The high employee involvement in the organization is evident in the data collection. This contributes to the flat structure within the company while also leading to a higher degree of intrinsic motivation, sense of accomplishment, and freedom among employees. As mentioned, communication and information sharing from the management are crucial not only for employees to engage, but also for the management to feel confident that the decisions made by employees are good for the company.

"The purpose of this is to achieve a high degree of intrinsic motivation. If you are in a place where you are allowed to engage in things you are passionate about in addition to your primary work tasks, then that helps build the intrinsic motivation to work there."- P4

"We have been able to be a part of driving quite big and important decisions. The practical side of things is pretty easy to see, but what is difficult to see are the

long-term effects of when things are delegated in this way. It has a sort of cultural effect through the responsibility each of us feels, and the amount of information the management group dares to spread throughout the organization." - P8

There are differences in who gets involved, but it is clear that everyone who wants to get involved has the opportunity to do so. It is the responsibility of the employees to show interest in decision-making and to keep up with the information published in the communication channel. Therefore, the degree of involvement is mainly up to each individual employee.

"People are different in terms of how much they want to get involved with us, so we notice that there are too many who at least want the opportunity to get involved." - P5

Some participants expressed concerns about efficiency when many people are involved in decision-making processes. In addition, one must be careful that the right people make the decisions, and that the decision-maker has enough knowledge in the field and has an overview of the consequences of the decision.

"When it comes to decisions, we can be quite random in our flexibility, who makes which decisions. It generally works, but then we see that I am making decisions in areas where I don't really have a full overview of how it will affect others. So it's an area where we could benefit from tightening up a bit, and being a bit more organized, and not least being more clear about when a decision has been made so that we don't have to make it multiple times." - P9

"Sometimes we involve too many people. Sometimes it would be enough to say yes, I understand that you don't quite understand why we are doing this now, but we have to do it, I think." - P7

Although there are some concerns within the organization regarding this, one of the participants had a holistic view of efficiency and decision-making.

"It's not good for efficiency, but it's an interesting question because you lose efficiency in the short term, but you gain a lot in implementation. Because when the decision is made, and people have been involved, it takes a long time, but then they know what to do, they understand the background and they agree with it, and they are engaged and motivated. And then it goes very fast to implement it. The phase where you wonder a little about how it will be, that takes a long time, but overall I think we win, or I know we win time." - P6

Employee involvement in decision-making processes is essential for the case company when it comes to being an agile organization. It is clear that the way they work in the organization is based on the management mainly setting direction, goals, and providing support, rather than ordering teams to specific tasks. This way, it becomes the teams' responsibility to find the best way to work to achieve the goal.

"I am very conscious of staying away from the details of what needs to be done, but rather talk about why we have made such and such an agreement. What kind of potential we believe in sales, or what goals we have. The teams get to create the plans themselves and feel the involvement and engagement from that. It's quite core actually that I don't come up with the detailed plan because they in the teams understand best what needs to be done. If we have communicated well, what the goal is and the framework for it."– P6

4.3.5 Autonomy

A high degree of employee involvement and delegation from management leads to overall autonomy within the organization. The findings indicate that autonomous teams are one of the key factors when it comes to agility. This requires organizational structure and culture adjustments, which the case company has clearly done. Prioritization and delegating tasks require autonomy, and a higher degree of autonomy leads to more significant opportunities to make own decisions. Autonomy exists in the case company both at an individual level, where there is a high degree of freedom around when and where to work and in the teams. Once again, it is based on trust.

"In our team, we have a high degree of autonomy and a very flat structure."– P9

"Between Monday and Friday, you have a lot of freedom to do what you want. A lot is based on trust."– P10

The findings show different degrees of autonomy within the teams based on what the team is working on and what dependencies it has. One participant mentions that team leaders sometimes have to protect the team so that autonomy does not disappear due to strong dependencies around the team.

"The team I had a lot earlier, where they had to have a lot of approvals from our CEO, I had to work a lot to ensure the autonomy of the team, which is the first thing I think of when I think of agility."– P9

Several teams in the organization have strong dependencies on other teams, which can be a limiting factor in autonomy. It is important to strike a balance, as both autonomy and dependency hold significant value.

"In a flat, agile organization, it is crucial to recognize the complexity of combining the highly valuable autonomy of each team with an understanding of how to interact and manage the very real and relevant dependencies across teams. These are not conflicts that should be resolved by simply deciding who gets to override the other."-P8

As previously mentioned, the management in an agile organization should be supportive and set direction for what needs to be done. This requires autonomous teams, as finding the best solutions can be a challenging way to work. Once again, there is a clear difference in the degree of autonomy among the teams in the organization, which leads to varying levels of management needed.

"It is the goal for the teams to become as independent as possible, with the project owner or the leader providing direction and helping to set goals, and then the team finding the best solutions. However, it is a demanding process, and we are not there yet with all the teams. The level of maturity of the team, including the length of time they have worked together and their experience, plays a significant role in how much leadership they need. So, it is challenging to make a general statement, but I would say that we have some teams where one might wonder if they need a leader on a day-to-day basis because they are very independent, while with other teams, it is clear that they need leaders."- P4

There is also a high degree of autonomy between leaders and middle managers, where leaders focus on the overall strategy, while middle managers focus on their area and the goals to be achieved to contribute to this strategy. One of the participants mentions that there are also strong dependencies that can be limiting on both the autonomy and expectations around their role and responsibilities middle managers have, especially regarding decision-making.

"The issue of autonomy, between the top management, project owners, and agile coaches, is an issue between the top management and middle managers. Let me explain. Middle managers are in a way, the team of the top management, so there is often a challenge in terms of how much more you should push versus pull. You should give a lot of responsibility, but there are dependencies on each other. There are usually significant decisions that the top management needs to be involved in, while you want to give middle managers a lot of responsibility and trust. If you think that, in theory, I have received the trust and the mandate,

then you can quickly think: "Now I also have to make the decision." If you then experience that no, I cannot make that decision or show that the middle manager cannot make that decision, we have to go to the top management. There you can quickly get a feeling of "Is that how it should be?"- P4

4.4 Key Findings

The findings presented in this chapter are neatly summarized in Table 4.1. The table showcases the main literature sources and indicates where they will be discussed in the following chapter.

These key findings form the foundation of our results and are primed for a more detailed discussion. The goal was to use these insights to address our research question thoroughly in the next chapter. This table serves as a helpful guide for understanding the direction of our ongoing discussion.

Table 4.1: Key empirical findings

RQ	Main Findings	Empirical Evidence (Yes/No)	Links to literature	Discussed in chapter 5
RQ1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear guidelines in the decision-making and priorities • Balance between hierarchy and flat organizational structure • Ambition in prioritization processes 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beck & Beedle, 2001 • Dikert et al., 2016 • Reitzig, 2019 	5.1-5.2
RQ2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture strongly influenced by agile principles • Focus on communication and transparency • High level of employee flexibility 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denning, 2018a • Lindvall et al., 2002 • Mordi & Schoop, 2021 	5.3
RQ3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of leading by example • The role of the agile coaches • Importance of having an agile mindset 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joiner & Josephs, 2007 • Vidyarthi et al., 2014 • Miler & Gaida, 2019 	5.4

5 Discussion and Analysis

In this chapter, we will discuss the findings from the empirical chapter against relevant theories from the literature review. The chapter is built around the three research questions, where discussion and interpretation will form the basis for the conclusion. Addressing the first research question will reveal the interplay between the agile mindset and leadership decision-making, along with its inherent drawbacks and challenges. The second research question will shed light on the influence of the agile mindset on strategic agility at both team and organizational levels. The third research question will uncover the essential factors that ensure the enduring and sustainable success of organizational agility. Together, these questions will fully answer the research problem.

5.1 Impact, Drawbacks and Challenges of agile mindset on leaders' approach to decision making

An agile mindset significantly influences the way leaders approach decision-making, with both drawbacks and challenges associated with its implementation (Joiner & Josephs, 2007; Weber & Tarba, 2014). This discussion aims to address the research question *How does the agile mindset affect leaders' approach to decision-making, and what are the potential drawbacks and challenges associated with an agile mindset in decision-making?*

Agile change management, characterized by flexibility, collaboration, and significant involvement from both employees and customers in the decision-making process (Cohen et al., 2004; Berger & Rumpe, 2010), is apparent in the researched organization's approach. The findings of our study indicate that the management is committed to involving employees and customers in decision-making processes. Employees are deeply involved in large parts of this process, while customer involvement has been proven to be crucial in achieving the right objectives. This approach is evident in the company's practice of conducting prioritization processes every three months, a procedure that narrows the hierarchical gap between leaders and team members as they collaborate on the objectives for the forthcoming period (Beck & Beedle, 2001). However, based on our findings, it is apparent that there is no clear structure on how the prioritization process should proceed. The management has tried different ways of conducting the prioritization process, such as setting aside two days for the entire company to conduct a prioritization process simultaneously, with a key theme being to involve the employees as much as possible, which appears to be consistent with Beck's (2001) theoretical model. Our findings show that the employees of Company X have been increasingly involved as the company has

matured in terms of agile methodology. The participants emphasize that they are involved in defining the objectives (OKR's), which represents a development compared to earlier stages, where the management was responsible for this. According to Dikert et al. (2016), this has a positive effect on how employees handle changes in agile organizations. However, our findings indicate that it could be beneficial for the employees to maintain a clear structure around the prioritization process to enable efficiency gains. This suggests that despite increased involvement, Company X may benefit from establishing a clear structure that outlines who is involved at any given time, promoting transparency and enhancing the effectiveness of the prioritization process (Sorenson, 2022).

Our study findings suggest that the management primarily has short-term plans. This aligns with Beck & Beedle (2001), which highlights the importance of prioritizing tasks and projects based on their potential impact and value, rather than rigidly following a predetermined plan, allowing organizations to respond effectively to changing circumstances. Further, our study findings show that the adoption of an agile mindset by Company X's leaders is primarily motivated by the necessity to respond to the constantly evolving market dynamics, particularly as the company has transitioned to a technology-based market where rapid change is the norm. Therefore, it is crucial to make frequent changes rather than creating detailed long-term plans to remain competitive. The findings also show that this approach leads to more successful outcomes by fostering a collaborative environment and promoting employee involvement in decision-making processes. This observation is also echoed by Bolino et al. (2010), who stated that agile reflects a shift towards more participatory forms of management, which can lead to a greater sense of ownership over the product or service being delivered.

The participants highlighted that changes often occur during the prioritization process, however, in practice, minor continuous adjustments are expected as they can occur frequently and vary greatly from one team to another. By involving employees in decision-making processes and forming small cross-functional teams that are largely self-organizing (Shankarmani et al., 2012), agile promotes collaboration and teamwork. Our study findings also indicate that the leaders aim to provide a sense of ownership to the company by involving as many employees as possible in the decision-making process. Having a strong sense of ownership allows a company to make strategic pivots in response to market changes more readily (Shankarmani et al., 2012).

Cohen et al. (2004) suggest that agile methodology may not be suitable for all types of projects or organizations. Our findings indicate that Company X faces challenges in implementing agile practices across the organization. As Company X has increasingly become a technology-based enterprise, there has been a corresponding trend toward adopting agile methodologies. How-

ever, the findings show that commercial teams struggle with agile adoption. For instance, the marketing and sales department participates in various agile processes, but without significant benefits. On the one hand, there may be no need to involve commercial teams in agile methodology. On the other hand, the findings show that agility is an integral part of the company's culture. Although commercial teams may not benefit greatly from working in iterations, communication and collaboration are essential components of the agile culture (Kniberg & Skarin, 2010). Thus, we believe that it is important for the entire organization to work more or less in accordance to the agile methodology, and that teams should be able to adapt the degree of agility that suits them.

5.2 Potential Drawbacks and Challenges Associated with an Agile Mindset in Decision-Making

Potential drawbacks and challenges are also associated with an agile mindset in decision-making. Our findings show that over-involvement of employees in decision-making processes can lead to a backlog of tasks (a prioritized list of deliverables), resulting in frustration and inefficiency. Additionally, the findings indicate that the structure has become so flat that it can be unclear who makes decisions, which appears to be consistent with Stray et al. (2018) literature. This is because Company X has moved away from having a strict agile methodology structure. The literature suggests that the company's flat organizational structure is designed to reduce the distance between the employees and the leadership by having fewer hierarchical levels (Reitzig, 2019). On the other hand, the flat structure can make it difficult for both employees and leadership to maintain a clear overview of decisions made in the company, as noted by Sorenson (2022).

Our findings further show that it is desirable for the leadership to have a more robust structure in the company, especially during decision-making and prioritization processes. To achieve better structure during these processes, one solution could be more significant hierarchical differences in the company. As Sorenson (2022) wrote, it is not uncommon for agile companies to revert back to a more hierarchical structure. This could be an alternative to gain an overview of where decisions are made in the company.

Our research outcomes indicate that the management views hierarchy as not inherently detrimental but rather contingent on the leadership's conduct. Additionally, the research suggests that fostering an open culture can create a "flat" organizational feeling, which may mitigate the

negative consequences of hierarchy. Denning (2016a) similarly advocated for this kind of leadership behavior in the literature. This means that even with tightening the hierarchy, the leadership can still be as effective, if the leaders behave in accordance to agile methodology. Further, the findings show that many participants believe that adopting an agile approach involves being transparent with information within the organization, as information is considered a valuable asset. Denning (2016b) noted that agile organizations should not be strictly perceived as flat or non-hierarchical. As long as openness and the company culture are maintained, a greater degree of hierarchy will not negatively affect the agility of the company. On the contrary, a little more structure can lead to higher efficiency among employees, which makes them even more agile in the workplace (Lindvall et al., 2002).

According to our findings, the openness of the communication tool Slack has made it easier for the management to share and receive information, which makes it easier to stay updated on what's happening throughout the company. In addition, they have open-door meetings where employees have the opportunity to discuss themes they feel are essential to bring up. This form of organizational structure, which allows for collaboration and communication, is supported by other studies in the literature (Kniberg & Skarin, 2010).

To address these challenges, Company X could benefit from establishing clear guidelines around decision-making processes and priorities, including setting clear roles and responsibilities for each team member and ensuring that everyone understands their role within the organization's overall strategy (Comella-Dorda et al., 2019). Implementing a structured approach to decision-making could be beneficial for Company X. According to Leffingwell (2011), organizations should set up a framework that specifies where decisions should come from and when they should be made. This helps maintain consistency and transparency in the decision-making process, allowing for a more streamlined and efficient workflow. Boehm & Turner (2003) also emphasize the importance of balancing agility and discipline in Agile projects, which requires a structured approach to decision-making. Additionally, Dikert et al. (2016) highlight the role of communication and collaboration among team members and stakeholders in ensuring effective decision-making in agile processes. Therefore, it is crucial for organizations to establish clear guidelines for decision-making in agile projects. By doing so, they can reduce the risk of miscommunication or misunderstandings among team members and stakeholders, which can lead to delays or reduced productivity. A structured approach to decision-making can also help ensure that project priorities are aligned with stakeholder needs and expectations, ultimately leading to greater satisfaction with project outcomes.

Striving for a balance between hierarchy and flat organizational structure is crucial. According

to Reitzig (2019), flat organizations can reduce the layers between the company's CEO and the company's lowest organizational level, which means that they have a shorter path to management. However, it is important to note that flat companies remove middle managers to have a shorter path to management, and the organization is restructured. While having a hierarchical structure can be beneficial in certain aspects, it is important for the leadership to act in a manner that does not make the hierarchy too apparent. This can be achieved by maintaining open communication and leading by example, thus preserving the benefits of a flat structure. Sorenson (2022) suggests that this approach can help companies maintain agility while also accommodating a larger hierarchical level, which is common in growing businesses. Therefore, it is essential for Company X to find a balance between hierarchy and flatness in their organizational structure. By doing so, they can reap the benefits of both approaches while avoiding potential drawbacks such as communication breakdowns or reduced productivity due to excessive bureaucracy.

In sum, the findings of this study suggest that an agile mindset significantly influences the way leaders approach decision-making. While there are potential benefits to adopting an agile approach, such as increased flexibility and collaboration, there are also challenges associated with employee involvement in decision-making processes. To mitigate these challenges, leaders could maintain control over the process while involving employees and customers meaningfully. Further research is needed to explore how organizations can successfully implement an agile approach to decision-making while minimizing potential drawbacks.

5.3 The Impact of the Agile Mindset on Strategic Agility at Team and Organizational Level

As stated in the literature review, the main characteristics of an agile mindset are trust, responsibility and ownership, continuous improvement, willingness to learn, openness and a willingness to continually adapt and grow (Miler & Gaida, 2019; Mordi & Schoop, 2020). Our study seeks to address a gap in the existing literature on the agile mindset by examining how the presence of an agile mindset impacts strategic agility, both on team and organizational levels, in organizations that already have successfully implemented agile methodologies. Specifically, we closely examine the influence of the agile mindset on both the organizational culture and team dynamics within Company X, and explore how these elements contribute to achieving strategic agility in the organization. In addition, we investigate whether certain aspects of the agile mindset as manifested in the organizational culture and team dynamics have a detrimental

impact on the attainment of strategic agility. This chapter will provide valuable insights into the specific aspects of the agile mindset that leaders should prioritize to enhance their organization's agility in the future. Additionally, the study's findings will offer a better understanding of leaders' perceptions of their organization's future agility.

5.3.1 Organizational Level

The agile organizational culture has a strong impact on the mindset of the employees, and the mindset affects the entire culture (Hofert, 2022). Our findings reveal that Company X has fostered an organizational culture strongly influenced by the principles of agility, characterized by a focus on transparency, trust, and communication (Denning, 2018a; Dikert et al., 2016). In line with agile principles, Company X's culture deeply values promptness in deliveries, ensuring regular and effective communication with its customers, and building an environment that promotes learning from trial-and-error and embracing failure. This approach is supported by Lindvall et al. (2002), who stresses that the cornerstone of agility lies in achieving customer satisfaction by consistently delivering value in manageable, small increments. Further, our findings underscore the importance of leaders engaging with employees and maintaining an open-door policy, which again highlights how the culture emphasize transparency, communication and trust. The critical role that leaders play in shaping organizational culture and fostering the agile mindset at the organizational level in agile organizations is further underscored by these insights. This notion is supported by other empirical studies, such as Denning (2018a) and Dikert et al. (2016), which demonstrate that leaders have a pivotal role in cultivating and reinforcing organizational culture in alignment with Agile values.

Lindvall et al. (2002) noted that an agile organizational culture values flexibility. Our findings indicate that Company X exhibits a high level of flexibility, as evidenced by its willingness to embrace change and prioritize continuous improvement. Elali (2021) noted that organizations with a state of strategic agility are better equipped to navigate crises, which aligns with our findings, as they emphasize the significance of cultivating an agile mindset in promoting strategic agility, thereby enabling employees of the Company X to respond adeptly to a significant change, such as the shift to remote work during the Covid-19 pandemic. When analyzing the data collection, we found that the organization operate with a high level of flexibility with regards to remote work and self-determined working hours. The participants emphasized that this phenomenon is attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic, which aligns with the statement of both Ferreira et al. (2021) and Comella-Dorda et al. (2020).

Our research has revealed that some of the leaders in Company X harbor legitimate concerns pertaining to the implications of remote work on the organizational culture, particularly in terms

of inclusivity. They highlight a growing divide between in-office employees and remote workers, which raises concerns about the equal engagement of all employees in the agile culture. Our findings indicate that a considerable number of employees could potentially be excluded from crucial components of an agile organizational culture if this divide is not addressed. This is also seen in the literature, with Popovici et al. (2020) highlighting that remote work can have a significant impact on the culture. Neglecting to address this issue may have detrimental effects on the cultivation of an agile mindset at an organizational level. These concerns align with previous studies that emphasize the importance of physical workplaces in fostering communication and teamwork, reinforcing the significance of physical presence (Appelo, 2011). However, it is important to recognize that the current shift towards remote work can also offer a high degree of flexibility, a characteristic highly valued in agile cultures.

This extreme flexibility is not without its drawbacks. Lindvall et al. (2002) argue that an overdose of flexibility can paradoxically instigate a state of chaos and a lack of direction, factors that can potentially undermine the very fabric of the agile culture. Thus, while remote work does offer numerous advantages as seen in the empirical evidence, these findings and considerations point towards a need for a careful and balanced approach to ensure that it does not inadvertently compromise the essential elements that contribute to the development of an agile organizational culture and mindset.

Our findings indicate that the organization is taking steps to increase attendance at the office by creating an enticing workplace environment, as noted by P6's statement on "making it the coolest place in the world." Considering the flourishing of agile teamwork, these factors also hold significance, as highlighted by Comella-Dorda et al. (2020). However, our analysis suggests that additional measures may also be necessary to address this issue. As noted by Denning (2018a) and Dikert et al. (2016), leadership by example and by modeling desired behavior is critical to shaping organizational culture. Our findings indicate that some leaders in Company X could place more emphasis on this aspect of their role, as leaders are "in the office too infrequently", as stated by P6. Together with creating an enticing workplace environment, increasing the presence of leaders in the office enhances the likelihood that employees and team members will emulate their behavior and reduce the frequency of remote work. Using this approach offers employees the flexibility to work remotely when necessary, without necessitating the introduction of strict regulations by leadership.

Based on our empirical evidence, Company X employees exhibit a high degree of individual agile mindset, which they describe as continuous learning, transparency, trust, experimentation, self-management, delegation, and prioritizing customer value. We analyzed the impact of

this mindset on an organizational level, and found that it strongly influences the organizational culture. Our study suggests that the most effective way to foster an agile culture throughout the organization is by ensuring that all employees possess a fundamental agile mindset. However, the agile mindset is deeply rooted in socio-cultural constructs and human interactions (Mordi & Schoop, 2021), which may be threatened by a high number of remote workers. Agility is closely tied to flexibility, and it is reasonable to infer that free access to remote work has become a common practice in the organizations due to their adoption of an agile mindset. While the advantages of remote work for individual employees are significant, its implementation at the organizational level can have significant repercussions.

5.3.2 Team Level

The agile mindset at the team level refers to the collective thinking and actions of the team as a cohesive unit. Examining the team dynamics in Company X allows us to gain insights into how the agile mindset influences their collective thinking and actions, and how they collaborate to achieve strategic agility.

Rigby et al. (2018) noted that organizations should ensure that team members have opportunities to interact with colleagues from different disciplines. Based on our findings, Company X has two types of teams: cross-functional and professional teams. The cross-functional teams consists of members from various disciplines who work together in an agile manner with a primary focus on customer feedback and delivering the product in incremental iterations. On the other hand, the professional teams comprise members with similar professional backgrounds, and they come together to discuss problems in their area of expertise. This is also where initial prioritization is discussed and set. The ad hoc nature of the cross-functional teams means that they are not meant to last for a long time, and employees are accustomed to shifting teams and focus to align with the current organizational priorities. However, being a part of a professional team provides employees with some stability, as it allows them to address dimensions that may not be considered in the ad hoc nature of the cross-functional teams.

According to Khanagha et al. (2022), cross-functional teams promote collaboration. Our research findings indicate that employees in Company X highly value being members of cross-functional teams as it fosters a collaborative work environment and facilitates open communication. They appreciate the low threshold for showcasing their work and discussing it with team members from various backgrounds. The participants in the study also report a sense of ownership over the goals that are set due to their involvement in the prioritization process. This is an important aspect to improve collaboration and communication in agile teams, as it is crucial to develop a shared understanding among team members of the project's goal (Burga et al., 2022).

As previously discussed, Company X prioritizes employee involvement and delegation, leading to the development of autonomous teams (Stray et al., 2018). According to several participants, their teams have achieved a high degree of autonomy due to the level of trust established in the organizational culture. Our research has revealed that the level of autonomy among teams in Company X varies, with some teams exhibiting a high degree of autonomy and the ability to make independent decisions, while others are less autonomous and have more dependencies. Further, our findings suggest that a high degree of dependencies can hinder team autonomy in the organization (Stray et al., 2018).

Our analysis indicates that Company X is striving to promote high independence among its teams, with project owners providing direction without micromanaging. However, the data we collected suggest that the autonomy level of a team is influenced by various factors, such as the team's maturity, the duration of their collaboration, and the team members' experience, all of which affect the amount of management support required (Khanagha et al., 2022). It is worth noting that, according to Stray et al. (2018), autonomous teams have been shown to bring several advantages, including improved team performance, faster decision-making, better alignment with customer needs, higher job satisfaction, and better learning and development opportunities. Therefore, if there is less autonomy in the teams, the organization may miss out on these benefits.

According to our results, collaborating with other teams can be challenging due to time constraints, a high degree of dependencies and differing priorities, especially when several teams are working in parallel on the same product. This aligns with Berntzen et al., 2022 statement, who also suggested higher utilization of agile practices to enhance inter-team collaboration. Our findings indicate that Company X, as they have matured in terms of agility, have moved away from strict utilization of agile practices. The literature review indicates that embracing this in a higher degree may be beneficial regarding inter-team collaboration in Company X. Additionally, inter-team collaboration is a crucial aspect of agile teamwork, as it enables teams to work together towards a common goal and achieve better results (Rigby et al., 2018; Santos et al., 2015). When this is achieved it can lead to a higher level of strategic agility. According to Ahammad et al. (2020), inter-team collaboration can be a means to facilitate decision-making and idea contributions from employees across all levels of the organization. This further emphasizes the need for Company X to improve their inter-team collaboration.

Our study indicates a lack of structure in how inter-team collaboration is done in Company X, with this being a significant challenge that can hinder finding solutions that address prob-

lems for more than one team. Company X leaders emphasize the significance of inter-team collaboration as they deliver one core product, and prioritizing for one team can negatively impact another. To achieve better alignment with project goals and objectives, it is crucial to have a high degree of inter-team collaboration. Our findings also reveal that delays frequently occur as some teams are dependent on others, leading to significant frustration. To address these challenges, developing effective communication and collaboration practices that enable all teams to work together towards common goals is critical, which is highlighted by Burga et al. (2022). This can be accomplished by involving all team members in the planning and decision-making processes, fostering transparency and open communication, and ensuring that all teams prioritize the same issues.

Our results indicate that the impact of the agile mindset on team level in company X is significant. The contribution that comes with working in cross-functional teams is highly valued by the participants, and their individual agile mindset leads to an agile way of thinking as a team. The level of autonomy in the teams also contributes to an agile mindset, companies can foster an agile mindset by empowering employees to take ownership of their work and make decisions aligned with the company's strategic goals, as noted by Weber & Tarba (2014). When attaining an agile mindset it is important to not overemphasize process at the expense of people and collaboration (Miler & Gaida, 2019 in Ozkan et al., 2020). The inter-team collaboration in company X appears to be hindered by an excessive amount of processes that must be followed before addressing issues with other teams. Our research also revealed that teams in the organization tend to have an overload of priorities, leaving little time for inter-team collaboration. These issues may have an affect on the agile mindset on team level, as it leaves less room for agile thinking across the teams in the organization.

5.3.3 Impact on Strategic Agility

By analyzing the data presented in our result, we have found that Company X is situated in the outermost layer of the agile onion, which present an organization that has fully integrated the agility into the mindset of its employees, teams, and the entire organization (Powers, 2017). According to the literature, this means that the company's agile practices are less visible as they do not follow any strict agile processes, and the employees and teams have a considerable degree of freedom in how they choose to be agile. This indicate that Company X is characterized by "being agile", rather than "doing agile". Figure 2.2 illustrates that the layer where an agile mindset is achieved is the most powerful layer of the agile onion, and as Eilers et al. (2022) noted, a cultivation of an agile mindset among employees is crucial for achieving successful strategic agility. Our results indicates that cultivating an agile mindset on team and organization level is just as crucial for this matter.

According to our findings, the agile mindset on all levels in the organization is what leads to the ability to adapt quickly to changes, as well as anticipating them and proactively adjusting the company’s strategic direction, which are key factors in achieving strategic agility (Ahmad et al., 2020; Weber & Tarba, 2014). In addition, our findings suggest that the culture of Company X values innovation and risk-taking, with a strong emphasis on continuous learning and adaptation through trial and error. This aligns with Doz (2020)’s notion on the culture needed to develop strategic agility.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the key contributors to the cultivation of an agile mindset at both team

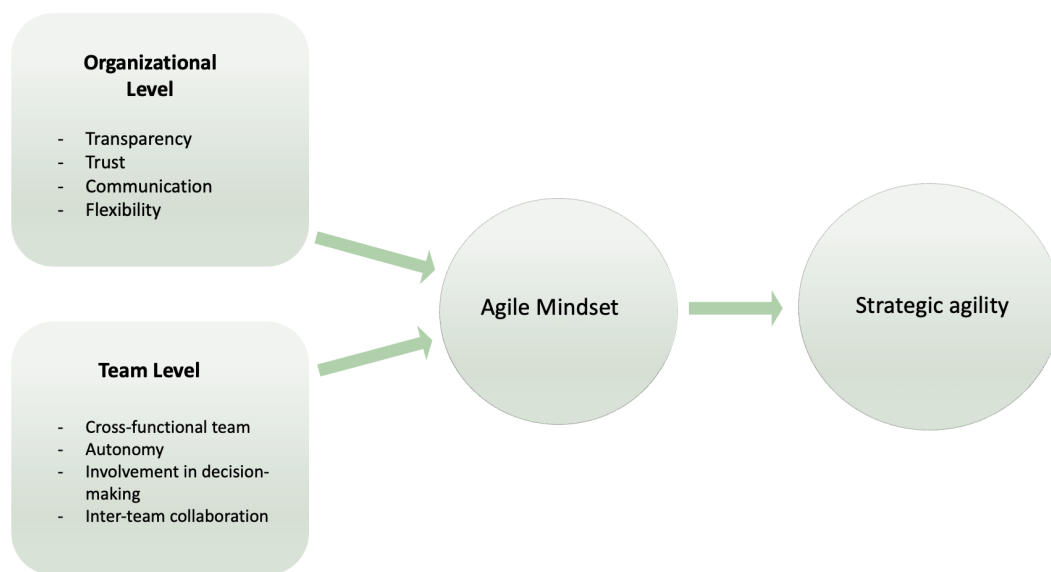


Figure 5.1: The impact of the agile mindset on strategic agility at team and organizational level and organizational level. It demonstrates the significant impact that an agile mindset has on enhancing strategic agility. By examining the figure, it becomes evident how various factors interplay to foster an environment conducive to agility and drive organizational success.

At the organizational level, transparency, trust, communication, and flexibility have been found in our data collection as factors leading to an agile mindset that contributes to achieving strategic agility. Our findings also indicate that having too much flexibility, and "being agile" without consequence thinking, can have a detrimental impact on strategic agility. We found that it is important to find a balance between employee flexibility and control, and that leaders of organizations should model the behaviour they want to see in their employees.

At team level, working in cross-professional teams, autonomy, involvement in decision-making,

and inter-team collaboration has been found as factors leading to an agile mindset that contributes to achieving strategic agility. By analyzing our data collection we found that too much of "being agile" and too little of "doing agile" leads to a lack of structure when it comes to inter-team collaboration, and that high ambitions in the prioritization process leads to less capacity to collaborating with other teams.

5.4 Key Success Factors for Ensuring Continuity and Sustainability of Organizational Agility

In this section we will analyze the factors that contribute to continued success of an organization's agility. While extensive research exists on the critical factors facilitating the implementation and adoption of agile methodologies, our literature review reveals a research gap on the success factors that enable organizations to maintain agility over extended periods and the strategies used to address challenges that arise in this context. Specifically, our study seeks to address questions such as the potential of becoming overly agile, and what the optimal degree of organizational agility is. This analysis will provide valuable insights when addressing how leaders envision their organization's agility in the future, particularly in the face of constant change. In an agile organization, being static or failing to move in any direction can lead to losing competitive advantage in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment (Alt et al., 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to constantly evolve and adapt to changing circumstances, and the insights gained from this analysis can aid in achieving this objective.

5.4.1 The Agile Leader

Based on our study, it is evident that the leaders of Company X embody the characteristics of an agile leader, as described in our literature review by Joiner & Josephs (2007). Participants emphasized the close relationship between leaders and team members, reflecting a flat organizational structure with minimal hierarchy (Reitzig, 2019). Our research further highlights two key strategies the leaders employ to promote agility within the organization: maintaining a high level of communication and involving employees in decision-making processes. Additionally, our data collection supports Denning (2016a)'s notion of agile leaders who prioritize effective communication and information sharing within the organization. According to Denning (2016a), leaders play a vital role in facilitating the smooth flow of information by utilizing digital tools. This emphasis on communication aligns with our findings, highlighting the significance of agile leaders in creating a collaborative and transparent work environment. By leveraging digital platforms and promoting open communication, leaders can enhance organi-

zational agility and foster effective decision-making processes.

The importance of leadership in driving agility within the organization is highlighted from our empirical evidence, with one of the leaders in Company X emphasizing the focus on understanding customer needs and delivering value through iterative and rapid development. This external customer-oriented approach promotes continuous innovation, which can lead to enhanced customer satisfaction and increased employee engagement (Fachrunnisa et al., 2020). Further, our research findings indicate that Company X places great emphasis on leadership unity, fostering trust, openness, and communication throughout the organization, starting from the CEO and extending to managers who further disseminate these qualities to employees. This unity of leadership facilitates cohesive decision-making processes and ensures alignment towards organizational goals. The organization achieves a collective commitment to taking necessary risks to drive changes in the business model (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). However, our findings indicate achieving leadership unity can be challenging, particularly in agile organizations where authority is often delegated to product owners and agile coaches. It is crucial to have clarity regarding the extent of responsibility and to prioritize the organization's best interests above individual aspirations for power. This aligns with Doz & Kosonen (2010) argument on willingness to put the needs of the organization first, and its importance for achieving effective leadership unity.

McPherson (2016) noted the challenge of balancing autonomy and control within autonomous teams as an agile leader. Our research findings indicate that the teams within Company X exhibit a significant level of autonomy. Even though there are different levels of autonomy, varying from team to team, the project owners, who serve as leaders, demonstrate strong delegation skills and empower their teams to make decisions and take ownership of their work. Their primary focus is on setting clear direction and delivering value to customers. Further, the insights from our data collection indicate that the leaders serving as agile coaches in Company X exhibit an inward focus on their teams. They are proactive in protecting and maintaining the autonomy of their teams, acknowledging that dependencies can arise and pose a risk to autonomy. This approach aligns with the notion discussed by Stray et al. (2021), who emphasizes the role of agile coaches as mentors for their teams. By prioritizing autonomy and acting as mentors, these leaders aim to foster an environment where teams can function independently and thrive.

Our research highlights challenges in the decision-making processes within Company X, emphasizing the need for more structured approaches from leaders. Participants noted that decision-making can be time-consuming, with everyone wanting to be involved, and that decisions some-

times are made without the right people being aware of them. Our findings indicate that decisions are being made by individuals lacking the necessary knowledge and overview, leading to duplication of decision-making across different parts of the organization. Therefore, it may be beneficial to incorporate some level of hierarchy in the organizational structure while maintaining transparency and effective communication. Sorenson (2022) supports this notion with the pyramid principle, suggesting that as Company X grows, there is a need for more structure and hierarchy to help employees understand their roles and responsibilities. An excessively flat structure can result in "chaos" and a lack of control over the organization's direction (Lindvall et al., 2002; Sorenson, 2022).

In sum, having an agile leader is crucial for organizational agility's continuity and success. It requires effective communication, an external focus on delivering customer value, leadership unity, and a balanced approach to autonomy and control. Incorporating some level of hierarchy and structured decision-making can mitigate potential chaos, while maintaining transparency and good communication within the organization.

5.4.2 Dual Leadership

According to the literature, dual leadership can lead to increased engagement and motivation among team members, as well as better decision-making and results (Moe et al., 2009). Schwaber & Sutherland (2020) notes that the Scrum framework, which is one of the agile methodologies Company X uses, emphasizes the importance of having dual leadership, where both leaders play essential roles in the teams. The empirical evidence from our study supports the notion that a dual leadership approach, where leadership is divided into a product owner and an agile coach, has been highly beneficial.

Furthermore, our findings indicate that several employees do not comprehend why there are so many leaders within the company. Specifically, they refer to the agile coach as potentially redundant and a hindrance rather than an asset in the workplace, providing concrete examples of confusing communication and reduced efficiency. Vidyarthi et al. (2014) also highlights challenges associated with dual leadership in the literature and supports these findings by suggesting that communication can be a significant challenge.

As there were differing opinions on whether the role of an agile coach is necessary at Company X, we delved deeper into the purpose of dual leadership, as it is today, and how it is actually used in practice. This is done as the management was rather positive about dual leadership, while the employees did not understand the need for it. Furthermore, the empirical evidence shows that dual leadership, specifically with agile coaches, was implemented during the initial

phase of Company X's adoption of agile methods. The literature also demonstrates that agile coaches can be useful in implementing agile principles and practices for teams (Stray et al., 2021). This is an interesting finding, as agile coaches may have lingered from the implementation phase of Company X. However, there is limited research on when to transition away from agile coaches and modify organizational structure.

These findings leads us to discuss two proposals regarding dual leadership at Company X. The first is to eliminate dual leadership and return to single leadership, while the second is to reduce the number of agile coaches.

By eliminating dual leadership, confusion that can arise from dual leadership, such as unclear communication, undefined decision-making areas, and how the relationship between leaders determines team performance, can be avoided (Vidyarthi et al., 2014). The latter is also demonstrated in the empirical evidence, where an agile coach noted that the effectiveness of dual leadership is contingent upon the relationship between the leaders. Company X has therefore experienced both dual leaders who complement each other well and function optimally, as well as leaders who complement each other poorly and do not function well. Furthermore, our findings indicate that some of the teams that are characterized by a high level of autonomy, strongly feel the need to only have one leader.

Having one leader allows teams to be more self-directed (Stray et al., 2018). This can be advantageous for autonomous teams that are independent and can more or less manage themselves. Khanagha et al.'s (2022) literature also supports this by suggesting that teams perform better when leadership has good knowledge of them and provides them with the opportunities and resources to be self-directed. Burga et al. (2022) highlights the importance of having clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, and one can imagine that single leadership makes it easier to enter a team with a clearly defined role, compared to the current situation in Company X where there are leaders who serve as agile coaches for multiple teams.

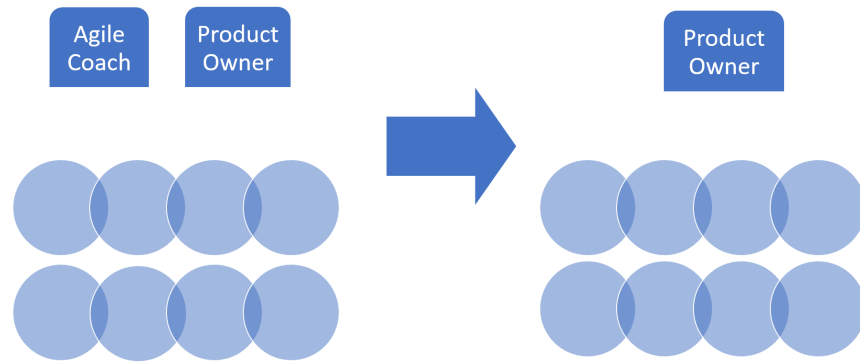


Figure 5.2: Transition from dual leadership to single leadership.

In addition, Company X has several small teams consisting of 3-5 team members. Our findings indicate that having dual leadership can be inefficient as there are too many leaders per person. While there is no concrete research on when to transition from dual leadership with an agile coach to single leadership, our findings indicate that it could have a positive effect in Company X. Figure 5.2 visually represents the transition from dual leadership to single leadership, illustrating that this shift results in team members having a single leader to engage with. The figure highlights the goal of minimizing the number of leaders while keeping the team composition unchanged.

An alternative option is to reduce the number of agile coaches and assign them a new role in Company X. The findings indicate that agile coaches were introduced to implement agile methodology, and that Company X has a strong corporate culture that constantly pursues new solutions within Agile methodology. Hofert (2022) notes in the literature that a strong Agile culture involves shaping the organizational culture to enable the adoption and practice of Agile methodologies. Given the existing organizational culture, which is strongly influenced by an agile mindset as discussed earlier, we contend that the presence of a dedicated leader specifically overseeing the agile aspect of the company is unnecessary. Instead, it would be more useful to change the role of an agile coach, to one who focuses on taking responsibility for common agile tasks such as sprint planning and retrospectives (Schwaber & Sutherland, 2020).

Furthermore, we believe that it is not necessary to have an agile coach per team. The findings already show that agile coaches can be responsible for multiple teams at once. Our recommendation is also that the new agile coach should be able to lead multiple teams at once. However, we still believe that having an agile coach in the teams is important for the company to be as effective as possible. According to Alzoubi et al. (2022), agile practices can help reduce lead times in software development by improving communication, reducing waste, and increasing efficiency. On the other hand, the findings suggest that having an agile coach has been inef-

fective due to excessive planning and numerous meetings. However, we believe that an agile coach, in their new role would be helpful for the product owner, as there are significant benefits to having dual leadership (Moe et al., 2009).

Another finding from the study also indicates that the agile coaches today do not have the same level of expertise as the agile coaches did when the agile methodology was introduced in Company X. This may be a reason why employees do not see the same need for agile coaches as they did previously, and it may also be a sign that changes are needed in the dual leadership structure.

In sum, the study highlights the significance of dual leadership in promoting organizational agility. The empirical findings indicate that having both a product owner and an agile coach can lead to increased engagement, better decision-making, and improved results, especially in implementing agile methodologies in the organization. However, there were differing opinions among employees regarding the necessity of agile coaches, with concerns raised about confusion and reduced efficiency. In light of these findings, it is recommended to assess the current expertise and effectiveness of agile coaches and consider whether changes in the dual leadership structure are needed. Based on our findings, a transition from dual leadership to single leadership, while ensuring that the product owner possesses a higher level of competence in agility, can help reduce confusion, enhance decision-making clarity, and improve team performance. By consolidating leadership responsibilities, the organization can streamline communication channels and promote a more cohesive approach to achieving organizational goals. Additionally, investing in the development of the product owner's agility expertise can ensure the effective use of agile principles and practices within the teams.

5.4.3 The Agile Mindset

Based on our analysis of Research Question 2 in Chapter 5.3, we have uncovered that the agile mindset is a key factor in sustaining organizational agility. The development of an agile mindset across all levels of the organization contributes significantly to achieving strategic agility, which, in turn, allows the organization to effectively navigate a VUCA environment. Our findings also indicate that the organization operates at the highest level of agility, focusing on "being agile" rather than merely "doing agile." This emphasis on the agile mindset leads to the cultivation of team autonomy, clear communication, and a strong agile culture.

However, our examination of Research Question 2 has brought to light challenges related to inter-team collaboration and inclusion of all employees in the agile culture. Addressing these challenges is crucial for leadership to maintain the continued success of their organization's

agility, as failure to do so can result in the organization deviating from the agile mindset. By proactively tackling issues related to inter-team collaboration and ensuring the inclusion of all employees in the agile culture, leaders can uphold the organization's commitment to agility and prevent any regression or loss of focus on agile principles and practices. This ongoing effort is vital to sustain the benefits and competitive advantage that an agile mindset brings to the organization.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

The last section of this thesis focuses on addressing the research problem: *How do leaders envision their organization's agility in the future, in the context of constant change?* This section combines empirical findings with the existing agility literature, resulting in theoretical contributions. Additionally, practical implications for agile organizations are discussed, followed by an examination of the limitations of this study. Lastly, recommendations for future research are provided.

Research Question 1

The findings highlight the significant impact of the agile mindset on leaders' decision-making approaches. This mindset enables flexibility, promotes collaboration, and involves employees in decision-making processes. However, as the company has grown and matured in terms of agility, our findings indicate a lack of structure in agile decision-making and prioritization processes, resulting in reduced efficiency and overview. The theoretical contributions of this study is that there is a need for clear guidelines and structure in these processes, emphasizing the importance of striking a balance between the agile mindset, known for its flexibility and adaptability, and a certain level of control. Additionally, the findings suggest that an agile mindset in decision-making can result in overly ambitious prioritization processes, where too many tasks are taken on simultaneously. While the agile mindset drives a desire to accomplish numerous tasks quickly, it is essential to be mindful of capacity limitations and the impact excessive workload can have on other aspects of the organization.

Research Question 2

Further, the research indicate a strong impact of the agile mindset on strategic agility at both team and organizational level. This suggests that by embracing the agile approach, both teams and organizations gain an increased ability to adapt to changes, be flexible, and strategically manage uncertainty. At the organizational level, factors such as transparency, trust, communication, and flexibility contribute to cultivating an agile mindset that enables organizations to adapt quickly and anticipate changes. However, our findings suggest that an excessive focus on flexibility without considering consequences can have a detrimental impact on strategic agility. Another theoretical contribution is therefore that striking a balance between employee flexibility and control, while modeling desired behavior, is crucial for leaders in fostering an agile mindset. At the team level, factors such as working in cross-professional teams, autonomy, involvement in decision-making, and inter-team collaboration contribute to an agile mindset that supports strategic agility. However, our findings indicate that an excessive emphasis on "being agile" without sufficient attention to "doing agile" can lead to a lack of structure in inter-team

collaboration. Our findings also indicate that an agile mindset can lead to high ambitions in the prioritization process, reducing capacity for collaboration with other teams. Overall, cultivating an agile mindset is essential for achieving strategic agility, which is vital for organizational success. However, maintaining a balance and taking into account the specific dynamics of both the team and the overall organization are essential. By striking this balance and considering the context of the team and organization, strategic agility can be effectively harnessed to drive positive outcomes and enable the organization to adapt and thrive in a VUCA environment.

Research Question 3

Lastly, our study reveals that the key factors that contribute to the continued and sustainable success of organizational agility are the cultivation of an agile mindset, effective leadership practices, and the ability to address challenges related to leadership and team collaboration. Our research findings highlight the importance of an agile mindset at all levels of the organization, as it enables strategic agility and the ability to adapt to a volatile and complex environment. Effective leadership practices, such as clear communication, employee involvement in decision-making, and fostering a strong agile culture, are crucial for maintaining organizational agility. The theoretical contribution of this research emphasizes the need to address challenges associated with dual leadership, such as clarifying roles and responsibilities, and finding the right balance between autonomy and control. Furthermore, promoting effective inter-team collaboration and ensuring the inclusion of all employees in the agile culture are key factors that contribute to the sustained success of organizational agility. By focusing on these factors, organizations can navigate change effectively and maintain their competitive advantage in the long run.

Conclusion

Based on the thorough analysis and comprehensive examination of the three research questions, we have arrived at the following conclusion: Leaders envision their organizations' future agility in the face of continuous change by recognizing the significant impact of the agile mindset on decision-making approaches. They understand that cultivating an agile mindset at all levels of the organization is crucial for sustaining organizational agility. This involves promoting flexibility, collaboration, and employee involvement in decision-making processes. However, leaders also acknowledge the need for clear guidelines and structure in agile decision-making and prioritization processes, striking a balance between the agile mindset's adaptability and a certain level of control. They are mindful of the potential challenges that can arise, such as a lack of structure, reduced efficiency, and overly ambitious prioritization processes. Leaders prioritize capacity limitations and ensure that excessive workloads do not hinder other aspects of the organization. By embracing the agile approach and addressing

these considerations, leaders envision their organizations as agile, adaptable, and capable of managing continuous change successfully.

Recommendations

The conclusion leads us to recommend considering the introduction of a more hierarchical structure in the organization to maintain an overview, enhance decision-making processes, and provide clarity to employees regarding their roles and responsibilities. While the agile mindset promotes flexibility and autonomy, our research highlights the potential challenges that can arise from a lack of structure in decision-making and prioritization. Denning (2016b) emphasizes that in an Agile organization, the hierarchy is based on competence rather than authority. Therefore, by implementing a hierarchical structure that recognizes and values individuals' competence, leaders can ensure that decision-making is guided by expertise and knowledge. Additionally, by introducing a more structured approach, it may also be necessary to adjust the tasks allocated to an agile coach. This is recommended because the organization is no longer in the adaptation phase and therefore does not require a leader specifically responsible for implementing agile practices. Reinforcing this change is the majority of teams that have become so autonomous that having an agile coach for each team may create more confusion than it provides benefit.

Introducing a certain level of hierarchy can mitigate these challenges by providing clear guidelines and accountability, ensuring efficient and well-informed decision-making. This approach aligns with Denning (2016b) notion of a hierarchy of competence. It allows individuals with the necessary expertise to take the lead in their respective areas, driving performance and adding value to the organization and its customers. It is important to note that this hierarchical structure should be implemented while maintaining the principles of transparency, trust, and open communication, which are essential for fostering an agile culture. By striking a balance between the agile mindset and a hierarchy of competence, leaders can ensure that the organization maintains its agility while benefiting from improved efficiency and coordination.

In figure 6.1, the central theme is the agile mindset, represented by key attributes such as flexibility, collaboration, employee involvement, and decision-making processes. The challenges associated with agility, including a lack of structure, reduced efficiency, and overly ambitious prioritization, are shown as interconnected elements surrounding the agile mindset. To address these challenges, the model introduces a hierarchical structure as a recommendation. The hierarchical structure is depicted with elements like clear guidelines, accountability, efficient decision-making, and defining roles and responsibilities. The model emphasizes the importance of striking a balance between the agile mindset and the hierarchical structure, as represented by

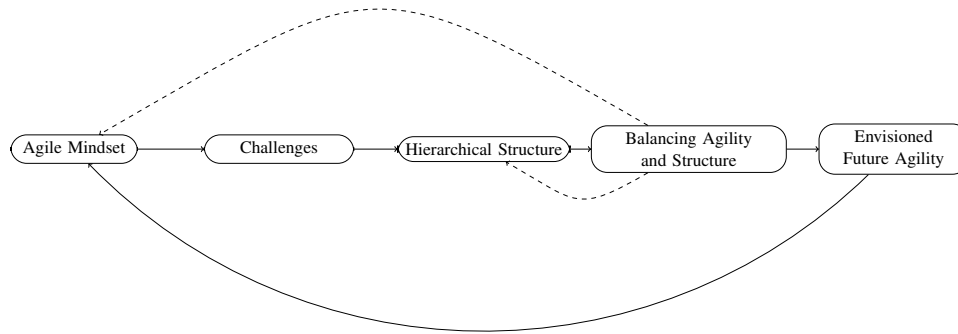


Figure 6.1: Envisioning Organizational Agility: The Agile Mindset and Hierarchical Structure

the overlapping areas between these two components. The desired outcome of implementing this balanced approach is an envisioned future agility, where the organization becomes agile, adaptable, and capable of managing continuous change successfully. The model highlights the expected benefits of improved efficiency and coordination resulting from the integration of the agile mindset and the hierarchical structure.

6.1 Practical Implications

In this subsection, we explore the practical implications of our study for organizations that have already embraced agility and aim to sustain their success in the future. Our research provides valuable insights into how leaders can envision and cultivate agility within their organizations amidst continuous change. By considering the findings and recommendations of our study, leaders can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to the continued success of organizational agility. They can leverage this knowledge to shape their strategic direction, foster an agile mindset, and refine their leadership practices. Our study also highlights the importance of addressing challenges related to decision-making processes, team collaboration, and maintaining a balance between autonomy and control. By proactively addressing these areas, leaders can position their organizations for sustained agility, adaptability, and competitiveness in the face of ongoing change.

6.2 Limitations

There are several limitations that should be acknowledged in this study. Firstly, given the wide scope of agility within the business environment, it was necessary to narrow down the research focus to agility from a leadership perspective. As a result, some aspects of agility may not have been fully explored. Additionally, due to time constraints, the data collection was limited to a single case company, which may limit the ability to generalize the results to a broader population. The findings are context-specific and may not be applicable to organizations in different industries or cultural contexts. The study focuses on a specific set of variables and may not capture the full complexity of factors influencing organizational agility. Future research with a larger and more diverse sample could help enhance the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the time frame of the study may also impact generalizability, as organizational contexts and dynamics can evolve over time. Therefore, caution should be exercised when applying the findings of this study to other organizational settings, and further research is needed to validate and extend the current findings.

6.3 Future Research

Moving forward, there are several avenues for future research that can build upon the findings and recommendations of this study. Firstly, further investigation is warranted to explore the specific mechanisms through which hierarchical structures can be introduced in agile organizations without stifling agility. This research can delve into the design and implementation of hierarchical frameworks that promote clarity and efficiency while preserving the core principles of agility.

Additionally, studies could examine the long-term effects of introducing hierarchy on organizational culture, employee engagement, and overall performance. Understanding how hierarchy and agility can coexist harmoniously would provide valuable insights for leaders navigating the complexities of organizational dynamics. Furthermore, comparative research across different industries and cultural contexts could help validate the findings of this study and enhance the generalizability of the results. Exploring how leaders in various contexts envision and navigate future agility can shed light on the contextual factors that influence the implementation and sustainability of agile practices.

Finally, longitudinal studies tracking organizational agility over time would enable a deeper understanding of the dynamic nature of agility and how it evolves in response to changing internal and external conditions. By examining agility's trajectory, researchers can identify patterns, challenges, and success factors that contribute to sustained organizational agility.

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A Appendix

A.1 Appendix A: Interview Guide Leaders

Takk for at du tar deg tid til å delta i masterprosjektet vårt. Vi er interessert i å lære mer om hvordan ledere ser for seg utvikling av organisasjoner i konstant endring. Vi har noen spørsmål som vil hjelpe oss å forstå hvordan ledere håndterer utfordringene med tverrfaglig samarbeid, og hva som er de viktigste faktorene som påvirker organisasjonens evne til å tilpasse seg og være smidig i møte med konstant endring.

Vi ønsker også å presisere at dette er et semistrukturert intervju. Vi kommer til å bruke spørsmålene under som et utgangspunkt, men det er mulig at vi endrer litt på noen av spørsmålene underveis.

Intro:

- Hva er stillingen din? gi gjerne noen stikkord om hva den går ut på.
- Hvor lenge har du jobbet i bedriften?
- Hvilken utdanning har du?
- Hvor gammel er du?
- Hvordan ser en vanlig arbeidshverdag ut for deg?

Team-samarbeid

1. Hvor mange team og hvilke type team er du leder for? Hva er størrelsen på disse teamene?
2. Fortell oss om hvordan team jobber i organisasjonen din. Syntes du teamene jobber effektivt?
3. Hvordan samarbeider teamene i RiksTV med hverandre?
4. Tror du tverrfaglig samarbeid trenger forbedring i bedriften din?
5. Er det noen problemer i prosessen med team-samarbeidet? Gi oss gjerne noen eksempler.
6. Er det noen konflikter? hvilke konflikter, og hvorfor?

Endring

7. Hva betyr endring for deg som leder og for organisasjonen din?
8. Syntes du at du er flink å ta i mot endringer, hvordan reagerer du når endringer oppstår?
9. Hvilken type endring går organisasjonen din vanligvis gjennom?
10. Hvor hyppig skjer endringene?
 - a. Ettersom året er delt inn i "tre perioder", hvor ledelsen velger prioriteringer. Har det noen gang oppstått utfordringer ved å bli tildelt nye oppgaver?
 - b. Har du opplevd mangel på motivasjon blant ansatte pga prioriteringer?

- c. Har du opplevd missnøye innad i teamet?
- 11. Opplever du motstand mot endring fra ansatte eller teamene?
- 12. Hvordan opplever du endring i bedriften?
- 13. Er det noen betydelige utfordringer? Vennligst gi eksempler.

Smidig

- 14. Hva betyr smidighet for deg som leder?
- 15. Hva er de største utfordringene du ville identifisere når det gjelder organisasjonens smidighet og tilpasningsevne?
- 16. Føler du at det er noen spesifikke ressurser som du trenger for å takle organisatoriske utfordringer bedre? Hva / Hvorfor?
- 17. Hvor stort fokus er kunden når dere jobber på arbeidsplassen?
- 18. Dere skårer høyt på trivsel, hvorfor tror du at dere gjør det?
- 19. Føler du at arbeidsoppgavene du har på jobb øker trivselen på jobben?

Post-Covid utvikling

- 20. Er det noen forskjell før og etter Covid-pandemien som du kan se når det gjelder organisasjonens evne til å endre seg? Hva / Hvorfor?

Faktorer

- 21. Hvilke ressurser trenger du og andre ledere for å takle smidighet og tilpasningsevne til endring effektivt? Hvilke? Hvorfor?
- 22. Føler du at tilpasning til endring avhenger av noen spesifikke faktorer? Hvorfor?
 - a. Føler du at du får støtte fra ledelsen over deg?

Ledelse

- 23. Opplever du at du som leder får frem organisasjonskulturen i bedriften? Hvordan?
- 24. Hvordan påvirker disse verdiene arbeidshverdagen din og ditt forhold til de ansatte?
- 25. Hvordan påser du at ansatte blir hørt og får uttrykt sine meninger?
- 26. Hvordan blir de ansatte involvert i beslutninger? har du eksempler på det?
- 27. I hvilken grad er ansatte involvert i beslutningstaking, syntes du graden er tilstrekkelig? Hvorfor?
- 28. Hvor stor er variasjonen i hvilke ansatte som blir involvert i beslutningstaking? Hvorfor er det slik tror du?
- 29. Til slutt: Er det noe mer du vil legge til som du tror er relevant fra ditt perspektiv?

Vi kommer til å stille spørrende oppfølgingsspørsmål underveis i samtalen når samtalen utvikler seg. Spørsmålene er laget som et utgangspunkt for å få så mye informasjon rundt temaene som mulig.

A.2 Appendix B: Interview Guide Employees

Takk for at du tar deg tid til å delta i masterprosjektet vårt. Vi er interessert i å lære mer om hvordan ledere ser for seg utvikling av organisasjoner i konstant endring. Vi har noen spørsmål som vil hjelpe oss å forstå hvordan ledere håndterer utfordringene med tverrfaglig samarbeid, og hva som er de viktigste faktorene som påvirker organisasjonens evne til å tilpasse seg og være smidig i møte med konstant endring.

Vi ønsker også å presisere at dette er et semistrukturert intervju. Vi kommer til å bruke spørsmålene under som et utgangspunkt, men det er mulig at vi endrer litt på noen av spørsmålene underveis.

Intro:

- Hva er stillingen din? gi gjerne noen stikkord om hva den går ut på.
- Hvor lenge har du jobbet i bedriften?
- Hvilken utdanning har du?
- Hvor gammel er du?
- Hvordan ser en vanlig arbeidshverdag ut for deg?

Team-samarbeid

1. Fortell oss om hvordan team jobber i organisasjonen din.
2. Jobber du i team? Hvilket type team jobber du i?
3. Hvordan samarbeider dere med andre team?
4. Tror du tverrfaglig samarbeid trenger forbedring i bedriften din?
 - a. Hvilke endringer i teamarbeidet tror du kan føre til forbedring?
5. Er det noen problemer i prosessen med team-samarbeidet? Gi oss gjerne noen eksempler.
6. Er det noen konflikter? hvilke konflikter, og hvorfor?

Endring

7. Hva betyr endring for deg og organisasjonen din?
8. Syntes du at du er flink å ta i mot endringer, hvordan reagerer du når endringer oppstår?
9. Hvilken type endring går organisasjonen din vanligvis gjennom?
10. Hvor hyppig skjer endringene?
 - a. Ettersom året er delt inn i "tre perioder", hvor ledelsen velger prioriteringer. Har det noen gang oppstått utfordringer ved å bli tildelt nye oppgaver?
 - b. Har du opplevd mangel på motivasjon pga prioriteringer?
 - c. Har du opplevd missnøye innad i teamet, eller følt at det dere

gjør ikke blir verdsatt?

11. Er det noen betydelige utfordringer? Du er fri til å komme med eksempler.

Smidig

12. Hva betyr smidighet for deg?

13. Hva er de største utfordringene du ville identifisere når det gjelder organisasjonens smidighet og tilpasningsevne?

14. Føler du at det er noen spesifikke ressurser som du trenger for å takle organisatoriske utfordringer bedre? Hva / Hvorfor?

15. Hvor stort fokus er kunden når dere jobber på arbeidsplassen?

16. Dere skårer høyt på trivsel, hvorfor tror du at dere gjør det?

17. Føler du at arbeidsoppgavene du har på jobb øker trivselen på jobben?

Post-Covid utvikling

18. Er det noen forskjell før og etter Covid-pandemien som du kan se når det gjelder organisasjonens evne til å endre seg? Hva / Hvorfor?

Ledelse

19. Opplever du at ledelsen får frem organisasjonskulturen i bedriften? Hvordan?

20. Hvordan påvirker Åpenhet og Tillitt (som er en viktig del av bedriftskulturen) arbeidshverdagen din?

21. Føler du at du blir hørt på tvers av organisasjonen, og at din mening er viktig? Gjerne gi eksempler

22. Hvordan blir du som ansatt involvert i beslutninger? har du eksempler på det?

23. Liker du å være med på å ta beslutninger? Hvorfor?

24. I hvilken grad er ansatte involvert i beslutningstaking, syntes du graden er tilstrekkelig? Hvorfor?

25. Hvor stor er variasjonen i hvilke ansatte som blir involvert i beslutningstaking? Hvorfor er det slik tror du?

Vi kommer til å stille spørrende oppfølgingsspørsmål underveis i samtalen når samtalen utvikler seg. Spørsmålene er laget som et utgangspunkt for å få så mye informasjon rundt temaene som mulig.

A.3 Appendix C: Themes for Interview Guide

1. Team collaboration

The purpose of having teamwork as a separate topic was to see the difference in what the management and employees emphasized in a team. In addition, we wanted to look at how different teams functioned and how they were structured. Not least, we also wanted to look at how much the various teams depend on each other and how their cooperation works.

2. Change

As agile companies are adaptable, we wanted to look at how they handle change (Appelbaum et al., 2017). By uncovering changes and previous experiences, we will get information about previous workplace changes and how these were carried out. Important keywords we looked for during the design of the interview guide were what attitudes the employees have towards change and the extent to which there is resistance to change in the workplace (Jacobsen, 1998).

3. Agility

The purpose of agility was to gain insight into how the organization adapts to changes and challenges in its environment. Here, we specifically wanted to look at how the management adapts in the market, technology, or other areas. In addition, we wanted to look at how the employees view flexibility and whether this form of organization makes the company better equipped for change.

4. The management

Management plays a central role in a continuous change process. We aimed to uncover how the management communicates with the employees and to what extent they involve the employees in the decision-making processes. Here we also wanted to find out to what extent the employees become involved and whether this affects their motivation in the workplace. Having management as a separate topic gives us a picture of how management works and an overview of its strengths and weaknesses.

5. Post-Covid development

A tiny topic in the interview guide, but still interesting to look at. As there have been many home offices during the pandemic, we wanted to look at the extent to which the organizational culture has been affected by this.

A.4 Appendix D: NSD Consent Form

Informasjonsskriv og samtykkeskjema:

Deltagelse i forskningsprosjektet «Navigere endring med smidig ledelse: Viktige faktorer for varig organisatorisk suksess»

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å finne ut hvordan ledere ser for seg fremtiden i en smidig mellomstor bedrift, i kontekst av konstant endring. Vi vil også finne ut hvordan smidighet kan føre til bedre effektivitet, større endringskompetase og bedre kommunikasjon mellom ansatte og team. Formålet med problemstillingen er å finne ut hvilke strategier og metoder som fungerer best for tverrfaglig samarbeid og innvolvering av ansatte i en smidig bedrift. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Formålet med masteroppgaven er å undersøke hvordan smidighet som arbeidsmetode kan føre til større involvering av ansatte i mellomstore bedrifter. Ved å involvere ansatte i beslutningsprosesser og gi dem mer ansvar for prosjekter og oppgaver, kan man skape en mer motivert og engasjert arbeidsstyrke. Dette kan igjen påvirke bedriftens effektivitet og evne til å håndtere endringer på en mer fleksibel måte. Studiet vil se på hva som skal til for å implementere smidighet som arbeidsmetode og hvilken innvirkning dette har på ansattes involvering og bedriftens suksess. Gjennom analysen vil vi kunne få et dypere innblikk i hvordan mellomstore bedrifter kan dra nytte av smidighet som en måte å forbedre arbeidsmiljøet, øke ansattes motivasjon og engasjement, og til slutt forbedre bedriftens effektivitet og endringskapasitet. Problemstillingen som skal besvares vil dermed være:

- How do leaders envision their organization's agility in the future, in the context of constant change?

Dette er en Masteroppgave, og opplysningene vi mottar skal kun brukes i oppgaven.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

NTNU Handelshøyskolen er ansvarlig for dette forskningsprosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Vi ønsker å intervju deg for å få innblikk hvordan ansatte både påvirker og bidrar til den agile arbeidsmetodikken. Også for å få innblikk i hvordan ansatte påvirkes av usikkerheten kontinuerlig endring medfører. Vi søker å finne svar på i hvor stor grad de ansatte bidrar i endringsprosessene, og i hvilken grad ansatte føler eierskap til endringene. Samtidig vil vi se på hvor det oppstår problemer og motstand, og hvordan smidige arbeidsmetoder kan løse dette.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Dersom du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det et dybdeintervju på ca 60 minutter. Spørsmålene vil inneholde mye av det som er nevnt i foregående avsnitt. Det vil bli tatt lydopptak og notater under intervjuet, som senere blir transkribert, og det mest relevante vil bli brukt i oppgaven.

Vi vil også be deg om å gi noen opplysninger, dette vil være om din stilling og avdeling, hvor lenge du har vært ansatt i stillingen og i bedriften, og litt om din påvirkningskraft.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrevet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- Prosjektgruppen og veileder vil ha tilgang til opplysningene vi mottar.
- Navnet og kontaktopplysningene dine vil erstattes med en kode som lagres på en egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data. I tillegg vil alt av opplysninger sikres med passord.
- Ditt navn vil ikke publiseres, her brukes heller stilling (leder, mellomleder, ansatt).
- Deltakerne i forskningsprosjektet vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i masteroppgaven.

Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes?

Opplysningene anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er 31.08.2023. Ved dette tidspunktet vil også alt av innsamlet data slettes.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra NTNU har Sikt – Kunnskapssektorens tjenesteleverandør vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger vi behandler om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om deg som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å vite mer om eller benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

Studenter	Mobil nr	Mail
Mihajlo Krivokapic	90724723	mihajlok@stud.ntnu.no
Marit Høiem Mathiassen	90985076	marithma@stud.ntnu.no

Veileder/Prosjektansvarlig	Mobil nr	Mail
Daniel Casoinic		danieca@ntnu.no
Personvernombud NTNU		
Thomas Helgesen	93079038	thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til Personverntjenester sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med Personverntjenester på epost: personverntjenester@sikt.no eller på telefon: 73 98 40 40.

Tusen takk for din verdifulle deltakelse, dedikerte tid og relevante innspill til dette forskningsprosjektet.

Med vennlig hilsen

Daniel Casoinic
(Forsker/veileder)

Mihajlo Krivokapic
(Masterstudent)

Marit Højem Mathiassen
(Masterstudent)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet «Smidighet og ansattes involvering: Effektivitet og endringskapasitet i mellomstore bedrifter» og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- å delta i intervju
- At min stilling (leder, mellomleder eller ansatt) i bedriften publiseres.
- Jeg samtykker til lydopptak av intervju
- Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)



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Science and Technology