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Understanding employee reactions to organizational change

An exploratory case study research on employee attitude toward change

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ABSTRACT

Few attempts have been made to identify employee reactions to organizational change. Most of this research was done from a negative problem solving view. This research aims at uncovering what criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change. To identify these criteria, concepts are integrated from the Theory of Planned Behavior. Because there is limited information about the criteria employees use, this research was conducted in a single organization and had a qualitative character. During this research 27 employees have been interviewed.

This study resulted in several criteria employees use in the evaluation of the organizational change: personal control, reaction of colleagues, autonomy, change necessity, personal benefits, preparation of change, customers’ reactions, involvement in process, support from management, support from colleagues, job security and financial consequences.

Further was investigated whether these criteria vary for different types of employees. Based on the findings of this research, it appears that job level can explain the use of the criteria change necessity, personal benefits and involvement in the process. Age can explain the use of the criteria reaction of colleagues, support from colleagues, personal benefits and job security. During this research, indications have been found for the relationship between personality traits and the use of criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change. Future research should reveal whether this relationship is confirmed.

*Keywords: organizational change, attitude, behavior, resistance, acceptance, theory of planned behavior (TPB)*
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research problem

Organizations are continuously confronted with developments in their environment that force them to introduce changes in culture, structure, processes and strategies (Armenakis et al., 1993). Especially in times of economic crises, organizations are more and more forced to change. No day passes without screaming newspaper headlines about downsizing, restructuring and other organizational changes.

Organizations implement changes to adapt to developments of the markets in which they are active. Remarkably enough though, these changes often lead to obstacles, and in the worst case even threatens the organizations’ survival in that market (Levasseur, 2001).

In the research field of organizational change there are two general lines of research: (a) research on how to persuade employees to buy into changes and (b) how to manage employees attitudes toward change (Bouckenooghe, 2010). The growing interest in the employee attitude toward change led to an interchangeable use of labels, definitions and constructs that are related to attitude toward change. These attitudes (e.g. readiness to change, resistance to change, acceptance to change, commitment to change, cynicism toward change) seem to represent multiple but also related concepts. The fact that the understanding about organizational change made limited progress in the past decades is argued to be partial because of a number of issues concerning our understanding of employee reactions to change (Clegg & Walsh, 2004) and the interchangeable use of concepts (Bouckenooghe, 2010). In order to force the ongoing debate, Bouckenooghe (2010) created a starting point toward the emergence of a more complete typology of attitude toward change. He selected dualities (i.e. planned change or emergent change, individual- or collective level of analysis, negative problem solving view or positive problem solving view, variance method approach or process method approach) that represent opposites that often work against each other, but not necessarily exclude each other (Bouckenooghe, 2010). Next, he came up with a new definition of ‘attitude toward change’, by which he hoped to capture the general essence of the term, and create a solid ground for the measurement and conceptualization of the concept for future research. He defined attitudes toward change as “a tridimensional state composed of cognitive, affective, and intentional/behavioral reactions toward episodic or continuous change” (Bouckenooghe, 2010).

Past research showed that most organizational changes do not work out successfully and do not
achieve their goals (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Many scholars stress that the reason for failure of many organizational change processes can be found in resistance to change (e.g. Maurer, 1997; Spiker & Lesser, 1995). Resistance to change is the lack of, minimal support for, or the hindrance from employees to the process of organizational change (Coetsee, 1999), and can therefore be considered as an attitude toward change (Bouckenooghe, 2010). Few attempts have been made to identify the actual nature of attitude toward change. Most of this research was done from a negative problem solving view, stressing how to overcome resistance or cynicism to change (Seo et al., 2004).

In a single case study research Bernerth (2004) found several factors to be leading to employee resistance to change, namely: fear, uncertainty, absence or a lack of information and the influence of management. However this gives a direction to think of what factors lead to resistance to change, it lacks in explaining the actual origin of resistance to organizational change. Logically, one would expect that scholars are not only interested in why certain employees resist change, but that scholars are also interested in why certain employees accept change. Strikingly enough though, very little attention is given to the question why certain employees accept change. This raises the question how behavior and attitude toward organizational change can be explained (i.e. not per se explaining only resistance or acceptance of organizational change).

An interesting theory in this sense is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (see figure 1). This theory is originally derived from the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), and is similar to other cognitive decision making models in that its basic assumption advocates that individuals make decisions rationally and systematically through the information that is available to them.

![Figure 1.1 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991)](image)

According to this theory, the ‘behavioral intention’ is an individuals’ relative strength of intention to perform a behavior and is a function of ‘attitude’, subjective norm’ and ‘perceived behavioral control’. Each of these are formed by a set of beliefs. The first set of beliefs, behavioral beliefs,
the individual’s subjective probability that the behavior of interest will produce a certain outcome.

An individual may have many behavioral beliefs, but only a relatively small number are accessible. These accessible beliefs - in combination with the subjective values of the expected outcomes - determine the individual’s attitude toward the behavior. A second set of beliefs, normative beliefs, refer to the perceived behavioral expectation of significant others in the environment of the individual. These normative beliefs - in combination with the individual’s motivation to comply with his or her significant others - determine the subjective norm. A third set of beliefs, control beliefs, refer to the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior. These control beliefs - in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, determine the perceived behavioral control. In the original model of Ajzen (1991), it is not clear that ‘attitude’, ‘subjective norm’ and ‘perceived behavioral control’ are the result of a set of beliefs in combination with the subjective evaluation of these beliefs. Therefore we adjusted the original model of Ajzen (1991) (see figure 2).

In the context of organizational change, the TPB is a useful theory that gives us a better direction to research the actual nature of behavior and attitudes of employees that are confronted with an organizational change. In this sense, this model tells us that change recipients hold certain beliefs (i.e. behavioral, normative and control beliefs). These beliefs are ‘valued’ by the change recipient. This evaluation results in the attitude, subjective norm and the perceived behavioral control, which in turn lead to the intentional behavior: the relative strength of intention of the change recipient to comply with the organizational change. Thus, when we are searching for the explanation of behavior and attitude toward organizational change, we have to find an answer to the question which beliefs (i.e. behavioral, normative and control beliefs) individuals hold, and how the individuals value these beliefs. This raises the question why individuals hold certain beliefs, why these individuals value
these beliefs in a certain way, and how it can be explained that individuals hold different beliefs and value them in a different way.

This study is limited to investigating what criteria employees use to value their beliefs (i.e. behavioral, normative and control beliefs) when they evaluate an organizational change to which they are subjected, investigating whether these criteria are hierarchically structured, and if so, how this structuring varies for different employees. Thus, with ‘criteria’ we mean the following: values, in combination with the three sets of beliefs: attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control that are formed in a situation of organizational change.

1.2 Research setting

Considering the time limitation of this study, one organization has been picked in which a type of organizational change was implemented that is often subject of research in the field of employee reactions to organizational change. Definitions of organizational change in this sense often encompass the following elements: “organizational change is a deliberately planned change in an organization’s formal structure, system, process or product-market domain intended to improve the attainment of one or more organizational objectives” (Lines, 2005). More specific, this research has been executed in an organization in which a reorganization took place, followed by the implementation of a new major ICT-system. This organizational change can be considered as a ‘strategic organizational change’ as it affected the whole organization and significantly altered the daily work of its employees (Rajagopalan & Spreitzer, 1996). It is an example of organizational changes that are often researched, like for example the merger of two subunits, downsizing of an organization, or system changes (e.g. new reward system, new work processes) (Rajagopalan & Spreitzer, 1996).

1.3 Research question and goal

This research aims at identifying which criteria employees use in their evaluation of an upcoming organizational change. Based on previous research we know that employee reactions toward organizational change are crucial for the success of the change (e.g. Maurer, 1997; Spiker & Lesser, 1995). Past research does not give us a clear answer to the question what the actual nature is of attitude toward organizational change. The TPB models, which has often been used in several research fields to predict behavior, learns us that in their evaluation of new behavior, individuals
both use beliefs concerning this new behavior and a valuation of these beliefs. By using a qualitative method, this research tries to unravel the criteria employees use to value these beliefs.

In sum, this research aims at unraveling the criteria employees use to evaluate an upcoming organizational change. Next, it will be investigated if, and if so, how these criteria are hierarchically structured, and why this hierarchical structuring differs for different types of employees. Therefore the following research questions are formulated.

**What criteria do employees use to evaluate an upcoming organizational change? Are these criteria hierarchically structured? And if so, how does this structuring vary for different types of employees?**

### 1.4 Scientific and practical relevance

As already mentioned, research about organizational change made limited progress in the past decades because of a number of issues concerning our understanding of employee reactions to change (Clegg & Walsh, 2004) and the interchangeable use of concepts (Bouckenooghe, 2010). This research goes along with the ideas of Bouckenooghe (2010) that more attention should be paid to the constructs that are related to the research of attitudes and behavior of employees that are confronted with an organizational change. By doing so, this research is a step in the direction of breaking the current debate about our understanding of attitude and behavior of employees that are confronted with an organizational change.

By focusing on attitude and behavior toward organizational change in general, this research paves a new path in research in the field of organizational change, as it is not per se from a positive or negative problem solving view. Further, in terms of the dualities of Bouckenooghe (2010), this research focuses on planned organizational change, on the individual level of analysis, using a variance research strategy.

Next to the empirical relevance, this research also has a practical relevance. Knowledge about what criteria employees use in the evaluation of organizational changes, gives change initiators the opportunity to deliberately choose from a pool of possible change alternatives to maximize enthusiasm and commitment and minimizing resistance to change.
2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter the theoretical foundation of this study will be presented. In order to create a better understanding of the underlying principles of this research, concepts are clarified.

2.1 Research on organizational change

The study of organizational change is a major topic in the organizational science. In line with several management bestsellers like Beer & Nohria (2000), Kotter (1995) and Goldratt (1999), two themes of research are recognizable. The first theme is research about investigating the ways to persuade employees to buy into changes. The second theme is research about the way to manage people’s attitude and behavior toward change.

The growing interest of scholars in employee attitudes and behavior led to the current situation where labels, definitions and constructs that are related to attitude toward change are used interchangeably (Bouckenooghe, 2010). These labels, definitions and constructs (e.g. readiness to change, resistance to change, acceptance to change, commitment to change, cynicism toward change) at first hand seem to constitute multiple, but also related constructs. By scrutinizing the attitude-related concepts and creating a new framework, Brouckenooghe (2010) set forth a map for research on attitude toward change. This new framework consisted of a set of four dualities. These dualities are implicit in theories of change and the observed practices reported in the change literature.

2.1.1 Four dualities in research on attitude toward behavior

Nature of change
An important duality that arises from change research involves the nature of the organizational change. Weick and Quinn (1991) distinguish change that is episodic, or planned and continuous change. Episodic or planned change is an intentional intervention for bringing change to the organization and is described as “deliberate, systematic and purposeful” (Weick and Quinn, 1991). Continuous or emergent change, however, is the change that is ongoing, evolving and cumulative.

Level of change
There is a general consensus among scholars that many organizational phenomena such as change are multilevel phenomena (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). As change moves through the organization, it is believed to have different implications at different levels, and is perceived in different ways at each
level. A distinction that is often made, is the distinction between individual-level versus collective-
level change. Individual change refers to change aimed at individuals, contrary to collective change,
which focuses on the organization as a whole (Bouckenoughe, 2010).

Positive vs. negative focus of change
The third duality is the positive versus the negative change dimension (Seo et al., 2004). In the
context of attitudes toward change, research about resistance to change and cynicism about change
often reflects the negative focus, stressing how to overcome the problem of cynicism and resistance
to change. The positive focus is more concerned with identifying factors that enable, motivate, and
facilitate people’s readiness for change (Seo et al., 2004).

Research method
Past research on organizational change distinguishes two major research strategies: the variance
strategy, and the process strategy. Whereas the variance strategy focuses on cause-effect
relationships, the process strategy examines the sequences of events as change evolves within the
organization (Mohr, 1982).

2.1.2 Definition of attitude toward change
The defining characteristics as described in the previous paragraph (i.e. nature of the change, level of
the change, view on change and research method) have important consequences for the perspective
being adopted to measure the concept of attitude toward change. By providing a new definition of
the concept “attitude toward change”, Bouckenoughe (2010) hoped to capture the general essence
of the term, and create a solid ground for the measurement and conceptualization of the concept for
future research. He defined attitude toward change as “a tridimensional state composed of
cognitive, affective, and intentional/ behavioral reactions toward episodic or continuous change”
(Bouckenooghe, 2010).

The affective component indicates the individual’s set of feelings toward the change. The cognitive
component indicates the opinion the individual has about the advantages and disadvantages,
necessity and usefulness of the change. The last component, intentional/ behavioral reaction of the
individual, refer to the actions which will be taken in the future, or have already been taken.
2.1.3 Current debate about attitude toward change

An attitude related concept that has earned much attention in research over the past decades is resistance to change (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). Resistance to change is the lack of, minimal support for, or the hindrance from employees to the process of organizational change (Coetzee, 1999). Because of the “general tone” of this type of research, it can be labeled as a negative problem solving view on change (Bouckenoughe, 2010).

The origin of resistance to change has been researched by several scholars. In their research, Zaltman and Duncan (1977) stated that employees seek a stable situation and try to maintain that situation. Resistance to change occurs, because change processes often involve going from a stable (‘the known’) to an unstable (‘the unknown’) situation (Zaltman and Duncan 1977; Coghlan, 1993). Two ways in which resistance can express itself are cynicism and change tiredness (Connell & Waring, 2002). These can be seen as mechanisms through which employees deal with changes that personally affect them. In this sense, cynicism is an active form of resistance to change in which employees actively try to delay the change process. Change tiredness is a passive form of resistance, which results in a passive behavior toward the change and employees focus on their daily work.

In a single case study research Bernerth (2004) found several factors to be leading to employee resistance to change, namely: fear, uncertainty, the absence or the lack of information, and the influence of management. An explorative and limited study by Smith (2005) found more or less these same factors explaining employee resistance to change.

Another attitude related concept, that is often researched -commitment to change- can be seen as the equivalent of resistance to change (Elving & Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2005). Commitment to change is the stimulation of a positive attitude and behavior toward the organizational change (Armenakis, Harris & Feild, 1999) and points to the support and efforts of the employees to succeed in the change plan and is therefore an essential part of a change process (Elving & Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2005). Because of the “general tone” of this type of research, it can be labeled as a positive problem solving view on change (Bouckenoughe, 2010).

An important condition for commitment to change is believed to be a well organized internal communication about the organizational change (Armenakis et al., 2007). For that reason, research in this field is aimed at finding ways to optimize commitment to change ((Armenakis et al., 2007).

Research about the two attitude related constructs, resistance to change and commitment to change, give a direction to think of what affects the attitude of employees that are subjected to
organizational change. But, both fail to contribute to explain the actual nature of employee attitude toward change.

By introducing a new definition of attitude toward change, Bouckenoughe (2010) tried to give a solid foundation for future researchers for the measurement and conceptualization of this concept. However, a more detailed understanding of the components of the concept of attitude toward change is needed in order to create a better ground for uncovering what actually causes attitude and behavior of employees that are confronted with an organizational change.

2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior

2.2.1 TPB and TRA

Fishbein and Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behavior is one of the most widespread theories in the domain of human behavior. The theory was first described in 1988 and is an extension of the in 1967 developed Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein, 1967). The goal of the TRA was to study behavior and develop possibilities to intervene in behavior. The basic assumption of this theory is that actual behavior is the result of behavioral intentions (see figure 2): an individual’s relative strength of intention to perform a certain behavior. This behavioral intention is a function of ‘attitude’ and the ‘subjective norm’. Both the attitude and subjective norm are formed by a set of beliefs and the subjective evaluation of these beliefs.

![Diagram of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)](image)

The first set of beliefs, behavioral beliefs, are the individual’s subjective probability that the behavior of interest will produce a certain outcome. An individual may have many behavioral beliefs, but only a relatively small number are accessible. These accessible beliefs -in combination with the subjective values of the expected outcomes- determine the individual’s attitude toward the behavior.
A second set of beliefs, normative beliefs, refer to the perceived behavioral expectation of significant others in the environment of the individual. These normative beliefs—in combination with the individual’s motivation to comply with his or her significant others—determine the perceived behavioral control.

Many years later, Fishbein and Ajzen realized an important element was missing in the TRA. The TRA only seemed applicable for situations in which individuals said to have full control of the situation. In situations individuals did not have full control, the model failed. This led to the development of Theory of Planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The TPB was an extension of the TRA, and added the ‘perceived behavioral control’, which is also formed by a set of beliefs: the control beliefs. These control beliefs, refer to the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior. These control beliefs—in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, determine the perceived behavioral control.

### 2.2.2 TPB: a useful theory?

In the context of organizational change, the TPB is a useful theory that gives us a better direction to research the actual nature of behavior and attitudes of employees that are confronted with an organizational change. In this sense, this model tells us that change recipients hold certain beliefs (i.e. behavioral, normative and control beliefs). These beliefs are ‘valued’ by the change recipient. This evaluation results in the attitude, subjective norm and the perceived behavioral control, which in turn lead to the intentional behavior: the relative strength of intention of the change recipient to comply with the organizational change.

Thus, when researching the actual nature of attitude and behavior of change recipients, the TPB learns us that we have to pay special attention to the beliefs and criteria change recipients hold in their evaluation of the change they are subjected to. The adjusted TPB model below, gives a better idea of the formation of ‘attitude’, ‘subjective norm’ and ‘perceived behavioral control’. 
An important question the TPB raises, is, how certain beliefs and criteria can be explained. The TPB model is a generic model, not mentioned to explain differences in beliefs and criteria employees use to evaluate an organizational change. Although the TPB is not meant to explain why employees hold different beliefs and criteria to evaluate an organizational change, it raises questions about how certain beliefs and criteria can be explained.

Past research shows that not all employees adapt to an organizational change the same way for the reason that they experience change processes differently (Carnall, 1986). Some employees move through a change process quickly, they for example experience the change as a source of joy, benefits or advantage. Others become stuck because they experience the change as a source of suffering, stress and disadvantages (Bouckenooghe, 2010, Scott & Jaffe, 1988). A more thorough investigation of the relationship between attitude and behavior with respect to organizational change is needed.

2.3 Research on attitude and behavior

Much research in social psychology is focused on studying the concept of attitude (Newbill, 2005). Depending on the object of the research there are several definitions of ‘attitude’. The definition that is used in this study is as follows: “attitudes are general evaluations people hold in regard for themselves, other people, objects, and issues” (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).
In the social psychology research field the debate about the structuring of attitudes is ongoing. Attitudes have long been seen as made up of several components: a behavioral component, a cognitive component and an emotional component (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Kamradt & Kamradt, 1999). Not all researchers nowadays share the opinion that attitudes have these three components, but they overall agree that attitudes can be expressed by cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses (Newbill, 2005). The discussion on the existence of the component structure of attitudes may never be completed for the reason that attitudes are constructs that are not directly observable. Apart from the ‘actual’ nature of attitudes, they are often measured by behaviors that are based on emotional and cognitive foundations.

The concept ‘attitude’ is developed by social psychologists to help them make sense of the world (Newill, 2005). Social psychologists noticed that individuals respond to objects or ideas with a different degree of positive or negative to evaluations. These responses can either be affective (e.g. by smiling), cognitive (e.g. by making rational thoughts) or behavioral (e.g. by walking away) (Newbill, 2005). Psychologists searched for a driving force behind these responses and named it ‘attitude’. Social psychologists proceeded with measuring attitude by measuring what they thought to be the effects of it. According to Ajzen (1989) all responses to attitude are behaviors. But before this statement by Ajzen, there was a decade’s long discussion about the relationship between attitude and behavior. In 1969 Wicker suggested that the attitude-behavior relationship was not direct, but was mediated by situational and personal factors. He asked for more research that could explain the discrepancy. Wicker received much criticism on his assumptions because his research was only conducted in controlled laboratory settings. Fishbein and his colleague Ajzen (1975) found that although attitudes may not predict specific behaviors, attitudes are in fact very good predictors of ranges of behaviors related to the attitude object. This theory ultimately lead to the Theory of Reasoned Action which was later extended to the Theory of Planned Behavior (see paragraph 2.2.1).

2.4 Related theories

Most research on attitudes aims at measuring attitudes by solely focusing on the degree to which the attitude is either positive or negative. Few research is focused on the development of attitudes. A research that can shed more light on the development of attitudes is the work by Kamradt &
Kamradt (1999) about attitude research in education. Contrary to Ajzen & Fishbein (1975) Kamradt & Kamradt (1999) see attitudes as a psychophysical structure. This means that behavior is an integral part of the attitude, and the behavior is not a consequence of a certain attitude. The attitude is an active instrument that is capable of developing itself. According to Kamradt & Kamradt (1999) the three components cognition, affection and behavior are related to each other and cannot be seen as separate from each other (see figure 2). A change in one of the components will automatically lead to a change in the other components. Information or knowledge about, or emotions of an issue affects the capability to engage in a certain behavior.

![Figure 2.3 Three elements of an attitude
Kamradt & Kamradt (1999)](image)

The following example will illustrate the development of an attitude following the theory of Kamradt & Kamradt (1999).

**ATTITUDE:** I know a car pollutes the environment. I want to be environmentally conscious. I always use my car, even for short distances.

In this example the components cognition and affection will influence the component behavior. If the individual is aware of his attitude, he will probably more frequently use his bicycle, at least for short distances. A latent unconscious attitude (*I want to be environmentally conscious*) will be activated by a yet uncompleted need that stimulates the affective component (*I think it is important to contribute to a healthy environment*). The affective component in turn will activate the cognitive component (*I want to learn more about pollution. I learn that cars can be very polluting*). This knowledge in turn influences his choice of the behavior (*I decide to make use of my bicycle more frequently*). This behavior in turn has influence on the affective component (*I am happy to contribute to a healthy environment*). If this specific individual feels the need to even more contribute to the environment, he or she follows the same cycle again.
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The example illustrates the development of the attitude in a simple way. In practice there will be more factors playing a role in the decision to either or not make use of a bicycle. If for example an individual does not know how to ride a bicycle, he or she will probably not try to ride the bicycle. Or, the individual knows that a car causes pollution (cognition), and he or she knows how to ride a bicycle, but does not like to ride the bicycle (affection).

Kamradt & Kamradt (1999) state that in principle all attitudes have a high degree of internal consistency. This means that all three components of an attitude are well integrated to achieve a reliable and consistent result: the behavior. Attitudes are appropriate strategies to achieve our personal needs. The affective signal, the cognitive concept and the in turn chosen behavior are firmly connected.

Attitude dissonance occurs when only one component is significantly more stimulated than others. For example when employees take part in a training to become more customer-friendly, and these employees only receive information about customer-service (what is customer-service, what are the rules and norms, what are good manners) without giving attention to the affective and behavioral component (role-playing, and receiving feedback), it is very likely that this will lead to attitude dissonance. These employees will probably think they know a lot about customer service and that they are customer friendly. But without bringing this into practice and giving them feedback, the affective and behavioral components will not be stimulated. In that case, the actual goal of the training will not be reached. The attitude model (figure 2) helps to discover which component is responsible for the ‘execution’ of the attitude: the actual observable behavior.

Whereas Kamradt & Kamradt (1999) consider behavior as an integral part of the attitude, Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) consider behavior as a resultant of the attitude that influences the behavioral intention. However these scholars hold a different position about the nature of the concept attitude, they agree on the fact that behavior is the final result of the (sub)conscious evaluation (or valuation) of the individual in regard to a specific issue. As Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) shed insufficient light on this evaluative process, Kamradt & Kamradt (1999) give a better idea of this process by making use of more clear and explicit concepts. However, neither Kamradt & Kamradt (1999), nor other scholars explain why employees have certain beliefs and criteria to valuate these beliefs in a situation of organizational change. To our knowledge, yet no research is done that explains whether -and how- beliefs, or the criteria to valuate these beliefs, vary between individuals.
2.5 Do evaluative criteria vary for different employees?

As already mentioned in paragraph 2.2.2, not all employees adapt to an organizational change the same way because they experience organizational change processes differently (Carnall, 1986). Some employees move through a change process quickly, others become stuck and need more attention (Scott & Jaffe, 1988). So far, the organizational change literature gives no answer to the question why some employees are easier to persuade than others. Research in other research fields may explain why certain employees use different criteria in the evaluation of an organizational change.

Past research on the introduction of employee functional flexibility, learns that the use of a large variety of skills are of less importance for older employees than for younger employees (Cordery et al., 1991). Older employees are expected to dislike the idea of changes in long established work patterns, because they are less confident and capable to apply and master new skills, and as a result resist such interventions (Cordery et al., 1991). Further, the alteration of job related aspects is seen as threatening to older employees, because with ‘seniority’, employees develop ‘rights in a job’ (Carnall, 1986).

Research on decision making processes shows that managers have a tendency to interfere in strategic decision making because they are highly committed to the achievement of organizational goals. An explanation for this is given by Buselitz & Barney (1997) which state that managers are driven by certain interests like their shared responsibility for organizational survival. Because of their responsibility for organizational survival, it can be expected that managers experience organizational change differently than operational employees, and as a result have a different attitude toward the change than operation employees.

However we have no direct proof that certain employees use different criteria in the evaluation of an organizational change, from above mentioned findings from other research fields it can be expected that age and job level might explain that certain employees use different criteria to evaluate an organizational change.

2.6 Setting in the organization

This research has been conducted in an organization that provides services for domestic support for people that are not (anymore) capable of doing domestic work themselves.
The industry of domestic care has been subjected to intense changes in the recent years. Until 2007 domestic support services were financed by the so called *Algemene Wet Bijzondere Ziektekosten* (AWBZ). Nowadays the domestic support services are financed by the *Wet Maatschappelijke Ondesteuning* (WMO) for which the local municipality is accountable. The reasoning behind the change of this financing structure was the increasing bureaucracy and increasing costs of the AWBZ. Local municipalities were believed to be more capable of controlling costs and managing flexibility. As a result of the implementation of the WMO, municipalities were buying more standard services, contrary to the AWBZ in which more complementary services were bought. Consequently, domestic service organizations had to anticipate to these changes.

The organization in which this research is conducted is one of the largest domestic service organizations in the southern part of Limburg (i.e. province of the Netherlands). This organization has roughly 1,175 employees, mostly domestic support workers and provides services in the regions of Maastricht, Sittard, Heerlen and Roermond. The organization is led by one director, which is directly leading the Back Office Manager and the Operational Manager. The Back Office consists of nine supporting employees (financial administration, site-assistants, human resources, salary administration and ict). The Operational Manager is at the head of 18 relational managers that are responsible for matching the supply and demand of domestic services. These relational managers are directly leading the domestic support workers.

This organization anticipated to the above mentioned changes in the financing structure of the industry of domestic care by changing its internal organization and implementing a new ICT-system in order to become more efficient and in turn cut costs. The organizational structure became more flat after cutting overhead and the restructuring of positions. For example positions like team leader, contract arranger and planners changed to relational manager, which became directly accountable for the whole range of services toward the customer. The implementation of a new ICT-system affected all employees within the organization. This system replaced all former systems and piles of paper. This system provided the relational manager with all information about clients, domestic support workers and planning. It provided the domestic support workers with all information about their clients, their personal information and planning.
2.7 Focus of this research

As has become clear, literature provides very little information about the nature of employee attitude toward organizational change. Therefore this research had an explorative character. The goal of the research was threefold. First was investigated what criteria employees will use in the evaluation of an upcoming organizational change. Next was researched whether these criteria are hierarchically structured, and if so, how this structuring varies for different types of employees (i.e. employees from different job levels and employees from different age classes) Finally, several assumptions are formulated that explain why criteria vary for these different types of employees.
3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the methodology of this study is described. First, the research design is described, secondly the data collection, followed by the sample strategy, data analysis and the research quality indicators.

3.1 Research design

In order to answer the research question, this research is conducted in a qualitative way, using a single-case study design. The qualitative research strategy is the most appropriate strategy because this research asks for an in-depth understanding of what criteria employees use in their evaluation of an organizational change, and how these criteria—and their significance—vary for different types of employees. Next to that, a qualitative research strategy is most appropriate because the literature gives limited insights about the object of this research. Therefore an exploratory nature is most suitable. Since this study adds new insights to the literature of organizational change, this study can be characterized as inductive. A case study is appropriate because it allows getting in-depth information from a single case or multiple cases and is especially suitable to develop new theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). The unit of analysis and the unit of observation of this study are members of the organization of both the management level and the operational level.

3.2 Data collection

Because the literature tells us little about the criteria employees use in their evaluation of organizational change, three random individuals are interviewed that have been confronted with a major organizational change but do not belong to the case that is studied. These experimental interviews provided the researcher with a list of potential criteria which he could specifically ask for in the interviews with the employees that belong to the case. Using interviews as data collection method fits the exploratory nature of this study.

To collect data from the actual case, in total 27 employees have participated in the interviews. For each interview the procedure was as follows. Using an interview protocol (APPENDIX I), open ended questions like ‘what was personally important to you when you were confronted with the organizational change?’ have been asked, in order to find out what criteria individuals use. Additional questions were asked to find determine the significance and why criteria were used in the evaluation of the change. Next to that, the criteria that were derived from the experimental interviews were
mentioned in order to qualify their relevance and significance. These interviews were recorded and afterwards transcribed.

3.3 Sample strategy

Convenience sampling was used to select individuals for the experimental interviews. The researcher approached four individuals in his personal network of which he knew were recently confronted with an organizational change. Three individuals agreed to participate in the experimental interviews.

For the actual case that was researched, it was important to select respondents on their job level and on their age. With respect to job level, respondents from both the operational level (i.e. domestic support workers) and management level (i.e. relational managers) were selected. With respect to age, respondents from three age classes were selected: 20-34, 35-49 and 50-64 years old.

Random probability sampling was used to select respondents. During a management meeting in which all relational managers were present, the current research was shortly explained. The relational managers were asked to participate in the interviews. From the total number of 18 relational managers, seven voluntarily decided to participate in the interviews. Each of these seven managers was asked to randomly select domestic support employees in their own district that were confronted with the organizational change. These employees were asked whether they would like to be interviewed. A number of 20 domestic support employees agreed to be interviewed. By using a random sampling method the chance to select respondents based on subjective criteria is limited. Next to that, the random sampling method was most suitable because the chance of a biased selection of the respondents was limited. For example random sampling controls for selecting respondents on their attitude towards the organizational change. An additional advantage of random sampling is that it guarantees a more or less equal distribution of respondents in the three age classes. Every operational employee had an equal chance to be selected. The table below shows the sample of respondents.

Because of the limited amount of men working in the organization, it was not possible to select an equal amount of men and women. Only two men could be interviewed: one manager and one operational employee. Except for gender, it can be assumed that a representative sample of operational employees has been acquired.
3.4 Data analysis

As already mentioned, the interviews were transcribed. The transcripts were then coded using the systematic coding method as defined by Bryman (2008). Bryman distinguishes three stages in analyzing transcribed interviews: open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

The first stage was open coding. During this stage the data was reduced by selecting, simplifying and transforming it. The selection of the most important sentences was done by reading the transcripts several times. For example personal information of the respondents was not selected. After the most important sentences were selected, these were placed under codes. The open coding leads to a diverse set of codes. These codes were primarily based on in-vivo codes (i.e. based on words used by the respondents). This stage was ended by checking whether all fragments were coded and no new codes could have been labeled to fragments. During the stage of axial coding the list of codes were placed in coding families. This process was about creating several categories based on the core elements from the interview (see Interview protocol). In the last stage connections were made between the main categories of codes. Three categories have been made: impact of the organizational change, behavior and attitude, and criteria that were used in the evaluation of the change.

3.5 Research quality indicators

Reliability

In qualitative research external reliability is a criterion that is hard to meet (Bryman, 2008). However, reliability was increased by a thick description of the steps that have been taken during the research. The interviews have been recorded and transcribed. The transcripts have been checked with the recordings, and when needed, corrected. The reliability of this study was hereby enhanced. Because the sensitivity of the questions during the interviews it was necessary to take some measures with regard to the interviews. The interviews took place in a separate room which...
guaranteed quietness so that the respondents felt to speak freely. All the interviews were introduced with a short explanation of the research and to the respondents was explained that anonymity was guaranteed. To create an open atmosphere some general questions were asked in the beginning of the interview. Gradually more difficult questions were asked.

Objectivity
The interviewer used an interview protocol (see APPENDIX 1) that supported him in asking the interview questions. This protocol contained of the following elements: short description of the research, purpose of the interviews, interview guide and a topic list. To ensure objectivity, a guideline (as described in the interview protocol) for all the interviews was followed. By using this protocol and the open ended interview questions from its topic list, it was less likely that suggestive questions were asked, and in turn less likely that respondents felt they were pushed in a certain direction. For example to avoid social desirable responding, the interviewer kept a certain distance to the interviewer (Bryman, 2008)

Validity
However external validity is difficult to assure in qualitative research (Bryman, 2008), the researcher enhanced external validity by described every step thoroughly, and documented all research data. In total 30 interviews have been held, of which 27 belong to the case. This may be a small sample in terms of external validity, but is a substantial sample to answer the research question and matches the explorative nature of this study. Conclusions in this research are drawn at the organizational level. The results of this study can be classified as assumptions and can be considered as an important step to be (statistically) testing them in multiple cases.
4. RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the interviews will be described. Tables will be used to present the results of the interviews. Citations of respondents will be used to clarify the results.

4.1 Results of experimental interviews

As mentioned in the foregoing chapter, first three experimental interviews were held. These interviews resulted in possible criteria employees use to evaluate an organizational change to which they are subjected. Later, these criteria were used as input for interviews for the actual research. To give an impression of the background of the experimental cases, each case will be introduced shortly.

Experimental interview 1 (E01)

In this case open work spaces have been introduced in an engineering firm to promote flexibility and openness, and create a more informal atmosphere. All employees had to move from a private office to an open work space. In the open work space employees can pick any workplace they want.

Experimental interview 2 (E02)

The second experimental interview was about a reorganization in a large book shop. As a consequence of a structural decrease of turnovers, one shop was closed, several employees were fired. Further, the internal structure of the organization was changed which led to the alteration of job descriptions.

Experimental interview 3 (E03)

The last case was about the introduction of a new ICT system in a rest home for elderly people. This new system was introduced to connect several other formal and informal systems. This new system should contain all patient information.
### Table 4.1 Criteria employees used to evaluate the organizational change from experimental interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Present in interviews</th>
<th>Count (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>“I had the idea that we had to report to my boss even more”.</td>
<td>E03</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It was like I was not allowed to take the decision (...) myself anymore”.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal benefits</td>
<td>“Obviously I was also afraid I had to do a lot of work in the same time”</td>
<td>E02, E03</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Gradually it became clear that the system made it less likely we would mix up things (...) and we could rely on the registrations we made”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>“(...) the manager should have asked us how to deal with certain things (...) at the end of the day we are the ones that make money for the company”</td>
<td>E02, E03</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We were only told how to use the registration tool (...)”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“They never asked us what necessary options we wanted to integrate into the system”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits organization</td>
<td>“(...) we suffer a lot from online book stores (...) of course I know that it made things easier (...)”</td>
<td>E02</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal working condition</td>
<td>“As a consequence I had to drag all my stuff and files with me”</td>
<td>E01</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I did not like the idea that I would spend my office hours in a room with 20 or so colleagues”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the change</td>
<td>“In the beginning I really could not make sense what changed and why we had to change everything (...) in my eyes things were going well (...)”</td>
<td>E01, E03</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“How do we have to accept the new system if management itself does not know how to work with it?&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Autonomy**

In one of the three interviews it became clear that autonomy played an important role in the acceptance of the organizational change. The respondent believed that the introduction of the new ICT system threatened her autonomy. For example she said: “I had the idea that we had to report to my boss even more”. In her eyes the ICT system was a new control system for management that hampered her in having control of situations for which she was responsible. Further, she said she
found it difficult to completely rely on the system, because in the old situation she simply wrote things in her own logbook that she carried with her during her shift. Now she has to process all information in the new ICT system.

**Personal benefits**
In two interviews the individuals indicated that the consequences of the change for their personal benefits affected their attitude toward that change. In one interview the respondent told he expected that he had to do more work in the same time: “Obviously I was also afraid I had to do a lot of work in the same time”. In the other interview the respondent explained that after a while she became more experienced with working with the system. She experienced that the registration of all patient related information had the advantage that it was less likely that mistakes would be made by her and her colleagues: “Gradually it became clear that the system made it less likely we would mix up things (...) and we could rely on the registrations we made”

**Participation**
From two interviews can be made up that respondents were frustrated that they were not involved in the change process. In one interview the respondent was angry because the manager interfered in operational work processes without he actually knew how things were done before the reorganization. The respondent expected that the change would have been more successful when the manager would have listened more to him: “(...) the manager should have asked us how to deal with certain things (...) at the end of the day we are the ones that make money for the company”. In the other case the respondent told that she was frustrated because the introduction of the new ICT system came very sudden and no employees were involved in the change process and the decision making concerning the change. She expected that it would have been easier for her if she would have been involved in the introduction: “They never asked us what necessary options we wanted to integrate into the system”

**Benefits for the organization**
In one interview the respondent declared that he understood that the change was necessary for the survival of the organization. This was a major reason why he ultimately accepted that the change had to be implemented. Next, he also said that the reorganization made some processes more efficient: “(...) we suffer a lot from online book stores (...) of course I know that it made things easier (...)”.
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Personal working conditions

One respondent explained that he found it hard to accept the fact that he had to give up his private office and had to move to an open work space. This would lead to several personal disadvantages. He did not like the idea that he had to carry all his documents and files with him: “As a consequence I had to drag all my stuff and files with me”. Further he said that he was very attached to his own workplace and hated the fact that he had to work with a lot of colleagues in one open workplace: “I did not like the idea that I would spend my office hours in a room with 20 or so colleagues”

Understanding the change

In two interviews it was clear that the respondents did not understand the organizational change. This lack of understanding affected the way the respondents experienced the change. One respondent said he did not understand why the change was implemented, and why it was implemented. Because he could not see the rationale of the change, and could not understand what had to change, he tried to avoid the situation: “In the beginning I really could not make sense what changed and why we had to change everything (...) in my eyes things were going well (...).” Another respondent reacted frustrated to the change initiative because management itself was not capable of working with the ICT system they implemented: “How do we have to accept the new system if management itself does not know how to work with it?”

4.2 Criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change

As already explained in paragraph 3.2, the possible criteria employees use to evaluate an organizational change by which they are confronted, are used as input for the interviews of the case that is researched. These criteria were added to the interview protocol (see APPENDIX I) and were specifically mentioned during the interviews to determine whether they play a role in the evaluation of the organizational change.

In this paragraph the results are described that are aimed at answering the first research question: *What criteria do employees use to evaluate an upcoming organizational change?*. A table will be presented that gives an overview of all criteria that were mentioned during the interviews (i.e. n=27). This table consists of the names of the criteria, the description of the criteria and examples of citations derived from the interview transcripts. APPENDIX II gives an overview of the criteria that are mentioned per respondent.
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#### Criteria Example Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal control</td>
<td>“We had to make an enormous switch (...) it gave me so many doubts (...) you could not control it anymore”</td>
<td>The personal control the individual believes to have after the change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction of colleagues</td>
<td>“For some colleagues it would become difficult”</td>
<td>The expectancy of reactions of colleagues the change will bring about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>“The idea that I had to do everything on my own was very frightening”</td>
<td>The autonomy the individual believes to have as a consequence of the change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change necessity</td>
<td>“Our way of working had to become more professional”</td>
<td>The belief the individual has about the necessity of the change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal benefits</td>
<td>“In the beginning it did not see why it would make it easier for me”</td>
<td>The personal benefits the individual thinks he or she will have as a consequence of the change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of change</td>
<td>“we were not prepared to the introduction (of the system) at all”</td>
<td>The way the change was prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers’ reactions</td>
<td>“We were concerned how clients would react (...)”</td>
<td>The reactions of customers’ the change will bring about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in process</td>
<td>“I had to do exactly what they ordered me to do”</td>
<td>The way the employee is involved in the change process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from management</td>
<td>“Management knew that we could make the change, their confidence encouraged us”</td>
<td>What support the individual believes to receive from management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from colleagues</td>
<td>“I knew I could always ask a close colleague”</td>
<td>The support from colleagues the individual thinks he or she will receive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>“Major changes bring rumors (...) you do not know where it ends”</td>
<td>To expected consequences of the change for the individuals’ job security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial consequences</td>
<td>“(...) I am a single mother, if something goes wrong with the salary payment (...)”</td>
<td>The expected personal financial consequences the change will bring about</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Criteria employees use to evaluate an organizational change (n=27)

**Personal control**

Respondents indicate that their attitude toward the change was influenced by the personal control they believed to have after the introduction of the change. Several respondents were unsure about what would change, and where doubtful about whether they would have control over the situation. Some other respondents indicated that they were well informed and were not expecting difficulties. These respondents expected to be in control of the change situation.
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Reaction of colleagues
Respondents indicated that reactions of colleagues played a role in their attitude toward the change. Mostly, they were concerned about negative reactions from colleagues on the change process. Respondents felt a certain fellowship with older colleagues which probably would experience difficulties with the introduction of the new ICT system.

Autonomy
Respondents expected that their autonomy would change as a result of the introduction of the new ICT system. The idea that the change—in terms of training and time investment—would make them more dependent on others, respondents found unpleasant in several cases. Other respondents liked the expectancy that the introduction of the new ICT system made them less dependent on others.

Change necessity
Respondents made clear that their belief of the necessity of the change influenced their attitude toward the change. Some respondents said they had no idea why management introduced a new ICT system, and as a result thought the change was unnecessary. Others said that they could understand that the organization made a switch.

Personal benefits
Respondents said that they expected that the change had implications for their personal benefits. Several respondents declared that they expected that the change would have some negative consequences for their personal situation, and therefore did not like the change. Other respondents indicated that they thought the change would have some personal benefits for them, which made them delighted.

Preparation of change
Respondents said that the way they were prepared to the change had an influence on their attitude toward the change. Some respondents declared that they were not prepared at all, and therefore had real concerns about how the change would end. On the other hand, there were also respondents that were satisfied with the way they were prepared for the change. These respondents said that their preparation made them feel confident and positive about the change.

Customer’s reactions
Respondents expected that the change would lead to reactions from some clients. As costumer service is a hot topic in the organization, employees were anxious for negative reactions from
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In several cases the expectancy of customers’ reactions influenced the respondents’ attitude toward the change.

Involvement in process
Respondents declared that the way they were involved in the change process, had some implications for their attitude toward the change. Several respondents said that they found they were not involved in the change process, and therefore were frustrated. Other respondents declared that they were not involved in the change process, but that was not an issue to them.

Support from management
Respondents indicated that the support from management had an effect on their attitude toward the change. Some respondents said they were happy for the fact they knew they could always ask for support from management. Other respondents said they initially received no support, and therefore were skeptical toward the change.

Support from colleagues
Respondents declared that the possibility to receive help and support from colleagues influenced their attitude toward the change. They said that they knew that when necessary, they could ask for help from colleagues that were close to them. This idea gave them a safe feeling about the change.

Job security
Respondents indicated that the expected consequences for their job security influenced the way they perceived the change. Several respondents said they were frightened about the fact that they did not have a contract for an indefinite period, and therefore expected the possibility that their contract would not be continued.

Financial consequences
Respondents declared that they expected consequences for their personal financial situation, and this in turn influenced their attitude toward the change. Several respondents said they were afraid of start-up problems with the new ICT system that would ultimately lead to problems with salary payments.
4.3 Hierarchical structuring of criteria

The second research question was: Are these criteria (i.e. employees use to evaluate an upcoming organizational change) hierarchically structured? It was not possible to answer this question. During the interviews, it appeared to be complex to unravel criteria employees use in the evaluation of the organizational change. Respondents found it very difficult to indicate which criteria where personally more important than others. We will further elaborate on this in the paragraph 5.3 in which the limitation of this research will be discussed.

4.4 Criteria varying for different types of employees

The fact that it was impossible to investigate whether criteria employees use in the evaluation of an upcoming organizational change are hierarchically structured, has some implications for the third research question: And if so, how does this structuring (of criteria employees use to evaluate an organizational change) vary for different types of employees. As it appeared to be impossible to investigate whether the criteria are hierarchically structured, it was not possible to investigate whether this structuring varies for different types of employees. However, it was still possible to investigate whether these criteria vary for different types of employees.

In the next two subparagraphs the results will be presented that aim at investigating whether criteria vary for different types of employees. In subparagraph 4.4.1 the criteria used by managers and operational employees will be compared. In subparagraph 4.4.2 the criteria used by employees of three different age classes will be compared.

4.4.1 Criteria for managers and operational employees

Below a table will be presented that gives an overview of the criteria that were mentioned by managers and operational employees. After that, all criteria are described and compared between the two groups (i.e. managers and operational employees).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Management level (N=7)</th>
<th>Operational level (N=20)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Present in interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal control</td>
<td>“I did not know what was going on (...) at a certain moment in time you cannot stop it anymore”</td>
<td>M01, M03, M04, M06, M07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“now we have one system (...) it is a complete package, very compact”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction of colleagues</td>
<td>“(...) a lot of older employees did not even have a computer (...)”</td>
<td>M02, M03, M04, M05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“of course there were employees that grumbled (...) that troubled me sometimes”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>“we had to do our best, but we did not know whether we were doing it right”</td>
<td>M01, M03, M05, M07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“(...) the independence was too big, I experienced it as a huge burden”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change necessity</td>
<td>“(...) it was obvious that all those piles of paper were unnecessary”</td>
<td>M01, M02, M03, M04, M05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“(...) after 6 or 7 months I saw why it was”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal benefits</strong></td>
<td>“I experienced the shorter communication lines and the ease of working with the system as an advantage”</td>
<td>M04</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Now I can simply do everything with the computer”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“(...) everything is within reach: your working hours, news facts (...) everything that is relevant”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I had no computer at home”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I had not even touched a computer before”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I was very skeptical, because I did not know what the reasoning was behind all that”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I found the information meeting very helpful”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation of change</strong></td>
<td>“we were not prepared to the introduction (of the system) at all”</td>
<td>M01, M02, M03, M06, M07</td>
<td>5 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“from one day to the other we had to work with the system (...) we never had training (...)”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I was very skeptical, because I did not know what the reasoning was behind all that”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I found the information meeting very helpful”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customers’ reactions</strong></td>
<td>“(...) you want to keep the customer satisfied”</td>
<td>M01, M03, M05, M07</td>
<td>4 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“the clients would be confronted with a lot of changes (...) eventually this had major consequences for our customer satisfaction”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We were concerned how clients would react (...)”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I expected that the clients would resist (...) they cannot control us anymore”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“(...) past changes had so many consequences for our clients that I expected that they would protest”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement in process</strong></td>
<td>“The people that developed the new system never worked with it in practice”</td>
<td>M01, M02, M03, M05, M06</td>
<td>5 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“the system was already developed before we were informed of the change”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“They never accept my advises (...) sometimes I think I would be a better manager than she is”</td>
<td>U5, U8, U9, U13, U14, U16, U17, U18</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I told my manager that she should pay more attention to train the older employees (...)”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support from management</strong></td>
<td>“The support from management was very helpful”</td>
<td>M01, M02, M03, M05, M06, M07</td>
<td>6 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Management knew that we could make the”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“In the initial phase I called my manager several times, it was a relieve that you knew you were not on your own”</td>
<td>U1, U3, U4, U6, U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12</td>
<td>16 (80%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding employee reactions to organizational change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Support from colleagues</th>
<th>Job security</th>
<th>Financial consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support from colleagues</td>
<td>“Now all relational managers work in the same office (...), it created some sort of fellowship”</td>
<td>M02, M03, M05, M07</td>
<td>M01, M02</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Knowing that your colleagues are within your reach was amazing (...)”</td>
<td>4 (57%)</td>
<td>1 (28%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>“(...) the idea that if you cannot comply with the change, your contract will not be continued came into my mind”</td>
<td>M01, M02</td>
<td>M01, M02, M03, M04, M05, M06, M07, M08, M09, M10, M11, M12, M13, M14, M15, M16, M17, M18, M19, M20</td>
<td>U1, U4, U6, U13, U16, U19, U07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I had a contract for an indefinite period, but what is it worth nowadays”</td>
<td>1 (28%)</td>
<td>10 (50%)</td>
<td>35 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial consequences</td>
<td>“(...) if the municipality cuts the budgets it might be that I lose my job”</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>U6, U7, U9, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, U18, U20</td>
<td>U1, U4, U6, U13, U16, U19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“(...) of course upfront you do not know how the change turns out (...)”</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“(...) I am a single mother, if something goes wrong with the salary payment (...)”</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 Criteria respondents from Management level and Operational Level

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change, their confidence encouraged us”
“Initially I felt no support from my manager (...) after I shared my concerns that changed luckily”
“(...) she told us that we could call any time we want”
“It would have been easier if I had received more help”
“(...) he told us that we could call any time we want”
“If you had a problem there was always a colleague around that could help you (...) I think that is why we are colleagues”
“I am still in contact with some colleagues I used to work with in the past (...), when it is necessary we help each other out”
“(...) the idea that if you cannot comply with the change, your contract will not be continued came into my mind”
“I had a contract for an indefinite period, but what is it worth nowadays”
“(...) if the municipality cuts the budgets it might be that I lose my job”
“(...) of course upfront you do not know how the change turns out (...)”
“(...) I am a single mother, if something goes wrong with the salary payment (...)”
Personal control

Both employees from the management level, as employees from the operational level indicate personal control as an influential factor in the organizational change process. Respondents from both groups said they were concerned about the fact that they would face uncertainties during the change process. They were especially concerned about the possibility of losing grip during the process. The majority of these employees were skeptical about the change process. One respondent even indicated that the upcoming change had dramatic effects on her personal situation: “We had to make an enormous switch (...) it gave me so many doubts (...) you could not control it anymore”. Some respondents indicated that they thought they had a good idea of what would change in the future, and as a result they did not expect issues: “When they told us the system would change, I saw that it would become easier”.

Reaction of colleagues

A small majority of managers said their attitude was affected by reactions of colleagues. They expected that the changes would have some major consequences for domestic support workers, especially the older ones, since they would have to learn to work with a computer. Two managers said they were frustrated by reactions of some domestic support workers. For example: “of course there were employees that grumbled (...) that troubled me sometimes”.

A slightly smaller part of the operational employees indicated that their attitude toward the change was influenced by colleagues. They for example declared that they saw colleagues that were panicking during the information meetings they attended: “I felt bad that some colleagues were really desperate”. It has to be noted that several operational employees said they not even experienced reactions of colleagues, because they hardly meet colleagues.

Autonomy

A small majority of managers declared that they expected that their autonomy or dependence would change, and this affected their feelings toward the change. A remarkable fact is that they were mainly focused on the change process itself. They for example declared that they thought they would be more dependent on colleagues or other support to learn how to work with the new system: “(...) the independence was too big, I experienced it as a huge burden”.

The operational employees declared that they saw several advantages of the new ICT system.
would make them less dependent on their manager, as they could do more work on their own. Most of these respondents said they liked the idea that they did not have to visit the office anymore, as they could send their pay slips digitally: “I liked the idea I did not have to come to the office every week to hand in the pay slips”.

### Change necessity

A majority of the managers said that the necessity to change played a role in how they experienced the change. Most of the managers knew that it was necessary that something had to be changed. They primarily mentioned the fact that the new financing structure of the domestic support industry had huge consequences for their organization, and that the changes were needed to become more efficient: “(…) it was obvious that all those piles of paper were unnecessary”. One manager said that she did not saw the rationale of the change. To her, this was an obstacle in the acceptance of the change: “(…) after 6 or 7 months I saw why it was necessary we had to change (…) but first I did not (…)”.

A much smaller part of the operational employees, compared to the managers, declared that the change necessity influenced their attitude toward the change. A substantial amount of respondents said they knew that there were some changes in the domestic support industry, but did not see the relationship between these changes and the changes that would be implemented in their organization.

The respondents that stated that the necessity to change played a role in how they experienced the change, mainly said that they thought the former way of working was out of date: “The way we used to work before, with all the paper work, was really old fashioned”.

### Personal benefits

A small part of the managers stated that the expected effects of the change for the personal benefits influenced their attitude toward the change. In several interviews managers said they were mainly concerned that the system would work successful. They did not directly relate this to whether this would have personal advantages to them.

A very large part of the operational employees stated that the possible consequences of the change for their personal situation influenced their attitude toward the change. Some of the respondents expected that the introduction of the new system would make it easier to do all the “paperwork”.
Others were less positive because they needed to buy a computer in order to work with the new system. Another unpopular option was to regularly visit the office to process all the data with the use of an available computer. Several respondents explained why they thought it was important what consequences the change would have for their personal situation. They said that because of changes in the past they felt no commitment with the organization anymore, and therefore they thought their personal interests come first.

**Preparation of change**

The preparation and introduction of the change influenced the attitude of a large part of the managers, as well as a large part of the operational employees. The managers stated that they were hardly prepared to the introduction of the new system. They felt they were forced to work with the system which led to reluctant and reserved attitudes: “from one day to the other we had to work with the system (...) we never had training (…)”.

The majority of the operational employees –except for a few- stated that they were well prepared to the introduction of the system. They said they could always ask for help, and even could visit additional meetings. Therefore the majority of the operational employees did not expect significant problems.

**Customer’s reactions**

A majority of the managers indicated that the expectancy of certain reactions of clients influenced their attitude toward the change. These managers said that they knew that the change would bring along some problems that could affect clients. Because customer service is an important aspect of the work of the managers, they were concerned that the change would bring problems they could not control.

A slightly smaller amount of the operational employees said that the implications the change had for the clients, affected their attitude toward the change. Several employees said that they expected that the fact that clients would not have any hard copy documents anymore, would be a big issue for the clients: “I expected that the clients would resist (...) they cannot control us anymore”. Other respondents said that however they did not expect that this change would have major consequences for the clients, they thought that clients would protest to the announcement of the change, because they were already confronted with several other changes in the past: “(...) past changes had so many consequences for our clients that I expected that they would protest”
Involvement in process

A majority of the managers said that the way they were involved in the change process had some implications for their attitude toward the change. A much heard reaction from the managers was that they were not involved in the development of the new ICT system. They found it strange that it was developed by technicians that did not have to work with it in practice: “The people that developed the new system never worked with it in practice”. Some managers were even angry for the fact that they were not involved in the development and implementation of the system. Another issue that was mentioned by the managers was that they were not able to practice before the system went live.

The operational employees were less bothered by the fact that they were not involved in the change process. Some respondents even reacted surprised when they were asked whether the way they were involved in the process had an influence on their attitude toward the change. One respondent answered: “I do not understand why we should be involved in those things”. Another respondent explained her dissatisfaction for the fact that her manager never listens to her: “They never accept my advises (...) sometimes I think I would be a better manager than she is”.

Support from management

A vast majority of the managers declared that the support and confidence they received from senior management played a role in the way they experienced the change process. However, several managers disliked the abrupt way of introducing the system, almost all managers said they were satisfied with the support from senior management. This encouraged them to bring the change to a successful end. Two managers said that they initially received no attention from senior management. After a while, this changed and proved to be essential in “to survive” the change.

A large part of the operational employees claimed that the support from management influenced their attitude toward the change. Some respondents said that it was not always necessary to ask for help, but the idea that “we could call any time we want” was a relieve. One operational employee stated: “It would have been easier if I had received more help”.

Support from colleagues

A small majority of the managers said that the support from colleagues influenced the way they saw the change. It must be said that these managers noted that -as a result of a previous change- all managers were located in the same office. In their own words “it created some sort of fellowship” to
A small part of the operational employees indicated that the support from colleagues affected their attitude toward the change. Several respondents said they still had contact with colleagues they used to work with in the past, when the organization still had several regional offices. Other respondents said that they did not have contact with colleagues, therefore it could not be possible that colleagues supported each other.

**Job security**

A small minority of the managers said that they thought the change could have consequences for their job. By the time the change was announced, one manager did not have a contract for an indefinite period. She said she had the idea that if she could not comply with the change, her contract might not be continued: “(...) the idea that if you cannot comply with the change, your contract will not be continued came into my mind”. Another manager stated that the changes the organization had gone trough in the past, made her think that it might be the case that her contract could be cancelled: “I had a contract for an indefinite period, but what is it worth nowadays”.

Half of the operational employees stated that they thought the change could have consequences for their job. In several of these cases the respondents said that this feeling was the result of this change in combination with changes the organization had gone through in the recent past. One respondent said: “(...) of course upfront you do not know how the change turns out (...)”

**Financial consequences**

No manager indicated that he or she thought the change would have personal financial consequences.

A small minority of the operational employees declared that they thought that the introduction of the organizational change could have personal financial consequences. In all cases this concern was because the respondents felt that he introduction of the new system would bring problems forth to their salary payment, either because of their own fault, or because of system errors. One respondent said: “(...) I am a single mother, is something goes wrong with the salary payment (...)”.
4.4.2 Criteria for employees from age classes 20-34, 35-49 and 50-64

Below a table will be presented that gives an overview of the criteria that were mentioned by employees of three age classes. After that, all criteria are described and compared between the three age classes (i.e. 20-34, 35-49 and 50-64).
### Understanding employee reactions to organizational change

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#### Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Present in interview</th>
<th>Count (%)</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Present in interview</th>
<th>Count (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age 20-34 (N=6)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal control</td>
<td>“It would become a challenge (…) what would change, how we had to do things”</td>
<td>M01, U2, U3, U4, U5</td>
<td>5 (83%)</td>
<td>“For me it was important that I knew what I had to do, and how to do it”</td>
<td>M03, U6, U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15</td>
<td>11 (92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction of colleagues</td>
<td>“We barely meet each other, but I know that there were colleagues that felt very insecure”</td>
<td>U5</td>
<td>1 (16%)</td>
<td>“After the training we still had the idea we did not know how to do things”</td>
<td>M02, M03, U8, U13</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>“(…) we had to spend a lot of time in training and practicing”</td>
<td>M01, U4, U5</td>
<td>3 (50%)</td>
<td>“The fact that I did not have to call the office for small things was a major advantage”</td>
<td>M03, U6, U7, U8, U9, U11, U12, U14, U15</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change necessity</td>
<td>“(…) it was obvious all the piles of paper were unnecessary”</td>
<td>M01, U5</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
<td>“I did not quite get it why we had to change”</td>
<td>M02, M03, U8, U15</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal benefits</td>
<td>“I often work on my computer (…) I saved a lot of time because I did not have to come to the office so much”</td>
<td>U1, U2, U4</td>
<td>3 (50%)</td>
<td>“I was curious what the change would mean for me”</td>
<td>U6, U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>“The information we”</td>
<td>M01, U2, U3</td>
<td>5 (83%)</td>
<td>“Step-by-step”</td>
<td>M02, M03, U6</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age 35-49 (N=12)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age 50-64 (N=9)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal control</td>
<td>“I was most afraid whether I could do what they asked (…)”</td>
<td>M04, M06, M07, U16, U17, U18, U19</td>
<td>7 (78%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction of colleagues</td>
<td>“We heard that there would come some changes (…) colleagues where grumbling”</td>
<td>M04, M05, U16, U17, U19</td>
<td>5 (56%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>“I was a bit reserved whether I would really save time”</td>
<td>M05, M06, U16, U17, U18, U19</td>
<td>5 (67%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change necessity</td>
<td>“Why should we change when things are going according to plan?”</td>
<td>M04, M05, U18</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal benefits</td>
<td>“They knew we (older employees) are from another generation (…) not used to work with computers”</td>
<td>M04, U16, U17, U18, U19, U20</td>
<td>6 (67%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>“It did not quite get it”</td>
<td>M06, M07, U16, U17, U18</td>
<td>6 (67%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding employee reactions to organizational change

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>of change</th>
<th>received was clear (…) everything went well&quot;.</th>
<th>U4, U5</th>
<th>everything was explained to us”</th>
<th>U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U14</th>
<th>what the change would bring about”</th>
<th>U17, U19, U20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customers’ reactions</td>
<td>“Major shift like these always bring troubles (…) we expected complaints from clients”</td>
<td>M01, U5 2 (33%)</td>
<td>“The new digital client service is nonsense (…) my clients never worked with a computer before”</td>
<td>M03, U7, U9, U13 4 (33%)</td>
<td>“You have to understand that my clients are mostly elderly people”</td>
<td>M05, M07, U16, U17, U20 5 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in process</td>
<td>“They could have involved us more in the implementation”</td>
<td>M01, U5 2 (33%)</td>
<td>“How do you mean involved? (…) we just had to do it”</td>
<td>M02, M03, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13 6 (50%)</td>
<td>“Everything was already determined”</td>
<td>M05, M06, U16, U17, U18 5 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from management</td>
<td>“I have close contact with my supervisor (…) I know how to reach her”</td>
<td>M01, U1, U3, U4 4 (66%)</td>
<td>“They explained everything in detail (…) you could visit additional meetings”</td>
<td>M02, M03, U6, U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13 10 (83%)</td>
<td>“They told us that we could call any time we needed”</td>
<td>M05, M06, U17, U18, U19, U20 8 (89%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from colleagues</td>
<td>“It was easy to ask a colleague for help”</td>
<td>U5 1 (16%)</td>
<td>“Everyone works the same way (…) in case of sickness a colleague can take over easily”</td>
<td>M02, M03, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13 5 (42%)</td>
<td>“We met several times and tried to work it out”</td>
<td>M05, M07, U16, U17, U18, U19, U20, U21 4 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>“(…) the idea that if you cannot comply with the change, your contract will not be continued came into my mind”</td>
<td>M01 1 (16%)</td>
<td>“Major changes bring rumors (…) you do not know where it ends”</td>
<td>U6, U7, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15 6 (50%)</td>
<td>“I am already 61 years old (…) it comes to your mind that they want to get rid of you”</td>
<td>M06, U16, U17, U18, U20 5 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial consequences</td>
<td>“(…) I was concerned that things could go wrong (…) as long as I”</td>
<td>U1, U4 2 (33%)</td>
<td>“A lot of things went wrong (…) as long as I”</td>
<td>U6, U13 2 (17%)</td>
<td>“With a single click everything could be”</td>
<td>U16, U19, U20 2 (22%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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| wrong with salary payments” | get paid at the end of the month” | deleted (...) maybe they could not pay me anymore” |

Table 4.4 Criteria Age classes 20-43, 35-49 and 50-64
Personal control
In all three age classes, a relatively large part of respondents reported that the way they thought to be able to keep control of the situation, influenced their attitude toward the change. Respondents from the three age classes more or less gave a same reasoning. Respondents reported that they were concerned that the uncertainties they would face during the change would lead to losing grip of the change. Also, respondents from all three age classes said that upfront they already had a good idea of how the change would work out, and what would be expected from them. These individuals therefore expected no problems.

Reaction of colleagues
Only one respondent from the youngest age class said that her attitude toward the change was influenced by reactions of colleagues. She said she already helped a colleague in the past with some issues, and she was concerned about the way this colleague would manage to keep up with the change. Other respondents from the youngest age class said they hardly meet colleagues, and therefore did not know how colleagues would deal with the changes.

Most of these respondents of the middle and the oldest age class have a long history of working for the organization. These individuals said that in the past they used to meet colleagues on a daily basis. But since the local offices were closed, they only meet in their own time. Because of their social relationship these respondents often chat about work related issues. They said that when the change was announced, the reactions of colleagues sometimes made them nervous. One respondent for example said: “We heard that there would come some changes (…) colleagues where grumbling”.

Autonomy
Respondents from all three age classes said that the consequences they expected the change would have for their autonomy, played a role in how they reacted to the change. Respondents aimed both at their autonomy during the change process, as well as their autonomy after the change was completed. Respondents that thought they would become more dependent upon colleagues or other support mentioned things like: “(…) we had to spend a lot of time in training and practicing”. In these cases they disliked the fact that they would become more dependent. Other respondents thought that their autonomy would be less after the introduction of the new ICT system: “The fact that I did not have to call the office for small things was a major advantage”. In these cases they liked the fact that they would be less dependent.
Change necessity

In all three age classes, a small part of the respondents said that the necessity to change played a role in how they experienced the change. As already explained in paragraph 4.3.4 these respondents mostly belong to the managerial level. Because these managers are more or less equally spread over the three age classes, this shows no remarkable results in the comparison between different age classes.

Personal benefits

Respondents from all three age classes declared that what consequences the change would bring for their personal benefits, influenced their attitude toward the change. Respondents in all three age classes have both positive, as well as negative attitudes toward the change, depending on their expectancy of what the change will bring for their personal benefits. Respondents that declared that they would expect that the change would be personally beneficial to them, appeared to have a positive attitude toward the change: “I often work on my computer (…) I saved a lot of time because I did not have to come to the office so much”. Respondents that declared that they would expect that the change bring personal disadvantages, appeared to have a negative attitude toward the change: “They knew we (older employees) are from another generation (…) not used to work with computers”. Remarkably enough though, a lot more respondents from the middle age group indicated that what consequences the change would bring for their personal benefits, influenced their attitude toward the change. In interviews no explanation was found for this fact.

Preparation of change

In all three age classes, a relatively high amount of respondents indicated that the way they were prepared to the change influenced their attitude toward the change. Respondents from all three age classes had both positive as well as negative attitudes toward the change, depending on whether they believed they were prepared enough. Respondents that said to be well prepared for the change had positive feelings about the change: “The information we received was clear (…) everything went well”. Respondents that said to be prepared insufficiently, had negative attitudes toward the change: “It did not quite get it what the change would bring about”

Customer’s reactions

In both the youngest and middle age class, a relatively small part of respondents indicated that the reactions from customers they expected, influenced their attitude toward the change. A relatively
higher amount of respondents from the highest age class, indicated that the reactions from customers they expected, influenced their attitude toward the change. These respondents said they often had a longer history of working for the organization, and therefore have a stronger relationship with their customers. Overall, respondents expected that the change had some consequences for the customers, and this would lead to negative reactions from customers. The expected negative consequences affected their feelings toward the change: “Major shift like these always bring troubles (...) we expected complaints from clients”

**Involvement in process**

Compared to the middle and highest age class, a relatively smaller part of respondents from the youngest age class indicated that their attitude toward the change was influenced by the way they were involved in the change process. Respondents from the youngest age class appeared to have less negative attitudes toward the change than respondents from the middle and higher age classes. Respondents from the middle and highest age class often indicated they were frustrated because they thought they could have been involved more in the change process: “How do you mean involved? (...) we just had to do it”

**Support from management**

In all three age classes, a relatively large part of respondents reported that the way they thought to be supported by management, influenced their attitude toward the change. Almost all respondents indicated that they thought they could always rely on their manager if necessary. Respondents explained this by stating that they had close contact with their manager, and knew they could ask for help: “I have close contact with my supervisor (...) I know how to reach her”

**Support from colleagues**

Compared to the middle and highest age class, a relatively smaller part of respondents from the youngest age class indicated that their attitude toward the change was influenced by the way they expected to be supported by colleagues. Respondents from the youngest age class indicated that they hardly meet colleagues and therefore did not expect to be supported by colleagues. In most cases, respondents from the middle and highest age class have a long history of working for the organization. These respondents are still in contact with colleagues they used to work in the past when there were still regional offices. They indicated that they expected to be supported by their former colleagues when it would become necessary: “We met several times and tried to work it out”.
Job security

Compared to the middle and highest age class, a relatively smaller part of respondents from the youngest age class indicated that their attitude toward the change was influenced by the way they expected their job would be secured. Almost all respondents from the youngest age class said they were not concerned about the possibility they would lose their job as a consequence of the change. One respondent said she thought she could always work for a competing company: “I could always switch to one of the competitors (...) the job has to be done (...) whatever company it takes care of it”.

Respondents from the middle and highest age class said to be concerned about their job security, especially because they were older than their younger colleagues: “I am already 61 years old (...) it comes to your mind that they want to get rid of you”.

Financial consequences

In all three age classes, a relatively small part of respondents reported that the personal financial consequences they expected, influenced their attitude toward the change. All respondents more or less gave the same argumentation. They expected that the introduction of the new system could have some consequences for salary payments: “With a single click everything could be deleted (...) maybe they could not pay me anymore”.

In this chapter the results that have been presented in the foregoing chapter will be discussed. Further, the limitations of this study will be discussed, followed by the recommendations for future research. Finally a conclusion will be given.

5.1 Discussion of findings

5.1.1 Criteria employees use to evaluate an organizational change

This study contributes to the research field of organizational change in the following way. Past research does not give a clear answer to the question what the actual nature is of attitude toward organizational change. The fact that the understanding about the nature of attitude toward organizational change made limited progress in the past decades is argued to be partial because of a number of issues concerning our understanding of employee reactions to change (Clegg & Walsh, 2004) and the interchangeable use of concepts. This research tried to force the ongoing debate about the understanding of employee reactions to change, by integrating definitions and constructs from the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This model tells us that change recipients hold certain beliefs (i.e. behavioral, normative and control beliefs). These beliefs are ‘valued’ by the change recipient. This evaluation results in the attitude, subjective norm and the perceived behavioral control, which in turn lead to the intentional behavior: the relative strength of intention of the change recipient to comply with the organizational change.

Below, the criteria -by which employees ‘value’ their beliefs – which are derived from the interviews, will be discussed. This was done by making a clear distinction between beliefs, criteria, and the result of this evaluation.

Personal control

From the interviews can be made up, that employees can argue in two ways concerning their personal control. First, some employees had a believe that their personal control would decrease after the change. These employees said they did not appreciate the expectancy that their personal control would decrease, which can be indicated by their skeptical and reluctant reactions. For them - the believe their personal control will decrease- is negatively valued, leading to a negative attitude toward the change.

Secondly, there were also employees that believed they would still have control of their personal...
situation. For these employees can be said, that they were in favor of the believe to be in control. For these employees -the believe they would be in control of their personal situation after the change- is valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change. Considering the behavioral implication of this criterion, it can be seen as a behavioral belief, in combination with the subjective values of the expected outcomes, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

Reaction of colleagues

From the interviews can be made up that employees were influenced by reactions of colleagues. In all these cases the reactions were negative. It can be said that these negative believes of colleagues, were valued negatively, leading to a negative attitude toward the change of the focal employee. Although during the interviews only negative reactions of colleagues were mentioned, it can be assumed that there are also reactions of colleagues that will be valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change of the focal employee. This can be seen as a normative belief –in combination with the employees’ motivation to comply with his or her significant others (i.e. colleagues), as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

Autonomy

From the interviews became clear that employees can argue in two ways concerning their autonomy. First, some employees had a believe that their autonomy would decrease after the change, because they would become more dependent on for example colleagues. These employees said they did not like the expectancy that their autonomy would decrease, pointed out by their negative reactions. For these employees -the believe their autonomy will decrease- is negatively valued, leading to a negative attitude toward the change. It is clear, that in case the employee believes his autonomy will increase, is a situation that will be valued negative. This counts for individuals who do not like autonomy in their work.

Secondly, there were also employees that believed their autonomy would increase. For these employees can be said, that they were in favor of the believe their autonomy would increase. For these employees -the believe their autonomy would increase after the change- is valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change. It must be said, that it is also possible, that an increase of autonomy can be valued negatively. Considering the behavioral implication of this criterion, it can be seen as a behavioral belief, in combination with the subjective values of the expected outcomes, as it is known in the TPB model.
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Change necessity
From the interviews it became clear, that employees can argue in two ways concerning the necessity of the change. First, some employees had a believe that the change was not necessary. These employees said they did not like the change, pointed out by their negative reactions. For these employees -the believe that the change was not necessary- is negatively valued, leading to a negative attitude toward the change.

Secondly, there were also employees that believed that the change was necessary. For these employees can be said, that they were in favor of the change. For these employees -the believe that the change was necessary- is valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change.

This can be seen as a control belief –in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

Personal benefits
From the interviews became clear that employees can argue in two ways concerning the personal benefits of the change. First, some employees had a believe that the change would lead to less personal benefits. These employees said they did not like the change, pointed out by their negative reactions. For these employees -the believe that the change would lead to less personal benefits- is negatively valued, leading to a negative attitude toward the change.

Secondly, there were also employees that believed that the change would lead to more personal benefits. For these employees can be said, that they were in favor of the change.

For these employees -the believe that the change would lead to more personal benefits - is valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change.

This can be seen as a control belief –in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

Preparation of the change
From the interviews it became clear that employees can argue in two ways concerning the preparation of the change. First, some employees had a believe that they were insufficiently prepared for the change. These employees said they did not like the change, pointed out by their negative reactions. For these employees -the believe that they were insufficiently prepared for the change- is negatively valued, leading to a negative attitude toward the change.
Secondly, there were also employees that believed that they were well prepared for the change. For these employees can be said, that they were in favor of the change. For these employees - the believe that they were well prepared for the change - is valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change. This can be seen as a control belief –in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

**Customers’ reactions**

From the interviews can be made up that employees were influenced by the expectancy of reactions from customers. In all these cases the employees expected negative reactions. It can be said that the expectancy of negative reactions of costumers, was valued negatively, leading to a negative attitude toward the change. Although during the interviews only expectancies of negative reactions were mentioned, it can be assumed that the potential expectancy of positive customers’ reactions will be valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change. This can be seen as a normative belief –in combination with the employees’ motivation to comply with his or her significant others (i.e. colleagues), as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

**Involvement in process**

From the interviews it became clear that employees can argue in two ways concerning their involvement in the change process. First, some employees had a believe that they were insufficiently involved in the process. These employees said they did not like the change, pointed out by their negative reactions. For these employees - the believe that they were insufficiently involved in the process- is negatively valued, leading to a negative attitude toward the change. It is clear, that in case the employee believes his involvement in the process was sufficient, is a situation that will be valued negative. This counts for individuals who do not like to be involved in the change process. Secondly, there were also employees that believed that they were sufficiently involved in the process. For these employees can be said, that they were in favor of the change. For these employees -the believe that they were sufficiently involved in the process - is valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change. This can be seen as a control belief –in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).
Support from management
From the interviews can be made up that employees were influenced by the expectancy of support from management. In all these cases the employees expected they could rely on support from management when necessary. It can be said that the expectancy of receiving support from management, was valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change.
Although during the interviews only was mentioned that employees expected they could rely on support from management, it can be assumed that expectancies that employees could not rely on support from management, will be valued negatively, leading to a negative attitude toward the change.
This can be seen as a control belief – in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

Support from colleagues
From the interviews can be made up that employees were influenced by the expectancy of support from colleagues. In all cases the employees expected they could rely on support from colleagues when necessary. It can be said that the expectancy of receiving support from colleagues, was valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change.
Although during the interviews only was mentioned that employees expected they could rely on support from colleagues, it can be assumed that expectancies that employees could not rely on support from colleagues, will be valued negatively, leading to a negative attitude toward the change.
This can be seen as a control belief – in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

Job security
From the interviews can be made up that employees were influenced by the expectancy that the change had consequences for their job security. It can be said that the expectancy that the change would have negative consequences for their job security, was valued negatively, leading to a negative attitude toward the change.
This can be seen as a control belief – in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

Financial consequences
From the interviews can be made up that employees were influenced by the expectancy that the
change had personal financial consequences. It can be said that the expectancy that the change would have negative consequences for their personal financial situation, was valued negatively, leading to a negative attitude toward the change. Although during the interviews only was mentioned that employees expected the change would have negative consequences for their personal financial situation, it can be assumed that expectancies of positive personal financial consequences, will be valued positively, leading to a positive attitude toward the change. This can be seen as a control belief—in combination with the perceived power of the control factor, as it is known in the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991).

**Criteria in relation to findings in research on organizational change**

Past research gave us limited insights about employee reactions toward organizational change. According to Bernerth (2004) and Smith (2005), resistance to change is caused by fear, uncertainty, the absence or the lack of information, and the influence of management. Our research sheds light on the evaluative process of change recipients. The elicited criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change, can explain reactions like fear and uncertainty (amongst others) as they were mentioned several times during the interviews. The current research reveals that support from management and the preparation of the change are criteria employees use in the evaluation of the change. This gives us a reason to believe that Bernerth (2004) and Smiths’ (2005) findings about the absence or the lack of information, and the influence of management play a role in whether employees resist change.

Furthermore, commitment to change is believed to be dependent on the way the change is communicated (Armenakis et al., 2007). Communication might be interpreted as one of the aspects of the preparation of the change. Our research may prove that the preparation of the change can influence the attitude of the change recipient, and so, may confirm the findings of Armenakis (et al., 2007).

Yet, no research in the field of organizational change was focused on change recipients’ attitude and behavior in general (Bouckenooghe, 2010). So far, research was only focused on either the positive focus of change (e.g. commitment to change), or the negative focus of change (e.g. resistance to change). This research adds important insights to the research field of organizational change, as is unraveled several criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change, leading to attitude and behavior in general, and not per se to resistance to change or commitment to change.
5.1.2 Criteria varying for different types of employees

As already mentioned, it was not possible to investigate whether criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change are hierarchically structured. However, it was possible to investigate whether these criteria vary for different types of employees. It could also be noticeable that some outcomes do not vary. In that way, we interpreted every outcome to find surprising outcomes. It has to be noticed that we did not use strict measures for significance in comparing results.

As has become clear, we investigated criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change, for job level (i.e. operational vs. management) and age (i.e. classes: 20-34, 35-49 and 50-64). These findings show some surprising outcomes.

Job level and change necessity

It appeared that operational employees only in a few cases were focused on the change necessity. In several cases, operational employees were surprised about the relationship between the organizational change and the change of the financial structure of the domestic support industry. However, this relationship was mentioned several times by managers. A potential explanation of this fact is that managers have the responsibility for control, coordination, the achievement of organizational goals and productivity. Therefore we assume the following:

*Assumption 1: In the evaluation of an organizational change, managers use the criterion change necessity more often than operational employees.*

Job level and personal benefits

Personal benefits are far more mentioned by operational employees than by managers. In multiple cases it appeared that the change had a larger perceived impact on the operational processes. Furthermore, managers appeared to be more focused on the quality outcomes of the change, compared to operational employees. We expect that the operational employees do not make the conclusion that the changes in ‘overhead’ has an immediate impact on the quality of their work. As the organization of overhead is one of the main tasks of the manager, they are highly involved in such matters. As a result, managers tend to prioritize personal benefits as less important than
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operational employees do.

Assumption 2: In the evaluation of an organizational change, operational employees use the criterion personal benefits more often than managers.

Job level and involvement in process

Involvement in process is relatively more mentioned by managers, than by operational employees. It appeared to be, that operational employees were less bothered by the fact that they were hardly involved in the change process. On the other hand, managers and operational employees (i.e. but managers more than operational employees) often said they found it strange that they were not involved in the change process. The fact that involvement in process is relatively more mentioned by managers, than operational employees, can be explained by the fact that managers are responsible for control, coordination, the achievement of organizational goals and productivity, and the execution of change processes.

Assumption 3: In the evaluation of an organizational change, managers use the criterion involvement in the change process more often than operational employees.

Age and reaction of colleagues

It appeared to be, that older employees more often mentioned reactions of colleagues as a criterion, compared to younger employees. In this organization, younger employees rarely met colleagues. Older employees often have a long history of working for the organization, and therefore still have close contact with (former) colleagues they used to meet on a regular basis when there were still regional offices. This could be an explanation for the fact that younger employees, less often mentioned reaction of colleagues as a criterion in the evaluation of an organizational change.

Assumption 4: In the evaluation of an organizational change, older employees use the criterion reaction of colleagues more often than younger employees.
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Age and support from colleagues

It appeared to be, that older employees more often mentioned support from colleagues as a criterion, compared to younger employees. In this organization, younger employees rarely met colleagues. Older employees often have a long history of working for the organization, and therefore still have close contact with colleagues they used to meet on a regular basis when there were still regional offices. This could be an explanation for the fact that younger employees, less often mentioned support from colleagues as a criterion in the evaluation of an organizational change.

Assumption 5: In the evaluation of an organizational change, older employees use the criterion support from colleagues more often than younger employees.

Age and personal benefits

We have no explanation for the fact that employees from the age class 35-49 used the criterion personal benefits more than employees from both the age class 20-34, and the age class 50-64.

Assumption 6: Middle aged employees more often mention personal benefits as criterion in the evaluation of an organizational change, than younger and older employees.

Age and job security

It appeared to be, that older employees compared to younger employees, more often mentioned the criterion job security. A possible explanation could be that the consequences of unemployment are bigger for older employees, than for younger employees. Compared to older employees, younger employees are more flexible, and will face fewer difficulties finding a new job.

Assumption 7: In the evaluation of an organizational change, older employees -compared to younger employees- more often use the criterion job security.

5.1.3 Criteria varying for employees with different personal traits

As described in the previous paragraph, job level and age only partly explain why employees use different criteria in the evaluation of an organizational change. During the interviews, we received several indications that personality traits might explain why individuals use different criteria. In one of the interviews, a respondent explained her attitude toward the organizational change. This
respondent said that she was very strict in reporting her work (e.g. planning her work and the administration of her working hours), and as a result of the introduction of the new ICT system she became completely disoriented. She stated: “I completely lost overview over what work I had done (...) and what work I had to do. Even one of my clients complained because she did not have any control over my working hours”. This respondent said that she was scared of losing control over the situation. It seemed to be an incident, but was very illustrative for her personality. She can be interpreted as an individual with a high level of conscientiousness. This and other examples brought us to the suggestion that personality traits were involved. It is indicated that the approach of research of varying criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change, is more appropriate from personality theory. In this context, we aim at the personality theory of the Big Five (Matthews et al., 2003). The Big Five factors aim at the personality, which can be described along five broad domains or dimensions of personality. These five factors are: agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, openness and neuroticism (Matthews et al., 2003). It can be assumed, that an individuals’ score on the five factors of the Big Five, determine the criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change to which he or she is subjected.

5.2 Limitations

This research was limited in several ways. The first limitation of which to mention is that we gathered data from one single case, and used a small sample size. Only researching one case, might lead to findings that are dependent of contextual factors (e.g. specific organizational characteristics). The sample size we used in this research (i.e. n=27) is appropriate for the exploratory nature of this research. But, both limit the possibility to generalize the outcomes of this research to a bigger population of employees.

Secondly, as was noticed in the foregoing chapters, it appeared to be impossible to give an answer to the research question: Are these criteria (employees use to evaluate an upcoming organizational change) hierarchically structured? And if so, how does this structuring vary for different types of employees?. It proved to be impossible to answer these questions, because the interview has some technical and practical limitations. For respondents, it was very hard to formulate the criteria they used in the evaluation of an upcoming organizational change. However we used a semi-structured interview, we had to use many additional questions to come to an answer. Next to that, in many
cases we had to specifically mention potential criteria, to determine their relevance. To investigate the hierarchical structuring of criteria, we need at least one additional interview per respondent. Although, it might be very complex to make the respondent aware of his or her hierarchical structuring of criteria.

In this research only two men could be interviewed. It would be better, if the amount of women and men that were interviewed were more or less equal. At this moment, we have no indications that gender influences the use of certain criteria employees use in the evaluation of an upcoming organizational change.

Further, from interviews it became clear that the criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change, can change over time. For example, respondents mentioned that they initially had the believe their job security would decrease as a consequence of the change. After a certain period of time, the respondents realized that the change would have no consequences for their job security. It can be assumed that the use of criteria can change over time. There are several possible explanations to mention. For example, in case an individuals’ personal interests are at stake, he or she will apply criteria to his or her personal situation. At the other hand, we made a relationship between the criteria employees use, and the personality traits of the Big Five. According to personality theory, after a certain age personality is less susceptible to change (Matthews et al., 2003). However both explanations appear to be evident, this leads us to the conclusion that there is a fundamental discrepancy. In our research, we had no opportunity to give a definite answer to this issue.

5.3 Implications for future research

This research reveals some interesting implications for future research. In our research, we had the opportunity to interview only two men. We have no reason to believe that gender has an effect on the criteria employees use. Albeit, future research should examine whether gender has an influence on the criteria employees use in the evaluation of an upcoming organizational change.

Considering the fact that this research was executed in only a single case, learns us that the criteria that have been elicited, could depend on contextual factors. For example, in case an organizational change is implemented in a highly structured and bureaucratic organization in which employees use
to work according to strict rules and procedures, it can be expected that employees will react reluctant to be involved in the change process. The findings of this research not only have to be researched in multiple cases, but also, in future research contextual factors (e.g. organizational culture) have to be taken into consideration.

The assumptions about the relationship between, on the one hand job level and age, and on the other hand the criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change should be researched to determine whether they can be confirmed. Next, as was assumed in the foregoing paragraph, personality traits influence the criteria employees use. Future research should investigate whether this assumption can be confirmed.

For this research we used the variance strategy as presented by Bouckenoughe (2010). This research method focuses on important aspects or attributes of the organization, and so concentrates on cause-effect relationships. The process strategy examines the sequences of events, as change unfolds over time (Bouckenoughe, 2010). This research strategy enables “to explain outcome states as the result of preceding sequence of actions” (Mohr, 1982). Using this research strategy has three major benefits for investigating the assumed change of criteria: (1) it provides information on whether criteria change over time, (2) it provides information about the relationship between criteria and contextual aspects over time, and (3) it provides possibilities for researching interdependences between criteria (e.g. in case employees are more prepared for the change, involvement in the process will increase; after a certain period the further preparation of the change, may lead to less involvement in the process).

Additional research is needed to investigate the hierarchical structuring of criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change. It proved to be impossible to investigate an individuals’ criteria and its hierarchical structure in one interview. An appropriate method could be the following. After interviewing the respondent, criteria have to be elicited from the transcripts. These criteria should serve as input for a second interview. In the second interview, the interviewee presents the elicited criteria to the respondent, after which the respondent has to be asked to determine the significance for each criterion.
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5.4 Conclusion

In case employees are confronted with an organizational change, they have certain beliefs about the organization change. They think and feel the meaning, impact and results of the change. They also value these feelings and meanings, impact and its result. This leads to attitudes toward the organizational change. In Ajzens’ (1991) words, this evaluation results in an intention to behave according to the behavior that is expected from the change recipient. This research concentrated on eliciting the values employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change. For this study, these values are termed ‘criteria’.

This study resulted in several criteria employees use in the evaluation of the organizational change. These criteria are: personal control, reaction of colleagues, autonomy, change necessity, personal benefits, preparation of change, customers’ reactions, involvement in process, support from management, support from colleagues, job security and financial consequences.

From the interviews became clear that employees can use some criteria in one way (e.g. personal benefit is always seen as positive), others in two ways (e.g. autonomy can be seen as positive, if I like autonomy in the change process, or negative, if I do not like autonomy).

Due to technical and practical difficulties, this study did not succeed in investigating the hierarchical structuring of criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change. However, it was possible to investigate whether the used criteria vary for different types of employees. It could also be noticeable, that some outcomes do not vary. We searched for differences with respect to job level and age. With respect to job level, we made a distinction between managers and operational employees. With respect to age, we used thee age classes (i.e. 20-34, 35-49 and 50-64). Job level can explain the use of the criteria change necessity (i.e. managers use change necessity more often than operational employees), personal benefits (i.e. operational employees use personal benefits more often than managers) and involvement in the process (i.e. managers use involvement in the change process more often than operational employees). Age can explain the use of the criteria reaction of colleagues (i.e. older employees use the reaction of colleagues more than younger employees), support from colleagues (i.e. older employees use support from colleagues more often than younger employees), personal benefits (i.e. middle aged employees more often use personal benefits than younger and older employees) and job security (i.e. older employees more often use job security than younger employees).
During this research, indications have been found for the relationship between personality traits and the use of criteria employees use in the evaluation of an organizational change. Future research should reveal whether this relationship is confirmed. Further, future research should reveal whether the criteria and the related assumptions can be confirmed.
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX I INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1 Achtergrond

Dit interviewprotocol is bedoeld als richtlijn voor de interviews die gehouden zullen worden met medewerkers van Orbis Huishoudelijke Hulp. Deze interviews vormen een onderdeel van het afstudeeronderzoek van Laurens Jansen, student van de opleiding Organisatiewetenschappen van de Universiteit van Tilburg.

Dit onderzoek richt zich op het onderzoeken van de factoren die van invloed zijn op houding en gedrag van medewerkers die geconfronteerd zijn met een organisatieverandering.

In de literatuur van organisatieverandering wordt veel aandacht geschonken aan de vraag hoe organisatieveranderingen het beste gemanaged kunnen worden, en hoe weerstand als gevolg van organisatieveranderingen gemanaged kan worden. Echter weinig aandacht is reeds geschonken aan de vraag waar bepaalde houdingen en gedrag van medewerkers vandaan komen.

Om op eventuele weerstand bij organisatieverandering te anticiperen is het van belang te begrijpen waar deze weerstand vandaan komt. Anticiperen op bepaald gedrag en houdingen in een situatie van een organisatieverandering geeft ons de mogelijkheid om het resultaat van de organisatieverandering te vergroten.

Centraal tijdens de interviews zal de verandering staan die Orbis Huishoudelijke Hulp afgelopen jaren heeft doorgemaakt als gevolg van met name de gewijzigde financieringsstructuur van de thuiszorgsector van AWBZ naar WMO. Deze wijziging heeft ertoe geleid dat er lagere budgetten voor huishoudelijke diensten vrijgemaakt zijn geworden door lokale gemeenten, en dat er minder zogenaamde ‘pluspakketten’ ingekocht zijn geworden. Orbis Huishoudelijke Hulp heeft hierop in gespeeld door de interne organisatie te veranderen en zodoende een efficiencyslag te maken. Een leidend thema hierin is de invoering van een nieuw ICT-planningssysteem waarbij de huishoudelijke hulp meer verantwoordelijkheid hebben gekregen voor het plannen en verantwoorden van hun diensten.

Tijdens interviews zal deze organisatorische verandering, en de consequenties op individueel niveau als uitgangspunt genomen worden.

Twee typen medewerkers zullen worden geïnterviewd:
- management en uitvoerende medewerkers (respectievelijk relatiemanagers en huishoudelijke hulpens & medewerkers van de BackOffice).
- medewerkers uit de leeftijdsklassen 20-34 jaar, 35-49 jaar en 50-64 jaar.
2. Doel van het interview

De interviews die plaats zullen vinden dienen het volgende op te leveren:

- Factoren die een rol spelen bij het vormen van een houding van medewerkers die geconfronteerd worden met een organisatieverandering

- Inzicht in hoeverre deze factoren hiërarchisch geprioriteerd zijn (zijn bepaalde factoren van groter belang dan andere factoren?)

- Inzicht in hoeverre er een verschil in prioritering van deze factoren tussen verschillende typen medewerkers is

- Enigszins een verklaring kunnen geven waarom eventueel bepaalde factoren belangrijker zijn voor verschillende typen medewerkers.

3. Werkwijze per interview

De interviews zullen worden opgenomen met een voice-recorder. Deze interviews zullen later worden uitgewerkt en vervolgens gecodeerd, teneinde en wetenschappelijk analyse te kunnen maken. Bij de uitwerking van de interviews zal geen verwijzing worden gegeven naar individuele personen.

De volgende aandachtspunten zullen door de interviewer in acht genomen worden.

- Geef de geïnterviewden zo veel mogelijk vrijheid om te spreken.
- Laat merken dat de bijdrage van de geïnterviewden waardevol is voor je onderzoek.
- Geïnterviewden moeten niet het idee hebben dat ze verantwoording moeten afleggen.
- Toon geen goedkeuring of afkeuring voor de antwoorden van de geïnterviewden
- Zorg dat de geïnterviewden je zien als een begripvolle, actieve luisteraar, zonder dat je ‘meegaat’ in de denkbeelden van de geïnterviewde.
- Gebruik de woorden en termen die de geïnterviewden zelf gebruiken: sluit aan op het informatie niveau van de geïnterviewden.
- Vraag door zodra dat nodig is, ook als lichaamstaal daartoe aanleiding geeft.
- Zorg voor een duidelijk begin en einde van het interview. Voor en na de geluidsoptname mag er geconverseerd worden, echter tijdens de opname neem je de rol van interviewer aan.
4. Inhoud van het interview

Het interview bestaat uit drie onderdelen.

1. Introductie
   Inleiding door interviewer.

   *Ik ben Laurens Jansen. Ik ben op dit moment bezig met mijn scriptie voor de opleiding Organisatiewetenschappen van de Universiteit van Tilburg. Hiervoor onderzoek ik welke factoren van invloed zijn op de houding en gedrag van medewerkers die geconfronteerd zijn met een organisatieverandering.*

   Afgelopen jaren heeft Orbis Huishoudelijke Hulp een verandering doorgemaakt als gevolg van met name de gewijzigde financieringsstructuur van de thuiszorgsector. Kort gezegd heeft Orbis Huishoudelijke Hulp hierdoor de interne organisatie veranderd en is er onder meer een nieuw ICT-planningssysteem ingevoerd. Voor dit interview wil ik centraal stellen wat deze verandering voor u persoonlijk heeft betekend om te bekijken welke factoren van belang zijn geweest en een rol hebben gespeeld bij uw houding en gedrag ten aanzien van deze verandering.

   De antwoorden die u geeft in dit interview zullen vertrouwelijk worden behandeld en uw naam zal niet worden verwerkt in mijn scriptie.

2. Interviewvragen

   - Wat vond u van de verandering?
   - Hoe hebt u de verandering ervaren?
   - Wat heeft de verandering voor u persoonlijk betekend?
   - Hoe reageerde u op de verandering?
   - Waarom reageerde u op deze manier?
   - Wat was voor u persoonlijk van belang bij deze verandering?
   - Wat was in mindere mate voor u van belang?

   - Hebben de volgende factoren voor u een rol gespeeld bij uw houding ten aanzien van de verandering? En zo ja, in welke mate?
     - Uw zelfstandigheid (autonomie) in de nieuwe situatie?
     - Uw persoonlijk voordeel van de verandering?
     - Uw verwachting omtrent de wijziging van uw persoonlijke werkomstandigheden?
     - Uw verwachting een belangrijke bijdrage te kunnen leveren aan het bedrijfsresultaat?
     - Uw verwachting dat de organisatie gebaat was bij de verandering?
3. Afsluiting

*Het interview is ten einde. Ik wil u hartelijk danken voor uw medewerking.*
### APPENDIX II  CODES PER RESPONDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Job level</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Personal control</th>
<th>Reaction of colleagues</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Change necessity</th>
<th>Personal benefits</th>
<th>Preparation of change</th>
<th>Customers’ reactions</th>
<th>Involvement in process</th>
<th>Support from management</th>
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Table: Criteria per respondent