

Agile Organization and Tacit Knowledge Sharing

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Abstract: This study explores how agile and non-agile mindsets share tacit knowledge and how this sharing influences the development of agile organizations. The sample, consisting of 1871 knowledge workers, was analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). Results show that employees with an agile mindset share tacit knowledge and contribute more significantly to an agile organization than their non-agile counterparts. Additionally, tacit knowledge sharing is found to be critical to the growth of agile organizations. The study's practical implication is that organizations aiming to operate as agile enterprises should create favorable conditions for tacit knowledge sharing, an essential component of informal learning. Continuous learning is critical for the constitution of agile organizations.

Keywords: Agile mindset, Non-agile mindset, Tacit knowledge sharing, Agile organization

1. Introduction

Agile thinking and acting are essential for creating a successful agile enterprise that prioritizes customers and society, empowers employees, and increases productivity by 20%-40% through enhanced engagement (Rigby et al., 2020). Employee agility is fundamentally based on their mindset (Eilers et al., 2022; Kucharska et al., 2026; Ozkan et al., 2023). Following Kucharska et al. (2026) agile mindset is defined as “a state of mind that positively evaluates change as intellectual stimuli and sees it as a challenge; next, channels this challenge into opportunity; finally, smoothly adapts own actions to win the maximum advantage of this opportunity, thanks to critical thinking, risk analyzing, smooth learning and unlearning with special attention to contextual (tacit) knowledge gathering from experience, fluently operating on paradoxes and taking decisions timely and accurately.”

Tacit knowledge encompasses the skills and know-how acquired through personal experience by an individual (Reed and DeFillippi, 1990; Koskinen et al., 2003) and internalized via critical understanding and practice (Asher and Popper, 2019, 2021; Ganguly et al. 2019; Olaisen and Revang, 2018; Oliva, 2014). Tacit knowledge appears in insights, hunches, intuition, ideas, and values (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). It is closely associated with mental models (Meso and Smith, 2000). Tacit knowledge acquisition and sharing are critical organizational processes for informal learning and innovativeness (Kucharska and Rebelo, 2025; Kucharska and Erickson, 2023; Kucharska, 2021a-b, 2022). Therefore, this study aims to examine in greater depth the impact of agile and non-agile staff on the agile organization through tacit knowledge sharing.

Tacit knowledge sharing has previously been recognized as essential for organizations focused on agility (Idrus and Ali, 2019; Kucharska et al., 2026b, 2025; Marchesi et al., 2025; Medini et al., 2025; Misgeld and Fredriksson, 2024; Saini et al., 2018; Villa, 2023, 2025). Furthermore, Soroka-Potrzebna (2023) stated that mindset can serve as a significant barrier to knowledge sharing among software development teams. Villa (2023) emphasized that agile software development methods (ASD) are sensitive to knowledge sharing. Takpuie and Tanner (2016) pointed out that Scrum—one of the ASD methods—relies heavily on tacit knowledge transfer throughout the project, recommending “regular sprint meetings” to improve knowledge sharing between team members, including clients (Karlsen et al., 2011). This indicates that tacit knowledge sharing is vital for an agile enterprise. An agile enterprise is an organization that can quickly adapt to market, environmental, and technological changes by balancing stability with flexible, cross-functional teams. It applies agile principles beyond IT to the entire organization, fostering a culture of continuous learning, speed, and customer focus to deliver value sustainably (Moreira, 2017). Therefore, this study aims to explore the impact of tacit knowledge sharing on agile organizations, comparing the contributions of employees with agile and non-agile mindsets. Such empirical comparison is important for highlighting the role of tacit knowledge sharing in agile organizations that need to develop shared agile mindsets.

2. Hypotheses Development

Mindset shapes behavior and attitudes toward learning and risk-taking in the pursuit of innovation and growth (Dweck et al., 1995). A growth mindset, in contrast to a fixed one, is open to innovation and growth. This study compares agile and non-agile mindsets regarding tacit knowledge sharing, which differ from growth and fixed

mindsets primarily in their focus on adaptive intelligence, which can be simplified as the ability to act 'prompt and wise' as agile organizations do in the uncertain conditions of current reality. In sum, this study aims to compare how employees with agile and non-agile mindsets influence internal process innovations through tacit knowledge sharing. Based on the literature presented in the introduction and the literature given below, this section presents hypotheses that comprise the tested relational structure (Figure 1) and are critical to the planned comparison.

Mindset shapes behavior

Employees' mindsets' agility directly impacts an agile organization (Bablo et al., 2023; Eilers et al., 2022; Hofert et al., 2022; Ozkan et al., 2023). This study compares agile and non-agile mindsets. Kucharska et al. (2026, p. 11) define both based on their qualitative study. These authors see the agile mindset as: a mental state that positively evaluates change as intellectual stimulation and perceives it as a challenge; then, channels this challenge into opportunity; finally, smoothly adapts one's actions to maximize the advantage of this opportunity, utilizing critical thinking, risk analysis, and the ability to learn and unlearn with special attention to gathering contextual (tacit) knowledge from experience. This mindset operates fluently on paradoxes and makes timely, accurate decisions. The same authors define the non-agile mindset as a mental state that avoids, ignores, blocks, and negatively evaluates change; its emotional safety heavily depends on maintaining the status quo. If forced to implement change, it does everything to control it by establishing and sticking to strict rules and procedures; these rules and procedures create a false sense of control, which fosters an illusion of safety. In summary, the need for stability demonstrated by non-agile minds makes them particularly inclined to pursue all organizational processes devoted to exploitation, whereas agile mindsets are devoted to exploration. Therefore, examining how such opposing, way-oriented mindsets share tacit knowledge is interesting. So far, it has been stressed that agile mindset leaders master tacit knowledge absorption, which is critical to their ambidexterity skills (Kucharska et al., 2025, 2026a-b). But comparison of how agile and non-agile mindset employees share knowledge has not been studied before.

It is worth studying, since tacit knowledge sharing has previously been identified as critical for organizations focused on agility (Idrus and Ali, 2019; Marchesi et al., 2025; Medini et al., 2025; Misgeld and Fredriksson, 2024; Saini et al., 2018; Villa, 2023). Agile methodologies, grounded in informal communication and collaborative problem-solving, rely heavily on tacit knowledge sharing (Pikkarainen et al., 2008). Mindset shapes behavior (Armor and Taylor, 2003). The Agile mindset shapes a positive attitude and disposition toward prompt and wise action. Acting wisely directly results from intelligence and knowledge (Bryant and Aytes, 2019). Tacit knowledge supports human action primarily unconsciously, owing to its specific nature. To be shared, tacit knowledge requires that the owner be aware of its existence. The process of self-awareness depends on the disposition of the mindset; therefore, we assume that mindset matters for tacit knowledge sharing. Based on the literature above, we expect that the effects of agile and non-agile mindsets on tacit knowledge sharing differ, but we cannot determine the extent of these differences. Our goal is to investigate this. Therefore, we assume both have a positive effect, and to compare how each mindset supports tacit knowledge sharing, the following hypotheses have been developed:

H1a Agile-mindset employees have a positive impact on tacit knowledge sharing.

H1b Non-agile-mindset employees have a positive impact on tacit knowledge sharing.

Tacit knowledge sharing fosters an agile organization development

Tacit knowledge encompasses skills and know-how acquired through personal experience (Reed and DeFillippi, 1990), internalized through critical understanding and practice (Asher and Popper, 2019, 2021; Ganguly et al., 2019; Olaisen and Revang, 2018; Oliva, 2014). It is deeply embedded in an individual's experience and consists of implicit skills, perceptual frameworks, and internalized assumptions that are so ingrained in one's cognitive processes that they are often taken for granted (Koskinen et al., 2003). This makes it sometimes difficult to articulate, formalize, or transfer via traditional methods (Asher and Popper, 2019, 2021; Olaisen and Revang, 2018). Instead, it is shared through metaphors, drawings, examples, comparisons, and is often learned through social interactions called 'learning by interactions' or from contextual learning called 'learning by doing' (Kucharska and Erickson, 2023). It manifests in insights, hunches, intuition, ideas, and values (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Sharing tacit knowledge has been identified as critical for organizations focused on agility (Idrus and Ali, 2019; Kucharska et al., 2026a, 2025; Marchesi et al., 2025; Medini et al., 2025; Misgeld and Fredriksson, 2024; Saini et al., 2018; Villa, 2023, 2025). Villa (2023) emphasized that agile software development methods (ASD) are sensitive to knowledge sharing. Takpuie and Tanner (2016) noted that Scrum—one of the ASD

methods—relies heavily on tacit knowledge transfer throughout the project by recommending ‘regular sprint meetings’ to improve knowledge sharing among team members, including clients (Karlsen et al., 2011). Therefore, tacit knowledge is essential for fostering the development of an agile organization. According to Kucharska et al. (2026a), an agile organization is defined as ‘an efficient, comprehensive adaptive system that encompasses the coordination of people, processes, technology, culture, and other resources; which critically depends on its agile-minded leadership and employees’; technology adoption, application of agile management methods; and also firmly on its culture, structure, and strategic resource identification and security; and where the combination of all these elements is synergistically oriented toward maintaining a long-term competitive strategy’. Developing an agile organization is possible thanks to collective intelligence development (Kucharska and Kucharski, 2026), which is always rooted in knowledge sharing, especially tacit. The process of acquiring and sharing tacit knowledge is vital for enhancing informal learning and innovation (Kucharska and Rebelo, 2025; Kucharska and Erickson, 2023; Kucharska, 2021a-b; 2022) in agile organizations. Based on all of the above, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: Tacit knowledge sharing fosters agile organizations.

3. Methodology

The models reflect the perceptions of the participants: male and female, specialists and leaders from Poland and Finland. Data were collected in March 2025 using the CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interview) method. The total sample size is 1871 cases (balanced by country and gender). Respondents provided their subjective opinions and observations regarding their working environments by answering the statements (Table 1) on a 7-point Likert scale (1- totally disagree; 7- perfectly agree). The validity analyses (Table 2) demonstrate the good quality of the measures taken (loadings exceed 0.5 and scales do not overlap), including discriminant validity (Table 3). However, the Fornell-Lacker criterion is not achieved for TKS-I relations. Moreover, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) test of adequacy yielded a result of 0.968, and the CMV was 70%, indicating good quality of the measures (Byrne, 2016). Regarding collinearity, we obtained the following VIF results: 1.648 (AMe), 1.003 (nAMe), 1.647 (TKS) – all are more than 1 and less than 5, suggesting a low multicollinearity, which is acceptable (Shrestha, 2020).

Table 1: Scales and their sources

Scale	Statements
Agile mindset employee [AMe] / Non-agile mindset employee [nAMe] Kucharska et al. (2026a)	They quickly adapt to new conditions They usually achieve their aims They never give up They learn, unlearn, and relearn smoothly They can work in unpredictable environments (they accept uncertainty) They act dynamically They see change as an opportunity They are passionate, enthusiastic, and engaged at work (all conditions met) They can follow schemes, but also can act creatively beyond schemes (both conditions met) They accept the challenge They are open to change They accept risk They learn from mistakes ATTENTION: Regarding the non-agile mindset, participants responded to the same statements as they did for the agile mindsets, but typically responded negatively or in opposition (i.e., disagreed with the statements). The same method (reverse coding) was applied by Dweck et al. (1995) to measure growth and fixed mindsets. In sum, assessing agile and non-agile mindsets, respondents refer to the same statements.
Tacit knowledge sharing [TKS] Kucharska and Erickson (2025)	We share knowledge learned from my own experience We have the opportunity to learn from others' experiences We discuss best practices We share new ideas

Scale	Statements
Agile organization [AO] Kucharska et al. (2026a)	An organization acts smoothly as a comprehensive, adaptive system Adapts to changes quickly and comprehensively (both conditions met) Offers stable working rules and high operational agility (both conditions met) An organization constantly learns at all levels of the organization Business context change drives an organizational change We demonstrate market advantage orientation An organization demonstrates a constant development orientation Agile mindset people are recognized and empowered in an organization recognized and empowered Organization members think and act agilely (both conditions met) An organization's leaders are agile

Table 2: Validity Analysis

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	nAMe	TKS	AMe	AO
nAMe	0,973	0,786	0,018	0,973	0,886			
TKS	0,765	0,520	0,489	0,768	0,066*	0,721		
AMe	0,859	0,504	0,381	0,860	0,002	0,519***	0,710	
AO	0,885	0,562	0,489	0,885	0,134***	0,699***	0,618***	0,750

Note: nAMe-nonagile mindset employees TKS-tacit knowledge sharing AMe-agile mindset employees AO -agile organization; *p< 0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001 (Gaskination's StatWiki tool, Gaskin 2019).

Additionally, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) analysis, considered more robust than the widely used Fornell-Larcker criterion, was conducted to assess discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015; Gaskin et al., 2019, 2025). Table 3 below presents the HTMT analysis results supporting the discriminant validity of the measured constructs.

Table 3: HTMT - discriminant validity analysis

	nAMe	TacitK	AMe	AO
nAMe				
TacitK	0,065			
AMe	0,002	0,528		
AO	0,133	0,704	0,620	

Note: Thresholds are 0.850 for strict and 0.900 for liberal discriminant validity (Gaskination's StatWiki tool, Gaskin 2019).

The criterion thresholds are 0.850 for strict and 0.900 for liberal discriminant validity. So, the HTMT analysis results support the discriminant validity of the measured constructs.

4. Results

Results (Figure 1, Table 4) provide evidence that employees with an agile mindset share tacit knowledge and contribute more significantly (H1a, $\beta=.61^{***}$) to the development of agile organizations than their non-agile counterparts (H1b, $\beta=.10^{**}$). Moreover, tacit knowledge sharing is vital to agile organizational development (H2, $\beta = .77^{***}$).

Table 4: Hypotheses verification

n=1871; $\chi^2=1227.84(319)$ Cmin/df=3.84 CFI=.976 TLI=.973 RMSEA=.039(.037-.041)		
Hypothesis	β	verification
H1a	.61***	sustained
H1b	.10**	sustained
H2	.77***	sustained

Note: ML – maximum likelihood, standardized results; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

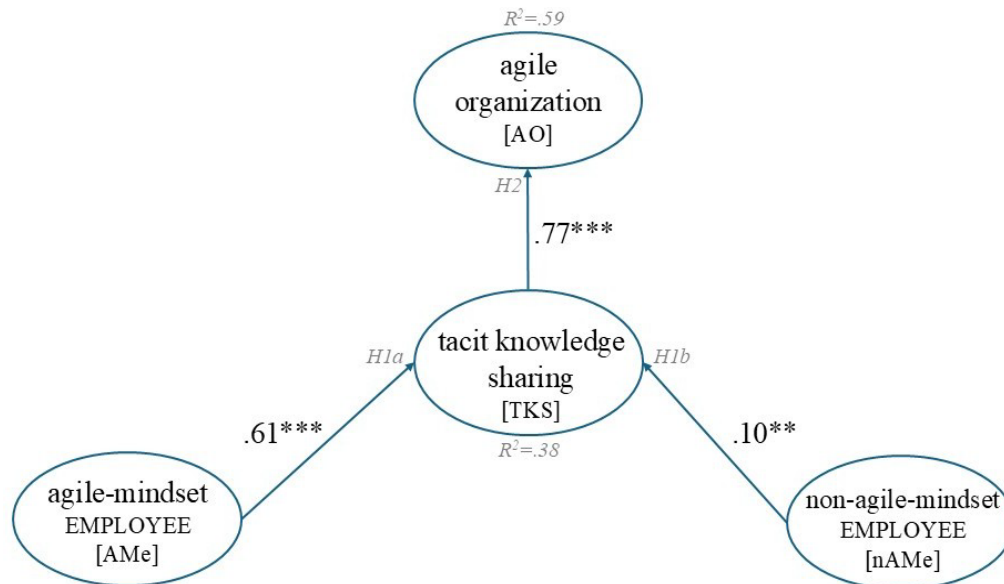


Figure 1: Results

Note: n=1871; $\chi^2=1227.84(319)$ Cmin/df=3.84 CFI=.976 TLI=.973 RMSEA=.039(.037-.041);

ML – maximum likelihood, standardized results; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

5. Discussion, Limitations, and Further Research

The study showed that employees with an agile mindset share tacit knowledge and contribute more significantly to the development of agile organizations than their non-agile counterparts. It presents an agile mindset to employees as a critical contributor to agile organizations by enhancing tacit knowledge sharing. However, it is worth noting that the overall model R^2 is 0.59, indicating that the model omits other critical factors linking agile and non-agile employees to agile organizations. The prior literature suggests that agile leaders and an agile culture may be critical (Kucharska et al. 2025, 2026a). So further studies can verify this. Moreover, since tacit knowledge absorption mastery and sharing among workmates is a basis for informal learning (Koskinen et al., 2003; Kucharska et al., 2025; Lee and Lee, 2022), and informal learning is critical for agile organization development (Boerma et al., 2025), informal learning can be one of those ‘critical omitted variables’ mentioned above. The model under study is simple, and tacit knowledge sharing among workmates is treated as a proxy for informal learning. Informal learning in organizations occurs via real-time knowledge absorption in the workplace (Kallen, 2013; Bryans, 2017). Research shows that 80% of employees learning at work happens informally, usually unplanned, incidental, and mainly experiential. As a result, most organizational knowledge is tacit. An example of such implicit learning is learning from mistakes. It’s easy to imagine how organizations and societies could achieve great results if they supported their internal company’s learning through these informal methods supporting (Kucharska and Szeluga-Romanska, 2025; Milani et al., 2025). Sharing tacit knowledge internally, which promotes informal learning, is crucial for agile organizational growth. Continuous learning through tacit knowledge sharing is vital for developing agile organizations, as its impact on informal learning supports this conclusion. Moreover, more complex models can better illustrate the connection between an agile mindset and an agile organization. Specifically, the simplicity of the model is a major limitation of the study, which provides empirical evidence that the agile mindset, via tacit knowledge sharing, significantly contributes to building agile organizations and that tacit knowledge sharing and it is a key driver of such organizations,

though it lacks details on how this process occurs. However, the relationship between an agile mindset and an agile organization is more intricate than the simplified model indicates. Therefore, further research is necessary.

6. Conclusions and Practical Implications

The study showed that employees with an agile mindset share tacit knowledge and contribute more significantly to the development of agile organizations than their non-agile counterparts. Moreover, tacit knowledge sharing is vital to agile organizational development. So, the study's practical implication is that organizations aiming to operate as agile enterprises should create favorable conditions for tacit knowledge sharing, an essential component of informal learning. Continuous learning through tacit knowledge sharing is critical to the formation of agile organizations.

Acknowledgments

The presented research results from the project 'Agile learning culture influence on dynamic capabilities of knowledge-based organizations: Polish-Finnish cross-country analysis,' No. UMO-2022/47/B/HS4/00597, financed by the National Science Center (NCN), Poland.

AI usage Declaration: We used Grammarly to make grammatical corrections.

Ethics Statement: Respondents voluntarily participated, gave informed consent, and their anonymity was protected.

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