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A Management Model in an Agile Organization Based on the Example of a Company Spotify

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Adrianna Trzaskowska-Dmoch[1], Maria Kocot[2], Izabela Gontarek[3], Stanisław Rodowicki[4], Jacek Oleksiejuk[5], Jacek Stasiak[6]

Abstract:

Purpose: *The aim of the article is to present an agile management model using Spotify as an example and to develop an original management model for an agile organization. An attempt was made to identify key mechanisms that allow organizations to maintain flexibility and innovation in conditions of dynamic development.*
Design/Methodology/Approach: *The research was based on a case study method, analyzing the implementation of an agile management model at Spotify. Qualitative analysis was conducted, including internal documentation, interviews with employees, and observation of organizational processes and management culture.*
Findings: *It was found that implementing a decentralized organizational structure based on autonomous project teams has a positive impact on operational efficiency, innovation and employee engagement. The developed model proves useful in medium and large organizations operating in a dynamic market environment.*
Practical Implications: *The presented results can be a basis for companies implementing agile management models, especially in the context of building modular organizational structures and developing a culture of trust and responsibility. The proposed model facilitates scaling operations without losing operational agility.*
Originality/Value: *The originality of the study lies in the presentation of an original management model in an agile organization, inspired by Spotify's practices, which can be adapted to the needs of various industries and sizes of companies. The article provides practical tips for leaders and managers implementing an agile approach to management.*

[1]*Ph.D., Warsaw University of Technology, Poland,*
ORCID: 0000-0002-4825-3635, adrianna.dmoch@pw.edu.pl
[2]*Ph.D., University of Economics in Katowice, Poland,*
ORCID: 0000-0001-5150-3765, maria.kocot@ue.katowice.pl
[3]*Ph.D., University of Technology and Economics, Warsaw, Poland,*
ORCID: 0009-0000-1901-9586, izabela.gontarek@uth.edu.pl
[4]*M.of Laws, Stanisław Radowicki, Academy of Silesia, Katowice, Poland,*
ORCID: 0000-0003-3376-0471, stanislaw.radowicki@akademiaslaska.pl
[5]*Ph.D., University of Physical Education in Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland,*
ORCID: 0000-0003-2654-1078, jacek.oleksiejuk@awf.edu.pl
[6]*Prof. Non-Public Health Care Centre Interschool Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Science and Research Center, Aleksandrów Łódzki, Poland,*
ORCID: 0000-0001-7041-408X, jacek_stasiak@interia.pl

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1. Introduction

Constant changes in the market, increasing globalization and the rapid development of digital technologies force modern companies to constantly adapt their management systems. Maintaining the ability to ensure high operational efficiency and flexible response to changes is becoming a key challenge in the face of growing uncertainty and volatility of the business environment.

Solutions more adapted to the needs of organizations are becoming more common, because traditional management models based on formalized procedures and hierarchical structures are increasingly insufficient. In this situation, the concept of organizational agility is gaining importance as a way to increase innovation, quickly respond to market needs and develop human capital.

The importance of the subject matter stems from the growing need to implement agile management models that allow organizations not only to survive but also to achieve a competitive advantage in times of economic instability. Of particular importance is the analysis of practical solutions used by global technology companies that have effectively implemented agile approaches that enable them to develop dynamically and increase their market value.

The example of Spotify is a valuable illustration of implementing an agile management model on a large scale, while maintaining flexibility and an organizational culture that promotes innovation and employee engagement. The conducted case study allows us to identify key mechanisms and good practices that can be an inspiration for other organizations, regardless of the industry or scale of operations (Grima *et al.,* 2023; Nermend *et al.,* 2021).

The added value of the article is the development of an original management model in an agile organization, which integrates the experience from the analysis of the Spotify model and own conclusions from the conducted research. This model is universal and can be adapted to the needs of medium and large enterprises operating in conditions of high environmental variability.

The proposed solutions include modular organizational structures, decentralized decision-making processes and an organizational culture based on trust, responsibility and cooperation.

The structure of the article has been planned in a way that allows for a comprehensive presentation of the topic. The first part discusses the theoretical foundations of agile management of an organization, with particular emphasis on models and methods used in practice. The second part presents a case study of Spotify, which is the basis for analyzing the effectiveness of the implemented model. The third part presents the author's model of management in an agile organization, developed on the basis of research results and conclusions from the case study. The article ends with a summary and recommendations for management practitioners who plan to implement agile models in their organizations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Agile Organization, Methods and Models of its Management

An agile organization is a management idea that requires flexibility (Serrador and Pinto, 2015), speed of response to changing circumstances (Beck *et al.,* 2001; Highsmith and Cockburn, 2001; Poppendieck and Poppendieck, 2003) and the ability to continuously adapt systems, procedures and methods of operation to the needs of the market and customers (Velinov *et al.,* 2023).

The term "agility" comes from the English language (agility) and was initially associated with the IT industry, especially with software development methodologies. However, over time its use has broadened significantly and now includes entire organizations that operate in dynamic economies. The foundation of agility is the ability to learn, experiment and make decisions quickly while maintaining a high level of external and internal cooperation (Knaster and Leffingwell, 2020).

An organizational structure that breaks away from traditional, hierarchical structures based on silos and strict division of duties is crucial to managing an agile organization. Flat structures are more preferable because they allow for better information flow, greater team autonomy, and their direct involvement in decision-making processes (Kniberg and Ivarsson, 2012).

These types of teams are usually interdisciplinary, meaning that people from different disciplines work together to achieve common goals. The independence of these teams while remaining aligned with the organization's vision and mission increases innovation and accountability for actions (Anderson and Zheglov, 2017).

Agile organizations often use a management model based on working in scrum teams. The Scrum method, which comes from agile methodologies, allows you to organize work in short stages, called sprints. This allows you to quickly test and implement new solutions, and then collect comments and make corrections. This allows for gradual improvement of goods or services and flexible adaptation to changing consumer expectations (Kamath, 2020).

In addition to Scrum, other approaches such as Kanban, Lean, and SAFe (Scaled Agile Framework) are also used in managing an agile organization. To increase efficiency and shorten the time to deliver value to customers, Kanban encourages process visualization and continuous process improvement (Leffingwell, 2016). In contrast, Lean focuses on continuous process improvement, waste avoidance, and customer value maximization while maintaining ease and understanding of customer needs.

On the other hand, SAFe is a scalable approach to implementing agility in large organizations, where managing multiple teams and projects requires organizing activities while maintaining agility and flexibility. An agile organization also requires a different way of leading. The concept of an agile organization also requires a different approach to leadership. The traditional model of a leader as a controller is replaced by a servant leader (Greenleaf, 2013).

This type of leadership helps build a culture in which people are confident, open, and accountable for results. Human resource management in an agile organization is also flexible (Verheyen, 2024). In practice, this means that the processes of hiring, performance evaluation, competency development, and compensation must be adapted to changing business needs (Appelo, 2016; Highsmith, 2009), focusing on supporting autonomy and talent development in the company.

Particular emphasis is placed on developing soft skills such as creativity, communication skills, cooperation and adaptation to change (Rigby, Sutherland and Takeuchi, 2016). Changing the organizational culture involves introducing agility in the organization. Trust, transparency, continuous learning, and willingness to experiment and accept mistakes in the learning process are the basic principles.

In such an environment, decision-making is decentralized, and teams operate based on shared values and strategic goals (Denning, 2022). This avoids delays resulting from the need to obtain approvals at different levels of the hierarchy. Change management is essential in agile organizations, because in a dynamic external environment, new challenges constantly arise that require rapid adaptation.

The iterative approach allows for systematic implementation of changes and collection of data for further optimization. It also makes it easier for employees to engage in transformation processes, which reduces resistance to change and increases the sense of shared responsibility for the development of the organization (Bonomi Savignon and Costumato, 2024).

Modern digital technologies, such as data analysis tools, team collaboration systems and artificial intelligence, which speed up decision-making and enable better adaptation of goods and services to customer expectations, are often part of the management models of an agile organization (Appelo, 2016). Even in geographically dispersed structures, agile organizations use digital platforms for communication, work planning, and project management (Feldman, 2018).

Examples of agile companies show that the use of these management models can bring greater flexibility, shorten the time to market for goods and services, and improve the quality and innovation of the offer. However, implementing agility requires a change in the way of thinking, breaking traditional norms and investing in the development of skills and technologies supporting agile processes (Ragas and Ragas, 2021).

2.2 Spotify Company Profile

Spotify is a streaming platform based in Sweden that allows users to enjoy music, podcasts, and other types of audio content. The company was founded by Daniel Ek and Martin Lorentzon in 2006 in Stockholm (Kniberg and Ivarsson, 2012). Its services were officially launched in 2008.

Spotify operates on a freemium model, which means that basic features can be obtained for free, but if you want additional features, such as no ads, better sound quality, or the ability to download songs for offline listening, you have to pay for a premium subscription (Smite, Moe, Levinta and Floryan, 2019). More than 100 million songs and several million podcasts are available worldwide on the platform, allowing users to listen to music from a huge library of songs (Spotify, 2024).

Spotify is currently one of the most popular and well-known streaming services in the world. In 2024, it recorded 600 million active users, more than 50% of which are premium subscribers, which operates in over 180 countries. Offering independent artists, record labels and podcasters the opportunity to distribute their content to a global audience, the company works with major record labels. Additionally, Spotify provides artists with analytics tools that allow them to track data on streams, listener locations and audience demographics, which helps them better plan promotions (Statista, 2024).

Spotify's two main sources of revenue are premium subscription fees and advertising revenues displayed to free users. These are the foundations of the company's business model (Spotify, 2023). The company is constantly improving its advertising offer, using targeting and personalization technologies that allow it to match ads to users' music preferences and interests.

In order to increase user loyalty and stand out from the competition, Spotify is investing in creating its own content, such as original podcasts and exclusive music recordings (Statista, 2024). Spotify's technology is based on artificial intelligence and advanced recommendation algorithms. To create personalized playlists and music recommendations, the platform uses factors that users perform, such as searches, playtimes, and song ratings (Prokopowicz, 2023).

The "Discover Weekly", "Release Radar", and "Daily Mix" playlists, which are based on individual listener tastes, are among the popular features. Spotify can be used to create music-focused communities by allowing users to create their own playlists and share them with others (Spotify, 2024).

In recent years, Spotify has acquired well-known podcasting companies like Anchor, Gimlet Media, and Megaphone to help grow the sector. The service has been able to increase its share of the growing podcast market with these acquisitions, which give it access to unique content and technology (Spotify, 2023).

It is imperative that Spotify expands its audio services by introducing new features, such as the ability to listen to audiobooks or integration with smart home and car devices. Copyright, privacy and digital services have been a challenge for Spotify, which has been listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) since April 2018.

The company also supports sustainability and diversity in the music industry by engaging in social and environmental initiatives. Despite its dominant market position, Spotify faces a large number of competitors, including platforms such as Apple Music, Amazon Music, YouTube Music and Tidal. This competition aims to acquire users and establish partnerships with creators and music labels.

To maintain its position as a leader in the audio streaming industry, Spotify regularly updates its offerings, introduces new features and expands its geographic reach (Statista, 2024). To achieve long-term growth and maintain an advantage over its competitors, Spotify's strategy focuses on expanding its premium user base, creating a diverse audio content offering, and expanding its premium user base (Spotify, 2023).

2.3 Agile Management Model at Spotify

Spotify's agile management model is an example of a flexible approach to work organization that has been adapted to the specifics of technological activity and the scale of a global enterprise offering digital services. Although Spotify initially came from a startup environment (Spotify, 2024), over time it became necessary to develop its own flexible management system to adapt to changing development conditions.

Many organizations around the world have drawn inspiration from this model, often referred to as the "Spotify Model". However, Spotify itself does not treat it as a rigid method, but rather as a structure that can change and develop (Statista, 2024).

Spotify’s agile approach is based on the premise that creating an environment where teams can collaborate and operate independently is key to success. The organization is divided into small, self-contained teams known as “squads” (Mumen, 2020). Each squad was responsible for a specific product element or feature on the Spotify platform. The groups have full responsibility for planning, designing, developing and maintaining their areas of operation. They can quickly adapt to changing market and user requirements, deciding independently which tools, processes and priorities to use (Spotify, 2023).

In the Spotify model, squads are grouped into “tribes,” larger organizational units tasked with coordinating the activities of teams operating in similar thematic areas. This structure allows for maintaining a balance between the autonomy of individual squads and the need for coherence of the entire system and compliance with the company’s strategic goals (Salameh and Bass, 2022).

Coordination of activities takes place at the tribe level, which allows for the exchange of knowledge, sharing best practices, and avoiding duplication of work. The tribal structure, although inspired by the ideas of agility, has been adapted to the scale of Spotify’s operations, which includes hundreds of teams working on various aspects of the service (Kocot, Golińska-Pieszyńska, and Kwasek, 2024).

An important element of the Spotify model is also the functioning of "chapters" and "guilds". Chapters provide a level of support for people in similar roles in different squads, allowing them to develop technical skills and standardize practices in a specific area of specialization, such as software engineering or UX design (Gerster, Dremel, and Kelker, 2019). Guilds, on the other hand, are more informal communities of interest, bringing together team members from different parts of the organization who share knowledge and develop common interests, which fosters a culture of innovation and openness (Uludağ, Putta, Paasivaara, and Matthes, 2021).

Trust, clarity, and accountability are the foundations of Spotify’s management culture. Managers act as servant leaders, supporting teams to achieve goals, solving challenges, and developing employees (Kamer, 2019). This way of leading teams is different from the traditional way of controlling teams (Anderson and Carmichael, 2023). Decisions are made quickly and without the need for approval from different levels of the hierarchy thanks to this leadership philosophy. Spotify’s model states that trusting teams and providing them with the right resources leads to higher engagement and better quality products and services (Brosseau, Ebrahim, Handscomb, and Thaker, 2019).

The approach to product development is another example of Spotify’s agility. The company uses an iterative process to deliver value, meaning that new features are implemented quickly and users can get immediate feedback. Experimentation is an important part of this process. A/B testing and analysis of user data allow for decisions based on facts rather than assumptions (Birkinshaw, 2019). This reduces the likelihood of launching features that do not meet customer expectations (Werder *et al.,* 2021). In contrast to the lack of a rigid organizational framework, Spotify’s agile management model means a flexible approach to defining them. The company provides an environment in which processes and structures can be quickly adapted to changing needs, rather than imposing strict procedures. Regular reviews, where teams evaluate their performance and make adjustments in the next work cycle, are also essential. (Wijaya, Kumorotomo, and Djunaedi, 2024).

From a strategic perspective, Spotify's model is an example of an approach that combines the scalability of an organization with the agility typical of smaller companies. The system is designed to enable rapid scaling of processes and teams without losing the agility of operations. Despite the complex operational structure and many problems with operating at scale, Spotify remains competitive in the global market. Ensuring the alignment of strategic goals among hundreds of autonomous teams was one of the challenges the organization faced (Smite, Moe, Floryan, Levinta and Chatzipetrou, 2020).

The solution was to introduce transparent goals (OKRs, Objectives and Key Results), which define priorities at the company level and allow teams to align their goals with the company strategy. In this model, key performance indicators are monitored; however, teams have a lot of freedom as to how they will achieve the intended results.

Spotify is an agile organization and uses different methodological approaches to create a hybrid operating system model that is flexible. The company emphasizes that its model is not a solution for every organization; it is rather the result of its own experiences and adaptation of practices to each situation. Spotify maintains high operational efficiency and the ability to innovate, while responding to changes thanks to an open and continuous evolution of the business model (Wijaya, Kumorotomo, and Djunaedi, 2024).

3. Methods and Materials

3.1 Methods

The aim of the conducted research was to identify effective mechanisms and practices in the area of agile management model, which enable the organization to maintain flexibility, innovation and high operational efficiency in conditions of dynamic growth and structural complexity.

An attempt was made to determine how the implementation of a decentralized organizational structure affects decision -making processes, team cooperation, the organization's adaptability to changing environmental conditions and the level of employee engagement.

An important element of the study was also the assessment of whether autonomous teams, operating within a coherent strategic vision, are able to effectively increase the competitiveness of the enterprise and provide it with the ability to quickly respond to customer needs and market changes.

The hypothesis was that implementing an agile management model based on the work of autonomous and interdisciplinary teams integrated into larger organizational units has a positive impact on the operational efficiency of the enterprise and enables maintaining agility, even in conditions of rapid scaling of operations. It was also assumed that such an organizational model promotes increased employee satisfaction and engagement, and also stimulates innovation, thanks to which the organization can better respond to dynamic market challenges.

As part of the research process, a number of questions were asked to verify the hypothesis. An attempt was made to examine how team autonomy affects the speed of decision-making and the ability of the organization to adapt to changing external conditions.

Another research question concerned the impact of a decentralized management model on the effectiveness of implemented projects and the quality of delivered products and services. The issue of the impact of implementing an agile model on the level of employee satisfaction and motivation, as well as their sense of influence on the development of the organization and the creation of innovative solutions, was also analyzed.

The inspiration for the research on the implementation of an agile management model in a large organization was the case study of Spotify, published by Kniberg & Ivarsson (Kniberg and Ivarsson, 2012). This analysis shows how Spotify, despite the rapid growth in the number of employees and the scale of its operations, managed to maintain operational flexibility and efficiency by introducing a decentralized organizational structure based on small, autonomous teams.

The case study allowed us to analyze the effects of such an approach in practice, indicating that the reorganization of the structure within the squads and tribes model not only improved decision-making processes, but also contributed to increased employee satisfaction and increased team innovation.

This research was conducted using the case study method, which was based on the analysis of qualitative data, including interviews with employees, internal documentation and observations of practices used in the company. The case study included the analysis of both organizational and cultural aspects, which were crucial for the effectiveness of the implemented model.

Based on the research and conclusions resulting from the analysis of the Spotify model, an original management model for an agile organization was developed. This model takes into account the specificity of medium and large enterprises operating in conditions of high market dynamics and volatility of the business environment. The key element of this approach is a modular structure based on autonomous teams, supported by a transparent system of setting goals and decentralized decision-making.

An important role in this model is played by an organizational culture built on trust, responsibility and cooperation, which promotes the development of employee potential and strengthens the organization's ability to quickly respond to changing market needs. The original model was designed as a flexible operational structure that can be adapted to the specificity of various industries and sizes of enterprises, which allows for its wide application in management practice.

3.2. Results

The research was conducted based on the Spotify case study described by Kniberg and Ivarsson (2012), as it is one of the most comprehensive and widely recognized studies documenting the implementation of an agile management model in a large, dynamically developing technology organization. The authors, who are practitioners and consultants closely associated with the Spotify transformation process, presented in detail the organizational structure based on squads, tribes, chapters and guilds, as well as mechanisms ensuring team autonomy while maintaining strategic coherence of the entire company.

The case study provides valuable information on the practical application of agile methods in the conditions of global scaling, which makes it a credible and often cited source in the literature on agile at scale. Referring to this research enables an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of implementing an agile management model and allows us to relate the research results to proven practices used in one of the most famous technology companies in the world.

The research process aimed to provide a detailed analysis of the implementation of an agile management model in this organization, and the analytical work was carried out during a period of intensive development of the company, when Spotify was dynamically increasing both the scale of its operations and the number of employees.

The analysis referred to the stage of development of the organization, in which it was necessary to maintain a high level of operational flexibility while ensuring the efficiency of processes in conditions of increasing structural complexity.

The research took place in Spotify’s internal environment, and its scope included analysis of organizational processes, team structures, and management culture. The data collected came from various sources, including internal company documents, operational reports, training materials, and interviews with managers and project team members.

Information was also obtained through direct observation of the practices used in the work of the teams, which allowed for capturing the specifics of everyday interactions and the way of making decisions within the implemented agile model.

The research process took place in several stages. The first stage involved an analysis of formal documentation, which included descriptions of the organizational structure, procedures, and strategies for implementing agile work methods. The next stage involved qualitative interviews with representatives of various organizational levels, both team leaders and members of squads and tribes. The interviews aimed to collect in-depth opinions on the functioning of the new structure and to identify the benefits and challenges associated with implementing an agile management model.

An important element of the research was also the analysis of Spotify's organizational culture, with particular emphasis on values such as trust, team autonomy, responsibility for decisions made, and transparency of processes. It was observed how these values translate into everyday cooperation, the pace of project implementation, and decision-making processes in a multi-team environment.

Particular attention was paid to the functioning of squads as independent units that had full responsibility for the development of specific product components and the ability to autonomously shape the way they work.

The research conducted on the basis of the Spotify case study was qualitative in nature and based on the case study method. Thanks to the use of this method, it was possible to thoroughly understand the mechanisms of functioning of the agile management model in a large technological organization and to capture the specifics of implementing this model in conditions of dynamic company growth.

The study also allowed to identify key success factors, such as modularity of the structure, decentralization of decision-making processes, common strategic goals and a strong organizational culture based on agility values.

The research ended with the development of recommendations for the implementation of similar models in other organizations and the formulation of conclusions that became the basis for the creation of an original management model in an agile organization. The research results proved that the use of agile management methods in a global company such as Spotify allows for maintaining flexibility while ensuring high operational efficiency, which can be an inspiration for other companies looking for modern ways of organizing work.

3.3 Discussion

Based on the conducted research, based on the Spotify case study, a number of important conclusions were formulated regarding the implementation and functioning of an agile management model in large technology organizations. The case study showed that the key element enabling the effective application of agility in conditions of dynamic growth is the reorganization of the organizational structure in such a way as to provide project teams with full decision-making autonomy while maintaining strategic coherence throughout the organization.

Maintaining a balance between decentralization and coordination turned out to be the foundation of the company's adaptability and its innovation. One of the most important conclusions from the research is that dividing the organization into small, interdisciplinary teams, so-called squads, allows for a significant acceleration of decision-making processes and enables quick response to changing market conditions and user needs.

Autonomous teams, operating within clearly defined goals, were able not only to plan and implement tasks independently, but also to introduce innovations and experiment with new solutions without the need for time-consuming approvals at higher levels of the hierarchy. This way of organizing work helped to shorten product production cycles and allowed for faster delivery of value to end users.

The analysis also showed that team autonomy had a direct impact on increased employee engagement and their sense of responsibility for work results. Squad members, having a real influence on the decisions made and the way projects were implemented, showed a higher level of motivation, which translated into team effectiveness and the quality of solutions provided.

These teams not only dealt better with problem solving, but also actively engaged in the processes of improving and optimizing their work, which strengthened the culture of continuous learning and development.

The research also confirmed that the use of tribe, chapter and guild structures allowed for effective coordination of the activities of numerous teams, while ensuring consistency in terms of technical standards, organizational values and business goals.

Tribes served as a link between autonomous teams and the entire organization, which enabled synchronization of activities without limiting the operational freedom of individual squads. Chapters, in turn, ensured uniform development of competences within similar professional specializations, while guilds strengthened the exchange of knowledge and built communities of practice around specific technological and organizational issues.

The research also found that a key factor in the success of Spotify’s model was a strong organizational culture based on the values of trust, openness, transparency, and accountability. A high level of trust between employees and managers allowed teams to take risks and experiment without fear of failure, which contributed to increased innovation and flexibility in the organization.

Transparency of goals and clear strategic communication allowed employees to better understand the direction of the company’s development and align their own actions with the organization’s priorities.

The conducted research also observed that the agile management model implemented at Spotify contributed to the organization's increased ability to scale its operations without losing its agility and operational efficiency.

Despite the rapid growth in the number of employees and teams, the organization was able to maintain a high speed of product delivery and maintain close contact with the needs of users. The use of a modular organizational structure allowed for the easy creation of new teams and their integration into the existing system without disrupting current business processes.

The conclusions from the research also confirmed that the implementation of an agile management model is not possible without a fundamental change in the approach to leadership. The role of leaders in the organization was transformed from a control and management function to a supporting and coordinating one.

Leaders played the role of mentors and facilitators, whose main task was to remove obstacles, support teams in development and provide conditions for effective cooperation and decision-making. This management method allowed for strengthening the independence of teams and increasing their ability to self-organize.

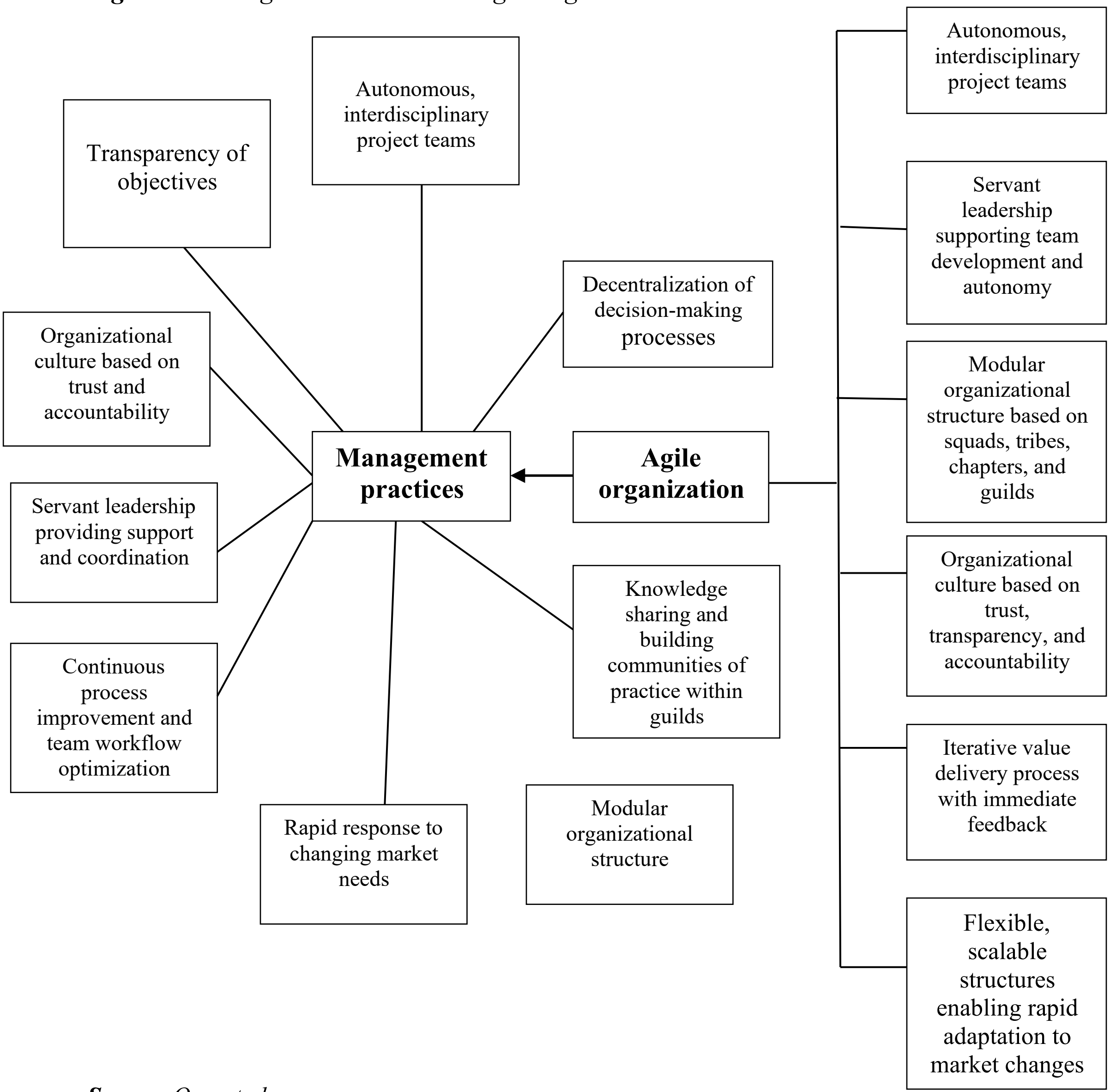
The final conclusions from the research showed that the agile management model implemented at Spotify can be effectively adapted to the needs of other organizations, provided that the specifics of the industry, organizational culture and scale of operations are taken into account. The key element of this approach is not only the implementation of specific structures or processes, but above all the development of an organizational culture that promotes flexibility, trust and continuous improvement.

Based on the collected data and analysis of Spotify's experience, the concept of an original agile management model was formulated, which can be adapted to various business conditions, ensuring a balance between scalability and maintaining the dynamics and innovation of operations.

Based on the considerations presented, an original model of management in an agile organization was constructed, which takes into account the key mechanisms and practices identified during the analysis of the Spotify case (see Figure 1). This model is presented in graphical form in Figure 1.

The proposed structure reflects a modular approach to work organization, in which the central role is played by autonomous project teams, combined into larger coordination units. The arrangement presented in the model illustrates how to maintain a balance between the independence of teams and the need to ensure the coherence of the strategic goals of the entire organization.

Figure 1. *Management model in an agile organization*



Source: *Own study.*

Figure 1 shows the basic structural elements, such as squads, tribes, chapters and guilds. Each of these components plays a specific role in the process of ensuring the operational agility of the organization. Squads are responsible for the independent implementation of projects, tribes coordinate their cooperation within specific functional areas, chapters ensure the development of competences within specialist roles, and guilds enable the exchange of knowledge and the development of good practices at the level of the entire organization.

The added value of such a constructed model is the structural and process flexibility, which enables quick adaptation of activities to changing environmental conditions. Autonomy of teams combined with a transparent system of setting goals promotes decentralization of decision-making processes and increases the efficiency of implementing innovations.

At the same time, the model enables scaling of operations without losing agility, which makes it particularly useful in organizations operating in dynamic sectors such as information technologies, digital services or creative industry.

Figure 1 also illustrates the relationship between the operational and strategic levels. The presented structure assumes the existence of clear mechanisms for synchronizing goals, such as the OKR (Objectives and Key Results) system, which ensures the coherence of activities at all organizational levels. Thanks to this, it is possible to maintain directional compliance with the company's mission and vision while maintaining a high degree of operational independence of individual teams.

The authors' model presented in Figure 1 also takes into account the role of servant leadership as an important element supporting the independence and development of teams. Leaders in this model act as mentors and facilitators, eliminating organizational barriers and enabling teams to effectively complete tasks. This type of approach strengthens an organizational culture based on trust, responsibility, and cooperation.

The added value of the proprietary management model in an agile organization is its universality and the ability to adapt to various industries and scales of operations. It was designed as a flexible operational structure that can be implemented in both small and large enterprises, taking into account their specific needs and market conditions. This model is an effective tool supporting organizations in their efforts to maintain competitiveness, innovation and high responsiveness to changes in the business environment.

4. Conclusions

The presented considerations and the author's model allow us to formulate recommendations that are guidelines for companies striving to implement an agile management model in their organizational structures. The conclusions drawn from the analysis of the Spotify case, as well as from our own research, allow us to state that organizational agility is not only a matter of adopting a specific methodology or work techniques, but is a holistic approach requiring changes at the level of structure, culture and leadership.

Therefore, the first recommendation is the need to redefine the current leadership model. Traditional managerial roles should be replaced by servant leaders, whose primary goal is to support teams, remove barriers in everyday work and inspire innovative actions. Such an approach requires building relationships based on trust and responsibility, which should be consistently developed as part of HR strategies.

The second important recommendation is to introduce a modular organizational structure based on autonomous, interdisciplinary project teams. These teams should have a clearly defined scope of responsibility and the right to make decisions in the areas for which they are responsible.

The condition for the effectiveness of this approach is to ensure a high level of transparency in the setting of strategic goals, which should be communicated in a clear and consistent manner at all organizational levels. The goal-setting system based on the OKR methodology facilitates the synchronization of team activities with the company's priorities and strengthens the sense of responsibility for implementing a common vision.

An important element recommended for implementation is the development of structures supporting knowledge transfer and building communities of practice. The example of Spotify shows how effectively chapters and guilds function, connecting specialists with similar competences, providing them with the opportunity to exchange experiences and improve their qualifications. Such initiatives also support the standardization of practices and tools used in the organization, which allows for maintaining the coherence of actions despite the high level of team autonomy.

It is also recommended to implement iterative value delivery processes that allow for rapid innovation and flexible response to changing customer needs. Regular user feedback and A/B testing minimize the risk associated with implementing new solutions and increase the probability of market success of offered products and services. It is crucial to create an organizational environment that not only accepts experimentation, but also treats failures as part of the learning and improvement process.

Another recommendation is the need to systematically organize team retrospectives, which allow for analyzing the effectiveness of previous activities, identifying areas for improvement and implementing changes that increase work efficiency. Such meetings should be incorporated into the constant rhythm of team work, which allows for maintaining a high level of adaptability and operational efficiency.

Companies implementing an agile management model should also take care to create conditions that allow for rapid scaling of team structures. Spotify's experience indicates that a modular structure facilitates both the expansion of existing teams and the establishment of new ones, without disrupting the functioning of the entire organization. Scalability should be based on uniform principles and procedures, while maintaining flexibility that allows for adaptation to the specifics of a specific project or market.

Finally, it is recommended to build a strong organizational culture, which is the foundation of agility. It should promote values such as trust, openness, transparency and responsibility. This culture should be consistent at all levels of the organization and reinforced through appropriate recruitment processes, onboarding programs, motivational systems and competence development policies. Maintaining a consistent and engaging organizational culture is crucial for the effective implementation and maintenance of an agile management model.

These recommendations are universal and can be implemented in companies of various sizes and operating in various industries. However, their effectiveness depends on their adaptation to the specifics of a specific organization, its strategic goals and the market context. The use of these practices, based on the proven model functioning at Spotify and the results of our own analyses, allows us to build an organization that remains flexible, innovative and able to effectively compete in a dynamically changing business environment.

5. Limitations

The limitations of the presented case study result primarily from the fact that the analysis was based on one specific example of an organization, namely Spotify. This type of approach, although it allows for an in-depth analysis of the mechanisms of functioning of the agile management model in practice, does not allow for the full generalization of conclusions and recommendations to other companies with different specificity, organizational structure or operating in other sectors of the economy.

The case study includes specific internal conditions of Spotify, such as organizational culture, level of technological maturity and the market context in which the company operates, which may limit the possibility of direct transfer of developed solutions to other organizations without the need for their significant adaptation.

Another limitation is the subjectivity of data sources, which were largely based on interviews with company employees, analysis of internal documents and observation of processes. Despite the diligence in collecting information and its verification, it is not possible to completely exclude the influence of personal experiences, beliefs and assessments of respondents on the obtained results. Also, the fact that the analysis mainly concerned positive aspects of the implemented model may suggest selectivity in the selection of presented data, which potentially limits the objectivity in assessing the effectiveness of the entire system.

The case study focuses on a period of dynamic organizational development, which means that the results obtained may be time-limited and do not take into account the long-term consequences of the adopted management model. There is a lack of data on how structures based on autonomous teams cope in crisis situations, slowdowns in growth, or external changes that force the restructuring of the entire organization.

Another significant limitation of the analysis is the lack of comparison with other organizations that have implemented similar agile management models. The lack of a broader comparative perspective makes it difficult to assess whether the effects achieved by Spotify are the result of unique characteristics of the organization or a universal benefit resulting from the implementation of such a management concept. There is also a lack of quantitative data that could support the assessment of the effectiveness of the implemented model in a more measurable and comparable way.

The study’s limitations also include the scale of the analysis, which did not cover all aspects of the company’s operations, focusing mainly on the organizational structure and team management processes. It omitted a number of other factors that may affect the effectiveness of an agile organization, such as technological issues, legal and financial aspects, or relationships with external partners.

Finally, a significant limitation is that the Spotify model is not a rigid methodology, but a dynamic solution that is constantly being modified and adapted to the changing needs of the organization. For this reason, the conclusions from the study should be treated as a description of the state at a specific point in the company's development, which does not necessarily reflect current practices or directions of future changes.

6. Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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