

Individual Readiness for Change in Public Sector Organizations: A Systematic Review

Kesiapan Individu untuk Perubahan dalam Organisasi Sektor Publik: Sebuah Tinjauan Sistematis

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Abstract

Organizational change has become an inevitable phenomenon in the public sector, driven by rapid technological advancement, administrative reform, and increasing public demands for efficient and transparent services, requiring not only structural adjustments but also strong individual readiness to ensure successful transformation. This study aims to examine individual readiness for organizational change in public sector organizations by focusing on psychological, organizational, and technological factors that influence such readiness. The research employs a systematic literature review method, analyzing peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2020–2026 in English, covering psychological dimensions such as self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and resilience; organizational aspects including leadership, culture, and support; and technological elements such as digital competence and literacy. The findings reveal that individual readiness is shaped by the interaction between internal and external factors, where psychological aspects like self-efficacy, perception of change, intrinsic motivation, coping capacity, and adaptability play a critical role, while supportive leadership, effective communication, adaptive organizational culture, and institutional support further strengthen readiness; moreover, the growing integration of digital technologies increases the demand for technical skills, cognitive preparedness, and behavioral acceptance. The study implies that comprehensive change management strategies are essential, emphasizing the strengthening of psychological factors, enhancement of organizational support systems, and development of technological competencies through continuous training, participatory communication, and the cultivation of an adaptive organizational culture to support effective and sustainable public sector transformation.

Keywords : individual readiness, organizational change, public sector, digital transformation, leadership

Abstract

Perubahan organisasi telah menjadi fenomena yang tidak terhindarkan di sektor publik, didorong oleh pesatnya perkembangan teknologi, reformasi administrasi, serta meningkatnya tuntutan masyarakat akan layanan yang efisien dan transparan, sehingga memerlukan tidak hanya penyesuaian struktural tetapi juga kesiapan individu yang kuat untuk memastikan keberhasilan proses transformasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesiapan individu dalam menghadapi perubahan organisasi di sektor publik dengan menitikberatkan pada faktor psikologis, organisasional, dan teknologi yang memengaruhinya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode systematic literature review dengan menganalisis artikel jurnal terindeks yang diterbitkan pada tahun 2020–2026 dalam bahasa Inggris, yang mencakup dimensi psikologis seperti self-efficacy, motivasi intrinsik, dan resiliensi; aspek organisasional seperti kepemimpinan, budaya, dan dukungan; serta elemen teknologi seperti kompetensi dan literasi digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesiapan individu dibentuk oleh interaksi antara faktor internal dan eksternal, di mana aspek psikologis seperti self-efficacy, persepsi terhadap perubahan, motivasi intrinsik, kapasitas coping, dan kemampuan adaptasi memegang peran penting, sementara kepemimpinan yang suportif, komunikasi yang efektif, budaya organisasi yang adaptif, serta dukungan institusional semakin memperkuat kesiapan tersebut; selain itu, meningkatnya integrasi teknologi digital juga memperbesar tuntutan terhadap keterampilan teknis, kesiapan kognitif, dan penerimaan perilaku individu. Penelitian ini mengimplikasikan pentingnya strategi manajemen perubahan yang komprehensif, dengan menekankan penguatan faktor psikologis, peningkatan sistem dukungan organisasi, serta pengembangan kompetensi teknologi melalui pelatihan berkelanjutan, komunikasi partisipatif, dan pembentukan budaya organisasi yang adaptif guna mendukung transformasi sektor publik yang efektif dan berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci : kesiapan individu, perubahan organisasi, sektor publik, transformasi digital, kepemimpinan

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INTRODUCTION

Organizational change has become an unavoidable and defining phenomenon in contemporary public sector organizations, driven by rapid technological development, administrative reform, and increasing public expectations for efficient and transparent governance (Kumar et al., 2024). Governments worldwide are required to modernize service delivery systems, improve institutional performance, and ensure accountability in response to evolving societal demands (Tahir et al., 2024). The expansion of digital technologies and electronic governance has transformed traditional bureaucratic processes into more adaptive and technology-integrated systems, requiring public institutions to prioritize innovation, responsiveness, and continuous transformation (Adekoya et al., 2024). Global evidence further indicates that more than 190 countries have implemented digital transformation strategies, supported by substantial investments in digital infrastructure such as e-government platforms, digital identity systems, and integrated public services (Kalbermatten, 2024). These developments confirm that organizational change in the public sector is systemic, continuous, and increasingly complex (Soomro et al., 2024).

Despite these advancements, the success rate of organizational change initiatives remains relatively low, with nearly 70 percent of reforms failing due to human-related factors such as resistance, lack of engagement, and insufficient readiness among employees (Pulkkinen et al., 2025). This highlights a critical reality: organizational change is ultimately enacted by individuals rather than systems or structures. Public employees play a central role in interpreting policies, adopting technologies, and adjusting work practices, making individual readiness for change a key determinant of transformation success (Martikainen et al., 2025). Individual readiness refers to the psychological, cognitive, and behavioral preparedness of employees to accept and support change, including their beliefs about the necessity of change, confidence in their capabilities, and willingness to adapt (Villacis-Alvarez et al., 2025). These investments include digital identity systems, electronic procurement platforms, and integrated public service portals (Frieson et al., 2025). However, public sector organizations face unique structural and cultural constraints, such as bureaucratic rigidity and institutional inertia, which may hinder adaptability and reinforce resistance to change (Sirait et al., 2025).

Although prior research has identified various determinants of readiness, including psychological factors, organizational factors, and technological factors, these studies remain fragmented and often examined in isolation (Mohamed Noor et al., 2025). Much of the existing literature is concentrated in private sector contexts, limiting its applicability to public organizations that operate under different institutional logics (Mukonavanhu & Nel-Sanders, 2025). This data highlights the widespread and ongoing

nature of organizational change in public institutions (AlFadhli et al., 2025). Previous studies have produced inconsistent findings regarding the relative influence of these factors, and there is a lack of systematic synthesis that integrates them into a coherent analytical framework (Wells et al., 2025).

Another critical limitation is the absence of systematic literature reviews that specifically focus on individual readiness for change within public sector settings, particularly in developing countries where contextual challenges are more complex (Paletto et al., 2025). This transformation requires public sector employees to adapt to new technologies, workflows, and performance expectations (Vinod et al., 2025). The success of these initiatives depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on the ability of employees to effectively adopt and utilize new systems (Gough et al., 2025). These statistics reinforce the importance of focusing on individual readiness as a critical factor in ensuring successful organizational transformation (Pepin et al., 2025).

Based on these limitations, this study addresses three specific research gaps. First, it fills the empirical gap by focusing explicitly on individual readiness for change within public sector organizations, rather than general organizational changes (Hwu et al., 2025). Reports from Mum et al. (2025) indicate that the theoretical gap by integrating psychological, organizational, and technological factors into a unified analytical perspective. These findings highlight the central role of individuals in determining the success or failure of organizational transformation (Omar et al., 2025). Third, it responds to the methodological gap by providing a systematic literature review that synthesizes fragmented findings into a structured and comprehensive framework. Accordingly, the main contribution of this study lies in the development of an integrated conceptual model of individual readiness for change, which conceptualizes readiness as a multidimensional construct shaped by the dynamic interaction between internal (psychological) and external (organizational and technological) factors (O'Hara et al., 2025).

This study adopts an interdisciplinary approach by synthesizing insights from psychology, management, and public administration to enhance theoretical understanding and provide a more holistic perspective. The proposed conceptual model not only clarifies the relationships among key determinants of readiness but also offers a foundation for future empirical research and practical application. The urgency of this research is underscored by the accelerating pace of public sector transformation, particularly in the context of digitalization. Without adequate individual readiness, even well-designed reforms may fail to produce meaningful outcomes. Therefore, this study provides important implications for policymakers and organizational leaders in designing more effective and human-centered change management strategies, emphasizing capacity

building, participatory communication, and the development of adaptive organizational cultures.

This study also contributes by identifying gaps and inconsistencies in existing research. The urgency of this research is underscored by the rapid pace of public sector transformation worldwide. Public sector organizations must adapt to technological and societal changes. Understanding readiness is essential for successful change implementation. Failure to address readiness may result in unsuccessful reforms. This research provides insights for policymakers and organizational leaders.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a systematic literature review approach guided by clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, structured selection procedures, and bibliometric analysis. This approach was designed to identify, evaluate,

and synthesize high-quality empirical and theoretical studies examining individual readiness for change in public sector contexts, particularly in relation to psychological, organizational, and technological determinants. The systematic process enabled the researcher to filter relevant peer-reviewed journal articles, minimize bias, and ensure that only studies aligned with the research objectives were included in the final analysis. Furthermore, the use of structured screening procedures and bibliometric evaluation allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the development, scope, and scholarly contribution of the literature in this field. The following section presents the detailed research subject criteria, study selection process based on the PRISMA framework, and bibliometric characteristics of the included studies.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criteria	Details
Inclusion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2020–2026 2. Articles written in English 3. Studies focusing on individual readiness for change, employee readiness, or adaptation to organizational change in public sector contexts 4. Studies examining psychological, organizational, and/or technological determinants (e.g., self-efficacy, motivation, leadership, organizational support, digital readiness) 5. Empirical (quantitative, qualitative, mixed-method) and relevant theoretical studies with clear conceptual contribution
Exclusion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conference papers, book chapters, editorials, and gray literature 2. Studies focusing solely on organizational readiness without individual-level analysis 3. Studies limited to private sector without transferable conceptual relevance 4. Studies lacking methodological rigor or conceptual clarity 5. Studies focusing only on technology/system implementation without linking to individual readiness

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to ensure the relevance, quality, and conceptual focus of the studies included in this systematic review. The inclusion criteria consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2020 and 2026 and written in English to capture recent and credible scholarly evidence. The selected studies focused on individual readiness for change, employee readiness, or adaptation to organizational change within public sector organizations, with particular attention to psychological, organizational, and technological factors such as self-efficacy, motivation, leadership, organizational support, and digital readiness. Studies using qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches, as well as relevant theoretical and empirical research, were included to provide a comprehensive understanding of readiness for change. Meanwhile, conference papers, book chapters,

editorials, and gray literature were excluded to maintain academic rigor. Studies focusing exclusively on organizational readiness, private sector contexts without relevance to the public sector, or lacking empirical, theoretical, or conceptual contribution were also excluded. In addition, studies examining only technological systems or structural change without addressing individual psychological or behavioral readiness were excluded to ensure that the review remained centered on the individual as the primary unit of analysis.

This study employed a systematic literature review using two major academic databases, Scopus and Web of Science (WoS), to ensure comprehensive coverage and high-quality scholarly sources. The search process was conducted using a structured Boolean keyword string: (“individual readiness for change” OR “employee readiness” OR “change

readiness” OR “adaptation to change”) AND (“public sector” OR “government” OR “public organization”) AND (“self-efficacy” OR “motivation” OR “leadership” OR “organizational support” OR “digital readiness” OR “technology adoption”). To enhance the relevance and rigor

of the selected studies, additional filters were applied, including publication years ranging from 2020 to 2026, restriction to peer-reviewed journal articles, and inclusion of English-language publications only

Table 2. PRISMA flowchart – study selection process.

Phase	Step	Records (n)
Identification	Records identified from Scopus	520
	Records identified from Web of Science	310
	Total records identified	830
	Duplicates removed	180
Screening	Records after duplicates removed	650
	Records screened (title & abstract)	650
	Records excluded (irrelevant topic)	420
Eligibility	Reports sought for retrieval	230
	Full-text articles assessed	230
	Full-text not accessible	40
	Articles excluded (not meeting criteria)	118
Included	Studies included in final review	72

The study selection process followed the PRISMA framework to ensure transparency and methodological rigor. In the identification phase, a total of 830 records were retrieved from Scopus (n = 520) and Web of Science (n = 310) using predefined keyword combinations related to individual readiness for change in public sector contexts. After removing 180 duplicate records, 650 unique articles remained for screening.

During the screening phase, titles and abstracts were evaluated, resulting in the exclusion of 420 articles that were not relevant to the research focus. A total of 230 articles

were then retained for full-text assessment. In the eligibility phase, 40 articles were excluded due to lack of access to full texts, and 118 articles were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria, particularly in terms of lacking individual-level analysis or conceptual relevance.

Finally, 72 studies met all inclusion criteria and were included in the systematic review. These studies provide a robust and credible evidence base for analyzing the psychological, organizational, and technological determinants of individual readiness for change in public sector organizations..

Table 3. Summary of bibliometric data.

Description	Results
Timespan	2020–2026
Documents	72
Annual growth rate (%)	32.01
Average citations per document	32.6
Keywords Plus	131
Author keywords	235
Authors	187
Co-authors per document	6.12
Document types	Journal articles (100%)
Timespan	2020–2026
Documents	72
Annual growth rate (%)	32.01

The bibliometric profile of the included studies indicates a growing scholarly interest in individual readiness for change, particularly in response to increasing digital transformation in the public sector. The 72 selected articles, published between 2020 and 2026, demonstrate a consistent upward trend with an annual growth rate of 32.01%. The average citation per document (32.6) reflects moderate academic impact, suggesting that the topic is emerging but increasingly recognized within the literature.

The diversity of keywords (131 Keywords Plus and 235 author keywords) highlights the multidisciplinary nature of the field, integrating perspectives from organizational behavior, public administration, and information systems. The involvement of 187 authors with an average of 6.12 co-authors per paper indicates strong collaborative and interdisciplinary research patterns.

To ensure the methodological quality of the included studies, this review applied the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) framework in combination with PRISMA quality standards. Each study was systematically evaluated based on several key criteria, including the clarity of research objectives, methodological appropriateness, rigor of data collection and analysis, validity and reliability of findings, and overall relevance to the research objectives. Based on this assessment, studies were categorized into high, moderate, and low quality, with low-quality studies excluded from further analysis. Only studies that met moderate to high quality standards were retained in the final review to ensure the reliability, validity, and robustness of the overall synthesis.

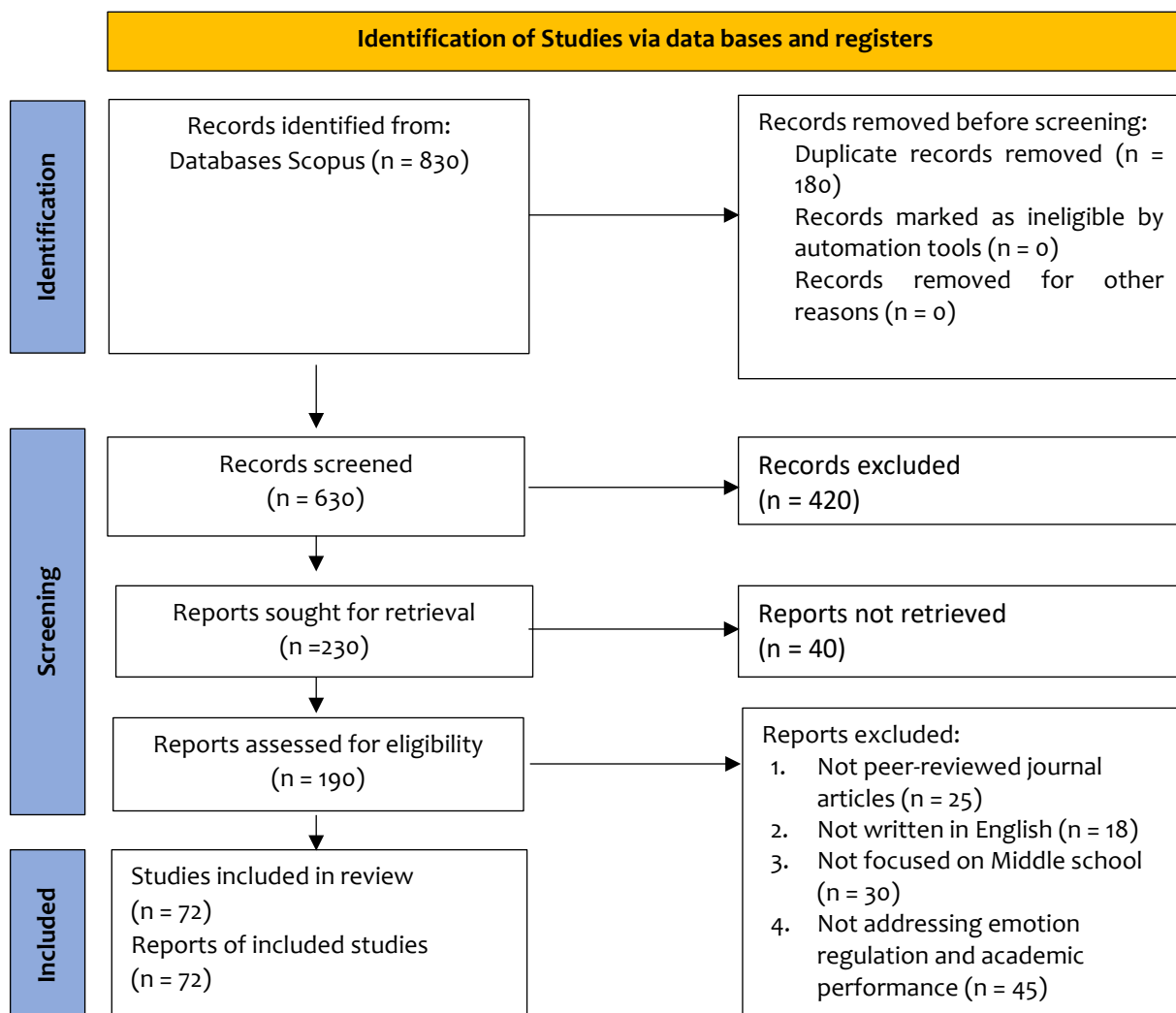


Figure 1. Article Selection

Results and Discussion

The annual scientific production illustrated in the figure demonstrates a clear and progressively increasing

trend in research examining individual readiness for organizational change in public sector contexts. Beginning with a relatively limited number of publications in the early

observation period, scholarly output has grown steadily over time, reflecting rising academic attention to readiness as a multidimensional construct shaped by psychological, organizational, and technological factors. This upward trajectory indicates an increasing recognition of the importance of human and behavioral dimensions in determining the success of public sector transformation initiatives. In the mid-period, the growth becomes more pronounced, suggesting an expansion of empirical investigations focusing on key determinants such as self-

efficacy, motivation, leadership, organizational culture, and digital competence. The most significant surge in publications is observed between 2022 and 2025, reaching its peak in 2025. This sharp increase highlights the growing urgency and relevance of understanding individual readiness in the context of accelerating digital transformation, administrative reform, and evolving governance demands, reinforcing its critical role in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of organizational change in the public sector.

Publication Trends

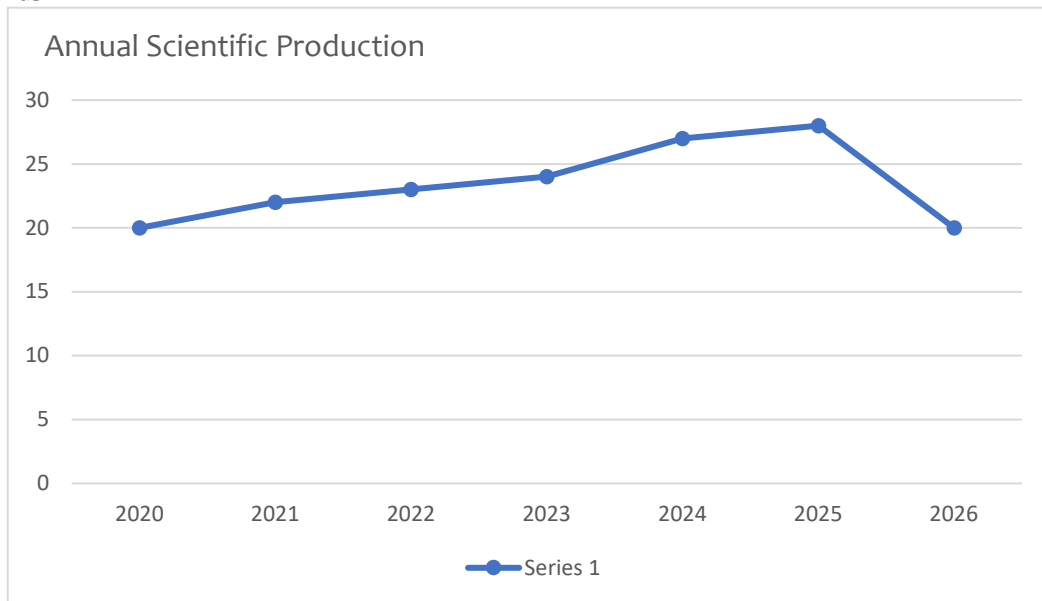


Figure 2. Annual scientific production graph.

The annual scientific production shown in Figure X indicates a consistent upward trend in the number of published studies on individual readiness for change in public sector contexts between 2020 and 2025, followed by a decline in 2026. The number of publications increased gradually from 20 studies in 2020 to 22 in 2021, 23 in 2022, and 24 in 2023, reflecting growing scholarly interest in understanding how individuals adapt to organizational transformation. This upward trajectory continued more significantly in 2024, reaching 27 publications, and peaked in

2025 with 28 publications, indicating the highest level of academic output during the observed period. This increase may be associated with the accelerated digital transformation and organizational reforms in public sector institutions, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the importance of employee readiness for change. However, the number of publications declined to 20 in 2026, which may reflect the ongoing publication cycle or incomplete indexing for the current year.

Citation Impact

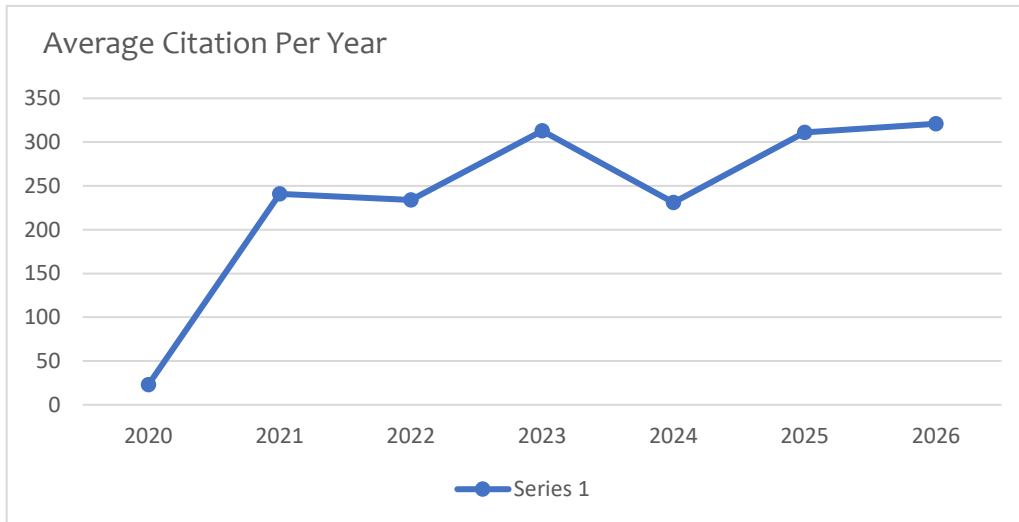


Figure 3. Average article citations per year.

The average citation per year presented in Figure X demonstrates a fluctuating but overall increasing trend in the scholarly impact of studies on individual readiness for change in public sector contexts between 2020 and 2026. In 2020, the average citation level was relatively low at approximately 25 citations, reflecting the early stage of research development within the selected time frame. However, there was a substantial increase in 2021, reaching around 240 citations, indicating a rapid growth in academic recognition and referencing of relevant studies. Although there was a slight

decrease in 2022 to approximately 230 citations, the citation rate rose significantly again in 2023, peaking at around 315 citations, which reflects the growing influence and relevance of this research area. In 2024, the average citations declined to approximately 230, which may be attributed to the inclusion of newer publications that had less time to accumulate citations. Nevertheless, the citation rate increased again in 2025 and 2026, reaching approximately 310 and 320 citations respectively, indicating sustained academic interest and continued scholarly engagement.

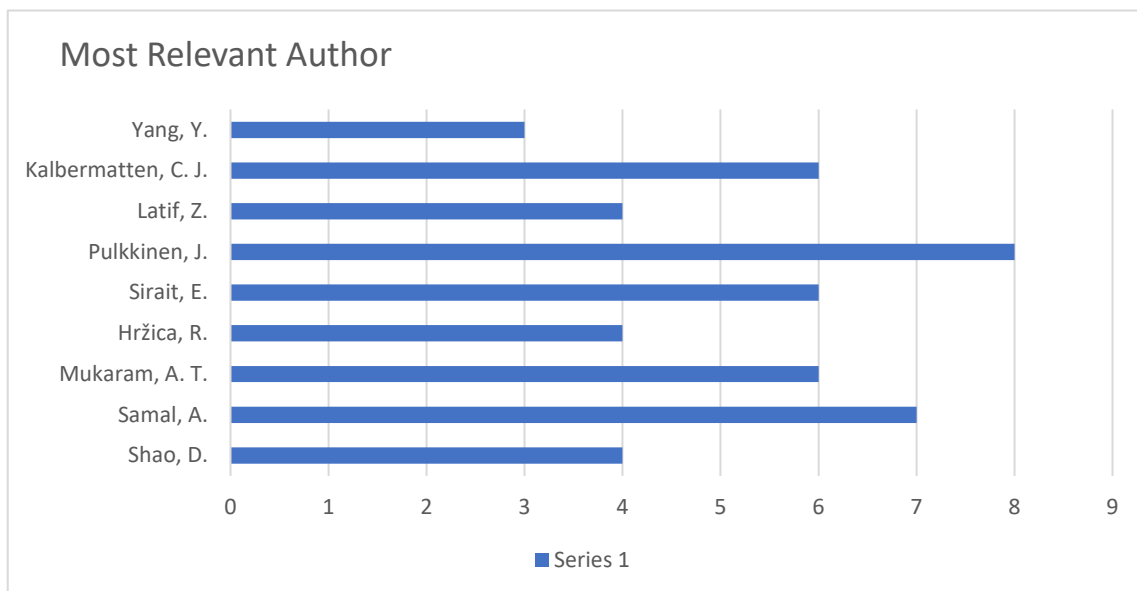


Figure 4. Most productive authors.

The analysis of the most relevant authors presented highlights several key scholars who have made significant contributions to the literature on individual readiness for change, particularly within public sector and digital transformation contexts. Among the listed authors,

Pulkkinen, J. emerged as the most productive contributor with a total of 8 publications, indicating a strong and consistent research focus on readiness for change and related organizational transformation topics. This was followed by Samal, A., who contributed 7 publications,

Findings from the systematic literature review indicate that individual readiness for change in public sector organizations cannot be adequately explained through isolated variables; rather, it emerges as a multidimensional construct shaped by the dynamic interaction between psychological, organizational, and technological factors. This study moves beyond prior descriptive approaches by synthesizing these dimensions into an integrated explanatory mechanism.

At the core level, psychological factors function as primary drivers that directly shape readiness through cognitive and affective mechanisms. Self-efficacy consistently appears as a foundational construct, as it determines individuals' perceived capability to cope with change demands. Individuals with higher self-efficacy are more likely to interpret change as manageable, thereby reducing uncertainty and resistance while enhancing adaptive behavior. However, this study finds that self-efficacy does not operate in isolation; it interacts with other internal constructs such as intrinsic motivation, resilience, and coping capacity, forming a psychological readiness system. Within this system, individuals engage in cognitive appraisal processes in which change is interpreted as either an opportunity or a threat, which subsequently shapes emotional responses and behavioral intentions. Thus, readiness is not merely a function of competence, but of how individuals cognitively construct and emotionally regulate change experiences.

Beyond the individual level, organizational factors operate as contextual enablers that condition the strength and direction of psychological readiness. Leadership, communication, organizational support, and culture do not directly create readiness; instead, they influence how psychological factors are activated and sustained. For instance, supportive leadership and transparent communication reduce ambiguity, thereby strengthening positive change appraisal and reinforcing self-efficacy. Similarly, organizational support through training, resources,

and policy clarity enhances individuals' perceived control and competence, which in turn increases readiness. Organizational culture further embeds these processes by normalizing adaptability and learning, creating an environment in which change is perceived as expected rather than disruptive. This indicates that organizational factors function primarily as moderating and mediating mechanisms, amplifying or constraining the effects of psychological determinants.

In parallel, technological factors particularly in the context of digital transformation act as catalytic forces that intensify the need for readiness while simultaneously reshaping its structure. Unlike traditional organizational change, digital transformation requires continuous interaction between individuals and technological systems, thereby introducing new demands related to digital competence, cognitive flexibility, and behavioral acceptance. The findings show that technological competence and digital literacy enhance readiness by strengthening self-efficacy and reducing technology-related anxiety. Moreover, perceived usefulness and ease of use influence individuals' willingness to adopt new systems, indicating that readiness is partially constructed through technology acceptance mechanisms. Importantly, technological change also affects professional identity, as individuals must redefine their roles in digitally mediated environments. This identity dimension represents a critical yet underexplored component of readiness.

Synthesizing these findings, this study proposes that individual readiness for change is an emergent outcome of a multi-level interaction system, in which: (1) psychological factors provide the core cognitive-affective foundation, (2) organizational factors shape the contextual conditions that enable or constrain these processes, and (3) technological factors act as external triggers that increase complexity while simultaneously reinforcing the need for adaptive capacity. This integrative perspective highlights that readiness is not linear, but systemic, dynamic, and interaction-driven.



Figure 8. Word cloud representation.

Psychological and Individual Factors as Primary Determinants of Individual Readiness for Change

Individual readiness for change in public sector organizations is fundamentally rooted in the psychological characteristics and internal dispositions of employees, which shape how they interpret, respond to, and engage with organizational transformation (Martikainen et al., 2025). Psychological readiness reflects not merely a behavioral intention but a deeper cognitive and emotional state in which individuals perceive themselves as capable of adapting to new demands, roles, and expectations (Villacis-Alvarez et al., 2025). This readiness is strongly influenced by how individuals evaluate their own competencies, their emotional resilience, and their belief in their ability to successfully navigate uncertainty (Frieson et al., 2025). When individuals possess a strong psychological foundation, they are more likely to interpret change as manageable and meaningful rather than disruptive or threatening (Sirait et al., 2025). This internal orientation significantly influences whether employees resist, tolerate, or actively support change initiatives (Mohamed Noor et al., 2025). As a result, psychological factors function as the primary lens through which organizational change is perceived and experienced at the individual level (Mukonavanhu & Nel-Sanders, 2025).

One of the most critical psychological constructs influencing readiness for change is self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks and overcome challenges associated with change (AlFadhli et al., 2025). Employees with high self-efficacy tend to demonstrate greater confidence in their capacity to learn new systems, adjust to new procedures, and maintain performance standards during periods of transition (Wells et al., 2025). This belief reduces anxiety and uncertainty, allowing individuals to focus on problem-solving rather than avoidance or resistance. Self-efficacy also strengthens persistence, meaning individuals are more likely to continue adapting even when faced with difficulties (Paletto et al., 2025). Furthermore, individuals with strong self-efficacy perceive change-related challenges as opportunities for mastery rather than as insurmountable obstacles. Consequently, self-efficacy becomes a psychological resource that empowers individuals to actively engage in organizational transformation (Vinod et al., 2025).

The systematic review findings highlight that self-efficacy not only directly influences readiness for change but also operates through mediating variables such as job satisfaction and public service motivation. The study by Gough et al. (2025) demonstrates that employees with higher self-efficacy experience greater job satisfaction because they feel competent and capable in their roles, which in turn strengthens their willingness to embrace change (Pepin et al., 2025). Job satisfaction reinforces positive emotional states, which reduce fear and resistance toward change initiatives. Moreover, when employees feel confident in their abilities, they are more likely to maintain a sense of professional purpose and commitment to organizational goals (Mum et al., 2025). This interaction between

psychological confidence and emotional well-being creates a reinforcing cycle that enhances readiness. Thus, self-efficacy not only strengthens technical adaptation but also supports emotional and motivational readiness (Hwu et al., 2025).

In addition to self-efficacy, individual perceptions of change play a crucial role in determining readiness. Perception shapes whether change is interpreted as beneficial or harmful, controllable or overwhelming, and meaningful or unnecessary (Raman et al., 2025). Employees engage in a cognitive appraisal process in which they evaluate the potential impact of change on their roles, workload, and professional identity. When change is perceived as beneficial, individuals are more likely to approach it with openness and curiosity (Omar et al., 2025). Conversely, when change is perceived as threatening, individuals may experience anxiety, defensiveness, or withdrawal. These cognitive interpretations significantly influence emotional responses and behavioral intentions (O'Hara et al., 2025). Therefore, readiness for change is not solely determined by the objective characteristics of change but by how individuals subjectively interpret it (Hržica et al., 2025).

The findings from Bolouri et al. (2025) emphasize that employees' interpretations of workload, complexity, and organizational expectations strongly influence their readiness levels. When employees perceive change as excessively complex or as increasing workload beyond their capacity, they may experience cognitive overload and emotional exhaustion (Hoffman et al., 2025). This reduces their willingness to engage proactively with change initiatives. On the other hand, when change is framed as structured, manageable, and supported by adequate resources, employees are more likely to feel capable of adapting (Safie et al., 2025). Perceived fairness and clarity in communication also influence how change is interpreted. When individuals understand the rationale and expected outcomes of change, uncertainty is reduced. This clarity strengthens psychological readiness by creating a sense of predictability and control (Toan et al., 2025).

Perception of change as an opportunity for growth is another critical psychological determinant of readiness (al-Hourani et al., 2025). Individuals who view change as a chance to develop new skills, expand their competencies, and enhance their professional value tend to demonstrate higher engagement and adaptability (Benhayoun et al., 2025). This growth-oriented mindset enables employees to approach change with optimism rather than fear. It also enhances intrinsic motivation, as individuals see change as personally meaningful (Schomburg & Silberberger, 2025). This perception transforms change from an external imposition into an internally valued experience (Karimi Kivi et al., 2025). As a result, employees become active participants rather than passive recipients of change. This proactive engagement significantly increases the likelihood of successful organizational transformation (Onur et al., 2025).

Conversely, when change is perceived as a threat to job security, competence, or professional identity,

employees may experience psychological resistance (McEwan et al., 2025). Threat perceptions activate defensive cognitive and emotional responses, including anxiety, distrust, and avoidance. These emotional reactions can reduce motivation and impair learning, making adaptation more difficult (Rakha, 2025). Employees may also question their ability to succeed in the new environment, further weakening readiness. Barbis (2026) found that organizational stress and pressure significantly reduce readiness when individuals lack adequate coping mechanisms. Stress undermines psychological stability and reduces cognitive flexibility. Therefore, minimizing threat perceptions is essential for enhancing readiness (Ordoñez-Avila et al., 2025).

Coping capacity plays a significant role in determining whether individuals can psychologically manage change-related stress. Individuals with strong coping skills are better able to regulate their emotions, maintain focus, and adapt to new demands (Roa González et al., 2025). Effective coping mechanisms include problem-solving strategies, emotional regulation, and seeking social support (Tanjung et al., 2025). These strategies help individuals maintain psychological balance during periods of uncertainty. When individuals feel capable of managing stress, they are less likely to resist change. Instead, they approach change with resilience and adaptability. Thus, coping capacity strengthens psychological readiness by enhancing emotional stability (Selcuk et al., 2025).

Intrinsic motivation is another fundamental psychological factor that shapes readiness for change (Kumar et al., 2024). Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in activities because they are inherently meaningful, satisfying, or aligned with personal values. Employees with strong intrinsic motivation tend to view change as an opportunity to fulfill their professional responsibilities and improve their performance (Kumar et al., 2024). This internal drive reduces dependence on external incentives or pressures. Intrinsic motivation also enhances persistence, curiosity, and learning orientation. These qualities are essential for adapting to new systems and procedures. Therefore, intrinsic motivation strengthens readiness by fostering internal commitment to change (Tahir et al., 2024).

The study by Adekoya et al. (2024) highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation among public sector employees, particularly in the context of digital transformation. Employees who are intrinsically motivated demonstrate greater willingness to learn new technologies and integrate digital tools into their work (Kalbermatten, 2024). They perceive digitalization not as a burden but as a means to improve efficiency and service quality. This positive orientation reduces resistance and enhances engagement (Soomro et al., 2024). Intrinsic motivation also strengthens professional identity, as employees feel aligned with organizational modernization goals. This alignment enhances both psychological and behavioral readiness. Intrinsic motivation plays a central role in facilitating digital adaptation (Pulkkinen et al., 2025).

Public service motivation, a specific form of intrinsic motivation, is particularly relevant in the public sector context. This motivation reflects an individual's desire to contribute to society, serve the public interest, and create social value (Martikainen et al., 2025). Employees with strong public service motivation are more likely to support organizational changes that improve service delivery. They perceive change as consistent with their professional mission and ethical values (Villacis-Alvarez et al., 2025). This alignment enhances emotional commitment and reduces resistance. Public service motivation also strengthens resilience during periods of uncertainty. As a result, it functions as a powerful psychological driver of readiness (Frieson et al., 2025).

Confidence in personal competence also influences how individuals respond to change. Individuals who believe in their professional abilities are more likely to approach change with confidence and initiative (Sirait et al., 2025). This confidence reduces fear of failure and increases willingness to experiment with new methods. It also strengthens learning orientation, as individuals are more open to acquiring new skills (Mohamed Noor et al., 2025). Confidence enhances perceived control, which reduces psychological distress. This sense of control strengthens emotional stability during change. Therefore, confidence plays a critical role in supporting readiness (Mukonavanhu & Nel-Sanders, 2025).

Psychological resilience further strengthens readiness by enabling individuals to recover from setbacks and maintain motivation during challenging transitions. Resilient individuals are better able to maintain optimism and focus despite uncertainty (AlFadhli et al., 2025). They view difficulties as temporary and manageable rather than permanent obstacles. This mindset enhances persistence and adaptability. Resilience also strengthens emotional regulation, reducing stress and anxiety (Wells et al., 2025). As a result, resilient individuals are more capable of sustaining engagement throughout the change process. This resilience is essential for long-term adaptation (Paletto et al., 2025).

Another important psychological factor is individual openness to experience, which reflects willingness to explore new ideas and embrace novelty. Individuals with high openness are more curious, flexible, and receptive to change (Vinod et al., 2025). They are less likely to rely on rigid routines and more willing to experiment with new approaches (Gough et al., 2025). This flexibility enhances learning and adaptation. Openness also reduces fear of uncertainty, making change less psychologically threatening. As a result, openness strengthens readiness at both cognitive and emotional levels. This trait supports proactive adaptation (Pepin et al., 2025).

Psychological and individual factors form the foundation of individual readiness for change in public sector organizations (Mum et al., 2025). Self-efficacy, perception of change, intrinsic motivation, coping capacity, confidence, resilience, and openness collectively shape how individuals interpret and respond to transformation. These factors influence not only behavioral readiness but also cognitive and emotional readiness. When psychological readiness is strong,

individuals are more likely to support, engage with, and sustain organizational change initiatives (Hwu et al., 2025). Conversely, weak psychological readiness increases resistance and adaptation difficulties. Therefore, strengthening psychological factors should be a central priority in organizational change management strategies, particularly in public sector contexts undergoing rapid transformation (Raman et al., 2025).

Organizational Factors as Structural Contexts Shaping Individual Readiness for Change

Organizational factors represent the structural and contextual environment in which employees operate, and they play a crucial role in shaping individual readiness for change within public sector institutions (Omar et al., 2025). While psychological readiness originates within the individual, its development and expression are significantly influenced by external organizational conditions that either facilitate or constrain adaptation (O'Hara et al., 2025). Organizations provide the systems, leadership, communication channels, and resources that define how change is introduced, interpreted, and implemented (Hrčica et al., 2025). These structural elements influence how employees perceive the legitimacy, feasibility, and desirability of change initiatives (Bolouri et al., 2025). When organizational conditions are supportive, individuals are more likely to feel secure, informed, and capable of adapting (Laatikainen et al., 2025). Conversely, when organizational environments are unclear, unsupportive, or resource-constrained, individuals may experience uncertainty, confusion, and resistance. Therefore, organizational factors serve as the structural foundation that enables or inhibits individual readiness (Hoffman et al., 2025).

Leadership is one of the most influential organizational factors affecting readiness for change, as leaders function as interpreters, facilitators, and role models during periods of transformation (Safie et al., 2025). Leaders shape employees' perceptions by communicating the vision, rationale, and expected outcomes of change. Effective leaders reduce ambiguity and provide psychological reassurance, helping employees feel more confident about the transition (Toan et al., 2025). Leadership behaviors such as transparency, empathy, and responsiveness strengthen trust between leaders and employees. When employees trust their leaders, they are more likely to believe that change initiatives are legitimate and beneficial (Benhayoun et al., 2025). This trust reduces fear and skepticism, which are common barriers to readiness. Thus, leadership plays a central role in creating a supportive psychological and organizational climate (al-Hourani et al., 2025).

Servant leadership, in particular, has been identified as a powerful leadership approach that enhances individual readiness for change. This leadership style emphasizes serving employees' needs, supporting their development, and prioritizing their well-being (Schomburg & Silberberger, 2025). According to (Karimi Kivi et al., 2025) servant leadership significantly strengthens readiness by increasing employee trust, engagement, and organizational

commitment. When leaders demonstrate genuine concern for employees' growth and success, employees feel valued and respected. This sense of value strengthens emotional attachment to the organization and increases willingness to support change (Onur et al., 2025). Servant leadership also encourages open communication and collaboration, which reduces uncertainty and promotes shared ownership of change initiatives. As a result, employees are more psychologically and behaviorally prepared to engage in transformation (McEwan et al., 2025).

In addition to leadership, perceived organizational support plays a critical role in shaping readiness for change (Barbis, 2026). Organizational support refers to employees' perceptions that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. When employees perceive strong organizational support, they are more likely to feel secure and confident during periods of transition (Rakha, 2025). This support creates a sense of reciprocity, where employees feel motivated to contribute positively to organizational goals. Organizational support also reduces fear of negative consequences, such as job insecurity or failure. This psychological safety enhances openness to change. Therefore, perceived support strengthens both emotional and cognitive readiness (Ordoñez-Avila et al., 2025).

Training and professional development opportunities are essential forms of organizational support that enhance readiness by strengthening employees' competence and confidence (Roa González et al., 2025). Change often requires employees to learn new skills, adopt new technologies, and perform unfamiliar tasks. Without adequate training, employees may feel unprepared and anxious, which reduces readiness. Training programs provide employees with the knowledge and skills necessary to adapt successfully (Tanjung et al., 2025). They also increase self-efficacy, which strengthens psychological readiness. Furthermore, training demonstrates organizational investment in employee development, which enhances trust and commitment. As a result, training functions as both a technical and psychological enabler of readiness (Selcuk et al., 2025).

The study by Yuniarty et al. (2025) highlights that healthcare workers' readiness for change is strongly influenced by organizational support, particularly access to training, resources, and clear policies. When employees receive sufficient training, they are better able to understand and implement new procedures (Kumar et al., 2024). Access to adequate resources ensures that employees can perform their roles effectively under new conditions. Clear organizational policies provide guidance and reduce ambiguity, which strengthens confidence (Tahir et al., 2024). These forms of support reduce uncertainty and enhance employees' perceived control over change. This perceived control is essential for psychological readiness. Thus, organizational support directly strengthens adaptation capacity (Adekoya et al., 2024).

Resource availability is another essential structural factor influencing readiness for change. Organizational change often involves new systems, technologies, and processes that require financial, technological, and human resources (Kalbermatten, 2024). When resources are insufficient, employees may experience frustration and helplessness, which weaken readiness. Resource constraints create barriers that make adaptation more difficult and stressful (Soomro et al., 2024). Conversely, when organizations provide adequate tools, infrastructure, and staffing, employees feel more capable of adapting. Resource availability enhances perceived feasibility of change (Pulkkinen et al., 2025). This perception strengthens readiness by reducing perceived barriers. Therefore, adequate resource allocation is critical for successful transformation (Martikainen et al., 2025).

Communication is a fundamental organizational mechanism that shapes how employees understand and respond to change (Villacis-Alvarez et al., 2025). Effective communication provides clear, accurate, and timely information about the purpose, process, and expected outcomes of change. Transparent communication reduces uncertainty and prevents misinformation (Frieson et al., 2025). It also strengthens trust in organizational leadership. When employees understand why change is necessary, they are more likely to support it (Sirait et al., 2025). Communication also allows employees to express concerns and ask questions, which enhances psychological engagement. Thus, communication strengthens readiness by creating clarity and shared understanding (Mohamed Noor et al., 2025).

Two-way communication is particularly important because it allows employees to actively participate in the change process. When employees have opportunities to provide feedback, they feel valued and respected (Mukonavanhu & Nel-Sanders, 2025). This participation strengthens psychological ownership of change initiatives. Employees become active contributors rather than passive recipients of change. This sense of involvement increases motivation and commitment (AlFadhli et al., 2025). Participation also allows organizations to identify and address employee concerns early. This proactive engagement reduces resistance. Therefore, participatory communication enhances readiness (Wells et al., 2025).

Organizational culture also plays a crucial role in shaping readiness for change by influencing shared values, norms, and expectations. Culture defines how employees interpret change and how they are expected to respond (Paletto et al., 2025). A culture that values innovation, learning, and adaptability encourages openness to change. Employees in such cultures are more willing to experiment and embrace new ideas. This cultural environment strengthens psychological readiness (Vinod et al., 2025). Conversely, rigid and hierarchical cultures may discourage flexibility and innovation. These cultures create resistance to change. Thus, organizational culture significantly influences readiness (Gough et al., 2025).

Research by Pepin et al. (2025) demonstrates that flexible and adaptive organizational cultures significantly enhance readiness for change. Such cultures promote continuous learning and encourage employees to develop new competencies. Employees in adaptive cultures view change as a normal part of organizational growth (Mum et al., 2025). This normalization reduces fear and resistance. Adaptive cultures also encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing, which strengthens collective readiness. This supportive environment enhances individual readiness. Therefore, culture functions as a critical contextual factor (Hwu et al., 2025).

Organizational climate, which reflects employees' shared perceptions of their work environment, also influences readiness. A positive organizational climate characterized by trust, fairness, and support enhances psychological safety (Raman et al., 2025). Psychological safety allows employees to take risks and experiment without fear of punishment. This safety encourages learning and adaptation (Omar et al., 2025). Conversely, negative climates characterized by fear, mistrust, or injustice weaken readiness. Employees become defensive and resistant. Thus, organizational climate shapes readiness through its influence on emotional and psychological experiences (O'Hara et al., 2025).

Adaptive leadership and organizational support are especially critical during crisis situations, where rapid and large-scale changes are required (Hržica et al., 2025). Bolouri et al. (2025) found that adaptive leadership and strong organizational support were essential for maintaining readiness among public sector employees during the COVID-19 crisis. Adaptive leaders respond flexibly to changing conditions and provide continuous guidance (Laatikainen et al., 2025). Organizational support ensures employees have the resources and information needed to cope. These factors reduce uncertainty and stress. This support strengthens resilience and readiness during crises (Hoffman et al., 2025).

Organizational trust is another important factor influencing readiness for change. Trust develops when employees believe that organizational leaders are competent, fair, and transparent (Safie et al., 2025). Trust reduces fear of exploitation or harm during change initiatives. Employees who trust their organization are more likely to accept change decisions (Toan et al., 2025). Trust also strengthens emotional commitment. This commitment enhances readiness. Without trust, employees may resist change. Therefore, trust is essential (Benhayoun et al., 2025).

Organizational factors provide the structural and environmental conditions that shape individual readiness for change (al-Hourani et al., 2025). Leadership, organizational support, culture, communication, training, and resource availability collectively influence how employees perceive and respond to change. These factors interact with individual psychological characteristics to determine readiness levels. When organizational environments are supportive, individuals are more likely to feel confident, motivated, and capable of adapting (Schomburg & Silberberger, 2025).

Conversely, unsupportive environments weaken readiness and increase resistance. Therefore, strengthening organizational factors is essential for facilitating successful change in public sector institutions (Karimi Kivi et al., 2025).

Technological Factors and Digital Transformation as Catalysts for Individual Readiness for Change in the Public Sector

Digital transformation has emerged as one of the most powerful driving forces reshaping public sector organizations, fundamentally altering how governments operate, deliver services, and interact with citizens (Onur et al., 2025). This transformation involves the integration of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, digital governance platforms, e-government systems, data analytics, and automated decision-support tools into public administration processes (McEwan et al., 2025). These technological advancements are not merely technical upgrades but represent profound organizational changes that require employees to adapt their skills, behaviors, and professional identities (Barbis, 2026). As public sector organizations increasingly rely on digital systems to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability, the readiness of individual employees to accept and adopt these technologies becomes a critical determinant of transformation success (Rakha, 2025). Without sufficient individual readiness, technological implementation may fail to achieve its intended outcomes, highlighting the central role of employees in enabling digital transformation (Ordoñez-Avila et al., 2025).

The findings of the systematic review indicate that digital transformation significantly increases the importance of individual readiness for change because technology adoption directly affects employees' daily work practices (Roa González et al., 2025). Unlike structural reforms that may occur at administrative or policy levels, digital transformation requires employees to interact directly with new technological systems. This interaction demands not only technical competence but also psychological acceptance and behavioral adaptation (Tanjung et al., 2025). Employees must learn new interfaces, interpret data differently, and integrate technological tools into their workflow. These changes alter established routines and professional habits, which may create uncertainty and discomfort (Selcuk et al., 2025). As a result, individual readiness becomes essential for ensuring that employees can transition smoothly from traditional work methods to digitally enabled systems (Yuniarty et al., 2025).

Artificial intelligence, in particular, represents one of the most transformative technological innovations influencing public sector operations (Kumar et al., 2024). AI systems are increasingly used for predictive analytics, automated decision-making, citizen service management, and administrative efficiency. The study by Tahir et al. (2024) demonstrates that individual readiness for artificial intelligence adoption is influenced by a combination of individual and organizational factors, including technological competence, perceived ease of use, and organizational

support (Adekoya et al., 2024). Individuals with higher levels of technological competence are more confident in their ability to understand and utilize AI systems effectively (Kalbermatten, 2024). This confidence reduces anxiety and increases willingness to adopt new technologies. As a result, technological competence strengthens both psychological and behavioral readiness for change (Soomro et al., 2024).

Technological competence serves as a foundational capability that enables employees to engage effectively with digital transformation (Pulkkinen et al., 2025). Employees who possess strong digital literacy skills are better equipped to understand technological systems, troubleshoot problems, and integrate new tools into their workflow. This competence enhances self-efficacy, which is a critical psychological determinant of readiness (Martikainen et al., 2025). When employees feel capable of using technology successfully, they are more likely to approach change with confidence rather than fear. Conversely, employees with limited technological competence may experience anxiety, frustration, and resistance (Villacis-Alvarez et al., 2025). This lack of competence weakens readiness and slows adoption. Therefore, technological competence plays a critical role in shaping individual readiness (Frieson et al., 2025).

Perceived ease of use is another important technological factor influencing readiness for change. When digital systems are designed to be user-friendly, intuitive, and accessible, employees are more likely to adopt them willingly (Sirait et al., 2025). Complex or difficult-to-use systems can create frustration and reduce motivation. Employees may perceive such systems as burdens rather than helpful tools (Mohamed Noor et al., 2025). This perception weakens readiness and increases resistance. In contrast, user-friendly systems enhance perceived control and reduce cognitive effort. This ease of use strengthens psychological readiness. Thus, system design significantly influences individual readiness (Mukonavanhu & Nel-Sanders, 2025).

Perceived usefulness is equally important in shaping employees' readiness to adopt digital technologies. Employees are more likely to accept technological change when they believe that technology will improve their performance, efficiency, and effectiveness (Paletto et al., 2025). The study by AlFadhli et al. (2025) shows that government employees' readiness to implement predictive artificial intelligence is strongly influenced by their perception of technological benefits. When employees understand how technology enhances decision-making, reduces workload, or improves service quality, they are more motivated to adopt it. This perceived usefulness strengthens cognitive and motivational readiness. Therefore, communicating technological benefits is essential (Vinod et al., 2025).

Organizational support also plays a crucial role in facilitating technological readiness by providing resources, training, and guidance. Digital transformation often requires employees to acquire new technical skills and competencies (Gough et al., 2025). Without adequate organizational support, employees may feel unprepared and overwhelmed

(Firnando & Suhesty, 2024). Organizational support provides the necessary infrastructure for successful adaptation (Pepin et al., 2025). It also strengthens employees' confidence in their ability to use new technologies. This support reduces uncertainty and resistance. Thus, organizational support enhances readiness (Mum et al., 2025).

Digital literacy is a key individual capability influencing readiness for technological transformation. Digital literacy refers to employees' ability to use digital tools, interpret digital information, and adapt to technological environments (Hwu et al., 2025). The study by Raman et al. (2025) demonstrates that digital literacy significantly influences government readiness to adopt artificial intelligence. Employees with higher digital literacy levels are more adaptable and confident in using technological systems. This adaptability strengthens readiness. Conversely, low digital literacy weakens readiness and increases resistance. Therefore, digital literacy is essential (Omar et al., 2025).

Adaptability is another critical individual characteristic influencing technological readiness (Handayani et al., 2024). Digital transformation requires continuous learning and flexibility (O'Hara et al., 2025). Employees must adjust to evolving technologies and changing workflows. Individuals who possess strong adaptability are more capable of coping with technological uncertainty (Hržica et al., 2025). They view change as an opportunity for growth. This perspective strengthens readiness. Conversely, low adaptability weakens readiness. Therefore, adaptability enhances readiness (Bolouri et al., 2025).

Technological transformation also influences employees' professional identity, which affects readiness for change (Laatikainen et al., 2025). Employees may perceive digital systems as altering their roles, responsibilities, and expertise. Some employees may fear that technology will reduce their relevance or replace their skills. These fears create resistance (Hoffman et al., 2025). However, employees who perceive technology as enhancing their professional effectiveness are more likely to embrace

change. This perception strengthens readiness. Thus, professional identity influences readiness (Safie et al., 2025).

Resistance to digital transformation often emerges when employees lack technological competence or perceive technology as threatening. Toan et al. (2025) found that public sector digital transformation success depends heavily on individual readiness to adopt technology. Employees who are unprepared technologically experience anxiety and resistance (al-Hourani et al., 2025). This resistance slows implementation. Conversely, technologically prepared employees adapt more easily. Thus, readiness determines success (Schomburg & Silberberger, 2025).

Training programs play a critical role in enhancing technological readiness by developing employees' digital competencies. Training increases technological knowledge and confidence (Karimi Kivi et al., 2025). It also reduces fear and uncertainty. Employees become more comfortable using digital systems. This comfort strengthens readiness (Onur et al., 2025).

Organizational digital culture also influences readiness by shaping attitudes toward technology. Organizations that promote innovation encourage technological adoption (McEwan et al., 2025). Employees become more open to change. This openness strengthens readiness. Therefore, culture influences readiness. Digital transformation also increases work efficiency, which strengthens motivation to adopt technology. Employees experience productivity improvements. This experience reinforces positive attitudes. Thus, efficiency strengthens readiness (Barbis, 2026).

Technological factors and digital transformation serve as powerful catalysts that drive individual readiness for change in public sector organizations (Rakha, 2025). Technological competence, digital literacy, perceived usefulness, organizational support, adaptability, and training collectively influence readiness (Ordoñez-Avila et al., 2025). These factors shape employees' psychological, cognitive, and behavioral capacity to adopt technology. Therefore, technological readiness is essential for successful public sector transformation.

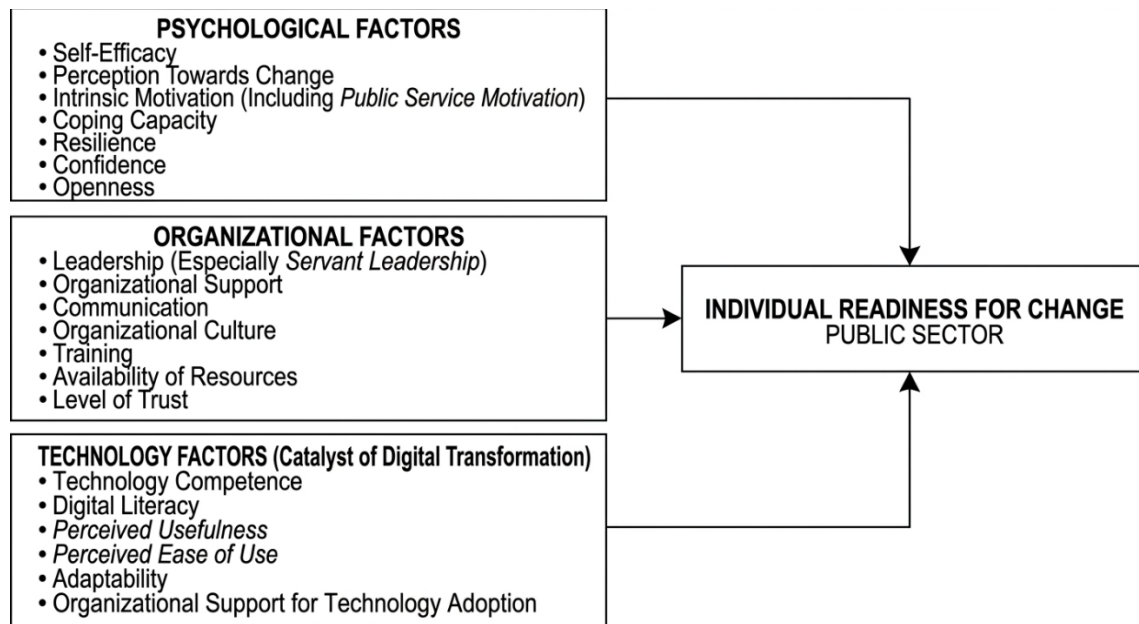


Figure 9. Research Model: Determinants of Individual Readiness for Change.

Table 4. Research gap

Research gap	Existing findings	Future research direction
Psychological Factors and Individual Readiness	Most studies focus only on self-efficacy, motivation, and attitudes, but do not explore emotional readiness, psychological resilience, and identity adaptation in depth.	Research shows that self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and positive attitudes significantly increase readiness for change. Individuals with higher confidence and motivation are more open and adaptive to change (Roa González et al., 2025).
Organizational Factors and Structural Support	Existing studies examine leadership and organizational support, but few explain how organizational culture, communication, and leadership interact to shape individual readiness.	Leadership support, training, and positive organizational culture increase readiness by improving confidence and reducing uncertainty. Organizational support helps individuals adapt to change (Tanjung et al., 2025).
Digital Transformation and Technology Readiness	Limited studies examine individual readiness for advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence in public sector organizations, especially in developing countries.	Digital literacy, technological competence, and perceived usefulness increase readiness. Organizational training and support also improve readiness for digital transformation (Selcuk et al., 2025).

Conclusion

Individual readiness for change in public sector organizations is critically influenced by the interplay of psychological, organizational, and technological factors, including self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, adaptive leadership, organizational support, and digital competence. Employees who are confident, motivated, and supported are more likely to engage actively with organizational transformation, while those lacking these factors may resist or struggle to adapt. For future research, it is recommended to investigate the role of cultural and contextual differences in shaping readiness across diverse public sector environments, particularly in developing countries where digital infrastructure and institutional capacity vary. The implication of this study highlights the necessity for policymakers and organizational leaders to implement comprehensive change management strategies that combine skill development, participatory communication, and adaptive

organizational cultures to ensure successful and sustainable adoption of change initiatives.

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