

# ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF JOB CHARACTERISTICS ON EMPLOYEES' ACCEPTANCE OF PROCESS STANDARDIZATION

*Complete Research*

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## Abstract

*Business Process Standardization (BPS) leads to significant changes in employees' working environment which affect acceptance for such initiatives. Organizational psychology and management research have examined the influence of work design on employee behavior (e.g., turnover). Based on that, we develop a model to analyze the impact of job characteristics, such as skill variety, autonomy, or task significance, on BPS acceptance. We surveyed employees of a non-profit organization during a process standardization initiative. As main contribution, this research shows that skill variety is the most important job characteristic for determining BPS acceptance.*

*Keywords: Business Process Standardization, Job characteristics, Acceptance, PLS.*

## 1 Introduction

Business Process Standardization (BPS) is one of the major instruments in the context of Business Process Management (BPM) to enhance the operational efficiency of companies (Münstermann *et al.*, 2009b). Though BPS is promising, the success of BPS initiatives vary (Schäfermeyer and Rosenkranz, 2011; Manrodt and Vitasek, 2004). Besides missing methods to identify the right processes (Schäfermeyer and Rosenkranz, 2011), cultural resistance, a lack of employee's identification or missing process orientation (vom Brocke and Sinnl, 2011) are reasons for failures of BPM and BPS initiatives.

From an employees' perspective, standardization can lead to significant changes. The tasks in a standardized process could become more regulated. For instance, the way the employees perform their work changes and new policies and practices have to be considered. These organizational changes often lead to employee resistance (Bala and Venkatesh, 2013; Madison, 2005). Given this background, some works (e.g., Tumbas and Schmiedel, 2013; vom Brocke *et al.*, 2014) stress the importance of the role of the affected employees and call for deeper analyses of their involvement and motivation. From a practitioner's point of view, it is important to consider the employees' perspective because their willingness to change as well as their motivation are crucial factors for successful change (Baumöl, 2010; Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008). Especially motivational factors of the work itself, often conceptualized as job characteristics, are supposed to increase positive personal and work outcomes (e.g., increase performance or work satisfaction or decrease turnover) (Hackman and Oldham, 1975, 1976; Hackman and Lawler, 1971). Knowing which characteristics influence employees' willingness to

change helps to define the right adjustable screws (Suter, 2004) to successfully implement process standards.

Hence, to understand, to what extent these factors drive employees' acceptance of BPS initiatives, the paper is guided by the following research question: *How do job characteristics affect BPS acceptance of employees?*

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows: Drawing on the literature on organizational psychology and management research, we develop five hypotheses regarding how job characteristics (JC) influence BPS acceptance of employees. We employ data of a non-profit organization that is in the midst of a process standardization project to evaluate our hypotheses.

## **2 Theoretical background and research model development**

### **2.1 Business process standardization and changed job characteristics**

De Vries (1999) states that "*standardization is the activity of establishing and recording a limited set of solutions to actual or potential matching problems directed at benefits for the party or parties involved balancing their needs and intending and expecting that these solutions will be repeatedly or continuously used during a certain period by a substantial number of parties for whom they are meant*" (de Vries, 1999, p. 155). In the context of BPS, a standard process is used "*as a template for all instances of the process throughout the organization*" (Tregear, 2010, p. 308) to enhance process time, cost, and quality (Münstermann et al., 2010, 2009a). Objects of standardization are business processes as well as methods, tools, techniques, and procedures (Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008).

Process standardization refers to changing or adding tasks and workflows which can be perceived as threatening by the employees (vom Brocke et al., 2014), and lead to a lower acceptance of these initiatives. In this context, the concepts of job and task need to be distinguished: according to Ferstl and Sinz (1997), business systems consist of tasks which are executed by different resources. Bundled tasks constitute a job which can be assigned to a person or an application system.

Process standardization induces a lot of changes which can affect employees tremendously. These changes include changes in tasks, workflows, working conditions, technology, and governance. For instance, employees have to execute new tasks or have to work in accordance to altered workflows. Moreover, process standardization goes along with modified usage of technology, such as new software applications or other tools. Altered governance structures, e.g. working for a new manager, affects employees as well (Kettenbohrer et al., 2015). These changes are often perceived as threatening by the employees (vom Brocke et al., 2014). Consequently, it decreases employees' acceptance for BPS which can be explained by a perceived loss of meaningfulness of work (Hackman and Oldham, 1976; Barrick and Mount, 2013). Accordingly, we understand BPS acceptance as the employees' acceptance of different BPS-caused changes of their work.

To understand the consequences of process standardization on employees' behavior, a deeper understanding about work design is required. Organizational psychology and management research provide well-established theories and models that explain the impact of work design on employee reactions (e.g., satisfaction or turnover). One of the most important works is by Hackman and Oldham (1976) who define five job characteristics (Table 1).

<b>Job characteristics</b>	<b>Description</b>
Skill variety	The degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, which involve the use of a number of different skills and talents of the person.
Task identity	The degree to which the job requires completion of a ‘whole’ and identifiable piece of work; that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome.
Task significance	The degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment.
Autonomy	The degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out.
Feedback	The degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance.

Table 1. Job Characteristics (Hackman and Oldham, 1976)

According to Hackman and Oldham (1976), these five job characteristics increase positive outcomes (e.g., work satisfaction) and decrease negative ones (e.g., turnover). The impact of these characteristics on personal and work outcomes is influenced by several critical psychological states (meaningfulness, of work, responsibility for outcomes of the work, and knowledge of the actual results of the work) whereby meaningfulness of work is the most important one (Humphrey et al., 2007). Meaningfulness means “the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual’s own ideas or standards” (May et al., 2004). The feeling of meaningfulness is influenced by the ability to pursue higher-order implicit goals (Table 2) (Klinger, 1977; Ryff and Singer, 1998; Barrick and Mount, 2013). These are goals which all individuals strive to subconsciously (Barrick and Mount, 2013).

<b>Higher-implicit goals</b>	<b>Description</b>
Communion Striving	Individuals are motivated to achieve meaningful contact, get along with others
Status Striving	Desire to exert power and influence over others
Autonomy Striving	Motivated to gain control and understanding of important aspects of the work environment and to pursue personal growth opportunities
Achievement Striving	Need to demonstrate personal competence and a sense of accomplishment

Table 2. Higher-implicit goals (Barrick and Mount, 2013)

To perceive own work as being meaningful, the accomplishment of these higher-implicit goals is crucial as well as the extent an individual could act according to his/her personality: “Meaningfulness refers to individuals’ perception that their actions are valuable, useful and worthwhile” (Barrick and Mount, 2013, p. 137). In situations, where employees could not act according to their personality (so called ‘discordant work situations’), the employees do not perceive meaningfulness in their work (Barrick and Mount, 2013; Halbesleben, 2006; Hobfoll, 1989). As previous studies show (Holland, 1959; Barrick and Mount, 2013; Hackman and Oldham, 1976), employees perceive these situations as threatening and no longer meaningful which consequently decrease acceptance of changes because the ability to fulfill their higher-implicit goals are missing. BPS can be such a discordant work situation because it increases bureaucracy and the level of control as well as changing working routines (Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008). Due to a pre-determined workflow including new policies and practices as well as changing job scope, the employees’ higher-implicit goals do not longer fit with the standardized process (Kettenbohrer et al., 2015). Consequently, employees do not accept the newly defined standard process. But BPS can also support employees in their striving for several higher-implicit goals. I.e., standardization “used as a template” (Tregear, 2010, p. 308) can help employees to avoid mistakes and so support them in their striving for achievement. In the following, we develop

our hypotheses by explaining the relation between process standardization, job characteristics, higher-implicit goals, and BPS acceptance.

## 2.2 Development of hypotheses

Process standardization leads to changed job characteristics. As consequence, the changed design of work highly influences employees' perceptions about their jobs and the attitude plus acceptance towards these changes. In the following, we develop our hypotheses by explaining the impact of changed job characteristics (based on process standardization) on BPS acceptance.

Employees executing jobs with high skill variety require several skills and therefore need to be trained well (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). This expertise leads to perceived control over and understanding of the job and the corresponding environment. Due to understanding and controllability, the higher-implicit goal of autonomy can be fulfilled because personal development and growth is possible. Based on several skills and expertise, employees have the opportunity to demonstrate competence and accomplishment whereby the higher-implicit goal of achievement can be pursued. Process standardization supports this pursuing. Routine tasks and tasks with high repetition rate become standardized (Tregear, 2010; Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008). These are tasks where employees cannot fulfill their higher-implicit goal of achievement. Due to standardization of routine tasks and the corresponding efficient performance, employees have the opportunity to focus on tasks which require high skill variety. Consequently, they have the opportunity to demonstrate competence and accomplishment.

*H1+: High skill variety in the current job increases BPS acceptance.*

But process standardization can also reduce BPS acceptance. Due to a standardized process, the job's complexity decreases or the job gets more specialized whereby certain skills become obsolete (Green et al., 1995). Thus, the employees are no longer able to use their various skills and they are hindered to pursue their striving for autonomy and achievement.

*H1-: High skill variety in the current job decreases BPS acceptance.*

A job with high degree of task identity allows employees to produce a whole and identifiable piece of work (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). This means, the job has a clear beginning and ending as well as a visible outcome. Employees who perform the overall job get the ability to bring in themselves and their expertise. Thus, they can fulfill their higher-implicit goal of achievement (Barrick and Mount, 2013). In a standardized process, the job is changed (Borgen et al., 2010; Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008) so that a production of an own and identifiable piece of work is not possible anymore. The employees cannot bring in their own ideas and knowledge in the same extent as before the standardization. As consequence, the fulfilment of their higher-implicit goal of achievement is not possible (Barrick and Mount, 2013) which negatively influences their attitude towards BPS.

*H2-: High task identity in the current job decreases BPS acceptance.*

Task significance refers to a job's impact on the job of others. By performing a job with high task significance, employees have the opportunity to influence colleagues and their work (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). Based on this influence, they can pursue their higher-implicit goal for status and achievement (Barrick and Mount, 2013). Process standardization supports employees in their striving for status and achievement because it serves as a template (Tregear, 2010) and therefore gives them support for their doing (Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008; Tregear, 2010). Due to the importance of their jobs and the impact on others, it is necessary to perform a good job and avoid mistakes. A standard process helps employees to know exactly when and where they have to do certain tasks. So, the probability to miss something important or to make a mistake is reduced.

*H3+: High task significance in the current job increases BPS acceptance.*

On the other hand, process standardization can decrease a job's significance because the job gets changed, fragmented or deleted. So, the impact on others' work can become smaller which also decreases the opportunity for status striving. In addition, due to documentation, standardization makes processes transparent (Münstermann and Weitzel, 2008; Ungan, 2006) and mistakes of individual employees become visible. Responsible persons can be identified and they can be made responsible.

*H3-: High task significance in the current job decreases BPS acceptance.*

Employees who have high autonomy in executing their job receive a certain level of freedom, independence, and discretion (Hackman and Oldham, 1976). This freedom gives them the opportunity to plan and define the applied procedures to do their job. Based on that, their job is controllable and understandable (higher-implicit goal of autonomy). In addition, the employees can demonstrate their competence whereby they fulfill their higher-implicit goal of achievement (Barrick and Mount, 2013). Process standardization diminishes or even destructs a job's autonomy. Employees have to adhere to standardized working routines (Bandura, 1997; Hall and Johnson, 2009). Thus, definitions about the execution of the job as well as applied procedures are no longer made by the employees and they cannot bring in their expertise anymore. Thus, their striving for autonomy and achievement is hindered.

*H4-: High autonomy in the current job decreases BPS acceptance.*

Employees with a job that shows a high degree of feedback receive direct and clear information about their work. Based on the experienced knowledge about their results and performance, they are able to check their accomplishment and competences. Due to the comparison of perceived performance and actual performance (based on feedback), employees are able to adjust their competences and their accomplishment (higher-implicit goal of achievement). A standardized process provides more precise feedback. Firstly, the employees know where they can receive feedback because there are clear accountabilities and responsibilities (Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008; Wüllenweber *et al.*, 2008). Secondly, structured procedures within the standardized process give immediate feedback if the job is done in the right way (Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008). Consequently, employees are better able to gain knowledge about their own results and their striving for achievement is supported (Barrick and Mount, 2013).

*H5+: High degree of feedback in the current job increases BPS acceptance.*

### **3 Empirical evidence**

#### **3.1 Data collection**

To evaluate the proposed hypotheses, we had the opportunity to collect data in a German non-profit organization during a process standardization initiative. The non-profit firm is structured as a holding organization of more than 60 institutions for social care including elder care, youth welfare services and work with the disabled. 2,000 employees are organized in service units providing both stationary and ambulant services. The holding is responsible for all financial, technological, and HR related issues.

The BPS initiative we observed in this approach comprises a standardization of the billing and accounting process between the holding organization and a service unit for care of disabled people. In total 40 employees were affected by BPS, 16 of them working in the holding organization and 24 working in the service unit.

We conducted an online survey from August 2014 until September 2014. We managed to survey 39 of the 40 employees accounting for a response rate of 97.5%. The demographics, which also served as control variables, are represented in the following table (Table 3).

Age		Work experience in the current position		Academic degree	
Younger than 25 years	5.1%	Less than 1 year	2.6%	No degree	5.1%
25-40 years	33.3%	2-5 years	28.2%	Non-academic degree	53.8%
41-55 years	48.7%	6-10 years	35.9%	Academic degree	41.0%
Older than 55 years	12.8%	More than 10 years	33.3%		

Table 3. Demographics

### 3.2 Research methodology

In this section, we describe the research methodology and survey instrument as well as the results of the model validation.

#### 3.2.1 Measurement

The different constructs of our hypotheses were surveyed by multi-item measures adopted from literature (Table 8).

To capture employees’ perceptions about the characteristics of their job, we used the measurement items by Sims et al. (1976) and specified by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006). Participants could respond based on a 5-point Likert scale with anchors by 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

To analyze BPS acceptance, we measured employees’ attitude towards process standardization. Therefore, we used the framework by Bovey and Hede (2001) and transferred into a semantic differential (with anchors by 1 to 5). Overall, the Cronbach’s Alpha is high (Table 4).

#### 3.2.2 Analysis

We used the measurement mentioned in the section before to evaluate our research model. To validate it, we used partial least squares and the SmartPLS 2 software (Ringle et al., 2005).

To evaluate the hypotheses, we measured the impact of each construct on BPS acceptance both separately and within one combined PLS model. We used both approaches because the size of the available data set does not meet the ‘rule of 10’ for a combined PLS model with 5 exogenous variables and three controls.

All constructs are measured by reflective measures. Therefore, content validity, indicator reliability, construct reliability, and discriminant validity have to be checked (Bagozzi, 1979). All of the used measures have proven to be robust by prior research. Nevertheless, to ensure content validity, we discussed the items with the project team of the BPS initiative and pre-tested the items with three employees of the organization beforehand.

Indicator reliability refers to the rate of variance of an indicator which comes from the latent variables. If an indicator should explain a least 50% of the latent variable’s variance, each value has to have a loading of 0.707 or greater (Carmines and Zeller, 2008). All loadings fulfill these conditions (Table 9). Next, the AVE value should be 0.50 or higher (Hair et al., 2013). To determine the quality at the construct level, we also used the concept of composite reliability (CR) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), which should be higher than 0.7, and Cronbach’s Alpha. Our measurement mostly fulfills both criteria (Table 4). Since each hypothesis or pair of contradicting hypotheses was also tested in a separate model (models 1 to 5), the values for the endogenous variable (BPS acceptance) are presented for each of the tested models.

Model #	Construct	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
1 (only skill variety)	Skill variety	.779	.914	.860
	BPS acceptance	.703	.904	.864
2 (only task identity)	Task identity	.794	.919	.948
	BPS acceptance	.699	.902	.860
3 (only task significance)	Task significance	.575	.840	.809
	BPS acceptance	.695	.901	.860
4 (only autonomy)	Autonomy	.837	.939	.924
	BPS acceptance	.708	.906	.860
5 (only feedback)	Feedback	.737	.849	.647
	BPS acceptance	.698	.902	.860
6 (all five JCs)	Skill variety	.779	.913	.864
	Task identity	.896	.963	.948
	Task significance	.678	.863	.762
	Autonomy	.836	.938	.924
	Feedback	.734	.846	.647
	BPS acceptance	.708	.906	.860

Table 4. Measurement model validation

Discriminant validity explains the extent to which a construct is distinct to other constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2013). To measure discriminant validity, we used the Fornell-Larcker criterion which compares the square root of the AVE values with the latent variable correlations (Hulland, 1999; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Our measurement fulfills this requirement as the square root of each construct's AVE is greater than its highest correlation with any other construct (Table 5).

Job characteristic	Skill variety	Task identity	Task significance	Autonomy	Feedback
Square root of AVE of BPS acceptance	.838	.891	.834	.915	.858
Square root of AVE of job characteristic	.883	.836	.758	.841	.835
LV correlation	.464	-.030	.264	-.170	.141

Table 5. Latent variable correlations (according to models 1 to 5; for the value of model 6 see App.)

The results for testing the hypotheses are provided by Table 6 and Table 7 below.

<b>Job characteristic:</b> (models 1 to 5)	<i>Skill variety</i> (model 1)	<i>Task identity</i> (model 2)	<i>Task significance</i> (model 3)	<i>Autonomy</i> (model 4)	<i>Feedback</i> (model 5)
<i>Path coefficient (β) and sig. level</i>	.361*	.001	.125	-.281*	.063
<i>Paths (β) of controls and sig. level</i>	<i>Age</i>	.208 <sup>+</sup>	.358*	.304*	.388**
	<i>Work experience</i>	.179*	.222 <sup>+</sup>	.239*	.114
	<i>Educational degree</i>	.143	.176	.158	.217 <sup>+</sup>
<i>R<sup>2</sup> (BPS acceptance)</i>	.295	.194	.214	.241	.198
<i>R<sup>2</sup> (BPS acceptance), controls only</i>	.194	.194	.194	.194	.194

Table 6. Test results of models 1 to 5 (\*\*:  $p < .01$ , \*:  $p < .05$ , +:  $p < .1$ )

<b>Test results of model 6</b> (paths and level of significance)	<i>Model 6 with controls only</i>	<i>Model 6 (all JC included)</i>
<i>Skill variety</i>		.440*
<i>Task identity</i>		-.092
<i>Task significance</i>		-.036
<i>Autonomy</i>		-.300 <sup>+</sup>
<i>Feedback</i>		.028
<i>Age</i>	.358*	.199 <sup>+</sup>
<i>Work experience</i>	.222*	.029
<i>Educational degree</i>	.176 <sup>+</sup>	.215 <sup>+</sup>
<i>R<sup>2</sup> (BPS acceptance)</i>	.194	.371

Table 7. Test results of model 6 (\*\*:  $p < .01$ , \*:  $p < .05$ , +:  $p < .1$ )

The results show that skill variety is significantly positively related with BPS acceptance (support of H1+, rejection of H1-) while autonomy is a clear inhibitor of BPS (H4- supported). The remaining three job characteristics show only very weak or no relationships with BPS, thus we do not gain support for H2-, H3+/H3-, and H5+. Obviously, the small sample size reduces the significance of the results. However, since our analysis did not only include a sample of the employees but almost all of them (39 out of 40), we can rely more on the descriptive results.

## 4 Discussion, implications, and limitations

Aim of the paper was to examine the impact of job characteristics on BPS acceptance. Our results do indicate that at least some job characteristics do influence employees' BPS acceptance.

The job characteristic exhibiting the strongest effect is skill variety (t-test for comparing distribution of path coefficients resulting from bootstrapping shows that the absolute path of skill variety is larger than all other paths to a highly significant degree). This indicates that process standardization is perceived to lead to higher work efficiency because routine tasks can be standardized (Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008; Tregear, 2010). Due to these standardized tasks, the employees have the opportunity to focus on more complex tasks where they can use their various skills and consequently fulfill their striving for achievement (Barrick and Mount, 2013). Accordingly, people exhibiting higher skill variety expect them to utilize to a larger degree if their process gets standardized.

As expected, autonomy has a negative impact on BPS acceptance. Jobs with high autonomy (e.g., knowledge-intensive jobs or creative jobs) need a more flexible handling regarding inputs, outputs, and procedures (Hall and Johnson, 2009). The success of processes consisting of highly autonomous jobs depend on creativity and the detailed sequence of tasks is not predictable (Marjanovic, 2005;

Kirchmer, 2011). This kind of processes is not suitable for standardization (Schmelzer and Sesselmann, 2008) which is supported by the employees' attitude towards BPS.

The remaining three job characteristics seem hardly be related with BPS acceptance. While task significance has a somehow positive path in the single-JC model (model 3), this effect disappears if testing a model that includes all JC variables. Finally, feedback and task identity do not show any positive or negative relationship. It remains open to further data collection and research to clarify if this is truly the case or if the results suffer from a Type II error due to too little statistical power.

If looking at the control variables, age has a strong impact on BPS acceptance. Our results indicate that older employees are more likely to accept BPS initiatives. This finding confirms research from change management (Oreg, 2006). Older employees have experienced a lot of changes during their working life within an organization. Due to that, they become "somewhat apathetic about new change initiatives" (Oreg, 2006, p. 95). This explains why often younger employees show stronger resistance to change (Oreg, 2006). In addition, we assume that younger employees do not want to follow strict guidelines or standardized working routines but that they want to think and work autonomously. In addition, they want to bring in themselves as individuals and 'create their own product'.

As we know from e.g. production and supply chain literature, organizations gain to standardize their business processes to improve operational performance and reduce costs by decreasing errors, facilitating communication or using expert knowledge (Wüllenweber *et al.*, 2008; Manrodt and Vitasek, 2004; Ramakumar and Cooper, 2004). Our results show that the organizational goals are not completely opposite to the ones on individual level.

Our results provide important implications for research and practice. First of all, we transferred job characteristics theory into the field of process standardization, and thereby, BPM. In addition, we described the relationship between current job characteristics and the acceptance of BPS-related changes. As it leads to a better understanding of BPS acceptance by employees, our research is supposed to enhance designing and implementing BPS initiatives. As such, our research puts the human factor into account of BPS research as well as practice.

For practitioners, our results give insights what kind of processes are more likely to be standardized successfully because of employee acceptance. The findings of our study show that the two job characteristics of skill variety and autonomy have the strongest effect on employees' acceptance of BPS. The standardization of a process which consists of highly autonomous tasks is less likely to be accepted, which requires process managers in such cases to be particularly careful when conducting BPS initiatives and to think about how those workers can keep parts of their autonomy or can be in other ways involved in a successful BPS initiative. Being aware of crucial job characteristics as well as the impact of higher-implicit goals on BPS acceptance helps practitioners to derive the right management actions to increase acceptance. For instance, to increase acceptance for the new standard process, employees can be involved in its design (Kettenbohrer *et al.*, 2013); this helps to ensure that pursuing for higher-implicit goals is possible although the process becomes standardized.

Future research could build on the results of our study. First of all, further influencing factors for BPS acceptance can be examined. Future research might also analyze the role of meaningfulness of work in the context of BPS. As it is the best mediator for the impact of job characteristics on personal and work outcomes (Hackman and Oldham, 1976), it can also play an important role for BPS acceptance.

As the empirical data is based on a survey with employees of one firm and only 39 employees were surveyed, the statistical validity and generalizability of our results is limited. In addition, we collected data in a non-profit organization which can bias the results. As the observed process is executed by employees of the billing and accounting department, the survey results are easy to generalize and transferable to other repetitive and highly information-processing processes. In future research, multiple (non-profit and profit) companies and more employees have to be considered to receive more reliable results. The focus of this article is on the impact of job characteristics on BPS acceptance. Hence, there are other factors (e.g., culture or process orientation) which influence employees' attitudes towards BPS. Another limitation is that we collected all empirical data before the BPS initiative was

performed. All employees were aware of possible changes but the processes are not standardized yet. So, a follow-up survey is desirable to analyze the influencing factors of BPS acceptance in more detail. As age has shown to have a strong impact on BPS acceptance, future research could also examine the differences based on age in detail. Expert interviews seem to be a promising research methodology to find out the different reasons for accepting standardization initiatives by younger and older employees.

## 5 Conclusion

In this paper, we examined the impact of job characteristics on employees' acceptance of BPS-related changes. Our research shows that skill variety is the most important job characteristic. Further, autonomy has shown to be the only job characteristic that does potentially inhibit employees' acceptance. Our research contributes by combining job characteristics theory with BPS literature as well as by putting the human factor into the focus of process standardization.

## Appendix

Job Characteristic	Item ID	Item	Reference
Skill variety	SKI-1	My job requires a variety of skills.	(Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006)
	SKI-2	The job requires the use of a number of skills.	
	SKI-3	The job requires me to utilize a variety of different skills in order to complete the work.	(Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006)
Task identity	IDE-1	The job involves completing a piece of work that has an obvious beginning and end.	(Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006)
	IDE-2	The job provides me the chance to completely finish the pieces of work I begin.	
	IDE-3	The job allows me to complete work I start.	
Task significance	SIG-1	The results of my work are likely to significantly affect the lives of other people.	(Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006)
	SIG-2	The job has a large impact on people outside the organization.	
	SIG-3	The work performed on the job has a significant impact on people inside the organization.	
Autonomy	AUT-1	The job allows me to decide on the order in which things are done on the job.	(Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006)
	AUT-2	The job allows me to plan how I do my work.	
	AUT-3	The job allows me to make decisions about what methods I use to complete my work.	(Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006)
Feedback	FEE-1	I have the opportunity to find out how well I am doing on my job.	(Sims <i>et al.</i> , 1976)
	FEE-2	I receive feedback on my performance from other people in my organization (such as my manager or co-workers).	(Morgeson and Humphrey, 2006)
PS Acceptance	BPSA-1	I would/wouldn't welcome a standardized process.	(Bovey and Hede, 2001)
	BPSA-2	I would/wouldn't support a standardized process.	
	BPSA-3	I would/wouldn't accept a standardized process.	
	BPSA-4	I would/wouldn't give in to a standardized process.	

Table 8. Measurement model

Model #	Construct	Item	Loading	Loading (model 6)	Construct	Item	Loading
1	Skill variety	SKI-1	.893	.893	BPS acceptance	BPSA-1	.792
		SKI-2	.917	.918		BPSA-2	.830
		SKI-3	.836	.834		BPSA-3	.923
						BPSA-4	.802
2	Task identity	IDE-1	.734	.886	BPS acceptance	BPSA-1	.766
		IDE-2	.949	.972		BPSA-2	.824
		IDE-3	.970	.979		BPSA-3	.934
						BPSA-4	.811
3	Task significance	SIG-1	.881	.865	BPS acceptance	BPSA-1	.755
						BPSA-2	.808
		SIG-3	.829	.834		BPSA-3	.938
		SIG-4	.744	.768		BPSA-4	.824
4	Autonomy	AUT-1	.868	.866	BPS acceptance	BPSA-1	.817
		AUT-2	.920	.918		BPSA-2	.862
		AUT-3	.955	.956		BPSA-3	.924
						BPSA-4	.752
5	Feedback	FEE-1	.828	.803	BPS acceptance	BPSA-1	.762
		FEE-2	.889	.907		BPSA-2	.823
						BPSA-3	.937
						BPSA-4	.811

Table 9. Outer loadings (all loadings are significant at  $p < .05$ )

Job characteristic	Skill variety	Task identity	Task significance	Autonomy	Feedback	BPS acceptance
Skill variety	.882					
Task identity	.302	.947				
Task significance	.569	.114	.826			
Autonomy	.185	.328	.395	.914		
Feedback	.248	.256	.367	.128	.857	
BPS acceptance	.456	-.023	.210	-.173	.123	.841

Table 10. Latent variable correlations for model 6

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