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Am I the Only One? Consequences of Change Championing (A)symmetry on Group- and Individual-Level Change Outcomes

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Abstract

Employee change championing (i.e., discretionary behaviors to promote change to others) is critical for implementing organizational change successfully. However, extant research has been focused on individual-level championing without considering the broader group context in which championing occurs. Our study adopts a multilevel perspective to provide insights into the effects of change championing at both the group and the individual level. We collected data at two points in time from 267 employees in 69 groups undergoing an organizational change in a German technology company. Multilevel modeling results show that group championing asymmetry (i.e., the degree to which group members differ in their championing) weakens the positive effects of group championing level on change implementation effectiveness. Moreover, we shed light on the individual-level processes that underpin group championing dynamics. Our findings reveal that employees who are embedded in groups with high average championing levels perceive a more positive change impact (but do not experience higher levels of enthusiasm) and report higher levels of individual championing at a later point in time compared to employees in groups with lower championing levels. Our study expands the championing literature to the group-level and offers a multilevel perspective on the championing dynamics between individuals and groups.

Keywords: Behavioral change support, Change championing, Change championing asymmetry, Collective responses to change, Multilevel theorizing

Introduction

To realize change successfully, organizations are dependent upon the support of those expected to put change into practice in daily work (Bartunek et al., 2011; Bartunek et al., 2006). A growing body of research has thus started to examine factors that drive support for change among employees (e.g., Fugate & Soenen, 2018; Kim et al., 2011; Rafferty et al., 2013). One critical change-supportive behavior is championing, which refers to the discretionary attempts of employees to convince others of the benefits of a change (Fugate & Soenen, 2018; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Change champions can positively sway the behaviors of others by conveying their own levels of confidence in a change, thereby reducing insecurity about the change for others (Howell & Shea, 2006). Despite the purported practical importance of championing, we have a very limited understanding of when and how championing drives change effectiveness (Santos et al., 2022). Two key critical issues remain underexplored in the existing literature.

First, although researchers have repeatedly highlighted that change efforts, like change support, involve actors and processes on multiple levels (Caldwell et al., 2004; Pettigrew et al., 2001; Rafferty et al., 2013), existing research has largely been focused on a single (i.e., the individual) level of analysis (e.g., Fugate & Soenen, 2018; Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Sonenshein & Dholakia, 2012). Second, the few quantitative (e.g., Choi & Chang, 2009; Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2010) and qualitative (e.g., Huy, 2011; Kanitz et al., 2022) studies about collective responses to change have focused on similarity in responses (i.e., absolute response levels), without explicitly considering variance of group members' responses. Yet, as we know from individual-level research, people can substantially diverge in the way they make sense of and respond to an identical change initiative (Bartunek et al., 2006; Caldwell et al., 2009; Sonenshein, 2010). Against this background, it is surprising that prior scholarship has not crossed levels to explore (a) how differences in individuals'

championing behavior may impact the collective-level effects of group change championing; and (b) how individuals' championing may be dependent on the overall championing in the group.

To illustrate the benefits of connecting the group and individual levels for a better understanding of change championing behavior, consider two scenarios. In one group, all group members show similarly high levels of change championing behaviors, resulting in overall high group championing levels; in a second group, the overall level of change championing is also fairly high, but some group members nonetheless substantially differ in their change-supportive behaviors. What are the effects of such similarities and differences in change championing among group members on change implementation? And how are individual change championing behaviors dependent on the change behaviors of others in the group?

To address these questions, we draw from situational strength theory (Meyer et al., 2010; Mischel, 1977) to hypothesize that group championing *asymmetry* (i.e., the degree to which group members differ in their championing) diminishes the positive impact of group championing *level* (i.e., the average level of championing within a group) on the group's later implementation effectiveness (i.e., the extent to which change goals have been adopted by the collective). To further advance multilevel understanding of championing, we also shed light on how an individual's appraisal and championing depends on the championing of others within the group. We integrate situational strength theory (Meyer et al., 2010; Mischel, 1977) with an appraisal lens (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Rafferty & Restubog, 2017), suggesting that the average level of championing in a group will shape an individual's appraisal and championing of change. Specifically, we propose that the group's level of championing affects the individual's later championing through (a) change impact valence perceptions

(i.e., cognitive appraisal), and (b) change enthusiasm (i.e., emotional appraisal) (see Figure 1).

- Insert Figure 1 about here -

Taken together, our study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, we advance change research by examining the thus far underexplored consequences of championing behaviors. Prior research has focused on predicting change behaviors at the individual level, but has provided insufficient insights into the outcomes of championing behaviors (Oreg et al., 2011). Indeed, the current body of work rests on the assumption that championing behaviors are worth studying because they positively influence (and are the closest precursor to) implementation success (Santos et al., 2022). By investigating the influence of group-level change championing on implementation effectiveness, we provide much-needed empirical evidence that would support this key assumption, but also challenge its universality by revealing its boundary conditions.

Second, we enhance research on collective change responses by showing that a nuanced understanding of championing not only requires consideration of the average championing in a group, but also the differences in championing among group members. In other words, accounting for the effects of group championing level and asymmetry (and their interactive effect) is decisive to gain a holistic understanding of the outcomes of collective support. Hence, our study advances research by integrating (a) group-level research where shared responses to change (i.e., mean-aggregated responses) have been in focus (e.g., Choi & Chang, 2009) and (b) individual-level research on the differences of employees' responses to change (Bouckenooghe et al., 2021; Oreg et al., 2011). This integration enriches our understanding of the interplay of group championing level and (a)symmetry and their role in change implementation effectiveness.

Third, our multilevel approach paints a more realistic picture of individual-level championing by studying group-level factors that shape individual responses. Change research so far has concentrated on processual antecedents and responses to change at the individual-level (Oreg & Berson, 2019; Oreg et al., 2011) and has been criticized as being too individual-level centric (Oreg & Berson, 2019) and 'decontextual' (Pettigrew et al., 2001). We enrich our understanding of the conditions (i.e., the average level of championing in the group) under which change appraisals will be most positive or negative, and thus sustain individual championing.

Theoretical Background

Championing and Championing Asymmetry

Championing behaviors are considered an intense form of change support, which are distinct from compliance behaviors, or more passive forms of support (Fugate & Soenen, 2018; Kim et al., 2011). Driven by a desire to actively and voluntarily propel a new initiative forward, individuals that engage in change championing behaviors "demonstrat[e] extreme enthusiasm for a change by going above and beyond what is formally required to ensure the success of the change and promot[e] the change to others" (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002, p. 478). In order to engage in championing, an individual must be highly committed to a change (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002), and even willing to take personal risks (e.g., to one's reputation at work) on behalf of a change initiative (Howell & Higgins, 1990). For these reasons, championing has been examined as a means to understand the active support of a change across individuals.

So far, few scholars have examined collective responses to change in general, and collective championing in particular. The initial work that has been done on collective change responses has focused on how people in a group on average respond to a change, and how shared change acceptance (Choi & Chang, 2009) or affect-based responses can shape

implementation outcomes (Kanitz et al., 2022; Vuori & Huy, 2016). However, exclusively considering average levels of change responses may be inadequate as group members may diverge in terms of the degree that they support and champion a change (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). Based on this logic, people are likely to show different degrees of change support, which may depend on other factors, such as prior experiences with change during their career or the change-related behaviors of the people around them. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that even people within the same group are likely to differ to a certain extent in their championing of a change.

To capture differences in championing behaviors between individuals working in the same group, we differentiate between *group championing level*—the average level of championing behaviors of members within a group—and *group championing asymmetry*—the degree to which group members differ in their championing. To obtain a realistic understanding of how championing influences group-level implementation effectiveness, we consider both factors and their interplay. To advance multilevel theorizing of change championing, we furthermore expand our theorizing to the individual level. This individual level perspective enables us to shed light on how an individual's appraisal and championing behavior depends on the championing of others within the group.

Group Championing Level and Implementation Effectiveness

We propose that group championing level is associated with change implementation effectiveness—the extent to which the goals of the change have been adopted by the collective (Choi & Chang, 2009). Indeed, championing has been considered an effective way to drive successful change implementation (Faupel & Süß, 2019; Islam et al., 2020) because of the positive influences of championing on other individuals. Change champions model the ways in which one can support a change and deliberately motivate others to follow their lead. By proactively making attempts to convince others that a change is important and needed,

change champions can overcome obstacles to change and shape the beliefs of other group members. Thus, change champions are likely able to spread change-supportive beliefs and behaviors to others (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002).

Such social influence effects have been documented in several studies on championing. Change champions can positively influence how others in the organization think and behave in response to change by conveying their beliefs about a change, thereby reducing uncertainty and energizing others (Howell & Shea, 2006). The authors of one study find that when managers' perceptions that subordinate support for change is high, it increases their own championing behaviors and support for change (Faupel, 2020). Another study's findings point to the link between championing and the achievement of group performance outcomes (Howell & Shea, 2006). Because championing is associated with group effectiveness (Howell & Shea, 2006) and perceived change success (Waldman & Bass, 1991), it is likely that groups that engage in higher levels of championing will more strongly engage each other to realize the change. Combined, the results of these studies suggest that the level of championing amongst group members is important for implementation effectiveness. Hence, groups that are high on group championing level are likely to share and disseminate a positive view of a change to colleagues and act in full support of a change until it is completed (Clarysse & Moray, 2004; Heng et al., 1999).

One important aspect of the social influence is that when employees within groups engage in high levels of championing, they may also provide a point of reference to other members of the group regarding the appropriate level of change support. Therefore, championing may create expectations that other employees within the group will adapt their attitudes and behaviors to meet the demands of the implementation (e.g., Shoss et al., 2012), and these expectations will be especially strong in the case of high group championing levels.

Thus, we propose that groups with high average levels of championing will make more progress regarding the change implementation.

Hypothesis 1: Group championing level is positively associated with implementation effectiveness.

The Moderating Role of Group Championing Asymmetry

Group championing asymmetry describes differences in championing behaviors, that is, situations where the level of championing varies across group members. Similarities or differences in championing within a group may exist for different reasons, such as ambiguous messages sent by the change leaders, individuals' prior experience with change, or perceptions of how one's peers react to a change. As prior research in other disciplines has shown, divergent behaviors that exist between individuals in a group may have significant consequences for group-level outcomes (Humphrey & Aime, 2014).

We draw from situational strength theory (Meyer et al., 2010; Mischel, 1977) and consider how group championing asymmetry influences the effect of group championing level on implementation outcomes. Situational strength is defined as the "implicit or explicit cues provided by external entities regarding the desirability of potential behaviors" (Meyer et al., 2010, p. 122). How individuals interpret their environment is based on how they interact with others, and as behaviors and perceptions are cyclical, group members continuously assess their behaviors in relation to those of others and adjust their responses accordingly (e.g., Bandura, 1986). From this perspective, low levels of championing asymmetry within a group represents a strong situation that provides clear cues of acceptable and predominant behavioral change norm within the group (Mischel, 1977). Conversely, high levels of championing asymmetry characterize weak situations in which individuals experience higher levels of ambiguity regarding change-related norms and behaviors that are most appropriate.

We expect that the effect of group championing level on implementation outcomes depends on the strength of the situation. Specifically, we propose that the social influence

effects underlying the positive impact of change championing on implementation effectiveness are facilitated in groups with lower asymmetry in group members' championing—where there are clear and consistent cues from peers that change is considered appropriate. This is because when multiple members engage in similar levels of championing, these consistent behaviors lead group members to infer that everyone in the group construes the situation in a similar way and that, for example, supporting the change is normative. When group members assess the behaviors of their peers, groups where members express similar behaviors send strong signals about whether championing behaviors are appropriate. For example, if all group members are exhibiting relatively high levels of championing behaviors, then this will enhance social influence processes, thus increasing collective confidence about a change and encouraging collective effort to work toward its successful implementation.

In contrast, when group championing asymmetry is high (i.e., when championing varies among group members), the effect of group championing level on implementation effectiveness should become weaker. In this case, there are salient differences between individual group members in terms of their championing which likely hampers influence processes. Due to behavioral dissimilarity across group members, individuals will infer a certain degree of ambiguity about how to behave (i.e., exhibit high or low championing) and if the change is worth pursuing and actively supporting. Due to this ambiguity, employees may be less confident about how others are adopting the change, leading into reduced collective effort. This behavioral asymmetry will hamper influence processes, resulting in a weaker link between average level of group championing and implementation effectiveness. Based on these arguments, we predict:

> *Hypothesis 2:* Group-level championing asymmetry moderates the relationship between group championing level and implementation effectiveness, such that the relationship weakens (i.e., becomes less positive) when group championing asymmetry is higher.

Thus far, we have considered inter-individual differences in championing at the group-level and how they influence group-level outcomes. However, this collective level perspective leaves us with a limited understanding of how individuals appraise the broader group context when making their decision whether to adapt to the championing behaviors of their peers or not. Thus, to better understand how influence processes in change championing unfold, we examine how individuals appraise and adapt their championing in the context of their group.

The Role of Group Championing Level for Individual Change Appraisals and Championing

By extending our theorizing to the individual-level, we dive into when (i.e., under which conditions) and how (i.e., through what mechanisms) individual championing takes place. In this study, we build on work on appraisals of an organizational change (Liu & Perrewe, 2005; Oreg et al., 2018) to develop insights about individuals' psychological reactions to championing behaviors in their groups. In particular, we build on the tenets of the transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) that has been shown to be a useful lens in explaining individual responses to change (e.g., Fugate, 2013; Fugate et al., 2012).

From this perspective, individuals form appraisals as they evaluate the information available to them during a change (Liu & Perrewe, 2005), and adapt future behaviors according to those appraisals (Oreg et al., 2018). Appraisals of change "give meaning to employees' experiences of change" (Fugate et al., 2012, p. 891) and depend on the specific situation an employee is embedded in. For instance, while an individual is engaging in change championing, they will assess the appropriateness of their championing behaviors by observing their peers. The extent to which individuals decide to continue championing will be

based on the duality of the cognitive and emotional appraisal (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) they form from interpreting the change behavior that is dominant in their work group.

Various studies on how individuals respond to organizational change have examined cognitive components (e.g., Fugate et al., 2012; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006) and emotional components of change appraisals (e.g., Shin et al., 2012; Sommer et al., 2016). Cognitive and emotional responses to change have been argued to be highly intertwined during appraisals (Ellsworth, 2013; Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003), and have been studied as part of the holistic change-supportive response (Rafferty & Minbashian, 2019). Thus, we investigate two components of the appraisal we believe underlie an individual's (dis-) continuance of championing behaviors: change impact valence perceptions (i.e., the cognitive component of the appraisal) and change enthusiasm (i.e., the emotional component of the appraisal).

On the cognitive side, one's perceptions about the valence of the change impact—the degree to which a change impacts one's personal job environment in positive or negative ways (Shin et al., 2012)—is an important part of the appraisal process. When appraising the impact of a change, individuals assess potential gains that may follow from its implementation (Liu & Perrewe, 2005) and use this information to assess the relevance of a change for personal goals (Oreg et al., 2018). Specifically, individuals evaluate the meaning and significance of a new situation with a cognitive appraisal, which determines their continued engagement with the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). More favorable behavioral responses are likely to ensue when the situation provides a high relevance for goal attainment and accomplishment (Skinner & Brewer, 2002). Thus, if a change has greater personal relevance for an individual because they perceive there to be room for positive impact on decisions, relationships, and growth, they will feel more personally involved and inspired (Nyer, 1997), and react more positively to the change (Oreg et al., 2018). Perceptions that a change will have a positive impact on one's work (and therefore be

relevant) can be a motivating force to continue and reinforce to engage with the change, and therefore will have a positive influence on future championing behaviors.

On the emotional side, we propose that change enthusiasm—a discrete feeling that has high activation and energizing potential characterized by being excited, alert, and inspired (e.g., Fredrickson, 2001)—plays a central role in championing-related appraisal processes. Championing behaviors are more likely to be related to the experience of high activation pleasant emotions such as enthusiasm and excitement toward that change (versus contentment, which is suggested to be more closely related to passive support) (Fugate & Soenen, 2018; Seo et al., 2004). This is because when employees actively support a change, they are more likely to eagerly and vigorously engage with others (Fugate & Soenen, 2018), prompting high activation forms of positive affect (Liu & Perrewe, 2005). Furthermore, perceptions of impact and relevance have been shown to be associated with positive emotions, such as excitement, cheerfulness, and inspiration (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Skinner & Brewer, 2002; Webster et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2019). Thus, experiencing enthusiasm across the change process may help sustain and reinforce championing behaviors, as positive emotions may serve to increase one's energy and willingness to continue to exert more effort on behalf of the change.

The tenets of situational strength theory (Mischel, 1977) and appraisal theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) help us make sense of how group championing level may affect employees' cognitive and emotional change appraisals, and continued championing behaviors. After all, individuals' appraisals can be attributed to, in part, social influence processes (Larson & Christensen, 1993). The relationship between championing and appraisals might depend on the inferences individuals make about how others behave related to a particular change. Specifically, employees' championing efforts are likely to be (further)

enhanced in groups with high levels of championing, where strong cues exist that championing behaviors are supported, welcomed, and encouraged (Mischel, 1977).

For these reasons, we expect that high average levels of championing within a group will strengthen the individual-level relationship between initial and later championing through change appraisals. Because of the general pro-championing atmosphere in the group that change is desirable and achievable, individuals should perceive more strongly that the change has a positive impact on their work environment (Mischel, 1977). Similarly, high group championing levels can suggest to the individual that there is a higher likelihood of a positive change outcome and that the collective is relatively engaged, also prompting them to become more excited and enthusiastic about a change through personal interactions with other champions (e.g., Madrid et al., 2014; Russell & Barrett, 1999). In contrast, we propose that groups where the general championing level is lower and the cues from interaction with other group members will make people less likely to anticipate more positive change outcomes and become more emotionally engaged with change. Hence, if the group is championing at high rather than low levels, individuals will be more optimistic about the impact of their own behavior and become more excited, and, in turn, increase their own championing behaviors. Thus, we posit that:

Hypothesis 3a and 3b: Group championing level strengthens the positive relationship between initial championing and (*H3a*) change impact valence perceptions (the cognitive appraisal) and (*H3b*) the positive indirect relationship between initial championing and later championing via (higher) change impact valence perceptions.

Hypothesis 4a and 4b: Group championing level strengthens the positive relationship between initial championing and (*H4a*) change enthusiasm, and (*H4b*) the positive indirect relationship between initial championing and later championing via (higher) change enthusiasm.

Method

Research Context

Our field study took place at a German multinational technology firm that develops and manufactures high-end technology products that are sold in the business-to-business market. Worldwide, the company makes more than $10 billion USD in revenues per year. Data were collected from employees within one business function located at the company headquarters in Germany. One central characteristic of the company is the strong emphasis on engineering excellence with a focus on outstanding product quality and long-term technological leadership. Due to technological advances and new regulations in the market environment, top management saw it as essential to initiate a top-down change initiative to transform from a strong engineering tradition characterized by stringent processes, hierarchy, and a product-focus into a more collaborative, flexible, and customer-oriented way of working. Theoretically speaking, the change initiative can be described as one with a transformational end result in mind, but had to be realized through multiple incremental steps rather than a 'big bang' (Balogun & Hailey, 2004). The main thrust behind the initiative was to change the structure and culture of the organization to prepare the organization to execute the new strategy (i.e., heavily extend the digital services).

To initiate the process, the fifty top organizational leaders gathered and formulated seven change goals to operationalize the desired future state. Employees were not involved in the formulation of the change goals. The goals covered both people-oriented (passion, active listening, integrity) and business-oriented themes (quality, risk-taking, lean, and future-orientation), and aimed at setting the groundwork for a change of internal functioning to take place. Each of the goals was further detailed by desired future states when change would be successfully realized and behaviors that drive those outcomes.

The change initiative started with a top-down change announcement via email to all employees, followed by a top management presentation at a town hall meeting. The global roll-out of the activities stemmed mainly from top-down communications in which organizational members received information on the change goals through town hall meetings, presentations, or information provided on the firms' intranet. In addition, local change managers were expected to foster interactive communication activities in all departments to engage employees with the change goals and foster employee proactive engagement.

We deem this change context well-suited to examine change championing asymmetry at multiple levels. The introduced change goals were rather abstract and intended to guide the overall direction of change (the what?). Indeed, management needed the employees to promote the initiative and generate concrete actions to bring the change forward (the how?) at operational- and group-levels, making championing very important to the implementation of the change.

Procedure and sample

We collaborated with the management team and the HR department of one functional unit that focused on research and development (R&D) activities. For data collection, the head of the unit sent out an email invitation to all employees at both data collection waves, which stated that the voluntary survey offered employees the opportunity to bring in their voice. At time 1 (T1), we received responses from 557 organizational members (T1 response rate = 44%) and 611 at time 2 (T2; response rate = 49%). From the participants at T1, we were able to match 267 to the T2 survey offering responses for both points in time. In the matched sample, a few participants (n = 7) did not reveal their gender. Among those who revealed their gender, 84% were males and 16% were females, which was representative of the engineering-oriented R&D context. Participants had worked for the company for between 0

to 4 (9%), 5 to 9 years (25%), 10 to 14 years (23%), 15 to 19 (7%), 20 to 24 (8%), 25 to 29 (8%), or for more than 30 years (18%). 2% of participants did not indicate their tenure (*n* = 5). Participants were nested in 69 groups in the unit. The average size of a group was 5.39 (ranged between 3 and 9).

Managers introduced the change initiative to employees before our first survey. The second survey was conducted ten months after the first survey. We chose these time lags for several reasons. First, we assumed that implementation effectiveness can be determined by a group after some months post change launch only. Hence, the first survey was conducted at the initiation stage and the second survey at the implementation stage of change (e.g., Isabella, 1990; Seo et al., 2012). Relatedly, because we are interested in championing behaviors, we wanted the change to have evolved for a few months to allow sufficient time for championing to take place and subsequent appraisals to form. Second, we wanted to avoid memory or priming effects that might bias our results due to a temporally close survey execution (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

Measures

All items were operationalized with a focus on the context of the particular change. We translated the items using the back translation procedure as outlined by Brislin (1986). Appendix A of the Online Supplement reports the items of all measures.

Individual championing (T1 α = .90, T2 α = 0.89). We measured individual change championing behaviors using an adapted three-item version ("I try to overcome co-workers' resistance to the change.", "I speak positively about the change to others.", "I tell co-workers about the benefits of the change.") of the scale by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002). This shortened version is commonly used in the change literature (e.g., Sonenshein & Dholakia, 2012). Participants rated their agreement with the items on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

Change impact valence perceptions (T2 α = 0.89*).* We measured the perceived impact of the change using an adapted version of the scale by Shin et al. (2012). The valence of the change impact was captured by the scale anchors. Participants were asked to rate their perceptions of how the change impacted different job dimensions. To choose appropriate job dimensions in the context of the change initiative in this study, we reviewed a list of various dimensions with company officials. Based on the content of the change initiative and the purpose of the change, we agreed on the following four dimensions that were specifically targeted by the change goals and would likely be impacted by the implementation activities: (1) interactions with colleagues, (2) leadership behaviors, (3) workflows, and (4) decision-making processes. Participants rated the perceived impact on a seven-point scale at Time 2 (1 = very negative to 7 = very positive) for each of the dimensions.

Change enthusiasm (T2 α = 0.87). To measure enthusiasm about the change, we used a measurement approach aligned with Shin et al. (2012). Participants were asked to rate the high activation positive affect that they experienced related to the change. The instructions read "Please indicate approximately how often you have experienced the following emotions associated with the change implementation". We used four high-activation-pleasant-affect items (excited, inspired, alert, and interested) of a validated scale (Watson et al., 1988), as those emotions are particularly likely to mobilize proactivity (e.g., Russell & Barrett, 1999), and therefore championing. We asked participants to rate the frequency on a five-point scale (1="very rarely, 5="very often")

Group championing level (T1). We calculated group championing level based on the above measure of individual championing by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002). Specifically, we group-mean-aggregated all members' responses per group, applying an additive model (Chan, 1998). We used an additive model of the individual-level change championing items (e.g., "I try to overcome co-workers' resistance to the change.") instead of a consensus model

with referent-shift items (e.g., “In this group, we try to overcome co-workers' resistance to the change.”) because the later makes it more difficult to detect interaction effects between level and asymmetry constructs (Cole et al., 2011; Schneider et al., 2013). The collective reference in the items could conceal actual differences in championing behaviors in a group.

Group championing asymmetry (T1). Following past research assessing dispersion concepts that reflect asymmetry within groups (e.g., Jehn et al., 2010; Rispens et al., 2021), we measured group championing asymmetry as the within-group standard deviation among championing behavior ratings within a group. The higher the score, the stronger the asymmetry (or dispersion) of reported championing behavior within a group. The group championing asymmetry score ranged between 0 and 2.02.

Implementation effectiveness (T2 $\alpha = 0.86$). We measured implementation effectiveness based on the procedure used by Choi and Chang (2009). Accordingly, we asked participants to rate the extent to which the group already acts according to each of the seven change goals (i.e., lean, quality, long-term orientation, integrity, listening, passion, and risk-taking) on a five-point extent scale (1 = not at all, 5 = to a very large extent).

Control variables. We included a set of theoretically relevant control variables. At the individual level, we controlled for gender because women represented a minority in the engineering-driven company and their token status in many groups my influence their perceptions and behaviors during the change initiative (Reinwald & Kunze, 2020). Second, we controlled for tenure, as previous research has shown that employees with longer tenure tend to be more critical towards change and therefore may engage in lower levels of championing (Van Dam et al., 2008). Third, we controlled for leadership responsibility, as leaders are often involved in the development of change projects and, therefore, may perceive change initiatives to be more beneficial than employees (Hill et al., 2012). Fourth, we included the identification scale by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) to capture an individual’s

identification with their business unit. Prior research revealed, in this regard, that the degree of identification may influence how people respond and behave in relation to change (e.g., Van Knippenberg et al., 2006). The scale consists of a graphical image, where participants indicate the overlap between their own identity and the business unit's identity. At the group-level, we controlled for group size as lower social proximity in larger groups may promote the development of distinct championing behaviors (Reinwald et al., 2019). If unaccounted for, these have the potential to bias our findings for the group-level interaction. In line with recommendations by Becker et al. (2016), we repeated all hypothesis tests both with and without the control variables. The substantive findings and conclusions remained identical across models with and without controls (see Tables 2-5 for details), supporting the robustness of our findings.

Aggregation Tests

We examined interrater reliability (ICC_1 and ICC_2) and interrater agreement (r_{WG}) statistics to support the aggregation of the group-level variables in our model (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Interrater reliability captures the relative consistency of responses among raters, while interrater agreement refers to the degree to which individual ratings are interchangeable (Bliese, 2000). Both, high reliability and agreement, are essential for consensus-based aggregation models (i.e., our measure of implementation effectiveness), but "of no theoretical or operational concern" for additive models (i.e., our measure of group championing level) or dispersion models (i.e., our measure of group championing asymmetry) (Chan, 1998, p. 236).

In line with our theoretical model, the consensus-based aggregation of implementation effectiveness was strongly supported, revealing that group membership explained 24% of the variance in individual ratings of the dependent variable (ICC_1 = .24, F = 2.24, p < .001; ICC_2 = .55; r_{WG} = .80) (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Meanwhile, corresponding with the theoretically

expected asymmetry in group members' championing behaviors, we obtained smaller, yet acceptable aggregation statistics for group championing level (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; LeBreton & Senter, 2008): ICC_1 = .14, F = 1.62, p < .01; ICC_2 = .38; r_{WG} = .59.

Following Bliese et al. (2018), we also examined ICC_1 statistics for the individual-level variables in our model: 16% of the variance in perceived change impact (ICC_1 = .16, F = 1.75, p < .01), 21% of the variance in change enthusiasm (ICC_1 = .21, F = 2.03, p < .001), and 21% of the variance in individual championing T2 (ICC_1 = .21, F = 2.06, p < .001) resided at the group-level. The significant group-level variance in these individual-level variables underlines the statistical appropriateness of our multilevel conceptual model (Bliese et al., 2018).

Data Analysis

Our model includes relationships at the individual- and group-levels, as well as across both levels of analysis. Given this nested arrangement, we applied multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) techniques (Lüdtke et al., 2008; Preacher et al., 2016) in Mplus version 8.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2017) to test our predictions. This allowed us to (a) examine all group- and individual-level relationships simultaneously (Preacher et al., 2010) and (b) model the cross-level interaction effects captured in Hypotheses 3a and 4a (Preacher et al., 2016). Specifically, regarding the latter, we followed slope-as-outcome-procedures as described by Preacher and colleagues (2016), regressing perceived change impact and change enthusiasm on individual championing T1 and saving the slope coefficients per group. Then, we modeled the influence of group championing level on these slope coefficients per group. To explore the conditional indirect effects (Hypotheses 3b and 4b), we performed 20,000

bootstraps with the Monte Carlo method based on Bayesian statistics to estimate confidence intervals (Preacher et al., 2010).

To facilitate the interpretation of our results, we grand-mean-centered group-level variables and group-mean-centered individual-level variables (Aguinis et al., 2013; Bliese et al., 2018). Perceived change impact and change enthusiasm were grand-mean-centered because, to test the cross-level interaction (Preacher et al., 2016), we introduced latent components of these variables at the within level (i.e., predicted by individual championing) and at the between level (i.e., predicted by group championing level) (Muthén & Muthén, 2017). Participants were allowed to skip questions on demographic and vocational variables, resulting in some missing observations for tenure (2% missing) and gender (3% missing). We applied FIML procedures in models including control variables to deal with these missing data (Enders & Bandalos, 2001). Because of limited degrees of freedom available from our 69 groups, we indexed all multi-item measures as scale scores for use in the structural analysis (Williams & O'Boyle, 2008). As recommended by Muthén and Muthén (2017), we used robust standard errors (i.e., the *MLR* estimator) in our analyses.

Results

Table 1 summarizes means, standard deviations, and correlations of all study variables.

Measurement Model

We examined the measurement model prior to testing our hypotheses (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). To this end, we fitted a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis and evaluated model fit based on a combination of incremental (*CFI, TLI*) and absolute fit indices (*RMSEA, SRMR*) (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). We included our study variables at their levels of conceptual origin: individual championing T1, perceived change impact, change enthusiasm, and individual championing T2 at the individual level, and group

championing level, group championing asymmetry, and implementation effectiveness at the group-level. Fit statistics for the measurement model indicated a good overall fit ($\chi^2_{(113)}$ = 273.20, $p < .001$; *CFI* = .94, *TLI* = .93, *RMSEA* = .07, $SRMR_{within}$ = .04, $SRMR_{between}$ = .05). To further probe the validity of our measures, we inspected (a) the standardized factor loadings of single items (all were ≥ .63; $p < .001$), (b) the discriminant validity of measures with relatively high correlations (i.e., $r \geq .60$), and (c) *AVE* statistics for all core constructs of our model (all were ≥ .55). These additional analyses provide robust support to the discriminant and convergent validity of our measurement scales (for details, see Appendix A and Appendix B of the Online Supplement).

Hypothesis Tests

Tables 2-5 report the results for the structural analyses in two steps. The first step specified the unconditional effects of group championing level at the group-level (Hypothesis 1) and the unconditional (indirect) effects of individual championing at the individual level. In the second step, we additionally accounted for the moderating effect of group championing asymmetry (Hypothesis 2) and the cross-level moderating effect of group championing level on both individual-level paths (Hypotheses 3a/b and 4a/b). Model comparisons based on *Deviance* statistics revealed that the inclusion of the interactions led to a significant improvement in model fit in models excluding (Δ *Deviance* = 67.29, *df* = 11, $p < .001$) and including control variables (Δ *Deviance* = 117.48, *df* = 11, $p < .001$) (Aguinis et al., 2013; LaHuis & Ferguson, 2009).

At the group-level, we predicted that group championing level is positively related to implementation effectiveness (Hypothesis 1). As shown in Table 2 (Columns 1 and 2), Hypothesis 1 was supported in models without (*B* = .50, *SE* = .07, $p < .001$) and with control variables (*B* = .51, *SE* = .07, $p < .001$). Next, in Hypothesis 2 we proposed that the group championing level – implementation effectiveness relationship is moderated by group

championing asymmetry, such that the relationship weakens when asymmetry is higher. As displayed in Table 2 (Columns 3 and 4), we found support for a negative and statistically significant interaction in models without (B = –.43, SE = .20, p = .03) and with controls (B = –.45, SE = .20, p = .03). Moreover, simple slope tests revealed that the relationship between group championing level and implementation effectiveness was positive and statistically significant at lower (–1SD: B = .59, SE = .08, p < .001) and mean levels of the moderator (B = .42, SE = .08, p < .001), and it was insignificant at higher levels of group championing asymmetry (+1SD: B = .25, SE = .13, p = .06). Figure 2 depicts the interaction plot. Thus, Hypothesis 2 received support.

At the individual level, we found a positive and significant effect of individual championing T1 on change impact valence perceptions (without controls: B = .37, SE = .05, p < .001; with controls: B = .33, SE = .07, p < .001) and change enthusiasm (without controls: B = .43, SE = .05, p < .001; with controls: B = .37, SE = .05, p < .001), respectively (see Table 3 and Table 4: Columns 1 and 2). After assessing the direction of these relationships, we tested the cross-level interaction proposed in Hypotheses 3a and 4a (see Table 3 and Table 4: Columns 3 and 4). We obtained support for Hypothesis 3a, as indicated by a positive and statistically significant interaction between individual championing T1 and group championing level on perceived change impact in models without (B = .15, SE = .06, p = .01) and with control variables (B = .17, SE = .06, p < .01). Moreover, as depicted in Figure 3, simple slope tests revealed that the effect of individual championing T1 on perceived change impact became stronger as group championing level increased: –1SD: B = .30, SE = .04, p < .001; *mean*: B = .40, SE = .05, p < .001; +1SD: B = .50, SE = .09, p < .001. Hence, Hypothesis 3a is supported. In contrast, we did not find evidence of a cross-level interaction between individual championing T1 and group championing level on change enthusiasm in

models without (B = –.07, SE = .06, p = .31) and with control variables (B = –.04, SE = .06, p = .51). We therefore did not find support for Hypothesis 4a.

Finally, we turned to the conditional indirect effects of individual championing T1 on individual championing T2 (Hypotheses 3b and 4b). To this end, we first regressed individual championing T2 on perceived change impact (without controls: B = .40, SE = .12, p < .001; with controls: B = .35, SE = .10, p < .001) and on change enthusiasm (without controls: B = .46, SE = .14, p < .001; with controls: B = .52, SE = .014, p < .001) (see Table 5), as these paths were required to form the multiplicative indirect effect (Preacher et al., 2010). Then, regarding Hypothesis 3b, bootstrapping revealed that individual championing T1 had a significant and positive effect on individual championing T2 via perceived change impact at lower (–1*SD*: B = .12, CI = [.05; .19]) mean (B = .16, CI = [.07; .24]), and higher levels (+1*SD*: B = .20, CI = [.09; .31]) of group championing level. As predicted, this effect became stronger as group championing level increased. This provides support to Hypothesis 3b. Given the non-significant cross-level interaction effect between individual championing T1 and group championing level on change enthusiasm, we conclude that there is insufficient evidence to support Hypothesis 4b about the downstream consequences for individual championing T2.

Taken together, we obtained support for a main effect of group championing level (Hypothesis 1), as well as the interactive effect between group championing level and asymmetry (Hypothesis 2), on group-level implementation effectiveness. At the individual level, our findings support a cross-level interaction effect between individual championing T1 and group championing level on perceived change impact (Hypothesis 3a) and, by extension, change championing T2 (Hypothesis 4a). Meanwhile, the cross-level interaction effect on change enthusiasm (Hypothesis 3b) – and, by extension, on change championing T2 (Hypothesis 4b) – was not statistically significant. The full structural model including control

variables explained 49% of the variance in implementation effectiveness and 48% of the variance in individual championing T2.

Discussion

This investigation addresses critical and unexplored questions about the multilevel consequences of change championing behavior. Our results, collected from a two-wave field study with 267 individuals nested in 69 groups during an organizational change initiative, provide several valuable insights into the group and individual dynamics of change championing that are critical for successful change implementation.

Specifically, our results suggest that the often-assumed positive relationship between group championing level and implementation effectiveness is only present when group championing asymmetry is low (i.e., group members are aligned in their championing behaviors—either collectively at high or low levels). These results are supported by the tenets of situational strength theory (Meyer et al., 2010; Mischel, 1977). As we expected, the relationship between group championing and implementation effectiveness is strengthened when there is a lower degree of championing variance in a group.

To examine when and how individuals are influenced by their group when they converge or diverge in championing from group members, we extended our model to the individual level to understand how inter-individual differences develop in groups. Our findings show that group championing level affects the individual-level relationships between initial championing and later championing via perceptions of the change impact valence (but not enthusiasm). Change champions who are embedded in contexts with high group championing levels perceive the change to have a more positive impact on their work and report higher levels of championing at a later point in time. Thus, group championing level functions as an 'amplifier' of individual championing for later championing via the cognitive

component of the appraisal, which is also aligned with situational strength theory (Meyer et al., 2010; Mischel, 1977).

However, in contrast to our predictions, the emotional component of the appraisal (change enthusiasm) was not affected by the group championing level, which merits some discussion. The non-significant result for the emotional appraisal may be explained by the transactional theory of stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which places the cognitive appraisal of the situation as the central element in the stressor-response model (Rafferty & Restubog, 2017; Webster et al., 2011). It could be that emotions are secondary responses informed by the cognitive appraisal, rather than serving as a primary mechanism in the championing process. For instance, it may be that emotions develop more dynamically and are more short-lived than cognitive appraisals. Therefore, it may be critical to capture emotional reactions in momentary experience sampling assessments to better understand how enthusiasm relates to championing.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of our empirical analyses contribute to current research on collective responses to change in three important ways. First, our study advances research on change supportive responses by examining the under-explored consequences of championing behaviors (Santos et al., 2022) and extending its scope to the group-level of analysis. So far, research has focused on the person-centric, processual antecedents that predict change-supportive behaviors at the individual level (Kim et al., 2011; Oreg et al., 2011), but has paid very limited attention to the consequences of supportive behaviors. For instance, scholars have focused on factors that drive individual championing such as change commitment (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002), meaning-making and psychological resources (Sonenshein & Dholakia, 2012), or combinations of perceived contextual- and person-factors (Fugate & Soenen, 2018). Indeed, current research that examines the antecedents of championing

behaviors assumes that such behaviors positively influence implementation outcomes (Santos et al., 2022); yet, this assumption has remained largely untested. Consequently, by investigating the influence of championing at the group-level and on implementation effectiveness, we provide much needed empirical evidence that would support such claims—but also bring in more nuance by showing that this effect is only present under certain conditions. Our findings underscore the relevance of studying change supportive behaviors and draw more attention to group-level processes in organizational change.

Second, our study extends current debates on collective responses to change (Choi & Chang, 2009; Choi et al., 2011; Rafferty et al., 2013) by demonstrating the value of considering idiosyncrasies in individuals' change responses. We rely on compilation models to theorize about the emergence of collective responses from individual responses to change. Compilation models emphasize how a "configuration of different lower-level characteristics" (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000, p. 16) can generate a group-level effect. The few existing studies on collective responses to change, however, have been emphasizing composition models (Kozlowki & Klein, 2000) and therefore have mostly focused on commonalities shared by group members (Rafferty et al., 2013). These studies have been concentrated on examining average levels of responses (i.e., using the aggregated mean of individual responses) (Choi & Chang, 2009; Choi et al., 2011) and have treated within-group differences between members as noise and measurement error in the aggregation process (Cole et al., 2011). This practice has resulted in very limited insights into response asymmetry in groups (see Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2010, for a notable exception) and allows for only limited insights regarding group dynamics in the context of change. The focus on shared responses over dissimilarity in responses is surprising given the amount of research, particularly qualitative studies, that highlight how people within the same context can diverge in the way they think and feel

about an identical change (Bartunek et al., 2006; Caldwell et al., 2009; Sonenshein, 2010), and therefore respond to it in dissimilar ways.

The third contribution of our work pertains to the value of considering the multilevel interplay of group-level factors and employee individual appraisals for illuminating the consequences of change championing on both group and individual-level outcomes. Although researchers started more than a decade ago to document how group-level factors shape individual level relationships during change processes (Fedor et al., 2006; Herold et al., 2008), very few scholars have followed this path. Indeed, the large majority of studies so far has been concentrated on individual-level relationships between perceived processual antecedents and responses to change (Oreg & Berson, 2019; Oreg et al., 2011) and has also been criticized as being too individual-level focused (Oreg & Berson, 2019) and 'decontextual' (Pettigrew et al., 2001).

Drawing from situational strength theory (Mischel, 1977) as a multilevel framework, our work integrates (1) group-level research where shared responses to change have been in focus (e.g., Choi & Chang, 2009) and (2) individual-level research that has examined differences in employees' responses to change (Bouckenooghe et al., 2021; Oreg et al., 2011). Our results show that collective- and individual-level effects of change championing can best be understood by considering individuals' behavioral championing tendencies alongside the situation created through the championing behaviors of other group members. Key in understanding championing effects on the individual and collective level is how consistently the situation encourages or discourages individual behavioral championing tendencies. Future change championing work can highlight other factors that create strong situations which result in consistent and stable championing behaviors from the vantage point offered by situational strength theory (Mischel, 1977). In doing so, change scholars may go beyond the championing behavior of team colleagues and look at how leader behaviors or

contextual factors from outside the team, like an organizational change vision, may create strong situations and thereby shape individual and group-level championing effects.

Practical Implications

Our results provide two important insights for change leaders to consider. First, change managers and group leaders should not only focus on individual responses to change but also monitor the change responses of groups overall (i.e., average group support), as groups that engage in lower levels of championing can present an obstacle to the change. This is especially worrisome because the level of championing in a group also influences the extent to which individuals within that group will continue to champion a change over time via perceptions of a positive change impact to one's job environment. In other words, due to influences from their group members, the championing behaviors of these individuals may decrease over time because of diminished perceptions that the change will have a positive impact on their jobs. Thus, managers might invest some time re-energizing, coaching, and motivating champions that are in groups with lower levels, on average, of group championing. However, there is a potential upside to this finding that is important for change leaders; there might be championing gains for individuals placed in groups with high average levels of group championing.

Second, managers should discern that high levels of asymmetry in championing behavior within groups can be an impediment for a change implementation. Hence, we propose that one step change leaders can take to improve change outcomes is to assess whether there is high asymmetry within groups and to explore the underlying causes leading some individuals to withhold support for a change. Thus, the ability to recognize the composition of diverse behaviors in a collective, which includes awareness of subtle and hidden cues in employee actions (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009), is an important skill for change leaders to develop. Such skills can help change leaders to accurately diagnose group-

level responses to change and infer appropriate interventions. Thus, managers might benefit from detecting groups with high championing asymmetry to understand why some individuals are withholding support. Leaders can then deploy targeted interventions to better support groups, or individuals within groups, engaging in lower levels of championing.

However, we acknowledge that there might be a positive side to high levels of group championing asymmetry, such that leaders may glean constructive insights from group member championing asymmetry. It is important to work with people that have some concerns about the change to reduce the dysfunctions associated with asymmetry of change championing—as they might have good reasons to not champion for a particular change (for example, concerns about a negative impact to one area's functioning). In this regard, as has been demonstrated in earlier work (Oreg & Berson, 2019), two promising approaches for leaders are to alter their communication and involvement tactics. Leaders can try to motivate higher levels of change support by communicating transparently, timely, and openly about the change. On the other hand, leaders can also use involvement techniques to encourage higher levels of change support and provide employees with opportunities to voice their views and concerns. The raised concerns could then be incorporated into the further design of the process or even content of the change which signals to employees that their voices are 'heard.'

Limitations and Future Research

Despite valuable strengths and insights from our study, our work comes with limitations. First, we cannot infer causality. Although we measured our independent and dependent variables at two time points and grounded our expectations in prior empirical research and theorizing, we cannot entirely rule out alternative explanations and endogeneity problems (Hill et al., 2021). More specifically, while the individual-level part of our model draws on a relatively robust design (i.e., by controlling for T1-scores of change championing

when regressing its T2-scores on the mediator variables) there may be particular concerns about omitted variable bias (Hill et al., 2021) for the group-level part of our model. To alleviate such concerns, we followed Hill et al.'s (2021) recommendation and estimated the impact threshold of a confounding variable (ITCV) for the group championing–implementation effectiveness relationship (see also Frank, 2000), using the "konfound" package in *R* (Xu et al., 2019). We found that, to alter the original inference we made from our results, (a) an omitted variable would have to exhibit a positive correlation pattern with both the dependent variable and the independent variable of $r \geq .71$ (i.e., greater than any other group-level correlation in our data); (b) 69% of the estimate would have to be due to bias; and (c) 70% of group-level observations would have to be replaced with cases for which the effect is zero. We consider this as initial support that the significant effect is not simply an artefact of correlated omitted variables (Frank, 2000). Still, we hope that future research replicates our findings using designs that allow for stronger causal inference (e.g., experimental methods; Hill et al., 2021).

Second, although we are confident in our more general theorizing and we regard the observed change process as an optimal context to examine championing behaviors because it was a growth-focused rather than cost-cutting change, our research was conducted in one organization within one specific change context, limiting the generalizability of our findings. Thus, we encourage researchers to further study the effects of group championing behaviours by collecting data in other organizations going through different types of changes.

Third, we also operationalized the individual appraisal process (e.g., perceptions of the valence of the change impact, excitement about the change) using measures that were aligned with championing behaviors. However, we acknowledge that other change scholars have focused on other components of the appraisal process (Fugate, 2013; Fugate et al., 2012, e.g., threat, challenge, or hindrance appraisals) and that our measures more simplistic proxies

of the appraisal process. We invite future work to continue to model the change appraisal more comprehensively, and to build on earlier work that has made contributions within this area (e.g., Rafferty & Restubog, 2017).

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	*N*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Individual-Level													
1. Individual Championing T1	267	--											
2. Change Impact Valence T2	267	.51*	--										
3. Change Enthusiasm T2	267	.62*	.58*	--									
4. Individual Championing T2	267	.73*	.62*	.68*	--								
5. Gender	260	.09	.11	.03	.13*	--							
6. Tenure	262	.12*	.01	.03	.10	-.03	--						
7. Leadership Responsibility	267	.20*	.13*	.10	.14*	.05	.08	--					
8. Business Unit Identification	267	.42*	.34	43*	.41*	.16*	.13*	.04	--				
Group-Level													
9. Group Championing Level	69	.60*	.35*	.43*	.52*	.17*	.04	.04	.29*	--			
10. Group Championing Asymmetry	69	-.20*	-.20*	-.19*	-.25	-.03	.09	-.02	-.18*	-.33*	--		
11. Implementation Effectiveness T2	69	.35*	.39*	.41*	.39*	.07	-.09	-.01	.25*	.61*	-.38*	--	
12. Group Size	69	-.10	-.03	-.05	-.13*	-.04	-.03	-.11	-.17*	-.18	.14	.00	--
Mean		3.24	4.51	3.20	3.31	.84	3.84	.25	3.19	3.28	.92	3.28	5.39
Standard Deviation		1.10	.86	.85	1.04	.37	2.04	.43	1.23	.68	.40	.55	1.54

Note. For correlations between individual-level and group-level variables, group scores were assigned to individuals; statistical significance should be interpreted with caution. Tenure was coded as follows: 0 to 4 (= 1), 5 to 9 years (= 2), 10 to 14 years (= 3), 15 to 19 (= 4), 20 to 24 (= 5), 25 to 29 (= 6), or for equal or more than 30 years (= 7). * $p < .05$.

Table 2

Group-Level Results (Dependent Variable: Implementation Effectiveness)

	Implementation Effectiveness							
	Step 1				Step 2			
	Without controls		With controls		Without controls		With controls	
Variable	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Intercept	3.28***	.05	3.28***	.05	3.24***	.05	3.24***	.05
Group Championing Level	.50***	.07	.51***	.07	.42***	.08	.44***	.08
Group Size			.04	.03			.03	.03
Group Championing Asymmetry					-.17	.11	-.18	.11
Group Championing Level × Group Championing Asymmetry					-.43*	.20	-.40*	.21

Note. N = 69 groups. Step 1 = Structural model excluding moderation effects. Step 2 = Structural model including moderation effects. Group Championing Level and Group Championing Asymmetry were grand-mean-centered prior to interaction. Robust standard errors are reported. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Individual- and Cross-Level Results (Dependent Variable: Change Impact Valence)

	Change Impact Valence Perceptions							
	Step 1				Step 2			
	Without controls		With controls		Without controls		With controls	
Level and Variable	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Individual-Level								
Individual Championing	.37***	.05	.33***	.07	.40***	.05	.34***	.07
Gender			.18	.13			.17	.14
Tenure			.01	.03			.00	.03
Leadership Responsibility			.08	.13			.07	.12
Business Unit Identification			.08	.05			.13**	.04
Group-Level								
Group Championing Level					.25*	.10	.33**	.09
Cross-Level Interaction								
Individual Championing × Group Championing Level					.15**	.06	.17**	.06

Note. N = 267 employees nested in 69 groups. Step 1 = Structural model excluding moderation effects. Step 2 = Structural model including moderation effects. Individual Championing T1 was group-mean-centered and Group Championing Level was grand-mean-centered prior to interaction. Robust standard errors are reported. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table 4

Individual- and Cross-Level Results (Dependent Variable: Change Enthusiasm)

	Change Enthusiasm							
	Step 1				Step 2			
	Without controls		With controls		Without controls		With controls	
Level and Variable	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Individua- Level								
Individual Championing T1	.43***	.05	.37***	.05	.42***	.05	.36***	.05
Gender			-.17	.15			-.15	.14
Tenure			-.01	.02			-.00	.02
Leadership Responsibility			.01	.08			.01	.08
Business Unit Identification			.14**	.05			.15***	.04
Group-Level								
Group Championing Level					.37***	.10	.33**	.09
Cross-Level Interaction								
Individual Championing × Group Championing Level					-.07	.07	-.04	.06

Note. N = 267 employees nested in 69 groups. Step 1 = Structural model excluding moderation effects. Step 2 = Structural model including moderation effects. Individual Championing T1 was group-mean-centered and Group Championing Level was grand-mean-centered prior to interaction. Robust standard errors are reported. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table 5

Individual-Level Results (Dependent Variable: Individual Championing T2)

	Individual Championing T2							
	Step 1				Step 2			
	Without controls		With controls		Without controls		With controls	
Variable	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Intercept	3.31***	.08	3.31***	.08	3.31***	.08	2.57***	.15
Individual Championing T1	.23***	.05	.24***	.06	.26***	.07	.20**	.06
Change Impact Valence Perceptions	.40***	.08	.39***	.09	.40***	.12	.35***	.10
Change Enthusiasm	.53***	.10	.56***	.10	.46***	.14	.52***	.14
Gender			.18	.14			.14	.14
Tenure			.01	.02			-.00	.02
Leadership Responsibility			.01	.10			.05	.09
Business Unit Identification			-.05	.04			.11*	.04

Note. N = 267 employees nested in 69 groups. Step 1 = Structural model excluding moderation effects. Step 2 = Structural model including moderation effects. Robust standard errors are reported. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model

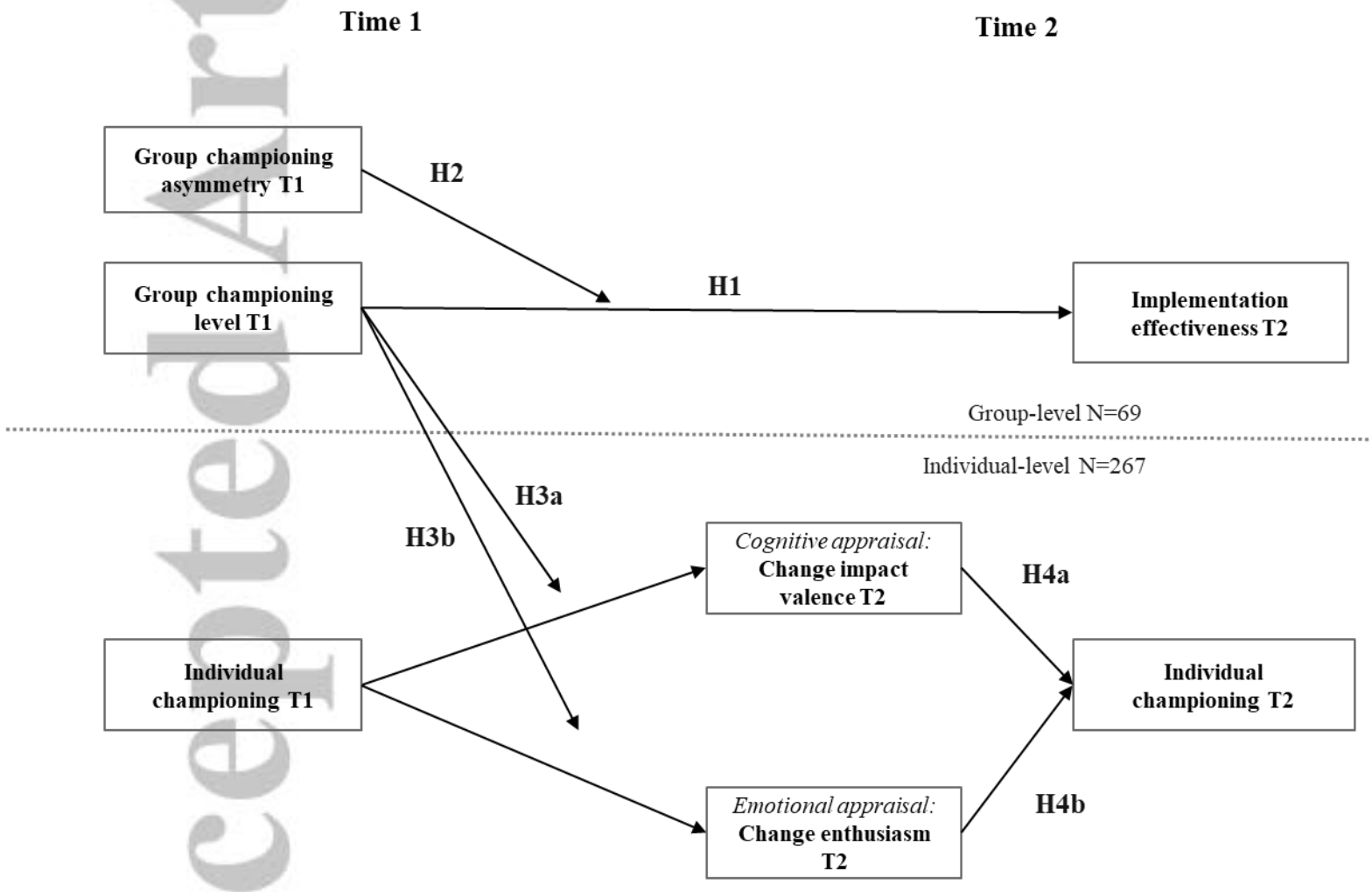
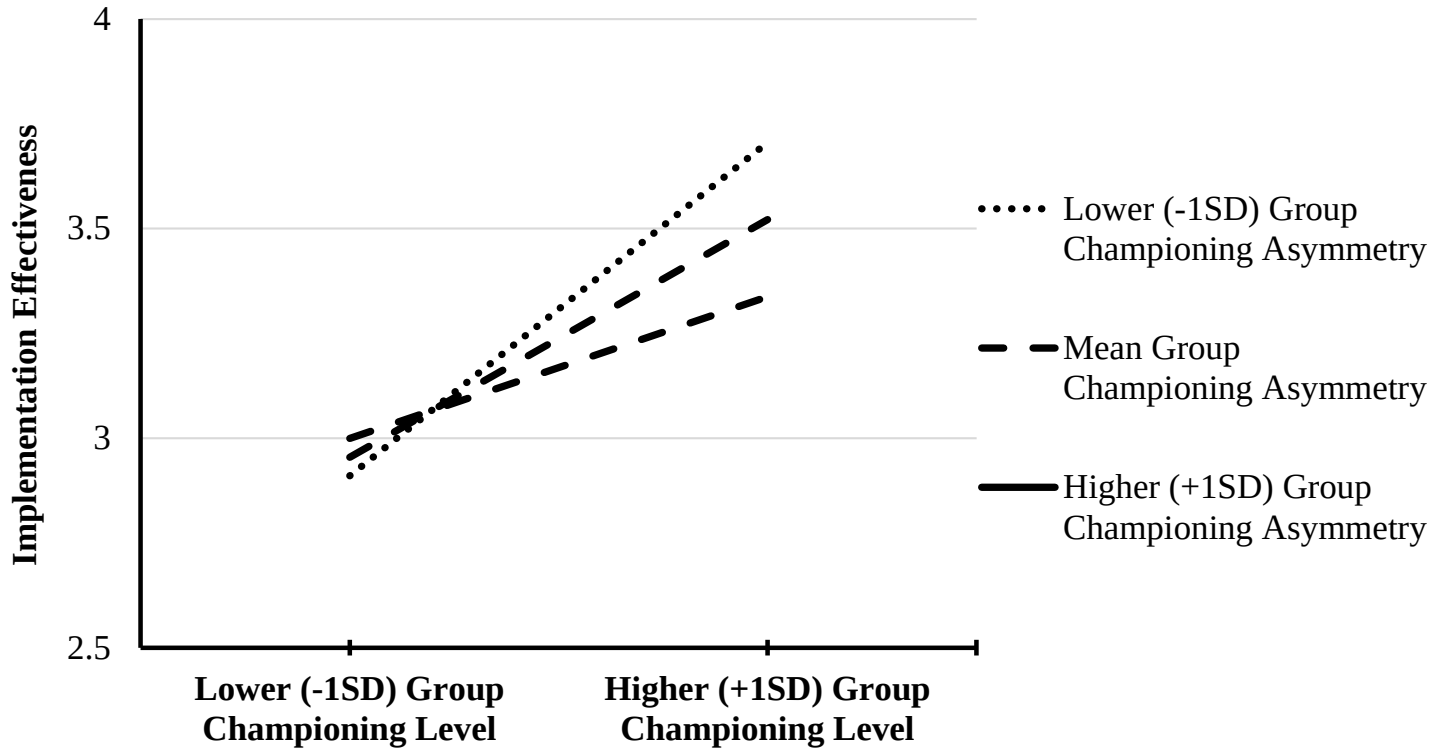


Figure 2

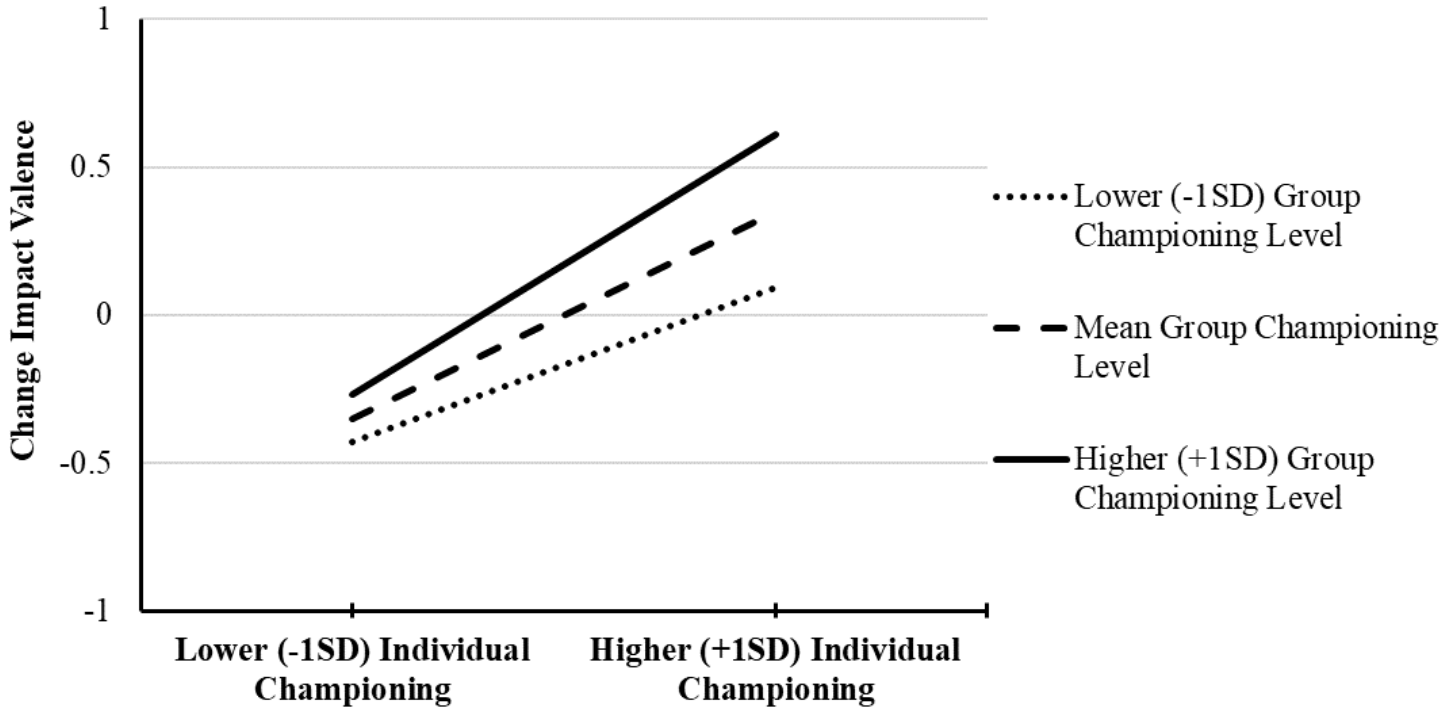
Group Championing Level and Group Championing Asymmetry Interaction on Implementation Effectiveness



Note. N = 69 groups. Group Championing Level and Group Championing Asymmetry were grand-mean-centered.

Figure 3

Individual Championing and Group Championing Level Interaction on Change Impact Valence Perceptions



Note. N = 267 individuals nested in 69 groups. Individual Championing was group-mean-centered and Group Championing Level was grand-mean-centered.