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How to Handle Changes in Job Satisfaction Based on Workplace Setting

A Case Study of Swedish Municipalities

by

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Abstract

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations have faced significant changes regarding workplace settings, primarily a shift from in-person to remote environments. The fact that remote work is generally increasing has impacted what employees experience in work and can potentially impact their job satisfaction. Therefore, it is important to learn what has changed and how to handle the change in this new context. To mitigate the impacts of these shifts in workplace settings, change management is hypothesized to be a way to limit decreases in job satisfaction. To answer these questions and conduct this study, a two-part data collection method took place: first, with surveys of employees in the selected municipalities in Skåne; and second, with interviews of managers at these same municipalities. Existing research on job satisfaction, remote work, and change management is extracted to form a managerial understanding of the relationship between these three concepts. Then, this framework is applied to public sector organizations, which are relatively understudied in this context. The findings of this thesis reveal that employees consider factors related to remote work as more important to their job satisfaction compared to some of the previously important factors. In addition, managers can maintain employees' satisfaction by including them in the change management process. Clear communication and shared goals are two key practices to avoid increased job dissatisfaction in the event of a significant change. However, conducting change management in the context of a crisis, like the COVID-19 pandemic, is complicated.

Key words: Job Satisfaction, Remote Work, Change Management, Public Sector, Organizational Change

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1 Introduction

Much has been written and studied about job satisfaction – in fact, it is one of the most frequently studied factors in organizational behavior research (Spector, 1997). Understanding what leaves employees motivated to do their work and stay at their workplaces is of interest to managers, psychologists, economists, and more (Spector, 1997) – including the authors of this paper. Getting to the crux of what satisfies workers has also received significant attention – numerous studies and theories exist about motivation and job satisfaction. The findings show that engagement with each factor in the workplace contributes differently to the job satisfaction construct and that most of the individual evaluations towards those aspects fluctuate over time (Spagnoli, Caetano & Santos, 2012). Especially during major changes, Howard and Frink (1996) found that organizational restructuring resulted in a decline in employee satisfaction. Since a decrease in job satisfaction is directly related to employee turnover decisions (Tett & Meyer, 1993), one could argue that this matter is also relevant to the recent phenomenon in the past two years labeled the “Great Resignation” (Hultman, 2022). Large numbers of employees, primarily in the United States but in Europe as well, are resigning from their jobs or seeking new positions in their current position. There is a labor shortage in many industries, and people are leaving their jobs in large numbers (Taylor, 2021; Tessema, Tesfom, Faircloth, Tesfagiorgis & Teckle, 2022). Part of this can be attributed to changing values in employees, especially where they see their careers fitting in with the rest of their lives, prompted by remote work practices (Tessema et al., 2022).

Today, however, the workforce is operating in a new, volatile environment: the COVID-19 pandemic has started a period of rapid and oftentimes significant change (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). For one, many organizations switched to partly or entirely digital operations wherein employees worked remotely (Li, Sun, Tao & Lee, 2021). Remote work or telework increases employee flexibility and has opened the floodgates to new organizational structures for companies (Fitzer, 1997; Bellmann & Hübler, 2021; Niebuhr, Borle, Börner-Zobel, & Voelter-Mahlknecht, 2022). Some studies have found that remote work leaves employees more satisfied with their work – but others find the contradictory result, that teleworking results in less satisfied employees than those working in an office environment (Golden & Veiga, 2005; Iacurci, 2022). What is clear is that with a shift from in-office to remote work, many variables of the workplace can change, including productivity (Owl Labs & Global Workplace Analytics, 2021), health (Wheatley, 2012; Tavares, 2017), organizational culture (Illegems & Verbeke, 2004), and more.

With this rapid change induced by the pandemic comes a need for organizations’ leadership to, in some capacity, manage the change. Change management comes in a variety of models (see section 2.3.2), but in its broadest sense, it is the way an organization goes from its existing form to a new way of operating (ProSci, 2022). These can be small, incremental changes that happen

continuously over time (Carter, Armenakis, Feild, & Mossholder, 2012), or significant changes to company structure. Of note for this study is that the change management is occurring during a period of crisis. An organizational crisis can be defined as “a specific, unexpected, and nonroutine event or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and threaten or are perceived to threaten an organization's high-priority goals” (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 1998, p. 233). As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a change in what employees expect from their workplace (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). This, in tandem with the rapid pace of organizational change due to the pandemic (Paton & McCalman, 2008), means that change management is happening in new, interesting ways. That is why one aim of this paper is to understand how change management is used in the context of job satisfaction in remote and in-office work.

Swedish municipalities are a compelling case for a study on job satisfaction because of the unique way in which Sweden handled the pandemic (Baral, Chandler, Prieto, Gupta, Mishra & Kulldorff, 2021). The government avoided overly interfering in individuals’ lives while keeping the situation in control, leading to the absence of governmental regulations in terms of lockdowns or forced remote work (Baral et al., 2021). However, remote work was widely adopted in many organizations in Sweden, and some of these organizations are considering a permanent change in working style after the pandemic (Hiselius & Arnfalk, 2021). Despite many public organizations switching to remote work due to the pandemic, there is little research on how remote working has affected public sector organizations (OPSI, 2021). Public sector organizations face unique challenges related to the diversity of the roles within the organization, as well as challenges regarding digitalization and flexibility – making them an interesting case for studying the impacts of remote work on job satisfaction (OECD, 2021).

Given the continued uncertainty around the COVID-19 pandemic, this paper is relevant in trying to uncover some of the initial impacts of the crisis on job satisfaction in employees who shifted from in-person to remote work. Additionally, as mentioned above, it is still unclear whether there will be future waves of COVID variants that force offices to return to remote work. Exploring this recent trend through the lens of change management and job satisfaction is compelling and relevant, perhaps with big-picture implications. Through empirical data review and testing hypotheses, new insights will be formulated providing additional value to existing theories used in the context of this paper.

1.1 Problem Formulation

The society-wide changes around the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic leave room for numerous studies and findings. Remote work is generally increasing, and already many organizations are considering a permanent shift to hybrid or remote work (Tessema et al., 2022). If there is a significant difference in how satisfied employees are in remote work and in-person work, that means each shift in the workplace setting will have a big impact on satisfaction. Additionally, many employees who had previously never had the opportunity to work remotely

have done so in the past few years, especially those employees working in public sector organizations, like Swedish municipalities. Understanding these employees' new perception of job satisfaction and their willingness to return to the office is of interest. Likewise, finding out how to minimize the fluctuations in job satisfaction to potentially reduce job turnover and employee dissatisfaction can be useful for managing the change process.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the change in factors determining job satisfaction when the workplace setting changed. Additionally, this research aims to explore if and how change management is used within Swedish municipalities to maintain job satisfaction in these two distinct working environments.

1.3 Research Questions & Hypotheses

This paper seeks to answer three related questions:

- What, if anything, has changed in the employees' perception of job satisfaction in remote and in-person work?
- How can employers find a balance between these differences to minimize job dissatisfaction and employee turnover rates when the workplace environment changes?
- What role, if any, does change management have in maintaining employee job satisfaction when changing workplace settings?

The hypotheses below will be tested in response to these questions. Further elaboration of these will be included in the following chapters.

- Hypothesis 1 (H1): Herzberg's motivational factors and Maslow's higher needs (esteem and self-actualization needs) will rank higher than other factors for employees who have experienced remote work.
- Hypothesis 2 (H2): Aspects of a job that correlate to remote work have become more significant to overall job satisfaction due to the experience employees have with remote work
- Hypothesis 3 (H3): When employees consider what matters in terms of job satisfaction in remote work, flexibility will rank higher than other factors.
- Hypothesis 4 (H4): The McKinsey 7-S model is expected to be seen in the data collection more than the other models.

- Hypothesis 5 (H5): Due to the change management occurring in a time of crisis, employees were not highly involved in the change management process.
- Hypothesis 6 (H6): Employees with higher job satisfaction have experienced or felt included in the change management process more than those with less job satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 7 (H7): When employees and managers are aligned on the most important factors related to job satisfaction and organizational change, employees will reflect positively on the change management process.

1.4 Delimitations

Given the limited time frame and resources available to the authors, the scope of this study is kept relatively narrow. The authors focus solely on the differences in job satisfaction based on workplace settings at municipalities in Skåne, Sweden. Likewise, the authors study change management only through the lens of job satisfaction at Swedish municipalities.

1.5 Outline

The thesis starts with a comprehensive overview of theory and past research pertaining to job satisfaction, remote work, and change management – including the links between these three distinct categories. Several hypotheses are explained in detail as well.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology for this paper, including the research approach, data collection design, data analysis procedures, and research limitations.

Next, the collected data is described and analyzed in Chapter 4. This chapter comprises the main findings from the data, the narrowing of the scope, and the analysis of findings from the survey and the interviews.

The discussion chapter, Chapter 5, is primarily an analysis of the key takeaways from the data collection in tandem with the theoretical framework. The authors attempt to answer the research questions through the testing of the hypotheses and drawing comparisons between the collected data and the theoretical framework.

Finally, the concluding chapter refocuses the data on today's context and how the collected information and findings can be linked to previous research and future events.

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter elaborates on the terms and theories that support the content of this research. The key concepts include job satisfaction, remote work, and change management. The definitions of the terms explain the significance of the study topics and assist with the analysis of the data, as well as the concluding findings. The theoretical background provides the basis for studying the relationships between job satisfaction, remote work, and change management to generate a better understanding for the data collection. This theoretical framework also highlights relevant information on the key concepts, demonstrating the importance of this research to the management of an organization. Throughout this chapter, the overview of the predicted connections between job satisfaction, remote work, and change management are elaborated upon as hypotheses that are later used in the data analysis.

2.1 Job Satisfaction

2.1.1 Defining Job Satisfaction

Although there is no single agreed-upon definition of job satisfaction, comparing job satisfaction to job morale can illustrate the context of positive emotions that a person feels towards the job (Gruneberg, 1979). Although both concepts refer to the extent an organization can meet the needs of employees, job morale refers specifically to positive emotions resulting from the group's well-being (Gruneberg, 1979). In contrast, job satisfaction relates more to an individual's pleasurable emotional state that is connected to the job experience (Locke, 1976), which is the central concept of interest in this research. Since job satisfaction can be viewed from several perspectives, its definition can be explained in numerous ways depending on the combination of theoretical orientation and the measurement of various aspects (Gruneberg, 1979). For this study, the authors look to the following definition which describes job satisfaction as the:

attitude that individuals have about their jobs [...] from their perception of their jobs and the degree to which there is a good fit between the individual and the organization (Ivancevich, Matteson & Olekalns, 1997, p.86).

Although some scholars have indicated that job satisfaction can be stable for long periods due to personality traits and dispositional factors, employees' attitudes on the job can also be affected by environment and situational factors, which change over time (Spagnoli, Caetano & Santos, 2012). Therefore, understanding how employees' perceptions of job satisfaction have

changed can be perceived a crucial matter that managers and organizations should recognize, especially during an uncertain time like the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1.2 Significant Effects of Job Satisfaction on an Organization

Job satisfaction is one of the most researched topics in business psychology and organizational behavior (Gruneberg, 1979). For an individual, learning about the factors that contribute to job satisfaction can increase one's well-being in work life (Gruneberg, 1979). Furthermore, there has been a significant amount of research on the connection between employee job satisfaction and the factors that impact organizational productivity and profitability; namely organizational commitment (Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, Madupalli & Rutherford, 2009), turnover or intentions to quit the job (DeConinck & Stilwell, 2004; Rutherford et al., 2009), and extra-role behavior (Bowling, 2010).

In studying the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, the dimensions of job satisfaction related to supervision, the job itself, policy, and support, are the factors that most affect organizational commitment (Rutherford et al., 2009). These dimensions are categorizable as situational factors. Recognizing these situational factors is important for the objectives of this study, which is to reveal how the change in workplace settings can affect the employees' perceptions of job satisfaction. Organizational commitment is one of the factors that is argued to impact managerial turnover (Porter, Crampon & Smith, 1976). Research indicates that a decline in commitment is directly related to the decision to leave the job; therefore, raising organizational commitment can lead to a decrease in the job turnover rate (Porter, Crampon & Smith, 1976). Another study analyzing the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions from Tett and Meyer (1993) explains that job satisfaction has a more substantial impact on turnover intentions compared to organizational commitment. From the literature, it can be implied that management needs to be aware of the concerns around employees' job satisfaction to retain talent in the organization (Tett and Meyer, 1993).

Job satisfaction relates not only to the operation of employees' official roles but also to employees' extra-role performance, which can impact an organization (Bowling, 2010). According to Bowling (2010), extra-role performance refers to employees' behaviors that are not a part of their assigned roles but affect the well-being of others in the organization. The study highlights that employees with high job satisfaction act beyond their official duties as a way of rewarding the organization for providing a satisfying work environment (Bowling, 2010). Examples of extra-role performance include helping new employees get to know the organization or speaking positively about the organization (Bowling, 2010). The more employees with extra-role performance an organization has, the more productive the work environment becomes, which also counts as a situational factor for employees' job satisfaction and positively impacts a company as a whole (Gruneberg, 1979).

2.1.3 Theories of Job Satisfaction

Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, and Weick (1970) have classified job satisfaction theories into two categories: content theories and process theories. Content theories illustrate which factors contribute to job satisfaction (Gruneberg, 1979). In contrast, process theories describe the process that produces job satisfaction with the influence of internal and external variables, such as employee expectations or job preferences (Gruneberg, 1979). The two widely used content theories of job satisfaction are Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959). Some process theories of job satisfaction, such as Adam's equity theory (1965) and Locke's range of affect theory (1976), are considered to build a better understanding of the relationships between the key concepts but will not be the focus of this section due to the scope of this paper.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943)

In 1943, Abraham Maslow developed a model of different needs individuals desire to achieve motivation and fulfillment. These needs are satisfied in sequential order, meaning that the first level must be met before moving to the next layer of needs (Maslow, 1943). These needs are: physiological needs; safety needs; love and belonging needs (social needs); esteem needs; and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1943). In the absence of these needs, individuals are unsatisfied – but they are also motivated to achieve these needs until they reach self-actualization (Cameron & Green, 2009). Managers can use these needs to motivate their employees to do work and perhaps initiate organizational change (Wirandendi Wolor, Solikhah, Susita, & Martono, 2020).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be adapted to apply specifically to job satisfaction in different contexts; for instance, Hale, Ricotta, Freed, Smith & Huang (2018) apply the needs as a framework to prevent burnout among graduate medical students. In another paper, the framework of needs is adapted to address nurse trainee well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic (Weiss & Li, 2020). In investigating the significance of Maslow's theory in human resource development, managers must consider the benefits of different contexts to employees in terms of satisfying various needs (Rowland, 2020). When compared to in-office work, remote work addresses these needs differently. As a result, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, business strategic planning for remote work must include the use of technologies and virtual processes to support employee development and the satisfaction of workers' needs (Rowland, 2020). Even though financial needs apply to both in-office and remote workers as physiological needs, some aspects appear more noticeably in remote work, such as data security, or flexibility and autonomy, which can be categorized as safety needs and esteem needs respectively (Rowland, 2020).

The adaptability of Maslow's framework regarding job satisfaction is a helpful trait (Gruneberg, 1979). Scholars in social sciences, education, business, and more (Hale et al., 2018) employ versions of Maslow's hierarchy of needs in different contexts, so the authors view the models as generalizable for this study.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959)

Utilizing Maslow's theory, Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman (1959) found a pattern in feelings that impact employees' attitudes. The main idea of Herzberg's model is that two different sets of factors influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction; therefore, both concepts are not measurable on the same spectrum (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Even though many things can be a source of dissatisfaction, only certain factors related to Maslow's theory of personal growth and self-actualization can contribute to satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). According to Herzberg's research, job satisfaction factors can be placed into two categories – motivational and hygiene factors. Motivational factors correlate directly to satisfaction and can promote improvement in productivity if present in the work environment (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). These factors include achievement, recognition, and interest in the work which correspond to the higher levels in Maslow's hierarchy – esteem and self-actualization needs – and if missing, they do not contribute to dissatisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). The other category Herzberg describes is hygiene factors, which can lead to dissatisfaction and poor performance when not present in the work environment (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Hygiene factors include pay, security, and physical working condition, which correspond to the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959).

There have been some arguments around Herzberg's ambiguity in interpreting the results (Gruneberg, 1979). For example, in Herzberg's study of what factors lead to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, salary was mentioned only slightly less as a positive than a negative attribute, which is not clear evidence that it can be categorized as a hygiene factor (Gruneberg, 1979). Wall and Stephenson (2007) also dispute whether certain hygiene factors could contribute to job satisfaction and if certain motivators can lead to dissatisfaction as well (Gruneberg, 1979). Therefore, to not overlook some details in finding the shift in how employees perceive job satisfaction, this research considers both motivational and hygiene factors and explores which factors have become more impactful during this changing period of change.

Other Models Considered

With many research studies on job satisfaction theories, process theories were not included in this paper due to the scope and limitations of this research. One such theory is Adam's equity theory, which elaborates on the concept of balance between the effort individuals put in and the rewards individuals receive (Adams, 1965). Only when they are seen as balanced is satisfaction achieved (Adams, 1965). Since the equity theory (Adams, 1965) is a way to look at job satisfaction by depending on the perspective of employees and the fairness they perceived, it is strongly affected by personality traits and dispositional factors. Due to the limited samples and time of this research, it would be difficult to analyze the data using this theory and synthesize a proper conclusion.

Another process theory about job satisfaction is Locke's range of affect theory (1976). Locke (1976) developed the idea that an individual's job satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what an individual wants in a job and what is present in the job. The theory states that the level of satisfaction one has depends on the value one places on expectation and reward,

which differs between individuals and relies heavily on personal judgment and perspective (Locke, 1976). The job satisfaction measurement tool would be different for each person based on Locke's theory (1976); therefore, it would not be reasonable to use this theory in this paper's context either.

2.1.4 Critical Reflection on Presented Theories

Since Herzberg's two-factor theory builds upon the relationship between job satisfaction and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, utilizing both theories will help frame a clear scope of what kind of data is needed for the research questions (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). According to the focus of this paper, which is to find the changing pattern in employees' perception of job satisfaction, it is crucial to study both positive and negative impacts of the change in work settings to locate the most significant forces that affect job satisfaction. Hence, the concept of hygiene and motivational factors from Herzberg's theory is a compelling fit in the context of this research.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many managers have shifted from fulfilling higher-order needs on Maslow's pyramid, such as self-actualization and social needs, to lower-order needs like physiological and security needs (Wirandendi Wolor et al., 2020). Due to concerns about contracting COVID-19 and taking care of family members, basic needs are left unfulfilled, meaning managers need to prioritize those above higher-order needs (Wirandendi Wolor et al., 2020). However, compared to the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, the reason for working from home has shifted dramatically (Parker, Horowitz & Minkin, 2022). In more recent observations, the workers who choose to work from home are less likely to do so out of health concerns and more likely to do so simply out of preference, compared to the start of the pandemic (Parker, Horowitz & Minkin, 2022), which relates to the findings of positive effects of remote work to job satisfaction (Schall, 2019). Since flexibility and autonomy of remote work are considered esteem needs in Maslow's theory, they are counted as Herzberg's motivational factor as well (Rowland, 2020). Because of this, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: Herzberg's motivational factors and Maslow's higher needs (esteem and self-actualization needs) will rank higher than other factors for employees who have experienced remote work.

Measuring Job Satisfaction

Among job satisfaction measures used in theoretical and practical research, there are large varieties in the level of specificity due to the difficulty in measuring job satisfaction (Parker, Horowitz & Minkin, 2022). According to the literature, there are two main approaches to measuring job satisfaction: 1) an overall measure of job satisfaction or 2) a factor-based measurement of distinct elements in job satisfaction (Spagnoli, Caetano & Santos, 2012). Scholars have agreed that job satisfaction is a result of a variety of feelings related to the characteristics of the job (Nerkar, McGrath & MacMillan, 1996; Skalli, Theodossiou &

Vasileiou, 2008). Further detailed information about the measuring tools and usage for this research is provided in the methodology chapter.

Overall Measurement of Job Satisfaction

From a large scale, the overall measurement of job satisfaction consists of asking employees about their feelings about the job. As such, their response is a combination of their reaction to various aspects of the job (Nerkar, McGrath & MacMillan, 1996). Nevertheless, comparisons of the overall measurement of job satisfaction can be hard to interpret given that individuals have different perceptions regarding each of the various aspects of a job (Skalli, Theodossiou & Vasileiou, 2008).

Job Satisfaction Measurement with a Focus on Specific Aspects

Various scales measure job satisfaction separately in each aspect. Among the most famous scales are the Job Descriptive Index (JDI; Smith, Kendall & Hulin, 1969), the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ; Weiss, Dawis & England, 1967), and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS; Spector, 1985). Each scale has a different focus on the facets of work. For example, JDI (Smith, Kendall & Hulin, 1969) focuses on five work aspects, including the type of work, pay, opportunities for promotion, supervision, and coworkers. MSQ (Weiss, Dawis & England, 1967) measures job satisfaction on 20 factors with two grouping between intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. JSS (Spector, 1985) on the other hand, focuses on nine facets of job satisfaction. JSS (Spector, 1985) is open to non-commercial research use without a fee, and the main facets of this tool can also be explained through Maslow's and Herzberg's theories.

JSS in Practical Applications

The nine facets that JSS (Spector, 1985) uses to evaluate job satisfaction are listed below:

1. Pay – pay and remuneration
2. Promotion – promotion and growth opportunities
3. Supervision – manager supervision
4. Fringe Benefits – extra work benefits (transportation, employee discounts, etc.)
5. Contingent Rewards – success recognized by managers and peers
6. Operating Procedures – dealing with bureaucracy and administrative tasks
7. Coworkers – relationship to coworkers
8. Nature of Work – meaningfulness of the work
9. Communication – transparency and communication from the organization

Due to the popularity of the survey, there has been plenty of research on the relationships between remote work and job satisfaction using JSS's factors as focal points in data collection. One instance is the study about the impact of COVID-19 on conventional work settings by

Diab-Bahman and Al-Enzi (2020). The researchers found that the majority of respondents agreed on having their previous working conditions reviewed due to the satisfaction received from flexible conditions of remote work during the pandemic, including a tendency to choose the hybrid model if given an option (Diab-Bahman & Al-Enzi, 2020). Another case study by Lehtisalo and Agdalen (2019) found a positive correlation between remote work and job satisfaction; the employees perceived the opportunity to telework as providing additional value to the workplace. As seen in these previous research studies, JSS is frequently used in combination with other models and to study relationships between the respective topic and job satisfaction. Therefore, JSS and its nine factors can be considered an effective tool to frame questionnaires that measure job satisfaction in different work settings.

2.2 Remote Work

2.2.1 Defining Remote Work

Remote work, also known as telecommuting, teleworking, or work from home, can be defined as a way of working in a flexible work arrangement where employees do not need to be in the company's office, and telecommunication technology, including the internet and computers, facilitate the work process (Fitzer, 1997). Despite technological advancement in the last decade, remote work was growing at a slow pace (Bellmann & Hübler, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a major shift from in-person work to remote (Li et al., 2021). The pandemic impacts people's working conditions since some countries enforce regulations that promote working from home to avoid spreading the virus and reduce the risk of infection. To comply with the government's recommendations, many companies adapt to flexible work styles and rely on technology to operate. However, the change in the work setting also influences employees' lives in many aspects, for instance, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and health conditions (Bellmann & Hübler, 2021; Niebuhr et al., 2022). Even after the pandemic, up to 93 percent of employees would prefer to have the option of remote work (Bonin, Eichhorst, Kaczynska, Kümmerling, Rinne, Scholten & Steffes, 2020). The majority of employees choose a hybrid strategy that includes both office and home office days (Niebuhr et al., 2022). Some scholars find the positive impacts of remote work, while others dispute the positivity of these impacts. Regardless, what is agreed upon is that remote work introduces flexibility and freedom, which can change how employees perceive their jobs (Chandra Putra, Aris Pratama, Aureri Linggautama & Wulan Prasetyaningtyas, 2020; Kondratowicz, Wener, Polomski & Khosla, 2021; Gashi, Kutlllovci & Zhushi, 2022; Niebuhr et al., 2022). To understand the context of remote work in this paper, the impacts of remote work are elaborated upon in the next section.

2.2.2 Effects of Remote Work on Job Satisfaction

Among the research conducted on remote work, the overall benefits of remote work are still controversial. Although remote work often leads to increased flexibility and autonomy, reduction in commuting time, and increased productivity and job satisfaction, there are some disadvantages in its nature as well. Some of these negative impacts include the blurring of boundaries between work and home time, presenteeism, and social isolation (Tavares, 2017). According to Harker Martin and MacDonnell (2012), their meta-analysis reveals positive connections between remote work and organizational performance, including increased employee productivity, employee retention, and organizational commitment, which correlate with employees' perception of job satisfaction. To provide background information on the significance of this paper, the main factors of remote work that contribute to job satisfaction are explained further in points.

Organizational Trust and Culture

According to a study of 2,050 full-time workers in the United States by Owl Labs and Global Workplace Analytics (2021), 90 percent of the respondents state that working from home during the pandemic results in the same or higher levels of productivity compared to working in an office. However, 36 percent of the managers who manage remote workers demonstrate concern about employee productivity since it is hard to observe employees who work from home. This matter correlates with organizational trust, which is also considered one aspect of an employee's job satisfaction (Gashi, Kutllovci & Zhushi, 2022). Gashi, Kutllovci, and Zhushi (2022) state that managers' maintaining of strong, positive relationships with their employees is critical in establishing a culture of trust in an organization, which also leads to high job satisfaction levels.

One study by Illegems and Verbeke (2004) looks at remote work from the perspectives of managers who have experienced remote work and decided to adopt it versus managers who had experienced remote work and decided not to adopt it. Illegems and Verbeke (2004) found that non-adopting managers anticipate negative consequences of organizational culture and the social isolation of their employees because of its implementation. Meanwhile, those managers who have adopted remote work do not perceive organizational culture or social isolation as a negative effect of remote work based on their experience (Illegems & Verbeke, 2004). Both groups of managers saw internal data security difficulties, face-to-face contact issues, and teamwork issues as negative consequences (Illegems & Verbeke, 2004). However, the group that decided not to adopt remote work had a far more negative outlook on teamwork issues (Illegems & Verbeke, 2004). There is still a lack of evidence that remote work can cause a negative impact on organizational culture; however, organizational culture and justice can affect the collaboration between remote workers and in-office workers, which impacts their job satisfaction (Williams, 2021).

Frequency of Remote Work

Even though many studies find that remote work can increase productivity, one study finds the opposite to be the case when employees work fully remote five days a week (Shimura, Yokoi, Ishibashi, Akatsuka & Inoue, 2021). Gajendran and Harrison (2007) explain that the frequency

of remote work, in terms of hours and days, leads to different levels of employee job satisfaction. In a study of the relationship between remote work and job satisfaction, Schall (2019) finds that these two concepts relate to each other in a positive, linear way, meaning that employees are more satisfied when they can more frequently work remotely. However, this contrasts with earlier findings mentioning that there is a curvilinear relationship between remote work and job satisfaction (Golden, 2006). The possibility for the conflicting results could be that the sample groups are different in terms of the intensity of their remote (Schall, 2019). Nevertheless, the scholars are all in agreement on the impact of remote work frequency on employee job satisfaction (Golden, 2006; Gajendran and Harrison, 2007; Schall, 2019; Shimura et al., 2021).

Flexibility

One issue resulting from remote work is that boundaries between work and home life are less clear (Tavares, 2017). Another factor to consider when relating remote work to job satisfaction is that remote work cuts down commute time, which can create more free time (Tavares, 2017). This added time provides employees with more flexibility, and they have more power to manage their time, which has a positive impact on employee job satisfaction (Wheatley, 2012). According to the survey of U.S. adults conducted by Parker, Horowitz, and Minkin (2022), most workers with jobs that can be done remotely and who have been working from home since the pandemic say it is now easier for them to balance work with their personal life. Many of the employees say it is easier for them to get their work done and meet deadlines when working remotely (Parker, Horowitz, & Minkin, 2022). However, working from home can also lead to longer working hours and unconscious overworking, which is associated with stress, fatigue, sleeping problems, and anxiety (Paoli & Merllié, 2001). Remote workers also risk feeling depressed and lonely due to social isolation (Tavares, 2017). These findings of the positive and negative effects of flexibility in remote work can highlight the correlation between flexibility and job satisfaction.

Possibility of Making Own Choice to Work Remote

According to the findings from the studies on job satisfaction of workers required to work remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, Kučerová (2021) finds that most of the respondents are less satisfied with their jobs. This finding contrasts the studies conducted on voluntarily remote workers (Fonner & Roloff, 2010). This argument is supported by the findings from the research on health effects of workplace flexibility by Casey and Grzywacz (2008); the authors find when people can choose to work from home, they do not deal with as many negative health consequences. Another study on involuntary and voluntary flexible work provides the insight that employees who work at least 20 percent of their hours at home and have moderate or high control over where they work are less stressed and less likely to leave the company (Kaduk, Genadek, Kelly & Moen, 2019). These findings highlight the necessity of the relationship between having the option to choose remote work and employee job satisfaction.

2.2.3 Critical Reflection of Remote Work on Job Satisfaction

There exist conflicting reports on whether remote work has a favorable or unfavorable impact on job satisfaction (Bailey & Kurland, 2002). Some researchers suggest there is a linear relationship between remote work and job satisfaction, meaning that more days working remotely equals higher job satisfaction (Schall, 2019), while others dispute that the relationship is better described as curvilinear, where too much remote work negatively impacts job satisfaction (Golden, 2006). One reason to link remote work with job satisfaction is employee's perceived autonomy, which increases due to the lower level of external interferences compared to in-office work (Golden, 2006). Another effect of remote work that impacts job satisfaction is work-family balance (Schall, 2019). According to the previous studies, employees working remotely have more control over their time; therefore, the work interferes less with family which leads to higher job satisfaction for employees (Golden, 2006). Consequently, scholars seem to agree that there is some causal connection between remote work and job satisfaction.

In conclusion, many aspects of the significant effects of remote work are linked to job satisfaction. Scholars have found that the frequency of remote work, organizational trust, and culture can affect both productivity and job satisfaction (Shimura et al., 2021; Williams, 2021; Gashi, Kutllovci & Zhushi, 2022). Flexibility and the ability for employees to make their own decisions about working remotely provide more control over their time, which also impacts employees' health and job satisfaction (Casey & Grzywacz, 2008; Wheatley, 2012). A research study comparing job satisfaction between in-office workers and remote workers using Herzberg's two-factor theory found that remote workers are motivated by the same factors Herzberg studied, with flexibility as an additional motivational factor (Knight & Westbrook, 1999). However, existing job satisfaction measurement tools do not consider remote work. Hence, in this paper, these remote work factors will be included and elaborated further as study points to see the change in employees' perception of job satisfaction, due to their experiences with remote work.

H2: Aspects of a job that correlate to remote work have become more significant to overall job satisfaction due to the experience employees have with remote work

H3: When employees consider what matters in terms of job satisfaction in remote work, flexibility will rank higher than other factors.

2.3 Change Management

2.3.1 Definition of Change Management

Change management, according to Moran and Brightman (2000), is "the process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers" (p. 66). To Paton and McCalman (2008), managing

change is about “evaluating, planning and implementing operational, tactical and strategic ‘journeys’” (p. 3). ProSci (2022) defines change management as:

much more than communicating what is changing, such as a system implementation or an acquisition... [it] must support people in the organization through their transitions from the current state to the future state and understand what is needed to influence each person to embrace and adopt the change (n.p.)

Given the constant nature of change, there are numerous examples of organizations going through some type of change – and much has been said of different models or theories about how best to accomplish change. One aspect of change management models that is examined is if the target is the individuals in the organization, or rather the entire organization as an actor. Cameron and Green (2009) explain that “individual change is at the heart of everything that is achieved in organizations,” (p. 9) but that there are bigger phenomena that dictate why the individuals want to change – and that usually comes from the organizational or leadership level. Both individual and organizational change are referenced in the change management models described in the next section, but the primary focus of this section is organizational change management. The following definition of organizational change suits this paper: “organizational change refers to the process in which an organization changes its existing structure, work routines, strategies, or culture that may significantly affect the organization” (Li et al., 2021, p. 2).

In the context of this paper, change management is used as a lens with which organizational change in the workplace setting, and therefore job satisfaction, will be analyzed. Below, some models of change management are described. Afterward, different contexts of change management are expanded upon, as well as the roles of employees (those going through the change) and managers (those handling the change process).

2.3.2 Change Management Models

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to change management, especially in a world with wicked problems (Camillus, 2008; Cameron & Green, 2009). To understand how employees go through changes, managers need to use different techniques based on the situation with which they are dealing (Cameron & Green, 2009). An organization might benefit from one model during one change process, but that same model might not work for a different change (ProSci, 2022). That partly explains why there are so many different models for change management; “change management can vary in scope and purpose, and one organization might define and implement it differently than another” (ProSci, 2022, n.p.).

Lewin and Schein’s Change Models

In the mid-20th century, Kurt Lewin posited a change model with three phases (see Figure 1): unfreezing, change, and refreezing (1947). Edgar Schein expanded on this three-stage model to elaborate on what goes into each part of Lewin’s model (1996). In the first part of this model,

what is considered the status quo needs to be disrupted (Schein, 1996). During this phase, participants in the change process will often feel uncomfortable or anxious – but these feelings are necessary for the ‘unfreezing’ to happen. Without these feelings, the employees are not motivated to change or learn something new (Cameron & Green, 2009).



Figure 1: Lewin 3-Step Change Management Model (Adapted from Lewin, 1947)

The next phase is the implementation of new changes. The anxious feelings of the employees lead them to look for new understandings of confusing concepts: this process is referred to as “cognitive redefinition” (Schein, 1996, p. 30). One way to expedite this process is to have role models for employees to imitate. These changes are shared with employees by managers or fellow employees, and the others adapt their behavior to match these changes (Schein, 1996). Additionally, these role models can be a source of psychological safety (Schein, 1996), in that they feel safe to take risks, share their feelings, and make mistakes (Edmondson, 1999). Finally, the refreezing phase is about the internalization of these new changes (Cameron & Green, 2009). Although uncomfortable at first, the new processes and concepts will become familiar and routine (Schein, 1996).

McKinsey 7-S Model

A different model for change management is the 7-S Model created by McKinsey & Co. The organization identified seven elements impact change processes in an organization. The relationship between these factors defines the organizational change process and can help management figure out what needs adjustment to undergo the change process (Waterman, Peters, & Phillips, 1980). Successful strategic implementation is dependent on a positive relationship between the seven elements, shown in Figure 2: structure, strategy, skills, staff, style, systems, and shared values (Channon & Caldart, 2015). These elements might not always be equally impactful in an organization's change process – each change process has different driving forces (Waterman, Peters, & Phillips, 1980). One element of importance in this context, given the attention on individuals undergoing organizational change, is the staff dimension. Waterman, Peters, and Phillips (1980) write:

Considering people as a pool of resources to be nurtured, developed, guarded, and allocated is one of the many ways to turn the ‘staff’ dimension of our 7-S framework into something not only amenable to, but worthy of practical control by senior management (p. 24).

Another element, the one found at the center, is shared values, which the creators of the model believe is the key point around which the organization operates (Waterman, Peters, & Phillips, 1980). The most dramatic changes will require a readjustment of these values, which is a difficult but necessary step to achieving radical change (Channon & Caldart, 2015).

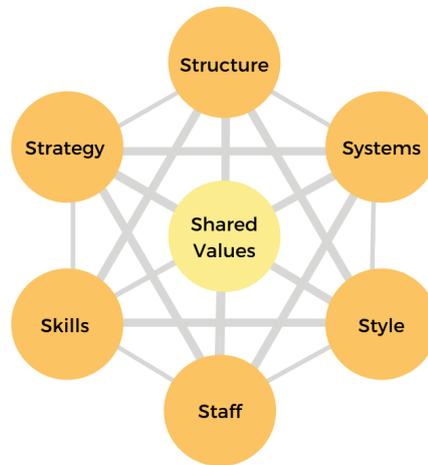


Figure 2: The McKinsey 7-S Model (Adapted from Channon & Caldart, 2015)

Kotter's Eight-Step Model

John Kotter's eight-step model on how to successfully transform an organization follows a linear process that should be followed in this order (Cameron & Green, 2009). Kotter studied organizations going through significant changes and observed that many of these changes failed (1995). Understanding the root causes for these failures, he put together a roadmap for how to lead a corporate change effectively (Kotter, 1995). These steps are depicted in Figure 3.



Figure 3: Kotter's Eight-Step Model (Adapted from Kotter, 1995)

By laying out a blueprint for undergoing organizational change in steps, Kotter identified where organizations could go wrong as they go through the change process (1995). Kotter's model emphasizes that the early parts of the change process are important for continued success and

the urgency and power of the beginning steps can make or break the rest of the process (Cameron & Green, 2009). Additionally, Kotter's model emphasizes the role of senior leadership in this process; each of the eight steps pertains to actions they must oversee in the change management process (Galli, 2019).

Other Models Considered

There is an abundance of literature and models about change management, some of which were considered but not included in this paper. One such model is the 4I framework of organizational learning by Crossan, Lane, and White (1999). In this model, individual, group, and organizational levels are studied as they move through a feed-forward and feedback process that includes intuiting, interpreting, integrating, and institutionalizing (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999). According to the selected case organization, the authors decided not to pursue further examination of this model.

Another model for change management is the ADKAR model (Hiatt, 2006). The acronym stands for awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement – and these feelings occur at the individual level. From the starting point of a change, a person goes through each of these feelings sequentially, until the change has been accepted (Galli, 2019). The steps of the ADKAR model can be placed within the stages of Lewin's model, as can Kotter's eight-step model (Galli, 2019). However, because Kotter's model is more in-depth and complex, that model will be considered in lieu of the ADKAR model.

2.3.3 Critical Reflection of the Models

Because each instance of organizational change differs slightly, no one model can perfectly capture the process from start to finish. However, there are some advantages to the models that the authors of this research can detect. A common critique of Lewin's (1947) model, which also can be considered an advantage, is that the model is simplistic (Galli, 2019). Additionally, Lewin's change model focuses on overcoming resistance to change (Galli, 2019), which can be perceived as helpful in situations where management views the change as necessary, regardless of employee perspective.

Both Lewin's (1947) model and Kotter's eight-step model (1995) are linear in progression, and, as mentioned above, the steps in Kotter's model can be placed within Lewin's model (Galli, 2019). There is a clear sequence of events in Kotter's (1995) blueprint for how an organization can go through change successfully. These steps should be followed in order, and the leadership of an organization is responsible for guiding the employees through the change process – the employees are not necessarily active agents in the change process (Kotter, 1995; Cameron & Green, 2009). Managers might appreciate the stepwise nature of Kotter's model (Galli, 2019), but, unlike the McKinsey 7-S model (Waterman, Peters, & Phillips, 1980), it is not looking at different factors in relation to one another.

The McKinsey 7-S model (Waterman, Peters, & Phillips, 1980) evaluates seven factors in the change process, looking at them as interconnected elements. These aspects of an organization

are mutually interdependent and work in harmony with one another to varying degrees, depending on the change in question (Channon & Caldart, 2015). The list of seven elements can be used as a checklist when going through organizational change (Cameron & Green, 2009), but there is no one sequence to follow. Because a step-by-step change management model might be difficult to implement during a crisis, the following hypothesis is developed.

H4: The McKinsey 7-S model is expected to be seen in the data collection more than the other models.

2.3.4 Change Management in Periods of Uncertainty or Crisis

In a safe, predictable environment, a single model for change management might suffice – but the world is becoming increasingly more complicated, and organizational changes are increasingly more complex (Camillus, 2008). Additionally, the pace of change is increasing, both in terms of duration of change (as in how long the change process takes place) and in terms of frequency (as in how often change is happening) (Paton & McCalman, 2008). Of particular interest for this study is what change management looks like in the context of a crisis or an unexpected change.

A crisis event can uproot long-standing strategic plans and create a need for rapid adjustment (Seeger, Ulmer, Novak, & Sellnow, 2005). An organizational crisis can be explained as an unexpected event that increases uncertainty and threatens previous goals (Seeger et al., 2005). A crisis often disrupts the status quo, and existing practices must be quickly changed. This can be the platform for a dramatic, fast-paced change – and then in the aftermath, a more deliberate adjustment is made to reach a new status quo (Seeger et al., 2005). In other words, the crisis can be a part of a rapid unfreezing stage in Lewin's change model (1947); there is severe discomfort and anxiety that prepares and motivates employees for the change.

A crisis can come in a variety of forms, but the COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant, impactful nexus for change. The uncertainty of the origins of the disease, the status of vaccines, the impacts of contracting the virus, and the duration of the pandemic all accumulate into a period of significant chaos (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). In fact, “the oscillations, reversals, and fluctuations in pacing and sequencing that usually characterize change...will be more pronounced than ever as organization leaders contend with exacerbated levels of uncertainty” (Amis & Greenwood, 2020, p.585). With a crisis, many of the early elements of the change management process cannot be fulfilled properly because the changes need to happen quickly (Li et al., 2021). During these rapid, emergency changes, management needs to minimize the negative effects of the changes, and employees need to quickly make sense of their new conditions (Li et al., 2021). Strong internal communications have been found effective in reducing uncertainty during a crisis (Li et al., 2021), but many studies remain to be conducted regarding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on change management.

Crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic, create a platform for rapid organizational change that might otherwise have taken a long time to undergo (Seeger et al., 2005). The COVID-19

pandemic represents an instance of uncertainty, but one element that is relatively clear for employees is that there is a need for change – and oftentimes, a lack of reason for the change can be a hindrance to organizational change (Bordia, Hobman, Jones, Gallois & Callan, 2004). However, most parts of the pandemic have been quite uncertain for employees, which leads to numerous negative impacts, including stress, turnover, job satisfaction, and trust (Bordia et al., 2004). Again, communication from management can help to reduce strategic uncertainty among employees (Bordia et al., 2004), but given how the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, there is uncertainty for the managers as well.

Understanding employees' values and interests was important in the study of organizational change before the COVID-19 pandemic (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). Given the rapid pace of decision-making and organizational change with the onset of the pandemic, employee interests and values were not particularly of concern – but they should be in future decisions, as they play a key role in how organizations succeed at the change process (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). One thing to note is that people's values and needs changed during the pandemic, sometimes quite deeply (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). For instance, in terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, people who previously felt fulfilled on the bottom two levels (physiological needs and safety needs) were sometimes disrupted by lockdowns and fears of illness (Wirandendi Wolor et al., 2020).

H5: Due to the change management occurring in a time of crisis, employees were not highly involved in the change management process.

2.3.5 Different Roles in Change Management Processes

Role of Employees

In the highlighted change management models, employees are affected by the employers' decisions, and their change process is contingent on what management is deciding (Lewin, 1947; Waterman, Peters, & Phillips, 1980; Kotter, 1995). For instance, in the Lewin three-stage model (1947; Schein, 1996), employees are passively going through the change experience: they are placed in a feeling of discomfort until they are ready to adapt to the new practices, therefore completing the change progress. However, employees' reactions to the proposed changes can impact the success of the change (Li et al., 2021). Kotter (1995) found that few organizational changes were successful, and one of the first steps in his model of how to achieve a change is to convince employees that (1) a change is needed and (2) the new vision is exciting and will benefit both themselves and the organization. Likewise, employees who are unwilling or unexcited about organizational change can lead to failure; if they see the changes as too big a hindrance to their duties or too uncertain, they are less likely to buy into these changes (Shin, Taylor, & Seo, 2012). This explains why employee buy-in is part of some of the change management models, namely Kotter's eight-step model (1995). Readiness for change, as described by Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993), is "the cognitive precursor to the behaviors of either resistance to, or support for, a change effort" (p.681-682). Therefore, getting

employees ready for change can make or break the efforts. That is why, as is explained below, employers need to work to communicate the need for change well.

In a meta-study of research on change participants' reactions to organizational change, Oreg, Vakola, and Armenakis (2011) found that the main consequences of the change process were organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job turnover. They find that pre-conditions for change are critical for employees to be receptive to change; building up trust, internal communication, and support networks – or simply put, involving the employees in the change process in some capacity – are key in preparing employees for the organizational change (Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, 2011). Additionally, managers were found to be unaware of potential negative reactions to change and do not necessarily think to consider the change recipients' perspective on the potential outcomes (Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, 2011).

During organizational change, “uncertainty is one of the most commonly reported psychological states” (Bordia et al., 2004, p. 509). Bordia et al. divide uncertainty during these changes into three categories: strategic (meaning organizational level changes), structural (meaning internal functions and systems), and job-related (meaning job security, promotions, changes, etc.) (Bordia et al., 2004). These uncertainties can negatively impact job satisfaction and organizational trust (Bordia et al., 2004; Li et al., 2021). As mentioned above, transparent internal communication can be one way to reduce uncertainty (Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, 2011; Li et al., 2021).

H6: Employees with higher job satisfaction have experienced or felt included in the change management process more than the ones with less job satisfaction.

Role of Managers

Not only are management teams responsible for creating the new vision for their organization, but they are also the ones responsible for the actual change process. They serve as motivators, salespeople of their plans, and role models for what the outcome of the organizational change will look like (Kotter, 1995). To create readiness for change, managers need to communicate a strong message of the need for change, as well as the ability for employees to successfully go through the change – that is, build up the confidence of members in the organization (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993). Another task for management during a period of uncertainty or change is to communicate about the change process and the expected outcome transparently and clearly (Li et al., 2021). Clearing up any confusion and involving employees in some capacity during organizational change will reduce their concerns and doubts about said changes (Li et al., 2021). In the same vein, during the change management (as well as before and after), managers should:

engage in quality relational behaviors, such as, increasing personal interactions with employees, providing resources and information for work adjustments, and delivering formal and informal rewards for successful adaptations” (Carter et al., 2012, p. 945-946).

In each of the highlighted change management models, the management team has a significant role in guiding the employees through the change process.

H7: When employees and managers are aligned on the most important factors related to job satisfaction and organizational change, employees will reflect positively on the change management process.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This chapter describes the literature and theories used to create the theoretical framework. The concept of job satisfaction is elaborated as the core focus in the study of the change between in-office and remote work. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) are used as the lens to interpret how job satisfaction is perceived by employees and to illustrate which factors matter. To study if there is a new trend in job satisfaction due to the change in work settings, the significance of remote work is presented to provide the context of how the motivating factors might have changed according to the flexibility of work setting, and how it affects employee job satisfaction. Change management models are also proposed as a tool to understand how managers communicate and facilitate the change in the organization to maintain employee job satisfaction during these changes. The conceptual framework shown below in Figure 4 is the predicted relationship between the main key concepts of this research.

As previously mentioned, this research mainly studies the influence of the change in work setting to employee job satisfaction and how the management team handles the change. It corresponds specifically to selected organizations in the public sector in Sweden. The above-mentioned theoretical framework serves as the foundation for the analysis of the data and in order to test the seven hypotheses.

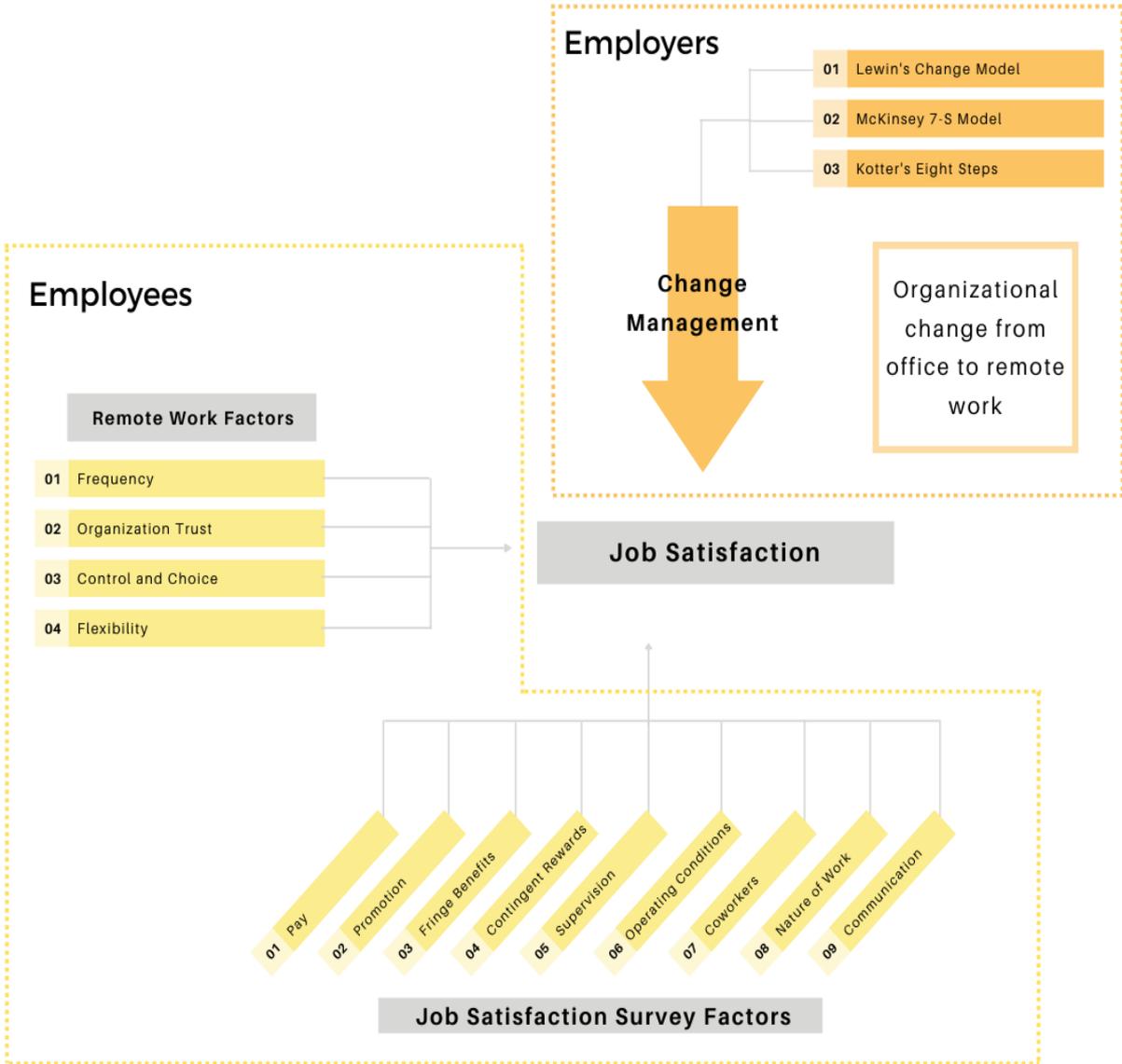


Figure 4: Conceptual Framework developed by the authors using existing theory

3 Methodology

The methodological approach used in this research is outlined and discussed in this chapter. The chapter starts with an explanation of the usage of both inductive and deductive approaches in this research, and how one approach can lead to the formation of another approach when answering the research questions. In the research design section, a qualitative research method is elaborated as the focus of this paper, with the help of empirical data. The research place and respondents (sample unit) are discussed in terms of their characteristics and the reasons behind this selection. Furthermore, the methods of data collection and data analysis are provided to describe the process of crafting the data analysis chapter of the paper. It is critical to recognize limitations and various ethical considerations and constraints that may occur in any research, regardless of the research methodologies used. In summary, this chapter describes the research process in detail to clarify the way the data was gathered and analyzed, including all the tools that were employed, to ensure the validity and reliability of this paper.

3.1 Research Approach

According to the research questions posed at the start of the paper, there are two main topics of interest involving job satisfaction, remote work, and change management. First, to understand the trends in general perceptions of employees about job satisfaction, this research took the hypothetico-deductive approach to examine the findings of previous scholars around factors that contribute to job satisfaction, including theories that explain the relationship between those factors and the needs of employees (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The authors craft hypotheses from the assumption according to the knowledge obtained from existing literature and select the sample groups that fit best with the context of this paper. Using an existing job satisfaction survey (Spector, 1985) combined with additional job satisfaction factors that have increasing significance with the increase in remote work, the outcome explains whether the pattern in perceptions of job satisfaction has changed or not, and, if changed, then what the new pattern is. Understanding and analyzing data leads to new insights, which either accept or reject the hypotheses and answer the research questions.

The second method is the inductive approach. This approach is used to reveal what management at the selected municipalities has done to facilitate the change within the organization during the switches between in-office and remote working. To illustrate, the figure shown below explains how the two approaches are combined with each selected data collecting tool (see Figure 5).

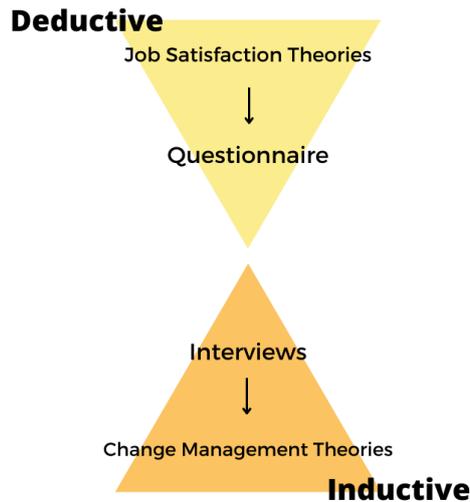


Figure 5: Inductive and deductive approach.

To further understand the results, the change management theories developed by Lewin, Kotter, and McKinsey & Co (Lewin, 1947; Waterman, Peters, & Phillips, 1980; Kotter, 1995) are used as interpreting tools to synthesize more general insights. The results from the interview questions are then be compared to the employee survey data to understand what the main factors that impact job satisfaction are and what could be suggested to management to maintain employees' satisfaction from now on.

3.2 Research Design

The main research design is qualitative, with a cross-sectional design in a case study between several municipalities in the Skåne region of Sweden. This research is conducted in two steps: first, by surveying if there is a change in job satisfaction from experiencing remote work; second, by asking how the management has conducted organizational change, and what will they do to handle the change presented in the results from the first step. Since the final goal of this study is to explore how management copes with the change in job satisfaction aspects (if there is one), a qualitative approach is more suitable. This approach emphasizes a new understanding of the relationship between theory and research from a sociological point of view, which aligns with the topic of employees' perception of job satisfaction (Bryman, 2016). Survey data is analyzed from a qualitative manner as well to further extrapolate information from the interviews. However, quantitative measurements are used to simplify data collecting and the numbers from the results can also be interpreted in a qualitative manner.

According to Bryman (2016), the cross-sectional design consists of four main elements. First, there should be a variety of samples (Bryman, 2016). The participants are from different offices of Swedish municipalities to ensure the generalization of data collection, but the scope is still limited to the Skåne region of Sweden to fix location as a controlled variable. The focus is on the perceptions of the employees and the managers on the topic of job satisfaction and if they

agree on the view of the factors that contribute to job satisfaction. Bryman (2016) suggests that a study involving one location or context as a part of the analysis is compatible with the case study approach. Since the basis of this research is the change in physical work settings, conducting a case study would be a way to fix the office location and environment as an independent variable while allowing for an intensive and detailed examination of a case (Bryman, 2016).

The second element in a cross-sectional design is that data pertaining to the variables of interest are collected at a single point in time (Bryman, 2016). This study wants to examine how employees perceive job satisfaction in the present time after they have experienced both in-office and remote work.

The third element is having measurable data (Bryman, 2016). JSS (Spector, 1985) is one of the most reputable instruments for measuring job satisfaction because it is free for academic use, and it comes with previous survey results on the impact and effectiveness of each factor on job satisfaction in a variety of sectors. This data can be used to compare with the results from this research to gain new insights. By using JSS as the basis for the survey, with the addition of some factors relevant to remote work and change management, the results will provide a clear view of how the job satisfaction factors have changed, which can be elaborated further in a qualitative manner.

Finally, the last characteristic of the cross-sectional design is that the results will be in the form of patterns of association since it is not possible to draw causal inferences due to the lack of experimental features (Bryman, 2016). What this research hopes to find is a change in trends in the ways employees perceive job satisfaction; therefore, the cross-sectional design is compatible with the research process and aims, and this design will be able to support the validity and reliability of the results.

3.3 Sampling Selection

The study is conducted in Sweden, which provides an interesting case with which to focus. Sweden pursued a unique way of handling the COVID-19 pandemic that focused on mitigating the crisis while minimizing the disruption of normal life (Baral et al., 2021). Despite the absence of governmental regulations that employees must work from home, many organizations in Sweden decided to adopt remote work into their systems, and some plan to continue this practice even after the pandemic (Hiselius & Arnfalk, 2021).

Based on the research goal, which is to examine the change in job satisfaction between in-office work and remote work, employees who experienced both work settings are the target population. To clarify findings, this research will focus on the employees who were normally required to work in-office but were allowed to work from home during the pandemic.

The chosen case for this study includes several municipalities in the Skåne region of Sweden. The intention behind the selection of public sector organizations is to limit the dependent variables to the socio-demographic of the target population and proceed with only one context for in-office work. Another factor, as well, is the authors' access to the sample. Additionally, two of the three authors have a background in political science and knowledge of public organizations.

The data is collected from three municipalities in the Skåne region. For the sake of anonymity, they are identified as Municipality A (26,000 employees), Municipality B (10,000 employees), and Municipality C (1,300 employees) throughout the paper. The authors identified two departments within the municipalities which could offer relevant insight to meet the research objectives: human resources and finance. In most organizations, these departments initiate the change management and remote work process and are likewise impacted by these change processes (Sull, Sull, & Bersin, 2020). This paper aims to find how the surveyed employees perceive job satisfaction overall, as well as in relation to remote work. Selected managers from these municipalities were interviewed about the way they managed organizational change with regard to remote work and the pandemic to better understand the connection between managers' actions and the employees' job satisfaction. To protect the identities of the interviewed managers, names and specific job titles are removed.

3.4 Data Collection Method

As previously stated, the data for this study was collected using a survey and semi-structured interviews. The authors started the data collection process by reaching out to individuals working for different municipalities who held positions that were able to support the data gathering process in this research. Human resource (HR) managers and directors were primarily contacted through LinkedIn or by writing to their municipality email address. Other introductions were made through the authors' professional networks and mutual connections.

The authors faced significant difficulties in finding municipalities to participate in the study. These constraints were primarily due to slow correspondence and unavailability from the contacted organizations. The authors reached out to the 33 municipalities throughout Skåne and contacted several HR managers per organization to gain more attention. Of the municipalities contacted, 27 did not respond, one declined participation, and two expressed an interest in collaborating but never responded after the initial discussion. Of the interested and committed municipalities, communication was somewhat tedious and time-consuming. Corresponding and planning with the municipalities were significant barriers given the time constraints of the research project. To distribute the survey and organize interviews, the authors had to repeatedly follow up with their contact persons, and response rates often took longer than a week. The authors had to send repeated reminders through email and phone calls to ensure that data collection would still occur.

Once municipalities agreed to participate, they were provided more detailed information on the research project and were given the survey to review. From there, the main contact person for the municipality distributed the survey to the participating departments and agreed upon a deadline for survey completion. The main contact person also found relevant managers within the organization to interview and connected them with the authors to schedule interviews.

The authors also utilized relevant literature to collect data. The performance of a literature review allows academics to address research questions by integrating information from previous studies (Snyder, 2019). Accordingly, the literature review was used to accumulate theoretical information about job satisfaction, the connection between remote work and job satisfaction, and the effect of organizational change management on employees' job satisfaction to form hypotheses.

3.4.1 Survey Questions Design

After defining the criteria of the study, the authors chose a survey as the first data collection method to put the hypotheses to test. The survey starts with questions about socio-demographic variables, followed by job satisfaction variables concerning both in-office and remote work, as well as change management variables. Existing tools regarding job satisfaction measurement, including JSS (Spector, 1985), were adopted to craft a new set of questions that include the effects of remote work and change management to reveal the connection intensity between these factors and job satisfaction.

From JSS (Spector, 1985), there are nine facets of work that affect job satisfaction, as mentioned earlier in the previous chapter. The full, original survey includes 36 questions with four questions directed towards each facet. A score is assigned to each item ranging from one (strong disagreement) to six (strong agreement). Because high scores on the scale represent job satisfaction, the scores on negatively worded items must be reversed before being analyzed with the rest of the items. However, with the qualitative nature of this study, the focus of the study is on the relationship of answers more than the empirical data. Therefore, the original wordings of the answers are kept and not transferred to score points.

Considering the amount of time a survey participant is willing to spend on a survey, the authors decided to utilize only half the items from JSS (Spector, 1985), which are 18 questions, and combine them with 8 more questions focusing on the remote work aspect: control over work setting choices, organizational trust, flexibility, and frequency of remote work. Accordingly, 26 questions cover how employees perceive job satisfaction based on 13 aspects from JSS (Spector, 1985) and research on remote work satisfaction. Additional questions about change management were crafted through the theories and models on change management from Chapter 2. These questions are included to explore patterns of how employees and managers perceive organizational change management and the relationship between recognition of change management in the process and employees' job satisfaction. The last question asks employees to rank the factors that contribute most to job satisfaction. Included in this question are the nine factors from JSS (Spector, 1985) representing general job satisfaction factors and

three factors from remote work-related job satisfaction factors: control over work setting choice, organizational trust, and flexibility. The frequency of remote work is considered a part of the control over work setting choices; therefore, it is not mentioned in the ranking question to avoid confusion for respondents.

Table 1 presents an overview of the connection between certain theories on job satisfaction and change management and the questions included in the survey.

Table 1: Connection between the survey's questions and the theoretical framework

General Job Satisfaction Factors	Herzberg's	Maslow's	Question Number (See Appendix A)
Pay	Hygiene	Physiological	6, 15
Promotion	Motivational	Esteem	7, 16
Supervision	Hygiene	Social	8, 17
Fringe benefits	Hygiene	Safety	9, 18
Contingent rewards	Motivational	Esteem	10, 19
Operating procedures	Hygiene	Safety	11, 20
Coworkers	Hygiene	Social	12, 21
Nature of work	Motivational	Self-actualization	13, 22
Communication	Hygiene	Social	14, 23
Remote Work Job Satisfaction Factors	Herzberg's	Maslow's	Question Number (See Appendix A)
Control over work setting choice	Motivational	Esteem	24, 28
Organizational trust	Motivational	Esteem	25, 29
Flexibility	Motivational	Esteem	26, 30
Frequency of remote work	Motivational	-	27, 31
Change Management Concepts			Question number (See Appendix A)
Lewin 3-Step Change Management Model			32, 33, 34, 35
The McKinsey 7-S Model			36, 37
Kotter's Eight-Step Model			38, 39, 40
General change management			41, 42, 43, 44

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interview Design

Semi-structured interviews were selected as the appropriate method to collect data because they offer more flexibility and allow the authors to expand on topics that may be of interest when

answering the research questions (Bryman, 2016). The authors developed an interview guide (Bryman, 2016) of nine open-ended questions and ten sub-questions that covered job satisfaction, change management, and remote work (see Appendix C). The interviewees were asked every question from the interview guide but depending on the answers provided and the expertise of the manager, follow-up questions varied. Two of the authors interviewed the managers while the third took notes and added follow-up questions to their notes to guide the interviewers. The six interviews were conducted virtually on Zoom for the convenience of the interviewees and lasted between 30 – 45 minutes each.

The data the authors expected to obtain during the interviews are the answers to this paper's research questions. However, this data is analyzed in the data analysis section to draw some connections to the existing theories to contribute new general knowledge to the academic society.

3.5 Data Analysis

Due to the abstract nature of the focus of this thesis, all data is analyzed qualitatively, with some support from empirical data. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative data analysis consists of three steps: data reduction, data display, and the drawing of conclusions. The combined results from the survey and interviews were then analyzed to understand what actions or decisions the management have done that positively affect the employees' job satisfaction or what could have been done better to maintain employees' job satisfaction. The analysis processes of the survey and interviews are described below to provide an overview of how the collected data leads to the answering of the research questions.

3.5.1 Survey Analysis

The first step of data analysis begins with coding to reduce, rearrange, and integrate the data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Since the survey was crafted based on JSS (Spector, 1985), the interpretation in the style of closed-ended Likert-type items were also adopted and utilized for the additional questions to carry the same standard. Seeing that the answer choices for each question were assigned before administering those questions to respondents, they can be referred to as "pre-coded" questions.

Once the survey response period ended, the data was extracted from the survey website (Qualtrics). The downloaded data table was cleaned in Microsoft Excel to clarify questions, delete unnecessary rows, and categorize the questions based on the theories and models applied for each question. Then, each question's response data was transformed into a histogram using R and Excel. Finally, using the tagged categories, the charts were sorted into their respective section. The results from the survey are used to determine whether some of the hypotheses are

true or not, and the outcomes helped to formulate new insights on the updated perspective on job satisfaction.

3.5.2 Interview Analysis

Since interview data consists of words, the analysis of these types of data focuses on making valid judgments from the collected data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The process is done by selecting the coding unit, labeling each group of data, and turning them into categories for pattern recognition and investigation of connections between relevant data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Because there is no pre-assigned number like the survey, the coding units must be defined by the authors. In this paper, the keywords of focus in the interviews are related to the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational change management, which will be further elaborated on in the data analysis section. The coding process leaves the data in a smaller and more manageable form, which can then be categorized in relation to the studied theories from the literature review (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Within this step, patterns and relationships become more noticeable for the authors to understand the results.

The interviews were transcribed and coded to find the keywords and quotes related to the topics of interest. Those codes extracted from the quotes mentioned by the interviewees were then divided between groups of general job satisfaction, remote work-related job satisfaction, and change management in the table (see Appendix D). After the codes were organized, relationships were found between the coding units and led to new understandings, presented in the data analysis. The patterns are also presented between different interviews, which create general insights that assist with answering the research questions. Regarding all the theories stated earlier in the theoretical framework chapter, the conclusions are made to explain the new findings and the connection to the theories as the last stage of data analysis.

3.6 Limitations

A few delimitation points were mentioned in the introductory chapter of this study, and a few more limitations are elaborated upon now. First, with three organizations in one region of Sweden as the subjects of the study, the data collection is reliant on a few individuals to provide information. Given the limited number of survey responses, internal validity might be called into question. However, the answers were carefully considered, and inferences were extracted cautiously. Additionally, the data collected from the interviews was used to gain further insights from the survey responses.

Another limitation is that this is a case study with a cross-sectional design, meaning that data collection is occurring at a singular moment, not over a period of time (Bryman, 2016). Because of the use of cross-sectional design, internal validity might be considered weak (Bryman, 2016). Inferring causality from data collected at a single point of time can be difficult because there is

no data from a different point of time with which to compare responses. To counteract this, the questions in the survey are kept focused and specific so that a respondent would likely answer in the same manner today or in the future.

Finally, in qualitative research, there is a risk of bias from the authors when framing the questions and analyzing the data. However, there are no specific, tangible ways to prevent these biases other than the recognition that they might exist and the consideration of different viewpoints (Norris, 1997). Because there are three authors of this study, there are also opportunities to provide a variety of perspectives in data analysis.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

To ensure the reliability and integrity of the research, certain ethical issues must be considered throughout data collection. Participants should be provided with as much information as possible so they can make an informed decision as to whether they will participate or not (Bryman, 2016). The survey includes an introduction outlining the purpose of the study, the research institution, and the names of the authors conducting the study (See Appendix A). Because the participants are providing information on job satisfaction and their employer, it was essential to communicate that the raw data would not be distributed and would remain with the authors. Only the final analysis of the data is provided to the municipalities. As no personal information is collected, those participating in the survey remain anonymous and their information confidential (Bryman, 2016).

Regarding consent, both participants of the survey and the interviews are asked to give their informed consent. Doing so alleviates the concerns of participants and ensures that they are fully informed on the research process (Bryman, 2016).

4 Data Presentation and Analysis

In this chapter, the authors break down the results of the collected data from the survey and the interviews with employees and managers at Swedish municipalities. First, data gathered from the survey is broken down by question and by category, including job satisfaction, remote work, and change management. These categories, as well as the elements of job satisfaction derived from JSS (Spector, 1985), are taken from the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2.

Next, the analysis of the interviews is broken down into the elements used to craft the interview questions: overall job satisfaction, JSS factors, remote work factors, and change management. The analysis conducted in this chapter is used in the following chapter to answer the research questions and the hypotheses.

4.1 Survey Data Presentation and Analysis

With 46 questions included in the survey, including five about demographic and contextual information, there is a lot of data to take into consideration. A brief breakdown of the variations in survey respondents based on office, parental status, and job title will be given, then an explanation of the different facets of job satisfaction and how the survey respondents answered will be provided.

4.1.1 Demographic Break Down

The age range of the surveyed employees skewed younger, with the majority falling between ages 18-40 (see Appendix B). In terms of duration at the organization, more than half of the surveyed employees have been at the organization for less than three years (see Appendix B). Additionally, most of the surveyed employees have children under 18 years old (see Appendix B). Family status could be an outside factor that impacts the desire for work-from-home policies. Because the number of respondents categorized in each demographic group is relatively low, the relationship between demographic factors and job satisfaction is not significant and cannot be concluded in this study. Therefore, these responses will not be expanded further upon.

4.1.2 Ranking of Factors

Survey respondents were asked to rank 12 factors in order from most to least important when it came to determining job satisfaction (see Table 2). These 12 factors were derived from the facets important to job satisfaction in JSS (Spector, 1985), as well as factors important in job satisfaction and remote work, as described in Chapter 2. Once responses were collected, an average score was calculated for each factor in order to create a ranking. The mean ranking was compared with the median response as well to limit the impact of outliers, but there is alignment in median and mean.

Table 2: Ranking of Factors Pertaining to Job Satisfaction (collected from authors' survey)

Ranking	Factor	Average Response	Median Response
1	Meaningfulness of the work	2.19	1
2	Relationship to coworkers	4	3
3	Pay	4.60	4
4	Flexible working hours	5.56	5
5	Success recognized by managers and peers	5.74	6
6	Promotion & growth opportunities	6.11	7
7	Culture of trust in the organization	6.63	7
8	Choice of working from home	6.67	7
9	Transparency & communication from the organization	7.30	7
10	Manager supervision	8.67	9
11	Extra work benefits	9.78	10
12	Dealing with bureaucracy & administrative tasks	10.78	11

The factor most frequently ranked highest was meaningfulness of the work, followed by relationship to coworkers and pay. Least important to the surveyed employees were dealing with bureaucracy and administrative tasks, extra work benefits, and manager supervision.

According to Table 2, some JSS factors were ranked lower than the remote work factors on the list. The factors that relate to remote work were ranked fourth, seventh, and eighth among the 12 factors. The findings reveal the significance of flexibility, organizational trust, and choice of working from home to job satisfaction.

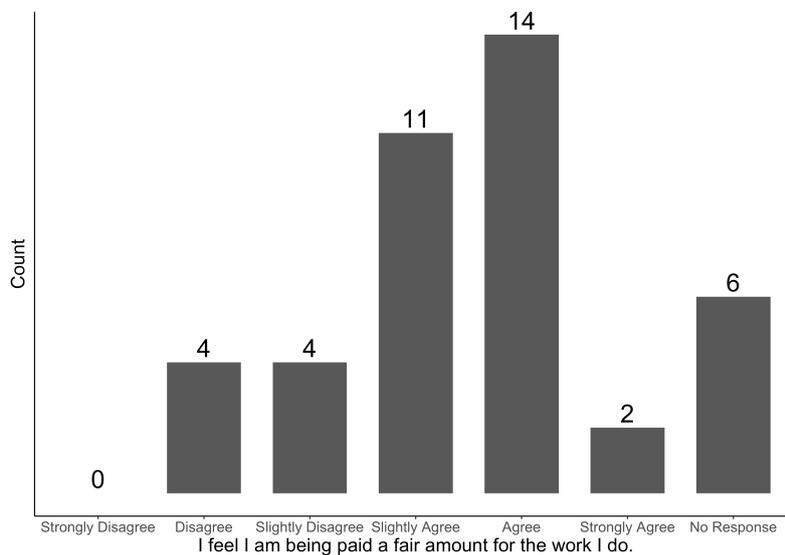
4.1.3 JSS Factors

With the questions derived from JSS (Spector, 1985), some questions have positive correlation (where a ‘strong agree’ answer means a favorable response) and some have a negative correlation (where a ‘strong agree’ answer is an unfavorable response). The nine categories, with the survey data for the two questions in each category, are below.

Pay

Pay was ranked among the highest of the factors of importance in determining job satisfaction. The JSS question related to pay shows that employees in the municipalities feel like they are receiving a fair wage for their work (see Table 3), which should contribute to their job satisfaction. The responses to the questions about pay reveal that most of the respondents are satisfied with their pay.

Table 3: Survey Question 6



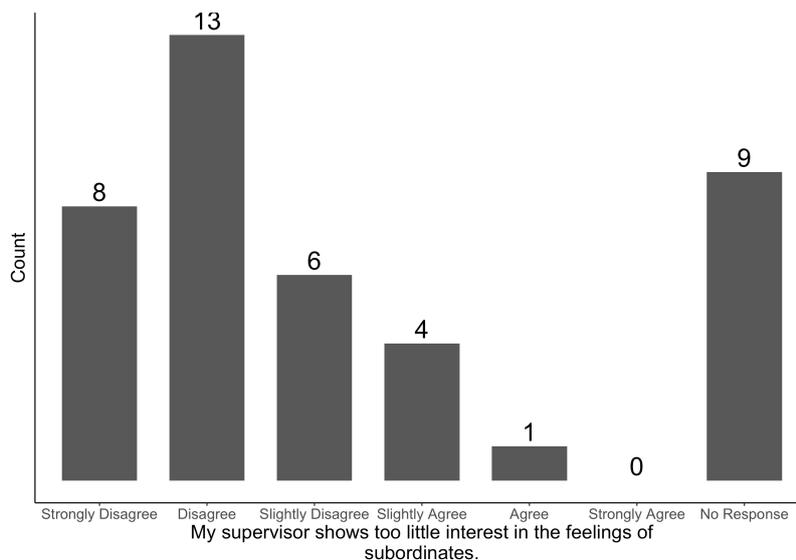
Promotion

Promotion was in the middle of the rankings for factors important to job satisfaction – and the survey questions indicate room for potential dissatisfaction on this front (see Appendix B). However, none of the interviewed managers mentioned promotions, so this factor is not evaluated further.

Supervision

Supervision was not ranked highly in Table 2, and in the surveyed staff at the Swedish municipalities, supervision does not appear to be an issue for these employees. The answers in Table 4 show that employees generally feel their managers have their best interests in mind, which is a helpful trait in building organizational trust and when going through change management (Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, 2011).

Table 4: Survey Question 8



Fringe Benefits

Like supervision, extra workplace benefits are ranked highly in determining job satisfaction – perhaps given that people in Sweden receive healthcare and other basic benefits through the government, not the workplace (Försäkringskassan, 2022). In the United States, however, fringe benefits from a workplace are of high importance (Spector, 1997). The survey respondents seem generally satisfied with the fringe benefits they receive at their respective workplaces (see Appendix B).

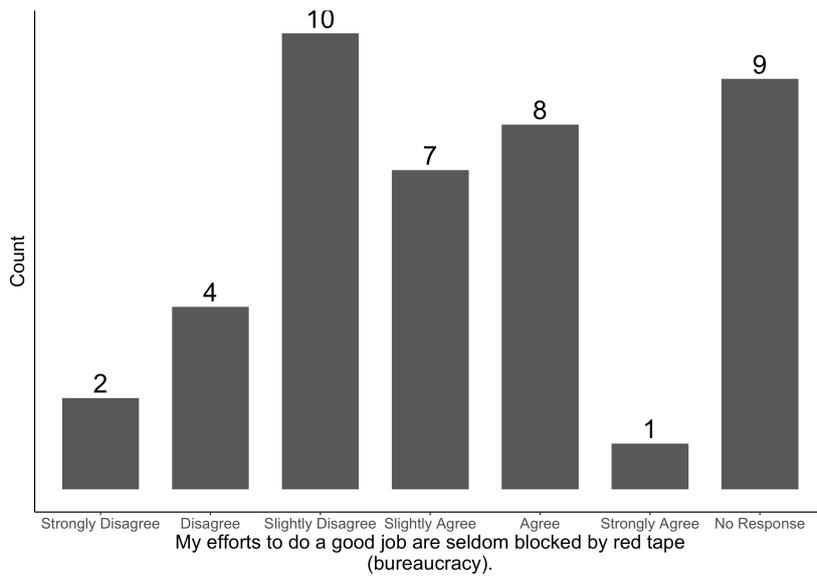
Contingent Rewards

Contingent rewards, meaning recognition from peers and managers, are ranked highly by the surveyed employees. Most employees feel recognized and rewarded for their work, but there is a handful of employees who have negative responses to these questions (see Appendix B).

Operating Procedures

Dealing with bureaucratic red tape is the lowest ranking factor in Table 2. However, it seems there is a wide breadth of satisfaction over bureaucratic blocks in employees doing their work: an equal number of employees agreed and disagreed on the question in Table 5 (see below). Logistics and red tape are mentioned by managers as a factor impacting job satisfaction (see Section 4.2).

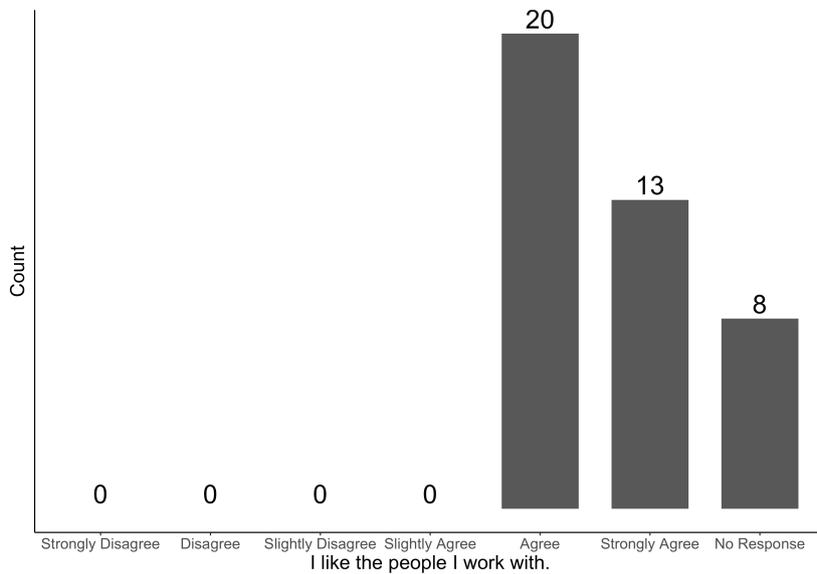
Table 5: Survey Question 20



Coworkers

Relationship to coworkers was the second-highest rank factor related to job satisfaction amongst the surveyed employees, and it seems from the survey that most employees appreciate their coworkers (see Table 6). However, there does seem to be a handful of employees who feel their coworkers do not have the necessary level of competence for their job (see Appendix B).

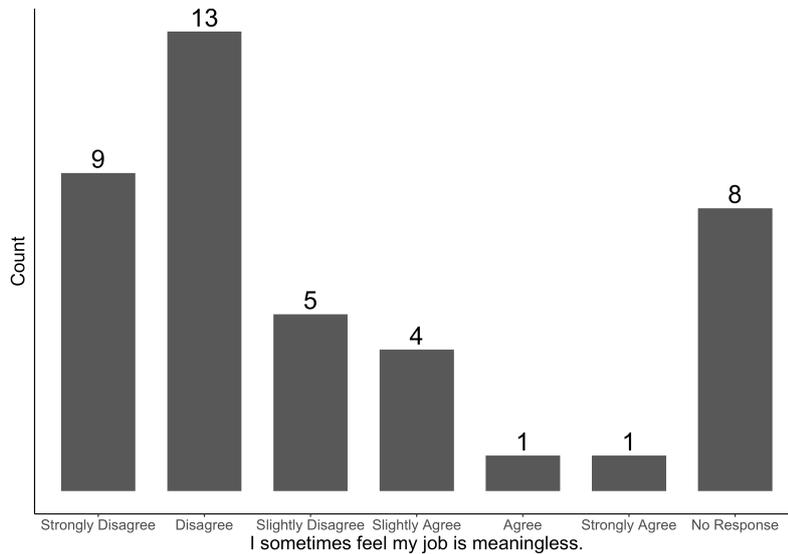
Table 6: Survey Question 12



Nature of Work

Nature of work, or job meaningfulness, is the highest-ranking factor contributing to job satisfaction in Table 2. In the questions relating to this factor from JSS, most employees seem satisfied with the work they are doing (see Table 7), although some respondents do not find their work to be meaningful – which would negatively impact job satisfaction.

Table 7: Survey Question 13

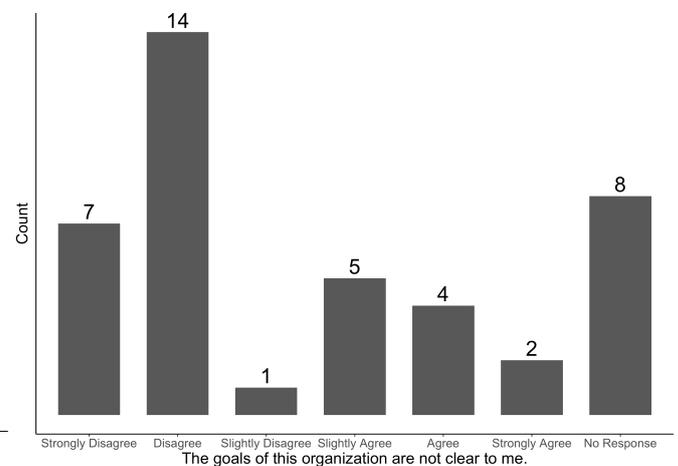
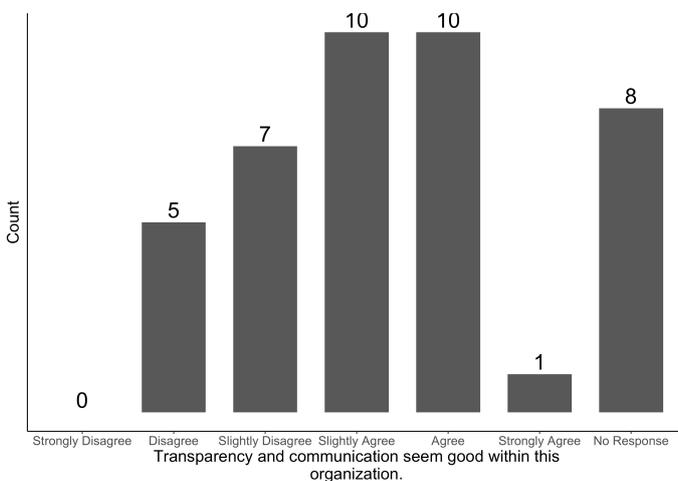


Communication

Clear communication did not rank particularly high in terms of factors relating to job satisfaction; however, the above questions show a broad variety of employee sentiments about the effectiveness of communication at the Swedish municipalities (see Tables 8 and 9). This factor is often mentioned in the interviews with managers at these municipalities (see Section 4.2).

Table 8: Survey Question 14 (Left)

Table 9: Survey Question 23 (Right)



4.1.4 Remote Work Factors

Next, the survey questions relating to the four remote work factors explained in Section 2.2.2 are analyzed. In previously conducted research, these four qualities of remote work were considered important for employees. The significance to the surveyed employees for this research, as well as specifics regarding these qualities, is expanded upon below.

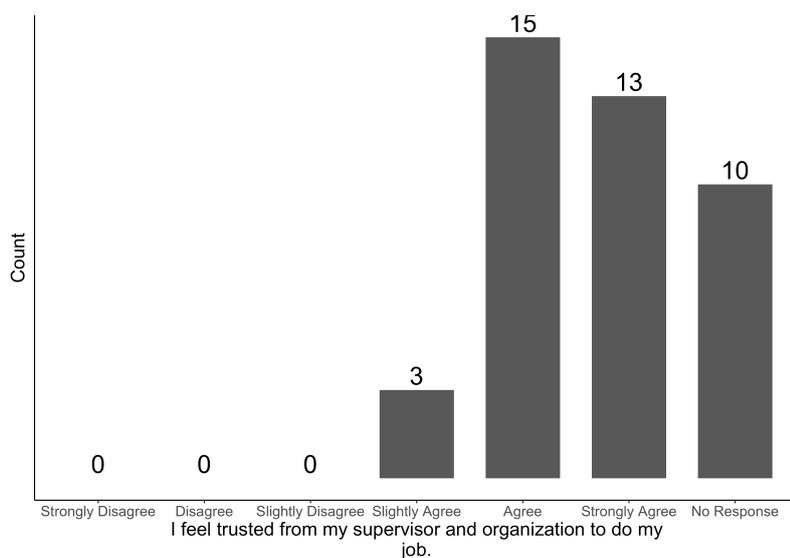
Control

The choice to work from home, which corresponds to control and frequency, is of mid-level importance to the surveyed employees. Based on the above questions, employees have some say in whether they get to work from home or not (see Appendix B) – as will be discussed in the interview analysis, this is dependent on the workplace.

Organizational Trust

Culture of trust is of middle ranking as well when it comes to job satisfaction factors. This trust is found in the relationship between supervisors and the employees – all respondents feel trusted to do their work (see Table 10). However, there is less trust in terms of where and when employees can deliver their work (see Appendix B).

Table 10: Survey Question 29

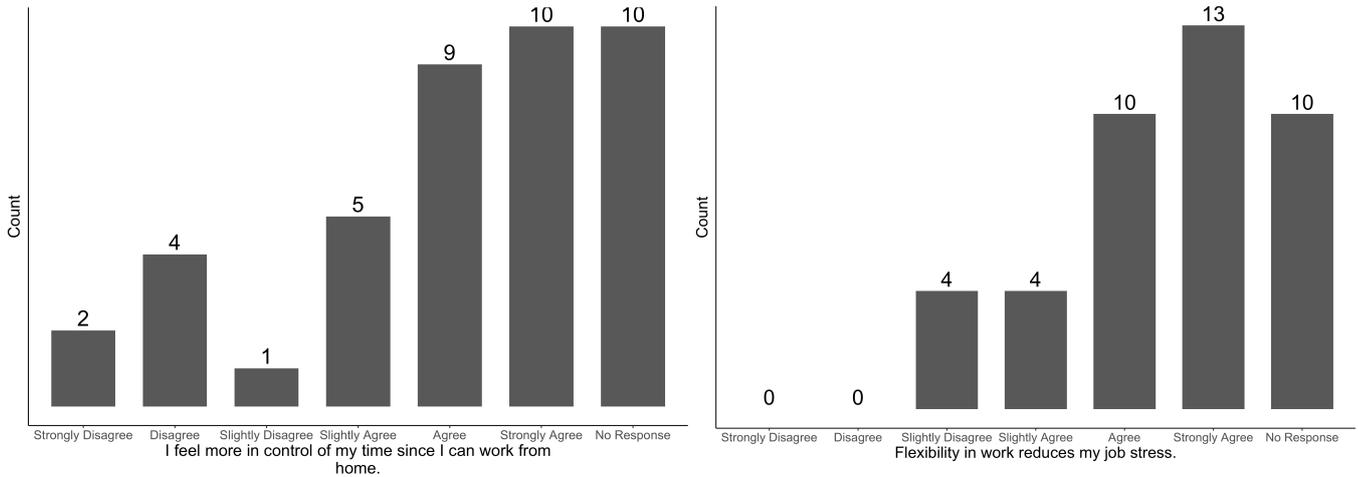


Flexibility

Flexibility in terms of when to work from home was the fourth-highest ranked factor in determining job satisfaction – the highest non-JSS related factor. The surveyed employees seem to appreciate flexibility in the workplace – it gives them control of their time (see Table 11, below) and reduces their job stress (see Table 12, below).

Table 11: Survey Question 26 (Left)

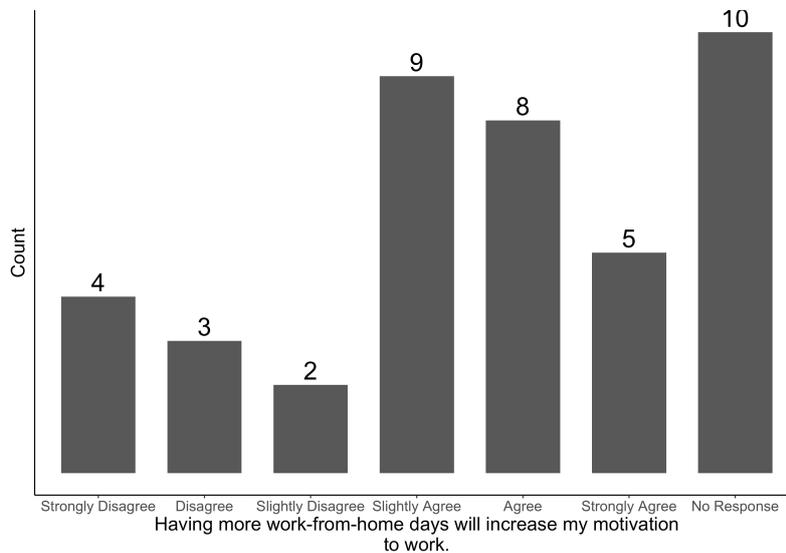
Table 12: Survey Question 30 (Right)



Frequency

As mentioned above, control or frequency of work from home is a mid-ranked factor for employees. Some employees appear to want more work-from-home days, attributing that to higher work motivation (see Table 13). Very few employees indicated interest in working more in an office (see Appendix B).

Table 13: Survey Question 31



4.1.5 Change Management Factors

The questions pertaining to different change management models and factors will be broken down. In Chapter 5, these will be connected to the theories outlined in Chapter 2.

General Change Management

The above questions were included in the survey to see if employees experienced any aspect of change management or participated in the process in any capacity. As defined in Section

2.3.1, change management is about guiding employees as an organization transitions from one state to another (ProSci, 2022).

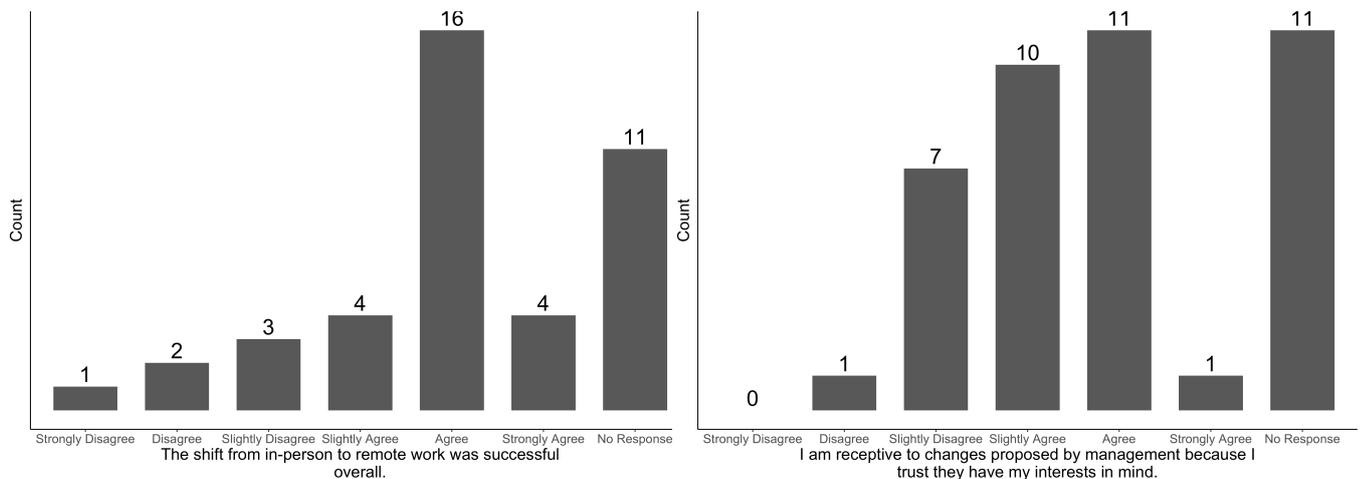
One question worth highlighting is, “I am receptive to changes proposed by management because I trust they have my interests in mind”. This question partly relates to the idea that employers need to have employee buy-in or organizational trust to successfully change. Organizational trust is of mid-level importance to the employees in terms of determining job satisfaction (see Table 2), and it appears that most of the surveyed employees believe their management has their interests in mind (see Table 15).

Likewise, transparent communication is important for employees in terms of job satisfaction. Li et al. (2021) highlight how important transparent communication is to prepare employees for a change process (see Section 2.3.5). There is a broad spectrum of answers in terms of transparent communication from the surveyed employees (see Table 8 and Appendix B).

Most employees find the transition from in-person to remote work to be successful according to Table 14, which would point to successful change management. More information about how the shift from in-person to remote work occurred is explained in section 4.2.

Table 14: Survey Question 43 (Left)

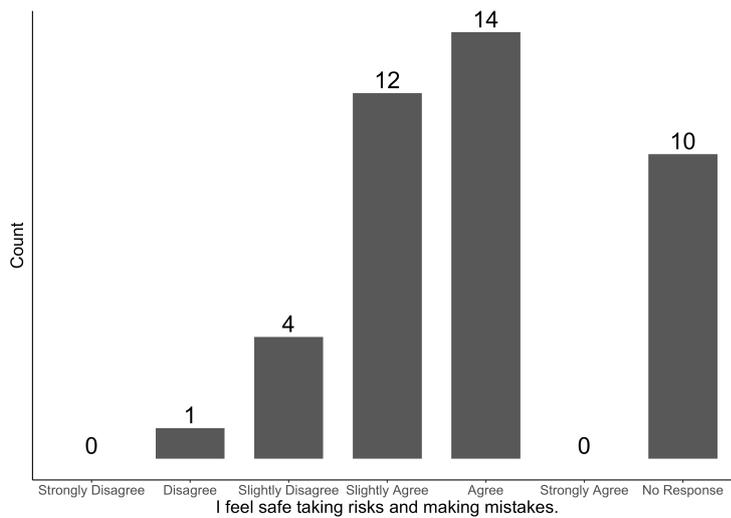
Table 15: Survey Question 44 (Right)



Lewin’s Change Management Model

Lewin’s change management model highlights a three-step process, described in Section 2.3.2. The change phase creates confusion as employees adjust to new organizational processes (Schein, 1996). What is of utmost importance for successful change management in this phase is to have the feeling of safety to make mistakes as adjustments are made – and from responses to the survey (see Table 16, below), employees of the surveyed organizations feel safe to take risks. Additionally, Schein (1996) emphasizes that having role models to look upon for inspiration when the change process is happening can better facilitate the change process. Most employees identified having people to look to as role models (see Appendix B).

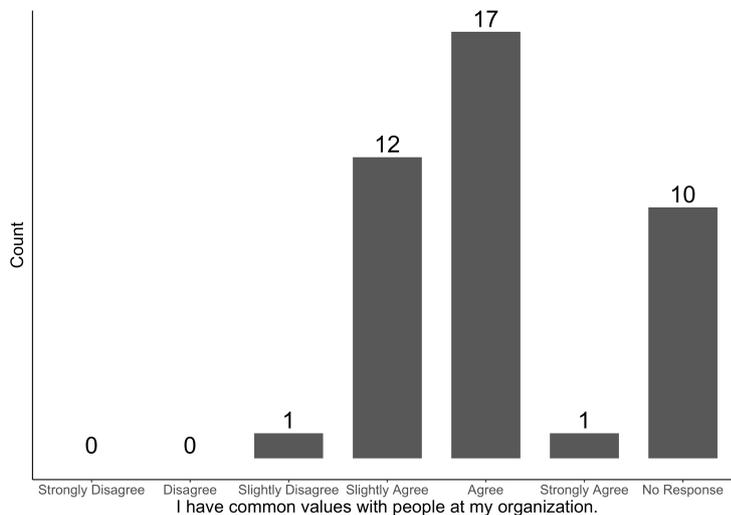
Table 16: Survey Question 34



McKinsey 7-S Change Management Model

The center spoke of the McKinsey 7-S Model (Channon & Caldart, 2015), is shared values. A change in shared values means a change for the other aspects of the organization (Channon & Caldart, 2015), but the change process is smoother when these values are held by most employees – which again bodes well for the change management process, based on the responses in Table 17 below.

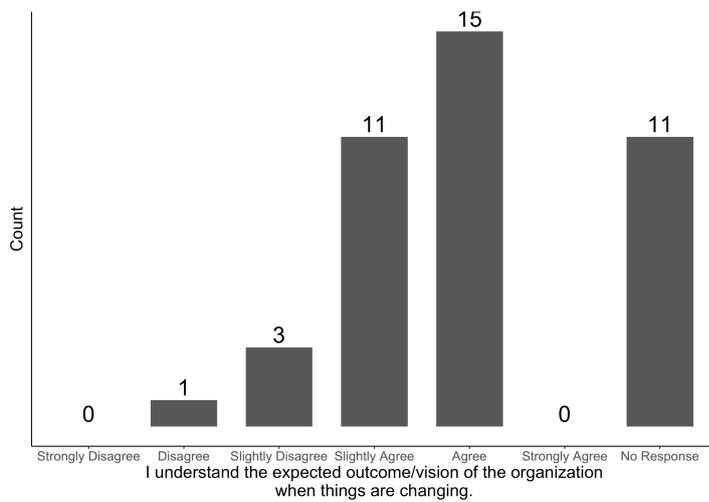
Table 17: Survey Question 36



Kotter’s Eight-Step Change Management Model

With Kotter’s eight-step model for change management, there is a stepwise approach to the process (Kotter, 1995). The first few steps are critical to the change process, including creating a common vision for why a change is occurring (Kotter, 1995). Likewise, explaining to employees why the change is happening is of importance (Kotter, 1995). With these two steps in mind, it appears that the surveyed employees are generally bought-in to change processes, based on responses seen in Table 18 (see below).

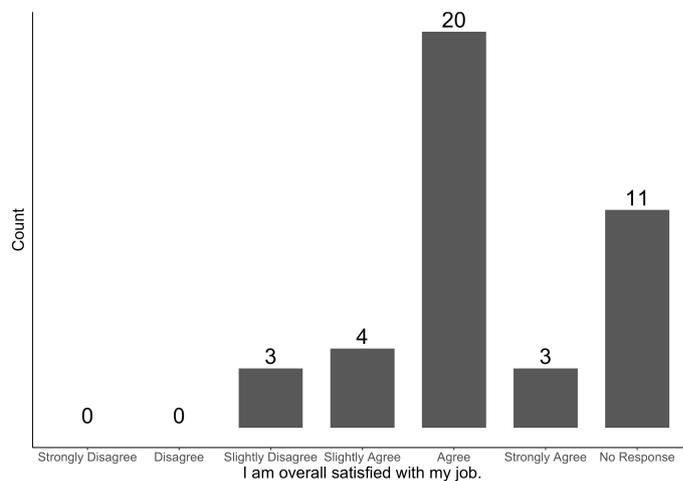
Table 18: Survey Question 38



4.1.6 Overall Job Satisfaction

The second to last question in the survey asked respondents about their overall job satisfaction. Most respondents are satisfied with their work based on survey responses in Table 19. Most respondents are satisfied with their work – this will be discussed with the above-mentioned factors in Chapter 5, as well as with the impressions of managers from the interviews conducted.

Table 19: Survey Question 45



4.2 Interview Data Presentation and Analysis

This section presents the collected data from the semi-structured interviews, as well as an analysis of the findings. The table below (Table 20) provides a guide to the managers interviewed and for which municipality they work. For a comprehensive summary of each interview, please refer to Appendix D.

Table 20: Breakdown of the municipalities and the managers interviewed

Municipality	Number of Employees	Manager Reference	Title
Municipality A: Large Sized Municipality	26,000	Manager #1	Strategic Change Leader
		Manager #2	HR Director
		Manager #3	HR Manager
Municipality B: Mid-Sized Municipality	10,000	Manager #4	C-Level
Municipality C: Small-Sized Municipality	1,300	Manager #5	C-Level
		Manager #6	HR Director

4.2.1 Impacts of the Change in Workplace Setting on Job Satisfaction

After interviewing the selected six managers, it is evident the change process from in-person to remote (and vice versa) does not impact job satisfaction equally in the different offices. For Municipality C, the change is less significant because the organization had already implemented some form of policy that allowed working from home before the pandemic. Manager #5 explains that employees “had that possibility, even before ... but they didn't use it very much so it was quite seldom.” Manager #6 confirms this and explains that employees could work remotely before the pandemic, “but not to that big of a degree ... so it wasn't all new when the pandemic hit us, but to a very small degree.” As a result, the concept of remote working is not novel or unfamiliar to the employees of this municipality and the change does not seem as extreme as it may have been for other organizations. Manager #6 highlights that it was “a smoother ride than expected” for his employees because of this; most employees feel “it has been better than before the pandemic.” Thus, it seems likely that this familiarity with the concept of remote work may have helped employees adjust more comfortably and there was less strain on their job satisfaction. The interviewed managers also express that the upper management of the municipality created clear guidelines that both the managers and their employees can refer to when making decisions, which makes it easier to adapt to the change. Manager #6 explains that they currently “have policies that help both the management and the employee, how to find a solution to what degree you can work remotely.”

For Municipality B, it is likely that there is not a significant impact on job satisfaction because the organization is managing the change well. The organization makes sure communication with employees is constant. This will be further expanded below. In Municipality A, a stronger impact is felt, most likely because messaging and information regarding the change to remote work and hybrid work remains vague. This will also be discussed below.

Lack of Communication

A common theme among all the interviewed managers is the significant impact that the change to remote work has on communication amongst employees. Nearly every manager mentions that the biggest impact on their departments is the lack of communication and social interaction since moving to a more hybrid work setting. Manager #1 explains that when meeting digitally, “so much of that true connection between people is lost. It's so hard to really connect with and know the person on the other side.” One aspect of this is that communication on projects and tasks is entirely different because employees are not having casual, in-person discussions about work. Manager #5 emphasizes that “with a lot of people working remote, you get problems with communication” and when “you're in your office, you hear your colleagues talking and you get some information, it's just coming to you. You don't have to do anything to get it.”

After moving to more digital formats and meetings, the managers realized how much work is discussed in informal discussions. Manager #5 recognizes this when her employees are working on big projects remotely:

I could see that if we had a problem with something and one employee was trying to solve it, he didn't tell anyone. But when he sat in the office, we knew because he said when something didn't work out loud. So, it's communication.

Lacking this connection potentially causes projects to be more drawn out and delayed because less communication is occurring between employees. Manager #1 emphasizes this issue when discussing crisis management and how the crises tend to be drawn out since everyone is not sitting together:

had we worked every day together, we would have talked about the crisis so much that after two or three months, we perhaps were done [with it]. But now when we were sitting at home, it lasted a year instead.

There is also the issue of no personal or human connection when using digital meeting tools. Manager #1 describes the lack of connection he felt with his coworkers in a recent department-wide Zoom call: “I was talking at a meeting last week for 90 people and I didn't see a single face – I was just talking into a void. It's crazy.” He explains how unnatural this feels and how isolating this could be for a manager who is trying to understand the needs and satisfaction levels of his employees. Manager #4 describes a similar issue from when he was trying to get to know his 50 employees as a new, incoming manager: “It felt a little bit like you were speaking into black hole because you don't get the sort of response, you can't see people's reactions.”

Lack of Socialization

Another significant impact felt is on the social components within the office. Manager #4 illustrates this in describing the difficulties his office is facing with socializing: “When you have a physical meeting, you have the chit chat at the beginning and afterwards. It's much less natural over Teams.” The pandemic pushes managers to recognize the significance socializing and building team culture has on their employees' job satisfaction. Manager #6 expresses that working remotely and “trying to get that connection and openness, it's quite difficult ... and

also socially limited. That's also a problem if you have a lot of extroverts in the department." The managers notice that many of their employees are isolated or not particularly socially fulfilled when they only work from home.

Managers #2, #4, and #5 all mention how there is little to no connection with people in the workplace beyond the usual team meetings, so employees' social circles could feel quite small. As a result, all the managers are exploring ways to address the issue and ensure that their employees are not only satisfied with their work, but with their team culture as well. For Manager #4, this means investigating and understanding how to maintain the culture the employees appreciate so much, but online: "we've also tried to focus on that bit, trying to have formal activities, but also with social elements to it so people have a chance to get to know each other, to have a chance to have fun together." For Managers #3 and #6, this means organizing frequent casual online hangouts and finding "new ways to have 'fika' and 'good morning' meetings together online" (Manager #3). Since moving to a more hybrid working style, many managers notice job satisfaction rising. Manager #1 explains that he thinks it has "a lot to do with [the team] getting together as a group again" and that "just the fact that we actually get together at the office every week now, in some way, the job satisfaction is rising." By prioritizing ways in which they can maintain connections with their employees, they are noticing positive impacts on overall job satisfaction.

Justice and Fairness

Many of the managers mention an impact on employees' perceptions of their coworkers and the fairness of the work. For all three municipalities, some employees prefer working entirely from the office and others prefer the flexibility of primarily working remotely. One predominant issue is satisfying remote workers and in-office workers equally. Often, those who chose to work in the office feel that remote workers are taking advantage of the situation and are pushing administrative tasks to those who had access to office supplies. Although they actively choose to return to the office because it fits their working situation better, they are still negatively impacted by those who choose to work remotely. Manager #3 highlights a similar difficulty balancing the different needs of her employees where "some employees want to have more colleagues at the office more often and some employees want to work more from home."

Manager #6 explains that at first, it did not appear to be an issue because there were no complaints, but over time "it came to the surface that it wasn't really fair for people at the office to be there and handling more administration than before, just because some were working remotely." Manager #5 had to sit with the remote workers and tell them: "You can't work remote and then ask a colleague in the office to do some of your work. It's not okay." The managers notice that because of this imbalance, the satisfaction of the in-office employees starts to decline because they are upset with those who are at home and taking advantage of the new situation (Manager #5). Manager #2 confirms this and says that it is a "discussion of justice (fairness) ... Always thinking someone else has it a little better." Before the pandemic, it was much more equal because everyone worked in the office anyways – there was no imbalance in the work due to the workplace setting.

In discussing justice and fairness, most managers mention compromise and dealing with different individual needs. To reach a compromise with employees' different needs, Manager #3 and her department came up with a solution of working 50 percent remotely and 50 percent in-office. For Manager #6, this means sitting with his employees and asking questions focused on fairness: "how is my work impacted by others staying remote? And is that a problem? ... how is that impacted if we have several people being at home, for example?" As a result, many of these departments have developed guidelines to cope with the issue and ensure equal division of work between people in-office and hybrid (Managers #2, #5, and #6). As Manager #5 explains: "You have to work with both sides. People are different. You can't say it's this or that. You have the whole spectrum." Manager #2 reiterates this idea of addressing the satisfaction for each individual and how there are many different elements at play: "It's the combination ... that is a real challenge. How do we get satisfaction from both being in office and working remote?"

Workload

A big concern for a lot of employees is that by working remotely, there would be a rise in the workload. In fact, in an internal survey measuring his employees' satisfaction levels, Manager #4 was surprised to see that people were concerned about the workload increasing because "when you're not at work, you don't have the sort of pauses between meetings." Since there are no social cues from coworkers to get up and take breaks between meetings, people often work from "eight to five with no breaks" (Manager #4). Manager #5 also recognizes this and explains that she "was maybe more afraid that they worked a little bit too much" when they worked remotely." However, this does not seem to have as significant of an impact on job satisfaction as other factors like communication and socialization do.

Digital Tools

Another impact of remote work on job satisfaction is the increased usage of digital tools. Before the pandemic, the municipalities had limited or no access to digital tools that would ease or encourage remote work (Managers #3, #5, and #6). In fact, of the three municipalities, only Municipality C had some sort of remote work policy in place but they "didn't really have the digital tools to do so ... Remote work before the pandemic was mostly keeping in touch by phone or by email" (Manager #6). Initially, there were also individual challenges employees faced regarding remote work and their access to digital tools from home. For example, "some colleagues did not have good internet connection, so it was a problem" (Manager #5). Although many teams adapted – especially once it was more common and acceptable to have a hybrid set-up – Manager #2 expresses that there were "many digital challenges still ... haven't solved yet ... In a couple of years, I believe that technology will be totally changed with a closer experience."

Other managers express a positive outlook on the connection with digital tools. Manager #3 feels that the situation is "getting better and better when [the employees] learn more about how to use digital tools to collaborate." The managers explain that once employees were given the tools to do their work effectively from home, they were able to adapt quickly. Manager #2 emphasizes that many employees "perform even better – more concentrated" and that tasks the

employees “already know how to do [they] can just do more of it when [they are] working remotely.” By adjusting to using digital tools and learning how they can best support the employees in this new workplace setting, managers have seen a positive impact on the job satisfaction of their employees.

Insignificant Factors

Based on the theoretical framework and trends in the news, the authors anticipated that certain factors would be more prevalent than were shown in the interviews. Initially, the authors wanted to see if there were any significant differences in the impact on job satisfaction between the different sized municipalities. Because the three municipalities participating in the survey and interviews are all unique in their size, the authors questioned if there was a clear difference in how their employees are affected by changing workplace settings. This was not found to be the case in the scope of data collected. Had the authors been able to look at more municipalities in a longer time frame, this might have been explored further. Another factor the authors considered was whether the changes might impact employee turnover and retention. This is also unclear, and as Manager #1 explains, “hard to say.” Most of the managers explain that there are so many other factors at play that it difficult to identify changing workplace settings as the reason for turnover (Managers #1, #2, #3, #4, and #5).

4.2.2 JSS Factor Prevalence

JSS factors represent general facets of work that affect job satisfaction, which are considered significant by Spector (1985). Although there is a change in physical work settings, the JSS factors are still applicable to the new context. However, the significance of these factors increases or decreases as evident in the ranking question from the survey (see Table 2). To further analyze, the following factors from JSS are uplifted as impactful to employee job satisfaction by the managers in their interviews.

Meaningfulness of Work

Not only ranked as the highest in factors that contribute to job satisfaction for employees (see Table 2), nature of work is also mentioned by several managers as a crucial factor related to job satisfaction. Manager #4 emphasizes that the meaningfulness of work is most important for employees’ perception of job satisfaction. Building off this notion, he says of the municipality and its employees:

We’re here because this is needed and that is needed, and we have these skills and resources to help with that. So, it [the meaningfulness of work] is building the purpose of what we do.

This matter is supported by Manager #5 when she describes that satisfaction with the work itself is the most important for job satisfaction: “I think satisfaction with the task. Yeah, I think that's the most important.”

Coworkers

Looking at the survey results (see Appendix B), the employees clearly perceive coworkers as highly important to job satisfaction. This is also seen by the managers, who explain during the interviews that employees experiencing remote work tend to feel isolated, especially older employees and employees who do not have a strong social network (Managers #2 and #4). Managers #2, #4, and #6 each receive the same kind of feedback from their employees – although they enjoy the increased flexibility, they miss social life at the office, including small conversations and fika breaks, since these are a part of their office culture. This kind of feedback does not only come from the remote workers, but also the in-office workers who feel isolated because their colleagues are working from home. The significance of coworkers is emphasized by Manager #5, who says “I think it's important to have a good relationship within the department and with teams.”

Another aspect of coworkers, in terms of job satisfaction, is that meeting and maintaining relationships with colleagues can help increase work motivation, particularly for employees who spend more time working remotely (Managers #1 and #5). The bonding should not be limited to only meeting in real life; Manager #3 suggests that teams should try coming together digitally as well to motivate each other.

Supervision

Supervision is mentioned in the terms of what managers have done to maintain their team’s job satisfaction. Municipality A seems to have a structure that delegates decision-making responsibilities to each manager, since Managers #2 and #3 mention that managers are allowed to decide the work style for their team. However, both Managers #2 and #3 have chosen the structure together with their employees, not fully forcing the style on them. This is also true for Municipalities B and C (Managers #4 and #5), which shows alignment with the positive responses to the supervision question in the survey results (see Table 4). Manager #3 mentions that it is her duty to be available for the employees to maintain the connections during the period of change. This practice was also brought up by Managers #4, #5, and #6, who ensure that everyone in their team is doing well by regularly checking in with them both on-site and digitally. Manager #6 suggests that check-ins are the most effective when they are open and personal. Employees know from their experiences that managers have their interests in mind, so they appreciate the check-ins (Manager #6).

Communication

Lack of communication is mentioned in the previous section as one of the main challenges that the interviewed managers face. Managers #1, #2, and #6 come across almost the same communication problems: when employees are not physically present, especially for work that requires extensive collaboration, the workflow can become stagnant. Another example of this issue is that people who need help with their tasks reach out less than when they are in an office and can ask their questions in person (Manager #5).

Additionally, the new working style in which some employees are in-person and some are remote has made cooperation and team building more difficult for the managers (Manager #3).

To mitigate these situations, Manager #6 suggests that managers should be open and honest while putting effort into finding a balance that will increase employee job satisfaction: “The department as a whole, we discussed how we are going to keep the connection in the department.”

Operating Procedures

The fact that the selected organizations operate within the public sector might increase the intensity of how operating procedures can impact job satisfaction since there is more bureaucracy involved. Manager #1 says,

It was very strange, because it was something about the management in [Municipality A] not being able to really say who should be or who should not be at the office. All of the [off-site] meetings in the branches were canceled. But then before they sent everyone home, they said everyone needs to be at the office. ... That was a bit frustrating.

However, for Municipality C, the employees seem to not have any problem with how management handles the change (Manager #6). Manager #6 emphasizes that to avoid employee dissatisfaction, the process should be transparent, addressing the problem clearly and finding solutions through discussions. Additionally, adaptability per office is sometimes limited. Managers #1 and #5 both identified municipal-wide policies that have to be considered by all departments, regardless of employee sentiments or office-specific rules. Likewise, the surveyed employees identify bureaucratic red tape as something that gets in the way of doing their work (see Table 5).

Omitted Factors

Since the interview context is related to the period of change caused by the pandemic, rather than overall job satisfaction, the interviewed managers’ focus more on current challenges rather than general observations. This might explain the difference in factors mentioned by the managers and the employees on what determines job satisfaction. For example, pay is ranked second in the survey results but is never mentioned by the managers in their interviews.

4.2.3 Remote Work Factor Prevalence

The survey results partly highlight the significance of remote work factors to employee job satisfaction. Factors related to remote work outside the scope initially set by the authors of the present study are mentioned by the interviewees in relation to job satisfaction. In this subsection, the mentioned factors are examined closer to find the relationship between remote work factors and job satisfaction in the eyes of the managers.

Flexibility

Flexibility is ranked highest by survey respondents compared to other remote work factors in the survey data (see Table 2). This finding is supported by several managers. Manager #3 mentions that her team was a bit reluctant to work from home from the start, but they have since

grown to enjoy the flexibility – so much so, she even says flexibility is now the most important factor impacting her team’s job satisfaction. Manager #2 confirms the importance of flexibility by saying that half of his department thought their “life puzzle” was perfect during the pandemic, particularly the employees with young children. Manager #6 conveys the same opinion, that the most important factor for job satisfaction in his team is flexibility; “that’s a big part of making [the job] attractive or sustainable.”

Organizational Trust

The managers provide both positive and negative input about organizational trust. Manager #1 says that during remote work upper management distributed a spreadsheet for everyone to fill in about their daily tasks. This tool did not seem to help facilitate the situation and he feels frustrated by the lack of organizational trust in employees’ ability to do their work. Manager #2, however, states that he fully trusts his employees, and he is more concerned with the results than when his employees get their work done. His statement is supported by Manager #5, who says that she “trusts that the employees do their time. I think most people want to do good work”. Manager #6 also agrees on the importance of trust culture. Especially by having regular check-ins about personal lives, instead of work lives, people will feel safe and trusted by their managers (Manager #6).

Control

There seems to be variety in how each office handles the decision of who can work remotely and how frequently, even across different managers in the same municipality. For example, Manager #1 was forced into the office at the start of the pandemic, despite being mostly off-site before the pandemic. Meanwhile, Manager #2 was able to make that decision with his team to find the right structure. Manager #2 also mentions that,

we haven't had a corporate decision about it. Every manager has to decide for himself how and in what way is it possible to take care of employees who wish to work from home, who wish to work from the workplace and wish to have all their colleagues around.

The same goes for Manager #4, who says that each manager is responsible for the team’s working style, and there are no regulations over who can work remotely or not. He explains that most of the employees enjoy working remotely and tell him that they are more efficient at home than in the office (Manager #4). The matter of being more productive working from home is also mentioned by Managers #2 and #6, who hear from their employees that remote work is better for tasks that require high concentration. At home, employees have more control over their time and fewer distractions. Overall, most of the managers consider employees’ opinions and agree on the days that everyone has to come to the office, so the employees can maintain some control over their schedules (Managers #2, #3, #4, #5, and #6).

Other Remote Work Factors Mentioned

With the shift towards more remote work, there are other factors not included in the theoretical framework that are mentioned by employees as important to their satisfaction. One such example is a well-equipped workspace, which includes digital tools and ample office space.

Managers #1 and #4 explain how the transfer to new working styles are hindered by the lack of office space. Their offices do not yet have enough room or digital equipment for hybrid meetings. Meanwhile, Managers #2 and #5 also receive the feedback from the employees that they do not have a suitable workspace at home. Some employees even mention that their preference for their own workspace at the office is what motivates them to come into work every day, instead of remaining remote (Manager #6). Manager #4 emphasizes the significance of having a proper office that can facilitate hybrid work and accommodate both people working in-person and remotely. Digital tools are also a crucial part in facilitating the workflow. Manager #3 explains that by becoming more familiar with digital tools, digital collaboration becomes. Overall, the physical workspace and digital tools are considered as hygiene factors that need to be fulfilled to maintain job satisfaction (Manager #6).

4.2.4 Change Management

In terms of the presence of change management in the responses from the interviewed managers, there is evidence of some thoughtfulness when guiding their employees through the change in workplace setting. There were varying degrees of success in terms of the changes according to the managers – for some, the process has gone smoothly, and job satisfaction has not been impacted. For others, however, organizational change has not been particularly successful. One manager, whose department is facing discomfort, put it bluntly: “if by change management you mean that we should be in some kind of control of the process? I don't think we're really in control” (Manager #2).

When determining the success of change management, the authors considered both the responses from the interviewed managers, as well as the survey responses from employees. As seen in question 42 in Appendix B, there is inconsistency in terms of whether the values of the employees were considered when going through changes. Regardless, most employees found the transition from in-person to remote work to be successful. This finding matches with what most of the managers said, including that, “I have gotten that feedback from my colleagues as well that it has been a smoother ride than expected” (Manager #6).

What will be analyzed below is how different practices and factors pertaining to change management were present or absent in how the interviewed managers underwent the transition from mostly in-person to mostly remote work settings.

Undergoing Multiple Changes at Once

A key factor identified by managers throughout the interviews is that the change process is complicated, especially given that multiple departments and municipalities were going through several changes at once. For Manager #5, whose department has remained satisfied throughout the change from in-office to remote work, there was dissatisfaction due to another change process happening in parallel. Because of a new software system implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, employees had discomfort and dissatisfaction (Manager #5).

Likewise, Managers #1 and #4 both have departments that are in the process of moving office facilities or changing the current workplace set-up – which represents an additional significant change for the employees. Even in this process, however, the effectiveness of change management can be seen. In Manager #4’s office, to guarantee it serves the employees effectively, management has ensured that employees are deeply involved in the redesign process. Committees have been formed with representatives of different departments to include employees in the process (Manager #4). Manager #4 explains that the project centered on this change, “is very much focused on getting the input and testing the assumptions made on all types of coworkers in the organization.” As a result, employees are included and invested in the change, increasing their satisfaction (Manager #4). However, in Manager #1’s office, the new facilities do not consider the nature of the department’s work, and employees are not satisfied with the set-up.

Employee Participation in the Change Process

Involvement of the employees in the change management process was found to be the most significant factor contributing to job satisfaction. In Municipality C, where job satisfaction has not been particularly impacted by the transition from in-office to remote work, measures have been made by both interviewed managers to involve employees in the process. In Manager #6’s department, discussions about the change process have been necessary to ensure fairness and address all perspectives. He initiates discussions between the different groups – remote workers and in-office workers – to determine how to evenly distribute the work and figure how to satisfy the needs of everyone (Manager #6). The other manager in Municipality C created a SWOT analysis with her employees to discuss the problems that arose from the change and identify ways that they could solve the issues together (Manager #5).

Other ways that organizations – especially larger municipalities – involve employees in the change management process is through surveys. Both Managers #1 and #4 mentioned how management distributed surveys to measure the needs and wishes of the employees regarding remote work. For Manager #1, the survey was not particularly successful from the perspective of the employees because it only looked at the current situation and how employees spent their time in remote work but not what the employees’ “ideal way of working should be. Manager #4 describes a much more successful survey because it allowed them to confirm their assumptions about employees’ job satisfaction related to the workplace setting and environment.

When employees are not as involved, the presence of the change management process has been interpreted more vaguely by the employees undergoing the process. Manager #1 highlights that at the beginning of the pandemic there was significant confusion regarding the switch to remote work because upper management made decisions for the employees and did so with mixed messaging. He explains that “before they sent everyone home, they said everyone needs to be at the office. ... That was a bit frustrating.” Additionally, in Manager #1’s change process, management made the decision with minimal insight from the employees – only with information collected from a survey and a committee meeting.

Manager #2 mentions a similar situation of upper management switching back and forth on decisions and changing processes constantly. He describes it as a confusing process where management frequently makes decisions that the employees accept and adapt to, and then they revert or change the decisions again. A pattern has emerged in his municipality where a directive would be given by top level staff, the employees would adjust their working style and grow to like it, but then shortly after, a new, contradictory directive would be given (Manager #2). This non-linear process frustrates employees, especially since their input is not always taken into consideration, and because of this, “there's still people not really comfortable about the change” (Manager #2). As a result of decision-making methods, it is often difficult for the employees to be involved in a process if they have no idea when things are changing.

Common Values and Goals

Another factor frequently mentioned and emphasized by the interviewed managers is the significance of having common values and goals to guide employees. In Manager #2's interview, he highlights the importance of the unit having a singular goal to work towards. When he started, his team set individual goals for themselves – but they ended up prioritizing those over the shared team goals. The focus on individual goals defined parts of the change management process for his department (Manager #2). As he put it, “When people start to work for themselves and not for the company, it's quite hard to make a change for them to care about the company” (Manager #2).

Manager #4, who started as a manager during the change process, recognizes the existing values and culture at his new workplace, and he has worked hard to maintain this culture even as the systems in place around the employees is changing. Manager #3 highlights a similar pre-existing culture when she started at her municipality that she worked to maintain. Furthermore, Manager #4 even explains that there was a period in which employees indicated they were dissatisfied in a circulated survey when it came to a question about the clarity of the organization's goals; he attributes this in part with the fact that there was a period for nine months with an interim director.

Clear Communication

Communication is frequently mentioned by the managers as an important factor in the change management process. Clarity in communicating goals, needs, and changes is critical in making sure employees understand the process – and as mentioned above and seen in the survey, communication is of importance to the employees as well. In Manager #5's interview, she identifies the need for clear communication and shared decision-making when going through organizational change. She says:

you can't be afraid to talk about it. Because when you talk about it with the department, it's clear for people, they understand. You have to have a discussion and they will be a part of it (Manager #5).

Although understanding the exact levels of job satisfaction from the employees of each municipality is difficult given the limited number of questions in the survey, the responses to the question, “I am overall satisfied with my job” (see Table 19) indicate general satisfaction.

The lack of clear communication can negatively impact job satisfaction as well. Manager #1 emphasizes the amount of confusion that has been involved in the change process, which has negatively impacted satisfaction. Part of this confusion is related to the pandemic, but partly because upper management is not clear in communicating the new plans to the organization.

Role Models

Part of what makes the change management process different in the interviewed municipalities, compared to other instances of change management, is that the managers are also going through the same changes. The pandemic not only impacts part of the employees – it impacts most aspects of these organizations. This means that the challenges in adjusting from in-person to remote work or adapting to new digital tools are felt by managers and employees. In some ways, this eases the change management process because managers can emulate the behavior and attitude they want to see in their employees. Manager #6 says:

everyone was in the same situation. So even the managers to some degree were also working remotely and we had to find out how to discuss even difficult subjects through Teams – just through screens. So after a while, it went smoother. But I must say, for a long time, that was a big issue.

Manager #5 put more succinctly, “I think it's the same for everyone; we have to learn by doing”. Additionally, from the survey data employees generally indicated that they have people to look to during the change process (see Appendix B).

Room for Growth and Errors

Managers #2, #3, #5, and #6 all identify trial-and-error that has occurred as their respective departments adapt to new working styles. Manager #3 explains:

I think it's getting better and better when we learn more how to use digital tools to collaborate... At the beginning, the employees in my team doesn't want to work from home, but now they like to have the flexibility.

As mentioned above, both managers and employees are getting used to the new digital tools used for communication and are learning how to manage employees from a remote setting. The change process has not been seamless, and several managers mention having to try a variety of working styles to figure out what works best for their team. Manager #2 says of the change process: “It is two steps forward, one step back; It is up and down, not linear”, which captures the essence of the change management process described by most of the interviewed managers.

5 Discussion

In this chapter, the analysis from the surveys and interviews (see Chapter 4) is connected to the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2. This combination of literature and data is discussed and used to answer the research questions. Furthermore, the analysis and theories from the framework guide the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses.

5.1 Research Question 1

What, if anything, has changed in the employees' perception of job satisfaction in remote and in-person work?

From the theoretical framework chapter, job satisfaction can be measured by different work factors that contribute to different needs (Maslow, 1943; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). The main factors identified as significant in job satisfaction theories are put together to form a tool to measure job satisfaction (JSS; Spector, 1985). However, the modified tool used in this thesis includes some factors related to remote work, and the results have clearly shown the importance of these new factors from the perspectives of the employees. As portrayed in the data presentation and analysis section, flexibility has become increasingly significant to job satisfaction, supported by a clear positive relationship with reducing job stress (see Table 12). Accordingly, the perceptions of job satisfaction have changed over time, especially since the pandemic, which accelerated the change in physical workplace settings. With the support from the interview data analysis, it can be concluded that the shift from working in-office to remote work has impacted the way employees perceive job satisfaction. Now, there is higher regard for the factors generated from the possibility of working remotely.

H1: Herzberg's motivational factors and Maslow's higher needs (esteem and self-actualization needs) will rank higher than other factors for employees who have experienced remote work.

The results from the ranking question (see Table 2) reveal that the motivational factors are ranked higher than hygiene factors in general, with nature of work on the top; therefore, **H1 is accepted**. Nature of work, or the meaningfulness of work, was considered by Herzberg as a motivational factor contributing to job satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Nature of work is also related to Maslow's self-actualization needs – the highest order of motivation which drives people to realize their true potential (Maslow, 1943). The positive responses to the questions about nature of work (see Table 7) provide the insight that most of the respondents enjoy their work and find their job meaningful, which correlates to the positive result for the question about overall satisfaction.

Contingent rewards and promotions are Herzberg's motivational factors and are related to Maslow's esteem needs (Maslow, 1943; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Among the factors from JSS, contingent rewards and promotions are given high importance and ranked above some hygiene factors – communication, supervision, fringe benefits, and operating procedures. It can be implied that the respondents' satisfaction comes from a higher level of needs in Maslow's hierarchy (Maslow, 1943). This implication, in combination with the fact that the survey respondents are also averagely satisfied with basic needs like pay, benefits, operating procedures, and supervision, confirmed the eligibility of Maslow's theory within this study's context.

Pay and coworkers are perceived as some of the most significant factors that impact job satisfaction, (see Table 2). Despite both being hygiene factors and receiving positive responses from the respondents, the high ranking of pay and coworkers provides the understanding that even though Maslow's basic needs are met, they can still affect how employees perceive job satisfaction. This finding may relate to the fact that this change was precipitated by the pandemic, which creates feelings of uncertainty for the employees and therefore shifts their focus back to a lower level of needs in Maslow's hierarchy (Wirandendi Wolor et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the reason why pay is ranked almost at the top could not be concluded within the scope of this study. Regarding coworkers, the data analysis from the interviews reveals that remote workers tend to feel isolated and therefore put social needs in higher regard than the other hygiene factors (Managers #2, #4, and #6).

H2: Aspects of a job that correlate to remote work have become more significant to overall job satisfaction due to the experience employees have with remote work

The survey data analysis reveals the importance of remote work factors in relation to employee job satisfaction. It can be implied that employees rank these remote work factors higher than some of the factors from JSS (Spector, 1985) because some conditions of working remotely contribute to their job satisfaction more than factors that previously held more significance during in-office work (Spector, 1985). Therefore, it can be said that the employees who have experienced remote work perceive some remote work factors as important to their job satisfaction, **implying that H2 is accepted.**

The data from the interviews show that all offices in this study have adopted the hybrid working style since the pandemic if the nature of their work allows it. Some employees have always needed to work in the office due to their tasks. The analysis identifies that there is some satisfaction gained from working partly remotely, according to the positive responses to the overall job satisfaction (see Table 19) and the clear results to the questions about remote work frequency (see Table 13). The findings align with previous research that has found a positive relationship between remote work and job satisfaction in different contexts (Chandra Putra et al., 2020). With the employees' input, the managers must consider changing the work setting preferences to maintain their employees' job satisfaction.

H3: When employees consider what matters in terms of job satisfaction in remote work, flexibility will rank higher than other factors.

The survey results show that, of the job satisfaction factors pertaining to remote work, flexibility is ranked higher than organizational trust and control over the choice to work from home. Therefore, **H3 is accepted**. The analysis of the survey and the interviews demonstrates that increased flexibility is a positive impact of the change in the physical workplace, giving more employees satisfaction (Managers #1, #2, #3, and #6). This finding aligns with the studies on flexibility and job satisfaction that show a positive relationship between employees having more power to manage their time and balancing work with personal life (Wheatley, 2012; Parker, Horowitz & Minkin, 2022). Even though organizational trust is ranked in the middle, this factor is mentioned many times during the interviews as a facilitating factor to support the workflow between employees who work remotely and employees who are in the office (Managers #5 and #6). To explore further, the survey responses to questions 25 and 29 about organizational trust are mostly positive as well (See Appendix B). Accordingly, it may be concluded that most employees feel trusted by their managers and organizations, and they do not think that it is an issue that will impact their job satisfaction. On the other hand, managers perceive organizational trust as a significant factor since it was mentioned several times in their interviews (Managers #2, #5, and #6).

5.2 Research Question 2

How can employers find a balance between these differences to minimize job dissatisfaction and employee turnover rates when the workplace environment changes?

In the interviews with the managers, there are many key insights on how difficult it is to find a balance when trying to minimize job dissatisfaction and turnover rates when going through workplace change. Most managers emphasize how job satisfaction and needs are unique to the individual – which aligns with the notion in change management that so much of the change process revolves around the individuals in the organization (Cameron & Green, 2009). In all the municipalities, a predominant issue is satisfying remote workers and in-office workers equally. Often, those who chose to work in the office feel that remote workers are taking advantage of the situation and are pushing administrative tasks to those who have access to office supplies. From the interview analysis, it is shown that there is a challenge in balancing the expectations of people who want to work remotely and those that prefer to go into the office. The challenge is dealing with individual needs and concerns when incorporating overall change.

To find a balance between these challenges and to minimize job dissatisfaction and turnover, managers must address individual needs through communication and should include employees in the change process, at least to some degree. Accordingly, the literature on change management highlights this need to understand individual perspectives for the employees to embrace the overall change (ProSci, 2022). Many of these theories discuss a need for communication and understanding relational factors to manage and implement successful change (Kotter, 1995; Schein, 1996; Channon & Caldart, 2015). The significance of

communication is highly prevalent in the interviews, where many of the managers mention discussing the change with employees as crucial to maintaining job satisfaction. Having these discussions and communicating with employees is important for management to engage and enable organizational change (Kotter, 1995). For all the interviewed managers, communication appears to be the most effective way to implement change and engage their employees in the change management process.

H5: Due to the change management occurring in a time of crisis, employees were not highly involved in the change management process.

Given the time and scope of this research, the authors are unable to comprehensively understand the involvement of all the employees for the individual municipalities. As such, **H5 is inconclusive**. However, in most interviews, there are clear external factors that impact the change management process and make it unclear to determine the exact ways in which employees are involved. The changes related to the pandemic are happening in tandem with other changes, like adopting new digital systems or bringing on new management. As a result, it is difficult to pinpoint employees' exact involvement in the change management process pertaining specifically to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What does appear to be the case, however, is that the pandemic crisis precipitated a shift in the status quo for existing organizational practices (Seeger et al., 2005). With that, employees are undergoing multiple changes at once, making the change management process difficult to organize from both the managers' and employees' perspectives. There are multiple layers of change ongoing, creating confusion in many instances.

From the analysis of the interviews, it is evident that the managers recognize that change management is happening, but it is not always the case that employees acknowledge the change management process. In some cases, particularly in Municipalities B and C, employees are aware of change management because they are actively involved in the change management process. When implementing organizational change, it is important to understand what employees value and are interested in – especially with the rapid pace of change from the pandemic (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). The interviews highlight that an understanding of employees' values can be found through surveys, workshops, and conversations directly with the employees (Managers #4, #5, and #6). In Municipality A, employees are not as involved, most likely because the change management process is vaguer and ineffectively communicated by upper management. In addition to the changes from the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the early elements of the change management process likely could not be fulfilled adequately (Li et al., 2021). The preconditions for change management, which often involve employee participation (see Kotter, 1995), could not be fulfilled because of the rushed nature of the change given the crisis (Seeger et al., 2005). Therefore, employee involvement in the change management process could not begin from the start but rather while the change management process was already occurring. Amis and Greenwood (2020) uplift this notion, stating that employee interests and values should be considered more fully as organizations continue their change process after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

H6: Employees with higher job satisfaction have experienced or felt included in the change management process more than those with less job satisfaction.

When going through organizational change, managers should motivate their employees and communicate the needs for change (Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993; Kotter, 1995). For instance, the first steps in Kotter's eight-step model for change management are establishing urgency and creating a vision for change (Kotter, 1995) – and based on survey responses (see Table 18), the surveyed municipalities are successful at this. From the interview data, it is evident that the managers whose employees are more involved in the change process have higher job satisfaction (Managers #4, #5, and #6). As such, **H6 is shown to be accepted**. From the data analysis, the authors of the present study find that the need for clear communication and clear decision-making are significant factors in ensuring that employees feel included in the change management process (Managers #1, #4, #5, and #6).

5.3 Research Question 3

What role, if any, does change management and the models associated with change management have in maintaining employee job satisfaction when changing workplace settings?

The theoretical framework of this paper (see Chapter 2) emphasizes how change management can facilitate organizational change, even in a crisis setting. With the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the offices that participated in this study had to switch from entirely or partly in-office to entirely or partly remote. This shift represents a significant organizational change that took place quickly, which is often the case with change during a crisis (Seeger et al., 2005) – otherwise, this shift likely would have taken more time to occur. Especially since the case study pertains to public sector organizations, which typically have bureaucratic red tape to consider when making organizational changes (OECD, 2021), the switch from in-person to hybrid or remote work occurred quickly.

Extracted from the answers given in the interviews with the managers, the authors can see attempts at change management to ease the transition from in-office to remote work, primarily using communication and shared values to achieve employee buy-in. Additionally, change management is used to maintain job satisfaction by incorporating employee input as much as possible. Traces of different change management models can be found in the responses from the managers, but as explained below, assigning a particular model to these change processes is not possible.

H7: When employees and managers are aligned on the most important factors related to job satisfaction and organizational change, employees will reflect positively on the change management process.

Looking at the analysis of the survey and the interviews, there is alignment between employees and managers on some of the factors that contribute to job satisfaction. Regarding the perception of job satisfaction among their departments, several of the managers list the JSS factors that employees also rank highly in the survey. Meaningfulness, communication, and relationships with coworkers are all highly ranked by employees and are also stressed by managers as important to job satisfaction.

By finding the factors that matter most to employees, managers can do their best to maintain or improve upon those factors during the change process to please employees, even during times of confusion. With the pandemic, the change management process was rushed at the start, and the initial changes were often made without consideration of employees' wants and needs (Amis & Greenwood, 2020). However, several of the interviewed managers mention getting employee input and considering what matters to their subordinates – for instance, chances to socialize with coworkers in a casual setting.

Based on responses from the survey that indicate positive job satisfaction and agreement with the notion that managers have employees' interests in mind when making decisions, **H7 is accepted**. With further insight into the specifics of the change management process, stronger conclusions can be drawn in terms of how aligned managers and employees need to be for positive change management experiences. Nevertheless, the managers from this study certainly account for what their employees look for during the change process, and job satisfaction remains high.

H4: The McKinsey 7-S model is expected to be seen in the data collection more than the other models.

In terms of identifying different change management models, with only 30–60-minute interviews with managers and limited questions about the specifics of change management models in the survey, **there is insufficient data to accept H4**. However, there are certainly traces of the three identified change management models in the change processes conducted at the interviewed municipalities.

In terms of Lewin's change model (1947), parallels can be drawn between the feelings of discomfort that are typical in the unfreezing phase of his model and the feelings of employees during the change process in the workplace setting. This change process is different from other change processes in that the status quo is disrupted by external factors (Seeger et al, 2005; Amis & Greenwood, 2020), rather than by management creating the discomfort purposefully to initiate a change process (Schein, 1996). Regardless, the interviewed managers highlight that there has been discomfort with the change management process. The change phase in Lewin's model gives room for mistakes and redefinition of previous practices in new ways (Lewin, 1947; Schein, 1996). Multiple managers mention trial-and-error in their departments as changes are made, pointing to room for discomfort in the change process.

Another way in which Lewin's (1947) model can be seen in this context is the presence of role models. It can be helpful for employees to have someone to look towards during this change

process; these role models ease their discomfort as they shift towards the freezing phase (Schein, 1996). In the data collection process, employees indicate they have people to look to during the change process for inspiration. Additionally, managers mention acting as examples to their teams – in this case, they could serve as role models because they too are adjusting to new working styles. The changes brought on by the pandemic do not necessarily discriminate based on job title, so each manager also has had to adjust their working style and practices. The difference, however, is that during change management, managers should inspire employees during the process (Kotter, 1995), while the employees are following the lead of their managers.

H4 posits that the McKinsey 7-S model (Waterman, Peters, & Philips, 1980) would be the most present in the collected data given that the model has a more nebulous structure compared to Lewin's change model (1947) and Kotter's eight-step model (1995). As mentioned above, there is insufficient data to accept this hypothesis, but there is certainly evidence of this model in the collected data. For one, this model highlights the importance of shared values – there is a need for organizations to adapt their values when undergoing a change to maintain employee buy-in (Channon & Caldart, 2015). This aligns with what the interviewed managers state: that it is important to have common values and culture to guide employees. Building and maintaining these values, even during a change process, is crucial for success in their eyes. Furthermore, the staff dimension of the McKinsey 7-S model (Waterman, Peters, & Philips, 1980) is of particular focus to the interviewed managers. Repeatedly, they mention the importance of taking individuals' values and needs into consideration when making changes in order to facilitate the change process.

A key part of Kotter's eight-step model is the creation of a clear vision for the organization that gets communicated to the employees undergoing the change (Kotter, 1995). The first few steps of Kotter's change management model set the stage for a successful change process (Cameron & Green, 2009). To some extent, the interviewed managers identify this clear vision for how they go through changes. They also communicate the vision and give room for the employees to act on this vision, which are both elements of Kotter's change management model (1995). However, part of Kotter's model (1995), as well as Lewin's model (1947), is that the changes happen in a linear progression. Kotter's model is a clear set of eight steps that go in a sequence – and few of the managers identify a process that is happening in a clear, linear manner.

One way in which the McKinsey 7-S model (Waterman, Peters, & Philips, 1980) manifests in the municipalities' change process, more so than the other change management models, is that the change process is not stepwise, but rather quite fluid. This is due in part to the fact that multiple changes are occurring at once for many of the interviewed managers. According to the interviewed managers, employees feel comfortable with some parts of the change process, but other parts of the change process are uncomfortable. There is not much linearity mentioned by managers in terms of the change management process; perhaps this is because multiple organizational changes were happening at the same time.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the change in factors determining job satisfaction when the workplace setting changed. Additionally, this research aimed to explore if and how change management was used within Swedish municipalities to maintain job satisfaction in these two distinct working environments. Accordingly, the study was divided into two parts. The research questions were formulated around the key concepts of this thesis, which are job satisfaction, remote work, and change management. To answer these questions, the authors first distributed the survey within the selected municipalities to study what, if anything, has changed in the employees' perception of job satisfaction in remote and in-person work. Next, they interviewed managers from the same municipalities to answer how can employers find a balance between these differences to minimize job dissatisfaction and employee turnover rates when the workplace environment changes. Finally, they explored what role, if any, does the change management have in maintaining employee job satisfaction when changing workplace settings. These research questions were extracted into seven hypotheses to elaborate the relationship between the theoretical framework applied and the data collection from the survey and the interviews.

The first part of this study focused on the change in job satisfaction affected by the shift in work settings triggered by the pandemic. **The answer to the first research question** revealed that there are changes in how employees perceived the importance of factors that determine job satisfaction. Some of the factors that were previously identified as highly significant by Spector (1985) were defined as less important than remote work-related factors, such as transparency and communication, supervision, fringe benefits, and operating procedures. Employee job satisfaction was affected by the change in work setting, with flexibility seen as the most significant factor among the remote work factors, from the perspectives of both employees and managers. However, some of the highest ranked factors were not particularly affected by the change, such as meaningfulness of work and pay. Furthermore, the results also supported that Maslow's and Herzberg's theories were relevant and applicable in this thesis context.

The second part of this study aimed to uncover how Swedish municipalities adapted to changes in important factors pertaining to job satisfaction, caused by the change in workplace setting. **The answer to the second research question** is that different individual needs and factors of concern can be balanced through clear communication and giving attention to employees' input in the change process, mainly through change management. Employees who felt involved in the process of change had higher job satisfaction.

The above finding was related to **the answer of the third research question**, which is that there was, in fact, change management involved in the transitions in work settings undertaken by the Swedish municipalities. Even though specific models could not be fully identified, the identified aspects of change management facilitated the changes and helped maintain employee job satisfaction. Additionally, the findings also disclosed that the change process was perceived positively due to the alignment on what factors are the most important to job satisfaction between the employees and the managers.

6.2 Research Contributions

The findings of this thesis can be applied in practical and theoretical settings, and the model for data collection can be replicated in other municipalities across Sweden and beyond. As mentioned in Section 1.4, the scope of this study was kept quite narrow given time constraints. With more time and resources, more data can be collected from other sources, and given that the survey and interview questions were constructed based on previous research, this data collection method can be replicated.

The discussion of findings points to a few takeaways, summarized above in Section 6.1. These findings can be used by managers when grappling with future change processes, especially those taking place in public sector organizations or in the context of a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, if a new wave of COVID emerges and requires managers to make decisions about how to move workers back to remote settings, they have some tools to use at their disposal. Of utmost importance, based on the findings of the present paper, are to have clear communication between all levels of management and the employees, and to incorporate as much employee input as possible. Personal touches by managers, especially given the crisis circumstance of the change, were viewed favorably by employees, and could be replicated by managers in future comparable situations.

An additional contribution made in this paper is an extension and critical comment on theoretical models, namely Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), Herzberg's two-factor theory (1959), Lewin's change model (1947), the McKinsey 7-S model (Waterman, Peters, & Philips, 1980), and Kotter's eight-step model (1995). Each of these models were used and adapted to the context of this research, and then reflections were made based on their applicability and appropriateness given the setting of this research. Future research, as detailed below, can take into consideration the findings and applicability of these models in the context of public sector organizations undergoing significant changes during a crisis.

6.3 Future Research

Due to the limited time and resources, several limitations impacted this research. As such, the authors suggest several topics that could be expanded upon in future research. Because the research was limited to municipalities in Skåne, further research could investigate the impacts of remote work and change management on job satisfaction in other regions in Sweden. Additionally, comparing Swedish public or governmental agencies with those in other countries would produce compelling results, especially since Sweden handled the pandemic uniquely (Baral et al., 2021). Finally, it could be insightful to conduct the research on companies in the private sector considering the different combination of internal and external factors that impact operations and management.

With the data collected by the authors, several concepts would be interesting to explore for future research. For example, several managers mentioned the importance of the readiness of physical work settings to support new or hybrid working styles. The authors did not investigate further on this topic due to the scope of the research, but it would be worth looking into through an observational experiment. Another topic mentioned frequently by the managers interviewed was the relationship between demographical information (ages and family status) to the preference of working in office or remotely. The interviewed managers often described that older people and people who do not have many personal relationships with other social groups out of work tend to feel isolated and therefore prefer coming to office more. The samples for this study were limited so the authors were unable to focus much on the demographic as variables, so this topic could also be interesting for further research.

One of the inconclusive hypotheses, H5, remained unacceptable given a lack of data available to conclusively understand the impact of the crisis on the change management process. Future research that could comprehensively understand how the change process differed in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic compared to other settings would be of interest to researchers and could potentially lead to adaptations to existing change management models. Likewise, the phenomenon of the “Great Resignation” is only recently coming into focus in the news and in research (Iacurci, 2022). Understanding what causes employee turnover, if not job satisfaction, could be topical in the coming years.

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Appendix A: Survey Questions

41 Respondents (as of May 16, 2022)

Job Satisfaction in Remote and In-Person Work – Master’s Thesis in Management – Lund University

Dear Participant,

For our master's degree in management at Lund University, we are conducting a study on job satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of remote work on job satisfaction and how the perception of job satisfaction has changed after experiencing remote work. The collected data will lead us to understand the importance of remote work factors that managers should be aware and take into consideration, in order to maintain employee job satisfaction.

This survey consists of three main parts: socio-demographic questions, job satisfaction questions with a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), and a ranking of different factors related to job satisfaction. The survey should take around 10-12 minutes to complete.

The information provided by you in this survey will be used for research purposes only. It will not be used in a manner that will allow identification of your individual responses – all responses will be anonymized.

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study.

Best regards,

Preamsiri Treevisavakij, Vanja Frazier, and Sophia Shetterly

Section 1: Socio-Demographic Questions

1. How old are you?
 - a. 18-30
 - b. 31-40
 - c. 41-50
 - d. 51-60
 - e. 60+
2. What is your relationship status?
 - a. Single
 - b. Single, with kid(s) under 18
 - c. Single, with kid(s) over 18
 - d. Have a partner, no kids
 - e. Have a partner, with kid(s) under 18
 - f. Have a partner, with kid(s) over 18
3. What is your current position?
 - a. Staff
 - b. Manager
4. How long have you been working in this organization?
 - a. Less than one year
 - b. 1-3 years

- c. 3-6 years
 - d. 6-9 years
 - e. 10+ years
5. What is the name of your organization?

Section 2: Job Satisfaction Survey

Please select the statement from each question that comes closest your opinion. Each question has a scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (6).

Disclaimer: This survey is extracted from Job Satisfaction Survey by Paul E. Spector (1994).

- 6. I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.
- 7. There are not many opportunities for a promotion in my job.
- 8. My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.
- 9. I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.
- 10. When I do a good job, I receive the recognition that I deserve.
- 11. Many of our rules and procedures make it difficult to do a good job.
- 12. I like the people I work with.
- 13. I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.
- 14. Transparency and communication seem good within this organization.
- 15. Raises are infrequent.
- 16. Those who perform well have a good chance of promotion.
- 17. My supervisor is unfair to me.
- 18. The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.
- 19. I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.
- 20. My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape (bureaucracy).
- 21. I find I have to work harder at my job because the people I work with are not good at their jobs.
- 22. I like doing the things I do at work.
- 23. The goals of this organization are not clear to me.

Section 3: Job Satisfaction Survey (extended – remote work & change management)

- 24. It is my own choice to work remotely whenever I prefer in the week.
- 25. It doesn't matter where and how long I work, as long as I can deliver the result.
- 26. I feel more in control of my time since I can work from home.
- 27. I spend too much time working remotely per week, I want to work more in the office.
- 28. The company decides for me if I have to come to the office.
- 29. I feel trusted from my supervisor and organization to do my job.

30. Flexibility in work reduces my job stress.
31. Having more work-from-home days will increase my motivation to work.
32. I feel uncomfortable or anxious when new changes are proposed by management.
33. I have support from my managers during organizational changes.
34. I feel safe taking risks and making mistakes.
35. I have people to look up to in the organization as role models.
36. I have common values with people at my organization.
37. The structure of the organization is in line with the strategy of the organization.
38. I understand the expected outcome/vision of the organization when things are changing.
39. I feel recognized when I achieve something at the organization.
40. When undergoing organizational change, I feel like I understand why we are changing.
41. There is transparent communication about changes being made at the organization.
42. My values and interests are considered when the organization goes through changes.
43. The shift from in-person to remote work was successful overall.
44. I am receptive to changes proposed by management because I trust they have my interests in mind.
45. I am overall satisfied with my job.

Section 4: Ranking

Rank the following items based on most (1) to least important (12) in terms of your job satisfaction:

- Pay
- Promotion and growth opportunities
- Manager supervision
- Extra work benefits (transportation, employee discounts, etc.)
- Success recognized by managers and peers
- Dealing with bureaucracy and administrative tasks
- Relationship to coworkers
- Meaningfulness of the work
- Transparency and communication from the organization
- Flexible working hours
- Culture of trust in the organization
- Choice of working from home

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey. Your response has been recorded.

Appendix B: Survey Responses

Question	18-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	No Response
How old are you?	12	11	9	6	1	2

Question	Have a partner, no kids	Have a partner, with kid(s) over 18	Have a partner, with kid(s) under 18	Single	Single, with kid(s) over 18	Single, with kid(s) under 18	No Response
What is your relationship status?	11	4	18	5	0	1	2

Question	Manager	Staffer	No Response
What is your current position?	8	31	2

Question	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	3-6 years	6-9 years	10+ years	No Response
How long have you been working in this organization?	6	12	11	3	7	2

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Response
I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	0	4	4	11	14	2	6
There are not many opportunities for a promotion in my job.	0	5	12	7	8	2	7
My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	8	13	6	4	1	0	9
I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	5	11	8	7	1	1	8

When I do a good job, I receive the recognition that I deserve.	0	4	2	5	19	3	8
Many of our rules and procedures make it difficult to do a good job.	4	12	3	10	4	0	8
I like the people I work with.	0	0	0	0	20	13	8
I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	9	13	5	4	1	1	8
Transparency and communication seem good within this organization.	0	5	7	10	10	1	8
Raises are infrequent.	5	11	4	7	5	0	9
Those who perform well have a good chance of promotion.	2	6	11	9	5	0	8
My supervisor is unfair to me.	17	14	2	0	0	0	8
The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	0	6	4	9	11	3	8
I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	10	15	1	6	1	0	8
My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape (bureaucracy).	2	4	10	7	8	1	9
I find I have to work harder at my job because the people I work with are not good at their jobs.	8	12	4	4	5	0	8
I like doing the things I do at work.	0	0	1	4	21	7	8
The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	7	14	1	5	4	2	8
It is my own choice to work remotely whenever I prefer in the week.	1	6	5	8	6	5	10
It doesn't matter where and how long I work, as long as I can deliver the result.	1	8	3	10	8	1	10
I feel more in control of my time since I can work from home.	2	4	1	5	9	10	10
I spend too much time working remotely per week, I want to work more in the office.	12	13	3	3	0	0	10
The company decides for me if I have to come to the office.	3	3	7	7	8	3	10
I feel trusted from my supervisor and organization to do my job.	0	0	0	3	15	13	10
Flexibility in work reduces my job stress.	0	0	4	4	10	13	10
Having more work-from-home days will increase my motivation to work.	4	3	2	9	8	5	10
I feel uncomfortable or anxious when new changes are proposed by management.	5	10	8	6	1	1	10

I have support from my managers during organizational changes.	0	0	3	7	19	2	10
I feel safe taking risks and making mistakes.	0	1	4	12	14	0	10
I have people to look up to in the organization as role models.	0	1	7	11	9	2	11
I have common values with people at my organization.	0	0	1	12	17	1	10
The structure of the organization is in line with the strategy of the organization.	1	2	3	11	13	0	11
I understand the expected outcome/vision of the organization when things are changing.	0	1	3	11	15	0	11
I feel recognized when I achieve something at the organization.	1	2	3	12	12	0	11
When undergoing organizational change, I feel like I understand why we are changing.	0	1	5	12	12	0	11
There is transparent communication about changes being made at the organization.	1	4	6	10	8	1	11
My values and interests are considered when the organization goes through changes.	0	4	10	7	9	0	11
The shift from in-person to remote work was successful overall.	1	2	3	4	16	4	11
I am receptive to changes proposed by management because I trust they have my interests in mind.	0	1	7	10	11	1	11
I am overall satisfied with my job.	0	0	3	4	20	3	11

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Basic questions

- What is your title?
- How long have you been in this position?
- Have you experienced both in-person and remote work with this team?

Specific questions

- How did your office operate before the pandemic (March 2020 and before)?
 - How did your office operate during the pandemic?
 - How does your office currently operate? Do employees still have the option or requirement to work remotely?
- How did you roll out the change?
 - How was it communicated?
 - Did you get employee input before the change?
- Do you see any changes in job satisfaction?
 - What was job satisfaction like before the pandemic-induced changes?
 - What is job satisfaction like now?
- Do you think the change process was successful?
 - Was it well-received by employees?
 - Was there pushback/negative impact on job satisfaction?
 - Was there any impact on employee retention or turnover?
- What were some challenges during the change process?
 - For you as a manager
 - For the employees (from your perspective)
- Would you do anything differently in this change process?

Appendix D: Interview Coding

Participant ID + Municipality	Impacts of change on Job Satisfaction	JSS factor prevalence	Remote work factor prevalence	Change management mentioned
<p>Manager #1: Change Leader at Municipality A</p>	<p>High impact:</p> <p>Conflicting and confusing information about remote work at the start</p> <p>Lacking resources going fully digital; Personal connection lost</p> <p>Good to have the flexibility of going remote</p> <p>It's now too much digital and remote work</p> <p>Management doesn't try to solve big issues</p> <p>Impersonal check-in surveys from management</p> <p>Management decisions and meetings don't bring results</p> <p>Job satisfaction going up due to employees being together</p>	<p>Communication within the organization became harder; increase stress</p> <p>Operating change procedure is not clear</p> <p>Meeting people and maintain the relationship helps with work motivation</p>	<p>Lack of personal connection</p> <p>Lack of good office facilities</p> <p>Flexibility is good</p> <p>Working online hinders crisis solving</p> <p>Organizational trust</p>	<p>Office moving, not fully set up to facilitate the new working style</p> <p>Management is aware of the need for more communication but still not decisive about the change</p> <p>Management want input from employees, but focus on the wrong aspects</p>
<p>Manager #2: HR Director at Municipality A</p>	<p>Moderate impact:</p> <p>Employees adapted well</p> <p>Effective and productive working remotely</p> <p>Dealing with a lot of change as a young organization</p> <p>Every manager has unique decisions to make about employees</p> <p>Work-life balance was great with remote work, young families especially</p>	<p>Authorities were given to the managers to decide the work style for their teams</p> <p>People want their social life at the office</p> <p>Organizational justice: decision that everyone perceives as fair can lead to satisfaction</p> <p>Not meeting in real life hinders the</p>	<p>Some became more productive</p> <p>Flexibility of remote work gives people higher satisfaction, especially employees with young children</p> <p>Isolation gives older employees a hard time</p> <p>Organizational trust</p> <p>Employees are more satisfied with</p>	<p>The management contributed to change and organizational development</p> <p>Decentralize the power to handle the team during pandemic to the managers, who decide how their new working style will be</p> <p>The managers took employees' input to make decisions</p>

	<p>Older employees felt isolated</p> <p>Some employees not comfortable with change</p> <p>No micro-managing; work whenever but take rest</p> <p>Change more effective in person</p> <p>Individualistic mindset during pandemic due to individual goals</p> <p>Essential to have common goal during big change. Success for the whole and satisfaction for all.</p> <p>Combination of remote work and in-office work is the real challenge with satisfaction.</p> <p>Change is trial and error. No full control.</p> <p>Management inconsistent with change processes and confuses employees.</p> <p>Change is up and down, not linear</p>	<p>communication and flow of work that needs collaboration (e.g., development work)</p>	<p>life but care less about work</p> <p>Physical settings in remote work matter</p>	<p>Some people felt uncomfortable about the change and left (either from the pandemic or the policy)</p> <p>Having common goal for the team helps people come together more</p> <p>Change is constantly happening, so there is no control over it, but trial and error</p> <p>It's not possible to make everyone satisfied</p>
<p>Manager #3: HR Manager at Municipality A</p>	<p>Moderate Impact</p> <p>At the beginning it was difficult, but employees have adapted well</p> <p>Everyone has different needs and wants; difficult to balance</p> <p>Management has been quite flexible</p> <p>Importance of creating and strengthening connection and culture - even when online</p>	<p>Availability and confirmation from manager</p> <p>Building connection with coworkers; teamwork, team spirit and connection</p> <p>Some issues with some employees wishing more people would come into the office</p>	<p>Flexibility is the most important need</p> <p>Team has made a collective decision to go 50-50 remote and in-office</p> <p>If there are big meetings, the agree that everyone should come in</p>	<p>Initially change difficult because the remote tools were not available</p> <p>Uncertainty was difficult but made people want to stay in the organization</p> <p>Input from team valued</p>

	Initially no one wanted to work from home, but now they appreciate the flexibility			
Manager #4: C-Level at Municipality B	<p>Moderate Impact</p> <p>People adapted quite seamlessly; there were some regulations for office work</p> <p>Difficult to get to know new manager through Teams</p> <p>Some people were isolated working from home</p> <p>Changed how employees viewed a physical office space</p> <p>Importance of culture; employees worried about losing a good office culture</p> <p>Emphasis on the mission and purpose of the organization</p> <p>Don't fix what isn't broken. Be open to change and adapting to situations.</p>	<p>Importance of socializing with coworkers</p> <p>People come to the office now for their coworkers and for meetings</p> <p>Communication was clear and constant</p> <p>Managers check-in often with employees on well-being</p> <p>Meaningfulness of the work is now a big focus when dealing with the change</p>	<p>Physical setting needs to be changed to address needs and satisfaction</p> <p>Let people manage their time themselves</p> <p>No set policy of when people need to come in, flexibility</p> <p>People were worried they weren't going to get work done – the opposite was true</p>	<p>Now focusing on an activity-based workspace – changing how the office functions</p> <p>Clear goals</p> <p>Issues with change potentially came from multiple factors; remote work and changing management</p> <p>Frequent check-ins with employees to communicate change</p> <p>Projects get a lot of input and are tested often; employees appoint people who represent them in workshops</p> <p>Strong feedback loop</p>
Manager #5: C-Level at Municipality C	<p>Moderate Impact</p> <p>Remote workers more satisfied than in-office workers.</p> <p>Employees resistant to remote work. People are different – spectrum of different needs.</p> <p>Responsible for work environment, even when remote</p> <p>Need a remote work balance for employees and the organization.</p>	<p>Importance of communication especially with the new working style</p> <p>Satisfaction with the work itself is the most important</p> <p>Check-in regularly with the team</p> <p>Organizational justice: what is fair?</p> <p>50% work in office full-time due to better communication</p>	<p>Not enough office space</p> <p>Not 100% flexible – must be in-office two days a week</p> <p>Many introverted employees – remote work makes this more difficult</p> <p>Employees worked too much</p> <p>Managers need to trust employees; everyone wants to do a good job</p>	<p>Overall guidelines from the top</p> <p>Everyday check-in for communication; at first, people resistant. Now, appreciative.</p> <p>Make employees feel included in the change process</p> <p>Dealing with multiple change processes at the same time is difficult</p>

	SWOT analysis to understand and solve the issues Learning by doing.			
Manager #6: HR Director at Municipality C	<p>Moderate Impact</p> <p>Remote work more accepted and expected</p> <p>Initially just coped with the change; issues started to emerge</p> <p>Most employees have had a positive development</p> <p>Discussions on the impact of remote work on all employees</p> <p>Pushback came when employees felt isolated</p> <p>Lack of connection and openness in remote work, so some felt bad</p> <p>How to evenly distribute work among remote and in-office workers?</p>	<p>Employees know from experience that their manager has interest in their situation.</p> <p>Making sure check-ins are effective and personal</p> <p>Be open and honest with your employees</p> <p>Communication and easy-going conversations missing</p> <p>Having the change process be transparent will help with the satisfaction</p>	<p>Remote work allowed them to find better methods and practices</p> <p>In-office workers had more admin work to do than remote workers; fairness</p> <p>Flexibility and freedom to choose</p> <p>Hygiene factor: initially IT and digitalization needs are not being met</p> <p>Create more human interaction so people feel safe and trusted</p>	<p>Transparency is key</p> <p>Have several discussions with individuals throughout the process</p> <p>Some people could manage the change better than others</p> <p>Policies and guidelines for managers and employees to find solutions</p> <p>Department-wide discussions and decisions</p>