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The Dynamics of Multi-level Digital Transformation – Organisational Change Capability in Public Wellbeing Services



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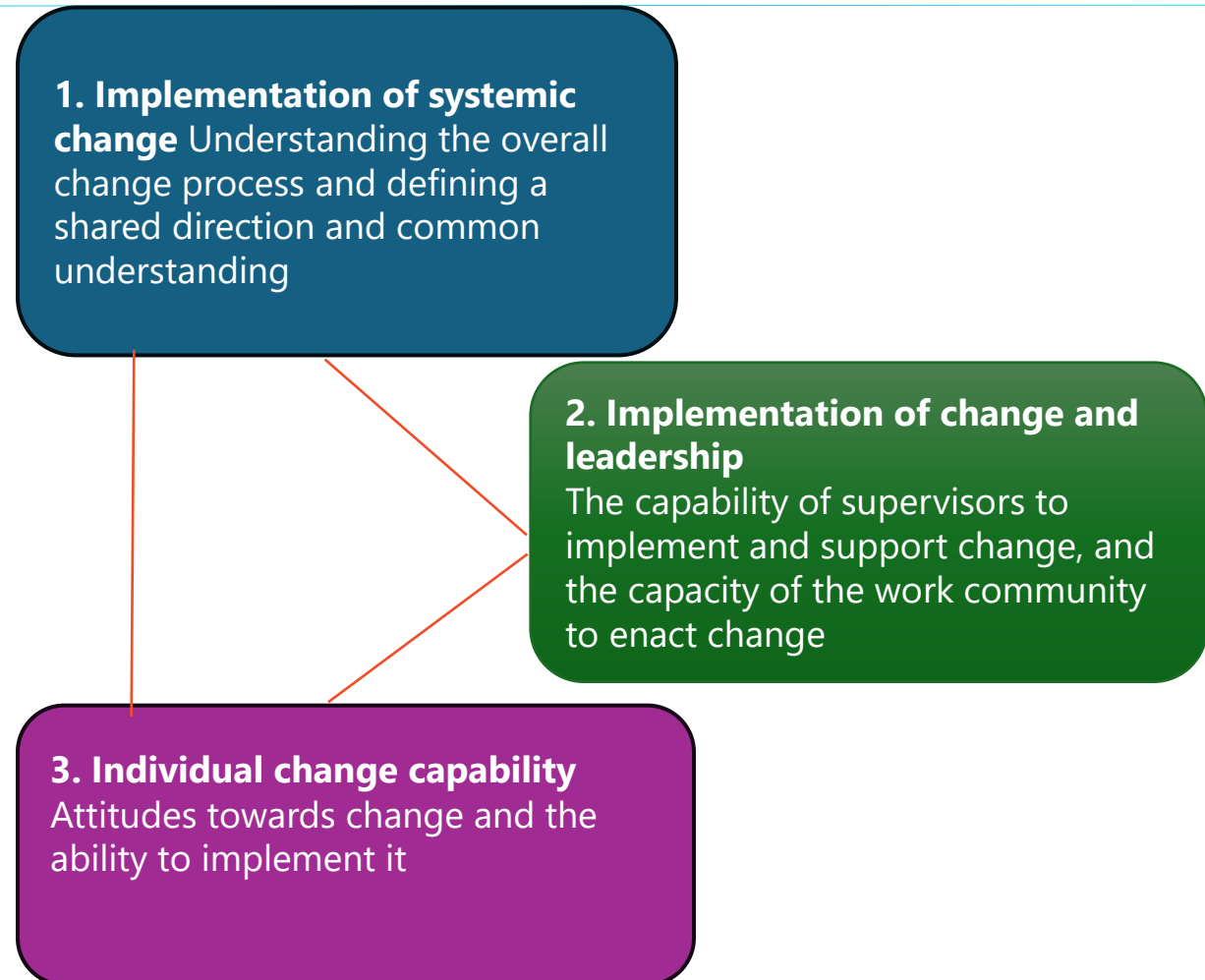
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Conceptualising Organisational Change Capability (OCC)

- Change **capacity** refers to rather stable factors such as resources, routines and structures, as well as the availability of additional resources needed in change (f.e. Meyer & Stensaker 2006)
- Organisational change **capability** mobilizes the capacity in practice: the ability to implement, sustain and lead change, but also learn from experiences and adjust to the changing requirements (f.e. Montreuil 2023; Karasvirta 2025)
- **Digital transformation in public wellbeing services** is a continuous, cumulative and multi-level change process, creating many forms of changes implemented simultaneously
--> new capabilities are formed in interaction (f.e. Kokshagina 2021)

Multi-level framework for OCC in this research

- Previous research (f.e. Montreuil, Karasvirta) suggests that organisational change capability requires interaction between systemic conditions and human experiences across multiple levels
- On this basis, this study develops a contextualised, theory-driven multi-level framework of organisational change capability for public wellbeing services
- The levels are not hierarchical, but dynamic and evolving, and they all include systemic and human centric factors, that need to be identified



Research questions

1. *What kind of systemic or human-centric factors support or slow down leading digital transformation in the wellbeing services county?*
2. *How do the levels of organisational change capability appear (and interact)?*

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Method and context

- Case study: Lapland wellbeing services county, in Finland
- 16 semi-structured interviews with supervisors and unit managers across social and healthcare, rescue, and support services.
- Theory-based coding in NVivo 15 using four analytical categories:
 - enabling/restricting factors
 - & systemic/human-centred factors.

WBSC Lapland consists of
21 municipalities

Central Finland
Central Ostrobothnia
Central Uusimaa
East Uusimaa
HUS Group
Helsinki
Kainuu
Kanta-Häme
Kymenlaakso
Lapland
North Karelia
North Ostrobothnia
North Savo
Ostrobothnia
Pirkanmaa
Päijät-Häme
Satakunta
South Karelia
South Ostrobothnia
South Savo
Southwest Finland
Vantaa and Kerava
West Uusimaa
Åland





RQ1: What kind of systemic or human-centric factors support or slow down leading digital transformation in the wellbeing services county?

	SYSTEMIC	HUMAN-CENTERED
Enabling	• Strategic and goal-oriented change management • Structurally coordinated and resourced change management • Participatory and systemic organizational culture • Profession-driven and work-life-relevant transformation • Client-oriented and equitable digital development	• Positive change orientation and perceived meaningfulness of change • Enabling use of resources and structures • Supervisors' competences in participatory and human-centred change leadership • Functional and learning-oriented work community • Profession- and user-oriented digital solutions
Restricting	• Lack of strategic direction and overall coordination in change management • Structural ambiguities and organizational fragmentation • Resource constraints • Gap between strategic intent and everyday practice • Digital system challenges • Complexity and burden of changing work environment • Cultural and institutional barriers	• Psychological and cultural tensions related to change • Reduced participation and agency • Challenges in change leadership and supervisory work • Resource and capacity constraints • Mismatch between technology and work practices

RQ 2: How do the levels of organisational change capability appear (and interact)?

Results: Organisational Change Capability Factors

- After analysing enabling and restricting systemic and human-centred factors of change capability, we found that levels of organisational change capability appears through following factors (that either support or slow down OCC in DT)

Table 2. Systemic and human-centred change capability factors (higher categories)

	SYSTEMIC	HUMAN-CENTRED
Organisational change capability factors	1. Strategic, goal-oriented change management 2. Substance-driven digital development 3. Coordinated structure 4. Inclusive culture 5. Sufficient resources 6. DT intertwining with the changing work environment	1. The significance of change 2. Participatory change management 3. Supervisors' capabilities and resources 4. Learning-friendly culture and climate 5. Estimated benefits of DT

Interaction between framework's levels

- **Organisational change capability emerges through continuous interactions between factors in strategic direction (macro), leadership and implementation (meso), and employees' everyday experiences and actions (micro).**
- At the macro level, OCC is reflected in strategic direction, overall coordination and the broader goals of digital transformation.
- At the meso level, it is visible in leadership, change structures, coordination of change, and organisational culture.
- At the micro level, it is reflected in employees' experiences, competencies, motivation, and the usefulness of digital change in everyday work and in clients' life.
- Interaction of factor of OCC- levels is not top-down or down-top process – it can be dynamic, asymmetric process f.ex. Between just macro and meso-levels or macro and micro –levels. → under research

Conclusion

- To conclude, this study shows that OCC, does not exist at just one organisational level. Instead, it emerges through the interaction of macro-, meso, and micro-levels through different factors.
- OCC in digital transformation requires both systemic capabilities (strategy, structures, coordination) and human-centred capabilities (participation, trust, agency, learning)
- Supervisors play a key mediating role by translating strategic goals into meaningful everyday practices.
- A learning-oriented and psychologically safe culture strengthens organisational change capability and supports digital transformation.



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Thank you!

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