

Finnish Institute of
Occupational Health

80 YEARS OF
WELL-BEING
THROUGH WORK

To trust and feel trusted? The role of frequency and quality of interactions for trust development amongst teleworkers

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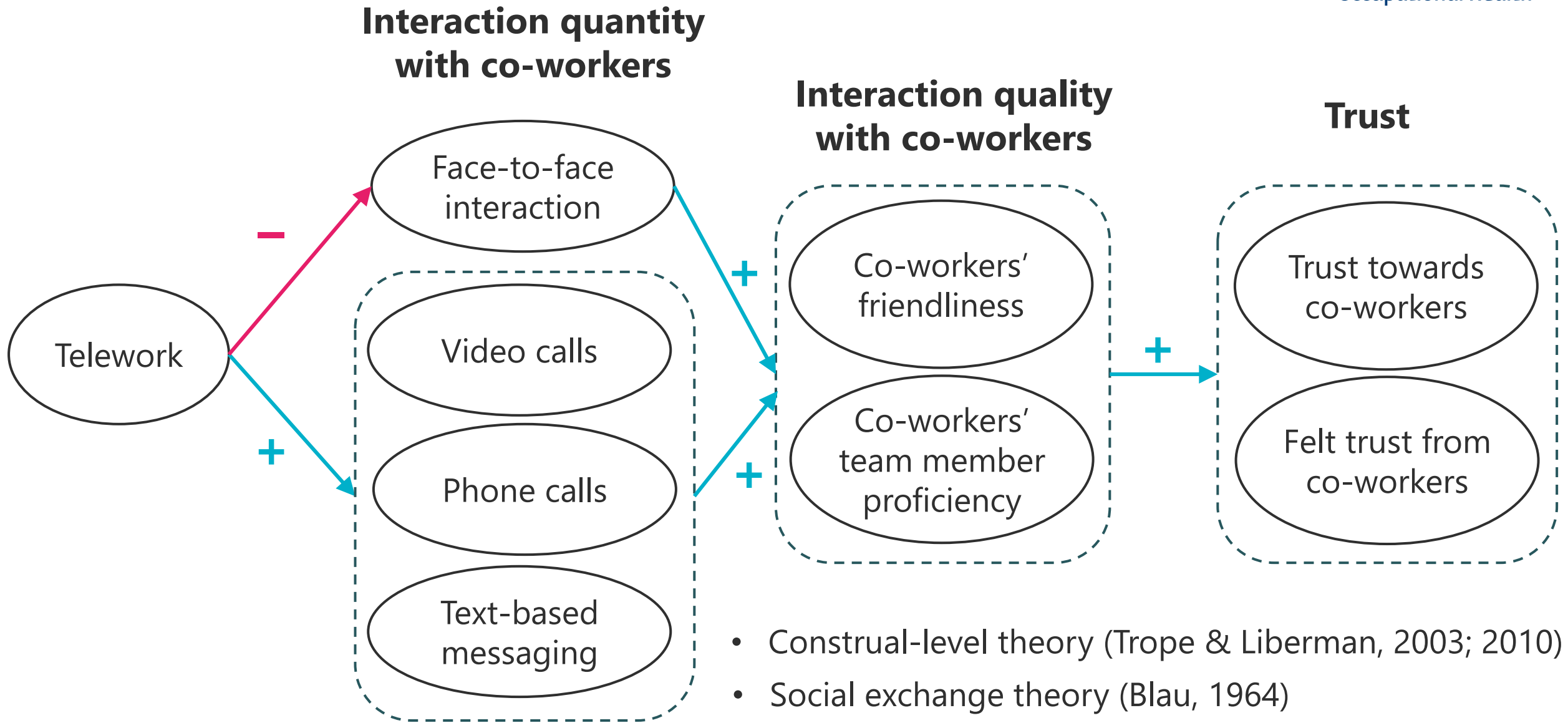


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Background

- Many have raised concerns that the physical separation amongst employees compromises workplace trust.
- Whether and why teleworking may harm or (even) promote trust amongst co-workers?
 - We focus on interaction quantity and quality as possible mediators between teleworking and trust.
 - Trust is essential at work as it is associated with, for instance, well-being, motivation, commitment, and performance (Dirks & de Jong, 2022)





Data

- Two-wave survey data collected from two Finnish organizations
 - Sample: responded and teleworked at both time points ($N=1203$)
 - Collected in November-December 2023 and May-June 2024 (time lag of six months)
 - Attrition analysis did not indicate substantial bias

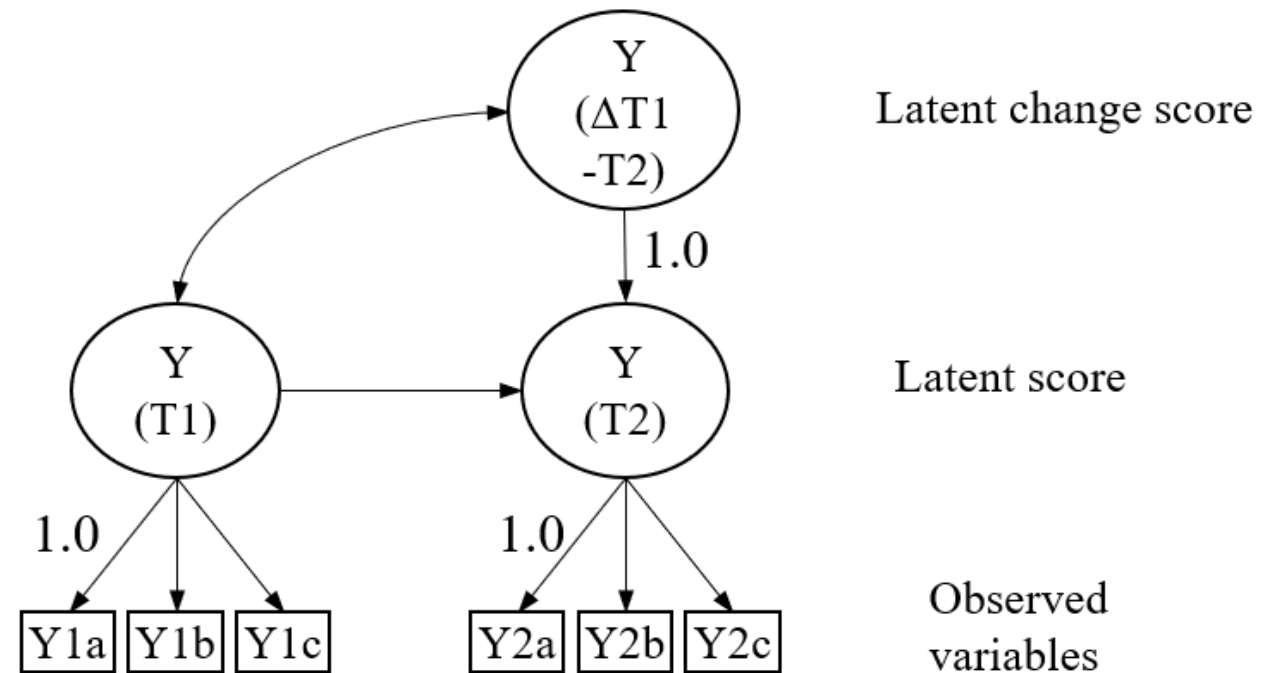


Measures

- **Telework** as proportion of working time (1=10%; 10=100%)
- **Interactions with co-workers** face-to-face/video calls/phone calls/text-based (1=never; 6=very often)
- **Co-workers' friendliness** (4 items, e.g. "My co-workers try to get me into a good mood; ask how am I doing; Hakanen et al., 2014)
- **Co-workers' team member proficiency** (3 items, e.g., "My co-workers communicate efficiently with me"; provide help to me when asked or needed"; Griffin et al., 2007)
- **Trust in co-workers** (10 items, willingness to e.g., "Rely on my co-workers' task related skills and abilities"; "Share my personal feelings with my co-workers"; Gillespie, 2003)
- **Felt trust from co-workers** (6 items; e.g., evaluations of co-workers willingness to e.g., "Rely on my task related skills and abilities"; "Share their personal feelings with me; modified from Gillespie, 2003)

Analysis

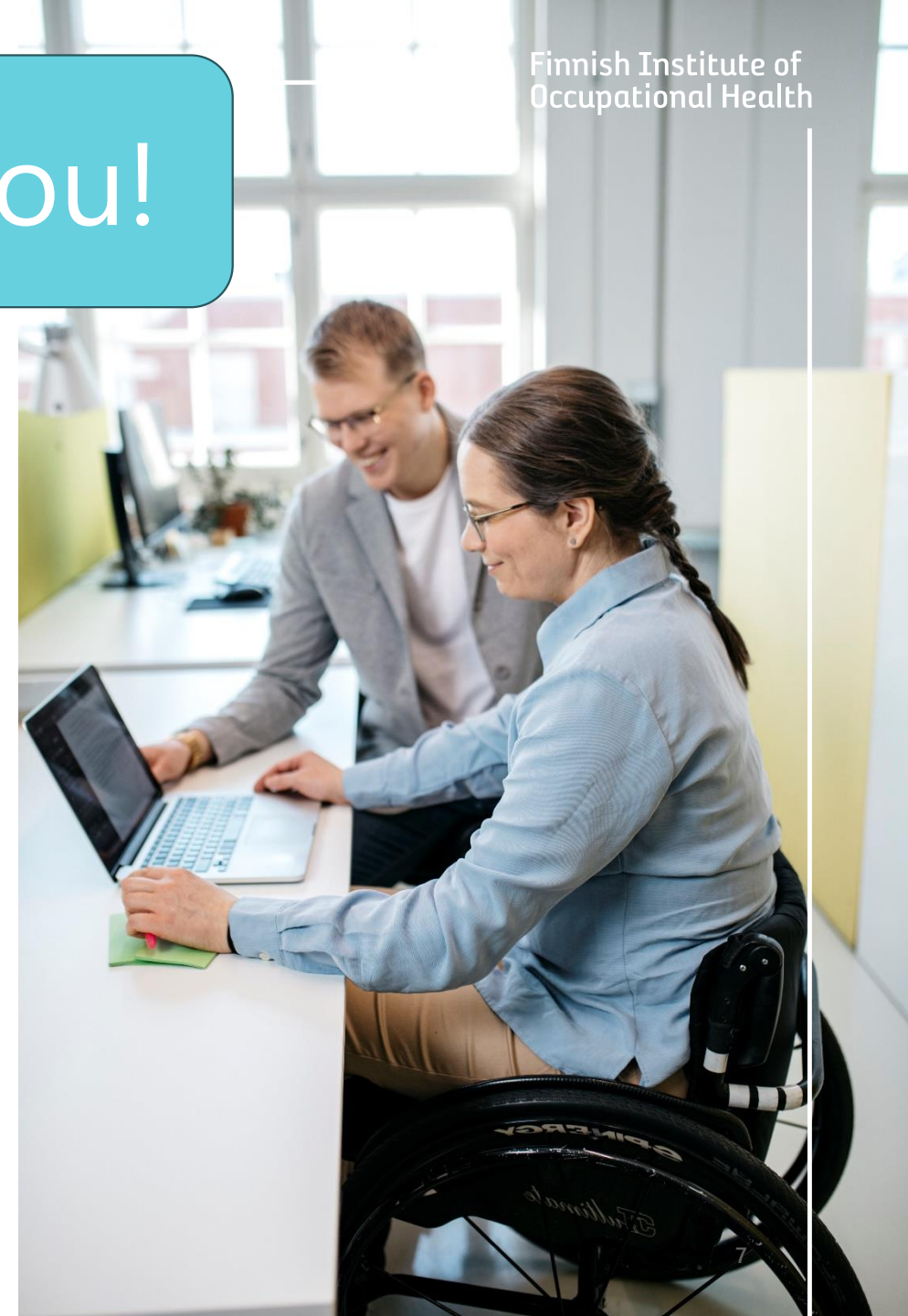
- Latent change score modeling to analyze changes across two time points (e.g., Henk & Castro-Schilo, 2016).
- Within-person changes and whether other variables predict between-person variability in such changes.
- Confirmatory factor analyses supported the hypothesized factor structure
- Strict measurement invariance over time was established (equal loadings and item intercepts and residuals).



Thank you!

Conclusions

- Preliminary evidence for teleworking rather harming trust than promoting it.
 - May occur due to less frequent face-to-face interactions, which may lead to less favorable perceptions of co-workers' friendliness and proficiency as a team member
- Teleworking potentially does not promote trust via increases in electronic interaction
 - Perhaps many interact via technology also when working at the office or workplace.
- The indirect effects were relatively small.



References

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