



Norwegian University of
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Transforming Change in Organizations by Projects

The Case of Trondheim-Klæbu Merger
Project

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Contents

Table of figures and tables	3
Abstract	4
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Methodology	9
Research method.....	9
Collecting data	10
Analyzing data	13
Methodological argumentation	14
3. Theory.....	16
Theoretical background and results	16
1. Projects for implementing transforming change?	16
2. Projects management challenges or shortages to implement transforming change processes	18
3. Project manager role in transforming change project? Needed skills and competences? challenges?.....	21
4. Transforming change project success factors	23
Theoretical simplification of conceptual model	25
New theory.....	30
1. Matching the project manager's leadership style to project type.....	30
2. The association among project manager's leadership style, teamwork and project success	32
3. Key competences for public sector project managers	34
4. Understanding project authority.....	36
5. In search of relevance: Project management in drifting environments	38
6. Do project managers practice what they preach, and does it matter to project success? ..	39
7. Working towards best practices in project management: a Canadian study.....	41
8. Perspectives on the formal authority between project managers and change managers ...	42
9. A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®GUIDE).....	43
10. Communication, dialogue and project management	45
4. Empirical data	47
Case description	47

The merger under municipality reform plan, and the governmental ‘recipe’	47
Merger’s lifecycle	49
Merger’s project management description	51
Related documents	52
Project plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities	52
Communication plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities	53
The letter of assignment to fylkesmannen	56
Project plan for implementing the reform plan in Sør-Trøndelag 2014-2017	57
Good advices for building a new, merged municipality	58
Establishing new municipalities and counties	60
Interviews	63
1. Project management discipline as a beneficial tool to implement merger process	63
2. Contextual considerations	65
3. Project managers’ roles and skills	74
4. Communication and information	79
5. Change management framework	82
6. Post-project phase	85
5. Discussion and analysis	87
1. Project management as a right tool to implement transforming change process	88
2. Contextual considerations	93
2.1 Culture	94
2.2 Technical and project skills	98
2.3 Understanding the change strategy	100
2.4 Leadership engagement and support	101
2.5 Post-project phase in transforming change projects	103
3. Project manager in transforming change project	108
3.1 Role and required skills and competences	108
3.2 Project manager Authority-Political influence	114
3.3 Communication - Implications for project manager	123
4. Change management framework	131
6. Results	136
Limitations and further work	142

Acknowledgements	142
References	143
Words and phrases	146
Appendices	147

Table of figures and tables

Figure 1 Focused area in this thesis	6
Figure 2 Transforming change project conceptual model.....	25
Figure 3 Simplified Transforming change project conceptual model.....	29
Figure 4 Milestones and processes in municipal and regional reform, Kummunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet 2017, pg. 5	48
Figure 5 Merger's lifecycle	50
Figure 6 The merger project organization: political and administrative organizing of the project, Project administration, 2017, pg. 3	51
Figure 7 Merger's communication map.....	81
Figure 8 Establishing new symbol: Post-project requirements might emerge any time or anywhere in transformed organization.....	106
Figure 9 Mapping consequences of project management's limited authority.....	119
Figure 10 Communicative courses by merger's project managers.....	128
Figure 11 Improved and final version of Transforming Change Project conceptual model	138
Figure 12 Conceptual framework – integrated model for change, Cowan-Sahadath, 2010 pg.399	152
Figure 13 Contingencies influencing the interior process dynamics of a project, Engwall, 2003, pg. 805.....	153
Figure 14 The integration framework, Zink, et al., 2008 pg.531	153
Table 1 First and second rounds of interviews	12
Table 2 New theoretical sources.....	30
Table 3 Leadership competencies, Derived from Muller & Turner, 2007, pg. 23	31
Table 4 Competences of public sector project manager, Jalocha, et al. 2014 pg. 254-256	35
Table 5 Relationship between using PM practices and project's success	40
Table 6 Loo's (2002) major findings.....	42
Table 7 Action plan for communication, Project administration, 2017, pg.	55
Table 8 Trondheim-Klæbu milestones, Project plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities, Project administration, 2017, pg. 6-7	148
Table 9 Trondheim-Klæbu progress plan 2017-2018, Project plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities, Project administration, pg. 8-9	149
Table 10 PM practices – Knowledge area, process group, and individual frequency of use, Papke-Shields, et al. 2010, pg. 655	150
Table 11 Significant relationships between pm practices and success dimensions, Papke-Shields, et al. 2010, pg. 658.....	151

Abstract

Transformation is an inevitable fact that any organization in any industry or sector might need to undertake. Very many reasons could trigger or force organizations to plan and execute transforming change processes. Project management is a legitimate alternative which could be employed for leading such processes. There are advocating and opposing arguments to explain how good project management could handle managing a large and complicated change process.

The departure point for this thesis is my specialization course's project which focused on stated area, and strived to answer how project management could serve implementing a transforming change process, and what project manager role, needed skills, contribution or challenges could be. By performing a literature study, I established that project management could be used to manage organizational change processes, but with some considerations. I also concluded that project manager is a significant actor, but might lack some managerial and behavioral skills to meet transformation's requirements. Figure 3 demonstrates my theoretical results.

This thesis is built upon mentioned theoretical fundament and tend to examine those conclusions in a real setting. Paper presents a case study of a transforming change project in form of a municipal merger. Through interviews by representatives from merging parties and some documents related to the case, I examined how my theoretical results could represent or explain case's experiences and performance. My findings suggest that project management could lead the change process reasonably while it is important to establish an integrated project management system to assure performing vital PM practices. In addition, findings recommend that organizational culture, assuring clear understanding of change's visions and strategy, and leadership involvement and support, are significant success factors or considerations that project management should take into account in transforming change projects. Data analysis could not establish a solid suggestion for post-project requirements in organizational change, but enabled me to improve my primary discussions. Moreover, findings establish project manager's role as a central actor who need to show both technical and managerial competences, have sufficient authority to keep his or her focal role, and could utilize communication to influence project's path and destiny. Lastly, findings suggest that change management framework is need to support project management by providing a 'change management office or center of excellence' based on contextual and project management' characteristics and requirements. There are two certain limited areas in thesis which will be addressed later.

1. Introduction

This work is my master thesis, to complete my master degree in 'Project Management'. It is worked and prepared for educational purposes, developing myself to establish my understanding of how project management discipline could fulfill managing a transforming change process requirements, and role of project manager in such large change projects. By my personal interest, I intended to learn how good or sufficient project management could contribute implementing a large change process, and what would be project manager's role, needed skills, and challenges, in such a project. To do the research, I have worked in form of two separate projects; First, I did a literature study as my specialization course's project, in fall 2016. And second project is current paper focusing on an empirical case, which is built upon the specialization course's project, as its theoretical foundation.

I found the idea of applying project management to manage large change projects interesting, as this concept deviates from what project management is normally expected or supposed to perform. One can imagine that a large change or a transformation in an organization, could concern many organizational dimensions and levels. Involving many individuals who will meet change's personal consequences in 'future', would be a complicated and messy process or processes. And then, employing project management concept which is fundamentally concerned with rigid planning and organizing to keep 'the project' controllable within time, cost, and scope limitations, to transforming change process with mentioned features, sounded challenging and interesting to me. From another perspective, large change processes or transformations are inevitable part of businesses in any industry or market nowadays. Therefore, I found the notion worthy and fruitful to work on, as gaining understandings could be productive and relevant for many. *In the literature*, there is a well-established concept claiming that managing organizational change as a complicated, multi-dimension, context-dependent, and messy, is possible through using project management discipline (Pellegrinelli & Bowman, 1994; Cicmil, 1999; Gareis, 2010; Cowan-Sahadath, 2010; Stummer & Zuchi, 2010). However, there are an increasing trend of criticisms among researchers who question projects' capability to cope with transformation change requirements; showing their disagreements by either targeting bureaucratic nature of project (Partington, 1996) (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009), highlighting project's isolation from context which disables the unite to understand and embrace contextual characteristics or requirements (Engwall, 2003) (Parry, et al., 2014), signifying project's rigid and narrow concerns about project management practices such as planning, organizing, managing, controlling, etc. (Parry, et al., 2014) (Shaw, 2016), or questioning project's temporal nature (Winch, et al., 2012), to confront *the idea of employing PM for managing change processes* with organizational change characteristics and requirements.

By explanations above, I would like to explicitly clarify that described area in focus, *is* in fact where project management and change management concepts overlap. It is rooted in both project and change management streams of literature, addressing how project and project manager could practice project management discipline in a change process which exhibits different characteristics and requirements than what project management assumes. To be clear, I am focused on how organizational change processes could be properly managed through employing project management as the discipline or the way project management deals with different

matters. In other words, I am not studying the project structure or the way that project is truly managed (through detailed PM knowledge areas, tools, techniques and methods) in a change process, but project management's entire concept or framework and its applicability as a tool in managing a transforming or organizational change project. Based on defined standpoint, project manager's role, required competences, and possible shortages or challenges in managing a transforming change project, will be accordingly and carefully focused. The definition of my focused area illustrates also that I do not go into change management area or concept. Change management is a massive body of knowledge itself which I am neither really interested in, nor have sufficient time to enter. Therefore, I strived to draw my research borders keeping my focus within project and change management overlapping area of knowledge, not going towards how project's detailed practices would operate in managing a transforming change project, nor going towards how change management discipline analyzes managing a transforming change project. Figure 1 illustrates my focused area.

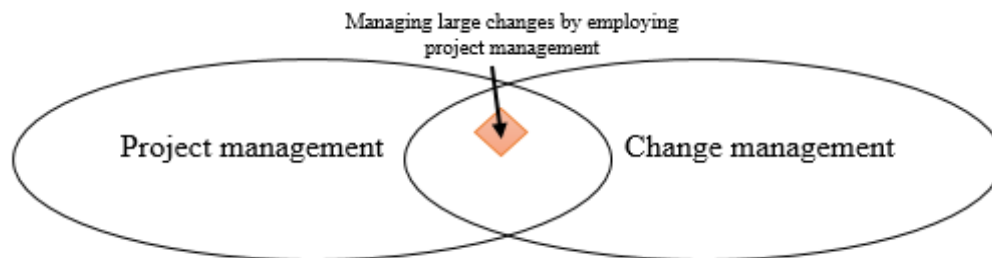


Figure 1 Focused area in this thesis

Therefore, as my explanations show, this thesis is built upon my attempt to answer two research questions:

1. How does project serve as a right tool for implementing transformation change in organizations, what are the challenges?
2. What is the project manager actual role in transformational change projects and how she or he could contribute the process? Which skills or competences are needed?

The research questions have been the core of my specialization course's project. Developed theoretical study from the course forms the first theory block of this thesis. It means that final product of my former project, the conceptual model, will be examined in a practical setting in this thesis. In terms of empirical case, I will use one municipal merger project that I chose to study for my purpose. The merger project is occurring between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities in Sør-Trøndelag county, in Norway. Analyzing empirical data will establish my practical understanding of employing project management to manage a transforming change project and project manager's role in such a project. Eventually, more theoretical sources will be used to explain and analyze empirical data where my primary theory could not accommodate sufficiently.

The results of analyzing empirical data will be finally used to improve and progress my conceptual model of transforming change projects. In fact, analyzing the merger project, would disclose how different aspects of the model ‘works’ in accordance with reality of the case. It will highlight what elements in the model could be theoretical representatives of merger project aspects, and additionally introduce new considerations that project management should be aware of when leading transforming change projects. The model therefore, becomes modified to suggest how project management serves managing a transforming change process, what important considerations should be taken into account, what project manager role (and authority) is in such a project, and what skills and competences he or she should be equipped with. As stated earlier, large planned changes in form of transformations are inevitable part of every industry or market reality. Different reasons could cause or make companies’ leaders deciding to execute transforming change processes to enhance businesses’ performance in various dimensions. And often, project management is the tool that companies choose to perform desired changes. Therefore, in think my focus could relate to very many cases where a planned transformation is practicing through employing project and project management. In other words, this thesis is talking to organizations who tend to perform large-scaled change processes by using ‘project’, and project managers who will lead such processes. **But**, because of the case that I chose, an extra attention is towards public transforming change projects. Merger’s nature and contextual characteristics added a new dimension to my focus, additionally. It not only disclosed change project aspects, but also showed how project’s political and public nature could affect project management operations. This matter widened model’s perspective specifically towards transforming change projects in public sector that are not addressed in theory as much as ‘transforming change projects’ with often industrial sense. The political challenges faced by project managers in public transforming change projects, is one significant area that merger case brought into discussions behind the model. Moreover, mentioned dimension created several questions about a public project manager authority that I could not find answers theoretically. This opened a new avenue for further studies to establish or develop answers for those project managers who stands in a public change project, get challenged by political implications in terms of their limited authority, and do not know what to do. Therefore, mentioned area could show the room for project management theory to develop new theory for helping project managers in public change processes.

Throughout the thesis, Chapter 2 explains applied method to gather and analyze empirical data. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical part of thesis. It consists three specific sections. Firstly, I will present a summary of theoretical background behind the conceptual model. Secondly, in order to simplify the conceptual model theoretically, I will develop possible argumentations and illustrate simplified model for further work in thesis. And finally, I will introduce and summarize the new theory I chose to supplement and support my discussion and analysis with. In chapter 4, the empirical data will be given. I found it necessary to divide the chapter into three major sections, to ease the reader’s understanding of merger case. Case description part explains the overall features and facts about the case. In document part, I address six documents related to the merger that I found useful for analyzing data. And eventually, the interviews’ content will be categorized and summarized into six main themes. Chapter 5 will present my discussions and qualitative analysis of data, classified into four major themes. I should mention that discussion themes are

basically based on my conceptual model elements and aspects. However, the empirical data introduced a new dimension that I did not think of or include in model, and signified some elements of model more or in another perspective, than what I perceived and established in my model; Project manager authority is the new theme based on empirical data. Communication and its implication for project manager, and project management practices, are two elements in model which got signified by empirical data in a different mindset compared to their original theoretical roots. Chapter 6 will present my final conclusions which will be employed to the model to revise and improve it, and eventually my explanations to reflect how I used the theory I read to establish such conclusions.

2. Methodology

As stated in introduction chapter, this thesis tends to investigate how project management discipline could be a right tool to implement transforming or large-scaled and multi-dimensional change processes. In addition, it addresses ‘project manager’ role, needed skills and competences, and possible challenges to lead such processes.

As stated earlier, I did a literature study on mentioned focused topics, in form of my specialization course’s project, in fall 2016. The project started with the idea of how large-scaled organizational changes might be carried out through projects. The idea targets the notion of overlapping change management and project management concepts when a broad multi-dimensional change is voluntarily decided to transform an organization. The two research questions leading me through the literature study were (1) How could project serve as a proper tool to implement transforming change in an organization? What are the challenges? (2) What is the project manager role in such a change project? How might s/he contribute to the transforming change project success? Consequently, having a transforming change scope in focus, I studied two major theoretical streams of project management with focus on change projects, and change management.

In my theoretical study, I chose to concentrate on 17 selected sources. I explored seven main themes which were essential fundamentals for me to discuss and develop my answers to the research questions. In other words, analysis of those seven issues enabled me to build up my argumentations, and eventually my conclusions. The conclusions are manifested in my final conceptual model of transforming change projects (figure 2). The model embraces my important findings and will serve as the first building block for this thesis. I must mention that for further work in the thesis, I have simplified the model slightly to make it more appropriate to be tested in a practical setting. The simplification is done in two dimensions: theoretical and methodological. The theoretical aspect is explicitly explained and discussed in thesis’s theory chapter, and the methodological simplification is stated in current chapter.

Research method

Having mentioned *theoretical basis*, the next step for writing my thesis is investigating and understanding how my conceptual model of transforming change projects would comply with practical settings. For doing so, the qualitative research strategy will be applied. This research strategy focuses on an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research which signifies the generation of theories (Bryman, 2016). The major steps to do a qualitative research is suggested as: devising general research questions, selecting relevant site and subjects, collecting associated data, interpreting collected data, conceptualize and theoretical work including narrowing specification of research questions and collecting further data, and finally writing up conclusions (Bryman, 2016). Stated definition of qualitative strategy and its steps, explains what my research targets to achieve; having two research questions in focus, collecting and interpreting data, associating empirical data to my theoretical suggestions, and establishing conclusions which could contribute existing theory. Regarding the research design, I will use

case study research design which basically requires the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case (Yin, 1994). Through procedures of case study design, I will try to investigate ‘how’ (Yin, 1994) project management and project manager could be associated with leading a change process. More specifically, at first, I intended to test my model by studying experiences of few project managers in transforming change projects. In the process of searching for relevant cases, I learned about Norway’s governmental reform program that encourage municipalities in Norway to merge with neighbor communities to make fewer stronger municipalities able to offer enhanced living opportunities for all inhabitants. Municipal reform projects sounded interesting to me. By getting my supervisor advice, I started to think that I could perform a comparative case study (Bryman, 2016) to discover how two mergers have used project management to do their change processes, and what considerations have accompanied the projects. For one of the cases, I contacted the municipality that I live myself in, Levanger in Nord-Trøndelag. For the second case, I visited Trondheim municipality for hearing what opportunity I have for research. In case of Levanger, I found that municipality had negotiated to merge with the neighbor municipality, Verdal. However, I learned that in this case, only a disagreement had been achieved through several primary discussions, and the change project could not get started. At the same time, by contacting Trondheim municipality, I found out that municipality is in middle of merging with one neighbor community, Klæbu.

Trondheim-Klæbu merger case is a transforming change project comprising two very different organizations to transform and unite together. Contact persons in Trondheim that I talked to primarily, were positive to my project and further conversations continued. By having the early talks, I learned that considering my transforming change project conceptual model, the case might not explain every step of the model as project’s implementing phase is just started. In other words, I found that project’s initiation and planning/preparation phases are almost completed, project organization was established, and implementation has been just starting. In the meanwhile, I also learned that there is a governmental ‘recipe’ containing different types of guidelines for merger projects in Norway that municipalities mainly follow to carry out transforming change projects. I thought that governmental guidelines for planning and implementing transforming change projects, could contribute to complete Trondheim-Klæbu merger’s overall picture for my model to be compared with. By having this overview of the case, I decided to start interviewing as soon as possible to get a better knowledge of project and my opportunities for the thesis. To sum up, I established to use a single case to study.

Collecting data

Among six typical sources of evidence introduced by Yin (1994), I utilize majorly *interviews* which enable me to gain insightful information by focusing directly on my topics, and *documentation* which gives me stable and exact source of data to supplement the interviews (Yin, 1994). To perform the interviews, I used semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2016). The interview guide is available in appendices. To devise my interview guide, I tried to list major themes in form of questions, to cover my main topics. By doing so, I felt confident in interview sessions since I knew that questions cover the topics, and I had left sufficient room for interviewees to structure their replies. Yin (1994) explains that in semi-structured or open-ended interviews, besides asking respondents’ opinions about events within the topic(s), one may also

ask respondents to propose their own understandings into specific occurrences and these propositions might be used then as the basis for future inquiry (Yin, 1994). Considering the characteristics of the case, I did include some questions to gain my interviewees' perception for future of the case.

Starting interviews with the first two interviews at Trondheim municipality, I learned that mergers' project managers are the chief executives of two municipality, with long and broad administrative experiences. The project group members have also administrative or advisory positions, with long experience in two organizations. This meant to me that case's project management group or package are well- anchored and experienced persons who know line organizations very well, and therefore have potentially both overall and precise insights of the project they are running. Another point I learned was that early negotiations started in 2014, project's preparing or planning phase started in 2015 and lasted for almost 2 years. This long planning or preparation phase comprised major activities as coordinating, managing, attending different meetings, and make different agreements. By these conditions for the merger case, I thought about two important aspects:

Firstly, I perceived that project's long period of initiation and planning is extensive enough for project management to experience different aspects of this merger, even though the implementation is yet to be done. Project management has been involved from very early steps, and involved with different tasks so far. Considering their organizational positions and project's which requires mostly managerial coordination and facilitation, I think quite similar project tasks are waiting for them, in implementation and closure phases. **Another** point for me was interviewees' professional education and experience. They are highly experienced managers in public and municipal section, well-aware of line organizations' work processes. This was a valuable asset for me as I feel that not only their experiences in this merge could provide needed insights, but their vision and expectations for coming phases could be also informative and valid. Based on mentioned matters, I decided to focus majorly on what has truly happened as I think it could be a rich representative *period* for this merger process so far, and what is supposed or expected to be done further. **In addition**, chosen parts of the recipe is also a portion of my empirical data to supplement interviews. Chosen documents that are prepared based on experience and knowledge gained from similar transforming change projects, would shed some light over the whole process, from initiation and planning phases to implementation and closure. In total, I found the case reliable and valid to my purpose, even considering that implementation and closure are yet to happen in future. Therefore, I decided to stick to the case of Trondheim-Klæbu merger and try to learn as much as possible about the case, by thinking of my conceptual model.

As stated earlier, interviewees started with two persons at Trondheim city hall, and through snowball form of sampling (Bryman, 2016), I established contact with further relevant people. Next two interviews followed by interviewees at Klæbu's municipal hall (table 1). By interviewing four people in project management and project group level, I learned that the merger affects six municipal areas or functions who are actual actors for merge to be realized. In fact, these areas are functions where merger's sub-projects will be taken place. I also learned that

some of functional services are trying to be merged even before implementation phase. This point alerted me to think about talking to someone who has already experienced the change in any functions. It could be very beneficial for me to get some operational insight of what transformation might mean for an employee affected by project, and how the process has taken place. I searched about this matter and ended up with having an interview with a municipal manager from Klæbu, who has recently started working in Trondheim municipality. By approaching him, I learned that this job change has not been directly as an agreement within the transforming change project, but a usual recruiting in Trondheim. Even though his appointment has not been as a part of merger, his involvement in merger's preparation and planning phases before leaving Klæbu, could provide me practical insights.

Through process of interviewing, I also learned about the support framework (change management framework) for the merge project. In fact, merger's project management has been and will be benefitting from the county governor's (Fylkesmannen) advisors and KS representatives, to refer their challenges and questions regarding different themes and stages of project. This issue could be responsive to two main themes of my conceptual framework; change management framework and change manager contribution to transforming change project. Having this matter in mind, I took the step forward to approach a relevant person in the county governor office in Trondheim (Sør-Trøndelag Fylkesmannen). I carried out an interview with one of the advisors who has been involved with this case from the first step. Interviewee clarified what they have been observing on the case, which aspects they have been helping the project with, and what they expect in the project from county level perspective. By spending a period of time to *process the data* (documenting and interpreting) which I will explain just after table 1, I performed my second round of interviews with two of six interviewees; one from each of line organizations. I had some follow-up questions and wanted to get updated with the case.

Table 1 First and second rounds of interviews

Position	Date of interview	Interview length	Location
Adviser – Central project group member	15/02/2017 04/05/2017	98 min 52 min	- At Trondheim Rådhuset (city hall) - By phone (Round 2)
Senior adviser – Central project group member	15/02/2017(R1)	54 min	At Trondheim Rådhuset (city hall)
Chief administrative officer – Project manager	20/02/2017(R1) 03/05/2017(R2)	57 min 35 min	- At Klæbu Rådhuset (city hall) - By phone (Round 2)
Political secretary – Central project group member	20/02/2017(R1)	60 min	At Klæbu Rådhuset (city hall)
Municipal manager	14/03/2017(R1)	84 min	At Trondheim Rådhuset (city hall)

Senior adviser – One of the merger’s advisors at Fylkesmannen	24/03/2017(R1)	87 min	At Fylkesmannen i Sør-Trøndelag (county governor office)
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Analyzing data

By performing the interviews, for *processing data*, I started to transcribe the contents, analyze data ‘generally’, establishing *six main themes*. The themes became established **primarily** based on my conceptual model elements as ‘Relying on theoretical strategies’ (Yin, 1994), and **secondarily**, based on categories of data which did not have representative elements in the model as ‘Developing a case description’ strategy which served as an alternative when theoretical propositions are absent (Yin, 1994). Therefore, two sets of themes became developed, one set based on my former theoretical background in terms of model’s different elements, and a new set based on what empirical data disclosed to me. One again, besides the interviews contents, I chose six documents related to merger including two guidelines, three different plans, and an assignment letter. As I chose to include one major guideline prepared by the ministry, I checked with interviewees, asking about how close they think the governmental recipe is with this specific merger practice. My interviewees generally agreed that the recipe is quite close to the project, but with some slight differences because of project’s specific context.

As the most obvious difference, they referred to the fact that by this merger, Klæbu’s organization will be disappeared by incorporating into Trondheim, while the recipe imagines a stop for all (both) merging parties and a new for all of them. Interviewees described this matter as ‘uniqueness of the case’. However, through my conversation with interviewee at fylkesmannen, I learned that this is a typical solution for such cases where one party is much bigger and more professionally organized than the other. This is an effective and efficient way to merge, by building new organization on the organization which is already established and operates. Considering two stated opinions, I could understand that Trondheim and Klæbu consider their situation as a unique context, however, I think this feature would bring a unique description of merger and it does not necessarily mean that their project is unique itself. In addition, interviewees stated that project management and project group try to follow the recipe as far as they can, since they find it helpful with advises, and they even wished for more comprehensive and timely access to guidelines. At the same time, they are aware that recipe does not tell everything about their specific case, and therefore, they try and use it in their own way with modifications when needed. The documents I used, are originally in Norwegian and I should have chosen them carefully since I had to translate them in English, considering the time limitation I had in addition to the fact that I am not an advanced Norwegian speaker.

Defining the themes and structuring data, I began to analyze the data based on my theoretical discussions behind the model. At the same time, I captured analysis’s highlights which could not be well- supported or discussed by my existing theory, either because the point was new to the model or because it was emphasized by the case beyond former theory thinking or scope. The major themes that lacked theoretical support were associated with project manager’s leadership skills, communicative strategies, and authority, merger’s PM practices, and change management

framework reflecting project and change roles collaboration. Among new sources I managed to go through, I found 9 articles and a book chapter (10 new sources) related to areas that I needed insight from. Thus, I took mentioned sources as my new theory to support and develop my thinking and analyzing merger's data. As mentioned earlier, I performed the second round of interviews to get updated with merger's status, clarify what I was not clear about, and ask my follow up questions. Eventually, through analyzing the empirical data using former and new theoretical contents, I developed my conclusions that are manifested in final and modified model.

Methodological argumentation

In this section, I will clarify the elements and areas of the model (figure 2) that I will majorly focus in my thesis. The argumentation here is related to one of two simplifying dimensions that narrows examination of conceptual model down. Theoretical simplification will be presented theory chapter, and here the methodological simplification will be discussed.

For simplifying the model methodologically, I had to look at the case in terms of analysis possibilities.

As it is already explained in current chapter, merger case between Trondheim and Klæbu is initiated almost three years ago. The implementation phase of project is just started and is expected to last for two years ahead, while closure is expected to be reached before January 2020. Mentioned conditions of the case, is the first point narrowing my model's focus. In other words, obviously, the initiation, preparation and planning phases which are truly passed, will be the major focus. In stated phases, I will employ the model on what practical steps are done in merger, what considerations or issues have surfaced, how project management has functioned and what challenges are met, and how change management framework has operated.

Nevertheless, it doesn't mean that I would overlook implementation and closure, or even post-project phase phases of the model. As argued in methodology section, since my interviewees are well-anchored and highly educated and experienced managers or advisors, I believe it will be also valid to benefit from their expectations or propositions for coming phases in project. Therefore, the implementation, closure, and post-project ideas will be also investigated, but not as focused as initiation and planning phases. Of course, selected guideline document from recipe, will supplement my discussions towards implementation and closure phases.

Regarding the elements of conceptual model, I will now clarify which factors will be focused more based on what case's characteristics gave me possibilities to investigate. Regarding the **business environment level** in conceptual model (figure 2), both leadership engagement and change strategy factors will be asked and tried to get analyzed. It is actually quite interesting to examine how well top leaders (who are political and administrative project managers) shown their involvement and support. One can say that as top managers are responsible to lead the project, they just naturally *must* involve and support the merger. I think this is reasonable to think so, but I believe this adds another important responsibility or burden to them from project management point of view. Considering the political and public nature of merger, defining and aligning project's strategy to organization strategies could be automatic in a sense, as public organizations could have much clearer and well-anchored strategies than private organizations.

However, translating and communicating change's strategies towards target groups is more relevant to my theoretical discussions, and therefore will be more in focus. Injecting change's goals and strategies to line organization in such a long project lifecycle could be interesting to look at. Regarding **organization performance or daily business** ground of the model (figure 2), the factors related to culture, and technical and project skills, will be investigated. Based on merger's nature and context, perhaps culture will be more important and therefore highly focused, while employees' technical and project skill would play a smaller role and therefore less focused. Not to forget, merger's features made training element fully irrelevant to look at. I mean similar municipal processes has not left any thinking for training during project's lifecycle. In terms of **project management framework** in model, all its dimensions ranging from project management basic practices to its connections downwards and upwards, will be assessed (majorly in terms of initiation, preparation, and planning phases). In addition, **project manager's role, skills, challenges, and contribution** will be the biggest focus in this paper, and new dimensions or signified considerations stemmed from the case, will be added to this topic. Moreover, regarding the **change management framework**, I will focus on merger's specific support framework, which I generally perceived it as a change management framework suggested by my model. I say generally because the change management framework in the case *does not* have acting authority, but is only advisory party. This makes the case different from my model prerequisite assuming change manager/actor could act in transforming change project to contribute project management when project manager could not fulfill needed requirements. Advisory role of change management framework in merger causes that change managers' helping with 'readiness for change and implementation' factors (figure 2) could not be focused. Anyhow, I think merger's change management framework actors are well-equipped with supportive knowledge, since they have long experience not only with such change processes, but also with other municipal dimensions and tasks that could bring a question or dilemma for the merger (operating in political and public context) any moment. By mentioned argumentation, I will focus on examining model's change management framework and related actors in merger's setting. It means that I will focus on what interviewees think about change management helping with translating change strategy downwards to the project, and handling potential resistance or emergent modifications. Eventually, regarding **stabilizing the organization phase**, I will pay attention to information that recipe and interviewees could give me, in terms of post-project considerations. Clearly, I could not expect to gain solid and sufficient data on that, but this does not hinder me trying to gain their interviewees' assessments.

Just to highlight again, 'training' and 'readiness for change and implementation' factors in conceptual model, could not be focused in my thesis analysis. To this end, I found it unnecessary to have them in my simplified model which will be focal base for data analysis. Thus, I just omit them to keep my focus for this thesis, and clarify reader's perspective.

3. Theory

Theoretical background and results

This chapter presents the theoretical part of my thesis. It is divided into two sections. In first part, I will present theoretical background of the conceptual model. I will also present theoretical simplification of model, as mentioned in methodology chapter. In second part, I will present the new theory I will use in my discussions.

For the first section, I decided to structure my summary in four major themes which cover all discussed aspects of conceptual model.

1. Projects for implementing transforming change?

To investigate and assess project management appropriateness for managing transforming change processes, some important characteristics of transforming change process must get perceived. Change by nature is subjected to uncertainty and modifications. Transforming change processes are multi-level, multi-dimensional, complicated and messy (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010). This means that a high degree of uncertainty and potential rooms for emergent requirements and adjustments during the change process, could be expected (Pellegrinelli & Bowman, 1994). The uncertainty often could bring about anxiety, confusion, business disruption, and temporary loss of productivity. A transforming change process involves very many individuals in different layers of organization. Those individuals are actual contributors of the change who would sacrifice daily and personal benefits to help the change (Cicmil, 1999) (Kotter, 2007). Therefore, they must understand crystal clear change's vision and objectives, and what tasks they should perform to support the process. Since many of change objectives are to be achieved in future, meaning invisible, late, or even no personal gain at all for people involved, a degree of resistance is reasonable to be expected. Mentioned characteristics develop understanding of transforming change projects' width and depth, and transforming change process's dependency on context they operate in. Mentioned descriptions created the understanding of a transformation process or project, and therefore, makes the first building block of my conceptual model. Mentioned understanding is influential on how the elements are perceived and placed in the model.

To answer my first research question, I analyzed different arguments discussed by selected theoretical sources, and made my conclusions. Major supports that I utilized their works to build my associated arguments, are shortly given here. Pellegrinelli and Bowman (1994) argue that project serves as required separate and dedicated organization which could bring needed and framework to provide structure, capacity, and needed skills for managing transforming change process. Project management could remedy the disability of organization's current work paradigm to manage change. This overview introduces project and project manager as the new vehicle and driver for change management. Project is small and temporary which makes it flexible beyond current procedures by crossing organization's internal and external borders (Pellegrinelli & Bowman, 1994). Project management basic tools and methods, such as work breakdown structure, networking, plans, schedules, risk management, budget management,

resource allocation, stakeholder management, and learning lessons, are also highlighted as the elements to create a good framework for planning and implementing complicated transforming change process. I considered Cown-Sahadath's (2010) work as well, who acknowledges a mature project management methodology as an essence to manage and implement organizational changes, and highlights required integration of change and project management disciplines. Author addresses the complex nature of organizational change which is subjected to anxiety, confusion, and disruption in organization, by project capabilities to plan, manage stakeholders, monitor and report, communicate, implement, sustain, and learn lessons of change. Cumming & Worley (2005), and Gareis (2010) look at organizational change as a set of sequential planned actions that each can be managed by a project. Turner & Müller (2003) say that projects are more than what classic definition of project management suggests. They highlight that projects are subjected to uncertainty, need for integration, and urgency which make them suitable to manage endeavors with similar feature. Relevant to change concept, authors suggest project as the agency for change and agency for resource utilization. It means that projects as small and temporary organizations, have naturally little inertia and this is advantageous to overcome high inertia of functional organizations. This perspective recognizes projects being flexible and able to meet change uncertainties and complexity. They also highlight project's advantageous features for managing transforming change process as being goal oriented, involved with interrelated activities, time limited, unique, and multifunctional. Other advocates also recognize project management proper to manage transforming change, but with some cautions (Cicmil, 1999) (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009) (Parry, et al., 2014) (Shaw, 2016). Stummer and Zuchi (2010) acknowledge the legitimacy that project and project manager role bring to change process. They mention that a formal and dedicated project manager not only leads and facilitates the change implementation, but s/he also creates legitimacy for change project in line organization.

By mentioned major discussions, I established that transforming change in an organization is a unique phenomenon and should be well-perceived, accepted, planned, implemented, and followed up. Therefore, project as a separate and special unit with its project management competencies and techniques could provide needed structure, capacity, and skills to manage the change. I thought that the very basics of projects (including tools and methods for planning, organizing, allocating resources, stakeholder management, risk management, control and report, and communication management, etc.) provide needed unit of planning, organizing, and implementing transforming change process. It means that project management provides the *framework* with mentioned elements for complicated transforming change. This framework could simplify change's messiness through structuring process so that it become a manageable phenomenon. I agreed that project's flexibility and capability could work across organizational inner and outer boundaries to facilitate the change process which is an essential requirement of implementing change process.

Altogether, I established that project management rules guide and implement change processes by a staged mindset. Each project's uniqueness and novelty give the organization flexibility and

adoptability to new change initiatives. Assigning a legitimate and formal project manager to lead the change process was another point I found fruitful to employ project management to lead a transforming change process. In fact, a dedicated project manager not only lead and facilitate the change implementation, but s/he also create legitimacy for change project. To reflect my argumentations, I got partially inspired by Cown-Sahadath (2010) framework, figure 12 In next section, I will present my discussions on possible areas where project management could fail managing a transforming change process.

2. Projects management challenges or shortages to implement transforming change processes

Looking from opposing perspective, through my literature review, I tried to highlight trends of disagreements to assign project management for managing transforming change process. I focused on arguments in my literature that claim project and project management is not the right or proper tool for implementing change to some degree, or even at all. By doing so, I developed my posture towards how project could *sufficiently or insufficiently* implement transforming change processes. Main issues discussed by writers, were largely rooted in project's bureaucratic constraints and narrow planning/controlling mechanisms that do not leave enough room for innovation and flexibility (confronting unstructured nature of transforming change), lack of understanding and considering contextual dependency and issues, incapability to embrace possible after-math consequences of transforming change processes, and potential shortages in project manager behavioral, managerial and leadership skills and competences. Here, I present major discussions that I utilized to make my argumentations.

Pellegrinelli & Bowman (1994) consider two limitations for project management meeting transforming change requirements. They state that an organizational change process gets often done through a set of projects within the 'change project', and project management could fail to understand and integrate interdependence between those sub-projects. Secondly, they highlight emergent modifications that count as an inevitable feature of change, since conditions may change constantly. Consequently, they suggest project planning and implementing methods relying heavily of fixed goals, boundaries, and timelines, as opposing to need for flexibility and room for modification when change gets implemented (Pellegrinelli & Bowman, 1994). Parry, et al. (2014) pinpoint the major problem for project management is to manage contextual issues. They argue that projects' performance is affected by both projects' self-features and contextual characteristics like overall organizational culture, and this issue challenges project management to assess project's achievements, and seek for potential adjustments and remedies as many alterations and modifications might be expected during the process. They highlight that project management considers project isolated with narrow constraints, and question the ability of rigid project management discipline to overcome those alteration and modifications. (Parry, et al., 2014). Engwall (2003) states that looking at project isolated by project management discipline, shows project management's ignorance of project's dependency on self- and contextual conditions. This is project's disadvantage of being narrowly blinded. He calls project managers

and organizations to consider organization's history, current operations and conditions, and future ideas, when establishing or running projects. Partington (1996), Schifalacqua, et al. (2009), Cicmil (1999), and Engwall (2003) also refer to contextual issues highlighting that project by nature does not properly associate to its context. Cicmil (1999) specifies the need for understanding behavioral aspects of change processes which could be challenging for project management to embrace as project learn slowly and forget quickly. **Just to mention here,** *contextual issues or considerations* in my discussions, clearly include a few specific elements. I decided to elaborate these certain elements under the last theme in current section. The reason is that they are commonly argued as *success factors*. Therefore, I refer the reader to "Transforming change projects success factors" theme in current section, for finding which certain contextual factors are focused in this paper.

Partington (1996) challenges 'bureaucratic' nature of project management. He opposes such feature with organizational change characteristics, and conclude that two concepts are incompatible. He states that project management could cause the change process gets weighed down with too much bureaucracy which might reduce needed agility, and could be seen as unfitting in organizational paradigm and may be resisted. Shaw (2016) introduces three sets of dualities between project and change management, showing that project management is an insufficient tool for managing a transforming change process. Three dualities include project needs to be free from distractions whilst it needs to engage stakeholders, tight governance of project whilst governing all change sub-projects, and focusing on achieving project's objectives whilst project success means differently by different stakeholders. Zink, et al (2008) highlight that regarding change initiatives, both objective and subjective dimensions of change must get integrated. According to authors, project management could lack required psychological fit in the change process, and therefore, unable to carry out the change completely. Stummer & Zuchi (2010) who study change roles in organizational change projects, explore project shortages associated with roles. They argue that project manager might lack some essential managerial competences for managing change, and therefore, they suggest project manager is only a building block of organizational change roles who is responsible for the content of change project work (this matter will be assessed inclusively in next section). The last significant criticism targets predefined project lifecycle specifying a definite end, while transforming change process is expected to show its actual results sometime after 'completion'. Organizational change is a more 'becoming' process (Winch, et al., 2012) and its actual end cannot be predetermined in the way project is characterized. From another angle, if there is an end to transforming change project, how and when project's success can be evaluated.

To develop my argumentations, I could understand, and agree that project's bureaucracy, narrow planning and controlling mechanisms which keep the project within cost-budget-deliverable triangle, might not fully embrace change project's contextual matters. Transforming change is large, deep, complicated, self- and context-dependent and therefore, I established that project management's narrow and rigid disciplines, comprise an important area that project management

could face challenges to manage and fulfill a transforming change process. In other words, I stated that basic elements of project management including formalized project management procedures, planning techniques to gain defined objectives within project's constraints, project system for allocating resources, control cycle, and project's systematic evaluation between activities and events (Partington, 1996), could not react properly to described change requirements. Thus, I suggested that project's isolation (Engwall, 2003) creates a significant dilemma for managing transforming change process, and there is a concrete need for connecting transforming change project to context. By doing so, contextual issues could be better understood and responded. In addition, benefitting from Winch, et al. (2012) discussions, I agreed that transforming process is a 'becoming' process *to a degree* and conscious efforts are needed to meet post-project possible requirements. I said 'to a degree' because I believed that project management concept should not be loosely disturbed, but an extra consideration must be added. I established that that we might not fully achieve organizational change's results once it 'completes'. Transforming change in organizational structure for example, requires people to come into positions in the new structure, start to work, face potential problems and so on. How could we then see the results when none of these have happened by completion date? Therefore, I recognized that classic expectation of project lifecycle must be modified. In my model, I considered a post-project phase as an 'enough time' extra to project stages, for transforming change project's results to be realized and stabilized. Change's pre-required objectives by top management could be expected to be achieved at the end of project, but this does not necessarily mean that 'change objectives' are accomplished. I concluded that 'becoming' nature of change process should be considered by project management responsible to lead the process. Mentioned issues and discussions, and two theoretical tools by Zink, et al. And Engwall (figure 14 & 13 appendices) were used when I developed my model.

Putting my argumentations about advantageous and disadvantageous aspects of project management (theme 1 & 2) together, I discussed and concluded that project is generally a beneficial tool for implementing transforming change, but perhaps with some limitations. In other words, I argued and suggested that project is an applicable approach to implement the transforming change, however not sufficiently. I suggested that some considerations must get thought-through when applying project management to lead a transformation; considerations relating to project's bureaucratic constraints, possible shortages in managerial and leadership capabilities, project's narrow planning and controlling mechanisms, and contextual requirements. Additionally, I established that it should be understood and accepted that organizational change has a continuing nature with indeterminate lifecycle like a 'becoming process', whilst projects have naturally distinctive lifecycle (Winch, et al., 2012). As stated earlier, the conceptual framework by Cowan-Sahadath (2010) (figure 12, appendices) was one important tool that I got inspired for developing my model of transforming change project. Mentioned conclusions became manifested in the model (figure 2).

3. Project manager role in transforming change project? Needed skills and competences? challenges?

My second research question, as mentioned earlier, was about project manager's role, his or her contribution and challenges in leading a transforming change project. I thought that project manager could have a determinative executive role in change project and it is essential to learn where project manager locates in change process, which responsibilities she or he has, what shortages she or he might show, which considerations must be thought-out, and which potential rooms exist for improvement. I went through chosen literature and developed my discussions. I will briefly present theoretical points I used, and illustrate my argumentations afterwards.

Regarding the project manager role in change projects, Pellegrinelli and Bowman (1994) distinguish two specific roles in change projects: the client and the project manager. They state that project manager is one who assures effective project execution, manages day-to-day project's tasks, and report directly to the change client. I should mention that authors look at the client as guardian of new vision, prevent operational difficulties, and support change completion. I found the discussion by Pellegrinelli and Bowman (1994) as a loose definition and believed that assigning project manager to execute the project and report to the client, might isolate project manager from context and limit his or her understanding of change visions. I thought that project manager is one important actor among others in a transforming change project, as some of writers pinpointed. Turner and Müller (2003) agrees with Pellegrinelli and Bowman that project manager is the chief executive (planner and doer) of the temporary organization, and agent of client. Additionally, they assign a bit more managerial work to project manager in change projects to *formulate objectives and strategy for the project, relate those objectives and strategy to parent organization goals and strategy, and motivate resources for achieving project's objectives* (Turner & Müller, 2003). This view of project management conveys a more balanced managerial mindset where project manager deals not only with technical duties, but also with project's environment and conflicts. Gareis (2010) considers several other change roles in addition to project manager role. Change roles comprise change owner, change manager, change agents, change management consultants, and change team. Winch, et al (2012) recognize project manager as the change agent, and claim that project manager role cannot be temporary like what project management dictates. But it is rather a role that must *remain* since change project cannot have a defined end, and it is a more 'becoming' phenomenon. Stummer & Zuchi (2010) clarify change and project roles. They define change roles as being responsible for overall change while program/project roles have responsibility for the change program/project. Among the change roles they introduce, change manager would be responsible for *overall change*; meaning overseeing the transition between change processes, securing continuity, but not responsible for the content of work.

When it comes to hesitations related to project manager capabilities to manage a transforming change project, project's contextual issues surface again. Considering that transforming change projects are highly context and self-feature dependent, continuous changes and modifications are

needed based on stakeholders' emergent requirements. Organizational resistance is another possible issue in transforming change projects that requires project manager to respond. Here discussions are around potential shortages of project manager's skill and expertise to handle such contextual matters. There is a general agreement that project manager as a classic planners and doers, do not fulfill managerial and leadership requirements of organizational change project. The need for *change manager skills* in addition to project manager's competencies, is highlighted consequently. In this overview, change manager is hand in hand with project manager and tries to help him or her to understand and translated change strategies and vision, handle contextual and behavioral issues and so on. Crawford & Nahmias (2010) also pinpoint project management methodology deficiency to educate project manager for handling behavioral and organizational issues. They claim that based on contextual situation and change characteristics, an appropriate combination or a fruitful partnership of change and project manager knowledge is required to have an optimal technical and managerial competence mixture. Shaw (2016) and Crawford & Nahmias (2010) also suggest that project manager's skills and competences need to be combined with change manager's managerial skills. Schifalacqua, et al. (2009) emphasize on this suggestion by claiming that change leadership and project management practices are tremendously complementary to plan and execute a change project.

To sum up, I learned that my reviewed literature distinguishes project manager's role as *one of the actors* contributing to implement change process. There is a general agreement that project manager do not fulfill the managerial and leadership requirements of organizational change project. The argument is that project manager as a classic planner and doer is not able to handle required behavioral and contextual issues. Some of the writers have emphasized the need for change manager skills, additional to project manager competencies.

Based on stated theoretical discussions, I established that in transformation change project, considering change's scope and depth, project manager role must be thought-out beyond the project management borders to relate to bigger picture of context. Change project's contextual conditions and characteristics must be considered when describing project manager role and responsibilities. She or he is responsible to plan, organize, manage, and take care of project's technical tasks to achieve change objectives. Additionally, she or he must engage to more managerial work as well. As it is already discussed, transforming change projects are highly context and self-feature dependent. Continuous changes and modifications are needed based on stakeholders' emergent requirements. Since transformations might result is changing power definitions in organization, and require associated individuals sacrificing some personal benefits, organized resistance is quite possible. Having stated issues, I found it reasonable to look at project manager as the one who is not only involved with classic project management responsibilities, but, s/he must actively understand the whole organization structure and culture, make communication, understand and convey visions of the change, motivate individuals to come out of comfort-zone, and remove day-to-day obstacles. These are more managerial responsibilities that project manager might be not skilled for (Turner & Müller, 2003). I

concluded that bringing change management capabilities, could supplement project manager's competences and help him or her to overcome mentioned shortages. Having change manager role and framework between higher level of organization and project management, could remove misunderstandings, facilitate information exchange, and clarify what top management actually needs. This does not mean that change manager will isolate project manager to refer him merely to project management duties, but change manager serves as a support for taking care of managerial responsibilities while project manager is well-connected to context.

4. Transforming change project success factors

This section, as the last theme covering theoretical background of my conceptual model, presents briefly some of important elements in model which are derived and inspired from my literature sources discussing change project's success factors. I found them essential to have as they are related to my main discussions and could disclose some of my thinking in the model.

Top management engagement is a predictable factor which contributes transforming change project success. Pellegrinelli and Bowman (1994) highlight that one vital factor for organizational change to succeed is that top management understand and accept required change. This will facilitate change processes and signal employees that the change is something needed and could reduce potential resistance, as a result. Cown-Sahadath (2010) adds to this point by saying that effective, committed, and competent leaders who show strong and visible sponsorship, are required in organizational change projects. Schifalacqua, et al. (2009) and Parry, et al. (2014) also, pay attention to importance of competent, committed, and involved leadership to support change project in *difficult times of the change*. I agreed that top management support would demonstrate change's importance and feasibility. Their support must be shown verbally and incorporated in activities (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009). Zink, et al (2008) suggest that objective and subjective dimensions of change should be integrated to succeed, and therefore an appropriate level of leadership to facilitate communication and information exchange should be in place to manage the integration. Cicmil (1999), Cummings and Worley (2005), Parry, et al. (2014), Cown-Sahadath (2010), Crawford and Nahmias (2010), Partington (1996), and Engwall (2003) emphasize on the need for contextual understanding and considerations in change projects. They suggest that understanding of project's context including culture, emotional energy, structure, capabilities, behaviors, norms and values, could affect project's success. Engwall (2003) emphasizes that it is important to consider inner and outer aspects of project and analyze the internal processes associated with its history, organizational context including organizational norms, values, and routines for example, and future ideas. He suggests that societal factors associated with players and organizations including their experience and knowledge base, affect the dynamics of processes in project. The other vital success factor is to assure that change's vision and objectives are crystal clear to individuals involves (Kotter, 2007) (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010). More specifically, Kotter (2007) introduces eight steps that leaders must do in right order to succeed: 1) Establishing a sense of urgency (2) Forming a powerful guiding coalition (3) Creating a vision (4) Communicating the vision (5) Empowering others to

act on the vision (6) Planning for and creating short-term wins (7) Consolidating improvements and producing still more change and (8) Institutionalizing new approaches. Gareis (2010) refers to competent resources, top management commitment, aligning new developments to overall strategies, and defining change's boundaries and dimensions clearly. Schifalacque, et al (2009) notify that in addition to benefitting from project management disciplines, user involvement, and clear requirements will contribute to change project performance. Shaw (2016) acknowledges that one significant criteria for succeeding organizational change, is to use combination of change and project management perspectives. He highlights that change management's managerial skills must be added to project managers' classic skills. Stummer & Zuchi (2010), similarly, state that change and project manager role descriptions should be defined based on their tasks and responsibilities. The expectations of roles must be understood and crystal-cleared. They additionally suggest that a multi-role assignment structure could positively simplify and facilitate the resource management and reduce the messiness. One important success factor mentioned by some of writers is related to communication. Stummer & Zuchi (2010) call for a well-established or structured communication system. Zink, et al (2008) also signify communication and individuals' engagement as an important success factor in organizational change projects. Schifalacque, et al (2009) highlight the need for honest and solid communication of change information. They add that visualizing change process, efforts to make change last, and aligning current system to the change, are all helpful. It is related to Kotter (2007) suggesting that change visions should be conveyed and understood. Communication's obviously is one of the most dominant ingredients in transforming change project success.

Having mentioned discussions, I concluded that understanding and including project's context including culture, structure, capabilities, behaviors, norms and values, seem to be quite significant for succeeding change projects. I believe these issues could be very influential in front-end stage of project, as well as during the implementation phase. I mean understanding project's context might be a rich source of information for managers who aim to create a change. In addition, I found it vital to have top management's support because it could demonstrate the importance of change as something possible which is truly happening. The support must be shown verbally and incorporated in activities of top managers (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009). Regarding project manager competences, I suggested that project managers' skills need to be combined with change management's managerial skills since project managers being educated and experienced by basic PM disciplines or often engineering background, might perform fail to handle change's uncertain and unstructured nature. Therefore, I established that finding a proper combination of change and project manager roles, is beneficial to manage transforming change process. In terms of change's strategies and vision, I argued that a well-thought and clear vision is critical itself, and the way that it should be conveyed and understood is another significant factor to consider. Change's visions and strategies should be understood by everyone involved so that all know the direction and their responsibility in process. The ambiguity of vision might create confusion, exhaustion, and resistance to contribute the change project. Communication importance is a golden success factor which I found worthy to be considered in model. I

suggested that establishing a systematic communication structure could improve change project performance significantly. Moreover, training was another element that can enhance change project implementation and outcomes. Mentioned success factors have been considered when I developed the model. The elements are manifested majorly by connecting change project to its context. Each element in model is rooted in associated discussions.

The conceptual model of transforming change project

Above, I summarized the theoretical argumentations that I developed in my specialization course’s project, to answer my two research questions. I organized the discussions in four major themes, while in the specialization course project I arranged in seven themes. I found it necessary to reduce themes for this thesis, to present significant points shortly and concretely. All my major conclusions from mentioned discussions thereafter, formed my conceptual model of transforming change project. Figure 2 illustrates the model.

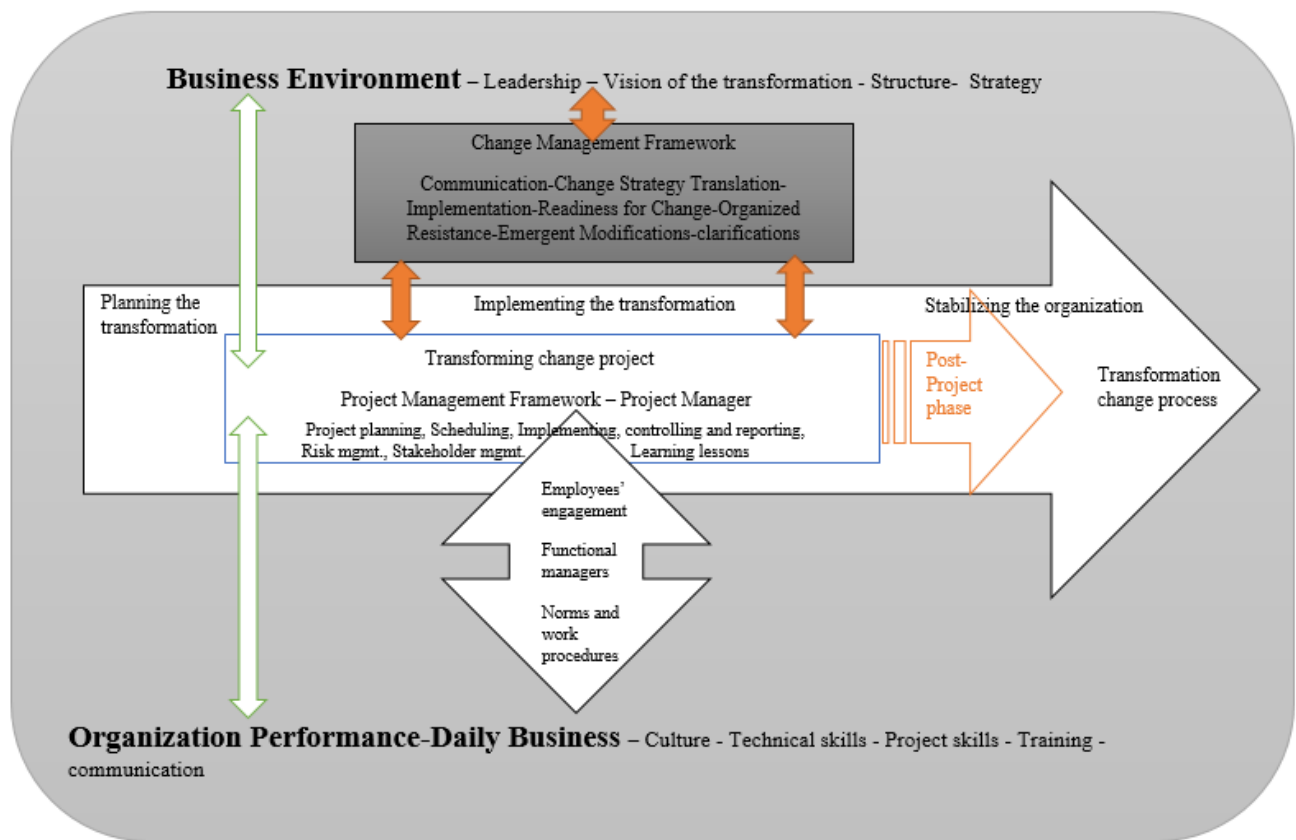


Figure 2 Transforming change project conceptual model

Theoretical simplification of conceptual model

As it is noticeable, the model (figure 2) has embedded all factors and elements drawn from theoretical discussions and conclusion that I developed. As stated earlier, the model is the theoretical basis for current thesis which will be examined in a practical setting. Obviously, investigating, learning, and discussing all the elements in current model is hardly possible

considering a master-thesis time and access constraints. Therefore, I will simplify the model slightly through possible theoretical argumentations. The aim clearly is to have a simpler model that could be practically examined. The simplification here, in addition to methodological simplification presented in chapter 2, will be employed to model to prepare it for getting examined in merger's real setting.

Theoretical simplification argumentations:

- (1) In theoretical background of model, I argued that employees' understanding of organization's and change's strategy, is an essential factor in transforming change projects. This matter has manifested itself in two layers of the model; change management framework and business environment. Regarding change management framework which links the business environment to change process and project, I have put '*change strategy translation and clarifications*' element within the framework. This concept is well-discussed by Cowan-sahadath's (2010) whose work is based on the idea of required change and project management frameworks together for performing change. She argues for having a dedicated leadership who works together with change management framework, to picture desired future by clarifying change strategy and plan towards project management. Crawford & Nahmias (2010) also introduce needed change management competencies in change projects, and assign some managerial work to change manager for taking care of contextual issues or requirements (which include strategy and plan clarification). Regarding the higher level of business environment in my conceptual model, I have devised the '*vision of the transformation and strategy*' element in model. In this respect, Cicmil (1999) discusses the matter by mentioning that 'Why' factor in change projects must be in place to create a shared awareness of change's final goals. Parry, et al. (2014) perceives 'aligned direction' concept as a success factor for change projects, by questioning if employees understand and agree with change's visions. Engwall (2003), Schifalacqua, et al. (2009), and Garies (2010) all refer to required clarification of change's strategy and goal. With wearing more obsessive glasses on now, I perceive that stated discussions I built my argument on, are commonly suggesting that organizational strategy must be translated and understood by the project team and the rest of organization, and organizational and change project strategies must be aligned. Looking at these suggestions, I believe that change 'strategy translation' and 'clarifications' in the change management framework in my model, mean actually the same concept. Therefore, I allow myself to summarize these to point into one as '*change strategy translation*'. In the higher level of business environment in the model, with same argument, I just reformulate the elements of 'vision of the transformation' and 'strategy' into '*change strategy*' by which I mean transformation strategies and aims must be well defined, clarified, aligned with organizational directions, and conveyed all from top to lower levels.

- (2) Concerning the connection between transforming change project and organization daily performance or business, I did discuss on how line employees' understanding and involvement in the change could be beneficial to succeed. I also took functional managers in the linkage between transforming change project and the organization daily business. To develop my discussions on mentioned factors, shortly, Parry, et al. (2014) refers to resources and their emotional energy that should be in place for a successful change. This means that all involved individuals in a transforming change process, could influence project's performance. Cowan-Sahadath (2010) emphasizes on employee engagement while highlight the middle managers' role and the necessity of collaboration among all level of organizational hierarchy. And lastly, Zink, et al. (2008) suggest needed engagement of staff in change process. With a deeper study in mentioned discussions, I perceive that mentioned authors attempt to notify how employees' knowledge and contribution to change is vital, more than establishing a bridge between them all and the project. With rethinking, I believe one should realistically consider restricted project managers' schedule filled up with very many requirements for planning, organizing, managing, reporting, meetings, etc.; meaning that direct connection with affected individuals is unlikely to happen. I think Cowan-Sahadath (2010) reflects this matter nicely by mentioning middle managers' role for a successful change project while highlights the importance of employee understanding and excitement. By this fresh look in this issue, I believe that functional managers as the linker between transforming change project and organization daily business, reflect required considerations associated with employee understanding, engagement, excitement, and contribution. Functional managers are daily responsible engaged with their staff, requirements, shortages, routines, and everything related to their unit. They would best serve the bridge for taking information and requirements from change project to their functions. Therefore, I will establish merely 'functional managers' in the model as I believe they are 'the ones' who could convey required information of change's needs, goals, and strategy to the employees, and reflect overview of day-to-day work, routines, norms and values, culture, staff expectations, and shortages towards project management. Stated discussion is a reason for eliminating '*norms and work procedures*' in the model. As I just explained, functional managers could naturally satisfy the need for this element as they are well-knowledgeable in their unit and field and therefore, they would be the good source for 'busy' project manager to get necessary information from organization's ground. It means that conveying 'norms and work procedures' factor is actually a part of discussing and reasoning for existing 'functional managers' element in the model.
- (3) In the model (figure 2), I have incorporated 'communication' term in change management framework and daily business level. Now, I can see that embedding 'communication' in these two layers is only repetition of communication arrows that I designed exactly in those places. Since the arguments behind communication is actually *one* concept, I think this repetition is only excessive and could be simply deleted.

Therefore, I will only benefit from the communication arrows showing needed communication between illustrated levels (including change management framework and business level demonstrated directions), and omit the communication terms used in the model.

- (4) The other point here relates to the 'structure' factor in business environment level of the model. Understanding and reflection of organizational structure is a factor that I considered important in applying project management to complicated and multidimensional transforming change process. This is a factor that affects and become affected by the change processes and goals. Cowan-Sahadath (2010) considers organization structure as an essence of 'vision and case of change'. I did agree with her and accepted that transforming change must be aligned and integrated with organizational structure. Nevertheless, with thinking deeper, I now understand better what Cown-Sahadath truly mean by suggesting organizational structure as an 'essence of vision and case of change'. Of course, when a transforming change is getting conceptualized and initiated, organizational structure is an essence that managers must consider. The reason is that organizational structure if not the first, is the most important fundament that any new structure or activity will be built upon it. Therefore, by my fresh thinking, I believe this is one of the very basic and early considerations that managers think about and consider when a transforming change process gets planned. I see that this is perhaps far from project management and project manager viewpoints or concerns. Now I can make a better judgment that this element has its most significance when the change would be conceptualized and initiated, where project management is not really involved. By mentioned argument, I conclude that this element could not have essential indications for project management, and for my purpose clearly. To this end, I will omit the factor from the model. Of course, project management understanding of organizational structure is something vital that helps project manager to establish a correct and realistic perception of line organization and project she or he is leading. But, I believe this understanding and consideration might be more a 'one-time course' for project management, and not influential in project's entire lifecycle.
- (5) The last point here is not a theoretical discussion. It is only a summarizing of mentioned project management's basics and tools in the model. I will take out the sub-PM factors (that I discussed in theory chapter as some PM's useful fundamentals, methods, and tools to manage a transforming change project), only to make project management framework simpler for reader. All the sub-elements will naturally and logically remain a part of theoretical background in my project management framework in model.

Based on five points discussed in current section, and two points discussed in mythological simplification section, figure 3 illustrates the simplified model which will be used as theoretical core of this thesis.

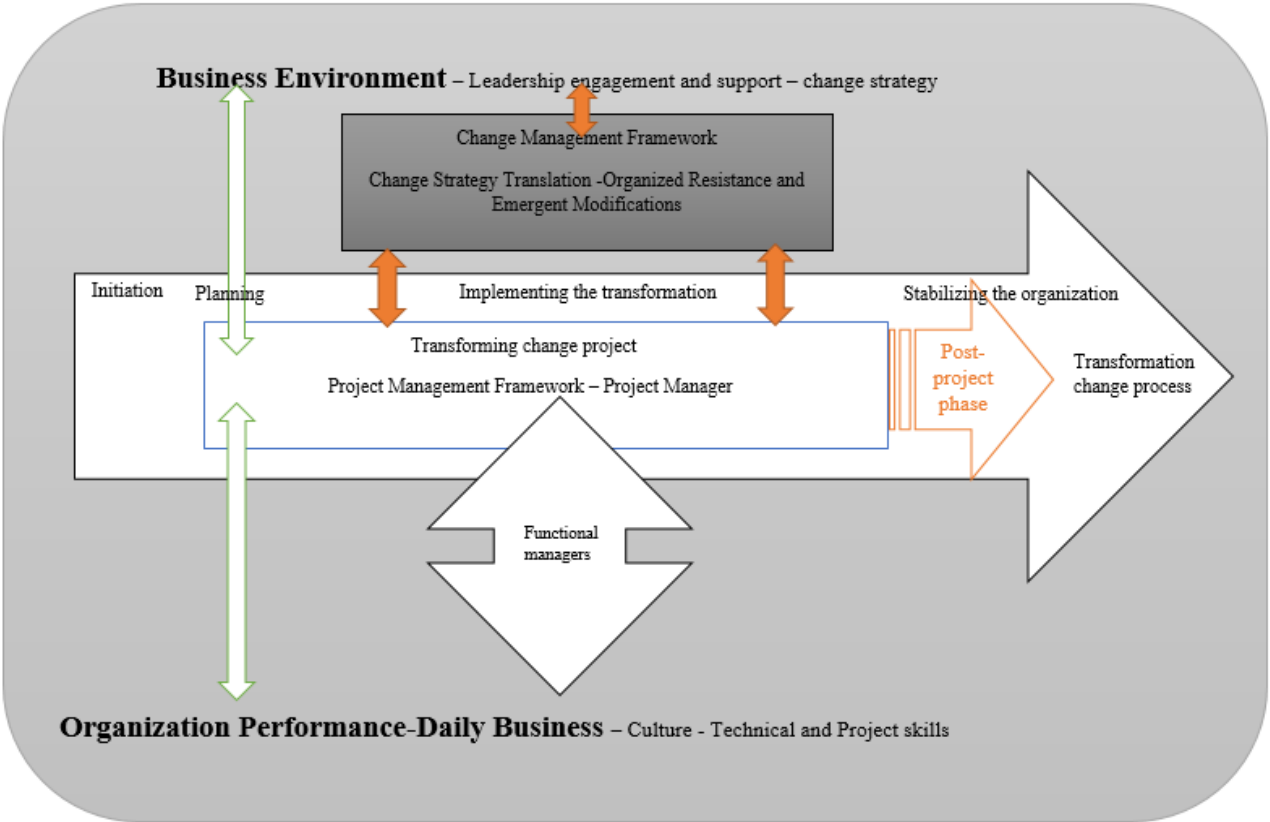


Figure 3 Simplified Transforming change project conceptual model

New theory

As stated earlier, this section of theory chapter presents new theoretical sources I chose to use. New sources will help me to understand, explain, and analyze empirical data where my primary theory could not support and explain issues well, or even at all. More specifically, for analyzing mentioned areas of empirical data, I needed to add some sources. Table 2 shows the areas and related sources that I decided to utilize.

Table 2 New theoretical sources

Area which needed theoretical support	Chosen sources
Project manager needed skills and competences	1. Matching the project manager's leadership style to project type (Müller & Turner, 2007) 2. The association among project manager's leadership style, teamwork and project success (Yang, et al., 2011) 3. Key competences for public sector project managers (Jalocha, et al., 2014)
Project manager authority	4. Understanding project authority (Cleland, 1967) 5. In search of relevance: Project management in drifting environments (Kreiner, 1995)
Project management practices	6. Do project managers practice what they preach, and does it matter to project success? (Papke-Shields, et al., 2010) 7. Working towards best practices in project management: a Canadian study (Loo, 2002)
Change management framework	8. Perspectives on the formal authority between project managers and change managers (Pollack & Alego, 2014)
Communication	9. A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®GUIDE) (PMI, 2013) 10. Communication, dialogue and project management (Ziek & Anderson, 2015)

1. Matching the project manager's leadership style to project type

Trying to analyze empirical data related to project manager's needed competences, my primary theoretical articles looks from project management's point of view. In my discussions, when I suggested that project manager needs to show both technical and managerial competences, my discussions were associated with project manager's lack of behavioral and leadership skills. Based on my sources, I did not support how leadership skills could be employed by project managers. The case from on the other hand, showed me a great focus on how project managers' leadership competences have functioned in the merger. Therefore, I needed to bring some theory to explain and analyze the data. This article and one following, are chosen to support mentioned area. Third article has a broader scope and look at key competencies, including leadership skills, for project managers in public sector.

In this article, Turner and Müller (2007) suggest how project manager's leadership style might influence project's success, and how different leadership styles could be appropriate for various project t types. Their study is built on a quantitative research method, and validated against their qualitative research results.

To build up their research, writers highlight six theoretical schools of leadership; Trait school suggesting that good leaders are born with specific traits, behavioral or style school saying that effective leaders show specified behaviors and styles which can be developed, contingency school, visionary or charismatic school claiming that leaders are either transformational focusing on relationships and communication or transactional focusing on processes, emotional

intelligence school telling that all managers have a rational level of intelligence and their difference is based on their emotional response to conditions, and competency school claiming that effective leaders show specific competencies. The competency school includes all five previous schools since traits and behaviors are in fact competencies, it considers different competency profiles proper in different conditions, it distinguishes transformational and transactional managers, and it offers emotional intelligence as one of the four groups of competencies. Based on my interest and focus of thesis, I didn't find it necessary to go theoretically deeper in mentioned schools of leadership. The reason is that I am trying to understand the importance of leadership styles associated to *project managers* in different situations. Therefore, I think a deeper study in leadership's concept itself, might not be relevant to my focus. So, I sufficed to introduce the schools briefly, which are basis for this article's research. Thus, I will go directly to what writers find out regarding project managers' leadership style and their performance in different projects.

Basing on stated theoretical background, writers perform their qualitative and quantitative researches to find out if project managers' competency including his/her leadership style might affect project success, and if various combinations of project leadership competencies could associate succeeding different types of projects. To do the research, writers focus on how leadership competency (categorized to emotional competencies, managerial competencies, and intellectual competencies), project success, and project type categorized by six attributes (application area, complexity, lifecycle stage, strategic importance, culture, and contract type) could be associated to each other. Table 3 shows three article's main leadership competency categories with sub-competencies. I found it necessary to have the table as it helps to understand article's findings better. In addition, it gives an overall overview what leadership competencies could mean.

Table 3 Leadership competencies, Derived from Muller & Turner, 2007, pg. 23

Leadership competency	
Emotional competencies 1. motivation 2. Conscientiousness 3. Sensitivity 4. Influence 5. Self-awareness 6. Emotional resilience 7. Intuitiveness	Managerial competencies 1. Managing resources 2. Engaging communication 3. Developing 4. Empowering 5. Achieving
	Intellectual competencies 1. Strategic perspective 2. Vision and imagination 3. Critical analysis and judgment

Authors conclude that project managers' leadership style affects project's success. More specifically, writers say that project manager's emotional competence contributes project success significantly, managerial competence is important to a degree, but intellectual competence is not being positively related to the success. Among the elements for each leadership competency category (table 3), writers highlight that leaders' sensitivity and capability to communicate are significant elements to succeed in most of projects. In addition, Turner and Müller (2007)

conclude that different leadership competencies could be utilized in different project types. They found that different traits in three competency categories, are differently beneficial in different types of projects. Among all six perspectives authors suggest, I found three of them related to my specific focus. I think that projects' complexity, strategic importance, and application area attributes will contribute to my study as I am focused on transforming or organizational change projects which is complicated and strategically important for both parties in merger. The other three, life-cycle stage, culture, and contract type, are irrelevant and therefore overlooked. Considering project types based on chosen attributes, authors claim that:

- Communication is important to lead projects with medium **complexity**, while highly complex projects need project manager to show more sensitivity. This means that projects with medium or high complexity require more transformational leadership rather than transactional.
- Regarding **strategic importance**, projects with more strategic perspective like renewal projects, need project manager to show a transformational style. But in less strategic projects like repositioning projects that require achieving 'targets', transactional style would be preferred.
- In terms of **application area**, writers mainly conclude that motivation is significant for engineering area, while vision could be damaging. This shows that engineering area needs more transactional leadership style. Regarding information systems projects, self-awareness and communication are crucial. And lastly, *organizational (my focus)* projects could benefit from communication and motivation and in general, a transformational leadership style would be more proper.

I believe that article's results could have been expected, and are understandable. This is interesting to my focus with a transformation project as my case. As stated above, transformation or organizational project is complex and could be strategically significant for both organizations involved. Considering these attributes, article's result show that transformational leadership style could be more appropriate for such a project. the results will be used carefully in discussion chapter.

2. The association among project manager's leadership style, teamwork and project success

This article written by Yang, et al. (2011) tends to investigate (1) if increased leadership could improve relationships among team members, (2) if teamwork affects project performance significantly, and (3) if project type has a moderating effect on relationship between teamwork and overall project success. Obviously, all three dimensions here are beneficial for me to understand better how project managers' leadership skills and competences, could be preferred in different situations. This could support my discussions on project management managerial skills in merger case.

Writers base their study on former works and target mentioned leadership dimensions that are less studied before. Authors highlight that leaders are influenced by their mental and emotional abilities, and capability to carry out complicated tasks. They emphasize that contextual

conditions also affect leadership styles. Through six schools of leadership, which are already presented in article by Turner and Müller (2007), transformational and transactional leadership styles got distinguished. Briefly, transactional leaders focus on conditional awards which means they rewards subordinates for meeting performance targets, whilst transformational leaders exhibit charisma and bring pride, respect, trust, and vision to project, and create inspiration and motivation (Yang, et al., 2011). Authors highlight that transactional and transformational leadership styles are affective on teamwork, teamwork is an influential element on team performance in terms of communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness, and team performance could be improved by enhancing team communication, collaboration and cohesiveness (two-way relationship). Mentioned points are fundamentals for this article to formulize hypothesizes and perform the empirical survey on a profile of different projects (types based on industry sector, project size, owner regulation, initial site, team size, complexity, project typicality, and international involvement).

Turning to the three focuses in article, by doing the research and analyzing data, writers state their findings. **First**, they claim that increasing levels of leadership results in improving relationships between team members. They highlight that applying transactional and transformational leadership styles appropriately could enhance team communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness. **Regarding** the relationship between teamwork and project's overall success, they find that teamwork is positively influential on project performance. It means that stronger team communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness could improve project performance in terms of schedule, cost, quality, and stakeholder management. And **lastly**, they present their findings regarding how project type could play a moderator role between teamwork and project performance. Recalling their attributes to classify project types, writers claim that project complexity is influential on relationship between teamwork dimensions and project success. More specifically, projects with high complexity have been more successful when there has been higher communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness, than those with less complexity. They add that in medium or high level of complexity in projects, each of teamwork dimensions have been significantly interrelated to project's performance. This is contrary to projects with low complexity. Additionally, project size, team size, and international involvement are other moderators influencing the relationship between teamwork and project success. The international involvement is not relevant to my focus, but project size could have indications for my arguments. In terms of project size then, Yang, et al. say that medium and small projects have had better performance with high level of collaboration, while large projects might be more successful with more team communication.

In summary, article shows that adopting high level of leadership could improve relationships among team members. It also claims that improving relationships among team members which results in better teamwork, is positively influential on project's performance. And finally, type of project could be a moderator variable influencing the relationship between teamwork dimensions (communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness) and project performance. I think the findings are understandable and expectable. In merger case that a lot of leadership skills exist, this article will help me to analyze data and support my discussions.

3. Key competences for public sector project managers

In this article, Jalocha et, al. (2014), tries to establish a concrete set of competences for public sector project managers. It is based on a qualitative research done through a literature study in relevant areas. Authors recognize theoretical differences and similarities between public and private organizations and managers, key definitions of competences of public sector managers, and project management. By doing so, they end up with introducing key competences of *public sector project managers*. Based on the merger which brought public perspective to my focus, I thought that a brief description of needed or preferred project managers' skills and competencies in public sector could enable me to have a clearer thinking to analyze the case. Because of my limited time to go further and find more sources, I chose this article as it is based on a comprehensive literature study. It will be a brief and good way for me to take an overall picture, and fulfill my need in this thesis.

By mentioned points, I allow myself to go directly to what authors argue and develop about needed competences for project managers in public sector. Writers benefit IPMA's model of competence to build their 'competence typology'. IPMA model of competence baseline describes competences into three categories; the technical, the behavioral, and the contextual competence ranges. Technical competence aims to define basic project management competence factors, behavioral competence targets defining personal project management competence factors meaning attitudes and skills, and the contextual competence category describes factors associated with project's context meaning project manager's competence to administrate relations with line organization, and his/her capability to perform in project organization itself (IPMA, 2006). Developing on this framework, writers categorize and assign the competences areas for manager, public sector manager, and project manager. In brief, they show that *project manager* is majorly equipped with technical competences such as managing risk and opportunity, quality, teamwork, scope and deliverables, resources, cost and finance, start up, time and project phase, and close out, to name some of them (Jalocha, et al., 2014). A *manager* concerns majorly with contextual and behavioral competences. And a *public-sector manager* has competences in all three areas normally. I will not go through manager, public manager, and project manager complete skill assignments because for this thesis focus, only public project manager competency profile would be fruitful.

Through assessing all categories, table of '*competences of public sector project manager*' is introduced eventually (Table 4). Table shows that although public project managers have technical competences, they should show contextual and behavioral competences as well. I think this is significant and understandable that public project managers are required to act beyond what project management discipline educate and order. One should consider public sector general and political characteristics. For example, (from behavioral and contextual competences in table 4), being able to analyze political support and opposition, carrying out the policies given by politicians, understanding of organizational mission and ethics, focusing on standards of honesty and integrity, and ability to take decisions and move the project forward towards its objectives even under pressure from different stakeholders, are quite logical when one think about public setting requiring mastering relations, legal constraints, weighting humane aspects,

Table 4 Competences of public sector project manager, Jalocha, et al. 2014 pg. 254-256

Contextual competences	Behavioral competences	Technical competences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project, Program and Portfolio orientation and implementation ● Stakeholders analysis and management ● Ability to analyze political support and opposition ● Collaboration with a variety of individuals and groups from both within and outside toffice ● Execution of the policy given by politicians ● Adequate understanding on legal and cultural issues ● Understanding of organizational mission, ethics and public good and being concerned with public trust ● Exercise power, authority and influence appropriately to achieve office goals ● Keep current with laws, regulations, policies, trends ● Focus on partnering with multiple stakeholders: work to overcome barriers to partnering. ● Diversity awareness ● Permanent organization ● Business: competence on the branch / sector to which the organisation belongs ● Systems, production & technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High standards of honesty and integrity, virtue ● Promoting ethical practices in all organizational activities. ● Accountability ● Motivation to serve public, including encouraging employees to believe in the spirit of public service and demonstrating a personal commitment to quality public service ● Leadership: Ability to take decisions and move the project forward towards its objective even under pressure from different stakeholders ● Engagement and motivation: ● Self control ● Assertiveness: Ability to make decisions and and execute them firmly ● Relaxation ● Openness ● Creativity: Ability to think various, possible future scenarios (challenges, opportunities, etc.) and to find creative solutions ● Result orientation ● Efficiency: Among other things, ability to deal with bureaucracy and red-tapes ● Consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project management success ● Interested parties ● Project requirements and objectives ● Risk and opportunity ● Quality ● Project organization ● Teamwork ● Problem resolution ● Project structures ● Scope and deliverables ● Time and project phases ● Resources ● Cost & finance ● Procurement & contract ● Changes ● Control & reports ● Information & documentation ● Communication ● Start up ● Close out ● Ability to work under time pressure ● Ability to make right prioritization at right times. ● Ability to establish and implement reward systems that correspond effectively to performance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personnel management ● Health, security, safety and environment ● General finance ● General legal knowledge ● Coalition building with understanding of community building and ability to establish collaborative relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Negotiations ● Conflicts & crises ● Reliability integrity ● Values appreciation ● Ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to select project team members based on their expertise. ● Professional competence in public administration ● Ability to apply office policies in a consistent manner ● Inter-organizational learning competence: analyze and apply lessons learned from other organizations ● Financial management including ability to demonstrate an understanding of the roles of the office, Division of Administration, and the legislature in the budget process ● Ability to take sound decisions on procurement of equipment, supplies or services and understanding of state and office procurement regulations ● Long range thinking: ability to recommend effective strategies ● Ability to consider all factors when making decisions (e.g. legal aspects, political and organizational reality, media, special interests).

political influences, and so on. The argumentations in this article, shed some lights over how a project manager could be equipped to perform well in public setting. The overall understandings

help me to understand project management situation in merger case, and table 4 would be used to assess and make propositions in discussion chapter.

4. Understanding project authority

This article and the following one, are chosen to address project manager authority issues in merger case. Project manager authority is a new aspect to my primary discussions as I did not think about or considered in my literature study. The case though, opened this new avenue.

Looking at different papers related to project management authority, my first choice was to look deeper at this 'old' article because it offers a very basic understanding of project and project management authority. Considering the time that writer has written the paper, he simply introduces projects to implement time and resource constrained tasks, and present what authority could mean for project managers, and how it should be assigned to them. As the merger case operates in quite traditional organizational structure with hierarchical authority distribution where project managers are assigned with limited power and authority, I found this article useful to get a basic understanding of how authority could be given to project manager in different situations.

Cleland (1967) highlights that authority concept is moving from the traditional bureaucratic hierarchical model to a participative and persuasive model. He pinpoints that basic description of authority is 'legal power and the right to dictate or act'. For a manager, this definition means manager's power to order others to act or not. He also highlights that authority gets often delegated to organization's subordinates by top management. This perspective overlooks sources and usage of authority across organizational boundaries and more importantly, impact of existing authority relationships within the organization's borders. Defining deeper, writer introduces authority by its two aspects; power and influence. Power which is provided by authority and is associated with organizational position, is the ability to dictate others how to behave. Influence, nevertheless, is 'authority assumed without the legitimacy of an organizational position' (Cleland, 1967). By mentioned definitions, a manager authority will stem from his or her power and influence. Applying this description to *project manager*, project manager's *legal rights and personal success* in his organizational position would form his or her authority. Furthermore, writer addresses 'project authority' and 'how much authority for the project'.

Project authority

One important point to consider is that project manages organize tasks through individuals and actors who are not under his or her direct control. It means that project manager concerns with both vertical and horizontal relationships. This pinpoints the importance of project manager's reputation rather than what he or she is authorized by on paper. The reputation here could be reflected by how others recognize his or her achievements. Mentioned point shows that in total, project manager's authority contains the legal and personal influences, which project manager practices in terms of time, cost, and deliverables. It exists in project's legitimacy, and is extended horizontally and vertically in line organization and external associates parties. It should be mention that project manager authority depends on type and magnitude of authority granted to him or her (ex. Project coordinator or assistant with limited authority; or Run own project with

high authority). One important aspect is that project manager is not one-sided authorized; there are many negotiations with functional managers to achieve a trade-off between project's time, cost, and quality dimensions. To sum up, writer signifies that traditional bureaucratic theory could not reflect project manager's authority solely, as the most significant part of his or her authority rests on his or her ability to develop 'reciprocity' in environment, remove conflicts, and preserve political alliances (Cleland, 1967). In other words, he or she strives to find points of agreement, make critics, and think reflectively.

How much authority?

Understanding project manager authority draws the question of how much authority project management would or should have? Once again, project manager works across functional and organizational borders. This could make challenges for project manager as indirectly involved individuals find their bosses as functional managers, not project manager. Another issue is that project manager would lead a team potentially with a whole diverse set of professional skills. This means that project manager use of authority should be beyond top-down relationship manner, as professionals would expect the leader to master relationships in addition to planning, organizing and so on. This requires project manager to *have sufficient* authority to keep his or her central role and gain project's objectives. Most importantly, regarding decision makings, writer states that higher management typically approve project managers' proposals, not directly decide for project. It means that from project's point of view, vertical organization is significant mainly for facilitating project's tasks and context. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that project manager could not freely command subordinates as she or he needs to make so many complicated decisions. It means that that project manager is dependent on many others to provide analysis, solutions, recommendations and so on.

To sum up, I believe that this article gives a basic and concrete overview of what authority means for a project manager. I think discussions make a clear message which is helpful for analyzing my case. I would like to summarize the arguments into three points:

- Project authority depends significantly on project manager's personality and how she or he associates to project's environment.
- Project manager's authority is consisted of his or her legal position, and far importantly, his or her reputation!
- And project manager should have enough authority to handle individuals related to project, who could be from different areas and professions across the line organization.

5. In search of relevance: Project management in drifting environments

This article by Kreiner (1995) highlights project managers' dilemma when project's intended outcomes change overtime, throughout implementation. He tries to address project manager's options when relevance of outcomes become eroded during project's execution phase. the reasons for project objective to change, could be change in customer requirement or desire, changes in competitors' strategies for example, and so on. He refers this situation as 'drifting environment' and discusses alternative strategies for project manager in such an environment. Even though article's original intention is not what I am focusing or questioning, the results in terms of managerial strategies for project managers to face different situations, could be quite helpful for me. As stated earlier, project management in merger case is highly influenced by their bosses. Through interviewees I learned that project managers are somehow confused in their specific context. Therefore, Kreiner's work could help me to analyze the situation and hopefully propose possible alternatives.

Theoretically, Kreiner highlights some of project's characteristics which could challenge relevance of project's determined outcomes over time. Very basics of project management discipline such as being time constrained, and project managers' instructions to devise contracts and specify project goals explicitly (which enables them to structure and plan the project work), illustrate the rationalization in a project. This could mean that rationalization might be so rigid that relevance of project's outcomes get endangered or ignored. Writer argues that, what he calls 'bracketing' project form its context to freeze specifications early and reduce risks of ambiguity and inefficiency in project, makes a significant dilemma for project manager when project's environment changes. He tries to suggest a solution for such situations.

To develop the research, writer categorizes project manager's dilemma into three classes; Tacitness of knowledge pointing at project management attempts to freeze specifications which could be impossible for client to do; Experiential equivocality referring to project management instructing project manager to collect more data which could challenge project manager to make sense of information; and systematic complexity pinpointing that complexity in project's context challenges isolated project management to understand while they are monitoring merely project complexity itself. I do not go through detail here as mentioned concepts are not relevant to what I am studying. But building on mentioned points, writer discusses project manager's strategic managerial alternatives.

- Hierarchy as a managerial strategy: project managers are encouraged to apply this strategy for coping with accountability issue. Hierarchy could be interpreted as bosses, plans, values, etc. Application of this strategy means that project manager authority is reflected in negotiated design and plan. This strategy could bring consistency and efficiency to project performance. The argument then pinpoints drifting environment which means that stated designs and plans (trust in hierarchy) would become dysfunctional. Therefore, hierarchy strategy nurture a behavior in project organization where legitimacy gets considered as significant, not project's results. In other words, this

strategy reduces project's risk of undesired revisions, while endanger project by overlooking events in context.

- Networking as a managerial strategy: as an alternative to hierarchy strategy, networking makes things connected, significant, and responsive. By applying this strategy, there would be no organizational fixed point as boss, plans, procedures, values, etc., to be relied on. Instead, a moving position exists which validates decisions and actions in project. In other words, it does not allow any involved party to command ideas and decisions to other parties. Communication is obviously an important element in this strategy. One essential other factor is trust as networking is defined by arm's-length relationships. Networking contribute, complement, and oblige project's formal relationships. Therefore, different parties in project get opportunity to be oriented with drifting environment and act accordingly. Clearly, this strategy promises keeping project oriented contextually, while challenge project manager by becoming unnecessarily sensitive, and act with transient and individualistic ideas.
- Torn between arrogance and hypersensitivity: writer highlights that employing hierarchy strategy could enable project managers being protected from contextual noises and confusions whilst it could endanger project by blinding project managers of potential important opportunities and threats that need to be responded. Applying networking strategy gives the project and context the opportunity to 'co-evolve' whilst it could confuse and disorient project managers by making them hypersensitive, and make project an 'explorative course' (Kreiner, 1995). Therefore, neither of strategies could be a perfect solution for project management. To this end, writer suggests project managers to keep both strategies as alternatives during project's lifecycle. This means that project would have fixed points that guarantee project's performance in terms of operational goals, tasks, plans, procedures and so on, while there are social bonds towards to keep project oriented and responsive. In total, Kreiner admits that such responsibility for project manager requires him or her not only to plan and control given set of data, but also to judge what data could indicate for future. obviously, it is not an easy solution and project managers need to show a specific tolerance of 'cognitive inconsistency' (Kreiner, 1995).

Discussed managerial strategy alternatives for project managers, provided me a theoretical basis to understand better how project manager could approach administering project in different conditions. I can see how projects' contextual alterations could direct project manager differently over time. To my focus, this could help me to explain theoretically, case's project managers' barriers in terms of limited authority, because of dominant hierarchical thinking.

6. Do project managers practice what they preach, and does it matter to project success?

This article and following one will address project management practices. I did not include this area in my primary project. By the case though, I realized that project management practices, should be clarified a bit because merger project is suffering in some fundamental PM practices. Even though, merger's long life-cycle, and lack of project management educated project manager could explain a part of mentioned issue, I thought that PM practices area could also shed some light over the problem. I chose this article because in addition to addressing practices,

it establishes potential relationship between PM practices application and projects success. So, it had an extra dimension for me which I think is quite beneficial to analyze data with wider perspective.

To perform the research, Papke-Shield, et al. (2010) have chosen respondents representing a variety of industries and organization involved in projects with different time, budget, and size features. Regarding definition of metrics, authors benefitted ‘A guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge’ (PMBOK® guide) among existing standards including APM, AIPM, IPMA, to reflect initiating, planning, executing, and controlling phases. Two metrics are defined: *project success and PM practices*. In terms of project success elements, well-known PM triangle, and client satisfaction and gaining business objective, are established. In terms of PM practices’, a list of factors driven from PMBOK® guide (2004), are chosen. Table of project success factors and PM practices metrics is available in appendices for reader (table 10 & 11). I overlook the details and address directly the findings.

Regarding usage of PM practices, writers establish that PM practices are in use in projects, but with different consistency and magnitude. PM practices associated with time, cost, and scope are mostly focused in projects, whilst human resource and procurement are less used for instance. The reason could be importance of mentioned triangle elements that project managers are most concern with, and trained for. Other explanation could be factors’ easiness to get measured, while softer elements like quality, risk and human-related matters could be harder to quantified and thus, less practiced. Authors highlight that PM standards are and will evolve, and more focus on today’s less-used PM practices would happen in new and evolved standards. I think the main point here which has indications for my perception, is that PM practices are used in real settings in different grades and consistency. Authors claim that PM practice usage could be affected by project’s context (in terms of cost, time, and size of the project), but is not truly influenced by organizational size or industry. More specifically, larger and more expensive projects, employ more practices focusing on control, risk and quality management. And projects with more resources requirements, would increase using procurement management practices. Finally, authors state their conclusion about how PM practice usage and project success could be related. In general, authors suggest that deploying formal PM practices will increase project’s success. Different PM practices across all knowledge areas differ ‘significantly’ between low and high successful projects. I will briefly summarize some key points illustrating article’s observations, as examples (table 5). It could be helpful to nurture my thinking and explaining merger’s project management performance more specifically.

Table 5 Relationship between using PM practices and project's success

Knowledge area	PM practice	Success group
HR	Several practices	Associated with several success dimensions, reflecting that defining roles and responsibilities in the project help keeping project’s time and cost on schedule for instance

Communication	Gathering and distributing information	Related to client satisfaction as it would be hard meeting cost and time goals and achieving business objectives. Communication is needed to inform involved individuals about where the project stands
Integration	Stakeholder analysis	Associated with success in terms of meeting quality requirements and gaining more customer satisfaction (SA specify significant stakeholders, and clarify their expectations)

Table 5 shows some among other examples showing how different PM practices are associated with project success dimensions, and eventually affect the overall success

To summarize, this article has four major points to suggest; PM practices are used in projects with different degrees and consistencies, project’s context broadly affects the usage of PM practices; Level of PM practice use is related to project success; and PM practices that truly affects projects’ success, might not be the most frequently used.

7. Working towards best practices in project management: a Canadian study

To expand my overview gained from previous article, I thought that it could be useful to look a bit extra at how different projects benefit from project management practices. I chose to study present article which studies best PM practices in diverse organizations in Canada that have had professional project managers. The aim is to find out which project management practices are in use most, and which issues challenge PM best practices.

Loo (2002) clarify that best practices convey optimum ways of performing in projects, comparing either internally or to external organizations. He recognizes PM best practices among several **success factors** introduced in literature; such as project strategy, project management professionalism, existence of competencies (leadership competencies, functional competencies, and HR management skills), having standardized methods (project tools like project scheduling, budgeting, etc. for instance) and so on. I should mention that article’s respondents are from different types of businesses including governmental organizations. Based on analyzing empirical data, author categorizes his results into five themes, and each theme in terms of two groups, technical and people groups. To convey his major findings, I found it efficient to devise table 6.

Table 6 Loo's (2002) major findings

	Top best practice	Second most important best practice	Third most important best practice	(First and second) Most important areas for improving PM practices	Potential barriers to achieving these improvements
Technical themes	Integrated project management system - Scope management - Project planning, scheduling, controlling - contract management	Integrated and proper PMS - Scope management - Resource management - Contingency planning	PMS - Budget management - Preplanning - Project documentation	Standard PM practices - Improve scope management - Improve budget management - Integrate project control methods - Organizational learning - Empower team - Resource planning	Managers thinking that there is one way to do PM - Lack of strong leadership - Leadership and organizational culture - Insufficient investment in training - Staff resisting to learn and use PM tools - Rewarding individuals rather than team - Time pressure
People-oriented themes	High-capacity team - Stakeholder involvement - Communication internally and externally - Customer satisfaction	Client contact - HR management - Effective Communication	Communication and meetings	Need for manager and staff training - More effective planning and preplanning	

As it is clear in table 6, Loo (2002) assesses how organizational context in terms of leadership style and organizational culture would make obstacles for benefitting PM's best practice. I think this message shows a two-way relationship between context and project management practices. Eventually, author suggests that organizations use project management practices differently, and there are areas for improvements in using. As illustrated in table, integrating and standardizing PM practice, better scope management, investing in training for employees and managers, implementing effective team-based compensation, are some areas that author's findings suggest as possible improvement areas. To sum up, I think three lessons could be learned by this research:

- Organizations benefit from PM practices differently in terms of both technical and people-oriented practices
- Project's context could affect using PM's best practices
- And there are important areas in using PM practices that organizations must be aware of, and strive to improve

8. Perspectives on the formal authority between project managers and change managers

Focusing on managing organizational changes, this paper investigates about project and change management perspectives on their formal authority, reporting relationship, and their contributions to organizational change processes. This will be supportive to my suggested change management framework in model considering merger's support framework. The paper would clarify what practitioners from both disciplines truly do in managing change processes, and how they find themselves as being involved and own the change process. I just must remind that my case does not have a change management framework with 'formal responsibility' to act. As stated earlier, change management framework is assigned by government responsible to advocate project management, but not intervene or decide anything. Therefore, I will utilize this

article having this matter in mind, and try to develop my general understanding of change and project management collaborations, and potential ways to enhance the relationship.

Pollack and Alego (2014) highlight that in managing an organizational change project, change management would focus more on communication of clear strategies and visions for the future, engaging top management in process, assuring change's strategy is not conflicting to organizational strategy, and striving to make change anchored in organization. Project management on the other side, has focused more on typical change management issues, towards meeting humane aspect of change process for instance. Authors signify that while there are overlapping aspects between two disciplines in managing change, project and change managers *both* claim that each contributes the most to deliver organizational change. Thus, it is necessary for project managers and change managers to understand how two disciplines relate to each other in change context; how their roles should associate to each other, and which discipline holds the ownership over the organizational change process.

To discuss mentioned points, writers ask “do project managers and change managers hold different views about how these two roles should formally relate in practice?” (Pollack & Alego, 2014). In terms of reporting relationship perspective, through performing a quantitative research, authors show that project managers and change managers looked at change management as more strategic concept, and project management as more operational level. This means that they perceive change management in higher level than project management. However simultaneously, project managers saw themselves supervising changer management and notified that change managers should report to them, whilst change managers looked at this relationship as a cooperative responsibility. This might show the different ‘worldviews’ of change and project managers, reflecting on how the organizational change should be led (Pollack & Alego, 2014). *Therefore*, writers suggest that change managers who face potential challenge of relationship with project managers, could “*develop their organizational understanding about change management, and establish frameworks in their organization like a ‘Center of Excellence or a change management office’*” (Pollack & Alego, 2014). They also recommend that, “*project managers should keep a well-thought balance between requirements to be focal to coordinate and control, and giving the space to change management to perform its responsibility*” (Pollack & Alego, 2014).

Even though change management framework in merger case does not imply a framework with operative change managers, I think suggestions of this article have indications of how project and change management might be tied in organizational change projects; and how these two actors could contribute in change project for better results. I found writers main messaged very reasonable suggesting that change management could provide a systematic framework in its organization for supporting project managers, while project managers make the room for change management to offer its contribution.

9. A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK®GUIDE)

As stated earlier, communication in merger case showed important indications for project management and project performance. Obviously, communication is considered in my theoretical background, but because of its significance and different mindset in the case, I

decided to look at literature to learn more about communication's concept in transforming change projects. Current and following source are chosen to define project communication management better, and illustrate how project manager could utilize communication.

Communication and managing project's information is one of the ten project management knowledge areas that PMBOK (2013) introduces. Just to mention, knowledge areas include project integration management, project scope management, project time management, project cost management, project human resource management, project communication management, project risk management, project procurement management, and project stakeholder management, project quality management. Communication management concerns processes to guarantee timely and proper planning, collecting, creating, storing, retrieving, managing, controlling, monitoring, and dispositioning project's information (PMI, 2013). It is highlighted that project managers spend a great amount of time to communicate with internal and external stakeholders with various backgrounds, professional expertise, expectations, interests and so on. Therefore, it is important that project benefits from a systematic communication management framework. PMI (2013) builds communication management on three range of processes; planning communication management, managing communication, and controlling communication. I would use this fundamental framework to analyze communication management facts and opportunities in merger case. Thus, I will briefly convey what PMI (2013) requires in each process. Just before that, I would like to highlight different dimensions of communication activities in communication management processes (PMI, 2013): internal and external, formal (reports and so on) and informal (emails, ad-hoc discussions for instance), vertical and horizontal (with peers), official (newsletters, annual reports) and unofficial, and written and oral aspects.

Plan communication management: this process aims to explore and document 'the approach' for communication with stakeholders optimally. It should consider different stakeholders' information need, and organizational possibilities. According to PMI (2013), lack of proper planning for communication may lead to deliver messages late, to wrong receiver, create misunderstandings, and so on. It is suggested that planning communication should start as early as possible like during project planning. This would facilitate assigning right capital for having an effective communication further in project's lifecycle. Communication plan usually contains information on explored target groups to receive information and their information requirements, issues regarding the format, content, and level of detail of information to be communicated, time table and frequency for distributing data, assigned individuals for communicating, tools and methods to communicate, decisions on resources assigned for communication, flowcharts, and communication obstacles, to name some of element.

Manage communication: having communication plan, information in project would get created, collected, distributed, stored, retrieved, and dispositioned, accordingly. Managing communication means taking project communication plan and appointed organizational asset in, and using communication tools and techniques to realize communications courses. Realizing communication does not only concern distribution of data, but it also strives to guarantee that

information is created properly, received and perceived correctly, while gives target groups room for clarifying and discussing.

Control communication: the last set of processes in managing communication concerns monitoring and controlling project communication during project's lifecycle. It is important that communication and its reflections get assessed and controlled so that right target group receives appropriate data at the right time. In other words, this stage strives to make sure that stakeholders receive their needed information. It also seeks to keep communication effective and efficient, 'at any moment of time' (PMI, 2013). Controlling communication could mean repetition of communication plan and processes. Information management systems, professional expertise, and meetings for discussions and dialogue are suggested as the tools and methods for controlling project communication (PMI, 2013).

10. Communication, dialogue and project management

Project communication management established by PMBOK (2013), introduced a standard and common understanding of what communication in project means and how it should get done. There are a large number of writings looking at project communication, similar to this standard and well-practiced perspective. This article by Ziek and Anderson (2015) however, departs from this overwhelmingly researched and discussed overview which translates project communication as proper and timely delivery of project information to stakeholders. Instead, Ziek and Anderson (2015) focus on *constitutive nature* of communication and try to establish what communication could mean specifically for project managers. This looks at project communication as practices that could be used by project managers to create dialogue with project groups. Authors suggest that such dialogues might eventually impact the content, direction and results of the project. I think this is a very interesting dimension of communication that project managers could employ to achieve success. In my case, through interviews, I heard from most of interviewees that they are not truly sure how project processes should be done. Therefore, there is lack of proper information to communicate. This alerted me not only to think about their challenges to communicate needed information, but it also made me think on how communication itself could contribute this situation. This article therefore, could some light over mentioned matter.

Writers highlight basic understanding of project communication as either a competency for project managers, or a success factor for project. Considering communication as a **skill** addresses project manager's capacity to influence project members. Communication is a method helping project manager to affect project's task, conditions, and predetermined and deliberate results. Therefore, project managers are suggested to develop their communication competency for achieving success. In terms of considering communication as a **success factor**, authors highlight that lack of communication could affect project team performance negatively and endanger project results.

Having mentioned highlights, authors tend to look at constitutive nature of communication as a social process, and how this characteristic could establish a dialogue between project managers and project team towards framing the project. Ziek & Anderson (2015) establish that project managers themselves, are not truly conscious about constitutive nature of communication which could make them designers or co-creators of 'dialogues'. They state that to cope with challenges

to manage project's context, project managers are relied most on 'transmission approach' which aims ultimately creating and transmitting clear messages. This shows that project managers think that sender must send clear and complete message so that receiver could receive the message correctly. Thus, more and faster communication means better transmission and therefore, better control over stakeholders (Ziek & Anderson, 2015). Even project managers' perception of softer aspect of communication, such as being good listener, is still relied on instrumental aspects of communication (Ziek & Anderson, 2015). This thinking demands project manager to collect, organize and send appropriate data, comprehensively and coherently. Writers eventually confront this perspective with constitutive aspect of communication. They call for an alternative so that project manager could develop a form of constitutive control in project, by designing social processes. This improves project manager's ability to *influence and frame* the project through engaging with analyzing a situation, deciding on what to do, and finally doing the decision (Ziek & Anderson, 2015). This imagines communication as a control tools, like many control tools that project managers use to control projects, such as budgets, timelines, Gantt charts, scope definition, etc. (Ziek & Anderson, 2015). In other words, communication could be used to regulate project's scope and stakeholders' behavior, where participants jointly develop meanings. The emphasis of this perspective is not on messaging, but on meaning making, which could outline not only the scope of a project but also its path (Ziek & Anderson, 2015).

I think Ziek and Anderson suggestions open a fruitful window towards approaching project communication. I do agree that since communication has social characteristic by nature, it could be utilized in a way to create meaning, rather being a rigid tool for project manager to exchange messages. I believe that authors' saying that project is just as much about technical requirements as it is about communication, should be *embedded* to project managers' understanding of communication. It would be very constructive for project manager to perceive communication as an opportunity to influence project's technical requirements by making dialogues with project stakeholders. This would provide them another form of control tool for devising those certain goals, activities and resources of a project (Ziek & Anderson, 2015). I think this is a significant point for me to consider when analyzing my case especially because merger suffers from loose specifications, to a degree. I will keep this mindset that "project communication is not about information and paperwork but about the management of the dialogue relative to projects" (Ziek & Anderson, 2015).

4. Empirical data

This section aims to give a comprehensive presentation of important parts of empirical data. The data consists of six interviews in the first round, two follow-up interviews in the second round, and 6 documents that I decided to include. As stated earlier, merger case has passed its initiation and planning phases, and the documents I chose to use, would help me to capture a more complete picture of case along all phases. Therefore, it could supplement my data to build a richer base for discussion chapter.

This section is divided into three parts. *First*, I will describe the case briefly. *Second*, chosen documents will be described. And *at last*, I will structure interviews' content into six specific themes to develop a ground for processing my empirical data. The themes are mainly chosen based on essential elements or factors of my conceptual model (simplified). One theme is completely new to my model, and a few are highlighted more or in a different way that model considered them. They stemmed from what interviewees described them as important issues, factors, or their worries about the merger project. Therefore, I decided to include and classify them into extra or different themes. The extra themes will of course come into account when I analyze the data in discussions, and will be the new considerations that I may potentially apply on my model to modify or improve it. In other words, my themes will be categorized in two groups; A group mainly from the conceptual model, and a group which is formed based on observations in empirical data. Under each theme I will present interviews' important and essential information.

Case description

As stated earlier, my case is a transforming change project in form of a merger between two municipalities in Norway, Trondheim and Klæbu which both locate in Sør-Trøndelag county. The case is a political project, meaning that it is significantly influenced politically. Merger will result in a new municipality as community, and a merged municipal organization to run the new municipality. The two communities, in many dimensions, have quite different situations compared to each other. Trondheim municipality with 187,353 inhabitants (1. January 2016) embraces 60% of total population of Trøndelag county. Klæbu, on the other hand, is home to only 6,067 inhabitants (1. January 2016) (Kommunal- moderniseringsdepartementet, 2016). Obviously, 'merger project' in this paper *focuses* on the two municipal organizations' union which will create the new municipal organization in 2020. I will describe the case more specifically into three dimensions. I found this classification necessary for reader to understand the project itself and its context.

The merger under municipality reform plan, and the governmental 'recipe'

In 2014, the government in Norway submits a proposition to parliament applying acceptance for a municipal reform plan in Norway. The major reasoning for proposition has been building stronger municipalities with sufficient competencies and capacity to safeguard inhabitants' welfare today and in future (Regjeringen, 2017). Other overall goals are giving good and equal services to inhabitants where they live, developing communities, approaching more sustainable municipalities, having better economy, and having strengthened democracy (Regjeringen, 2017).

The parliament agrees with the proposition and initiates the municipal reform program nationally, in June 2014. The milestone plan specified by the ministry is shown by figure 4.



Figure 4 Milestones and processes in municipal and regional reform, Kummunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet 2017, pg. 5

There is a package of laws, circulars, advisory documents, and presence of fylkesmennene and KS representatives in counties (providing informative seminars, and every day support), available to merger projects. This package is prepared and suggested by municipal and modernization department, based on former experiences of mergers. Trondheim-Klæbu also has been and is following the guideline as far as they could, so far. To address this matter throughout my paper, I will benefit calling the instructions and requirements as ‘the governmental recipe’ or ‘the recipe’. More precisely, the recipe consists of relevant laws and regulations, the circular (Rundskivet), documents of guidelines for the merger, and some seminars and conferences. The important point here is that ministry motivates and asks the municipalities to use their so-called ‘standardized recipe of a merge project’ instead of using traditional way of doing it. This means that government tries keeping the support to the municipalities throughout the project by showing them what are ‘musts’ and ‘better to haves’ along their way to merger. This matter is emphasized by assigning fylkesmennene in every county to have a central role in the municipal merge projects in their region. County governor in Sør-Trøndelag receives the letter of assignment in July 2014 and starts primary processes in the county (Kummunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2014). The department ask county governor to take a central role in implementing reform projects in Sør-Trøndelag. It is desired that governor office collaborates closely with regional KS, Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, representatives in county for supporting the relevant projects. The government supports both fylkesmannen and KS economically to offer professional support to municipalities. Several meetings and conferences have been taken place to exchange information and facilitate negotiations. From recipe’s guideline documents, I will take use the latest which is newly revised and embrace two former guidelines.

Under the reform program in the beginning, municipalities became asked to perform status analysis for their today and future (at least 50 years), and start negotiating with their neighbor municipalities. Trondheim and Klæbu by following the recipe, did the negotiations and studies, and came to municipal agreement in 2016. Both municipalities agreed that the new merged

organization will remain current Trondheim's organization, meaning that Klæbu will be merged into Trondheim's existing structure. In other words, this merger will directly affect Klæbu's organization, specifically the managers and employees who work in Klæbu city hall. They are 50 – 60 individuals (mostly administrative positions) who are essentially affected, since their job positions are going to change completely. Other employees belonging to Klæbu organization, like health or school personnel, will continue in same jobs and locations, just in new structure. Trondheim on the other hand, will only receive 50-60 new employees into its six functions, and a certain amount of land.

Ever since, project is waiting for government to formally accept the merger between them. This decision is expected to happen in June 2017. Organizations' common city council board (fellesnemnda) which is assigned and operating already in project organization as 'political project management', can be *formally/legally* appointed to make decisions for the project and grant needed authority to administrative project managers to act accordingly. After that, project management will implement the merge and complete the process till 01.01.2020. That is the closure date for project and start date for new municipality which will be called still 'Trondheim'. Just to highlight again here, as stated in methodology chapter, mentioned time spans for the project waiting for governmental processing, and documents to come in place for further work in project, does not mean a significant implication for my study. The reason is that by the empirical data, I observed that merger project has been operating reasonably according to the milestone plan, regardless of waiting times. For example, even though fellesnemnda and project managers are not formally assigned on paper, they are practically chosen and assigned, and have been factually leading the project through different activities. Therefore, I allowed myself to overlook the national reform's potential influences (like waiting times, etc.) on my case as project is practically working rationally, since 2015.

In the last point here, I would like to highlight and clarify that further in thesis, I will use the term "merger project" conveying the union/merger of two Trondheim and Klæbu municipal organizations, "affected organization or the organization" conveying Klæbu's municipal organization, and "affected employees or target group" conveying majorly the 50 to 60 employees in Klæbu's municipal hall who are mostly engaged with administrative work and will transferred to Trondheim's hall into new positions.

Merger's lifecycle

Focusing on merger project internally here, I will give an overall description on what have truly done in project so far, and what are expected to be carried on.

In the initiation phase, by several informative gatherings and conferences provided by fylkesmannen in Sør-Trøndelag, Trondheim and Klæbu began to study and investigate their municipalities' performance and facts in different dimensions. Through passing this period, by performing studies, developing documents, and performing political negotiating, two municipalities agrees to merge in June 2016 (the initiation phase and a minority of preparation and planning work, took almost two years). Just to mention, in May 2016, Klæbu performed a referendum and approximately 56 percent of the inhabitants voted which resulted in 67,3 percent positive votes for merging with Trondheim. The message from Klæbu inhabitants has been clear

as an important base or asset to start and fuel this project. By municipal agreement, formal planning phase starts and preparations for implementing phase continues in two municipalities. In February 2017, municipalities appoint their ‘common city council’ or ‘common municipal

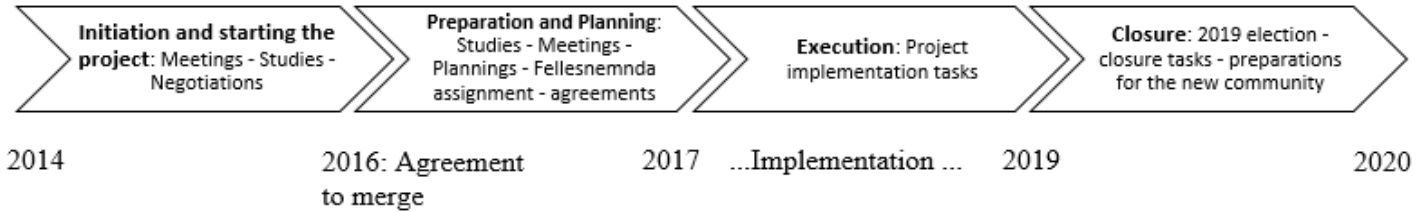


Figure 5 Merger's lifecycle

board’, the fellesnemnda, as project’s overall decision body in addition to the municipalities’ own city councils. I should mention that fellesnemnda’s power and authorities are suggested by laws and guidelines provided by the department, but will be decided by two organizations’ leaders eventually. Planning or preparation phase has resulted in developing several important documents such as project’s milestone plan, progress plan, communication plan, omstillingsavtale which will be prepared towards end on 2017, and other reports and documentation for implementation phase. Implementation phase is just started and will mainly get done in 2018 and 2019. Figure 5 illustrates project’s lifecycle.

I would like to highlight the long period of initiation and planning phases in the project when many studies, collaborations, agreements, and plans are developed between the two phases. It refers to project managers and central project group involvement in project tasks during the period. I should remind again, as stated in methodology chapter, my focus in project’s lifecycle of this merger case is majorly on the initiation, preparation and planning phases, while I will pay attention to propositions and expectations related to implementation and closure phases.

Merger's project management description

The third and very important aspect of the merger that I find necessary to address before describing empirical data, is project management's specification. I will present the overall configuration to clarify the reader on who project managers as my focus. Figure 6 shows overall structure of how project management in Trondheim-Klæbu merger is organized.

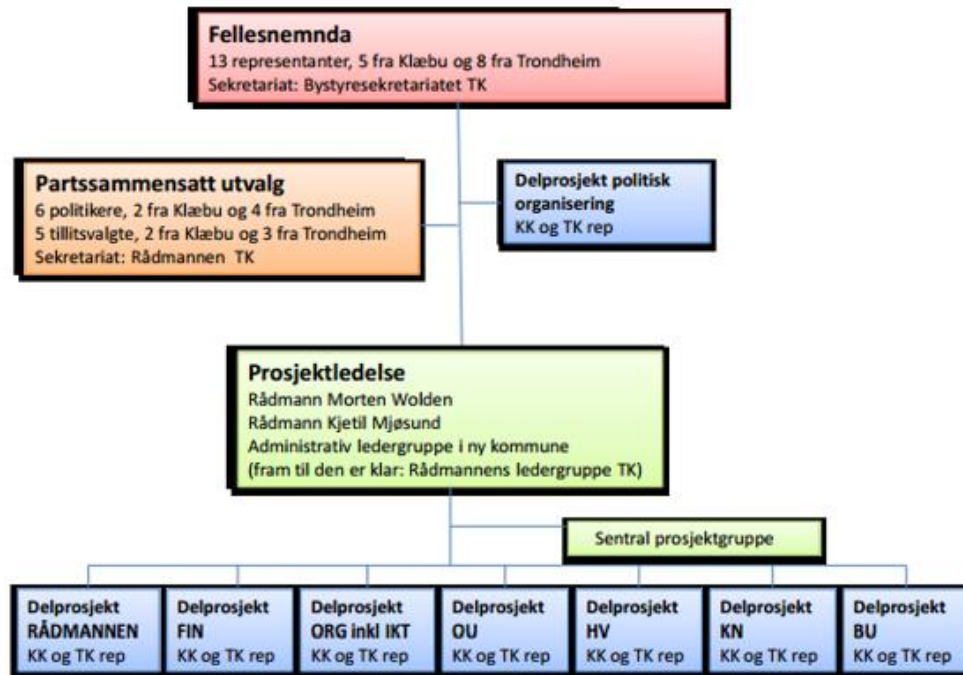


Figure 6 The merger project organization: political and administrative organizing of the project, *Project administration, 2017, pg. 3*

Briefly, figure shows that project management level is divided into two 'political project management' and 'administrative project management' levels. In addition to them, there is a central project group which supports administrative project management group. Political project management as stated earlier, is the common city council board who make all associated and fundamental decisions for the merger, and delegate power to administrative project management to act. To my perception, they serve as the 'bosses' for administrative project managers since they make decisions, assign the budget, require reporting, and interfere when needed. Therefore, I will refer to them either saying 'political project management' or 'bosses' in the project. It is also important that 'Partssammensatt utvalg' and 'Delprosjekt politisk organisering' are in place with the political project management (description of these two groups' roles will be given in the next section). Regarding the administrative project management, this level consists of Trondheim's and Klæbu's rådmennene, the municipal chief administrators, plus a central project group who are directly involved in project work administratively. The rådmann in Trondheim, is the official project manager, and the rådmann in Klæbu has the operative/acting project manager role. The central project group helps the administrative level with working on relevant cases, participate in discussions, assessing and foreseeing potential challenges, supervising and motivating involved parties. Under administrative project management, there are different functions who will make

the merger happen. The six functions are organization and IKT, health and welfare, city development, culture and business, growth and education, and finance.

To be clear, throughout the paper, I will use the term ‘project management’ or ‘project managers’ conveying the administrative project management level including two project managers and the central project group, and ‘bosses or fellesnemnd’ conveying the political overhead of project management. Again, clearly, the *administrative project management’s* performance, skills and competences, challenges, and other related dimensions, are under focus in this paper.

Related documents

Project plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities

The project plan gives an overall description of project’s different aspects; a summary of project’s goals from letter of intent decided in April 2016, project organization, project’s economy, communication, risk and vulnerability, frames for the work, and progress plan with milestones in 2017,2018, and 2019 (details for 2017: preparing and updating project plan, budget, communication plan, omstillingsavtale, decision of political organization size, mapping challenges, deciding for new municipality rådmann, etc). By mentioned elements, this plan supplements the interviewees’ data about preparation and planning phases by providing more details.

The merger’s goals highlighted in plan, include creating a municipality that provides good and equal services to the inhabitants where they live, growing work market and job opportunities, approaching a more sustainable community, building a better economy, and having an organization which looks at whole community in terms of growth and development. According to the plan, considering two current municipalities’ strengths, traditions, advantages and disadvantages, creating a proper organization and good operation systems, equality, generosity, and understanding are some of the *major principles* to follow. Different roles and responsibilities in merger project are described as follow:

- Fellesnemnda is the steering committee as the top political organ to make decisions for new organization. This organ is additional to two current municipal councils of the organizations until the new municipal city council of the future municipality become elected by inhabitants. Decisions made by fellesnemnda should be identically made through the two city councils as well. Building a common understanding of merger by city councils and fellesnemnda, is emphasized. Fellesnemnda has the authority and responsibility to distribute the merger budget, and grant administrative authority to project managers.
- Partssammensatt utvalg is consisted of politicians and representatives from two organizations. They concern and express their statements to fellesnemnda in all cases associated with employer’s and employee’s cases or issues.
- Referansegruppe for politisk organisering comprises politicians from Trondheim and Klæbu, who will give input and suggestions throughout the merger process, and follow cases related to new organization’s political body.

- Project management and the central project group or the project management package, are considered as administrative project management for steering the merger processes. Again, chief municipal administrators from both sides are the project managers and they have their leader groups besides them. The central project group is consisted of employees whose tasks are majorly related to project's progress. Project management will report and submit cases to fellesnemnda and municipal councils for decisions, study and assure the administrative work for merger's cases. Finally, the project moves forward through administrative managers in sub-projects (six functions). The responsibility for leading sub-projects are mainly given to functional managers in Trondheim. Under these sub-projects, there might be several projects with different characteristics. This pinpoints to many employees in functions who need to understand change's strategies, their role in change process, future work positions, and so on.

Regarding *project's economy*, the plan notifies that government will grant 35 mill kroner to merger, when the final decision is made by the parliament in June 2017, and fellesnamnda is consequently responsible to distribute the money to cover merger's costs. When new organization starts to operate, 30 mill kroner will be further granted to new municipality. In terms of *project's information and communication management*, project plan emphasizes on importance of communication plan. A risk analysis is also highlighted to assess potential risks and their significance in project. This requires subprojects to be informed and active to assess risks in different phases of the project and revise the analysis when needed. The progress and milestone plans can be seen in appendices (table 8 & 9). In fact, project plan illustrated an overall plan mainly for planning or preparation phase. It does not go into details for implementation phase which I found understandable because political nature of project requires many formal and time consuming steps. Anyhow, I think the plan is an illustration of how project management basic practice of managing time, budget, and deliverables is under focus, expectedly. However, there is also emphasis on communication and risk assessment in the plan, which I think, shows project management's awareness and practice towards softer aspect of project.

Communication plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities

Communication is one of the highlighted matters by interviewees. I learned that communication is considered an explanation and strategy to understand and meet merger's opportunities and challenges. Therefore, I took the communication plan into my data since it discloses the practical steps that merger has established to manage communication and information. In communication plan, the major concern is communication and information *availability* towards municipalities inhabitants, municipal employees, politicians, and the media. The plan seeks assuring that merger process gains legitimacy among mentioned target groups. It will also facilitate and make the change process easier for those involved. The plan is anchored in, and follows the project plan. The central target groups in the plan are described as:

- Employees in Klæbu city hall comprising around 600 (specifically 50-60 who are directly affected by the merger) individuals who form a central target group for communication plan. It is expected that this group come up with questions about their future work conditions. It is highlighted that they should be heard and get accommodated as much as possible.
- Inhabitants in Klæbu who could be expected to come with questions about municipal services such as kindergartens, schools, or elderly care centers, for instance. The inquiries could be about how the merger might affect the offers for children, the young, or the old for example.
- Voluntary organizations (and culture life) also could have worries about how merger would affect their assumptions to execute their activities, and their required economic support.
- And some other stakeholders

The overall goals of the plan are to provide municipal employees, politicians, and inhabitants with *correct and proper information timely*, to give target groups proper reference points to place questions about merger project, and to accomodate stakeholders' inquiries respectfully and openly. As mentioned earlier, communication plan includes a risk assessment; Three main challenges are predicted as unrest about jobs in Klæbu organization, using municipality information channels could deviate information, and possible skepticism in Klæbu. The actions to meet stated challenges are defined as collaborating with employees and tillitsvalgte to remedy possible questions, worries, etc., announcing through Klæbuposten if needed and using Klæbuposten's Facebook if possible, keeping contact with employees and tillitsutvalgte in Klæbu, and following debates in media and online forum (three actions meeting three challenges).

Communication plan presents and action plan that specifies required actions, the message to convey, target groups for the message, the responsible actor for establishing communication, and the date, table 6.

As it is obvious from table, the action plan utilizes project's communication manager to address associated actions. For instance, *communication advisor/manager* is responsible to convey facts and information about merger and information channels towards inhabitants, employees, politicians and media, through using website and work groups, early 2017. Or, a bit later in summer 2017 for example, she would be responsible to create and publish the inputs gained through work groups, in terms of possible news towards employees in Klæbu. Other actors are also involved to manage information. For example, action plan assigns operative project manager to update inhabitants, employees, politicians and media about the merger progress status, through information meetings (if needed by presence of mayor). So, I think stated plan builds a concrete picture of how related actors must take care of communication. I found the plan well-thought and considerate, regarding different target groups and aspects of merger.

Table 7 Action plan for communication, Project administration, 2017, pg.

Hva er tiltaket / kanalen	Budskap	Målgruppe	Ansvar	Når skal det skje
Midlertidig mellomside med informasjon. Erstatte egen nettside fram til denne er oppe og går etter sommeren 2017.	Fakta om sammenslåingen, FAQ, kontaktinfo for spørsmål (mail)	Innbyggere, ansatte, politikere og media	Kommunikasjonsrådgiver oppdaterer nettsidene. Nettredaksjoner bistår med funksjonalitet. Arbeidsgruppa	Frist 10.03.17
Nettside. Så langt som mulig optimalisert for Google, og med pekere fra begge kommuners startsider	Mer detaljert: - tidslinje / milepæler - møter /møtedokumenter - organisasjon - for ansatte - kontaktinfo - siste nytt / aktuelt - nedtelling	Innbyggere, ansatte, politikere og media	Nettredaksjonen hos kommunikasjonsenheten setter opp nettsidene. Kommunikasjonsrådgiver oppdaterer nettsidene. Arbeidsgruppa kommer med innspill om innhold.	Frist 31.08.17
Nyhetsbrev - både elektronisk og på papir.	Aktuelle nyheter om sammenslåingen	Innbyggere, ansatte, politikere og media	Arbeidsgruppa kommer med innspill, kommunikasjonsrådgiver skaper og publiserer	Vår eller tidlig sommer 2017
Samarbeide med tillitsvalgte for ansatte og nettredaktør i Klæbu kommune for innspill på informasjon. Målet er å kartlegge bekymringer, få innspill på når og hvordan informasjon skal gis	Tiltaket kommuniserer ikke med målgruppa i seg selv, men vil bidra til tiltak som gjør det.	Ansatte i Klæbu kommune	Kommunikasjonsrådgiver kaller inn til møte, og tar initiativ til tiltak	Frist 07.04.2017
Samarbeide med tillitsvalgte for ansatte i Trondheim kommune for innspill på informasjon. Er det f. eks. nødvendig å lage et informasjonsbrev til de ansatte? Partssammensatt utvalg og 10ergruppen kan bistå i kartleggingen av problemstillinger.	Tiltaket kommuniserer ikke med målgruppa i seg selv, men vil bidra til tiltak som gjør det.	Ansatte i Trondheim kommune	Kommunikasjonsrådgiver kaller inn til møte. Representanter fra arbeidsgruppa deltar.	Frist 07.04.2017
Kommunenes Facebook og nettsider støtter opp hverandre. Facebook lenker til aktuelle nyhetssaker, og til sammenslåingens nettside og nyhetsbrev	Etablere nettsidene som primær informasjonskanal.	Innbyggere, ansatte, politikere og media	Kommunikasjonsrådgiver	Jevnlige fra og med høsten 2017
Informasjonsmøte for Klæbus politikere ved behov. Behovet avklares med ordfører i Klæbu	Oppdatere på prosessen, forebygge uro og bekymring	Innbyggere, ansatte, politikere og media	Operativ prosjektleder	Høst 2017, etter overgang til endelig fellesnemnd
Informasjonsmøte med media og journalister, dersom det ansees som nødvendig. Skjer i så fall etablering av	Oppgradere deres kompetanse i hva som skal skje	Media	Kommunikasjonsenheten i Trondheim kommune kan bistå i arrangering av pressemøte	Frist 31.08.17
permanent fellesnemnd. Nyhetsbrev kan muligens fylle dette behovet!				

Eventually, the plan emphasizes on benefitting and establishing websites with relevant and up-to-date information. It also pinpoints that there are always issues that target group could not be responded by websites, and therefore, establishing *direct contact channels* such as mail, telephone, Facebook, etc. are considered (Project administration, 2017). I think the plan reflects the importance of communication nicely, by considering different dimensions of managing project's information and involvement.

The letter of assignment to fylkesmannen

As stated earlier, merger utilizes a support or change management framework. Fylkesmannen is in fact the central actor in the change management framework. They are representing ministry in the county, and are formally responsible to support all merger projects in Sør-Trøndelag including Trondheim-Klæbu case. Fylkesmannen receives the letter of assignment from ministry to help projects, in 2014. I decided to include this letter as it explicitly shows the areas where ministry assigns responsibilities to fylkesmannen. It explains what ministry requires the county governor to help the project with, which is helpful for me to get a more precise understanding of how change management or support framework is defined or should operate.

The letter highlights the central role of fylkesmannen in implementing merger projects, and asks that fylkesmannen cooperate with KS representatives in the region. The letter highlights fylkesmannen's wide knowledge about general challenges in region, in addition to each municipality situation and therefore, fylkesmannen is assigned for *facilitating and coordinating* the merger process. Fylkesmannen will follow merging organizations and offer them support in form of guiding, clarifying, facilitating, and helping with applications and submissions towards ministry. In addition to economic support, ministry will also help with *providing tools and guidelines* to facilitate assessments and processes. An information platform has been already established and municipal information will be revised and developed further on. A range of guidance documents is provided on how merger process should be done. As stated earlier, I will include one of available guidelines in my study. Altogether, I can see that ministry has established a rich support framework for merger projects; providing tools and guidelines based on a lot of former experiences, and supporting fylkesmannen to help project management for creating a continuous and smooth merger process. In addition, KS is also assigned to help the process with their expertise. I think major dimensions and aspects of merger, are well-thought-through by the department.

Lastly, fylkesmannen is asked to *prepare and submit* a report of observations on municipalities project work, and final *assessment and suggestions* for merging projects in county. I have read through the report submitted by county governor in Sør-Trøndelag towards ministry. Except the details about county and the steps that municipalities are gone through, there are some brief recommendations after all. I did not observe any specific issue or suggestion associated with Trondheim-Klæbu merger project, which I believe shows that the merger project has been properly performing so far, compared to what recipe requires.

Project plan for implementing the reform plan in Sør-Trøndelag 2014-2017

This project plan prepared by the fylkesmannen and KS, **concerns the ‘support work’ between these two parties in the period of 2014-2017**. As it is obvious, the project plan is in fact the plan for fylkesmannen and KS on how they will work together towards the mergers in Sør-Trøndelag. The letter of assignment (previous document) gave me the overview of fylkesmannen role determined by ministry. Letter mentioned KS as well, by asking fylkesmannen to establish a good collaboration with them. Current document goes one step deeper and describes what decisions two actors had made to organize their support between 2014 and 2017. Since two organizations are significant central actors in ‘change management framework’, I found this document beneficial to understand a bit deeper how merger’s change management framework has practically functioned in initiation and planning phase. One important matter again, is that municipalities will take the responsibility for local processes and make own decisions (make the recipe own), while fylkesmannen and KS provide only support them.

The *project organization* in this paper comprises important roles: the ministry as assignment giver, fylkesmannen as project responsible and project manager, fylkesmannen’s and KS’s employees and secretary as project employees, and advisory group. Focusing on fylkesmannen and KS responsibilities, the plan concerns with two periods of 2014-2016 and 2017-2020; The initiation and planning phases of mergers, and a brief description on what should be done between 2017 and 2020. Project’s *milestone plan* specifies different tasks ranging from clarifying the reform plan, providing tools and methods, establishing project organization and talking to KS, to implementing different assessments and follow municipalities which decide to merge. According to the plan, between 2014 and 2016, fylkesmannen and KS have assisted and facilitated all the municipalities (including Trondheim and Klæbu) to start assessment process and find and negotiate with neighbor partners. They have summarized and made recommendation for government’s decision making. Summarizing and making recommendation is actually the end for this project plan when a new phase, implementation, start to happen from 2017 and to 2020. Between 2017 and 2020, the two organizations will contribute in implementation phase of projects.

Project plan includes a *risk analysis* within the project’s scope and timeline highlighting the important areas that fylkesmannen and KS should have been informed and alerted. The risk analysis requires fylkesmannen and KS to strive for helping with creating good role assignments between municipalities’ political and administrative leadership, creating open and opportunity-oriented debates, utilizing the presence of municipal employees, business actors in communities, and other important regional and municipal actors, attending communication and information with and through media, providing required financial and human resources for good processes and knowledge base, and keeping entirety-mindset over the projects.

To sum up, one should notify that this document shows fylkesmannen and KS have established and planned a *structured framework* to support merger projects in the county. This is completely in accordance with how the department wishes and asks the two parties to help mergers. I think organizing the support tasks in a timeframe, based on ministry’s milestones, accompanied by risk analysis, has provided a solid base for change management to give a systematic support to

Trondheim and Klæbu in their merging journey. I learned about responsibilities which are appointed to change management framework in initiation and planning phases of Trondheim-Klæbu merger; clarifying the reform plan, introducing tools and methods, assisting and facilitating municipalities to start the assessment process with finding and negotiating neighbor partners, following municipalities which decide to merge, and summarizing and making recommendation for the government. Mentioned information will be utilized when I analyze the change management framework in discussion chapter.

Good advices for building a new, merged municipality

The municipal- and modernization department has assignee two institutions, Telemarksforskning and Deloitte, to research on former merger projects and prepare a reference which could be used by merging municipalities. The assignment is done by two institutes and a comprehensive report, 'Good grip on the new municipality', is prepared. The studies and assessments have been done majorly in January and February 2016 targeting to visualize and summarize processes and tips which could be used in new mergers. Telemarksforskning has summarized the original report into twenty main messages or recommendation for merging municipalities (current document). As the ministry, has utilized the report as a central reference, and based it for developing own guidelines including the one that I chose to take in my study, I wanted to have an overview of the report. The original report is quite comprehensive and in Norwegian. Based on my time for reading through and translating the whole document, I decided to take this summarized version. By doing so, I will have the main factors that the report suggests, and understand the ministry's guidelines basis.

Here I will summarize the twenty main messages that Telemarksforskning and Deloitte have concluded from studying former merger projects. According to Telemarksforskning (2016):

1. There are many plans and implementation tasks to be done in merger projects. Therefore, it is important that organizations start the project work early.
2. It is important to have clear definition and delegation of roles and responsibilities between fellesnemnda, project management, politicians, and arebidsutvalg. It is beneficial to assign a wide power and authority to authorize fellesnemnda to make most of decisions associated with the new organization.
3. This is important to assign the project manager as early as possible. Lack of project manager's existence will make employees frustrated and the project's progress troubled.
4. The merger project is a demanding process and needs project organization to function with desired capabilities and capacity. Project organization should be supplied with required and necessary competencies and capacity. Project manager must have broad experience in municipal work, or large change process.
5. It is advantageous to assign future chief municipal administrator as the project manager merger project. This would help to form the new organization in accordance with how the new chief will lead it. additionally, it could keep the process continues.
6. Trying to keep representatives involved in the whole change process is beneficial. Well-informed representatives with good understanding, could ensure merger progress.

7. Establishing a project progress plan is a precondition that helps all required elements get involved in the change process, well-thought and considered.
8. Communication and information are very important elements in merger projects. The inhabitants and organization employees must have access to timely and correct information. Therefore, a communication and information plan should be prioritized when working with progress plan.
9. A plan could be devised for building culture among inhabitants and employees. This could include activities during the change process that create participation and involvement for building ownership and contribution towards the new municipality.
10. Since a merger does not necessarily get completed when the merger project is finished, it is useful to have an overview over the elements that need to be in place when new organization starts to operate, and the ones that can wait till the new organization is established.
11. It is beneficial to arrange employees into different groups such as theme groups, project groups, etc. to take them across municipality borders for observing the status and development of the new organization.
12. IT/IKT and archive functions are the areas which can require a lot of resources and time to establish a common system. Therefore, an early awareness and focus would assure developing an optimal solution for developing a new common system.
13. Regardless of differences in size between merger parties, it is important to strive for keeping the equality in implementing processes.
14. A well-devised omstillingsplan is needed to clarify how personnel will be transferred. This contribute to create security and calmness in the organizations. The affected and unaffected groups should be recognized, and the way for transferring staff to the new organization, should be clarified as soon as possible.
15. Regarding the new organization, it would be beneficial to assign the future top leaders (in different functions) in place, preferably one year before full merger. (implementation phase)
16. It is preferred that unit managers could be in place around nine months before full merger, so they could participate in planning, organizing, and staff-related issues in the unite they will lead. (implementation phase)
17. It is needed to make wages' differences clear, and map the need for harmonizing the differences.
18. In the project lifecycle, project management should focus on creating effective project progress, larger and stronger professional environment, and better services and community development. This could be positive for realizing the overall benefits of the merger. Therefore, a concrete and early plan for *realizing benefits* and how they will be collected in short- and long-term, could be valuable. (stabilizing the organization)
19. It is important to align the two organizations' budget and economy systems in the last year of merger project. (one of the case's issue, need to find a solution)
20. Other mergers' experiences and knowledge are very advantageous to use.

As stated earlier, abovementioned results gained by Telemarksforsking and Deloitte research on former mergers, are used by ministry to develop merger guidelines. In next section, I will present

one of the guidelines that I decided to include for my study. Therefore, not only I will benefit from current report to analyze my data, but also I will use it to perceive guideline's reflections better.

Establishing new municipalities and counties

As mentioned earlier, one part of the recipe that Trondheim and Klæbu utilize, is a set of guidelines. Among the guideline documents prepared by ministry, I chose current document since it addresses major aspects of merger comprehensively, and is compound and newly revised. As stated in last part, this guideline benefitted from Telemarksforsking and Deliotte report which studied former mergers. In fact, considering that municipal mergers could be different in different dimensions, the document targets common part of such processes. I think this document comprise a rich, precise, and reliable source of information for my focus, as they are built upon government's vast experience.

Starting with timeframe, paper suggests two major brackets of time for merger projects, the initiation and preparation phase (until national decision), and implementation phase from national decision to put the merger into force (figure 4). Regarding the long-time between municipal decision and the national decision by parliament, document suggests this period to be used for preparations and planning. *"It is important that merging municipalities start the project work early as many things can be planned and stated, according to former experiences"* (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017). For the preparation phase, guideline firstly presents associated laws and legislations. I found considering related laws and legislations unnecessary for my purpose because knowing the reasons for merging or legal mandates during the process, could not have any indication from project management standpoint. Therefore, I overlooked the explanations about laws, and go directly to the practical concepts to draw essential notions and examples.

In terms of **leading merger process**, document notifies that merger processes must be managed and steered *by sufficient leadership competencies* in a structured way. Changes in organizations, and transferring employees should be well-managed, and integration between merging organizations must be facilitated. In addition, roles and responsibilities between administrative and political levels, are important to be decided and clarified early in the process (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017). Paper states that authorizations of fellesnemnda, partssammensatte utvalg, arbeidsutvalg, project manager and work groups, are *significant* to be clear for having an effective and good process.

Even though merger roles in Trondheim-Klæbu case are described in project plan, I found it helpful to look at definitions by current guideline as it addresses roles more precisely and comprehensively. According to guideline (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017) **Fellesnemnda** usually consists of chairman(s) in merging organization. Fellesnemnda's authorities should be discussed and granted *through merging municipalities' councils*. It is up to the councils how much fellesnemnda has power to decide and intervene, except preparing the work and economy plans for the first year after project completion, which is an obligation for fellesnemnda to do. When fellesnemnda get appointed with assignments and decision making power, it could delegate its underlying organs the authority to act. Fellesnemnda's task perishes

when new organization's council get elected and start working. *Arbeidsutvalg* is an organ that fellesnemnda could give them some authority for decision makings in simple cases or cases which has not fundamental nature. The committee can have also coordinator role for political and administrative processes that assure vital progress of establishing new organization.

Partssammensatt utvalg (PSU) can be established by organizations for processing cases related to new organization as the employer, and employees. Many merger cases have established work groups and subproject groups in addition to mentioned groups. The guideline emphasizes that, in administrative level, *project manager* is essentially required to *plan, administrate, and move the merger process forward*. It suggests that a project manager who has wide municipal experiences or with large change processes, is often more beneficial. Nevertheless, there have been cases that emphasized on appointing an external project manager (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017). The choice of assigning a project manager from line organizations or externally, varies in different situations. It is important to find the solution which merging parties have the best opportunity for. It is usual that project's project manager is the future chief administrator. This is positive since project manager could be involved to shape the new organization that she or he will lead. It helps to assure best possible transition process. In addition to project management, *sub-project* groups also could be established. In many merger experiences, there have been fairly large number of work groups, project groups, or theme groups who had responsibility to make different service areas ready, and develop proposals for potential solutions for new organization. These groups' experience and expertise could facilitate thinking for their future organization and aligning different service areas. Experience suggests that project management should follow sub-projects and create clear relationships to them (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017).

Related to other aspects of merger, paper proposes some suggestions that could support some dimensions of my discussions. Therefore, I present a small summary of relevant matters here.

In terms of *reports and documents*, guideline suggests that some project management documents should be prepared in early phases of project. Project plan with important milestone, the letter of intention, progress plan, plan for transferring personnel, information plan, economy plan, and plans for building culture and social activities are mentioned. Regarding employees, it is typical in merger projects that some of employees are affected, and some not. *Clear processes and good information* towards all employees are always crucial to have (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017). Relevantly, omstillingsavtale concerning relevant issues to new employer-employee relationship and terms, is highlighted. Regarding significant *success factors*, involving and information availability are the core concepts. It is vital that affected and involved individuals get information as early as possible, and as much as possible. A good involvement in assessments and decision making processes, could contribute the merger to be well accepted and anchored among leaders and employees (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017). The last matter that I would like to take in from the document, is that guideline pinpoint the need for building a *culture* for new organization. It relates to when new organization starts to operate, and all units are merged. Culture is a case that leaders and employees must be aware of, and spend time to get to know each other, and each other's way of working. The paper suggests that building culture should be done among all the

employees and not only most affected ones. There are different ways in merger process to build a common culture; Work groups, social activities, and meetings, are only some examples of doing so. The staff, by knowing each other, have the chance to build a common identity for new organization.

To sum up, I think this document addressed major and vital dimensions of merger case thoughtfully. Specially, the descriptions of role and authority clarifications will supplement my understanding gained through interviews and other documents. In addition, I think ministry's perspective and experiences about communication and involvement, preparing documents, employer-employee issues for new organization, and cultural issues, have all indications for or explain related aspects of Trondheim-Klæbu case. Therefore, mentioned points will help me analyzing the data.

Interviews

In this section, interviews' content will be summarized in terms of 6 themes. As mentioned earlier, the themes are devised either based on the model elements, or based on new indications that I encountered by case which I did not thought about, or considered before.

1. Project management discipline as a beneficial tool to implement merger process

This theme in fact, covers one significant aspect of my conceptual model. As stated in theory chapter, my theoretical discussions concluded that project management could serve as a proper tool for implementing transforming change projects, but with some considerations. Therefore, current theme targets this major part of the model. In order to implement Trondheim-Klæbu merger, a 'project' is established to conceptualize, initiate, organize, and realize the merger change process. Using a project to carry out merger projects, is the way that governmental recipe introduces and asks the municipalities to follow. Based on project's nature, obviously, some aspects and processes of project management are more weighted by recipe. Interviews made it clear that Trondheim and Klæbu organizations also, complied to employ the recipe and focus on highlighted aspects of project management as suggested. Here, I will majorly look at how project management concept is grounded in merger in terms of basics and definitions, and project management practices that are practiced in the case so far.

Starting from the ground, elementary basics of a project are used by merger to categorize the change process into project's process groups; initiation, planning, execution, and closure. In these processes, different project management activities have been performed and are being applied to run the project. From what I learned from interviews, identifying project's requirements, facilitating, coordinating, collaborating, managing stakeholders, assessing risk, and working on project constraints (budget, time, scope), have been some of important project management activities or practices that project management has performed so far. Nevertheless, I can see that case does not apply a pure project management practice. It means that project management knowledge areas (PMI, 2013), tools and methods are not fully taken and utilized. I think two reason could explain the situation. First, none of the project management members, is a professional project manager (educated or experienced with such a process), and second, project's public nature could have diminished some of project management basic requirements since it can be no need for them (legal specifications, political constraints, etc.). I think this is understandable that each project with different characteristics and contextual requirements, would benefit the discipline differently. For this 'merger project', by having help of governmental recipe and considering organizations' capacity, I see that Trondheim-Klæbu case has defined the merger project and described the lifecycle, established project's organization, and developed its profile of required project management processes through abovementioned project management practices.

In more practical setting, interviewees described that by agreeing to merge, Trondheim and Klæbu started negotiations, studies, analysis, and case preparations in *initiation phase*, following what recipe advised regarding initiation and preparation phases. Suggested timeline by ministry has specified the time constraint for project, and guided the two municipalities with keeping a smooth track in preparation or planning phase. Through describing project organization, as

explained earlier, municipalities decided and established their administrative project management group and central project group (project management package) to lead and implement this transforming project. The sub-project areas are also specified as the six organizational functions including the people who are finally responsible to make the change happen. Project organization is an adoption of what recipe pictures, with emphasis on early and properly project management formation. Again, Trondheim-Klæbu merger's project organization is completely driven from the line organizations; Project leaders are top administrative chiefs of the two municipalities and project group members who support the project leaders, are also mostly advisors or managers from line organizations. Figure 6 shows that operative project management level acts according to authorities that political level grant. There are many political papers and decisions that must be in place along the way so that project management could perform project tasks. In *preparation or planning phase*, communication and information exchange, coordination, stakeholder analysis, risk and opportunity analysis, planning, and organizing, have been some of important project management processes and activities so far. Two significant results from this phase include project plan and communication plan. Both plans are worked out and are summarized earlier in current chapter. A progress plan is also prepared by the project management. I should mention that county governor in Sør-Trøndelag, with a broad perspective and experience with all mergers in county, evaluates this merger's milestone plan and progress plan as being more detailed and better done, compared to similar cases in Sør-Trøndelag.

To summarize, considering merger's nature and context, I observed a reasonable application of project management. The project framework is defined as precise as possible, and project management processes are practically happening in form of communications, facilitations, coordination, collaborations, and so on, as structured and focused as project's context tolerates. Interviewees had mainly a positive look at using project management for running this merger. One of interviewees mentioned that it has been a good choice to use a project framework for this merger since it has enabled them to use resources across organizations when needed. This has prevented employment problems, and facilitated using existing knowledge in organizations. It is satisfying that by using a project organization, project management could contribute to the project now, and return their profession once project reaches its objectives. Another point was that having administrative project management level from line organizations, is perceived as beneficial to do different analysis as they know their organizations well. However, there is a worry that project management's limited authority because of political project management influence, could weaken decision making mechanism in project organization.

In terms of using project management techniques and tools, interviewees stated that for doing project management processes and activities, there are no special project tools or method in use. Merely simple and common tools (like Words or Excel) in both organizations are used to plan and control the project's progress. This matter is discussed in project management level and it is decided not to use any specific project tool. One reason is that it may need training which costs project financially and timewise. Thus, it has not been an option yet. However, there is a minor worry for execution phase when other subproject groups add to the project. Then, there could be need to use certain project tools and methods to facilitate controlling processes and progress.

From the level above organizations, county governor sees that applying project management concept or discipline to implement the merger would do the job properly as it has shown good results in former cases. “This is a way that we have done and had done it earlier in mergers. This is not a new one. We have had good experiences from other places!” interview with NN.)

2. Contextual considerations

By this theme, considering model’s contextual elements, I will include significant highlights that interviewees clarified. I will organize contextual considerations into six categories, and summarize relevant content.

Organizational size

This matter is in fact **based on case’s contextual situation**. I learned that organizational size has been an influential element for the case. Therefore, I decided to explain this factor separately.

It is the first and most influential contextual feature in the project, according to interviewees. Interviewees looked at existing organizational size difference as a factor that deviates merger from what recipe advocates. The reason is that by merger, recipe imagines an end and a new start for involved parties. This merger on the other hand, does not mean an end for Trondheim’s organization, but only Klæbu’s organization will stop operating and start functioning in Trondheim organizational structure from 2020. In fact, Trondheim as a municipality will change by the number of inhabitants and amount of land, but the municipal organization will operate in current structure only embracing a number of employees from Klæbu. Interviewees understand this matter as their project’s uniqueness. Obviously, this matter would affect the project and how it should operate from both parties’ point of view. However, from county governor perspective, this is a typical solution for merger projects when merging organizations are highly different in size. Interviewee in fylkesmannen pointed out that it is a useful solution, as this way is much more effective. The logic is to find the best and easiest way to do the merger. In cases with one organization much bigger and professionalized than the other one(s), it is the best and most efficient path to build the new organization on what already exists. Anyhow, from the recipe point of view, all formal and necessary steps that every merger do, must be done by Trondheim and Klæbu as well. I did understand that this issue had been significant in both organizations’ mindset about their merger, however, I agree that the difference in size does not necessarily imply a *unique context or characteristic* for Trondheim-Klæbu case. I think the difference then, will be the scope of project, affected individuals and parts in organizations, and project processes. To me, mentioned points pinpoint to merger’s *unique definitions, specifications, and requirements*, rather than meaning that project is unique itself. For instance, one significant indication of this issue, concerns with handling cultural matter which associate with project’s operations.

To sum up, I think by considering size difference in this case, one should understand that project is supposed to lead a process by which a new organization will be formed where Klæbu’s will end to operate, Trondheim’s structure and employees won’t be significantly affected, most of Klæbu’s municipal employees (outside the city hall) in different positions will continue the same job with different organizational structure, and affected group of 50 to 60 employees from Klæbu will get a similar or new position in Trondheim’s functions. I can see that mentioned description

of merger points to implications *to run the project*. Handling cultural matters is an example. I believe understanding of what organizational size difference have meant for both parties, and project's processes, is an important building block to understand and analyze the case further on.

Culture

As introduced in previous part, one of the elements affecting Trondheim-Klæbu's transforming change project, is their organizational cultural differences (rooted in size difference). I just should clarify that by culture in this thesis, I mean the administrative work routines and procedures, norms and values, and political systems in two organizations.

According to interviewees, organizational cultures are quite different between the two parties. This cultural differences, have shown some reflections for, and in the merger process. Starting by broader perspective, county governor's observations show that it is important to take organizational cultures into account. Organizational cultures affect how two municipalities find their own way that both agree to merge. It means that organizational culture and atmosphere, affect achievement of consensus. Based on county governor's point of view, this is one reason that a long-time is considered for merger projects so that both municipal boards and communities could gain needed consensus. This is an asset that help project's future. "The organizational culture is the ground which merger will be built on" interview with NN). Therefore, it is very important that municipalities get the time to build a good foundation for merger considering the cultural differences.

Now turning to Trondheim and Klæbu sides, through interviews it became clear that organizations' inherent political and administrative cultures are quite different. Trondheim has a much more professionalized organizational culture meaning professionalized work routines and relationships. There is a clear distinction between what politicians will do and what administration has responsibility for. The administration does not take part in political discussions and decision makings. On the other hand, Klæbu's organizational comprises less formal relationships and rely a bit on traditional way of doing tasks. In fact, organization operates on closeness and trust-based environment. For instance, in city council meetings, it is partially usual that chief administrator presents some explanations and suggest decisions to the assembly by mentioning what and why current matter is important. This could mean that politicians do not need to be quite prepared for the meetings as administration would inform them about the issues, according to one interviewee. From another perspective, this could also mean that administration might be a part of political discussions. The ways that information and papers get distributed are also different. One interviewee mentioned as an example, in the first common council meeting in February 2017, meeting is held through what Trondheim's organizational culture requires; the papers are emailed beforehand, it is supposed that participants have read it, and there is no introduction or explanation by the administration about discussion themes or cases in the session. "This is not a quite usual way that relations and discussions are held in Klæbu's organization. They had to sort of lean on having it read the papers in advance and the additions made by politicians were sent out by mail as we usually do in Trondheim. So, there was a big silence!" interview with NN). So, organizations' culture to run the meetings, relationships between politics and administration, making decisions, and

administration's options to intervene by giving comments to politicians for example, are very different. These examples pinpoint to what it will look like in new organization. This could mean that politicians and administrators in Klæbu might feel the difference as a loss; loss of influence.

Considering mentioned points however, there has not been serious worries. Interviews made it clear that *although* politicians and top administrators in Klæbu might feel losing influence and power in new organization with new culture, they have shown proudness and satisfaction by their decision for merging with Trondheim. They are actually willing to give away their responsibilities to Trondheim and say "this is best for all of us" interview with NN). This has been an asset that both organizations have collaborated well so far. It could also refer to the trustful and open culture that Klæbu operates in. I think this pinpoints to another aspect of organizational culture role in merger project; Organizational culture in terms of organization-community relationship. I would like to include this matter because I think it is one way where organizational culture has affected the project positively. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, merger is very significant to Klæbu's community compared to Trondheim. Now looking at organizational culture in terms of norms and values, I learned that relationships between inhabitants, employees, chief administrator, and politicians are described as 'close'. Mixing the importance of merger in Klæbu and its organizational culture elements, one can understand the inclusive involvement of Klæbu's inhabitants in the project, comparing to Trondheim's minor attempt to involve its inhabitants with the merger. In Trondheim, minor information can be found about the merger in community, while Klæbu's city hall has held many meetings with inhabitants to give information. The whole process in Klæbu is based on trust and a good relationship. This close and trustful relationship resulted in almost 70% of positive votes from participants. Clearly, this has facilitated the project itself. The feelings and involvement have resulted to have a good preparation process in Klæbu so that politicians and administrators have been motivated or prepared to sacrifice their influence. I believe this is an important aspect of how organizational culture in Klæbu has affected the project. From another angle, there have been always inhabitants (including some of affected group persons) who actually work in Klæbu, but chosen to live in Trondheim for different reasons (and vice versa). Therefore, from community point of view again, merging into Trondheim does not imply something threatening to Klæbu. "So, the cultural idea and understanding of Klæbu's municipal organization is much more identified at the personal level than at cultural organizational level" interview with NN). Therefore, there has not been serious worries that organizational culture differences would affect the merger project and its objectives. "I think it would be happy marriage" interview with NN).

Being aware of existing cultural differences, and bearing in mind that Klæbu will be incorporated into Trondheim's organization, interviewees clarified that project management strive to be *conscious* about Klæbu's needs and wishes. To do so, information is highlighted significantly. Through communication and information, it is tried to prevent cultural differences affect the merger project or its objectives. Interestingly, in the second round of interviewees, I learned that in political and administrative levels, the members from Klæbu side have tuned the working processes towards Trondheim norms and procedures. It is not only about Klæbu, but I think it shows a mutual cultural understanding. One interviewee mentioned that organizations

have approached the routines to work together (based on Trondheim's culture). I think this shows that communication and information management in initiation and preparation phases, have given sufficient space and time to both parties for understanding cultural differences, and attempting to develop a mutual culture.

Political influence

Merger's political nature is one contextual matter that should be well perceived in this case. This theme is **drawn from the case** and has no representative explanation in my model. It affects different elements of project significantly, from initiation and structuring of project organization, to politically decided time span project's Lifecycle. Based on empirical data, I could recognize three different aspects of political context in the case that concerned interviewees:

Predetermined long lifecycle for project (under reform plan), confusion and anxiety because of the long lifecycle, and the dilemma to run Klæbu's organization throughout the project.

Predetermined project's lifecycle:

The first matter deals with merger's predetermined lifecycle. This time line, suggested by the recipe, is considered for merger to get gradually done. It is expected that Trondheim and Klæbu benefit from this time to work together and merge constantly further. However, according to interviewees, there are some issues associated with this long time. I learned that there is a common agreement in project management, that project's timeframe is *too much longer* than what it should have been. County governor had also observed this concern not only in this merger, but also in other mergers in Sør-Trøndelag. Predetermined time span stands between parliament's decision on initiating mergers in 2014, and completion of projects in January 2020 (each merger has initiated in different time, but all must be finished before 2020). Trondheim and Klæbu have already passed initiating and minor preparation till 2016 and reached municipal agreement in spring 2016. Ever since and until now, preparing different analysis, project plan, communication plan, progress plan, and some other documents, have been focused. This is almost three-year time for initiation and planning phases. And a three-year period is ahead of organizations to implement and close the project. This issue has caused some concerns about project's effectiveness. "It is much too long time for a good merge process" interview with NN). After municipal agreement, as I just mentioned, different analysis and planning processes have been done to explore opportunities and challenges. One obstacle here is that some of the six directors responsible for stated tasks, have been going fast and willing to make the merger happen. Therefore, project managers had to sort of hold those directors back, rather than letting them go ahead and do the merger they are ready for. The reason obviously is that political decisions and official assignments are to be made in the timeline to open the way! Thus, this has hindered merger project to have a smooth and effective process so far. From another angle, this long time of waiting and slowing everything down, means a level of uncertainty about how the tasks should be exactly done. This uncertainty has affected people by frustrating and stressing them. The long time waiting for decisions to be made, means lack of enough information for target individuals. Lack of information of how the merger is going to be implemented, what are future jobs, and so on, is a big issue in project, according to interviewees. The follow-up problem

then, is that mentioned level of anxiety has started to drain Klæbu's competent and intelligent personnel who will say "I don't know where I will be, this takes too long! And then they may apply for a secure job somewhere else and just go! So, it is really difficult" interview with NN). So, obviously, there is a worry about the time span of merger project in different dimensions. "I don't think we are failing in handling people, but if we do it is because it takes so much time and that is a worrying issue!" interview with NN). "why do we need three and a half years to prepare that?" interview with NN). Interestingly, through the second round of interviews, I observed that the dilemmas caused by this long time, is getting bigger in project. One interviewee mentioned that people feel lack of security standing in a very long process. "If we had opportunity, we managed the process within a year. Then, we had better working situation and security. We have not been able to give them this security. It is a too long process" interviewee with NN).

Coming a bit above stated perspective, data shows that merger's long lifecycle so far, has stressed top management as well (reminding their positivity and proudness to merge!). I think following example convey this view nicely. I learned that merger agreement between two parties, comprises building an elderly house in Klæbu among other plans and agreements. Such matters are important to be well- considered and included since from 2020, there will be one community with a united organization. Therefore, both communities' requirements should be thought jointly for an optimum future. Regarding the elderly house case, one interviewee stated that Klæbu has obviously attempted to pressure Trondheim to start planning and operationalizing the elderly house project. This shows that Klæbu wants to assure that fellesnemnd and Trondheim take the responsibility. "They want to feel that something concrete is happening related to merger" interview with NN). Thus, I think one should understand that Klæbu's organization both as a whole, and in individual scale, suffers from unrest and confusion, and need to sense that the merger is happening! Then two additional question are what to do with the anxiety among effected groups, and how draining Klæbu is going to provide services to its inhabitants until the full merger.

Confusion and anxiety:

Regarding the anxiety and confusion, as it is explained earlier, many of municipal employees in Klæbu will continue with the same job and location in new municipality (with new structure), but the ones working at the city hall will get a new, perhaps similar position in new organization at Trondheim. Because of mentioned matters in previous section, at the moment, they do not know where and in which position or role they will work. The uncertain situation has created anxiety, confusion and frustration over time. This matter is quite meaningful for target individuals who have worked in their area for many years are middle-aged and harder to take risk, and therefore, could be more emotionally affected. One ground to amplify the confusion could be explained by their background. Normally in small municipalities, employees do a wide range of tasks as there might be lack of required specialized competencies or capacity. This means that employees are often multi-function which could make the job more interesting. Now by the merger, those at city hall in Klæbu are aware that moving to new organization in Trondheim, could mean a tighter spectrum of tasks in new jobs. This could seem less interesting to them. In addition, less diversity of tasks means that they will work with colleagues who are

possibly more professional in associated job. Even though new colleagues and competent surroundings are perceived positively, according to interviewees, but they could fear whether they will fit in the new job or not. When mentioned feelings is combined with lack of knowledge about what actually is going to happen (caused by project's long lifecycle), the confusion and anxiety are created or even fueled. Therefore, there are worries concerning how employees' expectations may be fulfilled in new organization. The importance of omstillingsavtale which will clarify important matters related to transferring employees' situation and employers' responsibilities, can be highlighted here. The lawyer in central project group is working on the paper and it is hoped that having the document ready would reduce worries and anxiety. I may recall again that project's long life cycle is one reason that mentioned document is not worked-out yet, by slowing processes down.

One example stated by interviewees refers to planning phase where the functional directors were asked to study their areas and come up with merger-related potential challenges and opportunities for their functions. The reports are submitted (in December 2016) to project management, however, project management has not given further instructions (till February 2017) majorly because there is a long time ahead and actual merger is yet to be implemented. I should remind that project management is not fully dedicated to merger. This matter is also another reason for not feedbacking functions. The point here is that, by lack of relevant and timely information, the functional directors as important actors leading personnel, have reacted in two ways; They either are waiting for new instructions which is in fact frustrating, or they have found a gap and created a role for themselves. By having their areas' analysis, the second group "have just analyzed their report and said oh, that means that we have to go about this", "this can be dangerous because it is not a defined role, you can be lucky but you could also be in danger of where project will go" interview with NN). So, this is the idea saying that "it could be most likely that a lot of the administration levels disappear because people are insecure of what the future will bring and they are looking for other opportunities." interview with NN). And now, the third aspect could be described.

Dilemmas to run Klæbu's organization until full merger:

Two parts above, introduced **the third matter** that concerns operation of Klæbu's organization administratively, until the full merger in 2020. In other words, project's long lifecycle which creates frustration, confusion and anxiety among employees, pinpoints to endangered Klæbu's operation because its key personnel have started to leave the organization. "Most likely, some of the services that Klæbu has provided and is providing now for the population ... they must ask Trondheim if they can temporarily, until the official merger, can take over that kind of service and administrate them. Because Klæbu has no longer the ability to govern." Interview with NN). "There is a big risk that a lot of services towards public will be affected negatively during this period of next three years" interview with NN).

To meet such situations, by interviews, I learned that chief administrators can usually make administrative agreements. For instance, Klæbu's administrator could negotiate, request, agrees, and pay Trondheim's organization to perform a service for them. This is a so-called administrative task that chief administrators have authority for, and politicians are not normally

interested. Nevertheless, interviewees have experienced that to make such decisions in the merger, politicians have been excessively involved. Project organization itself shows that project management is directly acting according to the political level. So, for some of tasks and services that Klæbu needs Trondheim to administrate them before full merger, possible administrative opportunities to make agreements and fulfill Klæbu's needs, have been limited because of political level again. Just to remind, in municipal operations, there are many tasks that administration has the power to act on, and politicians do not concern to be part of it. But the nature of this project has made politicians interested to get involved in administrative matters. Relating this contextual feature to project management's application in merger, one stated that "Well, we have to add on the fact that we are not only planning, organizing, managing a project. But we have a political interest level as well!" interview with NN).

To give an example, I learned that Klæbu's culture and education functional manager has left his position and starts a new job in health and welfare function in Trondheim. This has been a personal choice to apply for the job in Trondheim, and not a part of merger. Besides personal interest in the new position, the fact that sooner or later an unknown new job in Trondheim waits for this manager, has motivated him to shift the job. When the director leaves Klæbu's organization, another director fills his position and an employee get the new empty position in Klæbu. Obviously, moving and draining competencies and intelligence in Klæbu's organization, is a challenge. This has consequences for units in Klæbu, and for services' quality. As mentioned earlier, in second round of interviews, I observed a more significant worry in Klæbu. One of interviewees mentioned that there are more competent individuals who have started to find new positions and leave the organization lately. This has challenged the administration to handle this dilemma by internal movements which is not easy to keep functions well-operating. Regarding this issue, project management has met fylkesmannen to find a solution. Interviewee stated that project management requested fylkesmannen to investigate if some of 'formal' processes and requirements could be sort of omitted so that two organizations could act to 'merge' abandoning units as soon as possible. However, the answer they received was that merger process must follow the 'book' or recipe completely, and all required formal steps are needed to be followed. In other words, there has been no opportunity to make the way easier while waiting and developing the new organization.

To sum up, I see that political impact in merger has created a chain of issues that project management need to handle. Project's long lifecycle from the first place, has created anxiety, confusion, and frustration in organization, and followed by Klæbu's problems to run daily operations because target group started to leave the organization. Even to find solutions for mentioned dilemmas, political influence has limited developing remedies, in another level or dimension.

Technical and project skill profile

Through the interviews, I tried to learn how involved employees' technical and project skills have possibly affected the change process. In fact, this is **one of the elements in conceptual model**. Throughout data, generally, I did not observe a major or specific attention towards this matter. I think it could be explained by project's nature and characteristics. Nonetheless, I

learned that to fulfill required skills, in *project management level* and besides the project management members, there are few individuals from Organization and Finance functions working with project management constantly. A communication manager and a lawyer are also employed for the project. Project management's member from organization function (ORG director) has professional background in organization area, and has been involved in change processes before. IT and archive function (having member in merger's project management) have also done very good and big studies so far. It is interesting that since line organization is small, employees in archive unit anticipated that one day a merger would happen to them. Therefore, the archive function in Klæbu is prepared to merger.

To go a little deeper *into functions*, I learned that in education and culture function, there has been more willingness and excitement for merger. According to interviewees, it could be caused by their background as teachers and principals in schools. There is always willingness to change something in this function, "They don't rest and saying we will do same things next month or year" interview with NN). In health function on the other hand, there is normally same routines and jobs. The personnel therefore might feel insecure which may affect how they react to changes. Another point is that communication and information exchange has been better in some functions rather than other areas. For instance, in city development area, there have been many meetings with counterpart in Trondheim. This could be explained by personnel profile constituted of engineers, architects, and planners who naturally tend to clarify plans and discuss the common future. Not all the functions obviously collaborated similarly.

Leadership engagement

This element has been considered in **my conceptual model**, and I did search to find out if this factor has been considered in merger case. In merger project, leadership involvement and support are quite especial I think. Before presenting what interviewees stated, I would like to highlight again that project management are actually top chief administrators of both organizations. The bosses, political project management, are also top politicians of organizations. This means that top leaders are in fact *formally and obligatory* involved and must support the project, because they have actual responsibility. This is a different situation than what project management discipline assumes. Therefore, one should be aware of this fact in merger, and consider it when think about the situation to analyze data.

According to interviewees, in merger project so far, political project managers have truly followed project because their involvement is legally required and they have personal interests as well. Not only Klæbu's municipal leaders have been very informative and engaged in process to give information and clarify the facts towards their employees and inhabitants, but Trondheim's mayor and administrators' involvement has been also a great asset for building merger's fundament. At Klæbu, "I think it has been a good mixture of objectiveness and personal involvement" interview with NN). Overall staff meetings are performed several times at municipal hall in Klæbu inviting employees to get information of status and what will happen next.

Recalling important political and administrative project management linkage in project, I observed that in project management level, project managers have been in contact with their

leader groups, central project group, and subprojects along the way so far. They have held many meetings to exchange information and prepare needed cases for making decision by bosses. I think this shows that administrative and political levels are well-linked and engaged to exchange needed information and act accordingly. This facilitates the information flow towards the functions. In other words, administrative project management are tightly associated to the top level of organizations, and could convey needed information to the function managers downwards. Functional leaders will be then responsible to provide needed information and actions in their areas.

Through the interviews I learned that for improving leadership engagement in change process, early decision on future leaders could facilitate and increase their engagement in project during the merger process. Without a certain picture of new organization, current leaders might feel they are pushed to take responsibility for project today. But if they know that they are future bosses, they may experience more responsibility and ownership to the merger. In that case, their poor merger processes or decisions means they would hurt themselves in future. Therefore, employing future leaders in project management would help improving project's progress itself, and assuring that optimum considerations and thinking are utilized for running the new organization.

Recalling that leadership involvement in Trondheim-Klæbu merger project stems also from 'musts' because of project's nature, fulkesmanne's experience show that not all municipal leaders tended to engage equally in projects. This could depend on political perspective in a municipality, capacities, personal relationships, and so on. Therefore, I would like to highlight that voluntary or conscious involvement is something that leaders establish personally. In Trondheim-Klæbu case, interviewees made it clear that there are good processes and engagement so far, and good personal relations between top leaders have been positively influential of project's processes.

Understanding of Change strategy

Another contextual factor rooted in **my model** concerns employee's understanding of change strategy and goals. Regarding the merger, I tried to learn how extensive merger's strategies are understood and accepted by involved individuals. Just to remind here, merger's main strategy is to create required competencies and capacity in new organization, and enhance inhabitants living condition in both municipalities, especially small Klæbu which might not be able to provide and keep proper quality of services in different functions.

From Klæbu side, interviewees stated that inhabitants, employees, leaders and politicians have a clear understanding of reasons for change, and change's strategies and aims. They are well-oriented that municipality cannot survive financially without transforming or merging to another municipality. Municipality's economy has not been operating as expected, and organization has been open to understand and accept the facts. Target groups are informed that merger targets moving towards a better municipality in general, better economy, and a more professionalized organization with required competencies and capacity to provide services. According to interviews, in education and culture function for example, a full awareness of merger strategy and goals, is in place. There is agreement and willingness for the project to be done.

One point here is that merger's strategy and objectives are perceived more as *opportunities* for affected employees. This is about majority of employees in all functions. Positive mindset that this merger will bring possibilities to develop better competencies and expertise, is built upon the trustful fundament of project and openness about what merger seeks. Inhabitants have also shown their understanding by the referendum. High positive voting for merging among voters shows that they are expecting a stronger organization to offer better services to them. Therefore, change's main strategy is quite clear to Klæbu's organization and involved individuals (even though there might be a small part not wanting the change).

From Trondheim side on the other hand, there has been minor attention and awareness about merger project. It is because Trondheim's organization will continue as current, and not be affected specifically. Mainly, functional directors have actual understanding of merger because they are *responsible* to find solutions for project work in associated units, and fit similar areas together in implementation phase. Nevertheless, it might not be as meaningful for them as it is to their counterparts in Klæbu.

Being aware of what project means and seeks in Klæbu's organization, has facilitated project processes so far. In other words, anchored understanding of merger's strategies not only has facilitated the decision makings and achieving consensus in project, but it has also empowered the project for going forward practically. For instance, during project processes till now, leaders are willing to use possible paths to leave some of administration to Trondheim earlier than project completion, even by knowing that this will restraint their rights 'to say'. "They say let's do it! so in 2020 we have already done some of it ... let's get it done! Merge what can be merged!" interview with NN). As stated earlier, one example is when one of functional managers finds a new job somewhere else, the first reaction is seeking to find out how lacking function/sub function could be merged into Trondheim before full merger. This shows leader's thinking in both organizations. Even though they couldn't establish such a solution, yet, I believe the situations is based on clear awareness of merger strategy and goals. In other words, understanding of change's strategy and goals has been clear enough that both organizations, specially Klæbu, are actively finding ways to do the job as soon as possible.

3. Project managers' roles and skills

Project manager role in transforming change projects, his/her required skills, competencies, and challenges to run a transforming change project, have been central concepts that in my theoretical background. I developed theoretical discussions, made conclusions, and incorporated my findings in conceptual model. Here, I will focus on these fundamental notions and describe what interviewees stated accordingly.

Project manager role – Authority

Merger's brief description of merger's project management is given in case description section. In this part I will address merger's project management's structure, roles, major responsibilities and contributions more comprehensively.

As stated earlier, project management level in merger consists of two layers, a political and an operative layer. The operative project management is majorly affected by political project

management. For interest of this thesis, as I mentioned in methodology and case description, I am focusing on operative project management level with two project managers on top responsible to lead the actual process of transformation.

As stated earlier, project managers are both chief municipal administrators, rådmennene, of municipalities. The recipe emphasizes that employing chief municipal administrators would be a good and effective way for leading merger projects. Through the interviews, I learned that politicians wanted specifically that Klæbu's chief administrator to have a central role to develop new community, and be involved with merger. Besides project managers (and their leader group in administrative project management level), central project group supports project managers mainly by helping with facilitating and coordinating, trying to foresee further requirements and potential challenges, participating in the discussion in project management level, supply project management with needed information, and prepare the cases for further decisions. Considering especial merger's context and characteristics, the central project group attempts to keep the project on track and keep it going. "I think that both the formal and acting project managers need us who work in project to push the work forward" interview with NN). The 'pushing' matter could be looked at from two major points of view. Firstly, project managers are not fully dedicated to this project and have a full job as heads of their respective administrations. And secondly, project is affected by a long timeline that has slowed everything down and limited project management effectivity.

Focusing on project management role and authority, interviewees expressed that they are quite dependent on political level as their decision-making body. Project managers must report to bosses, provide needed documents, participate in discussions, wait for political project management to decide, and act accordingly. In more details, to answer my question on how a decision is made in merger project, I learned that decision making process follows a sort of routine (routine in Trondheim organization); Central project group devise needed document, project managers control the paper, financial unit in Trondheim organization check the paper, project managers receive the document again and if it is acceptable, paper goes to political project management for assessment and decision making. Clearly, for none-fundamental decisions that two project managers find unnecessary to go to politicians, they would make assessments and decisions at project management level. This matter shows merger's project management limited authority. Being so dependent on bosses for gaining authorization to act is an signified aspect of project management role in this case. I did not think about 'authority' element in my model. In fact, the model is based on my thinking that if project manager is leading the transformation, she or he 'has' naturally the authority to do so. Thus, meeting this challenge in merger case, opened a new angle to my thinking.

To complete the image of project management role and scope, interviewees highlighted the six functions' leaders who *have been and will* be responsible to administrate merger in their specific areas. This means that functional managers are project managers' arms to realize the merger. Just to remind again, functions are based on current Trondheim's organizational structure. The leaders there, have been collaborating with their counterparts in Klæbu to map and find the best solutions possible to merge functions together. As mentioned earlier, choosing Trondheim

structure is because Trondheim functions' leaders and employees have a wider spectrum of experience and professional competencies. This is what both municipalities agreed on from the first place; to use Trondheim functions and try to find the best solutions to incorporate Klæbu's functions into Trondheim's current organizational plan.

One interviewee in second round of interviews highlighted functional managers' role as *the third party* to manage the merger. She stated that a lot of works that functional managers have been doing, have not been reflected towards project management properly and frequently. This has had financial implications for project. She mentioned that project management has find it difficult to know the status of completed or ongoing processes in different functions; A project control problem! "So, many things are going on, but people don't think about that we should be told! Some of the joint work should be done in formal correct form! And some of these joint works add cost! So, we have many directors and managers who some of them are doing much, some of them less, and some of them don't think that they should report to us what they are doing" interview with NN). This could have indication to include or engage the directors in project management level, to a certain degree. Regarding the connection between functional managers and project management, as leaders in areas are quite busy with daily responsibilities, an assistant has been considered to facilitate project's work. So, directors and their assistants are directly collaborating with project management. Trondheim's directors as 'employer', will receive some more employees from Klæbu, and it is important that they have connection with associated unions to assure an acceptable merger for both parties. Therefore, they have been busy to collaborate with each other to check out what are challenges to merge functions, what are differences and similarities, and come up with solutions for a gentle and successful merge that people accept. More specifically, in very early phase of project, they had the responsibility to provide information and facts as much as possible. Politicians have used provided information for making decisions. Each area's proficiency contributed to foresee how each function is expected to operate in future, if municipality remains independent or if it merges. After formal decision to merge, directors at both sides collaborated to find out how they are organized, what are differences and similarities. One active function in project process, is IT and data unit for example. They have evaluated programs and systems that both have contract with, and discussed how merger could be done for incorporating Klæbu's IT unit into Trondheim's (it is an expensive part of the merger). Even a comprehensive presentation of assessments is presented to bosses. One example on the other hand, could be educational function in Klæbu that after studies and preparing reports about status, challenges and opportunities, has not been truly engaged for further work. The assessment suggested Klæbu to apply similar or same Trondheim's educational system until full merger. However, because of financial reasons, the suggestion has not been followed and function is working by its own system.

To sum up, the description of project management structure above, shows that a package of operative or administrative project managers plus a central group, are considered to lead the merger project. Functional leaders with leadership skills and professional expertise in their fields, do the job and lead their area in the change process. Project management is highly dependent on, and affected by political level or their bosses. This means project management has had limited authority to decide and act so far. Some indications of project management's limited authority,

are described in previous section. Altogether, even though there are some worries about project managers' role and authority in merger, interviewees look at current project management as a general good package of *planner and doer* of project, but with lack of sufficient power. I want to recall recipe's suggestion for employing future organization chief administrator as merger's project manager, to facilitate project's processes. According to one of interviewees, besides facilitating project requirements, this selection could also bring security for fellesnemnda thinking that project management is stronger and protective of future organization. This could mean less interference by political level. So, project administration become easier.

Skills and competences

Regarding skills and competences, project management members with broad and long managerial background and experiences, are well-equipped with wise leadership skills and capabilities. As mentioned earlier, project management is driven from line organizations, are familiar with their organizations, and knowledgeable in public sector. "All together we have a lot of experience in change processes and leadership and I think our case is so unique that is probably an answer to that we haven't chosen any model for change management or project management" interview with NN). However, no one in project management group is specifically a 'project manager' or a 'change manager'. Interviewees stated that they have been exposed to organizational developments and changes in different projects before, but not involved as a project manager in large organizational transformations like the merger. From project managers' backgrounds and professional experiences, I perceive that project is generally benefiting from a project management level who are well anchored in organizations, and have qualified leadership skills and competencies. This is a strongpoint in the project I think. However, they might lack project management expertise to a degree, as most of my interviewees expressed their worries for lacking 'a project manager' to structure the work. One interviewee expressed that project is full of competency to run municipality, write required papers and so on, but "To be quiet frank, I think this project is lacking a skilled project management for changes like this!". And "Project management in merge and organizational changes, that is something we should have had!" interview with NN). By having existing strong skills to find out organizations' differences, merger requirements, and discuss solutions, the issue is "when you have all those questions, you also need someone to decide what to do!" and "Then you are left with so-called project management which is political established project management, and then you have the operative project managers, they have no time to follow up that. So, in between them at the moment, there are no one! And I think that will create tension. We need a project manager to facilitate the work." interview with NN). Thus, it is wished to have professional project manager as I observed common worries conveying current project management could stumble any time in this merger, especially when handling people in the process. I think mentioned statements pinpoint to need for someone as a daily project manager who knows what to do in the change process, organize project tasks, make things happen, follow project and take care of progress. In second round of interviews by passing more than two months, I learned that in conjunction of project manager skill and dedication issues, project management level feels even more that a fulltime project manager with required skills, is vital to have. Stated example earlier, project control problem, is one of the dilemmas that show project management needs disciplined project management skills

and competences. “We need a fulltime coordinator, more like having project running competences.” interview with NN). One shouldn’t forget that project’s long lifecycle is another aspect affecting control problem. One interviewee explained that since project has a long time towards closure, there is a mindset saying “it is too early, we cannot do something that make people to expect something, that will not happen for many years ... something that is happening here is not paper work, here is something about how decision must get happen that affect almost 15000 people. I think they should face the fact and hire someone with right competence.” Interview with NN). Altogether, interviews showed a common perception about project management skills and competences in merger; There are a lot of leadership competences, but project moderately lacks project management skills to structure, act, and control the merger.

As last point, I should highlight that looking from a level above to this project, county governor’s observation shows a good project management practice in Trondheim-Klæbu merger case. Specially, project management’s ability to plan ‘detailed and instructive milestone’ and progress plans for the project. I think fylkesmannen perspective leaves a room between what state level expects and advises merging organizations to perform, and real challenges on project management ground in handling competency-related issues. Although the long time considered for merger could be the space where merger will ‘eventually’ happen within, but I believe it could not diminish or hide project management struggle to manage project when lacks required competences. I wished that I had sufficient time to go and see some other mergers, to understand fylkesmannen’s comparison better. This needs further research which is beyond my thesis time limitations.

Investment in project management - Dedication

The last aspect in this section addressed by interviews, discloses that politicians in fellesnemnda, do not tend to invest on administrating the change project. They wished that project’s administration could be done by existing resources. I should clarify that in managing project, project managers absolutely could ask bosses to support financially for employing experts when it is really required. Then, fellesnemnda studies, decides and grants accordingly. For instance, as stated earlier, two specific persons are employed to help project management fulfilling project’s requirements; one communication manager, and a lawyer. The lawyer is working on omstillingsavtale, which is basically a consensus paper put up by administration and the unions on how Trondheim and Klæbu would work when administrative posts and workplaces will merge. This is a very determinative paper to be in place for a successful merger. The communication manager has been employed to work on communication plan. Even by having experts in mentioned areas who help existing project management, there is still worries about needed technical skills that project need to be administrated with; As stated in last part, worries for structuring, decision makings, and making project truly happen. One thinking is that, bosses could have underestimated the administrative work; “I think it is going to be more expensive than what they think” interview with NN). Another important point here is that none of project management members works fulltime with merger. Project is only a part of their jobs and there is no dedicated project manager. According to interviews, this fact not only affected project’s performance, but also it has meant project management feeling a little extra pressure on them. Project managers have many other matters to work with, and this extra work could be a burden. I

should mention that since merger is affecting mainly Klæbu, many of activities and management tasks there, are towards the merger with Trondheim. However, it still doesn't mean that operative project manager, Klæbu's chief municipal administrator, is fully focused on the project. To sum up, working part time with merger is a challenge that almost all my interviewees referred to, and expressed their thinking based on their experience. They clarified that there is a need for someone to work *fulltime* with merger, take care of processes, and make sure that project move forward. "This could be a better solution to realize the merger process" interview with NN). So, this matter concerns having part time project managers from line organizations. One can see that besides that project managers might lack needed project competencies, being partially focused on project is another dilemma for project processes.

4. Communication and information

Another significant element that I established in **my model**, addresses how information and communication should be handled in transforming change projects. When I started the interviews, communication **became more and more** important based on what case had experienced. Interviews and documents made it clear that communication and information exchange is a huge concept in merge project, and has multi-dimension effects. Here I will describe related empirical data considering different aspects of merger communication.

Communication and information

In merger project, communication has been initiated and utilized from very early steps towards the agreement. The change management framework has played facilitator role in between. Good communication plus good personal relations between organizations' leaders has eased initial and further agreements between the two, with minor conflicts. Towards or between different groups, different communicative channels have been used for distributing and exchanging information; website, meetings, newspapers, etc. It should be mentioned that using direct communication and oral information exchange, is one main approach to communicate with thinking about importance of human aspects. "It is important to say it, to show yourself when you speak about it" interview with NN). It is very important to meet, talk, and supplement formal information. Internally, Klæbu's mayor and chief administrator have held many meetings with employees, specifically affected group, to inform them about status and coming events. Therefore, merger has not been a surprise for the employees. It has been talked about, and when municipal decision to merge was made, all information at the time, was given to employees simultaneously. Two separate days were chosen to cover 90-95% of employees. In addition, 'merger case' has been a part of every municipal meeting at Klæbu, so far. There is a trustful and open communication there. Chief administrator in Klæbu has his meetings with leader group every month where they communicate and discuss. The same get performed in Trondheim and then, results of those meetings with leader groups in each side, would be sent to administrative project management. Eventually, project management systematize the information for further work. Project management is well-aware of communication's significance for project progress and success.

Communication between politicians from both sides, has been also progressed well. They invite each other to discuss for decision makings. The unions for employees are also finding each other. As mentioned earlier, partssammensatt utvalg level in project management organization,

comprises some of organizations' politicians and unions' leaders. This platform makes needed communication and information exchange possible for members to sit together every month as a formal body (with only advisory function), discuss employees' issues, and express their views to fellesnemnda. Project management has also had meetings with unions since initiation several times, and informed them on all stages. "The ten most important union leaders are sitting in meetings with one of the top administrators once a month to get and give information" interview with NN). So, communication between mentioned groups are happening in different platforms and forms. It means that parties on both sides have found each other and established communication channels, like unions. Regarding Trondheim's internal communication about merger, minor attempts are done since employees are not specifically affected by the merger.

Interviewees clarified that even though "main thinking was to keep information to everybody as consistent as possible" interview with NN), there are some worries that affected people do not have actually full understanding of change process stages, and what different steps will bring for them; For example, information on roles are still to be cleared and related information is under discussions by developing omstillingsavtale. By having paper ready, many points regarding transferring affected employees, would be clear and get distributed. I think this means that regardless of communication and information management attempts so far, employees could have received more relevant and precise information they needed. "There is a big need for information in the project among affected groups" interview with NN). It is expected that communication plan could contribute clarifying aspects of merger so that more information become available for employees. More specifically, it is hoped that structuring and working on communication and having fellesnemnda to make decisions, could provide more precise and timely information for employees. When managers have more information, they could distribute relevant information to their employees, and that is what truly needed. "if your boss gives you the message, it has to do with you. You are considering it in a very different way than all the other loose information going around" interview with NN). Here, lack of proper and detailed project plan on how tasks will be done, could be highlighted (limited possibility to produce information).

One of interviewees pinpointed to another argument related to communication. He stated that they have a lot of issues that they are not aware of solutions; many questions towards fylkesmannen and department. He stated that "If we had a map to know what to do, we could give better information to employees. If we had recipe earlier, developed by department, it would have been better. To explain and tell us what and how to do it. It could affect the project positively" interviewee with NN). Obviously, this shows importance of interconnection between different actors in merger project. The change management readiness and performance has in fact affected project management operations. So, I want to highlight how project's performance is affected fundamentally by actors collaborating to produce and distribute needed information. Altogether so far, I see that communication and information management are thoughtfully and systematically established in merger project. However, there are some challenges showing rooms for improvement. Communication's highlighted in the case added an extra importance to my primary theoretical discussions. I tried to map described points that I summarized from data, to illustrate how communication system operates in the case (figure 7). I asked one of interviewees

to look at it and check my perception of communication in merger. She checked the model and confirmed that the map presents how communication is practically functioning.

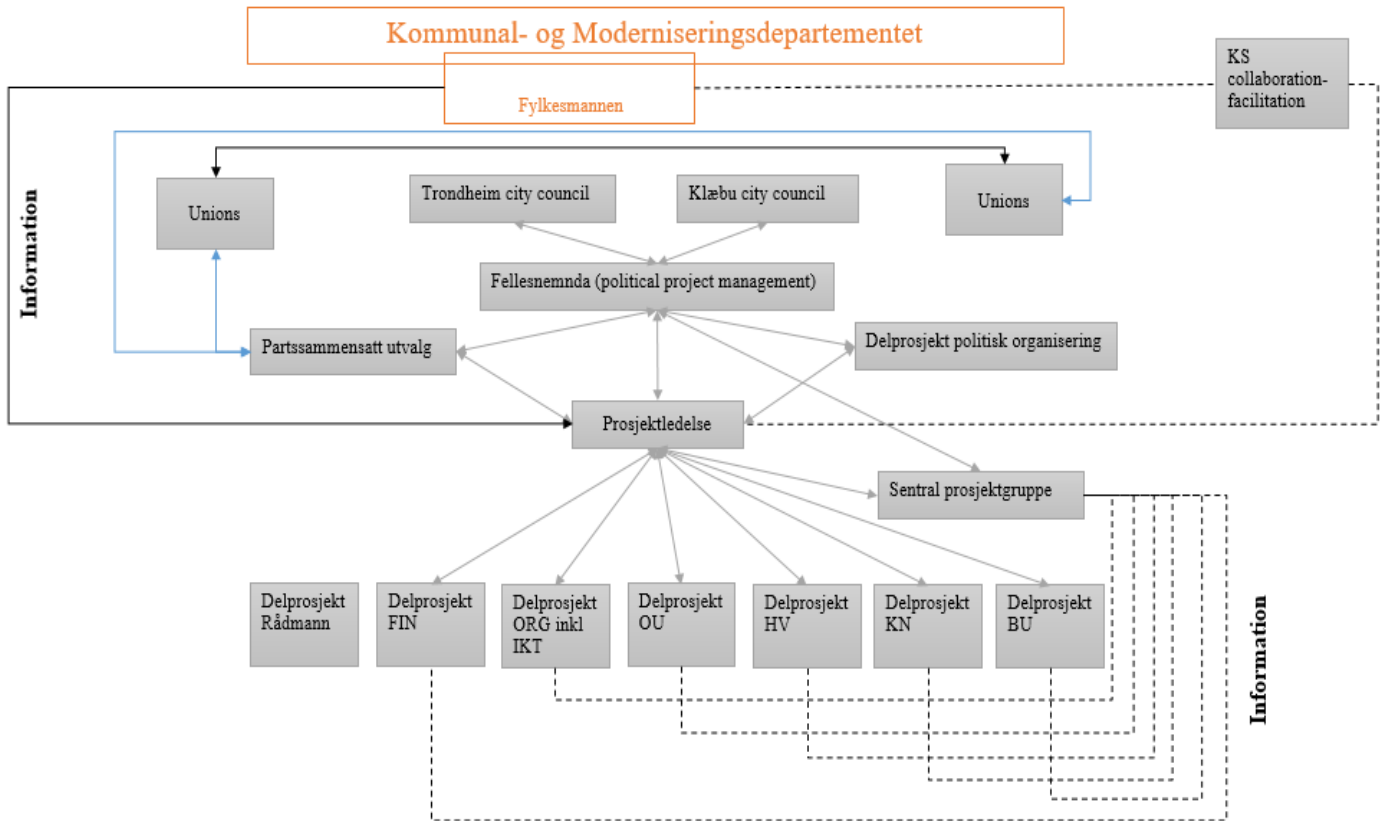


Figure 7 Merger's communication map

In my point, I want to highlight that communication and information exchange between counterparts has been better in some functions rather than others, according to interviews. For instance, in city development area, there have been many meetings with Trondheim's counterpart. It could imply that personnel professional profile affects how they establish communication. In this example engineers, architects, and planners have been *concerned* to clarify plans, and discuss future tasks. Not all the functions obviously communicated similarly.

The communication plan

The communication plan content is summarized in document section of current chapter. Since my interviewees expressed their ideas about the plan, I decided to present their thinking about having it and the ways it could help them in their jobs, separately here.

As stated earlier, to fulfill project's communication requirements, a communication plan is worked out by a communication manager. Interviewees explained that communication is focused in three aspects; towards community, politicians, and employees while those 50~60 affected employees at Klæbu's city hall are the most important target group to communicate with. By the plan, project management tries to care and anticipate potential challenges for employees and

inhabitants, mostly in Klæbu, and minorly in Trondheim. This would help project management to be structured to communicate and proceed the project which reducing uncertainty for “the ones that need to be informed or know when things will happen ... they could say that’s ok, I can relax. There is someone working on it and I will have more information later at a particular date or time. I would accept that as good, but I wouldn’t accept not knowing anything!” interview with NN). In fact, this is the point associated with organizational resistance that recipe advocates to be hindered through communication and information availability. The project has not experienced specific resistance so far, but tries to keep communication and involvement smoothly to prevent any trouble in that sense. This concept is a constant part of seminars provided by ministry emphasizing how important it is to foresee the needs of people to get the right information. “I have actually been communication manager myself here in Trondheim, I know that the lack of communication, lack of information can kill any project!” interview with NN).

The summary of interviews showed that communication and information distribution are perceived as a core element in merge project. Different channels have been and are utilized to establish communication and exchange information. Politicians in each organization have the municipal meetings where a part of meeting deals with the merger project. The chief administrators have their own meetings with leader groups in each organization and send out results of what they discussed to project management. Project managers have meetings with fellesnemnda, and central project group. Politicians in two organizations have found each other and have meetings. And Unions are also in contact. As it is obvious, different information types are circulating through various channels and forms (figure 7). This has kept employees oriented and involved. Above all, for a systematic and structure communication and information management, project benefits from a communication manager who has prepared the plan, and contribute the actual information management. Considering described plans and actions above, and focusing on communication built on openness and two-sided dialogue, again, there is still expectation for better communication. “In this kind of organizational mergers, information is never enough. It is always too little. But at least I think, giving the time aspect, I would be very surprised that people think they have gotten too little information!” interview with NN).

5. Change management framework

Change management framework is devised hand in hand with project manager in **the conceptual model** (figure 3). This element has roots in my theoretical discussions and conclusions. As stated earlier, Trondheim-Klæbu benefits from a change management framework supporting the case. A brief introduction is already given in case description and here I will address this element comprehensively with new dimensions.

As mentioned, the support framework comprises a set of aids in different dimensions and forms, provided by ministry. By interviews and documents that I read through, I learned that in merger’s support framework, which I perceived as a change management framework, associated *laws and circulars* are gathered that clarify what to do and what does the laws mean. Several *guideline documents* are provided based on academic and empirical researches. And *fylkesmannen and KS* are assigned as they have required experiences and expertise based on

former transforming change processes. Altogether, change framework is supporting merger, like a center of help. Fylkesmannen has a broad and deep experience with major municipal dimensions in associated county, and KS has expertise in different organizational scales. Not to forget, as a part of framework, some seminars have been actually provided by collaboration of fylkesmannen in the county and the KS, among other contributors. The seminars offered to bring fresh experiences from former merger cases by giving opportunity to those project managers to tell their story for new merger's project managers. The opening/starting seminar is held in two days, 31. October and 1. November 2016. The one about employer's responsibility in omstillingsavtale and how to build common culture and identity is held in January 2017. And the seminar about ownership, inter-municipal collaboration, and public purchasing with mergers, is held in March 2017. The last seminar about goals and visions for new municipality, and realizing or stabilizing benefits, will be held in April 2017. So, this is a useful supportive platform to give what other municipal organizations have learned about the process itself, success factors, and challenges. This could clarify what different stages truly mean in the change project.

Among different parts of the recipe as I sated earlier in my paper, I perceived that fylkesmannen and KS representatives in the county, specifically fylkesmannen so far, are central actors in change management framework. This is the place for project management to get insights and ask questions face to face. Through the interviews, I understood that project management has specifically benefitted from the fylkesmannen's support in initiation and planning phases, and KS has been alongside with the seminars. But fylkesmannen has been the focal point to facilitate processes, and give advices to project management when needed. I also learned that fylkesmannen's mission to support the project has officially finished and from now on, this is the KS who should provide the framework for helping Trondheim and Klæbu towards closure. Interestingly, I understood that fylkesmannen *would like* to remain supporting the merger, regardless of their mission completion. According to interviewee at fylkesmannen, the good personal relations and well-functioning collaborations are reasons that fylkesmannen tends to stay and support. To summarize, there are fylkesmannen and KS representatives in county who are fixed references in 'change management framework' with required knowledge and experiences on how municipal change processes must and wished to happen. They have long experiences in political processes and have a broad and overall perspective. Interviewees had the same understanding of this concept, and looked at these two bodies as a system to receive advices and help. Again, I should mention that none of the two organizations can or should make any decision in merger project, but they are only to support the project and express their opinion when needed.

Focusing on fylkesmannen role so far, I would like to give a more detailed description on how they have supported the merger. Fylkesmannen in Sør-Trøndelag as the bridge between the government and municipalities, has got the instructions and assignment to help the municipalities in county who are merging. According to interviews, Fylkesmannen in Sør-Trøndelag has a great range of experience and insight over different dimensions in county. They have been observing the municipalities in all actions for many years. In terms of the merger case, fylkesmannen started its assignment by asking municipalities to study their status and negotiate with their neighbor municipalities. I think by doing so, fylkesmannen has in fact translated merger's

visions and strategies. Since then, follow-up support is provided; informative meetings, conferences, answering questions, giving advices, facilitating communication upwards, helping with legal paper work, etc. I should highlight that when two municipalities established their project management groups and project plan, required support has entered in a new dimension. The questions are now more about ‘what to do? and how to do?’ meaning the actual merger work, question about juristic issues and what laws require to be in place, and so on. I believe this also refers to change management framework translating requirements and clarifying issues that are new to project management (have little knowledge about). According to interviewee at fylkesmannen, there are more formal processes under focus now, and project managers need help with guidance on what and how to prepare documents and submit to government. Another point in the framework is a ‘network’ established by fylkesmannen where project managers of merging municipalities can formally come together and establish relations. There are network meetings where project managers talk about experiences and exchange their knowledge. There are many meetings going on with different involved groups.

At this point, I want to highlight the ‘project plan’ (Fylkesmannen og KS, 2014) established by fylkesmannen and KS on how these two actors should work together for supporting mergers. The project plan is presented in documents section. Just to remind, the plan concerns collaborating and performing the ‘support’ for merger projects. It covers the way that is agreed for doing mergers in Sør-Trøndelag. I think the most important message the plan has for my focus is fylkesmannen’ and KS’s idea of devising such a plan for helping merger in different times in a concrete and systematic way. This shows the formality of change management existence, and the concrete agenda for providing required help. With this introduction, I will now summarize what interviewees expressed about this ‘change management framework’ available for project.

From municipalities’ point of view, fylkesmannen’s support has been required and very beneficial. Interviewees made it clear that good relationships and atmosphere exist between change and project management levels. Fylkesmannen’s advisors with a lot of experience in region are quite trusted and knowledgeable for project management to go to and ask. Another point is that individuals in fylkesmannen are perceived as very service minded and supportive, personally with a good attitude. “They are the ones that I would ask. Is this correct or can we do this also? Or can we go another path than the law recommends in this particular case?” interview with NN). And if needed, they would check with ministry which I think signifies change framework’s facilitator role especially between top level or government and merging organization or project management. The support has facilitated and kept change process continues from early initiation. Considering mentioned positive experiences, one interviewee at Klæbu mentioned that project has encountered some obstacles so far which have challenged project management. He stated that “I am sure the department had not seen all these challenges in the period between today and 2020. They have been focusing on organizations, not the obstacles in the period!” interview with NN). He stated that if project managers could have had more ‘tools in their bags’, they could be more flexible to manage the merger project, asking such matters take time. For instance, regarding some issues like procurement requirements during the project lifecycle, project management has submitted a number of questions towards ministry through fylkesmannen. I think mentioned example implies two aspects; one highlights

fylkesmannen's facilitator role, as expected. But the other one could pinpoint to the recipe inclusiveness or completeness. I mean, this example could mean that a more-equipped change management framework, like a tool center or change mgmt. office, could have provided better and more timely contribution to merger. As stated situations disclosed so far, I think one should note that project management has been obviously challenged by more project or technical matters, than leadership skills.

Altogether, I observed that mentioned combination can be confidently perceived as the support channel for project which assists merging organizations and project managers to understand better and implement the change process properly. Focusing on fylkesmannen and KS, I see that both organizations have a lot of experience in different municipal dimensions and similar change processes. Fylkesmannen and KS have established a plan structuring their support and describing project work in Sør-Trøndelag. They have offered advices and help to merger in different dimensions; from translation of merger goals and strategies, to guiding practical tasks such as preparing formal papers for submission. This clearly means that they guide or facilitate the tasks that project management has inadequate insight or competency to do. One core point is the good and trustful relationships between merging organizations and change framework which assure a beneficial dialogue between parties. Ever since project is initiated, fylkesmannen has been highly involved, and KS has collaborated to a degree. From now on, KS is officially responsible to aid the project for further work, while fylkesmannen will still accompany the merger but less than before. Project management has found this framework very good and supportive so far. Nevertheless, there are rooms in change management framework where project management wishes for broader support.

6. Post-project phase

The last significant factor which I discussed and incorporated **in my model**, concerns with transformation change projects post project requirements. It addresses the question of if transforming change projects could be really 'end' in a specific end date, or there a post-project phase is required to address possible follow-up tasks. In Trondheim-Klæbu merger case, I asked if project management could *expect* that project gets finished by January 2020, or if they could imagine some follow-ups for. I should mention here that following information are how interviewees *expect or propose*, not based on what actually has happened.

Through the interviews, I learned about a common expectation or idea that project's tasks could be done even before completion data. In fact, a lot of merger implementation tasks are planned to be done between 2017 and 2019, and 2019 is about closing the merger. On the other hand, interviewees stated that some loose ends could be expected. They made it clear that even though merger in all functions is expected to finish even before completion date, there would be some areas or tasks that need some follow-up work. For instance, in the finance unit, there are some challenges to merge organizations' pension systems. Small Klæbu municipality use different arrangements for their employees' pension to simplify the process, while big Trondheim municipality has different way of doing that. For full merger, both people who are already pensioners from municipal jobs in Klæbu and people who still work belonging to Klæbu's organization, are going to be transferred into the pension company of Trondheim and that will

cost a lot. Uniting pension systems cannot come into force till after 2020. So, “that would be one loose end. There are probably more of them I think. There is certainly going to be something that hasn’t been finished. But, on the other hand there would be a lot of things that are finished before 2020 too.” interview with NN). According to one of interviewees, another example could be related to archiving systems. It could be necessary to have some small training projects for Klæbu’s archive employees who are going to work with new system and instructions in Trondheim. So, there could be several places that they should work further with, some follow ups.

In addition, from a more humane perspective, interviewees expressed their concern about how Klæbu’s employees could be *integrated* with project completion? Could we say the project is finished then, when one goal is to create a better organization for *both* organizations’ employees? In other words, by project being ‘completed’, how confident organizations could be that a new culture is made among employees; The concern about how integrated Klæbu’s employees would be in the new organization when they get new jobs with new tasks and colleagues. It is the question of if the merger could be completed so that employees get transferred acceptably, when merger put them in a big environment but in small functional boxes.

To sum up, I did not observe significant concerns or planning for stabilizing new organization after 2020. There is a common expectation that most of technical and practical project tasks will be done even before reaching completion date. But, there are some ‘loose ends’ that could require follow-ups or small projects to assure merger results get achieved. In other words, interviewees proposed some technical follow-ups for the merger, because of different reasons. But, I want to highlight the worries concerning humane aspect of merger when thinking about completion of project. I think project’s long lifecycle should be emphasized here as well. One thinking that I observed is that project’s long lifecycle could hypothetically reduce the probability of post-project requirements. This period gives organizations sufficient opportunity that identical counterparts find each other, collaborate, and build a common understanding and project work together. To build a united organization gradually! But still, it remains to merger’s implementation and closure phases to prove to what extent post-project idea could be valid in this case.

5. Discussion and analysis

In this chapter, I will analyze empirical data and develop discussions. In fact, I am approaching to find out how my model operates or has indications in Trondheim-Klæbu merger setting. Through the analysis, I will be focused on similarities, differences, deviations, characteristics, and potential gaps that my model might have compared to what is being carried on in the merger case.

So far, theoretical background of the model became described in theory chapter earlier. **Four themes** are used to summarize **theoretical argumentations**; projects to implement transforming change, project's shortages to implement transforming change properly, project manager role in transforming change projects and his or her obstacles, and transforming change success factors. **Empirical data** also became summarized and organized in **six major themes** based on model's fundamentals, and new impulses that surfaced by empirical data. For this chapter, **discussion and analysis**, I have designed my discussions into **four major themes**; (1) project management as a right tool to implement transformation change process, (2) contextual considerations including culture, technical and project management skills, organization and change strategy, leadership engagement and support, and post-project phase in transforming change project (3) project manager in transforming change project, including role and required skills and competences, project manager authority – political influence, and communication (4) change management framework. I structured stated four themes to develop relevant and clear argumentations by cutting through the data. This structure could also help me to prevent potential repetitions. I just should mention that two of the sub-themes in contextual considerations' theme including *political influence-political project management, and communication*, are discussed under 'project manager role' theme, as these two contextual sub-themes had direct implications for merger's project managers. Discussions and analysis of data through stated themes, will result in my conclusions which will affect the conceptual model eventually.

1. Project management as a right tool to implement transforming change process
2. Contextual considerations
 - Culture
 - Technical and project skills
 - Leadership engagement and support
 - Understanding the change strategy
 - And post-project phase in transforming change projects
3. Project manager in the transforming change projects
 - Role and required skills and competences
 - Project manager Authority-Political influence (explored in the case)
 - ◆ Project management authority
 - ◆ Anxiety and confusion
 - ◆ Running organizations throughout the project's lifecycle
 - Communication – Implications for project manager (highlighted by the case)
4. change management framework

1. Project management as a right tool to implement transforming change process

In first theme of analyzing data, I will look at the essence of my conceptual model suggesting project and project management as reasonably right tool to implement transforming change projects. Just to emphasize again, applying project management framework in model (figure 3), concerns project management as the concept or discipline, rather than its detailed knowledge areas or methods. Therefore, I am focused majorly on entirety of project management discipline, but will track project management basics and tools in order to understand and support discussions about mentioned focus. As stated in new theory section, entering project management practices slightly to my theory, is because merger case has been challenged in some PM areas.

In conceptual model, I discussed and concluded that projects could be used to carry out multi-level, multi-dimensional, complex, and deep change processes which engage very many individuals in organization in various levels. The model suggests the 'project' as a separate, legitimate, and dedicated unit, to run and manage a transforming change process. Project is the organization with its fundamentals, competency sources and frameworks that provides needed structure, capacity, tools and methods such as plans, schedules, risk management, budget management, resource allocations, stakeholder management, etc., to manage a change process. One important notion is project's small size, and its flexibility beyond current organization's paradigm and procedures, which enables it to cross organization's borders. This means that project could bring change's needed resources from different inner and outer areas of organization together in a legitimate platform to realize change's processes. Altogether, the model discloses that project and project management provide required unit of initiating, planning, organizing, managing, implementing and controlling transforming change process, however with some shortages. The shortages are illustrated by different elements in model, and will be associated with empirical data to get practically examined. Each contextual element will be separately argued in following parts of chapter.

Now turning to empirical data, in merger case between Trondheim and Klæbu, data shows that project and project management discipline are especially used to initiate, plan, and implement the change process. Project's characteristics as being complicated, demanding, and broad, are well- thought and considered when project management is chosen to be applied. A limited period of time (project lifecycle) and a project management unit are defined and assigned to the merger. Just to mention, I observed that even though no one in project management level has professional project management background, project management discipline or concept is generally and not literally perceived, a reasonable and oriented understanding of the discipline is established and recipe plays as the major reference for relevant concepts. Focusing on project application in case, project is divided into initiation, preparation and planning, implementation, and closure phases. Interviews describe this way as a smart choice as project has gathered needed skills and competencies across the organization for a limited period of time, and given a framework to structure the change process. Regarding employing different project management methods and activities, I should mention that some of practices have been more focused than the others. I looked at this matter by considering *two facts*; One consideration is that merger does not benefit from a professional and complete project management practice. It means that even though

Trondheim and Klæbu are using a project management framework, its application is offered, guided, carried out, and limited to two organizations' capacity, and the materials available to them by government. The second fact is the nature and context of this project. The project is political and in public sector. This means that many elements in project are predetermined, and this might have diminished some of the project management requirements because there is simply no need for those to be considered, or even are not even possible to perform (political constraints, legality issues, etc.). By having mentioned considerations, I found it reasonable that some of project management processes are more highlighted in this case.

Looking into project's phases, according to empirical data, in initiation and planning phases, some of project management tasks and activities have been performed. The tasks range from facilitating, coordinating, collaborating, managing stakeholders, analyzing risks, to planning budget, time, scope, and communication. From initiation to planning steps, different analyzes have been done by project management and many documents and reports are prepared. More specifically, following the overall milestones for project, a project plan, progress plan, communication plan, and several other reports are worked out. This is in accordance to what the recipe advises organizations to do; starting early in process and preparing project progress plan which is considered as a precondition contributing to have a good overview of needed elements and devising other necessary plans like project budget (Telemarksforsking, 2016). Regarding project management tools, I learned that in initiation and planning phases, there has not been any specific project tools in use so far, and according to the data, it is not potential that any tools will get used in further phases.

Merger's application of project management to run the change process is how government recipe asks and advises municipalities to follow when realizing a merger process. The county governor with state level overview of merger project, and having a lot of experiences from former similar projects, looks at applying project management to merger projects as a very good solution. Former merger experiences have shown very good results, and Trondheim-Klæbu case is expected to have similar results. According to interviewee at fylkesmannen, Trondheim and Klæbu have done good processes so far, compared to other merger projects in the county; with preparing detailed milestone plan, progress plan, and communication plan.

Having theoretical background of the model, and mentioned points from data, I see that my discussion and conclusion to consider a project and project management discipline for implementing a transforming change process, like a merger, is an illustration of what is suggested and happening in the case. The bones of project management discipline to define a project through time, budget, and quality of deliverables constraints, are obviously established in the case. Here, I refer specifically to interviewees that looked at this application positively. They described the project as a flexible unit which contributed organizations to have a framework for merger, prevent employment problems, and facilitate using organizational resources when it is needed. Project organization is practically and systematically formed, and project management practices various activities from different knowledge areas; majorly planning, organizing, managing, coordinating, controlling, and collaborating (focused knowledge areas: stakeholder management, communication management, cost management, time management, scope

management, risk management). Not to forget, fylkesmannen perspective and experience explicitly suggested project management as a good solution to merger processes. Clearly, mentioned points in data sponsors major argumentation in conceptual background.

Regarding the point that merger is not using any specific project tool or methods for carrying out project tasks, I think the reason could be found in former experiences by recipe. Public and political nature of the project could be another reason; In municipal sector, many tasks and processes get done fairly similar, and humane dimension of the tasks is often in focus. Therefore, there are predictable major aspects for merger projects, like planning for merging job positions, planning how systems will be merged, and so on. One other point could be project's lifecycle which is quite long to develop smooth agreements and integration. This is different to a merger process between two private companies, which would perhaps get done as quick and concrete as possible, to increase efficiency optimally. So, in the case here, I think that minor need or use for project tools is quite understandable. However, I would like to highlight one of interviewee's worrying that when project's agreements and actions start to get done, perhaps tools and methods for controlling the scope would be needed. I think not using basic planning and controlling PM tools, could cause situations where project management might forget or neglect important requirements to get done, in such a big and complicated process. **To sum up**, I see that my model's background thoughts and considerations, suggesting applying project and project management to do the transforming change process, exist in Trondheim-Klæbu merger practice. Regarding the slight differences that case practices, I think mergers' nature and context, and the fact that the case lacks professional project managers, should be considered. In other words, my model has the general overview of transforming change projects, assuming a 'project manager' is available as prerequisite, while case's public and political nature adds certain characteristics and considerations to the project. So, I allow myself to be confident that my model shows a good picture of why and how project and project management is employed to do the transforming change process in merger project.

Now, I want to highlight that under describing how merger has assigned a project to implement transformation, interviewees disclosed some issues in project management application. In fact, they stated that merger project suffers in some project management areas; mainly scope management, planning and controlling. I think this issue should be looked from two dimensions: project management practices and project managers package. I think this matter could be caused by lacking use of an integrated and proper project management system, or/and could be explained by the fact that project management includes non-professional project managers who work only part time with the merger. Therefore, I discuss the former aspect here, and will argue the later dimension under 'project manager role' theme.

To explain the former dimension, I needed to benefit from the new theory as it is not discussed by my primary theory. For discussion at this point, my idea is that an 'unbalanced' or 'incomplete' use of vital project management practices might be one significant reason that merger project suffers in some areas. I am aware that merger's nature and context could dictate or influence which practices project managers should focus on. But regardless of reason behind merger's problem, I found it necessary to explain such a situation theoretically. Therefore, this

matter added a new angle to my thinking in the model: to what extent and in which areas projects should or could practice project management's standard practices. I take two articles in and assess data.

As stated in theory chapter, Papke-Shields, et al. (2010) show that project management practices are practiced in project, with different consistency and magnitude. Areas related to time, cost, and scope triangle are often most practiced, whilst human resource and procurement (softer factors) are less used for instance. They suggest that the importance of 'triangle' for project managers, and easiness to get them measured, could be reasons using practices differently. Stated findings obviously explains merger's situation which I perceived as an unbalanced use of project management discipline. I can see that this matter is a common phenomenon among projects, to establish project management practices with different grades and consistencies (Papke-Shields, et al., 2010). The authors suggest that usage of project management practices is mainly influenced by project's context, in terms of cost, time, and size. For instance, larger and more expensive projects, employ more practices focused on control, risk and quality management. I think Papke-Shields, et al suggestion could be responsive in my case. Considering merger's long lifecycle and reasonably high budget, various project management knowledge areas concerning scope, control, budget, time, risk, and stakeholder satisfaction, could be expected as necessary. I can see that sort of 'unfocused' project management practices in 'triangle' elements at least, has caused issues for managing the project. One of interviewees stated clearly that "we have a project management controlling problem" interview with NN). As stated in data chapter, some of functional leaders have engaged in different activities that project management is not precisely aware of, since activities have not been reflected towards them properly and frequently. It not only endangered managing scope of project, but it also has created financial consequences challenging budgeting. One of interviewees stated that project management thinks it would be useful to bring a few functional leaders in project management level. She mentioned that project management has find it difficult to know the status of completed or ongoing processes in different functions. Therefore, even considering the political nature of merger which may affect what PM practices could or should be employed, theoretical argumentation above shows that the merger *demand*s employing vital practices from different knowledge areas. Finally, Papke-Shields, et al. (2010) show that PM practice usage is related to project's success. I think it is reasonably obvious that the unbalanced employing PM practices in case, has created obstacles which might jeopardize project's success so far.

Merger's discussed controlling and planning dilemma, could get even more explained by Loo's (2002) paper. He categorizes PM practices as technical and people-oriented themes. His main findings (table 6) shows that (1) establishing integrated project management system, scope management, project planning, scheduling, controlling, resource management, contingency planning stakeholder involvement, effective internal and external communication, and client contact are some of first and second most important practices that projects could benefit from. And (2) standard PM practices, improving scope management, improving budget management, integrated project control methods, empower tam, more effective planning and preparation, are some of most important areas for improving PM practices. Regarding Loo's first finding, I see that so far, project planning is done by devising overall (not detailed) project progress plan and

milestone plan, communication is well-thought and practiced strongly, stakeholders are well-considered and communicated with optimally, and stakeholders are strived to get involved as much as possible. However, data shows that there is no systematic and *integrated project management system* to develop project planning, scheduling, controlling, or contingency planning, opposing to Loo (2002) suggestion. Therefore, I see that merger has employed project management practices, only to a certain degree, and therefore, some dilemmas and consequences have surfaced in project performance. In other words, I think that because some of important project management practices including project planning, scheduling, controlling, or contingency planning, as suggested by Loo, are not employed systematically or at all, merger has met mentioned dilemmas. Consequently, I agree with Loo's (2002) suggested-areas in terms of improving practices, for the merger case. I can see that striving for establishing standard project management practices, improving scope management, improving budget management (to assess and meet financial consequences caused by weak control), establishing integrated control methods, resource management, and more effective planning and preparation (table 6), could have been absolute improvement areas for the merger case.

New articles explained that project management practices from different knowledge areas are vital and should be employed in a systematic and integrated way. It was also highlighted that project's characteristics, could influence PM practices needed or used by project management. So, I could understand that political nature of the project and lacking professional project management have influenced on how and which practices the merger has used, but still, I could see that lacking 'important or essential' PM practices has shown negative consequences. Altogether, case showed a reasonable use of project management practices, but perhaps not sufficiently. This meant to me that a project requires using PM practices optimally, based on its context and characteristics. Loo's (2002) suggestions enabled me to go a bit deeper and explain the merger's project management practices, and develop my argumentation accordingly. I saw that merger's PM practices are more focused in some areas of knowledge such as time planning and budget management (partially), and stakeholder communication, whilst lacks attention to a proper 'triangle' scope management and especially controlling methods. This matter theoretically explained, and improvement areas are suggested. I concluded that merger could have benefitted by more focus on establishing standard project management practices, improving scope management, improving budget management establishing integrated control methods, resource management, and more effective planning and preparation, to improve its PM application towards a 'best optimum practice possible'. This is actually a major indication for the conceptual model, I think. Added stated layer of discussion, shows that to run a project properly, an integrated and disciplined project management system should be in place. I did not think or discussed this matter behind the model, but I believe these argumentations make a significant point to consider for every transforming change project. To this end, **I will just modify the project management framework in the model, by mentioning this factor.**

1. Project management as a right tool to implement a transforming change process

- By data analysis, I concluded that my conceptual model's main message, suggesting project management to implement transforming change processes, is accordance with the merger case. Merger benefitted project management to provide a separate, flexible and dedicated organization unite as a platform to structure and organize complicated merger process. 'Project' has meant the ability of passing organizational internal and external borders, to relate and engage very many actors involved in merger. Moreover, project has facilitated human resources management, and minimized employment dilemmas.
- Nevertheless, as merger suffers mainly in planning and controlling areas, I decided to study this new dimension, and add associated indications to my model. By new theory and merger data, I concluded that each project could benefit PM practices differently based on its characteristics and context, but it is important that some of the most essential PM practices be in place. This suggests project management to strive establishing an integrated project management system.

2. Contextual considerations

As already stated in introduction of discussion chapter, this theme address how contextual elements in conceptual model are associated with related concepts in Trondheim-Klæbu merger setting. The elements have theoretical roots when I discussed shortages of project management to implement transforming change projects, and transforming change project success factors.

The conceptual model highlights transforming project's context by relating the change project to its context in different dimensions. Contextual considerations are based on my related conclusions, aiming to remedy project possible challenges to run a change process; Briefly, as stated in theory chapter, I discussed and concluded that since project management contains bureaucratic constraints, and requires narrow planning and organizing focused on time-budget-deliverables triangle, project might fail to be flexible and innovative enough to response some of chaotic, complicated, context-dependent, and self-dependent transforming change process' requirements. More specifically, considering the large scope, depth and complexity of transforming change processes, I established that project management by isolating and detaching project from past experiences current situation, and future plans, could ignore transforming change project's dependency on self- and context-dependencies. Therefore, the model tries to connect change project both upwards and downwards, and make 'anchors' to balance mentioned issues.

The contextual elements in the model are carefully discussed and designed; crystal clear understanding of change's visions and strategies by involved individuals is determinative - having competent, committed, engaged and supportive top leaders to support the change project who show their support verbally and practically, is vital – communication as an essential factor for the change project to succeed - project's understanding of current culture (Work routines and procedures, norms and values) is important – and involved employees' capabilities and skills are crucial for change process implementation. Stated elements will be discussed separately below. Additionally, the post-project phase in model will also be addressed in this section.

2.1 Culture

Conceptual model highlights organizational culture as an influential element that transforming change project must understand and take it into account. It means that understanding and considering organizational culture has indications for transforming change project's performance. I think it is necessary to mention again that by organizational culture in this thesis, I mean an organization's work routines, procedures, norms and values, and relationships' arrangements (political system; important in case). Mentioned factors obviously conveys how employees in an organization perform tasks, develop behaviors and values, and establish different types of relationships. It covers technical aspect of organization in terms of work procedures, and the softer aspect in terms of relationships, norms and values. In theory chapter, I argued that understanding of organizational culture, is one of contextual considerations which could contribute the project towards success (Engwall, 2003) Perry, et al. (2014). In other words, I discussed that organizational work routines, procedures, norms and values, and relationships in an organization, are in fact inseparable parts of individuals and activities, and thus influential on any project operating in that organization. When individuals and activities come in use in project management framework then, the organizational culture enters the project naturally. To this end, organizational culture could influence project management processes and project's performance (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010). I also stated that, where there is a culture that recognizes the value of project management, good teamwork practice, low change resistance and strong leadership support, project management could show better results in change processes. To sum up, I concluded that organizational culture is one of the contextual element that is significant on how transforming change project operates. gets operates

Now turning to empirical data, one can expect that since two organizations are municipal organs operating in the same political and public environment, there should be minor cultural differences between the two. Nevertheless, data shows that organizations have significantly different organizational culture. Interviewees stated that such a difference is because of organizations' size gap. The cultural aspect has had some implications for merger project by firstly making project deviating from what recipe advocates. And secondly, by confronting merger project operations with two different sets of work routines and procedures, behavior, norms and values, and political systems. **For the first**, deviation from recipe means that Klæbu's organization will disappear and become incorporated into Trondheim's organization, while the recipe imagines two organizations will equally stop operation and a new organization will be formed. At this point interviewees mostly looked at this issue as a unique characteristic of their project. As stated in case description, county governor's broad standpoint says that this is a typical matter among mergers with high organizational size differences. I argued that this is understandable that the best and most efficient solution for Trondheim and Klæbu is incorporating Klæbu's organization into Trondheim's, and thus, I think this difference creates a unique definition for this merger project, rather than meaning that merger is a unique example among other mergers. Either cultural difference means project is unique or it has unique features, this matter has been a major concern among two parties, and had practical implications for the merger so far. This is precisely what the conceptual model suggests; that organizational culture could influence transforming change project performance. Here **second dimension** surfaces,

telling that Trondheim' and Klæbu's organizational cultures could have affected *the way project progress*. Clearly, this second aspect, organizational culture practical implications for project, will be studied in follow.

Starting by county governor perspective, fylkesmannen stated that organizational culture and atmosphere between the two merging parties, affect how agreements project could be achieved in the merger. This perspective tells that cultural differences is one important reason for why recipe specifies a long time-span for merger project, so that two partners could settle their understanding of each other's cultures and ways of doing tasks. In project plan also, it is highlighted that merger project is oriented about current organizations' strengths, weaknesses, and culture and traditions, to establish the new organization (Project administration, 2017). Telemarksforsking report (2016) states that it would be useful if organizations' employees could be grouped under theme groups, project groups, etc. to go across organization borders for understanding status, and development of new organization. In another point, report advises organizations to devise a plan for building a common culture for new organization. This could include activities during the change process which helps employees to feel ownership to project and help building the new organization (Telemarksforsking, 2016). In addition, the guideline document states that it is important to build a culture for new organization when project *progresses* (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017). The paper emphasizes that leaders and employees must be informed over their cultural differences, have enough time to get to know each other, and each other's way of working cultures. Work groups, social activities, meetings, etc. are examples of how to gather employees and give the opportunity to establish a common culture (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017).

Form interviewees' standpoint, I observed that they see their political and administrative cultures, quite different. The most significant difference they referred to, was the close and partially informal relationships existing in Klæbu's organization, while Trondheim operates in a fairly disciplined and professionalized environment. Obviously, the organizational size is main reason for having such different cultures. More specifically, the two organizations have different understanding, expectations and worries, work routines, norms and values, and relationships established; For instance, because of the way relationships are defined and practiced in Klæbu, administration could possibly affect political thinking or decisions, which is contradictory to Trondheim's relationship structure and work procedures. Interestingly, in the second round of interviews, passing only two months more in project from first round, I learned that in political and administrative levels, members form Klæbu side have tuned the working processes towards Trondheim norms and procedures. I think it is not merely about Klæbu, but it shows a mutual cultural understanding. This would refer to recipe advising organizations to give enough time, to find a common rhythm of working together considering organizational culture differences.

From another angle, mentioned degree of informality in Klæbu's organizational culture, means also that inhabitants feel closeness and comfort towards their administrators and politicians. Interviewees highlighted that Klæbu's organizational culture is built on trust and open relationship towards the community, while Trondheim does not pose such a closeness with inhabitants. This shows a difference of how organizations work and reflect on their communities.

One interviewee stated that Klæbu's organizational culture towards local community, has been in fact an asset for the project. The closeness and open dialogue between organization and inhabitants, has created positive environment towards the project which I think has been nicely manifested by almost 70% positive vote that Klæbu inhabitants (participated in referendum) gave to merge with Trondheim. This has been motivating political and administrative project management to be more confident and flexible in project because such feelings affected organization's way of looking at and sensing commitment to the project. In other words, technically, the positivity for merger resulted by close and value-based organizational culture, has facilitated the merger from initiation and decision makings to performing the project processes by leaders' willingness and excitement. One statement by one interviewees is a nice summary of mentioned matter, saying "although politicians and top administrators in Klæbu might feel losing influence and power in the new organization with the new culture, they have shown proudness and satisfaction by their decision for merging with Trondheim" interview with NN).

By mentioned viewpoints and perspectives that empirical data suggested, I can see that organizational culture is considered as an important factor for the transforming change projects to be well-understood, assessed, and taken into account. Project management and bosses are well-aware of this factor, and consider it in assessments and planning for the project. So far, the cultural factor has shown some practical indications for the project; different meeting or work routines, for instance. I think data shows well that organizational culture elements are influential in different phases of the project, and perhaps in different aspects. As argued earlier, *Klæbu's value-based organizational culture* rooted trust, openness, and honesty, has made politicians' and administrators' decision makings easier, created positive feelings and excitement towards the merger, decreased potential organized resistance to the project, and made a sense of honor for the top management who know they eventually will lose their power and influence they have today. *From Trondheim* side, I think being aware of cultural differences, following what recipe advise the parties to be fair and understanding, and being so professionalized and disciplined, have created such a good platform that Trondheim tries to minimize cultural differences by helping the partner organization with good communication and information exchange. Nevertheless, I should mention that there have been minimal attempts to engage related employees in Trondheim's organization who will finally meet and work with new colleagues. Interviewees stated that this matter is because Trondheim's employees will not be technically affected by the change. But I think this mindset could be dangerous for project's result. In other words, it could be damaging that project managers in Trondheim tell the functions that nothing will really happen to you! Creating such a mindset could suppress 'preparation' in related areas. Eventually, one day new individuals will arrive in functions, whilst cultural preparations have not got done. In such situations, often, this might be a common mistake by managers to underestimate the consequences and putting situation in a way that employees overlook or even forget that they will ultimately receive new colleagues which creates a new environment. I would like to refer to the recipe now which emphasizes that leaders and employees must be informed over their cultural differences, have enough time to get to know each other, and each other's way of working cultures. Work groups, social activities, meetings, etc. are examples of how to gather employees and give the opportunity to establish a common culture (Kommunal- og

moderniseringsdepartmentet, 2017). Even considering the improvements in finding a common work rhythm by two parties so far, I think the case could have benefitted more from applying some of introduced strategies or activities to build a platform for involved employees in *both sides* to understand each other's way of working, values, behaviors, etc. This could not only contribute the merger's results, but might perhaps dampened level of anxiety and confusion among employees right now. Especially, I think about Klæbu's 'multi-function' employees, who are used to have a wide but not very deep spectrum of responsibilities in their position (work procedures and routines), whilst, Trondheim as a professionalized organization offers quite narrow and deep range of responsibilities in job positions. As discussed earlier, organizational culture difference then, could be stressful enough for stated group who know that they will step in a professionalized organization where new colleagues will have narrow specialized experience in similar position. Providing a platform for counterparts to communicate is what I think that could influence the merger positively. Here, I emphasize on communicative strategies that recipe suggests. I think it is very important for merger project to consider that for meeting such issues caused by organizational cultures differences, communicating effectively and timely could reduce potential tensions.

By mentioned discussions altogether, I see that merger case shows the importance of understanding and considering organizational culture to succeed. The recipe and interviewees showed explicitly their thinking and actual attempts to perceive and meet cultural implications in the merger. More specifically, I can see that the merger's political-administration relationships, general organizational understanding, expectations, routines, norms and values, have had indications for the project. I agree with recipe suggesting that a good time is needed for the organizations to build a proper basis for their merger, considering their cultural differences. This is what I observed in second round of interviews; spending more time together has helped the parties to tune the work routines. Even though interviewees did not think that cultural differences have been 'significantly' influential on project's performance yet, I think, as mentioned a bit earlier, it might probably create some issues at least when project get executed when parties must act to transfer affected group from Klæbu into Trondheim's functions. Then cultural differences, with minimal preparation done in Trondheim, could potentially surface more.

Looking at the model now, through analysis of data in this section, I can see that the theoretical reasoning behind the model, is representing what project management in the merger case has thought and acted regarding 'organizational culture' factor. They do know the importance of the element, tried to understand and consider it, and has strived to remedy possible issues in the project through exchanging information. The case showed that organizational culture practically influence project situations in different phases and in different dimensions. Therefore, my model suggesting organizational culture as one important influential element affecting project's performance and success, is reasonably in accordance with analyzed empirical data results. It means that theoretical background discussed behind the model, could symbolize the element in real setting. **To this end, I conclude that since my model could reflect what happens in the merger case related to organizational culture, I will keep the factor in the model as it stands.**

2.2 Technical and project skills

Among the contextual elements that could affect the transforming change project's performance, I did discuss that technical and project skills available among individuals involved in the project, are influential. In my argumentation, I highlighted Engwall's (2003) findings who suggest that experience and knowledge available in organization, is a contextual consideration which could have essential impact on project's result. I agreed with his argumentation and suggested that societal factors associated with players and organizations affect how project progress. Specifically, experience and knowledge profile of the players engaged in the projects, affect the dynamics of processes in the project (Engwall, 2003). Another theoretical discussion suggests since change projects happen rare in organizations, there is usually limited experience or knowledge about them. Understanding of the change consequently, relies on reasons underlines it, which is often a blue-sky concept. Therefore, change projects usually are faced with large WHAT to change and HOW to do it, gaps. (Cicmil, 1999). By stated arguments, I agreed and perceived organization's experience or competence profile are important enough for a change project to consider. So, available 'technical and project skills' of involved individuals in transforming change project got established as a context factor in conceptual model. Therefore, the model (figure 3) suggests that existing competency' profile among the employees in organization, who will eventually operationalize the transforming change process in different organizational levels and units, affects transforming change project's performance. The functional managers are direct responsible for these players who will together make the change process happen. Eager to find out how this element in model might be influential in real practice, I asked about the matter, and here is what data suggests.

None of the documents presented in data chapter, referred to this element specifically. The recipe is only concerned with taking care of current skills and competencies capital in terms of having a proper personnel transition to new organization. It does not state any requirement or advice about how available technical and perhaps project experiences and knowledge, could contribute or affect the merger project's process. This could be first notion for the element in my model. I see that merger recipe, which is prepared based on a lot of experience from former mergers, does not include or suggest that involved employees' technical and project background might be influential in merger process.

From Trondheim and Klæbu standpoints, interviews also did not give me any substantial perspective, nor have a specific attention towards this matter. In fact, interviewees talked majorly about **project management package** and explained that in this level, there is a great spectrum of managerial and leadership knowledge and experience, and minor project skills gained from former projects or change processes. There is no experience or knowledge with such a mass change process/project. **But related to line employees'** skill profiles, they could only reflect by some examples referring to Klæbu's functional level, where there have been some differences so far. More specifically, they clarified that some of functions have had better involvement and performance in project processes, some less, and some have acted very little. For instance, educational or city development functions have been practicing project tasks better than health and care function. Interviewees thought, or better to say guessed, that such situation could be because of education and experience underlying employees. They told me that teachers are often

enthusiastic to do new tasks or change the routines, whereas health employees are educated and experienced with doing the same routines every day. Another example is city development function with engineers and architects who are professionally used to make precise and clear plans for coming works. As it could be expected, the education unit has been very positive to the merger and willing to merge as soon as possible, health and care has been quite passive in the initiation and planning phases, and city development has established an engaged relationship with the counterpart in Trondheim to plan for the common future sort of more than what project plan even allows. I think mentioned perspectives or propositions could show that employees' professional background has affected the project performance in different functions. However, I highlight again that the points stem from general and ad hoc thinking, rather than well-thought and grounded ideas or experiences.

Altogether, I learned that merger's recipe has not suggested current element as a success or an influential factor. Interviews provided few examples that they could think of or imagine, which related functions' underlying background or competences to project's progress in associated units. I think interviewees' expressed understandings and observations (examples) might show a trend on how existing technical and project experience and knowledge in function could affect the project's processes in associated units. In total though, I think mentioned argument *could not* give me a solid and sufficient picture of technical and project skills profile among employees affecting project operations; The interviewees were not attentive to this element and its potential influences over the merger project, and they offered some examples which *might* be the case, but not necessarily. This is in addition to recipe's neglect to consider such a matter. I think one should rely on government's vast experience. To this end, I conclude that this factor in my model has not a valid sponsorship in the merger case, and could not be supported.

Yet, I would like to pinpoint a deeper point that I can think of. Even considering stated conclusion, one should consider project's context and nature. I mean one should understand that political nature of merger (ordering certain specifications and constraints for the change project) could partially explain why project management is not aware or focused on its available organizational technical and project resources. In other words, project's long lifecycle, predetermined steps, legal requirements, and great humane considerations, to name a few, could dictate several defined borders to the project and project management work. I think these facts *require* project management to narrowly pay attention to 'instructions' rather than their available possibilities. It could be different if two private companies would have merged; in that case project manager, would perhaps have more personal interest in project, and thus, wanted to study what resources are at hand to optimize the change process, satisfy project owner, and improve his or her professional resume. Anyhow, this point is merely one consideration that I wanted to clarify. But, it would not diminish the fact that merger project has not been attentive to competency profile in organization.

To sum up, having mentioned arguments and reflections in empirical data, and considering my theoretical discussions, I conclude that 'technical and project skills' profile of engaged players in change project, might be beneficial (good to be aware of) for project's performance, but not necessarily like what I thought when developing the model. I still think that project managers

could benefit by focusing and planning on available resources in transforming change project, but it needs deeper theoretical study to investigate more viewpoints and proves, which is beyond my time and possibility in this thesis. After all, even considering case's specifications, the reality of merger case so far challenged my thinking about this element. The case actually made me question the element again, and by rethinking, I found current theoretical background not strong enough to claim the factor significant and influential. **Therefore, I decided to omit the element from the model.**

2.3 Understanding the change strategy

One of the contextual elements that is considered in transforming change projects, concerns with involved employees' understanding of change's visions and strategies. This element in model is based on my theoretical argumentation, presented in the theory chapter. Briefly, I argued that for transforming change project to succeed, it is significant that engaged individuals have a crystal-clear perception of reasons behind, and goals and objectives of the change project. Having a well-thought vision for change is critical itself, and the way it should be conveyed and understood is another essential factor (Kotter, 2007). It is argued that not only change's strategy should be generally aligned with overall organizational strategies (Gareis, 2010), but it also should be communicated (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010) to create awareness which is vital to succeed (Engwall, 2003). In other words, when involved employees are clear about change project's requirements and where it targets, project's performance could be facilitated (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009). In addition, I discussed that for conveying change strategy, change project requires systematic communication and engaged leadership to facilitate translating change's strategies and objectives down to the project and functions (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010). By mentioned argumentations then, I devised the element in model (figure 3). The element in model illustrates that change strategy should be clearly defined and infused from top level downwards. One reason for change management framework in model, is to use this level for contributing translation of the strategy and objectives down to project management level. This framework and its sub-element will be discussed in its separate section.

Turning to empirical data, regarding focused element here, interviewees had agreement that employees have an overall and clear perception of merger. In fact, employees and leaders have been well-aware of current and future challenges for the organization. Assessments in initiation phase had clarified that organization could not financially perform well if it remains independent. The trustful and open culture in organization, brought the facts on the table so that employees and leaders received full messages. Therefore, reasons behind the merger are well- explained and accepted. Regarding the new organization understanding and expectations, interviewees mentioned that target group and management are well oriented about future organization promising more opportunities, better professional working environment, and organizational performance. Practically in Klæbu, there have been many meeting in different levels and scopes striving to keep employees informed of project's goals and strategies. Top political and administrative leaders have attended such meetings to translate what merger seeks to reach, and how process will get done. For instance, municipal chief administrator has arranged two days long meetings, targeting over 90% of the employees to get information about project's status and its goals. Through informative sessions and using other means, employees are described as fully

aware of merger strategy and objectives which in brief are: creating required competencies and capacity for the community by merging with Trondheim, enhancing inhabitants living condition, and building a better and more professionalized organization. As stated in data chapter, employees look at this merger more as possibilities rather than challenge or discourage, and one main reason is that change strategy is openly clear. Employee's clear perception of merger objectives has empowered the change project processes at least with minimum organized resistance created. Just to mention, from Trondheim side, however, there has been minor attention and understanding about the project, clearly because their organization will not be exposed to change that much. As discussed in culture part of current chapter, this negligence could have consequences for project's result. To sum up, I see that merger project hasn't met any specific problem to translate or convey project's strategy towards employees. The methods employed to orient target groups, are described effective to clarify merger's strategy and goals. Interviewees perceived the matter as an important factor for project management, and a valuable asset for project's processes so far, and further on. Nevertheless, I think one should consider the point that merger's long lifecycle, and gradual dialogues happening between different actors, could be some of the factors that have helped employees' understanding of change strategy. Merger has not been an abrupt surprise, meaning that employees got the time to receive comprehensive descriptions of change strategy and reasons behind them; a good time to process the whole idea. I may highlight again, that Klæbu's organizational culture with openness and trustfulness is an element that eased and cultivated mentioned understanding. Trust, openness, honesty, and closeness have enabled municipal administrators to bring the facts on the table confidently, and the same values has created a common perception for accepting the merger strategies and objectives.

By having my theoretical discussions, and conclusions that I gained from analyzing empirical data, I can reflect on my conceptual model now. I think my theoretical discussions about importance of understanding change strategy by involved employees, is practically in accordance with the merger case of Trondheim and Klæbu. I observed that recipe and organizations' leaders have been aware of importance of this matter, and strived to create the common understanding of merger's strategy and objectives. By doing so, they have facilitated and empowered projects' processes. I believe that this is a practical explanation of my theoretical argumentation behind the model. The 'change strategy' element on top of the model is the symbol suggesting that in transforming change project, project management and top leaders must be proactive to translate change strategy and goals towards project and organization. I can see that this is close to what Trondheim-Klæbu merger project has established and experienced. Therefore, I conclude that the element has practical support in the merger case, and is representing associated practical implications. **To this end, it will remain as an essential contextual factor as it stands.**

2.4 Leadership engagement and support

One other contextual factor illustrated in conceptual model, concerns top management or leadership engagement and support to in 'difficult time of change'. The factor is incorporated in model to show that for a transforming change project to succeed, top management in organization must be well-involved, and contribute to project's performance. This is based on my theoretical argumentation, presented in theory section. I argued that involved and supportive

top management or leaders who understand and accept the change (Pellegrinelli & Bowman, 1994), contributes a change project to succeed (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010) (Gareis, 2010) (Kotter, 2007). Their support and involvement are needed to motivate staff and remove obstacles to ease their performance in change process considering that transforming change processes are quite demanding and require employees' sacrifices while the result are yet to come in future. I argued that top management support will demonstrate the importance of change as a possible phenomenon which is 'possible and happening'. The support must be shown verbally and incorporated in activities of top managers (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009). I may also highlight that, leadership engagement is actually one major ground for employees' change strategy understanding, which I discussed in previous section. In fact, this shows the interdependence of contextual elements which eventually influence project's achievements.

To analyze the empirical data in terms of leadership engagement and support factor, one should consider case's unique project organization. I mean since project managers in project, political and administrative project managers, are in fact the top political and administrative leaders in both organizations, their involvement in merger has a double-edged meaning: in an overall organizational level, and within the project.

From **organizations' point of view**, interviewees cleared that both organizations' top management, politically and administratively, have truly followed the project closely. By their description of leader's engagement, I learned that both legal requirements and personal interests in new organization, have been their motives. By legal requirements I mean by the recipe (which requires every step get done formally and in determined proper way), top management have been or had to be completely oriented about the merger from every dimension. It means that by political nature of this project, leadership's high involvement has been essential and obligatory. But one should also consider leader's personal interest in merger project. One of interviewees stated that Trondheim's mayor's presence in early informative and interactive meetings in Klæbu's city hall was very positive in merger project (She is the fellesnemnda's leader as well). Another example relates to several overall staff meetings arranged by Klæbu's chief administrator inviting employees to come and get information about project's status and what will happen next. Therefore, I see that leaders' attendance and involvement in the process, conveyed the message that merger is an important change for 'us', it is happening, and we have control over it. **From the project point of view**, the leaders have been quite engaged and supportive to the project as they have operative roles in merger. I want to highlight again, since project management include top managers and leaders of organizations, they have actually had a complete platform to support the process, remove the obstacles, motivate target groups, etc. This opportunity is an especial feature of this case, but their involvement could of course have lessons for my purpose in terms of every transforming change project. More practically, the leaders have been in contact with their leader groups, central project group, and subprojects, throughout project lifecycle. They have held very many meetings regarding merger. I think this shows nicely how administrative and political leaders are linked and engaged with different levels of target groups, to exchange needed information and show their support. This facilitates the information flow towards the functions I think. In other words, leaders of two organizations have utilized their positions in project management level, to practically moves the merger forwards. Lastly,

referring to the recipe, it suggests that merging organizations could benefit from early deciding and appointing new organization's chief manager as merger's project manager because it could facilitate and increase leaders' engagement during the merger process, by feeling more responsibility and ownership to the merger.

Thinking about what the model represents what empirical data suggests, I can see that the leaders in both organizations are well-linked to the project with high involvement and support. I believe that leaders' engagement and support, has kept employees well-oriented, positive and eager for merger, to show minimal resistance, and look at the merger as possibility. Thus, one can see positive indications of top management involvement in merger project. My model also illustrates the importance of leadership engagement, and suggests it as a success factor in transforming change project. As stated in discussion, I admit and consider that perhaps major reasons for leadership being highly engaged in merger, stem from project's especial characteristics. The certain way of organizing project management actually obliges top management to concern and support the merger project as it is a part of their job now. I understand this could be quite different if the merger happened in private sector. Thus, the reasons for merger top management to involve, might be different from what I thought when developed the model. Nevertheless, regardless of what reasons are behind the leadership involvement in this case, from both organizational and project perspectives, I can see that **leadership** in the merger is aware of their important role (one interviewee stated explicitly that his involvement in the merger was needed by the organizations), and supported the project carefully to assure a good fundament, and move project forward. These implications are truly important to my purpose: seeing that leadership involvement and support is perceived as significant, and it has affected project's performance (positively). Therefore, I can see that empirical data is supportive to my theoretical argumentations behind the model which requires top management to understand, accept, and support the change to demonstrates importance of change and eventually contributes project's outcome. **Therefore, I conclude that the element is reasonably symbolizing what merger case has practically experienced so far.**

2.5 Post-project phase in transforming change projects

This theme is based on my theoretical argumentations telling that project management could fail to fulfill transforming change process's possible follow-up issues. I discussed that project management might not embrace a part of transforming process that could happen after project's 'end' date. More specifically, as it is described in theory chapter, I deliberated that transforming change project could be considered as a 'becoming' process, to a certain degree (Winch, et al., 2012), rather than a process with rigid end. I meant that transforming change processes are potentially expected to achieve or disclose some of their actual results sometime after 'completion of project'. I also highlighted that taking the ideas about project' and organization's future (Engwall, 2003) is an important matter that project management could benefit from to consider. Thinking about future ideas of project and line organization, could open project management eyes not only to what might be needed when project 'finishes', but also to what implications future could have for project's lifecycle (what can be done to hinder future issues, or prepare better). Therefore, I argued that such a feature could be partially confronting project management discipline which characterizes project with defined limited lifecycle. For example,

transforming change process requires people coming into the positions in new structure, starting to work, facing potential problems and so on. How could we then see the ‘results’ while none of these have happened before new organization starts operating? Therefore, I thought that classic expectation of this lifecycle must be modified. In my model, I considered a post-project phase as an ‘enough time’ extra to project phases, for transforming change project’s results to be realized fully and stabilized. In other words, I concluded that since transforming project’s nature and context could be partially a ‘becoming’ process, rather than a process with definite end date, it might be beneficial to consider an extra period, for project to embrace potential follow-up works, in form of small projects for instance.

In empirical data, among the documents I studied, only Telemarksforsking report highlights this issue and states that since a merger does not necessarily get completed when merger project is finished, it is useful to have an overview over the elements that need to be in place when new organization starts to operate, and the ones that can wait till the new organization is established. The project plan and the guideline do not state any specific point regarding this matter.

Through the interviews however, interviewees stated commonly that most of merger’s tasks are expected to be finished a while before even completion date as a lot of main tasks are planned to get done between 2017 and 2019. However, they mentioned that some loose ends could be expected to remain. ‘Loose ends’ refer to areas or tasks that would need some follow up work. As an example, one interviewee explained that unifying pension systems from two organizations is a project task that could not get done until new organization starts formally to operate. Archive unit could also expect that its employees in new organization, need small programs for training to work with new systems in Trondheim. I think, regarding post-project considerations in merger, there are *two dimensions* to consider. Firstly, I can see that some of possible post project works are because of *project’s political nature*. For instance, uniting pension systems of two organizations is simply ‘not possible’ until the new organization starts to operate legally. But this aspect is unique for this project, and could not be an indication for every transforming change project.

But, the second dimension is completely based on what I discussed in model’s background. In the merger case, as described in data chapter, there is an absolute and important humane aspect, attached to the process. Even though, change is planned and perceived by laying more on structural side, yet, there are many legislations and legal requirements that focus on taking care of employees involved in the change. Based on interviewees perception, I think the humane feature of merger, is an understandable aspect which could create some post-project work almost for any transformation. It talks about taking care of employees’ training and their technical fit to the organization. I think it has implications for employee’s emotional fit in new organization. As explained in data chapter, there is a concern about how Klæbu’s employees could be integrated with project completion? Could one say that project is finished in 2020 when affected group are transferred and all the functions are ‘merged’, while one goal is to create a better organizational environment and possibilities for *both* former municipalities’ employees? One answer to this question could be that since project’s lifecycle is so long, this time gives organizations space to have a continues and graduate merger. So it could hinder or eliminate potential post-project work

or dilemmas. In other words, the long time for the project could provide sufficient opportunity that identical counterparts ideally find each other, collaborate, and build a common understanding and project work together; Building a united organization gradually! However, I saw that interviewees question this ‘answer’ or ‘hope’ by asking how confident organization could be whether a new culture is made among its employees till then? The concern is about how integrated Klæbu’s employees would be in new organization when they get the new job with new tasks and colleagues. How can we be sure that employees get transferred ‘acceptably’?

In total, having interviewees’ perspectives, I think by overlooking the legal requirements and constraints that might dictate some post-project work for the merger (but specific to this the merger case), it is quite understandable that project management have worries for transferring employees in terms of their emotional and cultural fit to the new organization (focusing on transformation’s humane aspect). I think their worries are reasonable, and perceive this issue as *an indication* of potential post-project work in terms of humane dimension highlighted in merger project. Focusing on mentioned indication, I am not confident with thinking that humane ‘aspect’ of transformations would be so much ‘highlighted’ in every transforming project. I mean, one cannot overlook that a merger project in public sector has own requirements, focuses and interests, compared to a private merge. I think in public sector, a higher (local and national) and usually quite long-term perspective is considered, when goals and strategies for such projects get defined. In fact, many rules and legislations are established to assure employees’ professional and emotional interest as much as possible, and planning and budgeting go through long and careful processing periods to assure making best use of inhabitants’ taxes while minimizing any risk by lengthening time to give room for assessments and decision makings. However, in private sector, I think one can expect that such a transforming project is perhaps decided by few number of top executives who possibly seek better monetary and professional performance in associated industry or market. It means that goals are based on what business world means as ‘long-term’, strategies are defined based on those, and enforcing decisions might mean a tense and effective merger, not necessarily making best use of money. Even by this argument, I think the importance of humane dimension should be understood and considered in any transforming change project since processes will be realized through people whose feelings or ideas about the change, would of course contribute or endanger project’s outcomes.

Having discussion points developed above, I would like to highlight again that the points are in fact interviewees’ thinking or propositions, not the points that have truly happened. I am just concluding that by this specific merger case, I did not observe a concrete thinking or consideration about post-project phase. Interviewees’ descriptions cleared that some loose end, either because of legal matters or because of specific importance of humane dimension in the case, will be expected; but there is no explicit discussion or consideration by project management to plan what to do after ‘project’s completion’. Therefore, I see that my model’s post-project suggestion could only limitedly sponsored by the case. I mean, project management in merger is aware of potential aftermath requirements for merger which is supporting my discussions, however, it could not support a grounded ‘becoming’ mindset of transforming change project as model suggests. Therefore, I could not be convinced that total discussion

behind my model's post-project phase is reflecting what merger's interviewees described as their thinking and expectations.

Altogether, I think mentioned discussions could be more special to this merge case as a public and political project, rather than explaining how a 'general transforming change project' should be oriented about, or might be influenced by possible post-project consequences or requirements. Especially, project's long lifecycle is one contextual feature which might diminish facing some potential aftermaths. The reason is that project has a good time for hindering or reducing post-project requirements. Not all transforming projects with usual timeframe would have mentioned luxury. Therefore, I still believe that transforming change projects could encounter technical or humane areas that, possibly should be fulfilled after project officially 'completes'. I think project managers would benefit from the awareness of this matter. Nevertheless at least, becoming familiar with how a real transforming change project operates practically, and looking at its characteristics, challenges, processes, considerations, etc. in the merger case, gave me a real basis to rethink about my element in conceptual model.

By adding sense of reality to my former theoretical thinking, I think the format of post-project idea in the model in terms of a 'phase', could be partially unrealistic. I mean model's suggesting a post-project phase, conveys a specific set of actions required to fulfill future requirements in form of a neat and dedicated chapter! Here, I refer to merger's project managers thinking imagining "yeah, there will be some loose ends, or need for some training maybe" interview with NN), and highlight that they do not feel pressure about such extra tasks *but* leave them to be solved *there and then*. Regardless of uniqueness of the case, I think *this factual behavior* shows that loose ends or post project requirements could happen *any time or anywhere* after project's completion, not necessarily in a timeframe. I believe this shows the way for improving my model by revising the 'post-project phase' to a more representative and realistic element. I developed my understanding and think that in terms of post-project considerations, a number of actions in form of 'when- and where- they happen' could be more logically to be expected. This is still based on my argumentation for transforming change project as a becoming process and the importance of post-project considerations. I only rethought and found it more realistic that post-project activities will perhaps be in form of 'some pages' of a book rather than a 'full chapter' happenings. Eventually, to show stated conclusion, I will change the post-project phase symbol by another symbol establishing that prost-project element in the model suggests those actions to remedy issues or requirements that might emerge any time or anywhere in *transformed organization*.

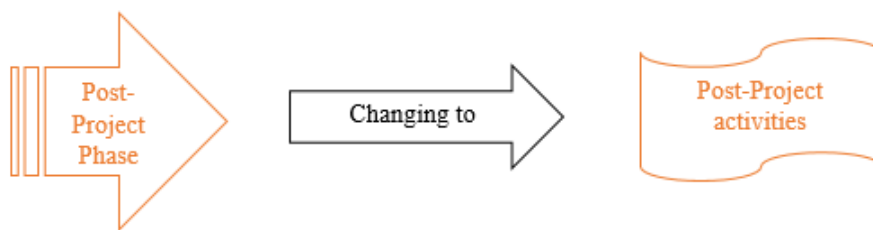


Figure 8 Establishing new symbol: Post-project requirements might emerge any time or anywhere in transformed organization

2. Contextual Considerations

2.1 Culture: By data analysis I could see that theoretical reasoning behind the model, is representing what project management in merger has experienced with ‘organizational culture’ factor. They do know the importance of this factor, tried to understand and consider it, and strived to remedy possible cultural issues through exchanging information. The case showed that organizational culture could influence merger’s situation in different phases and dimensions. Therefore, I conclude that as my model could reflect merger’s cultural consideration, I will keep the factor in model as it stands originally.

2.2 Technical and project skills: by analyzing data, neither merger’s recipe has suggested line employees’ technical and project skills as success or influential consideration, nor interviewees could supply me with solid and grounded ideas or experiences (except some examples which they could imagine or guess). Even considering merger’s context and characteristics, I concluded that relevant discussions *could not* give me a solid and sufficient ground to say that this element of model is representing what is happening in this merger case. By rethinking about my theoretical argumentation and considering the real setting, I decided to omit the element from conceptual model. But deeper study was suggested for further works.

2.3 Understanding change strategy: data analysis showed that communicating change’s strategy towards employees, has been focused from very early stage. Top leaders’ awareness and involvement to convey status of organization and promised future, through consistent informative meetings and other communicative channels, have provided employees sufficient knowledge about change strategy. I could see that my theoretical discussions about importance of employees’ understanding of change strategy, is practically in accordance with Trondheim-Klæbu practical setting. To this end, the element will remain as an essential contextual factor in conceptual model.

2.4 Leadership involvement and support: data analysis showed that that organizations’ political and administrative leaders are well-aware of their important presence, have engaged in merger quite actively, and supported project so that employees have a good perception of the change, express feeling and eagerness to merger, and showed minimum resistance. Even considering merger’s characteristics, I conclude that this element in model, is reasonably symbolizing what merger case has been, and is experiencing. Therefore, I will keep the element as it stands in model.

2.5 Post-project phase: by analyzing data, I learned that governmental recipe does not state such a consideration for merger case. Interviewees mentioned their expectations for some loose ends or follow-up works either because of political requirements, or because of humane aspect of merger. Altogether by the case, I did not observe a concrete or explicit thinking, consideration, or experience about post-project phase, but gained interviewees’ thinking and expectations that helped me to imagine or understand the element more realistically. By rethinking about post-project phase of model, considering my theory and data analysis, I concluded that transforming change projects could pose some technical or humane post project requirements, perhaps in a ‘here and there’ manner. Therefore, I improved the element in model by substituting ‘post-project phase’ with ‘post-project activities’.

3. Project manager in transforming change project

This theme will present discussions about project manager role in merger case. To develop cohesive and concrete arguments that cover all matters related to project's project management, I organize the theme into three sub-themes: role and required skills and competences, project manager authority, and communication.

3.1 Role and required skills and competences

In this theme, I will analyze empirical data in terms of project manager's role, skills and competences, and potential challenges to manage the merger case. The results then will enable me to find out how my conceptual model is representing mentioned elements.

Starting by the model and its theoretical background, as stated in the theory chapter, I argued and concluded that project manager is one important actor in leading transforming change processes, beside other roles. I stated that project manager in such processes not only engages with project management technical responsibilities to plan, organize, control, etc., but s/he also could be assigned to some managerial and leadership duties. Managerial and leadership responsibilities are more than what project management discipline requires or educates project managers for. The discussion is majorly related to nature of transforming change projects. As stated in theory chapter, such processes are complicated, messy, context- and self-dependent that might generate emergent requirements, and contain issues associated with humane dimension such as organized resistance to change. Therefore, in managing a transforming change process, project manager might be required to show some managerial and behavioral skills and expertise, to manage stated necessities. Therefore, I suggested that it is reasonable to look at project manager as project's leader who not only performs classic project management practices, but he or she also should actively understand the whole organization structure and culture, make communication, understand and convey visions of the change, motivate individuals to come out of comfort-zone, and remove day-to-day obstacles. By that fundament, I argued that project managers with their often technical and engineering background and/or project management expertise which orders them to plan, organize, manage, control, etc. narrowly, might fail to lead change process in mentioned dimensions. Based on stated theoretical argumentations, I suggested and assigned a change management framework to bring required capabilities which project manager may lack. The model shows that having change manager role and framework between higher level of organization and project manager, could remove misunderstandings, facilitate information exchange, and clarify what top management actually needs. This does not mean that change manager will isolate project manager to focus him/her on project management duties, but change manger serves as a support for taking care of managerial responsibilities when needed, while project manager is oriented about the bigger picture. Therefore, model illustrates how a change management framework could be considered and linked to the context and project.

Turning to the merger case, project management level and change management framework are comprehensively described in data chapter. This theme will focus on administrative project

management level associated with role, needed skills, issues and opportunities, and next theme will deal with change management framework relating to how it contributes project managers for leading the merger.

Starting with documents I looked at, project plan discloses specific description of project management level in merger. As stated in data chapter, in described project management 'package' to manage such a multi-dimensional and deep change process, two rådmennene have a very good overview of line organizations, and are well anchored in municipal work. They have a wide range of leadership and management competencies and skills. Project's central group also is full of managerial skills who keep an eye on different dimensions of process, and supply project managers with required insights and information. Looking from recipe's viewpoint, I would like to highlight its suggestion advising merging organization to decide and assign future chief administrator as merger's project manager (Telemarksforsking, 2016). The reason is that this assignment could facilitate merger processes, bring security for fellesnemnda that project management is stronger and protective for protecting future organization, reduce bosses' interferences which means project administration become easier. The guideline (Project administration, 2017) emphasizes that merger must be managed and steered by *leadership competencies in a structured way*. It emphasizes importance of managing humane aspect of merger, and highlights that project management (role) must facilitate, plan, administrate, communicate, establish relationships, and assure the project to move forward. It advocates that political and administrative management roles must be cleared early and supportive groups should be formed (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017) (Telemarksforsking, 2016). It is also emphasized to have project managers with wide municipal, or large change processes experiences. It is however, left to organization to choose an internal or external project manager based on their best possible opportunities, after all. Past experiences show that employing external project manager has perceived positively, but the challenge is when project 'ends' and project manager leaves, the continuity of work could be fringed.

Now, turning to interviews, I will cut through data by discussing what interviewees stated on their experiences with project managers/project management role and competences, so far. I will structure their statements into two parts to make coherent content.

Managerial skills and competences:

The interviewees described project management as trustable and well-anchored managers who are full of leadership competencies with wide experience in different municipal and organizational processes. However, none of them have been engaged in professionalized project management tasks before. Derived from line organization, being experienced with municipal processes, benefiting from strong and good relationships that are already established, and having broad and deep knowledge of both organization, are some of the factors that I believe are valuable assets for the merger project. The reason obviously is that project management are well capable, connected and informed of their context; this advantage is truly the challenge that my model strived to illustrate and solve by highlighting the linkages, and devising change management framework. Considering the scope of merger, involving the functions and

employees in organization requires collaborating with all functional managers through effective and interactive communication and relationship building. I observed that project managers have actually managed the situation like a daily task so far. One can imagine that a project manager, expert by project management discipline could have stumbled to establish needed interactive dialogue with all functions which have various features, expectations, etc. Handling such a situation of course, needs more managerial competences rather than technical. I specifically asked interviewees to assess how project management has been performing towards organized resistance (if any), and emergent requirements. Even though they highlighted that project management has not met significant resistance so far which is partially explained through organizational culture theme, they told me that good relations and communication are established to prevent or face possible negativity. In terms of handling potential emergent requirements, I learned that project management considers such matters as typical and daily tasks! I think this shows nicely that great and strong leadership skills cover transforming change project's behavioral and managerial requirements as such issues are a part of project managers' daily profession.

To sum up, I can see that project managers in this case, have great leadership skills and competences. Clearly, stated skills and competences have provided required managerial capacity for the merger. I think choosing project managers from line organization, specifically with such broad managerial experiences, has been a smart choice for project. Because not only they have needed competences, but also are quite legitimate and trustable for employees that could create security for them. In my theoretical discussions, as stated earlier, I argued that project manager in a transforming change project, must show some managerial skills and competences in addition to project management skills. Highlighted leadership skills and the results by the data analysis so far, encouraged me to investigate a bit more in theory to define more precisely what leadership skills could mean for a project and project manager. I will now bring the new theory in and relate to merger's data.

Müller and turner (2007) show that project manager's leadership style affects project success. In fact, they show different attributes of project managers' leadership styles such as emotional competence, managerial competence, and intellectual competence, affect how they could lead the project towards success. For instance, they claim that project managers' emotional competence, sensitivity, and capability to communicate are significant elements for project success, but intellectual competence is not positively related (Müller & Turner, 2007). They also show that different leadership styles could be utilized in different project types. For the medium to highly complex, highly strategic, and organizational projects, authors suggest that a more transformational leadership style could be better fitted. I think this could definitely explain the positive experience in merger case so far. Looking at merger project which is complicated at organizational level, and strategically important for both organizations, I can understand why project management leadership style has been felt so positively. I think leaders from line organizations have more *transformational leadership styles* because of their background and

experience. Two of interviewees told me that handling people in unexpected situations is our daily life! I think it is very different than a leader with engineering and/or project management background. In addition, I can see that emotional competence, sensitivity, and ability to communicate are leadership competencies that merger's project managers have practiced well. They have focused on humane part of merger as much as possible, and practice communication from different angles. Therefore, I can see that merger's related experiences could be explained by Turner and Müller's (2007) work, showing different leadership styles fit different projects. I see that the transformational leadership style has shown a positive experience in a complex, multi-dimensional, and strategic project type. Now, I would like to refer to Yang, et al. (2011). They showed that increasing levels of leadership could improve relationship between team members, meaning that transformational leadership could enhance team communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness. Finally, better teamwork affects positively project's overall success. In addition, they claim that project type could play a moderator role between teamwork and project performance. In other words, they state that medium to highly complex projects could be more successful if high communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness exist among team members. Therefore, in line with Müller and Turner (2007), Yang, et al. (2011) shows again that leadership styles could be best employed based on *project type and its requirements*. By doing so, achieving success could be eased. This has again, explanation for the merger case where a more transformational leadership style is working well because project management are equipped with *high* managerial skills to facilitate collaboration, communication, and cohesiveness, to the degree that their authorities tolerate. Therefore, I suggest again, considering merger's characteristics, project managers' high leadership competences are actually what merger needed hypothetically which practically facilitated collaborations among different actors, cohesiveness, and most obviously, communication!

Passing the discussion around managerial skills and competences, I will now present argumentations related to merger project managers' technical skills, and their performance accordingly. I highlight again that merger's project management does not have project management experience or background, neither work with this merger fulltime.

Challenges (project management technical skills and competences):

Regarding project management operations, Interviewees stated that in project so far, they have moderately experienced lack of strong structure, planning, and practical actions. As stated in data chapter, they made several statements illustrating the situation, and told that although project management is full of leadership competencies and handling municipal, but it truly lacks a 'project manager' to structure the work. They expressed their wish for having a 'project manager' who would make decision, plan the work, make the tasks get done, and control the process to assure the project is moving forward.

Relating to this matter, two different reasons are mentioned by interviewees which I believe are equally important in this case. **Firstly**, as described earlier, project management in merger, is highly dependent on political level or bosses. This dependency is evaluated as a main reason that

project could not be properly structured. This issue itself has two dimensions: (1) political nature of project requires project management to work in a specific timeframe, which is too long to make concrete plans so far, and in some legal constraints which has disabled project management to plan or find solutions in some areas (2) project managers must wait for bosses to decide which naturally hinder effective planning and acting. On top of these aspects, the politicians also did not wish to invest in assigning a fulltime project manager, and have decided to utilize current resources in the organization. Mentioned matters mean limited authority of project management to plan, manage, act, control, etc. independently.

And secondly, data shows that project management's lack of needed 'technical or project work' skills and competences, is the other major source of problem. As stated earlier, no one in project management has project skills; interviewees were all agreed that in moving the process forward, they lack needed knowledge on how to do it. They expressed their worries for project work to stumble any time, as there has not been sufficient 'structure and realizing processes'. One of interviewees pictured the issue quite nicely by saying that 'the long time for the project might make some saying it is too early, we cannot do something to make people to expect something that will not happen for many years ... something that is happening here is not paper work, here is something about how decision must get happen that affect almost 15000 people. I think they should face the fact and hire someone with right competence.' Interview with NN). Another interviewee stated that "when you have all those questions, you also need someone to decide what to do!" and "Then you are left with so-called project management which is political established project management, and then you have the operative project managers, they have no time to follow up that. So, in between them at the moment, there are no one! And I think that will create tension" interview with NN).

Therefore, by interviewees describing situation, I can see clearly that one major reason that has eluded project's performance, is lack of sufficient project management skills. I think this issue is, interestingly, illustrating that project management in a transforming change project *needs* to practice a balanced range of project management and managerial skills. As mentioned, theoretical discussions behind the model suggested that project manager could not manage a transforming change only by project management skills, but need leadership competences as well. The merger case from the contrary angle, shows the same meaning by disclosing the situation where project management performs needed managerial tasks as they have great leadership capital, whilst there is a gap in managing project from project management's disciplined, structured, and operational point of view. I believe that this matter is pinpointing to the fact that a transforming change project must have a project manager/s in place who has/have *both project management and leadership competencies and capacity* to assure the change process getting done successfully. I just want to highlight again that the first reason for (project's political nature - project managers' limited authority) for project's technical performance dilemma, is not neglected here. I am fully aware that mentioned matter has absolutely affected project managers' space to plan and structure the project. I just held it aside for current discussion, and focused on project managers' skills aspect. The first reason will be come into discussion under 'project manager authority' part in current section.

Turning back to project manager's skills and competences discussion, at this point, I would like to refer to article by Jalocha, et al (2014) to support my argumentation above. Jalocha, et al. (2014) presents the key competences for public project managers. I found their work supplementary as it targets specifically 'needed competences for a 'public project manager'. By considering competences required for a manager, public sector manager, and project manager, they show that a project manager in public sector could not only rely on technical competences, but need skills from behavioral and contextual categories to manage the project in public sector successfully (Jalocha, et al., 2014). Table 4 developed by writers, show that public sector project manager should demonstrate technical competences such as managing project's quality, interest parties, scope and deliverables, changes, communication, risk, etc., behavioral competences such as capability of engagement and motivation, self-control, accountability, negotiations, ethics, openness, etc., and contextual competences such as stakeholder analysis and management, collaboration with a variety of individuals and groups from inside and outside, keep current with laws, diversity awareness, general legal knowledge, general finance, etc. (table 4). From this article, I would like to emphasize that project managers in public sector must have competences from *different categories*. It is another support to my data analysis, showing that merger's project management must have had both professional project skills, and behavioral and contextual competences, specifically in public sector. In fact, this is another and similar explanation suggesting why project is suffering in project management technical areas.

Having discussed points above, I can see that my conceptual model highlighting project manager role and his or her needed skills and competences, is representing the practical setting of merger case. As I argued in this section, merger case showed that project management have a broad spectrum of leadership skills which has been very beneficial for the merger. However, project has suffered in some project management areas because project management did not show sufficient technical project management competences. The result of analysis, is clearly supporting my theoretical discussions behind the model. The new theory strengthened the theoretical ground of model even more. New literature firstly supported that project manager, especially in public sector, needs to show both technical and leadership (behavioral and contextual) competences. And secondly, regarding project management leadership performance, it explained that leadership style could affect project's performance, and different leadership styles might be used based on type of project. Therefore, it explained how high level of leadership (transformational style) has fitted well in merger, considering its characteristics. In addition, even though project managers do not lack managerial skills, the case showed that existing 'change management framework' in merger is still valid and useful. I will discuss the change framework comprehensively later. Altogether, I think the model, is well representing what happens in the case from project management skills and competences point of view.

The last relevant point that I would like to mention is associated with project manager's dedication to merger. I suffice to say that I think it is important to learn from merger case that lack of dedicated project manager are felt and experienced as a negative issue so far. Having project managers and central project group working with project only as a part of their jobs, has meant has hindered project to be properly followed and kept moving forward. Interviewees stated that it could have been a better solution for project to have a fulltime or dedicated project

manager/s. Even though in my theoretical discussions by model, I referred to this matter briefly, I think it should be emphasized as interviewees expressed their experiences. In fact, project managers' presence and dedication to project, throughout project's whole lifecycle, is a prerequisite for the model, but I found it useful to highlight it again. Further literature study is needed to investigate this matter specifically. But, it would be beyond my focus in this paper, and therefore, I will not address it further more.

3.2 Project manager Authority-Political influence

Discussions in this section are based on data from 'contextual considerations: political influence' and 'project manager role-authority' themes, in data chapter. The discussions are new to my model as the issue got highlighted significantly by interviewees and I decided to include related concept in my analysis. As stated earlier, through the interviews, I learned that merger's nature and specifications have limited project management's 'authority' and possibilities to act, and created consequences. Observing the importance of project management authority and its consequences in project, will be addressed in this part.

As stated in data chapter, considering merger's nature and context and having the recipe for implementing merger, Interviewees made it clear that project is obliged to follow predetermined politically decided timeframe and legal framework, and adhere to influential political level existing in project management level. According to interviewees, political and administrative levels working together, is a usual relationship or routine for project management members as all are from line organizations and worked with politicians in daily basis. However, they have experienced several problems in merger because of political indications. I think this matter pinpoints that regular work routines in organizations, have not been fully effective in 'project management' template. So, there are two dimensions here. For the former, as I summarized in data chapter (contextual considerations-political influence), the issue is focused on governmental *timeframe* and for the latter (project manager role-political influence), the issue is focused on political actors in project, the *fellesnemnda* or bosses. As stated in case description, *fellesnemnda* is the top political decision maker organ for project, which consists of both parties' politicians. Just to mention, there are *partssammensatt utvalg* and *delprosjekt politisk organisering* to help the *fellesnemnda* with providing required perspectives and materials for decision making, and processing simple cases that *fellesnemnda* grant the authority to them (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017). Here my focus is on the relationship between *fellesnemnda and project management* to manage the change. I perceived this linkage as the most important perspective here and therefore, my discussions will be around this relationship. Analyzing data and developing argumentations regarding two stated aspects, will establish the new dimension in my research and conceptual model, which hopefully would nurture the model by widening its overview.

My model does not have such a background and suggests a general picture of how project and project management locates in a transformation change process to lead change process, regardless of type of organization or business. In fact, project manager authority is sort of prerequisite in my former discussions. I did not even think about it since project manager's authority to practice his or her duty, in my thinking, was a natural part of his or her work

identity. Clearly, merger case alerted me that project manager could suffer from limited authority. It opened me the new avenue, striving to understand what authority could mean for a project manager, and how much or in which areas project manager could or should have power.

Just to mention, I am not tending to analyze mentioned dimensions to assess the merger's political characteristics, as my model is built on the general theory streams of project management and change management. I am just focusing on **the implications of those characteristics for project manager performance**. argumentations.

3.2.1 Project management authority

Starting with the **first aspect**, as described in data chapter, predetermined milestone plan suggested by government, has meant almost a six-year period as project lifecycle from early negotiations towards closure when new organization start to operate in 2020 (figure 5).

Interviewees showed a common agreement that this long time, which symbolizes political influence in the merger from one angle, has caused some consequences for project processes and project management performance so far. More specifically, project's predetermined timeline has frustrated the process by weakening project managers mainly to create concrete and structured frameworks, plans and control mechanisms, and communicate needed information. Interviewees draw a common picture of this issue by saying their experiences; "If we had opportunity, we managed the process within a year. Better working situation and security. We have not been able to give employees this security. It is a too long process" interviewee with NN). Here, I highlight the statement, referring the 'security' matter. In another word, project's long lifecycle has costed project with creating anxiety and confusion among affected employees. To elaborate this issue practically, by initiating the project and establishing project organization in the past three years, project has waited for different political processes and decisions to be made; For example, the process for municipal councils to decide on establishing the fellesnemnda, or long waiting for government to prepare required legal papers for the case. These waiting periods for politicians to perform their tasks, has hindered project managers to start planning the project formally in terms of time, budget, deliverables, and resources to name a few. I should mention that majority of such periods, has used for negotiations, assessments, collaborations, preparing documents, etc. under the overall milestone plan. Ever since fellesnemnd is established, project has yet three years ahead. This is described as a 'very long time' which *has had* and *could* tire employees even more, and hinder smooth processes in the project. There are interesting examples by interviewees that show situations where project management had to slow down project processes because formal requirements have not been in place. I think this is a significant aspect of case showing that project's 'long lifecycle', has challenged project management and decreased their effectiveness to structure and plan. Nevertheless, the county governor perspective in the case, looked differently. Even though the governor level is aware of this issue, they believe this long period should be used for creating consensus and a good fundament for new organization. The guideline highlights that the time between municipal agreement and the decision by parliament, could be used for planning and preparation for example. It says that it is important to start early in the process for planning and preparation (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartmentet, 2017).

By mentioned points, I see that even though Trondheim and Klæbu have strived to benefit the long time in project up to now, in accordance with recipe's guideline, they have yet experienced that project management could not establish project tasks effectively. I think one should remember that this matter is thought-through by the ministry. I mean, developing ownership and agreement through the merger partners, and of course following laws and legislations, are reasonable to expect being time-consuming. But, I would like to recall my theoretical discussion earlier saying that 'project management basics' should be utilized to plan a transforming change project concretely for optimizing project's processes as much as possible (Pellegrinelli & Bowman, 1994). This was actually a basis for some criticisms saying that project management's rigid and narrow planning, organizing, managing etc., could disable the discipline to fulfill context-dependent and evolving transforming change processes' requirements (Parry, et al., 2014), (Cicmil, 1999), (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009). I think the case shows that the long period of time has partially diminished project managers' possibility to establish those needed basics. Thus, merger suffers from a level of anxiety and confusion as involved groups who truly could be used to realize the change by another tone and enthusiasm, have been frustrated. This is something that project managers must hinder to happen (Stummer & Zuchi, 2010) (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009). I believe merger's related situation supports theoretical advocates for applying project management to implement change processes.

Focusing on the **second** dimension, data shows that most decision-making authority belongs to bosses in project and project management is quite dependent on them for all important steps or processes to get decided and clarified. Interviewees described this dependency and formality as one major reason making their duties complicated and hard. I observed that operative presence of bosses in project, has not left enough room for project managers to establish basic project management practices or activities so far. Project managers must practically report to bosses, provide needed documents, participate in discussions, wait for political project management to decide, and act accordingly. One major consequence caused by project management limited authority, refers **again** to anxiety and confusion among target groups. This is because project management hasn't had sufficient power to plan 'when and how' employees will be transferred. Therefore, needed information couldn't get created and distributed. Obviously, the authority matter ties with long lifecycle matter and *both* affect project management performance.

Another important point that I understood from interviews is that project managers are not truly oriented about magnitude and area of their acting power from the early stages. I should highlight again that current discussion addresses project management authority issue from initiation phase up to now, and one should be aware that implementation phase is just started. Therefore, by entering the implementation, project managers' authority will perhaps be granted in different levels and directions. But the dependency (in a different level perhaps) will remain as formal and legal requirements specify. Turning back to data, according to interviewees, clarifying project's tasks and project management duties have gone through a gradual and step by step process. I believe this is one significant reason creating and or perhaps amplifying problem of structuring, planning, acting, and controlling in project. I mean, when projects managers must refer to their bosses that often, it is natural that project suffers from a sort of confusion on *when, how, and who* will do the jon to make the merger happen. I think project manager role and responsibilities,

and *the authority* in a transforming change project, must be crystal clear. Based on what I see in this case, I believe assigning project manager to a change project, and floating him/her in the process waiting to get instructions from another level in the project has affect the process negatively, and created insecurity among involved employees who could not see visibly how and who is 'getting the job done'.

To sum up, obviously, **both aspects**, symbolizing most important political aspects in merger, contain consequences for project manager role and performance in project. Analyzing empirical data showed that merger's political nature and context has affected project management's performance through limiting their authority and possibility to practice required project management basics. I can see that even though predetermined milestones for merger case, provides the chance for organizations to settle consensus and go through all political and legal requirements, it has been moderately problematic for practical project management framework to operate and manage the process appropriately. Overlooking merger's context, I can also see that project management's dependency on bosses, and referring to them for getting instructions so often, have hindered them to manage the process optimally, so far. The ending point here is that two aspects argued in this section, are tied together to weaken project management performance. I like to highlight that current conclusions are in addition to the discussion in previous part where I settled that project manager's insufficient PM competencies is one reason for project's planning and controlling issues. Two following parts will address how project managers' limited authority creates a chain of problems in merger.

3.2.2 Anxiety and confusion

As discussed in previous section, anxiety and confusion are major consequences of the political influence in merger. It is rooted in project managers' limited authority and possibility to establish good planning, organizing, controlling, etc. Interviewees stated that the long time for project to get done, and waiting for decisions to be made by politicians in different dimensions, have created and increased uncertainty about when and how the merger is going practically to happen. The uncertainty, not only has frustrated people, but has built the ground for anxiety and confusion. This is the consequence that has got augmented even more as no one in project management work with this project fulltime.

To make this dilemma clearer, interviewees referred to employees in Klæbu, who are challenged by lack of precise or proper information about where, how and when they will be transferred in Trondheim's organization. So, there are worries for employees who might feel insecure and confused by waiting and waiting till project's processes get clear. I think this is a reasonable reaction to the change, when process's characteristics and courses are not well defined. In fact, it refers to one important success factor for transforming change projects that I theoretically discussed, suggesting that involved individuals *must have* clear understanding of their current and future roles related to the change (Stummer & Zuchi, 2010)(Cown-Sahadath, 2010). As sated, limited practical project planning and implementing so far, couldn't provide a safe and informative process for employees. I would like to refer to organizational culture here, because I think it has meaning for current discussion. As explained in data chapter, multi-functional employees in Klæbu, are used to have a wide but not very deep spectrum of responsibilities in

their positions, whilst Trondheim as a professionalized organization requires quite narrow and deep range of responsibilities in job positions. I think this point could be stressful enough for Klæbu's employees who know that they will step in a very professionalized organization where new colleagues would have specialized experience in similar positions they will work in. Now, long lifecycle for the project and project manager's little power to specify tasks, could amplify the anxiety and confusion even more. Even though employees have shown positive feelings for new opportunities in new organization, but the fear and question of if they fit in new environment is yet inevitable. So, mentioned points about project's lifecycle and operative role of bosses, mean that project management could not provide and distribute relevant and timely information towards employees as they lack the authority or possibility to do so. Besides the worries for employees' unrest, their attempt to find secure jobs somewhere else, is the subsequent dilemma that Klæbu's organization suffers from.

In addition to this level of anxiety, as described in data chapter, even top management in Klæbu has shown a level of unrest by pressuring Trondheim and fellesnemnda to realize sub-agreements like building the elderly house in Klæbu. This could show that Klæbu seeks to create security by operationalizing some of the sub-projects settled in the municipal agreement of merger. "They want to feel that something concrete is happening related to merger" interview with NN). I would like to recall Klæbu's top management and politicians' positivity and proudness which is contradictory to Klæbu's current behavior striving to 'materialize' some parts of the project. I think pressuring Trondheim and fellesnemnda is explaining again that political influences leading project management having limited authority, has been creating stress and discomfort from individuals to the top level in organization.

By mentioned points, overlooking the reasons behind the situation (irrelevant to my purpose), I see that project management's limited power to decide and act in merger, is one main reason for the unrest and frustration in the project. Data showed that this matter has deluded producing and communicating relevant and sufficient information. I believe that anxiety and confusion, in individual and organizational scale, could show the importance of project management authority and ability to plan, organize, and act the project. I think this discussion could expand my former discussions about project manager role in a transforming change project, by requiring an 'authorized project managers' who can truly perform technical and leadership tasks to move the project forward. I believe that influential political level which symbolizes 'project managers' limited power', has disturbed the essence of project management framework which clearly has consequences for project's objectives.

3.2.3 Running organizations throughout the project's lifecycle

Anxiety and confusion in merger follows up with another significant dilemma in merger: Klæbu's organization is losing competent personnel which affects line organization operations negatively.

As stated in data chapter, the anxiety and confusion among Klæbu's employees has challenged the organization since some of key personnel started finding other secure positions outside the organization. Interviewees had an agreement that frustration and anxiety are major reasons that Klæbu is getting drained by losing its competent and intelligent personnel. By losing personnel,

associated functions in Klæbu would suffer and organization would need Trondheim to take over and administrate those units until 2020, as the first alternative. Interviewees also stated that there are already negotiations about some of the tasks that Klæbu wants early ‘merge’ on them. I think this issue is a practical definition of theoretical point that change does not take place in an isolated environment as line organization must continue its day-to-day business. In other words, change is not only about the change project itself, but it also affects the overall organizational day-to-day performance during project lifecycle. Change project is best managed when it gains its defined objectives, while enhance organizational performance at the same time (Parry, et al., 2014). Back to current discussion, for making early agreements to leave ill functions to Trondheim for administrating, I learned that organizations chief administrators could normally make administrative deals. Here, I would like to signify again that because of project’s nature, making such deals are affected by political interest. It means that usual administrative work is affected by politicians’ intervening and decision making authority. Obviously, the story repeats again! In the second round of interviews, I observed that the dilemma is even more signified. I learned that because of increasing trend of key employees leaving the organization, project management has referred to change management to develop a solution for easing current constraints and formality. Nevertheless, by fylkesmannen facilitating and investigating, project management find out that all formal processes must get done according to the recipe, meaning no other paths could be used for establishing sub-mergers administratively. Therefore, for making any important decision, project managers *must* refer to bosses, as pictured in data section. In figure 9 I tried to map how project management limited authority has operated in the merger case.

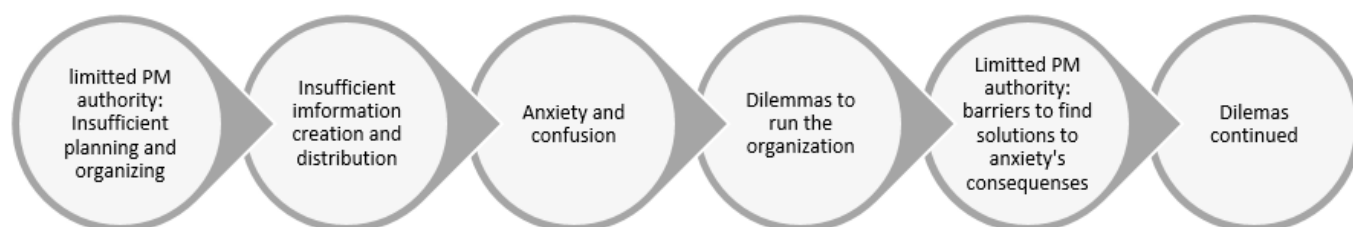


Figure 9 Mapping consequences of project management’s limited authority

The example of Klæbu’s municipal manager who applied and got a new job in Trondheim, is a good illustration for the discussion here. With him leaving the function, the position getting empty, another municipal manager has taken the place, and another employee has filled this new empty position. This could mean an early transfer when there is no concrete plan about how functions will be truly merged. Therefore, one can see that project management dependency on political level, has formed a situation where anxiety and confusion are created in the first place, and organization start to lose its key personnel because of insecurity. Then, it is the project management dependency on higher hierarchical level, again, that limits project management authority to develop solutions and remedy the situation (figure 9). The last point that I want to signify once more is that as I understood, there is not a well-explained description of project management magnitude and areas of authority. Considering two to three years in merger that project management are factually involved with merger processes, I could not find any concrete

description of what and how much they have power to act. Overall, I can see that limited authority, and ambiguous perception of magnitude and areas of authority, have challenged project management. They stated and exemplified situations where they do not know exactly how to handle circumstances. situation.

Altogether by the case, I see that project management limited authority and possibility to manage the process optimally so far, have affected project's processes in different dimensions. Some of significant implications became discussed above, and consequences for the merger got argued. I just want to mention once again that bosses' active existence and the political project lifecycle, are not under focus in my discussions. I perceived them as a part of project's characteristics, and analyzed the data related to their consequences for merger. As mentioned earlier, my model is based on theoretical discussions arguing general transforming change projects, regardless of industry, sector, etc. Therefore, I just naturally thought that employed project management in a transforming change project, must have required authority to manage the project. The case though, showed me current new and interesting angle. Therefore, lacking theoretical roots for this matter, I needed to search in literature to learn what authority could truly mean for project management. I chose two sources, summarized in theory chapter, which come in help here.

Cleland's (1967) description of authority in bureaucratic hierarchical model is quite relevant here. He clarifies that in bureaucratic hierarchical model, power gets delegated by superiors to manager. In terms of project manager authority, Cleland (1967) mentions that project manager's legal rights *and* personal success in his organizational position, formulate his or her authority. He signifies that since project manager is responsible for managing tasks which engage several organs and actors out of his or her direct control (vertical and horizontal relationships involved), his or her reputation is far more important than what he or she is authorized on paper. In other words, he highlights that significant part of project manager's authority rests on his or her ability to develop 'reciprocity' in environment, remove conflicts, and preserve political alliances (Cleland, 1967). Therefore, project manager strives to find point of agreements, make critics, and think reflectively. I think Cleland's (1967) portrays merger's project management authority situation quite well. The authority structure in merger case shows a traditional bureaucratic hierarchical model where bosses delegate authority to project managers to act. In accordance with Cleland's definition of project manager authority, one can see that merger's project managers might be more authorized by their positions than on paper. They are well-anchored top managers from line organizations who have 'established performance profiles' in their background. I think this explains project management's legitimacy that has enabled them to build merger's vertical and horizontal relationships confidently. In other words, even though their documented authority for making decisions is locked under bosses' umbrella, I see that negotiations, thinking, discussions, making and preserving alliances, etc., have been going on quite well. But looking at how much authority project manager should have, Cleland (1967) brings an interesting discussion. He states that since project manager leads a team of different professionals, and must manage vertical and horizontal relationships, she or he is dependent on many actors to provide him with needed materials, and to facilitate project's tasks and context. Then, writer suggests that project manager must have *sufficient authority to keep a legitimate central role in the project*. I believe Cleland's (1967) statement above, is theoretical explanation

of what I argued in current section, in terms of a chain of events, that illustrate project manager's limited authority could endanger project's performance. I can see the practical reflection of Cleland's argument in my case. I see that project management is involved in various vertical and horizontal relationships, and should handle people from six different functions with different professions and perspectives. In accordance with Cleland's argumentation, the case is showing that for managing such a situation, project management must have had sufficient authority to keep their central role. In other words, I believe that interviewees explanations, discloses that project management's high dependency on bosses, have deluded their *central role in the project*, which eventually, has resulted stated issues surfaced in project.

Having the early and classic perspective by Cleland (1967) which gave me a basic understanding to analyze project management's authority in merger case, I chose to take Kreiner's (1995) work to my discussion as well. He takes the step forwards from classic understanding of project manager authority dimensions, and targets project manager's dilemma when project's environment start to drift (Kreiner, 1995). He focuses on situations that project's intended outcomes and therefore project's relevance, change over time. He asks what a project manager could do about it. Even though his intention and reason for assessing project manager's managerial strategies in such situations are not exactly related to my case, but I think his formulated research area could be a metaphor where I can symbolize merger's 'authority problem' and try to find some managerial suggestions. As summarized in theory chapter, for handling different situations in project, Kreiner (1995) introduces three managerial strategies for project managers: *Hierarchy* where project manager's authority is reflected in negotiated design and plan which brings consistency and efficiency to project performance; *Networking* where there is no organizational fixed point as boss, plans, procedures, values, etc. to be relied, but instead, a moving position exists which validates decisions and actions in project; and *Torn between arrogance and hypersensitivity* where project manager would have fixed points that guarantee project's performance in terms of operational goals, tasks, plans, procedures, etc., while he or she establish social bonds to context to keep the project oriented and responsive. Writer tries to suggest the idea that there are situations that project manager should decide and act while there are situations that project manager must go to bosses. Turning to the case now, by Kreiner's work also, I see that project management's authority characteristics follow hierarchy model. According to Kreiner (1995), this strategy is supposed to ensure consistency and efficiency in project performance, however, I see that merger suffers from lack of consistency and efficiency to a degree. I think the main reason could be that their authority has not been explicitly and precisely designed or planned. But on the other hand, I can see that because of excellent ties that project management have established in project's context, they are using networking strategy naturally, perhaps not consciously. I believe that vast amount of anchored leadership in line organizations, has created the ground for project management to be sensitive enough about project's context. Therefore, I think, project managers in merger case is keeping a bridge between the two strategies (Kreiner, 1995), but more relying towards hierarchy strategy. Based on the case, I can grasp Kreiner's message suggesting project managers to consider both hierarchy and networking strategies and use them based on the where and when situation requires. In merger case, I believe that project management could have performed better if their

authority plan or design were defined more inclusively and precisely. Then, project could be run more consistent and efficient, as Kreiner promises.

To sum up, Cleland's (1967) and Kreiner's (1995) works helped me to develop my understanding of project manager's authority, and his or her managerial strategic alternatives to rely on and employ in different situations. Having merger's political nature in discussions' background, based on theoretical sources, I argued that project management's authority in the case could be *majorly* explained by hierarchy strategy, which is rigidly concerned with negotiated authority designs and plans. I agreed with Cleland (1967) and stated merger shows that project manager should have sufficient power to keep his or her central role in project. I also highlighted that project managers in merger have the privilege of reputation gained from their organizational positions which I think is a significant asset in this project. Benefiting from Kreiner (1995) suggestions, I widened my thinking and explained that merger's project management use actually a bridge between hierarchy and networking strategies. I established that project merger's difficulties could be explained by inaccurate defined plan or design of their authority. I suggested that project management could have hindered problematic challenges in the project, if they could have sufficient power. Altogether, although my discussions could explain several aspects of merger's project manager authority matter, I still could not elaborate what sufficient authority could mean, how context could affect this issue, and what project manager could do as remedy when he or she is obliged to deal with limited power. In fact, by the case, I saw that lacking authority has challenges project management as they are mostly dependent on bosses who intervene more often than what they should do, according to interviewees. In such situations, they are not clear what to do! I think this is a relevant and important area especially for project managers in public sector, that I could not provide an explanation or answer for. In my master thesis timeframe, I could not find any theoretical support addressing what a public project manager could do when challenged with his or her limited authority consequences in project. Therefore, I believe that here is a room for further work especially for project management theory to provide new theory to address mentioned area for public project management, and help them handling such a situation. As I see in my case that project managers are troubled, there is a room to provide theoretical answers to public project managers questioning 'Where do I have authority and freedom to act?? where should I be close to bosses, and where I can take authority myself?

As my final conclusions gained from discussions in 3.2.1, 3.2.2, and 3.2.3 sub-themes, I established that merger's project management limited authority and possibility to manage the process fully so far, have affected project's processes in different dimensions. Two significant consequences became highlighted: the anxiety and confusion among target groups, and Klæbu's dilemma to run the line organization as it has been draining from key personnel. By the new theory, I explained merger's project management authority situation, established which managerial strategies are in use, and proposed why merger project suffers in some areas. Through mentioned discussions, I developed my understanding of what authority actually means for project managers. This added a new consideration to my model. Yet, I could not find any theoretical support addressing what a public project manager could do when challenged with his or her limited authority consequences in project.

From the lesson that I learned from merger case here, and theoretical explanations regarding project manager authority matter, I think ‘authority’ is an essential element in managing a transforming change project or any type of project. I believe organizations and project managers must gain and specify an agreement to define how much and in which areas they would have freedom to act. Therefore, I will illustrate my findings in this section in the conceptual mode. Thus, I will modify the model by using ‘Authorized project manager’ instead of ‘project manager’, in model’s project management framework. This will exemplify the importance of project management ‘authority’ element in managing a change process.

3.3 Communication - Implications for project manager

This section addresses the importance of communication and information exchange. For developing my conceptual model, as stated in theory chapter, I discussed and established that communication is one of the most effective and important success factors in transforming change projects. I looked at communication from different angles and came to conclusion that a systematic communication management practice should be recognized in such a project. It is truly one fundament for other success factors or critical elements, in a transforming change project. More specifically, I highlighted that change’s background, goals, visions, and strategies must be crystal clear for project management and affected individuals, project must be well connected to its context, change roles and responsibilities must be defined and communicated, and top management must be engaged and supportive to the project. For all mentioned elements clearly, communication is the golden key. Therefore, I suggested that transforming change project should benefit from a systematic communication which facilitate honest and solid information exchange. A good communication system promises that ‘project’ embraces its contextual matters properly, and hinder possible ambiguity, confusion, exhaustion, and resistance. Eventually, in the model, I developed communication channels between project and certain layers of the organization, to illustrates mentioned discussions.

Interestingly, empirical data opened a wider perspective of how communication has been established and emphasized in merger so far. I realizes that compared to what I learned and discussed theoretically, communication has been practically even more central in merger case. It not only means exchanging required information, but is also considered as a significant strategy for meeting different emergent situations such as possible resistance and cultural differences.

Focusing on empirical data, merger’s project plan emphasizes and calls for devising and establishing a communication plan (Project administration, 2017). Project management has employed a communication manager accordingly, to design the communication plan. Communication plan has been practically submitted and accepted by project administration. As stated in data chapter, the plan seeks to assure merger gains legitimacy among target groups, and facilitate and make change process easier for those who are involved. The emphasis is to guarantee inhabitants, employees, and politicians to receive correct and timely information. There is an action plan provided in the document which specifies mainly what information and how they should be distributed within the timeline in 2017 (table 7) (Project administration, 2017). The report by Telemarksforsking and the guideline document emphasize the importance of communication generally. Telemarksforsking report calls for involving all affected individuals

throughout change process, and advises to prioritize devising project plan. It also highlights that an omstillingsavtale should be early in place as it addresses major issues related to employees and employers and therefore, provides necessary information to be distributed. It also advises to decide on future chief administrator, and involve unit managers a certain amount of time before new organization starts to operate. By doing so, they, who will lead the new organization eventually, could be involved and informed in planning and staff-related issues early (Telemarksforsking, 2016). So, information availability and distribution is considered from different angles. The guideline document states that clear processes and good information towards employees are always crucial to have in place. It highlights that information should be distributed as early, and as much as possible. Information availability not only could reduce associated risks such as conflicts, resistance, or unexpected modifications, but it also facilitates and contribute making informed decisions for project (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2017).

Focusing on practical communicative courses in merger so far, firstly, I would like to pinpoint project's connection towards change management framework in merger's project organization model. By interviews, I learned that project is well coupled with change management framework through close and effective personal relationships between project management and fylkesmannen (and KS). Several informative seminars have been, and will be arranged mainly by fylkesmannen and help of KS, to give information about merger processes, success criteria, what to avoid, how to inform and handle employees involved in the merger, and so on. This is one part of communication channels that bring key project management members from both organizations into a platform to learn and clarify questions and challenges face to face.

Now turning to merger and interviewee's perspective, interviewees explained their experiences regarding how communication has operated and affected their roles. Inclusive description of merger's communication is given in data chapter. To summarize though, interviewees stated that communication is initiated and utilized from very early steps towards municipal agreement. Communication and information availability are built on organizational values as trust and openness. Good communication in addition to good personal relations between organizations' leaders, have facilitated initial and further agreements between the two, with minor conflicts. Practically, different channels are used for distributing and exchanging information; website, meetings, newspapers, email, etc., formally and informally. One important point here is that using direct communication and oral information exchange, has been the main approach to communicate since merger's human aspect is thoughtfully come into account. Project management has established regular meetings about merger with different groups to keep information flow as well and precise as possible. Communication between politicians from both sides is also progressed well. "They invited each other to discuss and decide different matters of the project" interview with NN). The unions for employees are also finding each other. Project management has had meetings with unions several times since the initiation phase, and informed them on all stages. So, obviously from project management's central framework, towards different layers and groups inside and outside organization, communication platforms are being used within good and respectful environment, according to interviewees. Figure 7 shows how communication flow operates for the merger. I devised this plan and asked one of interviewees to

check my perception. She confirmed my understanding as what is practically happening. The plan signifying communication paths up- and down-wards, shows that project management are fully aware and committed to manage communication as much as possible. On the other hand, interviewees stated that there are some worries that affected employees might partially lack understanding of change process *stages*, and *what different steps will bring for them*; for example, information on their roles and responsibilities in merger period, future positions, etc. It means that regardless of utilized communication channels, and emphasis to distribute information towards target groups, more relevant and precise information has been needed. Interviewees were hopeful that communication plan which is expected to nurture communication management and foresee possible challenges, would be helpful for project managers. In other words, from interviewees' point of view, communication plan would help project management to structure project's communication better and creates more security by reducing uncertainty. Another document under work, as stated earlier, is omstillingsavtale which will clarify employees' transferring and associated issues. The absence of document so far, has disabled project management to produce needed information. An interesting point to mention is that communication and information exchange has been operated better in some functions than others. As described in data chapter, city development function for instance, constituted of engineers, architects, and planners, have establish communication sessions for clarifying plans and discuss the common future. Not all the functions obviously communicated similarly.

To summarize, based on empirical data, I see that governmental recipe highlights importance of communication clearly, and suggests some useful methods and tools for planning and performing a good communication. I think communication is merger's one specific area for which governmental recipe introduces tools and methods. Other project management knowledge areas don't have such an opportunity. Both organizations have understood and taken communication seriously by investing resources, and a lot of time to produce and exchange information. I think the merger has taken 'academic' understanding of communication into action, quite nicely. Interviewees stated that admitting some worries for lack of information which is typical in such processes, communication has been managed well so far; different information types are circulated through various channels and forms, continually (figure 7). However, there could have been better and more precise attempt to produce and distribute correct and timely information.

Mentioned perspective and actions by Trondheim and Klæbu, regarding communication and information management, shows a broader importance and usage of communication than what my model suggests. The model suggests that communication must be systematically established between project management and other organizational levels and actors. This is completely in accordance with practical setting in merger case. Nevertheless, merger case draw a more significant picture where a *systematic communication mindset* is truly in place as an effective and proactive strategy. A lot of resources has been assigned to manage and perform merger's communication courses. **Therefore, I conclude that, my conceptual model could illustrate merger's communication management practice, however, I would like to include merger's 'focused attention' to establish and nourish systematic communication management as an important strategy.** Therefore, I did some studies in literature to support communication's role and related matters in my theoretical discussions. The summary of chosen theoretical sources are

already given in theory chapter, and here, I will link the concepts to merger's practical communication.

As stated in theory chapter, communication and managing project's information are considered as processes to guarantee timely and proper planning, collecting, creating, storing, retrieving, managing, controlling, monitoring, and dispositioning project's information (PMI, 2013). PMBOK requires project manager to spent great amount of time to communicate with different stakeholders, and in a systematic way. I see that this basic understanding of communication management which is also suggested by government recipe, is truly grasped by project management in merger case. Data shows that project management, having a lot of administrative experiences and benefitting the recipe and change management support, are well-aware of importance of communication, especially in this type of project with an important humane aspect embodied. Among communication management phases (PMI, 2013), Planning phase aims to explore and document 'the approach' for communication with stakeholders in the optimum way, as early as possible. The emphasize here is to develop a communication plan based on stakeholders' information need, and the organizational possibilities. Managing processes assure that planned information get created, collected, distributed, stored, retrieved, and dispositioned, accordingly. Managing processes use appointed organizational resources, not only to distribute data, but also to guarantee that information is created properly, received and perceived correctly while gives target groups the room for clarifying and discussing (PMI, 2013). And controlling concerns with monitoring and controlling project communication during the project's lifecycle. This stage strives to make sure that stakeholders receive their needed information, keep communication among target groups effective and efficient, 'at any moment of time' (PMI, 2013).

Taking merger data into account, I think communication's planning phase is well-thought and established by thinking about, performing communication early, and attempting to devise the communication plan. As mentioned earlier, interviewees described that communication has been practicing frequently between different levels and actors (figure 7). The communication plan is designed by an expert which covers the areas suggested by PMBOK (2013). However, I should mention that although PMBOK recognize that designing communication plan is the first step to manage information, merger case has performed 'a lot of' communication courses even before having the plan at hand. I think this shows that *planning and managing* communication processes in the merger, have been developing simultaneously. One explanation is political nature of project which clearly has required many negotiations and communication from first step. But more importantly for my focus, I think one should consider project management high level of leadership skills, and their organizational reputation. I believe mentioned characteristics have just naturally structured, established, and managed communication so far, even before planning it. However, considering different actors in merger, and importance of affected employees by project management, I think designing communication plan late and practicing communication early, could be an explanation of why in some areas where information was vitally required, it is not 'created' yet. If project management could have the chance *to plan* communication in very early stages in project initiation phase, creating and distribution of essential information could have been 'managed or practiced' better. Here, project management

authority issue surfaces again which has hindered them to develop essential information in those areas. One clear area as stated earlier, concerns with transferring affected group in implementation phase. Such information has been so important that its absence resulted in confusion and anxiety, and operative problems for the organization consequently. One can see that misaligned project communication planning and managing processes, could explain one of the most serious issues in this project that interviewees experienced. Eventually, in terms of controlling processes, I can see that project's communication plan pinpoints to benefitting and establishing websites so that relevant and up-to-date data could be assured. There are always issues that target groups could not be responded by websites and therefore, communication plan suggests establishing direct contact such as mail, telephone, Facebook, etc. Mentioned ideas I think, shows that project management try to make sure stakeholders receive information frequently, effectively, and effectively. *To sum up*, I think merger project has applied a reasonable systematic communication management practice, as PMBOK (2013) suggests. It emphasizes on communication, and is practicing communicative courses in different dimensions: formal and informal forms of communication, vertical and horizontal communications, official and unofficial, oral and written methods. However, there are areas that information could be better managed, which I think misalignment between communication processes can explain the situation. By stated discussions, I found case's communication management as reflecting PMBOK's (2013) 'standard' perspective of project communication management. This linkage could be a supportive for communication elements in model to highlight a systematic approach for managing communication.

Next theoretical source written by Ziek and Anderson (2015) however, tries to open a new avenue for project management to utilize project communication management beyond standard description of communication that PMBOK (2013) provided for example. As stated in theory chapter, writers go beyond considering communication as a skill for project manager or project's success factor. Instead, they focus on constitutive nature of communication as a social process which can be utilized to establish a dialogue between project managers and project team for influencing and framing the project itself; giving project manager sort of designer or co-creator of a dialogue towards stakeholders. It means that communication could be used to regulate project's scope and stakeholders' behavior where participants jointly develop meaning. In fact, emphasis is not on messaging, but on making meanings which could outline the scope of project and its path.

Regarding the case, considering merger's unique context and characteristics, I think stated approach has been slightly used by project management, perhaps automatically. Besides a lot of legal and formal requirements that project management must have adhered to, I think there is some space where project management could be personally influential in decisions that 'bosses' will make. Here, I am focusing on 'creation of information' in communication managing processes (PMI, 2013), and relating it to Ziek and Anderson's (2015) main message. I think relationships between project management, bosses, and functional managers are quite unique since project managers are top chiefs in both organization. I mean because of their organizational positions; project managers have a long history in relationships and collaborations with politicians and functional manager. This matter conveys their influential figure based on their

daily duties, which makes eventually a powerful identity. I should mention that project's central group members, coming from line organization as chief advisors and municipal leaders, have also similar characteristics. Clearly, one can understand that a project manager from outside, could not have such a situation in this case. One of interviewees stated that "in project management level, we are negotiators and collaborator to describe what is needed now and in future" interview with NN). Therefore, even considering project's rigid requirements, and fellesnemnda's almost full control on decision making, I believe that communication between mentioned parties could mean more than a skill for project managers or success factor for the project. I believe in this case, bosses are also quite dependent on project managers to supply them with facts and requirements. According to interviewees, there are always 'discussion courses' before any decision to be made. I think it shows how 'negotiation' is happening rather than exchanging information. This give project managers have somehow opportunity to influence or create meaning for making decisions in project; meaning that project managers play partially a designer or co-creator role (Ziek & Anderson, 2015), affecting project's activities, resources, and objectives. I illustrated my current discussions in figure 10. I found this point valuable to suggest that if project managers could look at communication from Ziek and Anderson perspective, they could benefit communication in a superior way to lead the project and strengthen their attitude.

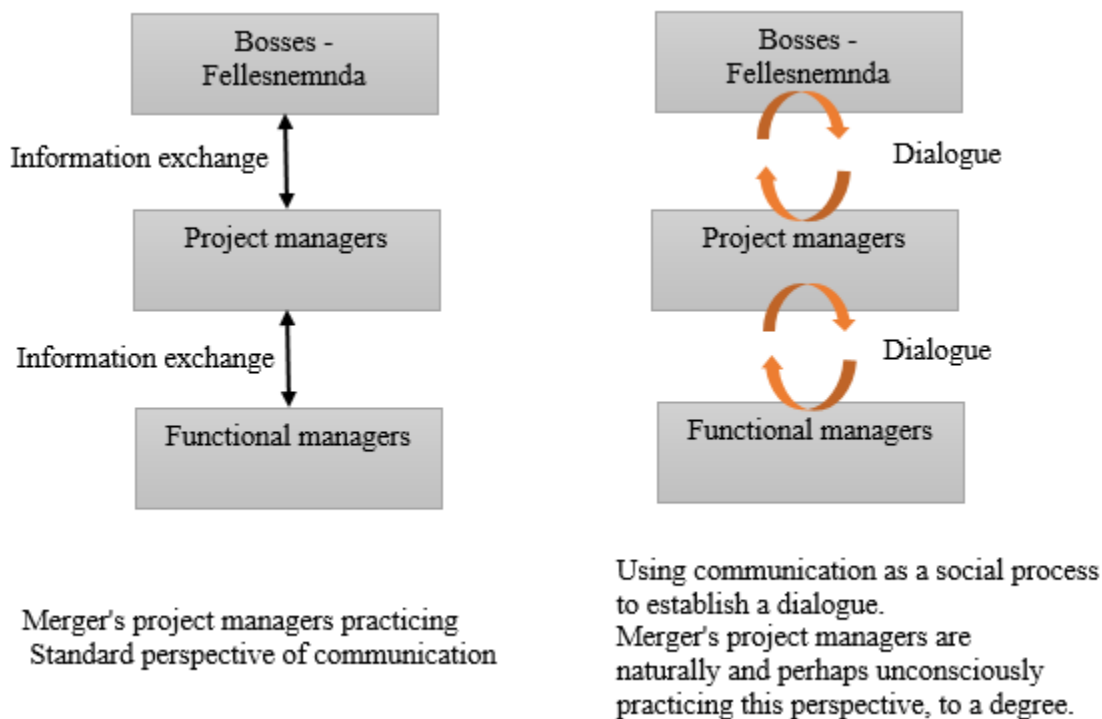


Figure 10 Communicative courses by merger's project managers

The last but not the least, in my model, communication is highlighted majorly to ensure project's performance and success. This idea got affirmed by the case based on governmental recipe advices and what interviewees described about their experiences associated with information and communication management. Case showed that communication and information management

are central concepts, and project management strived to keep communication managed optimally. However, interviewees disclosed project's communicative challenges as well. They clarified some major consequences that they are struggling with as target groups lacked receiving vital information they needed. Therefore, I decided to take communication under project manager role theme to discuss associated issues. To support my former theoretical arguments which were not so comprehensive to explain merger's focused communication situation, I used two theoretical sources which address what communication management actually means, and what implications it could have for project manager. PMBOK (2013) described and suggested a standard understanding of project communication management. I could recognize that merger has benefitted from standard steps (PMI, 2013) to manage communication. But I observed some deviations which I think, are because of project's context and features. Through Ziek and Anderson's (2015) work, I developed my thinking one step forward to understand a new dimension of merger's communication. I suggested that project management in merger is using constitutive characteristics of communication as social processes to perform a designer or co-creator role, to a degree. Lastly, I established that in a transforming change project, project manager must not only establish a systematic communication management, but she or he also could benefit communication in a constructive manner to influence and frame the project itself.

3. Project manager in transforming change project

3.1 Project manager role, required skills and competences: data showed that project manager is an essential role required to plan, administrate, and move the merger process forward. Considering high leadership competences in project, benefiting from my former and new theory, I established that merger as a large, complicated and strategically important project, should have and have practically benefitted from a more transformational leadership style, than transactional. I also established that in such a process, higher leadership ability (transformational leadership) to facilitate communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness, could create better teamwork which eventually approaches better performance. Moreover, merger's project management challenges with technical skills became highlighted. Therefore, I relied on the theory behind my model and took another article in to illustrated once again that project manager in a transforming change process, need to show *both* technical and managerial competences. Altogether, I concluded that my model is representing what the merger case has experienced so far.

3.2 Project manager authority: This factor has not been a part of my model, but brought in because of the case. Trying to analyze the data, I highlighted that political nature of project limited project managers' authority and possibilities to perform essential project management practices including planning, organizing, managing, controlling, etc. Consequently, I signified two certain issues; anxiety and confusion, and Klæbu losing its key competences which endangers organizations' performance. To assess data, I used two theoretical sources and argued that merger's project management's authority could be explained mainly by hierarchy strategy, and perhaps minorly by networking strategy. I argued that project manager should have sufficient power to keep his or her central role in project. I referred to merger project managers' organizational positions, which gave them privilege of their reputation which I think is a significant asset for project. Lastly, I established that merger's difficulties could be also explained by inaccurate plan or design of authority definition. Eventually, I highlighted that my argumentations could not yet answer *what* public managers might do when they are challenged by limited authority. Therefore, I suggested this matter for further theoretical works.

3.3 Communication – implications for project manager: Data analysis showed that in merger project, communication and information management are central concepts for, and project management strived to keep communication managed optimally. This is in accordance with my theoretical conclusions suggesting communication as an important platform that other success factors such as clarifying change's goals and strategies, embracing project's context, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and so on, are built upon. Besides merger's highlighted attention to communication, as project management struggled with lack of timely information to distribute, I took two new theoretical sources and explained the situation. I recognized that merger has benefitted from standard steps to manage communication. I also established that project management could have partially been using constitutive characteristics of communication as social processes, to perform a designer or co-creator role. Eventually, I concluded that communication in conceptual model is reasonably illustrating real practice by emphasizing on a systematic and integrated communication management. I additionally established that project management could benefit 'communication' in a constructive manner to frame the project, and affect its destiny.

4. Change management framework

As explained in theory chapter, related to project manager's possible competency shortages, I suggested and devised a change management framework to support project manager when needed. Mentioned element is based on my discussions about how a disciplined project manager might lack required managerial or behavioral skills to manage a transforming change project. I concluded that project managers with their often-engineering and/or project management education or experience, might fail to fulfill humane and contextual requirements of a transforming change project. Therefore, I suggested a change management framework to offer support in situations where project managers cannot show sufficient managerial or leadership competencies. In the change management framework, there would be an experienced 'change manager(s)' or actor(s) who knows large change processes and relevant issues. I discussed that change and project roles must be clearly defined to hinder any confusion. Change manager, among his or her other responsibilities, would be responsible for overall change; meaning that change manager or actor oversees the transition between change processes, secure continuity, but not responsible for the content of the work (Stummer & Zuchi, 2010). I concluded that project and change management activities in an organizational change project are differently focused, and based on change's context and characteristics, an appropriate combination or a fruitful partnership of change and project manager knowledge is required. To bring about an optimal mixture of technical and behavioral competences (Crawford & Nahmias, 2010).

Turning to empirical data, as explained in data chapter, merger case benefits from a support framework that contributes project management when it is needed. I just want to emphasize again that in my specific case, support framework or change management framework, *does not have acting authority*, but only 'formal' advisory and supportive role. The letter of assignment towards fylkesmannen states explicitly that merging organizations must *use* support framework and recipe, but *make* the process own (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2014). Therefore, this consideration is absolutely in background of my discussion. Turning to data chapter again, I explained that among the elements in change management framework, including laws and legislations, circulars, guidelines, seminars, and fylkesmannen and KS representatives or advisors available for face to face discussions, fylkesmannen and KS representative form the core part of framework to provide needed support. They are assigned by ministry for facilitating merger processes in different phases (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2014). The ministry asks both actors to cooperate closely for offering coordinator and facilitator role. I should mention that these actors have ministry's support financially and by guidelines and certain tools that department provided (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2014). I think stated support system could illustrate practically how my model establishes and employs the framework where change manager or actor experienced with organizational change processes, is available to remedy project management's incapability to handle certain issues. In the merger, fylkesmannen and KS representative have not only mentioned characteristics, but they also are experts in many other dimensions in political and municipal work. I think this is an extra 'plus' that merger case could benefit from. In fact, they have an overall insight over the organizations in addition to former merger experiences. This means that they form a strong and perfect basis for project manager to refer to confidently and ask for support when they hesitate

something or have lack of expertise. I found it interesting that even though fylkesmannen's mission to support the merger project is formally finished, and KS will officially continue contributing the project, interviewee at fylkesmannen emphasized that they will accompany KS to support merger project further on as they see their friendly and strong relationship with both organizations.

Now turning to interviewees to see how change management or support framework has been operating, I learned that when project managers have been unsure about processes, needed knowledge about a matter, needed to discuss and find solutions, and so on, they simply referred to fylkesmannen as much as needed. They stated that having fylkesmannen along the way, has been a great resource and reference for clarifying issues, ask questions, and consultation for possible solutions; Asking mostly 'what to do? and how to do?' or about juristic issues and what laws actually require to be in place. I think this shows that change framework has in fact *translated change's objectives and strategies*, and obligatory requirements towards project management (technical matters) where they had little knowledge or experience. Interviewees made it clear that good relationship and atmosphere exist between two sides and this matter has facilitated a trustful collaboration. They mentioned that fylkesmannen and advisors with a lot of experience in the region are quite trusted and smart for merger organizations to refer and ask. They signified that fylkesmannen's advisors have been personally very service minded, sincere, and supportive with good attitude.

Focusing on fylkesmannen and KS collaboration, as mentioned in data chapter, fylkesmannen and KS have devised a project plan for themselves on how to work with and support merging organizations in the county (to assure good and structured support). I think their project plan shows systematic thinking and planning behind the framework. The plan describes how two actors will work in 2014 to 2017 period. Project tasks range from clarifying the reform plan and tools and methods for municipalities, to implementing different assessments and follow up municipalities which decide to merge (Fylkesmannen og KS, 2014). It specifies that fylkesmannen and KS must facilitate initiation and planning phases, and eventually prepare a summary of their observations and recommendation for government. I think, this point discloses another angle of change management framework's importance. I mean, considering their position between project management and merger's top-level, one can see that change management framework works double-sided; it not only translates requirements from top level down to project management level and helps when project management needs, but it also reflects processes and decisions happening in project management level upwards for top management.

Overall, mentioned discussion points illustrates that change management or support framework in merger strives to help project when project management encounter issues out of their knowledge or experience. It is a practical demonstration of what theory assigns change management framework for; The actual 'attempt' for keeping the project moving forward continuously as Stummer and Zuchi (2010) suggest by saying that change manager oversees the transition between change processes, secure continuity, but not responsible for the content of work. Expectably in merger case, project management requested minimum managerial or leadership support while my model assigns change management framework to offer managerial

help. I find this expectable considering project management background. In contrast, project managers have referred to change management framework several times questioning *project's technical issues*: legal issues, project's processes in terms of what to do and how to do? To answer such inquiries, change management's experiences with former mergers provided project management with answers, or reflected those questions towards the ministry. I believe this collaboration between change and project management in Trondheim-Klæbu case is illustrating *suggested partnership* (Crawford & Nahmias, 2010) between the two frameworks, in accordance with my theoretical argumentation. I argued that based on change's context and characteristics, an appropriate combination or a fruitful partnership of change and project manager knowledge is required to have an optimal technical and behavioral competence mixture in the change project.

Regarding the instructions provided by recipe, one of interviewees stated that there are still rooms for better and timely advises. Clearly, more inclusive recipe would have equipped fylkesmannen with richer and wider perspective to help project management. The interviewee stated that "If we had a map to know **what to do**, we could give better information to employees. If we had recipe earlier developed by department, it would have been better. To explain and tell us **what and how to do it**. It could affect the project positively" interviewee with NN). He explained that project management have encountered obstacles that they think ministry hasn't thought-through carefully, or didn't focused at all. "I am sure that department had not seen all the challenges in period between today and 2020. They have been focusing on organizations, not the obstacles in the period!" interview with NN). He emphasized that if project managers could have more 'tools in their bags', they could be more flexible to manage the merger. I think the case shows clearly that transforming project's context, features, and project management 'needs' specify the magnitude and areas where change management framework should support. It confirms my discussion that change managers, actors, or advisors in the support framework are required to be well and broadly experienced for managing such change processes.

So far, I found out that change management framework in my model is consistent with what Trondheim-Klæbu case has practiced so far. To widen my perspective a little, in terms of how change and project roles relate to each other, I studied a bit more in theory and decided to have Pollack and Alego's (2014) work. Authors suggest certain findings regarding project and change management perspectives on their formal authority in a change project, reporting relationship between the two, and ideas on how project and change management disciplines contribute the change processes. I will use their work to nurture my discussions about change management framework in merger case, and elevate my theoretical argumentation by discussing 'how' two discipline might work better together.

As mentioned in theory chapter, Pollack & Alego's (2014) paper is based on the situation where both project and change management have acting responsibility in an organizational change project. Consequently, writers suggest how two disciplines see themselves contributing to the project, and how their relationships are perceived or could be perceived. Once again, even though the change management in my case is not an acting actor but formal advisory actor, I found a part of Pollack & Alego's (2014) findings useful for my intention. First, writers state that project management is normally considered with operational-mindset, whiles change

management as a strategic activity. This means that change management usually is considered in higher level than project management. Taking project and change management ‘worldviews’ into account, authors establish two important suggestions: *first*, change managers could develop their organizational understanding about change management, and create a frameworks in their organization like a ‘Center of Excellence or a change management office’. And *second*, project managers should keep a balance between coordinating and controlling project’s requirements and giving the space to change management to perform its responsibility (Pollack & Alego, 2014). In connection to the case, I don’t see any conflict or confusion between two parties as change management framework originally has advisory responsibility assigned by the government. But of course, stated good history in personal relationships between two line organizations and fylkesmannen in Sør-Trøndelag, could be one major reason for minimal conflicts. This point in addition to the fact that change management has an *overall interest* for merger projects in the county to work well, illustrate change and project roles’ good collaboration. In accordance with Pollack and Alego, I think change or support management framework in merger has generally an obvious strategic perspective. Letter of assignment to fylkesmannen shows this point clearly by highlighting that fylkesmannen has a wide knowledge of county’s status and future forecasts, and therefore, this actor is proper to facilitate and coordinate merger processes (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2014). Lastly, I would like to refer to writer’s recommendations for change and project management in organizational change projects. I think that first recommendation is obvious to see in the case: fylkesmannen and KS have a valid understanding of different areas merger, and their ‘project plan’ shows their attempts to establish a systematic ‘change management office’ or ‘Center of Excellence’ (Pollack & Alego, 2014) ready at hand. Regarding the second suggestion, I see that project management obviously utilizes change management framework by keeping close and friendly relationship. I believe this behavior or mindset is preferably and intentionally giving change management needed space to perform its responsibilities. To sum up, Pollack & Alego (2014) paper looked at co-existence of change and project management in a change project from an angle that my former theoretical sources didn’t. The argumentation above nurtured my discussion about change management in merger case, and showed theoretically how project and change management levels look at themselves and each other in a change project, and how their collaboration could be strengthened. Through explaining the case theoretically, I established an extra understanding of change and project management collaboration to my primary theoretical discussions.

Altogether, through analyzing data, I could observe and establish that merger project is utilizing a supportive or change management framework. The change management framework is equipped with great range of experience and knowledge regarding municipal works including municipal change processes. I think, assigning fylkesmannen and KS as the main supportive actors by ministry, has been the optimum choice for municipalities as they have ‘county perspective’, observed both organizations for many years, established communication and personal relationships with municipalities’ administrators and politicians, have a proper understanding of government’s and municipalities’ interests, and a great amount managerial experience. Looking at the model, change management framework supplements project management’s shortages mainly by translating change strategy, handling managerial and

behavioral issues, and facilitating implementation. Change manager or actor in the framework is suggested to have experience with similar transformation processes and good knowledge of management and leadership competences. I can see that the model illustrates reasonably the importance of change management framework, needed skills, and the tasks done in merger. As signified earlier, one point is that while my model suggests change manager to provide leadership support, in merger though, I saw that project management needed more technical advices or help rather than managerial or behavioral. I think its shows that project and project management *characteristics and context* would decide where change management framework could support change project. Regardless of what project management needs the help for, existence of change actors to translate, facilitate, collaborate, and handle issues where project manager fails to, are essential points that are common between my model and the merger's practice.

Taking one step forward, benefitting Pollack' and Alego's (2014) work, I showed the importance of change management in organizational change projects once again, and discussed how collaborations between change and project management could get enhanced. I established that while change managers should build a good organizational understanding and provide a center of excellence or change management office to support project management, project managers must focus on change tasks and leave sufficient space for change managers to perform their contribution. The case showed that change management framework could have provided a more comprehensive and timely 'center of excellence or change management office'. Mentioned argumentation supported and establish a new point to my former discussions suggesting a way to optimize change management benefits in a transforming change project. Altogether, I believe that change management framework discussed and illustrated in the conceptual model, is well presenting the support framework that Trondheim-Klæbu merger case utilizes. **Thus, I will keep the same structure in model.**

4. Change management framework

- Data analysis showed that as conceptual model suggests, merger project is benefitting from a well-established support framework which I perceived as a change management framework. Change framework has helped project management with translating change strategies, facilitating communication and dialogue, and information about technical processes.
- By adding a new theoretical argumentation and using merger's practice, I suggest that while change managers should build a good organizational understanding and provide a center of excellence or change management office to support project management, project managers must focus on change tasks and leave sufficient space for change managers to perform their contribution. In merger, data showed rooms for more comprehensive and timely 'change management office' to assist project management.

Altogether, I concluded that the change management framework discussed and illustrated in conceptual model, is well presenting the support framework that Trondheim-Klæbu merger case utilizes.

6. Results

In this chapter, first, I will present a summary of my data analysis and discussions. Four major themes will be addressed in sequence. Afterwards, based on analysis conclusions, I will modify my conceptual model and present the enhanced model (figure 11). And lastly, I will explain how conceptual model's theoretical background helped me to address merger's analysis, and subsequently, how I used new theoretical sources to understand and discuss empirical data.

Clearly, discussion and analysis chapter is structured by four major themes. These four themes are driven majorly from conceptual model elements or suggestions, and from empirical data in terms of few new dimensions. Altogether, discussion points examined how model's elements could represent Trondheim-Klæbu merger's real practice. I made my conclusions for each theme, and decided how they could enhance or modify the model accordingly.

Under the first theme, data analysis showed that Trondheim-Klæbu case has favorably used project and project management discipline to perform merger project. Based on the points argued, I concluded that my model is reasonably illustrating the basics that based on them, merger has chosen to use a project. By observing how merger performs project management discipline and associated dilemmas, I opened a new dimension in my discussions and concluded that each project could benefit PM practices differently based on its characteristics and context, but it is important that essential PM practices get used. By this new dimension that case signified, I concluded that besides suggesting project management to implement a transforming change process, it is also important that project management ensures using vital PM practices.

Under contextual considerations, I addressed five certain elements. In terms of organizational culture, merger project showed that culture is a significant factor to consider that could influence project situations in different phases and in different dimensions. Therefore, I concluded that my model can reflect what happens in the merger related to organizational culture indications. Regarding employees' technical and project skills, through analyzing empirical data, I found that neither merger's recipe has suggested the element as a success or an influential factor, nor interviewees could supply me with solid and grounded ideas or experiences telling employees' technical and project skills have impact on project's performance. By rethinking about this matter, I decided to omit it from conceptual model. In terms of employees' understanding of change strategy, data analysis showed that communicating change's strategy with employees, has been in focus from very early stages in merger. Top leaders' awareness and involvement to convey status of organization and promised future through informative meetings and other channels, and consistency of explaining project's objectives, have provided employees enough insights about change strategy. Therefore, I concluded that the element has practical support in merger case and is representing associated practical implications. To this end, it will remain as an essential contextual factor in the model. Focusing on leadership involvement and support, I observed that organizations' political and administrative leaders are well-aware of their important presence, have engaged with the merger quite actively, and have supported the project. Even considering project's nature and features, I conclude that the discussed element in model, is reasonably symbolizing what the merger case has experienced practically. Lastly, regarding post-project phase in conceptual model, through data analysis, I did not observe a concrete explicit

thinking, consideration, or experience about post-project phase, but gained interviewees' thinking and propositions that enabled me to imagine or understand the element more realistically. By gained results still, I argued validity of possible post project follow ups, but rethought by adding real setting mindset to my discussions. I concluded that transforming change projects' post-project requirements could perhaps be activities in form of 'some pages' of a book rather than a 'full chapter' happenings. Therefore, I illustrated this point by shifting the symbol in model. Under **project manager role in transforming change project**, data showed that project manager is an essential role required to plan, administrate, and move the merger process forward, as conceptual model suggests. By new theory, I established that merger as a large, complicated and strategically important project is benefitting from a more transformational leadership style, than transactional. I also established that in such a process, higher leadership ability (transformational leadership) to facilitate communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness, could create better teamwork which eventually approaches better performance. Moreover, merger's project management technical challenges validated my theoretical suggestion that project manager in a transforming change process, need to show *both* technical and managerial competences. Merger case added a new dimension to my model: project manager authority. By data analysis results, I suggested that project manager authority comprises his or her authority agreed on paper, and his or her personal reputation gained from organizational position. I established that he or she should have sufficient power to keep his or her central role in project. Moreover, I recommended that merger's difficulties could be explained by inaccurate plan or design of their authority definition. I found authority as a significant factor to be included in model. Eventually, I highlighted that my argumentations could not yet answer *what* public managers might d, when they are challenged by limited authority. Therefore, I suggested this matter for further theoretical works. I related communication element to project manager role and concluded that in transforming change projects, project management should establish a systematic and integrated communication management, and might benefit 'communication' in a constructive manner to influence and frame the project. The results of communication discussions were supportive to my theoretical argumentations. Finally, in terms of **change management framework**, data analysis confirmed my model's suggestion by showing the importance and supportive practices of support or change management framework in merger project. By new theory, I suggested that while change managers should build a good organizational understanding and provide a *center of excellence or change management office* to support project management, project managers must focus on the change tasks and leave sufficient space for change managers to perform their contribution.

Having mentioned conclusions by data analysis, I will now present the enhanced model, figure 11. Every change or modification is based on my argumentations and results.

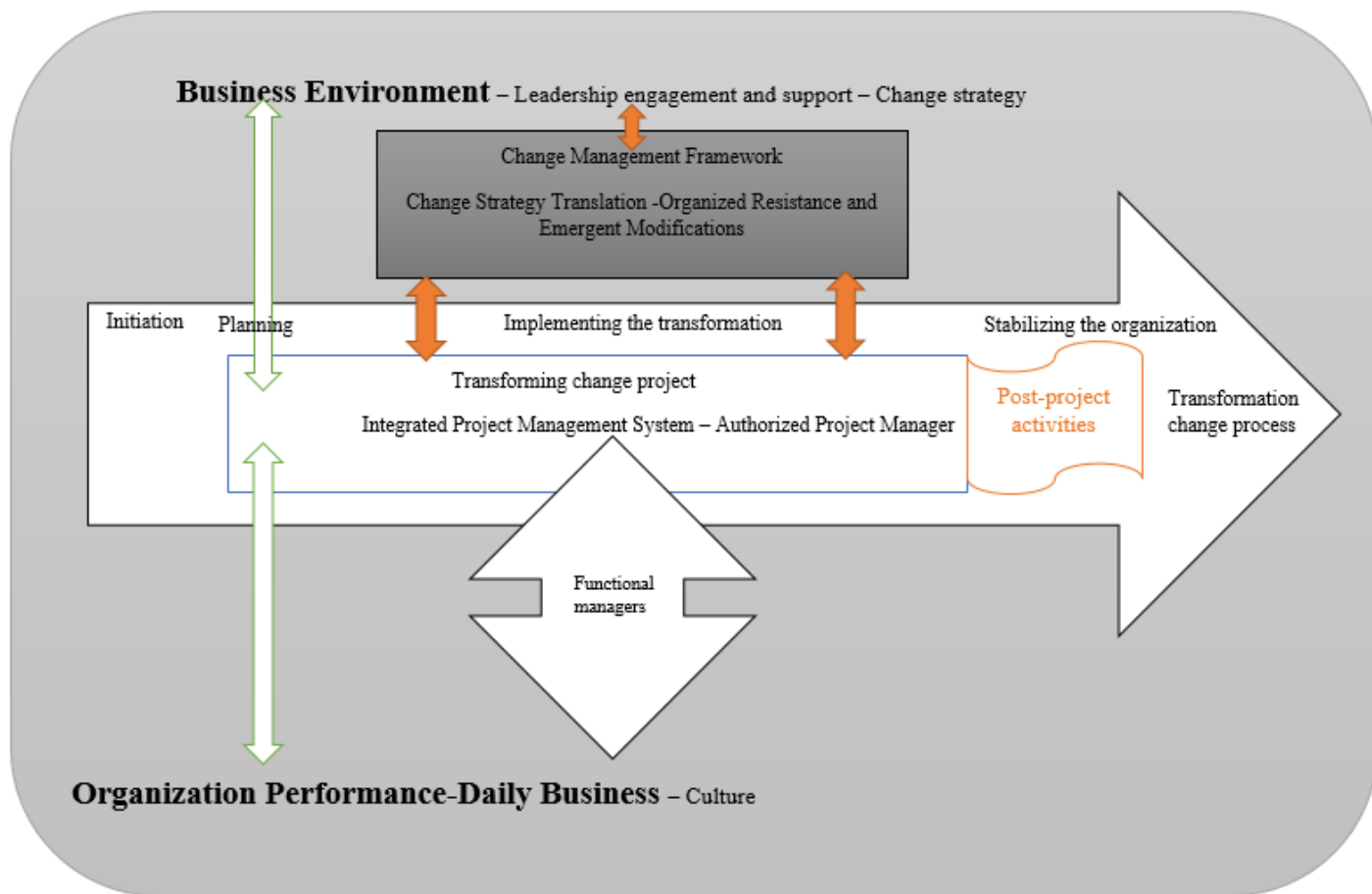


Figure 11 Improved and final version of Transforming Change Project conceptual model

I will now address how I used my theoretical sources in conceptual model's background, to analyze my empirical case. By doing so, I will specify how different sources I used were responsive or helpful to explain focused aspects of merger case. I will also address using new theory

By first theme in discussion chapter, merger's application of project and project management could be explained by my main theoretical advocates. I could directly benefit suggestions and ideas from Pellegrinelly and Bowman (1994), Cown-Sahadath (2010), and Turner and Müller (2003) works. Their major argumentation to introduce project as a small, flexible, separate, and temporary unit which provides a structured platform for complicated change process, assigns legitimate project management to cross organization's borders, and facilitates resource management to accomplish transforming change processes, gave me relevant and comparable ideas to develop my conclusion. Focusing on assigning project management to manage merger project, I learned that even though my case has planned project's progress through different planning courses, it still suffers in mainly planning and controlling areas. This matter seemed challenging to me as one of my major argumentations suggested project management to plan and control the process. By looking into related sources to explain the situation, I realized that my

sources do not specify which and how much PM knowledge areas should be practiced to manage a transforming change process successfully. In fact, authors including Pellegrinelli and Bowman (1994), Schifalacqua, et al. (2009), and Cow-Sahadath (2010), who suggested project with its tools and methods to plan and control change process, looked at planning, structuring, and controlling practices generally. They do not explain how these important areas should be done, or how much emphasize or accuracy is needed. Therefore, my theoretical sources couldn't give me solid idea on how applying different magnitudes of project management's practices could affect running change process successfully. At this point, I looked at literature and chose Papke-Shields, et al. (2010) and Loo (2002) papers who look at applying (best) project management practices from an overall point of view. Through their works, I explained merger's suffering project management areas. Nevertheless, as my primary theory was focused on change projects, I think they who are advocating project management's planning and controlling mechanisms to move transforming change process forward, could have elaborated significant project management practices in 'transforming change projects'.

Contextual consideration theme comprised five sub-themes to assess how model's contextual elements are representing merger's real setting. To explain organizational culture influence in merger case, I could benefit from my theoretical argumentations where this element was suggested as important to consider for leading a change project successfully. I could think of merger's cultural importance and influence, using Cown-Sahadath (2010) and Cicmil (1999) suggestions telling that organizational cultural context must be reflected in change project approach. Crawford and Nahmias (2010) was also useful to portray merger's situation by offering organization's supportive culture as an important factor to perform a change project. Cummings and Worley (2005) provided the same message. Some other authors in my literature study also referred to this matter not explicitly but under importance of project's contextual umbrella. Obviously, mentioned theoretical points enabled me to reflect merger's awareness and consideration of involved organizations' cultures. However, I want to highlight that none of sources elaborated what practical consequences organizational culture could dictate on transforming change project. They all looked at culture quite generally. The case on the other hand, showed culture's multi-dimensional affect in its operations so far. Focusing on employees' understanding of change strategy, merger's communicative strategies and leadership's proactive perspective to convey project's visions and strategies, could be explained by some of theoretical sources, including Cown-Sahadath, (2010) Kotter (2007) and Gareis (2010). These sources reflected this matter quite clearly and therefore, I benefitted the idea and related directly to merger. Theoretical background for leadership involvement and support also, provided noticeable message and understanding to analyze associated matter in merger case. In fact, this contextual element was discussed and suggested by several sources in my literature review. They helped me concretely to establish that competent, committed, and involved leadership to support change project in difficult times of the change, is an important success factor. Finally, regarding post-project phase, I could not observe a direct relevance between my theoretical discussions and merger's real practice. My theory concerning how rigid and time-limited project could handle 'becoming' nature of transforming change processes, could not be sponsored by empirical data which generally recognized 2019-2020 as project's completion date. By considering merger's nature and context, I stick to my theory but added a new layer of understanding to my discussion.

By my case, I found that my major theoretical fundament for this matter, Winch, et al. (2012), did not consider ‘project manager’s possible strategies’ or ‘what to do?’ aspect of post-project thinking. I mean in the case, regardless of missing post-project considerations, the experienced leaders (merger’s project management) *could think* of some loose ends which might remain to be fixed after 2020, *but were more explicit and attentive* about handling such situations. This alerted me that the ways or strategies to manage post-project issues, are actually missing in my theory background. This matter by merger changed my perception of how post-project requirements could happen in real setting, and therefore, I think it would have been beneficial if my related theory did consider this dimension.

Regarding my conclusions **under project manager in transforming change project theme**, my theory sources provided useful ideas to assess merger case strongly in some areas, not so strong in some aspects, and not at all in one area. Focusing on project manager role and needed competences for leading merger project, my related theory including Turner and Müller (2003), Gareis (2010) and Stummer & Zuchi (2010), explained directly case’s project management central role to plan, administrate, and move the merger process forward. Trying to assess project managers’ skills and competencies in merger, I relied on my theoretical argumentations suggesting that project managers in transforming change projects must show both PM technical skills and managerial or leadership competences. This point is well-established by Tuner and Müller (2003) and Crawford and Nahmias (2010). But in addition to mentioend point, data analysis showed a more tangible attention towards leadership skills, compared to my theory. In order to explain highlighted situation, I could not get a comprehensive idea of what leadership skills could imply for project manager, from my theoretical sources. In fact, mentioned theory had majorly a general perspective about project manager’s needed leadership skills. At this point, I chose new sources by Müller and Turner (2007), Yang, et al. (2011), and Jalocho, et al. (2014). New theory helped me to assess how merger’s project managers’ *leadership* has affected the project so far, and established once again that both technical and managerial skills are needed to lead a change project. Next dimension related to merger’s project managers, could not be explained by my theory at all. Project manager authority was not thought or considered in my conceptual model. Therefore, I needed to benefit from new theory. Cleland (1967) and Kreiner (1995) works helped me to reflect merger’s authority situation and challnges by explaining what authority means for a project manager, and highlight that it is important for project manager to have sufficinet authority to assure keeping his or her central role. I was also able to explian which managerial strategies case’s project managers are using, and suggest that more precise authority design or plan could enhance their performance. However, my sources didn’t provide any explanation or answer for mrger’s project management (public project managers) on *how* they could handle their limited authority consequences or challneges. Therefore, I suggested this matter for further theoretical works. Lastly under ‘project manager in transforming change project’ theme, I assessed merger’s communication management and its relation to project manager role. I decided to assess communication in mentioned theme as merger project showed this special thinking. In fact, the case showed a different angle to look at communication than my theoretical sources looking straight to communication like an isolated matter. In fact, even though my theoretical argumentations could reflect merger’s attention towards communication, the case showed a new dimension by signifying project managers’ communicative efforts and

challenges. As my theory presented only a general standpoint signifying a well-structured communication system to convey change's strategy and visions, and anchor project in context (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010) (Stummer & Zuchi, 2010) (Kotter, 2007) and (Schifalacqua, et al., 2009), it could not cover merger communication's indications for project manager. I entered PMI (2013) and Ziek & Anderson (2015) sources to support data analysis and by them, explained merger's systematic communication management practices. I also explained merger's project management communicative strategies (figure 10), and established that project management could have been using constitutive characteristics of communication as social processes, to perform a designer or co-creator role, to a degree.

Under final theme, change management framework, I had to modify my associated theory's mindset or thinking direction, from two aspects: First, I considered that change management framework in case does not have executive role, but my theory assumes operative role. Second, in my theory, I did establish the need for change management framework to help project manager when he or she might fail to handle managerial and/or behavioral aspects of transforming change project. By case though, data showed that project management demanded often project management technical help rather than managerial or behavioral. Therefore, I needed to modify my mindset when using theory, and look at case's support framework from stated perspective. I think second modification point identifies one area or perspective that my relevant sources including Cown-Sahadath (2010), Crawford and Nahmias (2010), Stummer and Zuchi (2010), and Shaw (2016), have overlooked or neglected. I am referring to the fact that mentioned sources, to discuss and suggest a change management support in a change project, have only focused on project manager's possible managerial or behavioral shortages. In my case, however, the need for PM technical support is significantly highlighted. I believe one should consider by change projects' characteristics and requirements, employing experienced managers from line organization could be a typical solution. Considering this point, merger's project managers' technical challenges could be valid or likely for other transforming change projects. Therefore, I think my sources focusing on change projects, show a narrow and one-sided thinking introducing change management requirements and responsibilities.

Having stated modifications behind my mind, my theory sources including Cown-Sahadath (2010), Crawford and Nahmias (2010), Stummer and Zuchi (2010), and Shaw (2016), reflected the importance of merger's support framework, and its practical courses to support project management by answering inquiries about legal and technical matters, advising, and facilitating negotiations and processes. To establish theoretical description of change (manager) role in merger, I could specify that framework's advisors or actors contributed translating change's strategies and requirements, and attend to develop solutions, give advises or facilitate communication with ministry when an emergent issue happens and project managers do not know what solution they could use. In addition, from a new angle, data showed that in some areas, merger's project management wished for a more timely and inclusive help from change management framework. I could not address such a situation by my theory and therefore, I added Pollack and Alego (2014) work. By this source, I suggest that change managers could build a good organizational understanding and try to provide *a center of excellence or change management office* to support project management.

To sum up, mentioned explanations above show how my theory profile could help me to assess the merger case. Obviously, they could give me useful ideas in several aspects of the case. However, I was not able to explain some dimensions by them since either case had a special thinking or feature to consider, or sources provided a general or different perspective. Therefore, I needed to use some new theoretical sources. The new theory also had similar ‘helping or usage’ possibility.

Limitations and further work

As already stated in discussion and analysis chapter, two areas in this thesis need to be further investigated. The first and more significant matter is associated with project manager’s limited authority in public sector. My discussions in this paper established that project managers benefit from their planned power and personal reputation referring to their influence. I also suggested that project manager should have ‘sufficient’ authority to keep his or her central role in a project. However, by my limited time to study deeper, I could not elaborate what sufficient authority could mean, how context could affect this issue, and what project manager could do as remedy when he or she is obliged to deal with limited power. In fact, by the case, I saw that lacking authority has challenges project management as they are mostly dependent on bosses. In such situations, they are not clear what to do and I think this is a relevant and important area, specifically for project managers in public sector, that I could not provide an explanation or answer for. Therefore, I believe that here is a room for further work especially for project management theory to provide new theory addressing mentioned area for public project management, and help them handling such a situation.

The second area which could be elaborated by further work is related to one of my contextual elements in primary conceptual model (figure 3). ‘Involved employees technical and project skills’ pinpointed one factor that I theoretically discussed to be influential in transforming change projects. By data analysis, the case showed that ‘this element might be beneficial (good to be aware of) for project’s performance, but not necessarily like what I thought when developing the model. There, I discussed that merger’s specific nature and context could have affected on how project management looked or should have looked at this matter. Still, my theory was not inclusive enough to cover such a thinking by strong explanations. Therefore, even though I cannot claim the element as a success factor, I still think that project managers might benefit by focusing on and planning available resources in transforming change project, but it needs deeper theoretical study to investigate more viewpoints and proves which was beyond my time and possibility in this thesis.

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Words and phrases

The words and terms associated with merger project:

Delproject (Finans, Organisasjon (IKT inkludert), Byutvikling, Helse og velferd, Kultur og næring, Oppvekst og utdanning): Subprojects including Finance, Organization and IT, City deveopment, Health and welfare, Culture and business/industry, Growth and education.

Fylkesmannen: The county governor

Fellesnemnda: Joint committee, The common city council for the merger

Kommunenes Sentralforbun (KS): Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities

Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet (KMD): Municipal and Modernization Department

Omstillingsavtale: Change agreement associated with employer-employee issues

Oppdragsbrev: Letter of assignment

Prosjektledelse: Project management

Rådmann: Municipal Chief Administrator

Sentral prosjektgruppe: Central project group

Trondheim-Klæbu Sammenslåingen: Trondheim-Klæbu merger

Appendices

Interview Guide

Major themes to guide the interview through, are given here. I would also ask follow-up questions during interview.

1. Considering Trondheim and Klæbu merger project and the governmental recipe which specifies how this merge should happen:
 - Do you look at it merge as a typical change project? Do you use the recipe as a blue print? Are there any specific areas where you think 'recipe' dose not associate with 'change project'?
2. Focusing on initiation phase of transforming change project:
 - General thoughts about considerations when change was initiated? Any contextual issues neglecting?
3. Regarding people involved in the change process and its outcomes:
 - General thoughts? Project's performance? Experiences of challenges or possibilities? Practical examples.
 - How does government model have estimated organizational resistance to change? Is there any preventing, managing, encouraging strategy for handling potential resistance?
4. Project manager (project management package) role and skills.
 - Role definition
 - Which background, skills, daily tasks? How dose governmental recipe relate using project management competencies in project work, or vice versa?
 - Handling emergent requirements and modifications, resistance or obstacles?
5. Project management tools and methods.
 - Are there any PM tools for planning, organizing, and managing that you used or suggested by recipe? Which? How do you use?
6. Transforming change project completion date.
 - Do you consider an end to the project? How is it defined? Thoughts about post-project requirements? Success criteria?
7. Important considerations and problems, success factors.
 - General thoughts?
 - Are people well-aware of change strategy and goals? Do they know their roles and contribution to the change? Leadership engagement?
 - How to embrace context? How communication channels are established?

Table 8 Trondheim-Klæbu milestones, Project plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities, Project administration, 2017, pg. 6-7

Hendelser	V 2017	H 2017	V 2018	H 2018	V 2019	H 2019	V 2020	H 2020
Interimsfellesnemnd	X							
Stortingsvedtak	X							
Kgl res		X						
Utbetaling av tilskudd til sammenslåing		X						
Fellesnemnd		X	X	X	X	X		
Stortingsvalg		X						
Ny felles nettside		X	X					
Informasjonstiltak	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Omstillingsavtale	X	X						
Tilsette ny adm sjef		X	X					
Tilsetting øvrig ledelse		X	X					
Ansattes avtaler, lønn, tilrettelegge for innplassering og harmonisering			X	X	X			
Avklare politisk organisering inkl nærmiljøråd	X	X	X	X				
Kartlegge, foreslå løsninger for å slå sammen tjenester	X	X	X	X				
Evt tidlig sammenslåing av tjenester		X	X	X	X	X		
Forberede Handlings- og økonomiplan 2020-2023 og budsjett 2020 for ny kommune				X	X	X		
Kommunestyrevalg og konstituering						X		
Uttale seg / bidra i arbeidet med Handlings- og økonomiplan for ny kommune		X		X		X		
Sammenslått kommune							X	
Utbetaling reformstøtte							X	

Table 9 Trondheim-Klæbu progress plan 2017-2018, Project plan for the merger between Trondheim and Klæbu municipalities, Project administration, pg. 8-9

	Aktivitet	Ansvarlig	Vedtatt av	Kommentar
Våren 2017				
	Oppstart interims-fellesnemnd , planlagt 3 møter våren 2017	Oppnevning og etablering: Bystyresekretariatet / politikerne	Kommunestyret i Klæbu: 5 rep velges 2. feb 2017 og bystyret i Trondheim: 8 rep 26. jan 2017	Konstituerer seg selv
	Mandat fellesnemnd	Utarbeides og foreslås av prosjektleder	Fellesnemnda og deretter delegering fra kommunestyrene	Delegasjon kan justeres underveis
	Valg / tilsetning av prosjektleder		Fellesnemnda	
	Mandat Partssammensatt utvalg	PSU har drøftet og uttalt seg om eget mandat 1. desember 2016	Endelig vedtak av mandatet i fellesnemnda	PSU er et rådgivende organ
	Prosjektplan med milepælsplan	Utarbeides av prosjektet	Fellesnemnda	Prosjektplanen må ha rullerende/ dynamiske elementer
	Budsjett for prosjektperioden	Utarbeides av prosjektet	Fellesnemnda	Evt supplerende vedtak i kommunestyrene
	Kommunikasjonsplan	Utarbeides av prosjektet	Fellesnemnda	
	Valg av revisor for fellesnemnda	Prosjektleder foreslår	Fellesnemnda sender fram til kommunestyrene	kontrollutvalgene innstiller
	Omstillingsavtale som skal gjelde fra 1. januar 2018	Kommunaldirektør organisasjon i TK	Fellesnemnda	Legges fram for PSU og drøftes med tillitsvalgte
	Beslutning vedrørende politiske dagnmøter	Bystyresekretariatet og politisk referansegruppe	Fellesnemnda i april og deretter november	Behandles også i de to kommunestyrene
	Innstilling om politisk organisering: Kommunestyrets størrelse	Bystyresekretariatet og politisk referansegruppe	Fellesnemnda sender fram til kommunestyrene	Må seinest vedtas i juni
	Statusrapport fra kartleggingen av utfordringer i sammenslåingen	Prosjektleder utarbeider rapport om videre arbeid på bakgrunn av innkomne rapporter	Orientering i fellesnemnda	Videreføringen må skje administrativt
Høsten 2017	Overgang til endelig fellesnemnd	Fylkesmannen innkaller / tar initiativ		Behandles i fellesnemnda, om nødvendig kommunestyrene
	Tilsetning av administrasjonssjef for ny kommune		Fellesnemnda	Evt supplert av de to kommunestyrene
	Uttale seg om budsjett og økonomiplan for begge kommunene		Fellesnemnda	Sendes til KMD
Oppgaver for årene 2018 og 2019 vil bli nærmere spesifisert høsten 2017. Under følger noen kjente oppgaver i en overordna form				

Table 10 PM practices – Knowledge area, process group, and individual frequency of use, Papke-Shields, et al. 2010, pg. 655

Knowledge area	PM practice	Process group ^a	Average use ^b	Construct mean and std. dev	Coefficient α
Integration	Project plan	P	4.47	3.41 (0.82)	0.69
	Project charter	I	3.49		
	Stakeholder analysis	I	2.82		
	Feasibility study	I	2.75		
Scope	Project deliverables list	P	4.40	3.76 (0.65)	0.80
	Scope statement	P	4.27		
	WBS	P	3.78		
	Scope change proposal	M&C	3.55		
	WBS update	M&C	3.28		
	Scope statement update	M&C	3.25		
Time	Project schedule	P	4.68	4.03 (0.69)	0.77
	Schedule update	M&C	4.32		
	Schedule baseline	P	4.04		
	PERT or Gantt chart	P	3.78		
	Project activities list	P	4.25		
	Activity duration estimates	P	4.16		
	Activity list update	M&C	3.64		
Cost	Cost baseline	P	3.84	3.51 (1.05)	0.89
	Cost estimate updates	M&C	3.69		
	Cost performance reports	M&C	3.49		
	Activity cost estimates	P	3.45		
	Cost baseline updates	M&C	3.39		
	Time-phased budget plan	P	3.29		
Quality	Quality checklists	P	3.08	2.90 (1.03)	0.89
	Defined quality metrics	P	3.07		
	Quality management plan	P	3.01		
	Quality metric results	E	2.87		
	Quality audit	E	2.80		
	Quality change proposals	M&C	2.46		
Human resources	Project staff assignments	P	4.07	3.27 (0.85)	0.80
	Roles and responsibilities list	P	3.74		
	Responsibility assignment matrix	P	3.34		
	Team-building event	E	2.88		
	HR change requests	M&C	2.17		
Communication	Communication management plan	P	3.39	2.97 (0.99)	0.83
	Information gathering and retrieval system	E	3.30		
	Information distribution plan	P	2.92		
	Communication requirements analysis	P	2.65		
	Communication change request	M&C	2.44		
Risk	Risk management plan	P	3.31	2.79 (1.03)	0.89
	Contingency plan	P	3.13		
	Risk register	P	2.60		
	Quantitative risk analysis	P	2.59		
	Risk register updates	M&C	2.51		
	Pre-planned risk response mechanism	E	2.43		
Procurement	Contract statement of work	P	4.00	3.24 (1.08)	0.83
	Bid documents	E	3.18		
	Supplier proposal evaluation	E	3.02		
	Supplier evaluation criteria	P	2.96		
	Procurement management plan	P	2.87		
Risk	Status review meetings	M&C	4.64	4.62 (0.54)	na
Overall			3.36		

Table 11 Significant relationships between pm practices and success dimensions, Papke-Shields, et al. 2010, pg. 658

PM practice	Cost target	Time target	Technical specification	Quality requirement	Client satisfaction	Business objectives
Status review meetings			✓	✓	✓	✓
Project charter						
Project plan						
Feasibility study			✓			
Stakeholder analysis				✓	✓	
Project deliverables list			✓	✓	✓	✓
Scope statement	✓				✓	
Scope statement update	✓	✓			✓	✓
Scope change proposal		✓	✓		✓	
WBS						
WBS update						
Project activities list			✓			
Activity duration estimates			✓			
Activity resource requirements						
Activity list update		✓				
Project schedule			✓			
PERT or Gantt chart						
Schedule baseline			✓		✓	
Schedule update						
Time-phased budget plan			✓			
Activity cost estimates						
Cost estimate updates	✓		✓			
Cost baseline	✓		✓		✓	
Cost baseline update	✓		✓		✓	
Cost performance report	✓		✓		✓	
Quality management plan			✓	✓	✓	
Defined quality metrics			✓	✓	✓	
Quality metric results			✓	✓	✓	
Quality checklists				✓	✓	
Quality audit				✓	✓	
Quality change proposal				✓	✓	
Roles and responsibilities list	✓		✓		✓	
Responsibility assignment matrix	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Project staff assignments	✓		✓		✓	
Team-building event	✓	✓	✓		✓	
HR change request	✓				✓	
Communication management plan		✓				✓
Communication requirements	✓				✓	
Information gathering and retrieval system					✓	
Information distribution plan					✓	
Communication change request	✓	✓			✓	
Risk management plan			✓	✓		
Risk register						
Risk register update						
Quantitative risk analysis			✓	✓	✓	
Contingency plan		✓			✓	
Pre-planned risk response					✓	
Procurement management plan					✓	
Contract statement of work						
Supplier evaluation criteria						
Supplier proposal evaluation						
Bid documents						

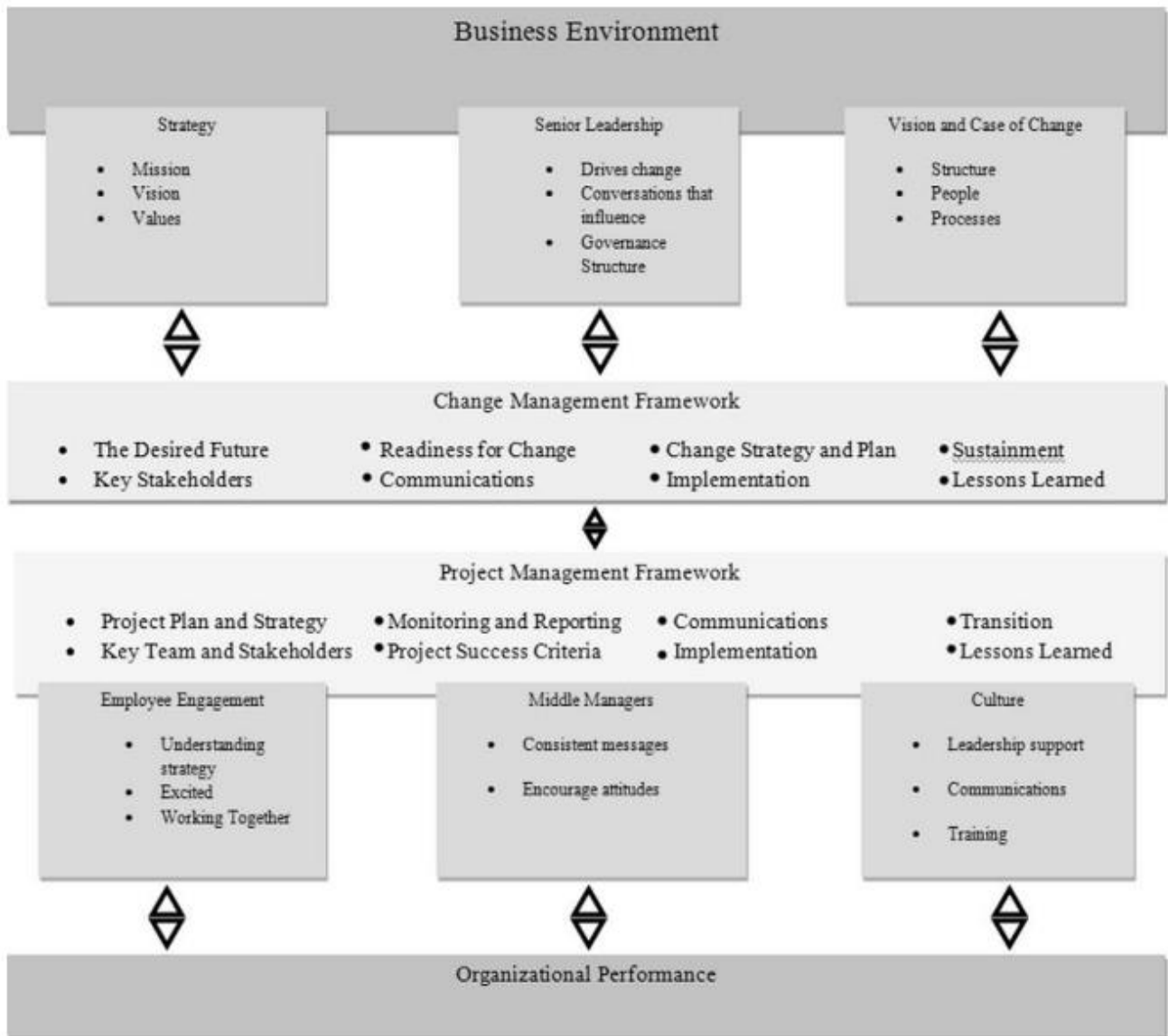


Figure 12 Conceptual framework – integrated model for change, Cowan-Sahadath, 2010 pg.399

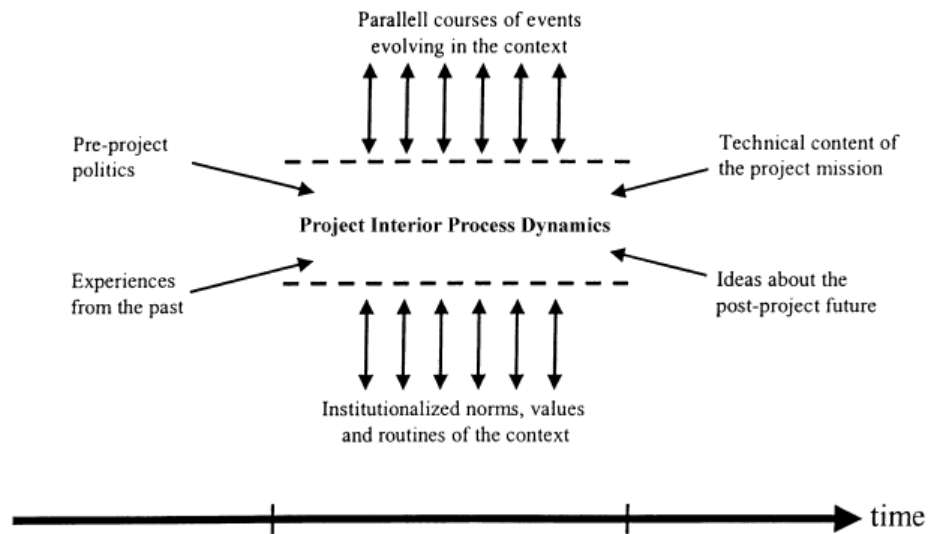
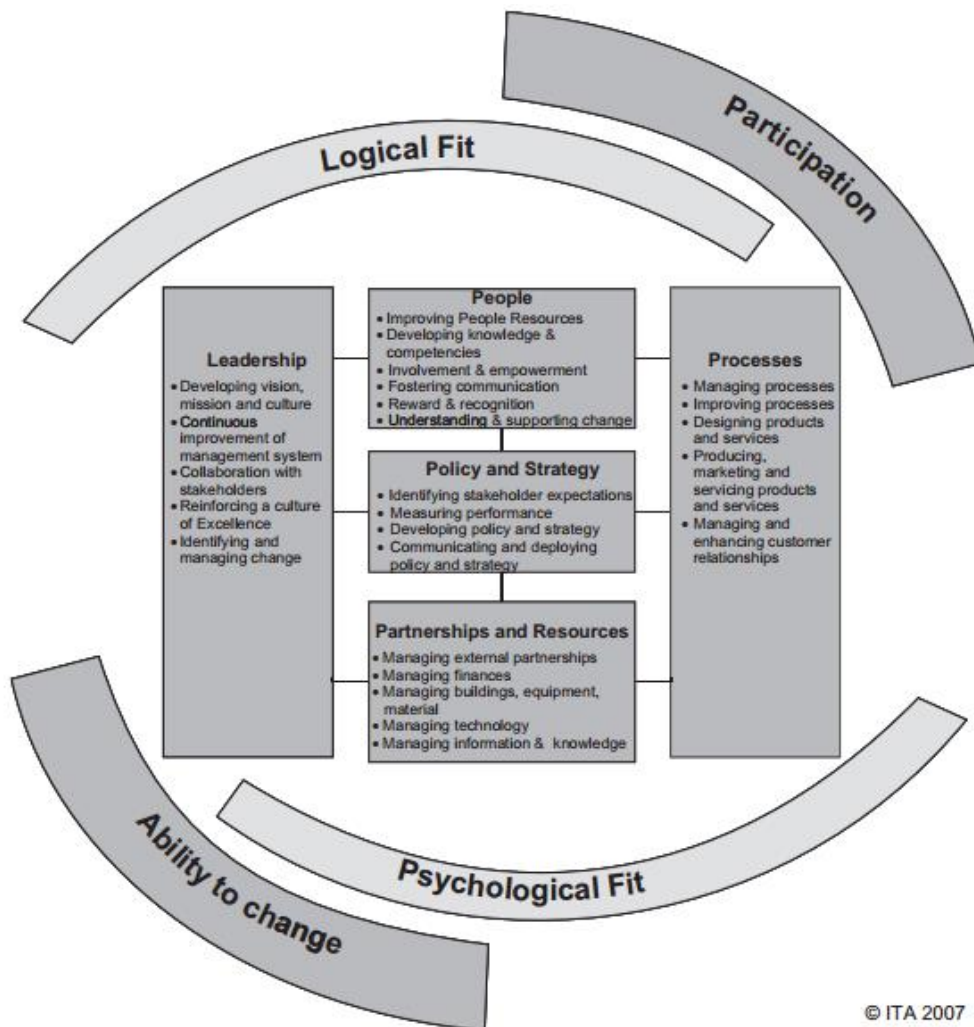


Figure 13 Contingencies influencing the interior process dynamics of a project, Engwall, 2003, pg. 805



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Figure 14 The integration framework, Zink, et al., 2008 pg.531