Parinaz Farid

Understanding program managers leading value creation in change programs: Taking content, context, and competencies into account

NTNU
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

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Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Economics and Management
Dept. of Industrial Economics and Technology Management

NTNU

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Abstract

The frequency and magnitude of large and complex planned organizational changes in temporary organizations is increasing; simultaneously, the search for possible frameworks and methods to facilitate appropriate implementation processes has been ongoing. In this search, the project management discipline has appeared as a central pillar for planning and implementing planned organizational changes. Meanwhile, to bridge between implementing change processes and temporary organizations' potential to plan and realize complex tasks, project management researchers have studied the management of change processes by temporary organizations for over two decades. Many studies in the project management field are conducted to investigate significant aspects of managing change projects and programs, where the interest in understanding the management of *change programs* has grown, as programs better suit the demands of large strategic changes in organizations. Programs are defined as a framework for leading a number of projects under a common strategic dimension. A program is managed to deliver higher-order strategic objectives that a single project is incapable of delivering. Among major aspects of managing change programs, value creation processes constitute a fundamental issue, triggering investigations on what value creation entails and how it can be managed by program managers to generate desired outcomes. Value creation is intertwined with managing change programs and encompasses processes of identifying, planning, generating, and capturing the desired value. Leading value creation in change programs requires program managers to synthesize necessary processes and collaborations while taking the context of the change program into account. Although insightful, the value creation debate in change programs is narrow and lacks in-depth empirical studies to capture program management actors' lived experiences. In other words, value creation in change programs has been scarcely studied from the standpoint of change program managers, especially when they find their temporary role and associated managerial ideas to be in conflict with their line roles in the permanent organization.

In this thesis, from an actor-centric perspective, I examine *how can program managers lead value creation in change programs*? To enable answering this research question, I raise three issues and develop a theoretical framework concerning (1) the process of value creation, (2) the importance of organizational context for managing change programs, and (3) the understanding of the change program manager's role and their way of handling their role when leading value creation processes. Based on empirical data derived from interviews and documentation, supported by a few observation sessions, my study offers an actor-centric account of the management of change programs to create value. Grounded in program managers' experiences, my findings show that program managers can lead value creation processes through a flexible, human-oriented managerial approach to accommodate the complexity and evolving nature of change initiatives through different phases. The findings suggest that change program managers need to acknowledge and address emerging changes in the program, keep the change relevant to the change's and organization's objectives, yet negotiate for what they believe the change program can enhance in the permanent organization in times of controversy. Moreover, to lead value creation in change programs, change program managers engage in (1) making sense of their novel temporary role and establishing an understanding of the demands and constraints of the role; (2) navigating potential institutional, complexity, and uncertainty tensions at the temporary-to-permanent organization contextual interface; and (3) navigating their competencies to facilitate value

creation in the interest of the program management agenda to deliver the change. It is shown that handling institutional tensions can be done through three practices, namely, problematizing, designing, and team building. My findings show that sufficient professional project and program management and technical competencies related to the business of the hosting permanent organization, human competency and conceptual competency are key to leading value creation in change programs. Building on this, findings further suggest that for change program managers with limited professional project/program management competency to lead value creation to an acceptable degree, they need to focus on a human-oriented management approach and accept a degree of personal burnout. The human-oriented management of change programs can be done through four trust-building practices, namely, preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering.

Papers

This thesis is based on following papers:

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Paper II. Farid, P & Waldorff, S. B. 2022. Navigating tensions to create value: An institutional logics perspective on the change program and its organizational context. *Project Management Journal*, in press.

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1. Introduction

This thesis is positioned within the field of project management. Initially, project management merges managerial and technical responsibilities, drawing on exclusive bodies of knowledge and related methodologies to plan, monitor, and control projects in various sectors (Hodgson, 2002, Morris, 1994). Over the last few decades, the practice and theory of the field have been developed towards a more inclusive practice (including programs and portfolios) and a social understanding of projects that takes their context into account and acknowledges them as being enacted by involved stakeholders (Söderlund, 2011). However, there is much more to explore and develop.

Among many application areas for projects, change projects or programs constitute an important area, and the way in which they should be managed requires specific attention. Management of change programs initially rests on the idea of planning and implementing planned organizational change processes through temporary organizations. Temporary organizations are characterized by change, and organizational changes occur in different sectors with increasing occurrence and magnitude. Planned organizational change or transformation (hereafter change) processes encompass large, complex, and deep changes that engage with and influence almost all dimensions of an organization (e.g. structure, systems, work processes, culture), and thus are subject to high complexity, uncertainty, and human-related issues (Gareis, 2010, Cummings and Worley, 2014, Crawford and Nahmias, 2010). Such changes entail three aspects, namely, content, people, and process, where the *process* of change (actions and processes to implement the change) is related to temporary organizations (Anderson and Anderson, 2002). Temporary organizations can be understood in terms of time (existing for a limited time), task (legitimizing a temporary organization, a task that must be accomplished), team (formed temporarily around the task or some aspects of it), and transition (a change/transformation as a consequence of the existence of the temporary organization) (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995). Temporary organizations might be in the form of projects, programs, or portfolios, where projects and programs are especially connected to the management of organizational change processes (Gareis, 2010, Partington, 1996, McElroy, 1996). Using projects and programs to implement major changes in organizations has shown key benefits in handling the complex and evolving nature of major changes (e.g. Crawford et al., 2003; (Farid et al., 2021, Gordon and Pollack, 2018, Crawford et al., 2003, Winch et al., 2012). In particular, underlying assumptions and main characteristics of program management make programs suitable vehicles for delivering large changes (Thiry, 2007, Gareis, 2010, Lycett et al., 2004, Pellegrinelli, 1997, Artto et al., 2009, Thiry, 2002).

Compared to a project, a program is longer, and comprised of several projects and non-project activities, each characterized by different tasks and goals, while being defined by and following common objectives (Lycett et al., 2004). A program is particularly concerned with delivering higher-order strategic objectives that a project is incapable of delivering. Programs are thus connected to a permanent organization's strategy, providing organizing and management frameworks for realizing intangible visions and value (Artto et al., 2009). This is the case in organizational change processes. The management of programs requires different management approaches and practices from that of projects (Graham, 2000, Pellegrinelli, 1997). Program management needs to show greater flexibility to enable organizations to deal with emerging, ambiguous, and changing goals (Pellegrinelli, 2011). While projects are typically related to achieving defined goals, programs are not characterized by a clearly

defined single deliverable or fixed time horizon; rather, they go through evolving loops (Pellegrinelli, 1997). I come back to the discussion of projects and programs in the change context in subsection 2.1.1.

Concentrating on the theme of managing change programs, this thesis takes an actor-centric perspective and investigates the leading of value creation in change programs by program managers. The actor-centric perspective refers to the thesis's focus on program managers' experiences, functions, and the activities they are most concerned with in change programs. The managers of change programs can serve several roles; in this thesis, I specifically focus on their role as the change program manager. The topic of managing change programs to create value has been receiving increasing attention in the project management literature (e.g. (Martinsuo, 2019), as the main purpose of change programs is to create value in the initiator organization (Thiry, 2004). The value creation process is essentially about creating the content of change programs. Nevertheless, current project management literature provides little understanding about the program managers' participation, experiences, and activities in leading value creation processes. This study is set to address this issue. On a general level, "the management of organizational change has continued to have a relatively small representation in the project management literature" (Hornstein, 2015), p. 293). Value in programs is the primary objective that is supposed to be achieved by the program, subjective in nature, and can be understood as a representation of satisfaction of needs and/or use of resources (Laursen and Svejvig, 2016). Value can be of different types, including indirect, direct, economic, non-economic, tangible, or intangible (Miterev et al., 2020), and can be seen from various time perspectives. Depending on time perspectives, value in change programs can range from establishing and developing a new organizational structure or new IT systems to renewing the organizational position in the associated industry.

Concerning the management of change programs, in earlier research, a group of studies has developed a *conceptual* understanding of what the management of change programs and value creation contain. The management of change programs is suggested to entail managing learning-oriented cyclic processes of formulation, organization, deployment, appraisal, and dissolution (OGC, 2011, Thiry, 2004, PMI, 2013). Across these processes, an overall change vision is established, which then is translated into program goals and the objectives of related projects that will be (re)defined, (re)planned, and (re)adjusted during the program (Thiry, 2007). The underlying idea is that projects and other activities within the program will be formed, reformed, or dissolved over time as the program progresses. To manage these processes and deliver desired outcomes in change programs, program management sets the necessary foundations. Program management as the managerial basis for managing change programs can be defined through several governance themes or professional processes, including risk management, stakeholder management, and benefits management, which together provide the required space, managerial framework, tools, and techniques for planning and implementing the desired strategic change or value (OGC, 2011, PMI, 2013). Furthermore, another group of studies has registered an *empirically grounded* understanding of the management of change programs. One dominant aspect underscored by such studies relates to managing the interconnectedness (concerning content) between projects and other actives within the program, and between the program and its components with the wider environment (e.g. organizational context) (e.g. (Nieminen and Lehtonen, 2008, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Dietrich, 2006). All this requires a flexible management approach to be able

to respond to the program's evolving requirements, for instance, the need to adjust the program organization to the current situation (Yu and Kittler, 2012, Miterev et al., 2020).

As mentioned, value creation and managing change programs are intertwined and two sides of the same coin. Earlier research has thus underscored processes of and managerial requirements for value creation. Value creation requires dedicated planning, responsibility allocation, and governance. Integrated in change program management processes, value creation occurs through different stages, namely, identifying, planning, generating, and capturing value (Laursen and Svejvig, 2016; (Miterev et al., 2020, Laursen and Svejvig, 2016). In the earlier stages, existing literature agrees that informal and iterative processes of collaborative negotiation and co-creation sessions among related stakeholders seek to establish and define desired value (Liu et al., 2019, Thiry, 2002, Thiry, 2004). Later in the program, the identified and defined value should be planned in detail and generated. The perception of value by involved actors can change over time; thus, the content and results of value creation processes go through ongoing (re)evaluation and needed changes (Thiry, 2004). Therefore, the management of change programs is required to show adaptability to accommodate and address such ongoing evaluations and adjustments. Together, existing research on the management of and value creation in change programs suggest that the complex, uncertain, and human-dependent characteristics of organizational changes with intangible objectives and desired outcomes require flexible program management. At the front line of management, program managers hold the ship's wheel, being the chief responsible for managing the change program and leading the value creation processes.

Standard perspectives on the *role/function* of program managers in managing programs suggest that program managers are the chief connection to the program's steering group and other key stakeholders, leaders of and facilitators for associated project managers and team managers, and responsible for ensuring that program management governance themes are practiced accordingly as programs unfold (OGC, 2011). Distinct to the change context, an understanding of the change program manager role in managing and creating value in change programs can be found in a group of studies that examine large change projects and programs, especially in terms of effective program managers. Consequently, bridging change management and project management disciplines, there is agreement that for temporary organizations to deliver large changes, the manager of the temporary organization must focus on achieving the objectives of the change program, is authorized to manage the temporary organization on a day-to-day basis within the constraints set by the change steering committee, and acts as change agent to manage the projects/teams and their interconnections (Pádár et al., 2017, OGC, 2011, PMI, 2013, Pádár et al., 2019). The change program manager is specifically responsible for ensuring professional fulfillment of the program management processes and realization of the program's interests (Stummer and Zuchi, 2010). Clearly, depending on the size of the organization involved in the change, the role of the change project/program manager can be supplemented with other relevant roles, for example, formal change agent, change manager, or change advocate (Pádár et al., 2017, Pollack, 2017). Accordingly, it is suggested that change project/program managers need to have knowledge of professional project/program management that, together with essential elements of change management (e.g. conflict management, communicating change's vision, advocating change), help them deliver the change appropriately. Several studies have examined the capabilities of effective program managers (e.g. Miterev et al., 2016; (Partington et al., 2005, Shao and Müller, 2011, Pollack, 2012, Miterev et al., 2016).

Considering these suggestions, change program managers equipped with project or program management governance themes are not always are employed to professionally realize associated processes. In fact, often change project or program managers are *accidentally* selected because of their leadership experience, status, or knowledge of the permanent organization's business (Darrell et al., 2010, Lundin and Söderholm, 1995, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016). The term "accidentally" refers to managers that are brought to the task by coincidence (see (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995). The oft-accidental managers usually keep a full or high percentage of their line roles while given responsibility for managing the change project or program to lead the program's content, namely the value creation process. Subsequently, two significant issues should be considered when considering the role of oft-accidental project/program managers in terms of fulfilling their temporary responsibilities. First, project/program managers might lack sufficient knowledge and experience of managing a temporary organization professionally. Second, the managers usually keep a full or high percentage of their line roles in the associated permanent organizations, which can influence their ability to fulfill their temporary roles. The role of organizational context is thus highlighted in creating value in change programs.

Regarding an understanding of the change program manager role, and the management of change programs to create value, although earlier research has related the role to managing change programs to create value, findings are dominantly reflected in studies on capabilities that effective program managers have. Thus, an explicit actor-centric focus on the link between the two is limited. In more detail, there is a lack of in-depth empirical investigations based on program managers' perceptions and experiences in which their participation in the management of change programs to create value is understood and theorized. This study focuses on addressing this issue and responds to calls for further research of change program value creation from a micro-level perspective (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018, Martinsuo, 2020). Resulting from the preceding discussion, I ask the following main research question:

How can program managers lead value creation in change programs?

Arriving at the posed question, three issues are raised: (1) the value creation process in change programs; (2) the importance of organizational context for managing change programs and creating value, as change program managers can be closely connected to the context; and (3) the understanding of change program managers' role and their way of handling their roles. In order to facilitate answering the main research questions, in chapter 2, I take the three mentioned issues forward to develop the thesis's theoretical framework in three parts, each resulting in a subordinate research question. Further, to answer the main and subordinate research questions, a longitudinal multiple-case study design is chosen and conducted. Seven change programs in the form of municipality merger programs in Norway are selected and studied. Four of the programs are further studied in depth as they represent relevant variations for this study's theoretical foci. The merger programs are chosen from one county in Norway and belong to a higher-order municipality reform program initiated by the Norwegian government in 2014 with the aim of developing more robust and sustainable municipalities and enhanced local democracy across municipalities in the country. Translating the overall goals to the local organizational level, the merging municipalities aimed for a number of desired outcomes or value, namely building a new robust organization with new organizational structure, renewed IT systems, renewed work processes, and new organizational culture. These are some of the core characteristics of organizational changes,

thus the merger programs are viewed as change programs for the purpose of this study. In the methodology chapter (chapter 3), I explain my case selection process.

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 has provided an introduction to the study. Chapter 2 lays the theoretical foundation for the study by presenting an overview of selected central theoretical areas. Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology of the thesis. The chapter starts by describing the philosophical positioning of the thesis, then it describes the selected research methods and underlying rationale. Further in chapter 3, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study, and ethical considerations are addressed. Chapter 4 summarizes the findings of independent articles, which lay the basis for developing the discussion in chapter 5, where each subordinate research question is answered. Chapter 6 brings the answers of subordinate questions together, provides an answer to the overall main research question, and discusses avenues for further research, practical implications, and concluding remarks.

2. Theoretical positioning

In this section, I present the positioning of the current thesis within the project management literature. The theoretical foundation of my work rests on three major areas related to content, context, and competencies within the change program context. Before presenting these, I would like to mention that, while program literature forms the basis of my theoretical framework, to explain some of the concepts in the thesis, I draw on project literature owing to the inconsistency/asymmetry in theoretical developments in project and program management. One example of this point appears in section 2.3, where I address the competencies of program managers, and have to partly use the project literature to overcome the noticeable asymmetry in research on project versus program manager competencies.

2.1. Managing organizational change programs to create value (content)

This portion of theory concerns the change program's content. To facilitate an explanation of content, I translate it into the management and value creation processes that represent an operationalized form of the concept. The aim of section 2.1 is thus to clarify change program content by offering a review of the literature on the management of change programs and value creation in order to summarize what is already known about important aspects of managing change programs, views on understanding change program outcomes, and the process of attaining them. This is the first theoretical bulk that I evaluated as necessary and relevant for understanding and investigating my overall research question. Accordingly, following the actor-centric focus of this thesis and grounded in theoretical discussions, I formulate my first subordinate research question in subsection 2.1.6, which is answered using empirical findings from my three independent articles (paper I, II, and III), and discussed in the first part of section 5.1 in light of the upcoming theoretical discussions.

2.1.1. Temporary organizations for managing organizational change: Change projects and programs

Projects and programs are temporary organizations, consisting of resources that are managed through certain management ideas and frameworks in order to deliver beneficial objectives of the desired change to the initiator organization(s) (Turner and Müller, 2003). "Change" in such definitions is a rather general term that has become sharpened over the years to serve different purposes, including the situation of employing temporary organizations for implementing large and transformational changes in and between organizations. In this respect, temporary organizations are considered as strategic projects and programs that can take various forms, including (a) large organizational change and transformation; (b) interorganizational integration, such as mergers, acquisitions, networks, or ecosystems; (c) new business ventures and radical innovation; and (d) major and megaprojects (Martinsuo et al., 2020). Among these forms, the focus of this thesis is largely on (large) organizational change programs, following the theoretical appropriateness and characteristics of the empirical cases. From a program standpoint, these endeavors are considered goal-oriented (Pellegrinelli, 1997) or vision-led (OGC, 2011), and aim to transform the parent organization and associated business in a pre-defined manner (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018). As selected cases in this study are municipality mergers, one expects that they could be viewed as strategic change projects/programs between organizations (category b), but I found that somewhat inappropriate based on the content and framework of the cases. I come back to this in subsection 5.1.2 in the discussion.

In order to define and explain change programs, in the following I briefly describe the management of change from the temporary organization perspective, which clarifies my focus. From a project management perspective, successful delivery of organizational change through temporary organizations (organizing as a form in (Bakker et al., 2016) is developed into a specific debate. It is argued that temporary organizations, namely projects and programs, or the organizations that the temporary organizing process brings about (a formal or social system that is intended to decompose within a pre-determined period), provide the necessary management framework, tools, and techniques for the implementation of change processes (Partington, 1996, McElroy, 1996). Initially, the applicability of projects and programs to plan and implement changes was the starting point of the debate, and was followed by studies on different aspects of the management of change projects and programs. These debates are reflected both in project management standards (Project Management Institute, 2013, OGC, 2011) and in scientific publications of the last two decades. For instance, the influential work by Gareis (2010) suggests that large projects or programs respond to the challenging task of planning and realizing an organizational or transformational change that is fundamental and engages most or all identity dimensions of an organization. Temporary organizations are suggested to create a drive to build up the necessary momentum for the change and overcome resistance (Turner and Müller, 2003). Ives (2005) approaches the contextual aspects of project management in organizational change settings and finds that projects managing change are very typical and subject to particular risk, as they depend on how the governance and sponsorship, and the power and authority dynamics occur between project managers and the organization's leadership. Stiles et al. (2016) echo that to lead an organizational transformation, program and project management is the "missing" link that connects the directional disciplines (namely strategy, value, and risk management) and enablement elements (namely skills, process, change, and IT management).

With an increasing recognition that single projects and the traditional view of project management fall short of addressing the needs and conditions of transformational change (e.g. unclear objectives, complexity, embeddedness, risk, and ambiguity), project and program management frameworks are increasingly considered when managing large and complex changes (Pellegrinelli and Bowman, 1994, Thiry, 2002, Thiry, 2004). A program is managed to deliver higher-order strategic objectives that a single project is incapable of delivering. A program can be defined as a framework for leading a number of projects under a common strategic dimension (Turner and Müller, 2003), as a large complex project (Graham, 2000), or as a framework including projects and other activities that together aim to realize strategic change and planned benefits in and between initiator organization(s) (Ferns, 1991, Pellegrinelli, 1997). Compared to projects, programs are closely connected to the organization's strategy, thus provide organizing and management frameworks for realizing intangible visions and benefits (Artto et al., 2009). By nature, the main differences between projects and programs include the clarity of outcomes to be delivered, the contextual dynamics, time perspective, and complexity. Programs' objectives and processes frequently evolve over time, and their surrounding contexts might change as they unfold (Thiry, 2004, Pellegrinelli et al., 2007). Programs usually have longer lifecycles than projects (OGC, 2011), and are sometimes terminated due to changes in the environment or following their results (Martinsuo and Lehtonen, 2007).

Although initially inspired by project management's managerial ideas, program management draws insights, theories, and techniques from other fields (Pellegrinelli, 2011), and has

developed into a specialized stream of theory and actual practices (Lycett et al., 2004) that is capable of delivering significant change and renewal in the parent organization (Artto et al., 2009, Thiry, 2002, Pellegrinelli, 1997). Program management is connected to change as it addresses the gap between business objectives and benefits, and projects and tasks (Pellegrinelli, 1997). In goal-oriented programs (major and often one-off changes), program management provides a supportive framework to converge related work and emerging projects that are necessary to realize the desired benefits of a change (Pellegrinelli, 1997). Furthermore, Pellegrinelli (2011) notes that projects sketch the form and shape of a program, and represent the activities, together with non-project activities, that enable delivering an actual change. Under such situations, project and program management frameworks are mutually dependent and supportive. What is clear in programs is the need for coordination and boundary management between the projects and activities within the program, and between the program and hosting organization(s) (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2009, Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018).

Now that I have introduced the underlying definitions and explanations of the concept of change programs, I would like to underline an issue that I encountered concerning the theory on temporary organization in the change context. Considering the above analysis, although extant literature recognizes that program management better suits the needs of the scope and complexity of transformational changes (Gareis, 2010), and the fact that there is an urge to approach program work differently to project work (Pellegrinelli, 2011), one can observe that several studies choose to take a project perspective on the change issue. In my view, there might be two reasons for this. First, the used terminology and practice of project management in the real world is quite diverse as organizations and sectors differ in the level of project management maturity (Pellegrinelli, 2011). Some organizations may consider and/or refer to programs as "large projects" (Vereecke et al., 2003). Interestingly, an example of this can be observed in the cases used in this thesis. I will come back to this in the methodology, section 3.4. Second, addressing the issue of "change project or change program" theoretically can be difficult due to the diversity of program definitions (Winch et al., 2012), publication considerations, philosophical cornerstone, or even the importance of such a consideration in a specific study. For the latter, I find that the purpose of a study can be a factor to suppress the attention when choosing the closest framework (project/program) for the study in a change setting. For example, Söderlund (2010) introduces "large-scale transformation (LST) projects," a type of project that aims to develop the organization strategically, and is characterized by "involving more than 1000 project members, numerous knowledge bases and technologies, complex contractual structures with external partners on client and supplier sides, and a wide range of development and restructuring activities, including the restructuring of production facilities, parallel development and termination of operations, new services and products" (p. 131). In my view, these characteristics strongly resonate with programs, particularly change programs; a program management perspective could thus be a very relevant framework in the study. I think "labeling" such an initiative as a project, considering the underlying assumptions, and the norms and practices of project management and program management (see (Pellegrinelli, 2011), has practical and academic consequences. For research, the lenses we use affect what we observe and how we understand it (Pellegrinelli, 2011). This also affects what others see in the findings of a specific study and how the findings can be interpreted for other purposes.

Acknowledging the abovementioned issue in the literature, in those studies where large and complex change processes are approached by a project management perspective, I argue that a high similarity of large change projects to change programs permits learning and interpretations from change project studies' findings to the change program purpose. This should certainly be based on the researcher's careful evaluation of the studies' purpose, theoretical framework, and the scope and characteristics of associated empirical settings. This means that some of the studies on change projects are applicable to this thesis, and can enhance understanding of the management of change programs. Thus, although the theoretical framework of this thesis is based on the program literature, I draw on some change project literature on some occasions, and this will be highlighted in the text.

Establishing the views on temporary organizations in the organizational change context and my focus on change programs, the following subsection provides a glimpse of characteristics of organizational change. The understanding of organizational change has been and is being comprehensively investigated in change management literature. To serve the interests of this work, and to design a manageable and relevant theoretical framework, I found it unnecessary to deeply review change management literature. Thus, a brief, relevant review is presented as follows.

2.1.2. Organizational change

Change can be characterized by different dimensions (cf. (Liguori, 2012, Burnes, 2005, Brandt et al., 2019), for example, by the rate of occurrence (e.g. discontinuous, incremental), by how it comes about (e.g. planned, emergent), and by scale (e.g. incremental adjustment, modular transformation) (Todnem By, 2005). Organizational change is a discontinuous, planned, and organization-wide intervention where major shifts occur across the organizational structure, strategy, processes, and culture, aiming to move an organization from its present state to a desired future state (Harigopal, 2007). Organizational change entails three aspects: content (strategy, practices, and involved technology), people (involved people and their attitude), and process (the actions and processes to implement the change) (Anderson and Anderson, 2002). To enable a successful organizational change, several enablers are highlighted in change management research that have also inspired debate in the project management literature. A number of elements highlight the human aspect of change, for example, strong leadership and commitment to involvement, a systematic approach for training employees in the skills needed for their work processes (Griffith-Cooper and King, 2007, Kotnour, 2011), readiness for change and individuals' perception of such readiness (Weber and Weber, 2001), people's positive attitude and solid commitment (Rafferty et al., 2013), and ability to address potential resistance (Fiedler, 2010). Another group of identified enablers highlights the importance of establishing a clear vision and objectives about the desired change (Griffith-Cooper and King, 2007), and having systems and technologies ready to facilitate the change and integrate them with the organizational culture (Bayerl et al., 2013). Some other enabling factors focus on significant aspects of the transition process, for example, an appropriate planning and mapping system to analyze the organization within its environment and identify needed requirements for a successful change (e.g. (Kotter, 1995), and a proper framework for resource allocation and clarifying roles and responsibilities (Griffith-Cooper and King, 2007). These elements influence the management of change programs, accomplishment of change outcomes, and necessary managerial skills of program managers, and together align with the themes of this thesis's theory. Al-Haddad and Kotnour

(2015) use skills, resources, and commitment to categorize these elements. Among the introduced elements, the transition process of change has been of great interest.

The transition process of change represents the actions and procedures that should be performed to implement the change. The change management discipline has long been concerned with the management of change processes in organizations. From this perspective, in order to succeed in implementing change, deploying systematic methods is key (Kotnour, 2011). Change management methods or models have grown greatly in change management research, and can be seen in three streams, considering change as a project, as an interpretive process, and as a response to resistance (Rosenbaum et al., 2018). Al-Haddad and Kotnour (2015) summarize the change methods in two categories of *systematic change methods* and *change management methods*. Systematic change methods, such as lean thinking and Six Sigma methods, are focused on various sets of processes and tools that management teams can apply to make change-related start, stop, and continue decisions. Change management methods, relevant to the current study, offer broader and more conceptual ideas in terms of intervention strategies that help managers to appropriately plan and create visions of change taking the organization's overall processes and strategies into account (Worren et al., 1999). Examples of change management methods include Lewin's (1946) three-step process, and the ADKAR (awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, reinforcement) model (Hiatt, 2006). In another attempt to integrate suggested prescriptions to manage organizational change, Stouten et al. (2018) evaluate how successful organizational change can be guided through several steps. These steps include assessing the opportunity or problem motivating the change; selecting and supporting a guiding change coalition; formulating a clear compelling vision of the change; communicating the vision; mobilizing energy for change; empowering others to act; developing and promoting change-related knowledge and ability; identifying short-term wins and using them to reinforce the change progress; monitoring and strengthening the change process over time; and institutionalizing change in company culture, practices, and management succession. Although many models have developed, a high rate of challenges in implementing organizational change is reported (Jurisch et al., 2013). Given any change management method, it is clear that organizational transitions are often ambiguous and entail great uncertainty and embeddedness; thus, particular structures for managing the change process are required to provide needed direction (Cummings and Worley, 2014). With such structures, legitimate and powerful individuals, chief executives or a steering committee of representatives, for example, come together to negotiate and gather required resources to realize the transition (Cummings and Worley, 2014). This is perhaps one of the central motives for the emergence of project management in the organizational change context, empirically and academically.

Establishing a brief summary of main themes on the management of organizational change from a change perspective, the next subsection approaches the focused phenomenon and explains what can be expected as the outcomes of change and how to reach them. Understanding desired outcomes and how to achieve them are necessary steps in building the framework for finding out how program managers can successfully deliver change. It is said that for a successful change, the leader's or leader group's understanding of change outcomes is critical. The discussion around these points is thus presented in the following.

2.1.3. Change program outcomes: Value and value creation

From a change management perspective, change outcomes are the applicable results of the implementation of change, differ from outputs (clear decisions), and can be intended or unintended and positive or negative (Kuipers et al., 2014). The outcomes of planned changes are informed by the gap between the definition of the present (often undesirable) conditions, and an image of the desirable future situation, for example a new structure with new functional roles (Kuipers et al., 2014). By their nature, change projects' outcomes cannot be fully defined, and their development is subject to iteration, thus their objectives might be revised several times (Kenny, 2003). Consequently, it is harder to set concrete measures for desired outcomes than to measure outputs (Kuipers et al., 2014). Moreover, as the (top-down) change can evolve during a process and is influenced by several factors, perceptions, and actions/interactions of many people, change outcomes do not always emerge as intended (Balogun and Johnson, 2005). Some examples of desired value through implementing planned change initiatives are greater efficiency (Weissert and Goggin, 2002), improved client satisfaction (Grønnegård Christensen and Pallensen, 2001), or increased safety in the hospital sector (Chustz and Larson, 2006). Al-Haddad and Kotnour (2015) suggest that the change outcomes include both the realization of a project's rather concrete objectives (e.g. change project completion within cost, time, and quality expectations) and somewhat subjective objectives (e.g. stakeholders' satisfaction). Stakeholders can be program managers, change team, organizational members, and project owners and/or sponsors. Such a breadth underscores the concept of value as a relevant and useful criterion to understand a change's outcomes, indeed, as the other side of the same coin (cf. (Kuipers et al., 2014). In other words, the outcome of a change process is the value that evolves and is generated over the course of a change process. Thus, in this thesis, the change's outcome is considered as the value generated through the value creation processes throughout the change programs. From one side, as the empirical context of my study is the public sector, the concept of value is appropriate because implementing organizational change in public organizations typically aims to create value for constituents, rather than focus on tangible output (Moore, 1995). From the other side, the concept of value is also very suitable in project management, particularly when it comes to the change context.

From a temporary organization point of view, the outcomes of change programs are intertwined with the concept of value (Thiry, 2002, Pellegrinelli, 1997). Particularly in programs, one of the major aspects that characterizes a program is the focus on value creation, which is connected to the success of change programs (Thiry, 2002, Winter and Szczepanek, 2008, Lycett et al., 2004, OGC, 2011). Programs represent lengthy, contextual, and strategic-oriented endeavors that encompass multi-stakeholder groups (Thiry, 2004, Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018, Pellegrinelli et al., 2007) whose mission is to create value (Winter and Szczepanek, 2008). Pellegrinelli (1997) suggests that organizational change programs, which offer an organizing framework for major, typically one-off changes whose implementation process and final outcome are not exactly clear at the outset, represent a specific domain related to value creation and management. Those involved in programs need to appreciate the strategic and emerging nature of programs and be able to accommodate a high level of complexity, changing boundaries, and a broad risk profile. The strategic and change-related nature of programs bypasses the focus on outputs and introduces the necessity to focus on outcomes or desired end states, and so calls for organizing and managing to realize the anticipated value or benefits (Pellegrinelli, 2011). The debate over value in temporary

organizations has been somewhat inconsistent regarding the relevant terms, where a number of words, such as benefits, value, and worth are applied interchangeably to refer to the same idea. I apply the definition of value that Laursen and Svejvig (2016) suggest as the quotient of benefits or satisfaction of needs to the use of resources or costs. Following this, in my work, the program value is the deliverable of the value creation process, representing the mentioned proportion, or worth. Establishing the concept of value, an elaborate explanation of value, and the value creation process in the change program context must be clarified, as presented in the following subsection.

2.1.4. Value creation process

On an organizational level, the concept of value generated by organizations is suggested to be subjective and multifaceted (Bowman and Ambrosini, 2000), can be considered as use and exchange value, appearing in different forms and natures following the organizations' core activities and its surrounding environment(s), and the parties and targets for which new value is created (Lepak et al., 2007). For example, one can expect differences between the value desired and generated by public organizations and that created by private sector organizations (Alford and O'flynn, 2009). The process of value creation is dependent on the source and target of value creation, and can be considered to be related to, among other things, producing products and services that are perceived as novel and appropriate by the targets, dynamic capability, new organizational knowledge, and enhancing employees' skills and competence (Lepak et al., 2007). Value creation applies to micro, mesa, and macro levels and depends on the relative amount of value that is subjectively realized by a target user (or buyer) who is the focus of value creation, whether an individual, organization, or society (Lepak et al., 2007).

When it comes to the temporary organization setting, the emphasis on value and value creation came about alongside or in continuation of recent perspectives in studying projects (departing from the "product creation" view) following the expansion of the focus on areas such as organizational change and IT, and business or strategic projects, programs and portfolios (Winter et al., 2006a). The value creation debate in project management began mostly within IT projects and programs and later became a broader debate related to other settings (Dupont and Eskerod, 2016). As mentioned, the literature on value and value creation in project management can be confusing, as several concepts such as value, benefit, impact, worth, success, value creation, and benefit management are interchangeably used while sharing a common cornerstone and mutual focus (Laursen and Svejvig, 2016). A few insightful review articles have strived to synthesize value research and guide further research on the subject (see (Laursen and Svejvig, 2016, Breese et al., 2015). For the purpose of this thesis, I draw on theoretical discussions on value and benefit management from program literature.

Value in the program setting can be defined as a representation of satisfaction of needs/use of resources (Laursen and Svejvig, 2016), referring to various types, including direct, indirect, economic, non-economic, tangible, or intangible (Miterev et al., 2020, Thiry, 2004), and can be seen in different time perspectives. Depending on the chosen time perspective, the possible value generated by a change program can range from establishing and delivering the change program's evolving content (e.g. new organizational structure or new IT system and work processes) within or just after the program's timeline, to longer-term objectives (e.g. enhancing organizational efficiency, position in associated industry, or organizational culture). Value can be considered as the primary objective that is supposed to be achieved by

coordinating, synthesizing, and realizing the outcomes and benefits of the projects and other activities within the program (Pellegrinelli, 1997). Thus, programs act as "the coordinating framework" whose emphasis is on flexibility, accommodation, and staged value realization (Morris et al., 2012, Artto et al., 2009). The understanding of value creation in programs can be initially found in earlier and rather general attempts to describe and articulate program and program management (Thiry, 2002, Thiry, 2007, Pellegrinelli, 1997), and further in more recent and sharpened works where value management processes are explored in relation to different dimensions, such as program organizing, integration of programs, and particularly front-end phases (Miterev et al., 2020, Martinsuo, 2019). Similar to the trend of using different terms concerning value, the theory on value creation in temporary organizations can be tracked in various overlapping streams, namely value creation, value management, benefits realization management, and benefits management, which share similar foundations.

The value creation process focuses on translating the desired value into program objectives and relevant performance indicators (Laine et al., 2016). A program's value should be identified through the management of the important early stages of the program (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008), and then managed interactively during the program's lifecycle through identifying and managing synergies/interactions between the projects, so the benefits of a coordinated program framework can be realized (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018). In business or change projects or programs, interests and viewpoints of a wide set of stakeholders should be taken into account when exploring and explaining value creation (Winter et al., 2006a). Intertwined with the program management phases, value creation in programs can be defined through a number of stages, namely *identifying*, *planning*, *generating*, and *capturing* during and especially after generation (Miterev et al., 2016). These demand establishing necessary processes and ensuring the needed structure, authorization, resources, communication, interactions, and decision-making (Laursen and Svejvig, 2016).

Elaborating on these stages, the early phases of programs play a key role in value creation, where the desirable (and undesirable) value is *identified* and *planned*. At this stage, sense-making, ideation, and evaluation in a learning loop help to identify and define the expected value of the program, and influence which activities, working groups, and projects are needed to plan and deliver the defined value. The focus is on identifying benefits or drawbacks, and creating a vision of the change (Martinsuo, 2019). Rather conceptual articles (e.g. (Thiry, 2002, Thiry, 2004, Pellegrinelli, 1997, Lycett et al., 2004, Pellegrinelli, 2002) suggest some guidelines and methods for defining the change vision, scope of program and responsibilities, and change objectives, which set the context for formulating and planning needed activities and projects. These suggestions are mainly based on informal and iterative cycles of collaborative sense-making, ideation, and evaluation through a flexible managerial approach (Martinsuo and Killen, 2014). Among empirical studies, Liu et al. (2019) echo co-creation of value-in-use at the front end of infrastructure development programs through the engagement of different stakeholders in their context of client, knowledge partners, market partners, and the program team in co-creation sessions. Martinsuo and Lehtonen (2007) provide an empirical study on the front-end phase of a public development program, where the authors show practices of program initiation, and highlight inconsistent views of practitioners on the concepts and function of the program.

Furthermore, as value is established and a program progresses into later stages, detailed planning, *generating,* and control follow. The (perception of) value can change over time,

thus, cyclic or iterative appraisal of benefits should accompany phases of programs (Thiry, 2004), which means that projects and the program should go through ongoing evaluation and reevaluation. In other words, Thiry (2007) argues that to assure relevance and justification of the investment, there should be "a learning approach where results are regularly appraised against benefits and changes are managed against these stated benefits" (p. 120). Value generation concerns the process of enabling resources and value *capture* is about the outcome of applying capabilities. In this sense, after the identification of value, planning and executing change activities (while continuously evaluating the output and impact) can be considered as enabling resources or generating value. The capture of value then occurs when targets of value creation perceive the impact of change. Among the empirical studies on value creation during the program lifecycle, Miterev et al. (2020) present an exploration of value processes, applying organization design theory, and find out that different program organization designs are necessary to provide the support needed for value creation. The authors use an interesting case and empirically show different arrangements of program organization in relation to each value process. The program governance, thus, seems to need to show flexibility in order to accommodate different managerial approaches in response to various requirements and conditions of value processes. Vuorinen and Martinsuo (2019) take a stakeholder perspective, looking into value creation over the course of a large infrastructure project in the public sector, and identify four strategies of communicating, raising and resolving disputes, setting rules and supervising the project, and using decision-making authority that were employed by stakeholders to influence the value. The authors highlight that stakeholders' expectations of project value creation may explain why they use the influencing strategies. Eskerod and Ang (2017) report that various value types matter differently to different stakeholders in megaprojects, and suggest that considering these differences might enable megaprojects' leaders to communicate more effectively with different stakeholder profiles during such large projects. Laine et al. (2016) investigate a large new product development change program and find that the program value (financial and non-financial) is created jointly and separately by the program actors through collective sense-making. This is found to contribute to enabling value creation beyond immediate benefits.

To sum up, the presented review highlights the main themes on value creation in change programs from earlier research. As described, the value creation process occurs through explorative and learning-oriented interactions and collaboration between involved parties at the early stages of programs, and through cycles of evaluation, redefining, replanning, and generation during detailed planning and transition phases. To facilitate these processes, an adaptive program management framework and managers' efforts are needed. The *management* aspect of change programs includes several governance themes, including stakeholder management, risk management, and the design of program organization, that aim to lead a successful delivery of change. Although managing value creation is considered as one theme under the management of programs (OGC, 2011), given that the purpose of program management through purposeful and coherent practice of its governance themes is delivering desired value, in my view, managing the value creation process and managing change programs are two sides of the same coin; indeed, the literature on managing value creation and managing change programs presents several overlapping ideas. Thus, in continuation of my effort to establish how we can understand a change's value and the processes to generate it, the next section presents a review of existing research on the management of change programs, particularly with a program manager focus.

2.1.5. The management of change programs

My review regarding the practice of management of change programs falls into two theoretical streams. The first stream focuses on the issue in relation to program management during the program's lifecycle towards shaping and creating the desired value. The second stream highlights the typical characteristics of change programs, such as their soft nature, and discusses the need to introduce and integrate a change management perspective for better management of change programs. The term "practice" in the opening sentence of the current subsection highlights my actor-centric focus in the thesis, thus, refers to understanding the management of change programs regarding which activities managers perform in change programs (Blomquist et al., 2010). In other words, my focus is on actors participating in and managing change programs.

Within the first stream, to understand the program's lifecycle, the starting point is establishing an overall vision of the change to be enacted by the program (Lycett et al., 2004). Further definition and description of the general program goals and the objectives of projects within the program are defined and refined early in the program, and closer detailed plans emerge while the program proceeds towards implementation (Lycett et al., 2004, Pellegrinelli, 1997). Thiry (2007) argues that such a dimension requires a learning approach and suggests a cyclic model of the program management lifecycle encompassing *formulation*, *organization*, *deployment*, *appraisal*, and *dissolution*. The underpinning assumption is that projects and other activities within the program are formed, reformed, or dissolved over time as the program progresses. The *formulating* phase concerns sense-making and ideation to identify value and evaluating alternatives; *organization* concerns strategic planning, creating a program organization, and selecting, coordinating, and synthetizing projects and activities to plan and generate pursued value; *deployment* concerns initiation of actions and controlling them, and repeatedly assessing projects' outcomes; and *appraisal* concerns closure and the appraisal of the program by the program team. Through appraisal, project deliverables are evaluated based on which projects and/or purpose of program might be adjusted or changed, or the program may even be terminated if the strategic rationale of the program is no longer relevant (Thiry, 2004). A similar conceptualization, suggested by (Pellegrinelli, 1997), introduces the program spiral, which encompasses initiation, definition and planning, project delivery, renewal, and dissolution. It is suggested that the content and requirements of these phases in programs should be managed through the program management framework entailing a number of necessary governance themes or areas (program organization, benefits management, risk management, etc.) (OGC, 2011). As I argue at the end of subsection 2.1.3, these descriptions of program management practice obviously overlap with and relate to managing the value creation process that is summarized in the former to the current subsection.

In addition to the aforementioned rather descriptive studies, previous research has also empirically investigated different aspects of managing change programs in different stages of a program's lifecycle. From one dimension, the early phases and initiation of change programs are paid particular attention, perhaps because of a combination of highest ambiguity and the best opportunity to analyze and agree on the desired value in those stages. The initiation of change programs is considered in relation to boundary spanning at the program–organization contextual interface to shape the program content and further processes (Nieminen and Lehtonen, 2008, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008), and actors' practices during this stage (Martinsuo and Lehtonen, 2007, Nasholm and Blomquist, 2015). From another

dimension, during change programs, some studies focus on interdependencies between the projects and activities within the program, and between the program's projects and the parent organization, and examine how these connections are managed to deliver the change's desired value. Several integration (e.g. exchanging information, coordinating projects, adopting parent organization's procedures and standards) and isolation mechanisms are explored that actors use to manage interdependencies in order to facilitate change program success (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Turkulainen et al., 2015, Dietrich, 2006, Gorog, 2011, Johansson et al., 2007). Another group of studies investigates the management of change programs in relation to program organization structure, suggesting that the design of the program structure is a strategic decision that should be adapted to the program environment during the program (Yu and Kittler, 2012, Miterev et al., 2020). Some other issues related to the management of change programs throughout the programs are also discussed; these are inspiring but not directly related to the purpose of this thesis. For a full overview, I present my review of literature on managing change programs in Table 11, in the appendix.

Concerning the second stream from my review, some of the core characteristics of organizational change form the basis of some studies that challenge the traditional perspective on managing temporary organizations and call for an integration between project management and change management perspectives. In fact, different conceptualizations of change-related concepts and practices within the two fields have triggered attempts to consider the two perspectives together (Lehmann, 2010, Hornstein, 2015, Pollack, 2017). Some of the core characteristics of organizational change include the issue of managing people (Shaw, 2017), high uncertainty and ambiguity (Thiry, 2007), the intangible nature of changes' objectives and desired outcomes (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018), the influence of psychological and organizational climate on the change process and success (Purvis et al., 2015), the importance of surrounding environment(s) on a changes' outcomes (Johansson et al., 2007), high sociopolitical dynamics during the early stages of change (Beach and Coule, 2016), and the issue of change recipients making sense of the change during the process (Balogun and Johnson, 2005). These characteristics are also related to and color the competencies of change program managers, which are addressed in section 2.3. Such dimensions move change programs towards the soft category of projects (see (Crawford and Pollack, 2004), which calls for appropriate and more flexible managerial attention (Crawford et al., 2003, Pollack, 2012). To address this, it is suggested that an integrated change model should link change management with the program and project management frameworks to facilitate strong leadership and relevant program management, and create change ownership (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010a). The integration of project management and change management can be challenging for actors as these can be misaligned, and is usually handled through improvisation (Gordon and Pollack, 2018).

To sum up, to establish and realize the value a change program is set up for, the reviewed literature defines the management of change programs in relation to a few important aspects. (1) Through appropriate practice of program management governance themes (program organization, benefits management, risk management, etc.) (OGC, 2011), the management of change programs concerns open, learning-oriented ideation, and sense-making early in change programs, and flexible management to enable inductive reassessment and reformulation of program processes and project plans as the change program unfolds. (2) The boundary-spanning activities are particularly important. (3) There is a need to introduce change

management to project and program management to handle challenges of organizational change. The details of these aspects from reviewed studies in this section can be found in Table 11 in the appendix. Alongside developments in the understanding of managing change programs in terms of processes and managerial ideas, there is a solid agreement about the contextuality of change programs and the requirement to explore the management of change programs in their wider organizational context. This latter aspect is beyond the focus of the current section and is addressed in the second part of the theoretical framework, section 2.2.

2.1.6. Subordinate research question 1

Following the aim of section 2.1, namely clarifying change program content in terms of management and value creation processes, and taking the summarized theoretical discussions from subsections 2.1.4 and 2.1.5 into account, although the reviewed literature provides valuable insights about managing change programs to create value, each debate to some extent lacks empirical evidence on program managers' experiences of practicing value creation and managing change programs. In other words, it is unclear how leaders interpret and practice the management of change programs to develop and generate the desired value (Martinsuo et al., 2020). This is especially important to explore as value creation in organizational change programs usually entails vague and intangible outcomes, which may be the reason for limited relevant studies in the extant literature (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018, Miterev et al., 2020). Following my earlier argument about the importance of this aspect for answering the overall research question of this thesis, and the observed lack of knowledge on it in the theory, I am motivated to empirically investigate how program managers participate in and manage change programs to create the desired value. To do so, it is essential to take a step back and explore how they interpret the management requirements and situations in which they are positioned. Therefore, I ask my first subordinate research question as follows:

How do program managers interpret and how do they practice the management of change programs to create value?

2.2. Situated management of change programs (context)

In the previous section, I addressed some of the main themes from change project/program literature that shape our understanding of change programs as a specific type of program, and the management perspective on change programs that aim to create value in the initiator permanent organization(s). In this section, I set out the overall understanding of change programs' value creation and management perspectives discussed in section 2.1 in the context in which programs are embedded. The major mission of change programs is to create desired value in the hosting permanent organization, and the managers of temporary organizations are often recruited accidentally or by coincidence from within associated organizations, while organizational operations continue to take place during the change process; these factors highlight the important role of the permanent organization's context in shaping the management of temporary organizations. Earlier research has been clear about the need to consider the organizational context of change programs in studying the management of programs because the attributes of the context can impact how the program can or should be managed to realize its desired results (e.g. (Pellegrinelli, 2002, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016). The term "accidental" that I have chosen to convey my take on the role of change program managers is explained in the introduction, and will be elaborated more in subsection 2.3.3.

The value debate in programs particularly suggests that value creation is a contingency phenomenon, depends on underlying assumptions and activities in the organization (Lepak et al., 2007), and occurs in the minds of actors and their language (Green and Sergeeva, 2019). Thus, the concept of organizational context seems fundamental in understanding the management of change programs to create the desired value. Hence, to serve the purpose of my thesis, here I focus on the contextuality of change programs, namely the potential influence of the organizational context of the permanent organization on the management of these change programs. This is the second theoretical basis that I evaluated to be essential to explore and understand my overall research question.

Before moving on, I would like to mention that, considering the empirical setting of my work (municipal mergers in public organizations), one could consciously seek potential implications of the public sector setting in relation to the organizational context of the focused programs. Implementing change in public sector organizations has been of particular interest (Van der Voet, 2016, Van der Voet, 2014, Van der Voet et al., 2016, Van der Voet et al., 2015). It is registered that public administration essentially seeks to appoint qualified professionals who have the knowledge and ability to take citizens' needs into account, into a hierarchy, and who make predictable, efficient, and fair decisions for service offerings (Van der Voet et al., 2015). In such systems, power and authority lie in the government, and decisions are executed through the distributed responsibilities within levels of public organizations. Under the public steering framework, a bureaucratic system exists with a hierarchy of political actors and administrators whose focus is on providing quality services to the citizens as clients and participants in procedures. Politicians are considered as visionary entrepreneurs or commanders, and public managers take the expert role, implementing and refining political ideas (Moore, 1995).

It is suggested that change initiatives in public organizations can be constrained as the bureaucratic configuration and focus on predictability of services overpowers and discourages employees' creativity (Adler and Borys, 1996), whilst the formality of such systems brings

clarity and guidance to employees, and helps implement innovative changes (Pierce and Delbecq, 1977). Compared to those implementing changes in private organizations, public sector managers often gain highly unsatisfactory experience (Doyle et al., 2000). Change initiatives in public organizations are attributed to a public policy framework, which is usually based on ministerial edict, is controversial, and ignores negotiable timescales, ability to plan, or political considerations in implementation (Doyle et al., 2000). Kickert (2014) suggests that change management in the public setting is not a straightforward application of change management insights from generic management science. At a general level, acknowledging the benefits of applying temporary organizations to solve complex problems in public organizations, earlier studies have touched upon some contextual dimensions of the public sector influencing the management of temporary organizations (Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm, 2002, Packendorff and Lindgren, 2014). For example, temporary organizations in the public sector are subject to some conditions, such as complexity of stakeholders, adversarial political environment, existence of conflicting goals, or unclear ways of identifying and measuring outcomes (Wirick, 2009, Crawford et al., 2003). They are initiated with flexibility and innovation promises to overcome permanent bureaucratic paradigms, yet are bounded by the same legacy that bounds their parent organizations (Grabher, 2002), or by over-institutionalization and strong structural dependencies, as argued by Sjöblom et al. (2013).

These brief descriptions underline a possibility of identifying and developing a specific public-related *contextual framework* for exploring the management of change programs in such settings. One could argue that public sector organizations, or even municipality subsectors, have distinct characteristics that could be purposefully introduced and integrated in my theoretical framework, and I do not disagree with that. Clearly, organizations develop and inherit some organizational attributes of, among other things, the sector, industry, or field in which they are active. However, this is not what I pursue in this thesis and I am not specifically interested in potential public–private discussions on change programs. Although I will explain my case selection in the methodology (section 3.4), it is worth mentioning that the hosting sector was not a criterion for selecting cases in my research project; however, I ultimately gained access to change programs in public organizations, which created an issue for framing my research. To handle the issue, following my main interest and evaluations, I decided to consider my cases as representatives of *neutral* change programs residing in any setting, and to approach analyzing them from the general outlook of the change program literature. As an insight, I evaluated the content of the selected cases to find the closest type of change programs (Martinsuo et al., 2020), which were found to be organizational change processes. Moreover, I examined possible theoretical frameworks to find those that were most relevant and with the best potential for theorizing. Subsequently, I considered the public sector as an empirical setting for the focused programs, and framed my study such that the chosen programs characterized temporary organizations set up to deliver organizational change to the hosting permanent organizations. I also briefly reflect on this issue in the discussion, subsection 5.2.3. Thus, building upon my articles, in the thesis I focus on the dynamic between a change program and its organizational context's general attributes; thus, I approach the context openly and use my cases as representative of the described phenomenon.

Taking a neutral stand, I now present my review of the literature on the management of change programs as a part of their wider organizational context. This section ends by formulating the second subordinate research question in subsection 2.2.5, which is answered

in subsection 5.2.4 using the findings of the papers (direct findings and my reinterpretation of the findings) and discussed in the light of the following theoretical basis.

2.2.1. Organizational context and managing change programs

Change programs are closely embedded in the initiating permanent organization to which they are set up to deliver the desired value (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018). Therefore, their management must be connected to the strategy and activities of the wider hosting organization (Pellegrinelli, 1997, Thiry, 2004). Change programs often last for a long period of time, bring different stakeholders with various interests and expectations together for common purposes, have evolving objectives that stem from an open and unclear terrain, and are affected by changes in their context, thus are subject to many contextual uncertainties (Pellegrinelli, 2002, Thiry, 2004). Consequently, to investigate and understand the management of change programs to create the desired value (see section 2.1), several studies have considered these programs as a part of the wider organizational context. It is established that investigation of program value creation in the program's organizational context enables reflecting on actual practices and subjectivity (Martinsuo, 2020). These refer to the need for a situated understanding of managing change programs. The term "situated" is inspired by the situated learning theory, which tries to explain the role of embodied social learning. The cornerstone of situated learning theory is the emphasis that "learning is an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world" (Lave and Wenger, 1991), p. 35).

Before summarizing earlier findings on this issue, I would like to clarify what the concept of organizational context includes in this thesis. On a general level, Donaldson (2001), who focuses on the contingency perspective of organizations, considers the dimensions or characteristics of an organization's environment as contingencies and defines the contingency as "any variable that moderates the effects of an organizational characteristic on organizational performance" (p. 7). Such contingencies vary across organizations (Clegg et al., 2021), but some general attributes can relate to any organization, for example, size of organization or the technology that organizations employ (Donaldson, 2001). Still, a central message is that organizational context includes many different attributes, necessitating a conditional effort to identify relevant attributes of a specific organizational context for a specific purpose. For the purpose of this thesis, my view on organizational context relates to underlying ideas as manifested attributes that steer how organizational actors work or fulfill expectations of their roles (introduced in section 1, and elaborated on in section 2.3). Keeping this in mind, in the following, I review and analyze earlier findings on managing change programs in relation to their organizational context, and focus on identifying highlighted contextual attributes and their implications on the management of change programs.

From the perspective of temporary organizations, in one of the initiating studies on programs within their contexts, Pellegrinelli et al. (2007) consider program context as "a dynamic cultural, political and business environment in which the program operates" (p. 41). The authors suggest that contextual factors, such as stakeholders' views and interests, ambiguity and uncertainty, or support from relevant departments, affect the role of program managers and require them to make compromises and (re)shape the program and its projects. As such, program teams are influenced by and seek to influence their contexts. Shao and Müller (2011) bring the debate forward and, based on an inductive study, suggest three aspects of program context, each having several sub-aspects, and components. The three aspects of program context are *program type* (application area, configuration, change-driven, size, timeline, and

lifecycle stage); *scope of program context* (parent organization and outside parent organization); and *characteristics of program context* (stability, support, harmony, and interaction). The first aspect seems quite straightforward. The second aspect concerns internal elements or attributes, such as top management, other programs and projects, or functional departments, and external elements, such as program stakeholders, outside network or the public. From the third aspect, *stability* concerns internal (organizational structure, policy, process, etc.) and external (economic environment, relationship with program stakeholders, etc.) stability; *support* highlights the support from top management, resource availability, established organizational learning in parent organization, etc.; *harmony* concerns good relationships with stakeholders, departments, top management, etc.; and *interaction* deals with the fit between the program context and the program. The third aspect seems to mainly focus on the attributes of the hosting permanent organization in relation to the program. Even with such an explicit categorization, I find these constructs constraining and quite general in what they refer to or contain. For example, one can see overlapping notions between the internal elements from "scope of program context" and at least two sub-aspects of "characteristics of program context," namely, support and harmony. However, I believe such a categorization can guide the review of former empirical studies that examine change programs in relation to program context.

In the following subsection, I summarize some of the main empirical studies that, to serve various purposes, concentrate on the embeddedness of change programs in their organizational context (a dynamic interface). The aim is to learn how the organizational context of change programs is conceptualized, and what is proposed regarding the link between contextual dynamics and the practice of management for value creation.

2.2.2. Implications of temporary-to-permanent contextual interface

As already mentioned, alongside the studies that have aimed to explicate aspects of program context, several empirical studies have investigated change programs as a part of the parent permanent organizational context in terms of various attributes or dimensions. Intertwined with such a focus, examining diverse theoretical inquiries in these studies, the role of program management actors in handling the change program–organizational context interface, or temporary-to-permanent contextual interface, has also been studied. On the very question of "separation or integration" of change projects or programs from or with their organizational contexts, Johansson et al. (2007) refer to contextual aspects, such as organizational identity, hierarchy, and rationality, and conclude that managers' ability to organize for facilitating innovation and/or achieving implementation depends on how well the distinction between the temporary and permanent organizations is defined. The issue of organizational context is considered in a number of studies that address the need for managing the boundaries between the program and its organizational context, which has led to the identification of several integrative and isolative mechanisms and activities. For instance, Lehtonen and Martinsuo (2008) focus on the initiation of change programs; recognize programs' organizational context in terms of parent organizations' structures, norms, rules, organizational culture and ways of working; and identify several boundary-spanning activities ("task of linking an organization with its environment and coordinating that boundary," p. 22) that shape the program's processes and results. The integration of change programs can also be found in studies by Lehtonen and Martinsuo (2009) and Vuorinen and Martinsuo (2018) where organizational context are captured as organization/top management support for the change program, organization's experience with project-based work, governance, dedicated

autonomy of the program, and program manager's experience. Vuorinen and Martinsuo (2018) show that, based on the clash between change programs and their organizational context, program actors may use similar integration mechanisms but have different goals in mind. These studies report a number of integration and isolation mechanisms and activities that actors use to manage project-to-project and program-to-organization boundaries, influencing program results and ways to realize them. Here, the boundary-spanning discussion highlights an important consideration and movement between the program as a separate organizational context and the organizational context of the hosting permanent organization(s). For Ritson et al. (2012), who look at the success of programs, program organizational context is (implicitly) captured as corporate strategy, program and organizational management systems, uncertainty and complexity, organizational learning, etc.

Following this path, Turkulainen et al. (2015) also echo the management of different interfaces in change programs, and implicitly identify the contextual attributes as the organization's project-based organizing practices and policies, uncertainty, and program legitimacy, which are then found to explain the variation that the authors observe in using integration mechanisms across interfaces. Furthermore, Willems et al. (2020) focus on shaping the autonomy of innovative large change projects; identify organizational context attributes, such as parent organization's identity, political (stakeholders) dynamics, lack of needed competencies and mandate for project, and organizational practices and norms of associated communities; and categorize symbolic, discursive, and spatial isolation practices that are used by actors to manage temporary-to-permanent dynamics. Another issue associated with program context in change programs is related to managers' attention to adjusting program structure to changes in the program environment (Yu and Kittler, 2012) for successful management processes (see subsections 2.1.4 and 2.1.5). The concept of complexity/uncertainty is also evident in some studies whose elaborated understanding can be found in a rich research stream in project management (see (Kiridena and Sense, 2016, Geraldi et al., 2011).

Although these studies have (rather implicit) implications for individual actors involved in the management of change programs to create value, and considering that managing program boundaries is obviously intertwined with actors' role and agency, few studies take an explicit actor-centric perspective and examine the management of change programs connected to their wider context. From those few, Stjerne et al. (2019) highlight potential temporal characteristics in the context of large interorganizational change projects and report three practices of framing, synthesizing, and hyping that actors develop to resolve relevant temporal tensions. In another study, Nasanen and Vanharanta (2016) underline possible tensions between temporal and hierarchical orientations of change programs and their organizational context, and find that program actors engage in discursive patterns to construct and reconstruct tensions, and clarify their identity and responsibility as the temporary team. Lunkka et al. (2019) also contrast project work with the organizational way of working (way of working as organizational context attribute) in change projects and echo project participants' sense-making of context and developing repertoires of discourses that reflect the actors' lived experiences of project-based work. In sum, it is established that the program's purpose and processes are influenced by contextual dynamics; subsequently, actors' sense-making and negotiating influence the program's context (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Pellegrinelli, 2002). Table 1 shows the review of studies on change programs as part of the wider permanent

organizational context, illustrating all attributes highlighted in current section. An expanded version of the table that includes more details from the review can be found in the appendix (Table 12). In Table 1, one can notice the *far and wide* vocabulary used to conceptualize organizational context.

Table 1 Studies on change programs in their context: attributes of organizational context (for full details, see Table 12 in the appendix)

Author	Context (program type)	Attribute of organizational context (either emphasized in the papers' theory or emerged in findings)
(Johansson et al., 2007)	Large development projects	Aspects of an organization: organizational identity, hierarchy, rationality
(Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008)	A complex change program, rationalizing a public Finnish organization's IT management	Characteristics of organizational context: structures, norms, and rules of parent organization; way of operating; organizational culture and personnel's attitudes; pressure of other changes and projects on personnel
(Yu and Kittler, 2012)	Large-scale multi-site information system change program	Initiating organizations characterized by the level of program authority and the level of homogeneity of the business processes in the participating organizations
(Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2009)	One change program in a public organization (restructuring activities, merging of units, closing down some units) One change program in a private company (transforming company's central service processes in its largest business area)	Contextual factors related to organization level, e.g. organization's experience with project management Program-level contextual factors: e.g. top management involvement and support to the program Individual-level contextual factors: e.g. program manager's experience with program management, and with leadership
(Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018)	A digitalization change program in a public organization, a new customer process-development change program in a private company	Contextual factors related to autonomy given to change program by parent organization, organization support to change program, organization experience with project-based organizing, how organization governs the change program
(Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016)	A spatial transformation change program, a large media company	Organizational and social context characterized by temporal and hierarchical orientations
(Turkulainen et al., 2015)	A global operations expansion change program, Finland-based oil company	Implicit contextual factors: project-based organizing practices and policies, project guidelines to ensure firm-level capability development, uncertainty, legitimacy
(Pellegrinelli et al., 2007)	Multiple-case, public and commercial organizations, programs	Fast-changing program environment characterized by stakeholders' views and interests, support from relevant departments, corporate perspective, ambiguity and uncertainty, sources of funds, powerful forces
(Sjerne et al., 2019)	Multiple inter-organizational projects (IOPs) under a large change program, change in governing Danish manufacturing industry and establishing a common political vision aligned with "Industry 4.0"	Aspect of context: temporal characteristics
(Morris and Geraldi, 2011)	Conceptual	Aspect of context: institutional aspects: Organization's efforts to create a stable platform and system (e.g. human resource management, reporting system) for entire lifecycle of projects; organization's efforts to gather, organize, and use tacit and explicit knowledge; project management professional bodies; governance/role of sponsor from organization; influence of organizational groups external to the home project organization; organization's stability, resilience, and order versus its adaptability and innovation; integration of

Author	Context (program type)	Attribute of organizational context (either emphasized in the papers' theory or emerged in findings)
		external groups (e.g. marketing); managing portfolios at the societal level; leadership at the institutional level; leader as a powerful organizational actor who can shape own version of institutional culture and connects project issues to relevant organizational and institutional needs
(Beach and Coule, 2016)	Conceptual, pre-initiation of organizational change projects	Aspect of context: sociopolitical dynamics
(Lunkka et al., 2019)	A large-scale change project at a Finnish university hospital including integration of two clinics and several small hospitals, public sector	Aspect of context: project work against organization's way of working
(Martinsuo and Geraldi, 2020)	Conceptual	Aspect of context: internal and external stakeholders, uncertainties stemming from the parent organization and broader context
(Willems et al., 2020)	Two innovation change projects: one in the Dutch railway network aiming to create a national coordination center; one city development project in a large Dutch municipality aiming to develop innovative collaboration in public–private partnerships	Aspect of context: influence of parent organization, identity, cultural differences in a politicized domain (stakeholders), political context, organizational practices and practices of specific communities, organizational processes and governance, lack of needed competencies, lack of mandate
(Ritson et al., 2012)	Quantitative, different program contexts	Aspect of context: corporate strategy, program management and organizational management systems, changes to the organizational and business environment, uncertainty and complexity, corporate objectives and internal and external environments, organizational learning

The summarized literature shows that organizational context entails different attributes or aspects, and can both challenge and enable the implementation of change programs. Regarding temporary organizations in a change setting, it is also possible to think about contextual attributes that are highlighted by change management literature; for example, regarding organizational capacity for change, it is found that organizations that are better at changing can be more successful with their change projects (Heckmann et al., 2016). As other examples, the influence of managers' experiences as change recipients on the magnitudes of changes they implement (Ozawa, 2020), the key role of change recipients' sense-making of change and its impact on change's outcomes (Balogun and Johnson, 2005), and the role of employees' readiness for change in implementation success (Rafferty and Minbashian, 2019) can be considered. However, although I believe there can be theoretical potential and fruitful learning in analyzing change management theory and introducing relevant literature (e.g. focusing on mentioned issues) to project management, I decided to limit the scope of this section to the program management literature. However, I would like to underline that the integration of project and change management literature in studying change projects and programs has already been strongly emphasized (e.g. (Pollack and Algeo, 2016, Pollack, 2017, Hornstein, 2015, Pádár et al., 2017). Thus, the focus on contextual factors from the bridge between change and project management can be a fruitful avenue for further research.

Considering the abridged theoretical foundation on change programs as a part of their wider organizational context to understand the management of change programs and generation of the desired value, I conclude two problems with the theory. First, from the review I present in the current section, and from Table 1 that summarizes the attributes of organizational context, it is visible that the organizational context of change programs has rarely been explicitly and profoundly studied, and that the implicitly underlined attributes create a scattered picture of context. It is apparent that the existing research has been quite open in, mostly implicitly, choosing the attributes of organizational context to focus on. There seems to be almost no justification in the mentioned studies for why and how selected attributes are chosen over other possible aspects. Overlapping across studies, parent organization's identity, culture, practices, policies, experience, and established systems for temporary organizing, sociopolitical dynamics, stakeholders, top management support, and complexity and uncertainty seem prevalent in getting scholars' attention when dealing with permanent organizations' organizational context (for full overview and regularity of attributes see Table 12). However, although insightful and inspiring, I believe it can be fruitful to see how the mirrored picture can be further sharpened to offer an explicit, grounded understanding of the program's organizational context. Therefore, I take these attributes further as the basis when discussing my findings in subsection 5.2.1. There, I show how my findings are supported by these attributes, and how the findings contribute to a more solid picture.

Second, given the key role of the program manager as the person responsible for delivering the change programs' outcomes, the reviewed studies fall short of explicitly and comprehensively explaining possible implications of the temporary-to-permanent organizational context dynamics for the management of change programs. As mentioned in the review, only a few studies take an explicit actor-centric perspective and examine change programs as a part of their wider context. This second point has led to calls for further research (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015). I argue that it is critical to address this gap, as change project or program managers, whose performance colors the destiny of change programs, are typically employed accidentally. These managers are often

recruited from the parent organization, holding a high or full percentage of their line roles while contributing to the change programs as internal program (Zwikael and Meredith, 2018, Lundin and Söderholm, 1995). Acknowledging the existence of various degrees of maturity of program or project working in organizations (cf. (Andersen and Jessen, 2003), it is suggested that change program managers are often selected based on their technical or managerial qualifications, but lack required competencies or experience to lead and deliver a project or program. Being intimately connected to the line organizational context, and encountering a fairly novel (Darrell et al., 2010) and ill-defined (Mullaly, 2003) role and management principles, program managers might meet a dynamic contextual interface and a knowledge gap that need to be handled to attain the change program's agenda. The problem statement I put forward in the current section is thus an attempt to expand a *situated* understanding of managing change programs as an integral part of managers' social practice of management in the program's context.

As a way forward to facilitate an understanding of change programs' organizational context, and to enable an actor-centric focus in exploring the link between the temporary-to-permanent contextual interface and the management of change programs, I needed to a tool to conceptualize organizational context and the contextual interface. During my research project, taking a doctoral course in fulfilling my PhD program's education requirements, I became familiar with institutional logics theory and found it could be useful for accomplishing my research purposes. In a nutshell, the logics perspective reflects the connection between individuals and meta-level values, norms, and symbols that constitute the institutions. Among several levels, it enables an actor-centric focus and highlights the institutionally conditioned actions and behaviors of organizations and organizational actors based on their nestedness in constellations of logics, and the actors' agency to interpret and enact the logics (Thornton et al., 2012, Friedland and Alford, 1991). Accordingly, I realized that the institutional logics perspective can provide a way to unfold the attributes of a change program's organizational context and develop a framework for understanding individuals' (here, program managers) interactions with the contextual interface dynamics when they engage in creating the desired outcomes. Simultaneously, aligned with the debate on the role of organizational context in managing change programs and generating the desired value, employing an institutional lens to examine such a role has been motivated. For instance, Morris and Geraldi (2011) suggest that it is crucial to consider temporary organizations in interaction with their context in terms of institutional aspects, such as organizational systems for temporary organizing, organizational learning, or organizational stability and adaptability. Martinsuo and Geraldi (2020) propose that institutional lenses are useful to explore the relation between programs or portfolios and their context. Laursen and Svejvig (2016) suggest that there is a solid opportunity for using institutional theory to theorize value creation in or by temporary organizations, particularly, considering that the institutional environment containing programs might both enable and inhibit the program's progress (Johansson et al., 2007). Taking my points together, therefore, I chose to introduce and use the logics perspective as a valid and useful lens for my research, meeting the criteria that I assumed for investigating my research focus. Certainly, other theoretical angles could provide means for understanding the concept of organizational context.

The institutional logics perspective can be angled differently to serve different purposes. In my work, it is focused on exploring the context's attributes regarding the management of change programs in a permanent environment and program managers' role when facilitating

attainment of a change program's outcomes or value creation. The perspective is particularly appropriate for my empirical setting as the involved managers were revealed to lack sufficient competency in temporary organizing, although they were highly experienced with the organizational context in which they were embedded.

In next section, I introduce the institutional logics theory, its contribution to the project management field, and my agenda in using this theory.

Before that, I would like to mention that the institutional logics perspective is not the only theoretical foundation used to serve the purpose of this section (section 2.2), but my empirical findings based on other theoretical premises (e.g. competency theory, trust management) are also beneficial. However, the institutional light colors the analysis of those findings for the current, focused phenomenon. I come back to this in section 5.2.

2.2.3. Institutional logics theory as a lens

The motivation to understand organizational action as something being beyond economic and rational sets of strategic goals has critically been at the core of institutional theory. Starting from "old" institutional theory towards "newer" waves, the institutional logics perspective is currently the dominant view (Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutional logics can be understood "as the socially constructed, historical pattern of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999), p. 804). The logics perspective focuses on understanding institutional logics beyond institutions, as more abstract social structures, and as coexisting with, and sometimes opposing, the real life of the organizations (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017). In this view, institutional logics are more powerful than the institutions, as they guide *institutions* and *social meanings*. Institutional logics help us to see the social content of institutions more clearly.

Research on logics has developed from industry- and field-level analyses documenting the effects of logics as they shift over time, to focusing on the complexity of plural logics in fine-grained studies of how organizations, and individual actors or groups within or across organizations, are affected by a multiplicity of logics (Lounsbury and Boxenbaum, 2013). For the latter developments, logics research has been concerned with ongoing societal changes or transformations due to the dynamics of (contradictory) logics in relation to organizational actors' agency. This perspective reflects the connection between individuals and meta-level values, norms, and symbols that constitute the institutions in two ways. First, the logics shape and form organizations' (and organizational actors') behaviors, actions, and decision-making processes. Second, in the described relationship, actors engage in "ritual behaviors" through "highly tangible material practices" (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017), p. 6), linked to their individual lives and needs, that may exemplify or alter the symbols of a given institution. Therefore, the institutional logics perspective highlights the institutionally conditioned actions and behaviors of organizations and organizational actors based on their nestedness in constellations of logics, and the actors' agency to interpret and enact the logics (Thornton et al., 2012, Friedland and Alford, 1991). Institutional logics offer organizing principles, available to organizations and individuals as frames of reference, thus guide institutional orders by and within which individuals organize their time and space, and provide meaning to

their social reality (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017). Institutional logics are often explored and identified inductively as sets of norms, values, and principles that are enacted by the actors in the organization under study (Reay and Jones, 2016).

2.2.4. Organizational actors and institutional complexity

The cornerstone of the institutional logics perspective is institutional complexity, referring to organizations meeting and representing multiple logics whose underlying assumptions and prescriptions might collide in different situations (Thornton et al., 2012). At the organization level, when an unfamiliar logic becomes a prerequisite for an organization's survival, adopting and socializing the new logic can become the basis of an organizational identity that finds a balance between the logics (Battilana and Dorado, 2010). For instance, Alvarez et al. (2005) find that filmmaking companies seek to integrate the logic of art and the logic of business to create a distinct position in the field of cinema. Greenwood et al. (2010) show that possible conflicting demands from multiple logics are perceived and get worked out inside organizations. Among various factors, the structural characteristics of field and organizational attributes affect how organizations respond to institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011). Decisions and outcomes in organizations can be considered as interplay between agency and institutional structure/logics (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999); thus, responses by an organization to pressure from multiple logics may depend on how well each logic is represented inside the organization and how the power is distributed between the representatives (Pache and Santos, 2010), where the consistency of participation in decisions is critical as it offers cumulative authority (Heimer, 1999).

Besides the organizational level, the institutional logics perspective focuses on organizational actors and groups dealing with the pressure of logics in their roles, manifested in studies with a number of analytical focal points (e.g. actor–logic interaction, identity). This stream has further developed into institutional entrepreneurship and institutional work literature, which are not relevant for my study. Regarding the individuals' responses to pressures or tensions in their organizational roles, dealing with several, sometimes colliding, institutional logics, the organizational actors develop different strategies. Johansen and Waldorff (2017) depict the logics as filled with myriads of characteristics, offering not only frames of reference, but also social identities and vocabularies of motives for actors that may be used or rejected (Lounsbury and Boxenbaum, 2013). Under institutional pressures, actors interpret, translate, and embed elements of the logics into their work, routines, and values (Pallas et al., 2016) to inform their behavior and actions. Sometimes the logics are blended, segregated, or hybridized depending on availability and the actor's knowledge of the logics. In other words, availability of plural logics in the organization and the knowledge of the actor involved affect how an individual uses minor or major aspects of those logics in line with their goals and interests. Within institutional logics theory, there have been many insightful empirical studies on how organizational actors handle institutional logics in different situations. In the following, I present a few relevant studies. My goal in providing exemplary studies is to offer an empirically informed understanding of institutional logics theory on how an individual may develop different strategies based on their personal or collective situational sense-making and evaluations to deal with logics' tensions imposed on their organizational roles.

Among previous studies, Bévort and Suddaby (2016) study individual accountants' sense-making of the conflicting institutional logics they meet (professionalism vs managerialism) and show that individuals make sense of their own role and can integrate the conflicting

demands of professional and managerial logics. In another study, on the edge between professional and managerial jurisdictions, in a process where elite professionals are drawn into bureaucratic roles to standardize operating processes in healthcare organizations, Waring and Currie (2009) show that to cope with imposed institutional pressures, professionals give situated responses to limit managerial encroachment and reinforce medical autonomy. In doing so, they strategically integrate some managerial techniques and jurisdictions into their home logic. Investigating decision-making processes in a drug court where members had several different institutional backgrounds, McPherson and Sauder (2013) echo how individual actors "pragmatically and creatively invoke available logics (often from competing logics) to manage everyday work" (p. 181). Their study highlights actors' discretion that can be exercised in their use of available logics, although the application of logics depends on norms, situational conditions, interpersonal skills, and the nature of the invoked logics (McPherson and Sauder, 2013). As mentioned, decisions and outcomes in organizations can thus be considered as an interplay between agency and institutional structure/logics (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999), where actors often latch onto appropriateness considerations (Oliver, 1991) that arise when decision-makers belong to a professional or organizational community and draw on institutional logics to justify and legitimize their approach (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999). Appropriateness would assure keeping the trust of the actors in the dominant community.

Reviewing several relevant empirical studies, Johansen and Waldorff (2017) provide a brief list of different relationships between the logics that serves as a useful concluding summary for the current section. The authors categorize the relationships between institutional logics in relation to individual agency under competition and coexistence, hybrids, and bricolage themes. At the individual level, the *competing* notion refers to how actors consider competing logics as competing frameworks, where sometimes one logic gains dominance over another, or where logics offer divergent references in other situations. The *coexisting* theme suggests that competing logics can be cooperative, and thus mutually affect practices, and actors can move between the logics based on the dominant organizational issue (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017). The *bricolage* theme allows for actors to choose from and combine multiple logics, raising their agency and showing that they may resist an entire logic but select and alter existing logics in their practices.

In addition to my argument for the appropriateness of the institutional logics theory to unpack the abstract concept of a change program's organizational context, identify possible dynamics at the interface, and understand program managers' response to those dynamics, I would like to support my choice by underscoring the perspective's established contribution to the project management literature. Several studies have proven the benefits of the logics perspective in investigating different issues in temporary organizations. For instance, Winch and Maytorena-Sanchez (2020) use the perspective to explore how project organizations influence institutional field changes. With a narrower focus, the navigation of tensions between multiple institutional logics has also been examined in different settings. For example, Corbett et al. (2018) refer to competing institutional logics in green projects and echo individuals' efforts to develop reinforcing micro-processes (such as learning and building networks) that support the traditional project logic (organizing for a series of tasks, emphasizing professional efficiency and value to the organization, etc.) and environmental logic (reducing environmental impact on natural ecosystems, contrasting capitalist economic approaches, etc.) in their roles. In another example, in a major Danish construction program, Frederiksen et al. (2021) identify a

compartmentalized structural approach to handle multiple logics by responding to each logic separately while simultaneously coordinating activities within the program to hinder fragmentation. Obviously, the use of the logics perspective regarding the temporary-to-permanent dimension has not comprehensively benefited project management. Perhaps the study by Corbett et al. (2018) is the closest; in this research, the roles of project actors are examined in relation to the management of different contextual ideas that create complexity in how they should perform their project roles. Therefore, to serve my purpose, I use the logics perspective to explicate the attributes of a change program's organizational context, possible dynamics at the temporary-to-permanent interface, and potential implications for the program manager role when creating desired outcomes.

2.2.5. Subordinate research question 2

Returning to the purpose of section 2.2 for my thesis's overall focus, as denoted in subsection 2.2.2, extant results from studying change programs in their contexts shape an incomplete understanding of the connection between change programs and their wider organizational context, and have potential implications for managing such programs and delivering the desired value. A focus on the potential influence of context-related management approaches on the final program outcomes has been neglected (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015). In other words, we know that the hosting organizational context influences the content and processes of change programs, and that actors make sense of these influences and use their agency to shape the programs' context and its content, projects, and activities; however, it is unclear how the permanent organization affects program managers' participation in managing the delivery of the desired value. The focus on exploring any potential tensions or shifts in power from the permanent organization side on managing change programs is thus encouraged (Martinsuo et al., 2020). Moreover, setting the management of change programs and their value creation process in context is also encouraged (Martinsuo et al., 2019). Additionally, the reviewed literature considers a narrow set of attributes of the program's context, which needs more attention. Accordingly, I formulate my second subordinate research question as:

How is the management of change programs influenced by organizational context?

2.3. Competency perspective of change program management (competencies)

So far in the thesis, I have explained the management of change programs in terms of content and context. I related the concept of content to management and value creation processes in section 2.1, and focused on the influence of change program's organizational context on its management for creating the desired value in section 2.2. Section 2.2 shows that the dynamic interface between the change program and its context is related to managing change programs, which highlights the complex roles of program actors, including program managers. The program management literature states that the program manager is the chief connection to the program's steering group and other influential stakeholders, leader and facilitator of the project and its team managers, and responsible for ensuring that program management governance is practiced as the program unfolds (OGC, 2011, Stummer and Zuchi, 2010). To ensure the success of a program, it is essential that the person occupying the program manager role has the appropriate competencies (PMI, 2013, OGC, 2011). Following my learning from section 2.2, and given the importance of competent program managers to successful program delivery, here in section 2.3, I address change program management in relation to program manager competencies as the last portion of my theoretical framework. Clearly, such an approach has a specific actor-centric orientation.

To address the competency perspective, in subsection 2.3.1, I present a review of program manager competency research, and then focus on the competencies needed in change programs in subsection 2.3.2. As mentioned in the introduction of section 2, due to significant asymmetry in the research on competencies of project managers and program managers, I had to look into and use some project manager competency theory for my purpose. The basic differences between a project and a program are already highlighted in subsection 2.1.1. In particular, considering organizational change as the focused application area has resulted in several findings on change project manager competencies (Shao and Müller, 2011), and rather limited equivalent results for change program managers. My understanding is that careful evaluations of the theoretical framework (designed for second-order change) and empirical setting (often large and deep transformational changes) of studies on change *project* manager competencies allow for the interpretation of many associated findings for the change program context. Later in the current section, I elaborate on the issue of oft-accidental program managers in change programs, which has been highlighted as an underlying dimension in sections 2.1 and 2.2. However, this has not been expounded in the thesis until now. Thus, after reviewing earlier research on (change) program manager competencies, in subsection 2.3.3, I briefly explain the typical issue of coincidence in employing change project/program managers and its possible implications for the necessary competencies. Finally, my review leads to the formulation of my third subordinate research question in subsection 2.3.4.

2.3.1. Competent program managers

The competency theory in the project management field is a core domain and entails numerous efforts to register what "makes a good project manager" (inspired by the title of the article by (Cheng et al., 2005). It has been an ever-growing research stream over the past few decades, aiming to deconstruct the qualities that project managers need to lead temporary endeavors successfully, resulting in broad "shopping lists" (Alvarenga et al., 2019). In the following, I give an overview of earlier findings on important competencies of project and program managers. The literature is wide and filled with lists; I mention some of them, which might mean you require a cup of coffee to get through.

Based on different perspectives that scholars have taken, existing studies cover a wide array of skills and characteristics, ranging from hard skills and knowledge areas to the soft personal attributes required by a competent project manager (Chen and Partington, 2006). Perspectives include but are not limited to work-oriented and worker-oriented approaches (Chen et al., 2008), attribute-based and performance-based views (Li et al., 2020), and the job/task competency model and behavioral competency model (Cheng et al., 2005). In many earlier studies, a unified definition of competency is scarce; the concept means different things to different people (Crawford, 1997). Competencies can be understood as motives, traits, skills, or one's self-image or social role (Boyatzis, 1982). Spencer and Spencer (2008) recognize five facets of competencies, including motivation, knowledge, skills, traits, and self-concept. Among these, traits, self-concept and motivation seem to be rather inherent and difficult to develop, while skills and knowledge can be developed. Derouen and Kleiner (1994) similarly associate competencies with motives, behavior, knowledge, and skills. In the project setting, competencies relate to one's ability to participate in project activities and so enable achieving desired outcomes (Crawford, 1999). Additionally, several concepts, such as competency, competence, skills, knowledge, expertise, or personal traits and behaviors, are used in the literature to underscore a fairly similar notion, namely, "what makes a good project manager?" (Cheng et al., 2005). In some of the studies, there is an effort to contrast some of these concepts (e.g. skill vs knowledge) to present a more sharpened focus in associated debates, while many earlier studies selectively choose one of these concepts with a brief definition and justification, and use different terminologies to develop their theoretical framework. A detailed analysis of this issue in the literature is beyond the scope of this thesis; therefore, I present an operational definition of "competency" (the term I use) and clarify how I approach using the literature.

One of the most widely adopted definitions of competency is a collection of skills, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that a project manager has and brings to their role (or individual uses to undertake occupational tasks) for superior performance (Muller and Turner, 2010, Stevenson and Starkweather, 2010, Boyatzis, 1982). Intertwined with these dimensions, knowledge, skills, personality traits, and demonstrable performance competencies constitute the concept of competence in project management (input competencies, personal competencies, output competencies) (Crawford, 2005), which has often been used as equivalent to competency. In my research, I follow the abovementioned widely used definition of competency, and use studies that employ various terminologies, assuming their foci are comparable and their results are complementary to the same debate. I particularly focus on competencies as qualities that can be developed through training and experience because I would like my results to be useful for practitioners as well.

Concerning competencies of *project* managers, several research articles and bodies of knowledge (e.g. *PMBOK® Guide*) in the project management field have tried to establish a set of general important characteristics that should be considered when evaluating the qualities of project managers. Simultaneously, research has recognized the need for a contingent approach to explore project managers' competencies by taking the context of projects (mostly in terms of project type and the sector in which the project is situated) into account, which has prompted listing important characteristics of project managers appropriate to various contexts. For example, intellectual, managerial, and emotional competencies (leadership competency profiles) of project managers are assessed for different project types (Muller and Turner, 2010). In a similar vein, Dias et al. (2014) identify 13 key competencies related to different

types of projects under three categories. Some of their identified competencies are leadership, engagement, openness, results orientation, conflict and crisis management, reliability, ethics, and performance orientation. From context-sharpened studies, Stevenson and Starkweather (2010) identify leadership, multilevel communication, verbal and written skills, attitude, and ability to cope with ambiguity as important competencies in IT projects. Skulmoski and Hartman (2010) identify 13 important (soft) skills for information project managers per project phase, for example, listening skills and consensus building in the initiation phase; project management skills and technical skills/theoretical knowledge during planning; trust and results-orientation during implementation; and writing skills and sharing information and credit during closure. As another example of competency studies positioned in a specific context, Hwang and Ng (2013) suggest ten important management knowledge areas (e.g. schedule management, cost management) and ten significant management skills (e.g. leadership, decision-making, negotiation) as key to the success of green construction projects. In construction projects, key social competencies (from nine social competency clusters, four are important: working with others, stakeholder management, leading others, and social awareness) are reported as critical for success (Zhang et al., 2013). In the same setting, Chen et al. (2008) find the ability to plan, knowledge of construction work, knowledge of commercial management, ability to communicate, ability to manage a team, ability to coordinate, and ability to build new relationships as significant attributes of project managers.

Reflecting on the presented glimpse of competency theory in project management, reviewed studies attest that the project competency literature offers numerous lists that each include a selection of significant elements or attributes. Consequently, although widespread, the competency theory has become confusing and unrealistic (Alvarenga et al., 2019) as such lists have become broad "shopping lists" (p. 1221) that present the project manager as a hero. "Tackling" competence research in project management, Nijhuis et al. (2018) conduct a comprehensive review of the existing literature and examine the theoretical findings against project managers' experiences from different contexts. Authors identify 20 important competences, including but not limited to organization knowledge, resilience, team building, and creative thinking, from different domains such as traditional functions, task orientation, or person orientation. In another recent attempt to identify the core competencies of a project manager, Alvarenga et al. (2019) extract 14 items/competencies from an extensive review of competency lists in the literature, which are then examined to reveal the importance of each item. The items the authors identify include a range of competencies both from a rationalistic perspective that focuses on traditional requirements such as time and technical management, and from an interpretive perspective that highlights softer skills or human competencies. The attributes are then introduced under seven clusters: *leadership*, *self-management*, *interpersonal*, *communication*, *technical*, *productivity*, and *managerial competencies*. These are defined in Table 2. For my operational summary of project manager competency theory, I use the work by Alvarenga et al. (2019) as it covers an extensive amount of relevant literature and mirrors an updated picture of the literature.

Initially inspired by the theory on project manager competencies, and sometimes assumed comparable, a considerably narrower research stream has started to distinguish and address competencies of competent *program* managers in different contexts (Miterev et al., 2016). From the standards, PMI (2013) suggests that working with stakeholders, communication management, leadership (leading program management team, setting direction, identifying interdependencies, decision-making, risk management, communicating program

requirements), and strategic visioning and planning are some of important competencies of a competent program manager. Compared to project managers, program managers need to exhibit strong contextual and strategic awareness (Partington et al., 2005) to handle the inherent uncertainty and ambiguity of programs, which are linked to and influenced by strategic dimensions of the hosting organization (Pellegrinelli, 2002). The strategic and evolving nature of programs requires program managers to enact an ambidextrous managerial style (Pellegrinelli et al., 2015).

To explore the phenomenon of effective program manager competence, drawing on 15 strategic programs, Partington et al. (2005) take a phenomenographic approach (to avoid work-oriented and worker-oriented approaches) to develop a two-dimensional understanding of program manager competencies, suggesting 17 attributes at four levels. In their framework, program manager competence is associated with four levels of delivery of program scope, the program's wider organizational impact, realizing high-level program outcomes, and the development of strategic capabilities. Their identified attributes (based on informants' perceptions of program management work) are categorized within three themes: (1) relationship between self and work, (2) relationship between self and others, and (3) relationship between self and program environment. The competence elements under the first theme seem to relate to the program manager's personal approach to serve their multidimensional roles to fulfill the program's own and the contextual goals and requirements. The elements under the second theme are associated with the program manager's approach and mechanisms to manage relationships, expectations, and conflicts within the program to ensure program progress. The final category includes competence elements that relate to the program manager's knowledge of the program and the program's environment(s) and mechanisms to manage the program within its context. In another study, Sohmen and Dimitriou (2015) suggest ten core competencies of program managers, including leadership and teamwork, planning and organization, communication, ethics and ethical values, internal and external stakeholder management, political understanding, knowledge management, financial management, risk management, and project and process management.

While the abovementioned attempts provide valuable insights about program manager competencies on a rather general level, few studies take the inherent context of programs (application area, content, organizational context) into account to develop the knowledge on the necessary situated competencies of program managers. Among the few, Shao and Müller (2011) investigate programs in different industries and countries and report the importance of program managers' leadership competencies for effective program implementation. Following the same avenue, Miterev et al. (2016) explore program managers' competencies in various program types, identifying directing, decision-making, planning and control, technical expertise, and team building for delivering goal-oriented programs. Compared with other studies, their findings expectedly emphasize leadership and contextual competencies of program managers to embrace the complexity and uncertainty that characterize programs. The work by Miterev et al. (2016) is amongst the few that employ a qualitative approach to examine program manager competencies in different program types, and identify a range of competencies, from technical expertise and planning and control to political skills and contextual awareness. In another study, concentrating on how knowledge can be transferred from senior program professionals to juniors during an organizational change program, Pollack (2012) finds that the program management style needs to be aligned with the organization and the change, and that there is a need for managing through communication.

From the review of program manager competencies, it is clear that project management competency theory is far ahead of program management literature. It is noticeable that the shopping-list tendency remains persistent in the program setting. Looking at the previously mentioned fragmented competency attributes of program managers, one sees several concepts (e.g. communication, leadership, team building, or planning and control) that immediately relate to the project manager competency theory. This made me wonder if the program competency literature can learn from project competency research, perhaps more than expected? This is especially interesting as program research has been urged, I believe rightfully, to diverge from that of projects. I come back to this briefly in subsection 5.3.2. In a similar vein, my observation in program competency literature is that the delay in associated theoretical developments in program management has led to an absence of an appropriate and all-encompassing taxonomy. Again, bringing the identified program manager competencies to the fore, several of the attributes of competencies can well be recognized in proposed competency categories in project literature, e.g. the work by Alvarenga et al. (2019). Thus, I wondered if such taxonomies from the project literature could shed at least some light on the way for program competency literature. Following this, here I present a preliminary classification of reviewed competencies of program managers in Table 2, using the framework developed by Alvarenga et al. (2019) that I described previously. I reflect on this categorization in subsection 5.3.2.

Table 2 Positioning program manager competencies in Alvarenga et al's (2019) project manager competency framework

		Definition of competency	Example sources from the review on competencies of a competent program manager
Project manager core competencies (Alvarenga et al., 2019)	1 - Productivity	This relates to project managers' efforts in organizing, using, and completing training for related technologies and (engineering) principles (related to the organization and business).	Relationship between self and program environment: (Partington et al., 2005) Technical skill: (Miterev et al., 2016)
	2 - Communication	Exclusive soft skill and essential tool that relates to project manager mastering communication with and connecting involved actors (project team, functional managers, sponsors, customers, etc.).	Relationship between self and program environment: (Partington et al., 2005)
	3 - Self-management	Project managers need to be committed to self-development, constant learning, and being sensitive to political and cultural happenings. They also need to be emotionally resilient to handle pressures, ambiguity, team conflict, which could lead to burnout.	Contextual awareness: (Partington et al., 2005) Political skill: (Miterev et al., 2016) Handing uncertainty and ambiguity: (Pellegrinelli, 2002) Relationship between self and work: (Partington et al., 2005)
	4 - Technical	This relates to exhibiting technical expertise, from business/financial insights, to knowledge of disciplinary management, of projects in general, management of the specific project at hand, the business and technology of concern, and possessing needed certificates and training.	Relationship between self and program environment: (Partington et al., 2005) Decision-making: (Miterev et al., 2016) Planning and control: (Miterev et al., 2016) Technical skill: (Miterev et al., 2016)
	5 - Leadership	The ability to empower subordinates to realize a vision while introducing and balancing shorter-term objectives and obligations of the organization.	Leadership: (Shao and Müller, 2011)
	6 - Managerial	This relates to project managers' task performance: problem solving,	Relationship between self and program environment: (Partington et al., 2005)

		Definition of competency	Example sources from the review on competencies of a competent program manager
		delegating tasks and controlling project plans and schedules (perhaps most traditional competencies attributed to project managers).	Planning and control: (Miterev et al., 2016) Directing: (Miterev et al., 2016)
	7 - Interpersonal	This relates to project manager's ability to create, maintain, and develop good and balanced relationships (with stakeholders). Moreover, project manager needs to be committed to the project yet flexible in dealing with people.	Relationship between self and others: (Partington et al., 2005) Team building: (Miterev et al., 2016)

Establishing a review on competency research for the managers of temporary organizations, in the next part, I look into what we can learn from existing competency research concerning the organizational change setting (content, application area).

2.3.2. Competent change program managers

Focusing on organizational change as the content or application area of the program, the literature in research on change projects and change programs seems quite asymmetric. The attention has been largely on change projects, and a smaller pool can be found to explicitly address needed competencies of change program managers. Following my argument about the possibility of benefiting from earlier results on change projects in studying change programs in subsection 2.1.1, while I specifically focus on the program literature, I use some relevant findings from change project studies, and take them as comparable and complementary to change program manager competencies. Before directing the discussion to the concept of competency, I would like to add a few words about the role of project and program managers in the context of change.

As mentioned in the introduction of the current section, a program manager's role or function concerns managing and leading the program's steering group and other influential stakeholders, leading associated project and team managers, and ensuring that program management governance is practiced according to how the program unfolds (OGC, 2011, Stummer and Zuchi, 2010, Zwikael and Meredith, 2018). OGC (2011) suggests that the program manager is "responsible for leading and managing the setting-up of the program through to delivery of the new capabilities, realization of benefits and program closure," (p. 40). Furthermore, a list of program manager responsibilities is suggested including tasks such as day-to-day management of the program, planning and designing the program, developing and implementing the program's governance framework, or managing the performance of the program team. The standard view suggests that program managers need to show competencies and outlooks of leadership and management where leadership is "inclined to clarify the 'what' and the 'why'" while management is "focused on the 'how' and the 'when,'" ((OGC, 2011) p. 61). The Project Management Institute outlines a similar role, suggesting that the program manager is responsible for interacting with and supporting project managers, connecting individual projects with the overall program and organizational performance objectives, and ensuring proper program structure and program management processes so that the program team can successfully complete their work and integrate the results and value (PMI (2013). Such descriptions present a rather straightforward role for program managers. In an organizational change setting, the role of change project/program

managers has been particularly studied to consider the change context, where corresponding project management and change management roles are examined (e.g. (Pádár et al., 2019). A key learning from such studies is that some of the change and project roles are equivalent (Pádár et al., 2017), and that change managers and project managers might have different perceptions of their contribution to change project success (Pollack and Algeo, 2016). Pádár et al. (2017) report that the manager of the temporary organization and the temporary management team represent the change agent and sometimes sponsor roles from the change management discipline, who are responsible for implementing the change and realizing benefits. Depending on the size of the organizations and the conditions, the delegation of authority to the roles to make the necessary decisions and deliver the change might vary (Pádár et al., 2017).

The role discussion implicitly underlines that, in addition to project management competencies, there is a need for change management competencies for the success of change projects. While it is known that change project managers can benefit from project management competencies, tools, and techniques (e.g. (Parker et al., 2013), the sufficiency of practicing project management principles to deliver the change successfully has been questioned. In particular, project management's traditional neglect of soft or human skills has been an important criticism zone. This has led existing research to emphasize the need to bridge between project and change management fields and suggest the importance of change management competencies (resistance/trust management, negotiating for support of the change, etc.) in the change project manager toolbox (Hornstein, 2015). Shaw (2016) and Schifalacqua et al. (2009) stress that change and project management skills together can handle the technical and contextual complexities of leading organizational change successfully. Levasseur (2010) also notes the potential contribution of change management to change project success and highlights the importance of people skills, namely two-way communication, supporting people, fostering collaboration, and leading discussions to reach an agreement. Thinking about the integrated human-oriented management approaches in program management, it is worth mentioning that the stress on the people- or human-oriented competencies in change projects seems to particularly concern resistance management, empowering and motivating, and conflict and trust management. This makes a specific set of human skills in the change setting compared with the reviewed theory presented in subsection 2.3.1. According to (Pollack and Algeo, 2016, Lehmann, 2010), change managers tend to focus on creating and maintaining ownership of the change, appropriate leadership, resistance management, and communication rather than focus on controlled delivery. Focusing on an organizational change project, Gordon and Pollack (2018) also find that project and change management competencies together are critical, yet pinpoint that using both might challenge practitioners as their focus across different stages might be misaligned. They suggest that practitioners use their experience to combine project and change management competencies, which can be challenging for novices if solid (local/organizational) guidance on how to employ project and change management knowledge areas is lacking.

Similar to the above discussion, Muller and Turner (2010) report that to manage organizational change projects effectively, project managers need to be strong in leadership competencies. The authors find that, depending on how change projects are originally defined and distinguished from the parent organization, the separation–integration issue creates a dilemma for project managers to either engage in fostering innovation or achieving successful implementation. Resistance to change is another area in change projects that is suggested to

be handled by project manager leadership competencies, project management methodology, support and guidance, and communication (Lundy and Morin, 2013). In another study, Buchanan (1991), drawing on large organizational change processes (with IT changes), identify five competency clusters including goals (sensitivity, clarity, flexibility), roles (team building abilities, networking skills, tolerance of ambiguity), communication (communication skills, interpersonal skills, personal enthusiasm, stimulation of motivation), negotiation (selling, negotiating), and managing up (political awareness, influencing skills, helicopter perspective). Lastly, contextual understanding (culture, emotional energy, structure, capabilities, behaviors, norms, and values) is suggested as critical to successfully managing change projects (Parry et al., 2014, Crawford and Nahmias, 2010).

When it comes to change program manager competencies, the research that explicitly addresses the program manager competencies is narrow but growing. Pollack (2017) suggests an integration of change management and program management competencies for successful change implementation. Pellegrinelli (2002) looks into an organizational change program and inductively identifies essential competencies of the program manager to lead the program. The many essential competencies/skills that the author finds are then connected to nine areas, namely understanding client's objectives, project/program organization and management, approach and strategy for the project/program, scope management, risk management, people and resource management, managing the client interface, cultural awareness, and commercial awareness. The author suggests the competencies that overlap with those from strategic change management and organizational development, and highlights the importance of back-staging and political skill for program change managers in vulnerable contexts. Cowan-Sahadath (2010a) suggests that in complex change programs, appropriate program management competence (namely leadership) and integration of change and project management frameworks are needed. Crawford and Nahmias (2010) also echo that project/program and change manager roles are complementary in providing the needed competencies, from leadership to communication, cultural awareness, decision-making, stakeholder management, team building, and project management competencies.

Moreover, similar to the integration–separation issue raised in managing organizational change projects (highlighted in section 2.2), the dynamics between the change program and its organizational context(s) are recognized as an important dimension in managing change programs. Program managers, as the leaders of, and together with, the change program management team, need to handle the oft-blurry and evolving boundaries. This requires boundary management competencies and actions of program managers to recognize and respond to associated complexities (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008), including behavioral and socio-technical complexities (Pellegrinelli, 2002). Lehtonen and Martinsuo (2009) find that managing boundaries of a change program is an important managerial area through which the program manager and their team ensure integration and isolation of change programs to create readiness for change, minimize resistance, and maintain the commitment to change. The authors suggest that the importance of context-based micro-level boundary-spanning activities in managing change programs calls for a skilled program manager. Fiedler (2010) looks at the resistance to change from a risk management perspective and suggests that there is a need for a systematic approach to managing potential resistance in change programs. The author identifies trust building, communication, availability of information in the program, acceptance of and commitment to the program, and maintaining motivation and momentum of change in the organization as critical factors in managing resistance in the change program. In

their study on program manager competencies, Miterev et al. (2016) identify directing, decision-making, planning and control, technical expertise, and team building as key competencies for successful goal-oriented (e.g. organizational change) programs.

To sum up the current section, I would like to make two points. First, taking the research on change project manager and change program manager as one comparable unit, earlier findings underscore the inadequacy of project/program management competencies to handle associated complexities of implementing change initiatives. Subsequently, different human-oriented attributes (inspired by change management) are suggested to compensate for such a shortfall. In particular, the concepts of team building, managing relationships, and trust building seem to be particularly critical in change programs.

Second, similar to the general tendency I described in section 2.3.1, the underscored competencies provide a picture with various, and rather fragmented, competency attributes, which I believe is somewhat difficult to apply for further use and theorizing. In other words, there have not been any purposeful analysis, summarization, and categorization to simplify the picture. As Dulewicz and Higgs (2005) suggest in their study of leadership styles, successful leaders often exercise only a small number of competency areas. Consequently, although I could take the picture as it is and work with it for my purpose, I argue that an analysis of the findings to provide a simpler and more applicable picture can be beneficial not only to serve the specific purpose of this thesis, but also to offer a more general idea for others to evaluate and use. Consequently, in order to make my analysis and categorization possible, I perform *two-step filtering*. In the first step, similar to my arguments and analysis of program manager competency theory in subsection 2.3.1, I use the framework of Alvarenga et al. (2019) to classify the reviewed literature in subsection 2.3.2. In the second step, I use the classic managerial skill framework developed by Katz (1955) to filter the results of my review. The reason for a second round of filtration here is that after carefully analyzing the attributes through the framework of Alvarenga et al. (2019), I found some key "strategic-oriented" or "conceptual-oriented" competencies (mainly represented by boundary management competencies) that lacked their place in the framework. To enable a clearer emphasis on such competencies, and simultaneously grasping the opportunity to reduce the competency categories if meaningful and possible, I decided to use Katz's (1955) skill model.

For Katz (1955), managerial skills are developable, not in-born, qualities. As I am also focusing on developable qualities of a competent program manager, I translate his terminology (skill) to competencies for my purpose. Considering the histories of these terminologies (competency being more recent), I think it is fair to make such a translation. Katz's theory on managerial skills is one of the classic, solid, and influential frameworks that has been used over the past seven decades to shape the understanding of what managerial competencies managers must exercise to lead an organization successfully. Katz's work has been examined empirically (e.g. (Guglielmino, 1978) and has been a dynamic inspiration for management scholars, prompting many academic works to add to his categories or identify new elements under his categories, and encouraging the development of several management textbooks in which Katz plays a key role (Peterson and Van Fleet, 2004). Simultaneously, his work alone remains consistently present in the management field. Not only has Katz's framework inspired many studies in the field, but research in the project management field has also shown potential benefits of employing Katz's managerial skill framework to investigate project managers' competencies. For instance, El-Sabaa (2001) adapts the

framework to investigate the difference between project managers' and functional managers' skills and attributes. Later, Chen et al. (2019) builds upon the work by El-Sabaa (2001) and examines certain competencies of project managers across different levels of their career path.

Briefly, Katz's managerial skill approach suggests that effective management rests on "three basic developable skills" ((Katz, 1955) p. 34), namely technical skill, human skill, and conceptual skill, that help to understand the administrative process. From these, *technical skill* is about the manager mastering the specialty that they are connected with. Technical skill manifests in the manager's analytical ability, and ability to use the methods, processes, and techniques of a certain type of activity. Indeed, a manager's technical skill concerns specialized knowledge of and ability to use the tools and procedures of the hosting specialty.

The second competency, *human skill* is about a manager's ability to work with people. It is about one's capability to recognize superiors, equals, and subordinates, identify their understanding, and behave appropriately to initiate and maintain a trustful and supportive team atmosphere, and work effectively as a team member (Katz, 1955). The human skill thus underscores the individual's self-awareness (attitudes, assumptions, beliefs) and the ability to evaluate his or her feelings. A manager with good human skill recognizes and appreciates the beliefs and perceptions of others, and is able to communicate clearly and effectively with others in their specific context. Moreover, a human-skilled manager shows sensitivity to and considers the entire organization, and evolving demands and interests, so that potential reactions to different actions they undertake are considered and responded to.

The last competency from Katz's framework, *conceptual skill* is about the manager's ability to consider and evaluate the organization as an entity. In doing this, the manager acknowledges that the organization's functions, processes, and relationships work together and influence each other for common objectives. Furthermore, they see the organization as situated and affected by dynamics in various embedding and surrounding environments, namely the industry, local community, and national political, social, and economic forces (Katz, 1955). Taking all of these into account, the manager is expected to behave and act to enhance the organization's overall performance and results. With such a definition of conceptual skill, whether the manager is a top-level decision-maker who sees the organization in relation to external environments, or a middle- or lower-level leader who sees the implementation in relation to other functions and processes and then echoes and implements the decision, influences the success of the organization in its business.

Using the frameworks of Alvarenga et al. (2019) and (Katz, 1955), my analysis of the literature in the current subsection is illustrated in Table 3. Notably, when analyzing my review against Katz's framework, I found that the competency literature in the temporary organization setting interestingly diverged from Katz's explicit clarification of technical skills. Fairly implicitly, embedded and explained in reviewed project management studies, technical skill in a temporary setting seems to refer to two subcategories: (1) related to the business of hosting organization(s) and content of the program; and (2) related to the administration of the temporary organization. Therefore, I found it necessary to recognize these explicitly, which are shown in the Table.

Table 3 Filtering the review of change program manager competencies through Alvarenga et al's (2019) and Katz's (1955) frameworks

Katz (1955) managerial competency framework		
Technical skill ▼	**Human skill** ▼	**Conceptual skill** ▼
1 - Productivity • **Business of the hosting organization(s) and content of the program** Exemplar references on competencies of change program manager: Organization: (Pellegrinelli, 2002) Technical expertise: (Miterev et al., 2016)	**2 - Communication** Exemplar references on competencies of change program manager: People skill, two-way communication: (Levasseur, 2010, Crawford and Nahmias, 2010) Communication, interpersonal skills: (Buchanan, 1991)	**3 - Self-management** Exemplar references on competencies of change program manager: Managing up: (Buchanan, 1991) Contextual understanding: (Parry et al., 2014, Crawford and Nahmias, 2010) Cultural awareness: (Crawford and Nahmias, 2010) Boundary management: (Pellegrinelli, 2002, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008) Commitment to program and maintaining change momentum: (Fiedler, 2010) Relating the work with visions from <u>Leadership</u> category (5). Political and cultural awareness from <u>managerial</u> category (6).
4 - Technical • **Business of the hosting organization(s) and content of the program** • **Administration of temporary organization** Exemplar references on competencies of change program manager: Technical expertise: (Miterev et al., 2016) Experience: (Pellegrinelli, 2002) Project management: (Parker et al., 2013) Program management: (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010b)	**5 - Leadership** Exemplar references on competencies of change program manager: Leadership: (Muller and Turner, 2010, Crawford and Nahmias, 2010) Resistance management, leadership: (Lundy and Morin, 2013, Fiedler, 2010) Decision-making: (Crawford and Nahmias, 2010, Fiedler, 2010)	
6 - Managerial • **Administration of temporary organization** Exemplar references on competencies of change program manager: Project management: (Parker et al., 2013) Program management: (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010b)	**7 - Interpersonal** Exemplar references on competencies of change program manager: Conflict management, resistance/trust management: (Hornstein, 2015, Fiedler, 2010) Supporting people, fostering collaboration: (Levasseur, 2010) Communication, interpersonal skills: (Buchanan, 1991)	

The left edge of the table is labelled vertically: **Components of project/program manager competencies (Alvarenga et al., 2019)**

The technical, human, and conceptual competencies build the theoretical basis of the findings of paper III, which, supplemented by findings of papers II and I, contribute to developing an answer for my third subordinate research question. The next subsection addresses the accidental employment of change program managers, which leads me to the thesis's third research question.

2.3.3. Oft-accidental project/program managers

As described in subsection 2.1.1, temporary organizations are becoming one of the most common ways of organizing in organizations. Implementing organizational change processes

is among the significant missions entrusted to temporary organizations and their management teams (Gareis, 2010, Pellegrinelli and Bowman, 1994). In particular, programs and program management are relevant to delivering large and complex changes (Pellegrinelli, 1997, Thiry, 2007). As these second-order change initiatives occur infrequently, and as they involve almost all aspects of an organization (e.g. structure, culture, systems), the managers of change projects or programs (and their teams) are typically recruited from the top management of line organizations based on their leadership experience and/or specialist expertise in the organization's business. For instance, in earlier studies on change projects and programs, depending on the type of organization and the hosting sector, we find that roles of change project/program manager and change manager or change agent are naturally used interchangeably (Pádár et al., 2019, Crawford and Nahmias, 2010). Furthermore, we often see that someone from the related permanent organization's top management, for example, deputy of the chief executive officer, head of change-related department, or a member of the city council, occupy the role of change project or program manager (cf. (Stummer and Zuchi, 2010, Van der Voet et al., 2016). This is a typical phenomenon as change programs are internal (Zwikael and Meredith, 2018). Such a recruitment can be referred to as an accidental project or program manager (Pinto and Kharbanda, 1995), which highlights the dual role of these managers who are responsible for delivering the temporary organization's mission based on project/program management institutional factors while being affected by the permanent organization's "hard place" (Hodgson and Paton, 2016) and keeping their line roles (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Lundin and Söderholm, 1995). As a side effect, often the person occupying the program manager role in change programs accidentally lacks knowledge and experience of managing a temporary organization, and, thus, needs to practice both their "familiar" permanent role and the "unfamiliar" temporary role. Certainly, there are situations where the accidental managers have sufficient skill and experience of managing projects and programs, perhaps gained through post-graduate project management training (Pollack, 2012). Nevertheless, many find the project and program management's managerial ideas and principles novel, especially compared to the permanent organization's institutional logic.

The issue of accidental project or program managers does not originate from the change context, but refers to a general matter in project management mainly related to (1) the concept of *projectification* at the organizational level (cf. (Jacobsson and Jałocha, 2021, Maylor and Turkulainen, 2019, Henning and Wald, 2019), and (2) the *transition* of technical specialists to the project manager role (cf. (Hunsberger, 2011, Pinto and Kharbanda, 1995). Projectification can be found in four *images* (Jacobsson and Jałocha, 2021). From a societal trend perspective, the concept underlines an increasing trend in transforming organizations to a new form in which project work is the normal way of operating, which is a new situation for individuals finding themselves in new roles with new identities. The latter concerns projectification from a human perspective. The idea of the transition of specialists (usually from hard engineering science) to the project manager role rests on a progressively typical situation where technical specialists become the temporary organization's manager owing to the demand on various occasions, a role for which they are often unprepared regarding project management skills (Richardson et al., 2015). With limited understanding of the practice and profession of project management, many organizations appoint almost anyone to the role of project manager (Bourne, 2005). As a brief general backdrop to this issue, there are discussions on project management as a profession and as a role. As projects increasingly appear to complement or

even replace traditional functional structures in temporary organizations, the role of project managers, their skills and training have become the subject of discussion in project management over the years (Winter et al., 2006b). At a glance, the emergence of project management as a profession and role in the 1950s stems from technological advances in engineering and construction during the 1940s and 1950s (Morris, 1994). Since then, during the second half of the 20th century, the project management field has been dominated by engineering, IT, and New Public Management (Hood, 1991, Hodgson, 2002). To fill the role of those taking charge of projects, project managers are often employed in organizations to ensure realizing the objectives of their employers, and less often are temporarily hired from consultancies to serve organizations and their projects (Morris, 1994). Alongside the increase in development and use of projects, professional associations started to be formed, primarily in the USA and UK during the 1960s and 1970s (Hodgson, 2008). However, project management continued to be a weakly institutionalized occupational field.

In the early 2000s, acknowledging the need and potential for professionalization, it was found that a widespread occupation of project management was not being formed because organizations (governments) as originators and procurers of project management services organized company-specific training and used tailored schemes to accredit professionals (Hodgson and Paton, 2016). Gaining progressively broader application and attention over the years after the early 2000s, a more suitable environment was created for careful professionalization of project management and opportunities for professional associations (Hodgson, 2008), which were enabled and shaped by the influence of organizations as employers of project management. Gradually, with organizations being unwilling or unable to train their own project managers, many turned to professional associations in search of reliable knowledge and accreditation (Hodgson and Paton, 2016). Academic authorities also began to train project managers (Crawford et al., 2006), and project management is a key part of the engineering, executive education, or MBA programs at many business schools and universities (Ramazani and Jergeas, 2015). Within this professionalization process, project managers are torn between affiliation with their profession and their employer, and so exposed to two distinct influences. In other words, the managers must handle the competing institutions of professional body and employing corporation (Hodgson and Paton, 2016). Furthermore, the developing debate on the expansion of professional project management as an occupation and as a role focuses on merits and demerits of project management standard Bodies of Knowledge (BoKs) in offering needed capabilities to handle diverse projects in different contexts, and on the discussions of project managers' work identity, training of reflective practitioners, project managers' career path, etc.

The swift history I present suggests that alongside the projectification process at the organizational level, leaders of temporary organizations continue to find their role coincidental and novel compared with their functional role or organizational association. Even novice project managers with professional training might find leading temporary organizations difficult (Bourne, 2005). In a change setting, following the content and characteristics of change projects or programs (compared to other types, e.g. engineering), this issue is fairly expected. It is also reasonably probable that experienced top executives and leaders chosen as change program managers might lack sufficient competency to practice professional project and program management. It is also important to notice that in non-project-based industries (e.g. public sector setting, as in this thesis), the issue of unprepared project and program managers, who have ill-defined roles (Mullaly, 2003) and lack the

competencies needed to run temporary organizations, is persistent and problematic (Darrell et al., 2010).

2.3.4. Subordinate research question 3

A review of the existing research on change program manager competencies registers narrow, yet growing research attention. Passing identified competencies through the prisms of Alvarenga et al. (2019) and (Katz, 1955), we gain some understanding of the importance of technical, human, and conceptual competencies for change program success. However, competencies of change program managers are barely understood regarding the dynamics and happenings within the program (Miterev et al., 2016). Considering the issue of selecting oft-accidental program managers in change programs, the managers' problems or need for support, and their part in delivering change programs with acceptable results have not yet been explored (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018). Therefore, I formulate my third and last subordinate research question as follows:

How do oft-accidental change program managers navigate their competencies to handle their temporary role?

2.4. Research questions

In this chapter, I have established the theoretical positioning of my thesis. The three sections address three different perspectives related to value creation and the management of change programs, as I evaluated them as key in exploring the main issue of interest. Before moving to the methodology chapter of the thesis, I would like to present my main research question, and the three subordinate research questions formulated to help me answer the overall question.

Each of the developed subordinate research questions is connected to a theoretical discussion, which is analyzed and discussed in three subsections of chapter 5, making a unique contribution to the program management literature. Simultaneously, the discussions of each subordinate research question contribute to developing the answer to my main research question.

Main research question:

How can program managers lead value creation in change programs?

Subordinate research questions:

1. How do program managers interpret and how do they practice the management of change programs to create value?
2. How is the management of change programs influenced by organizational context?
3. How do oft-accidental change program managers navigate their competencies to handle their temporary role?

3. Methodology

This thesis examines the research question as *how program managers can lead value creation in change programs*. To explain how this question is explored in this study, in this chapter, I describe the research design and method used, and present my reflections on the research processes. The research design connects the research questions, concepts and theories, empirical data, analytical approaches, and findings with the current coherent research (Creswell and Poth, 2016). The methodology outlines the research process, and explains the methods of data collection and analysis (Bryman, 2016). Before explaining the research design of the thesis, section 3.1 discusses the science and positions the thesis within the interpretivism (social constructivism) tradition (Creswell and Poth, 2016). This chapter mainly focuses on my PhD project as the overall entity; however, I naturally explain and comment on some details related to individual papers. Section 3.2 presents the research design, and accounts of the empirical setting, case selection, data collection, and data analysis are provided in sections 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6, respectively. In section 3.7, I raise some personal reflections. In section 3.8, I discuss the trustworthiness of the study, and in the last subchapter, section 3.9, I present the ethical considerations of the study.

3.1. Philosophy of science: Positioning of the thesis

The philosophy of science concerns studying science as science studies the world (Rosenberg, 2011). The philosophy of science is typically understood and discussed in terms of different scientific paradigms, which are ways of recognizing different scientific perspectives concerning how best to understand the world (Patton, 2015). Scientific paradigms may include positivism, interpretivism (social constructivism), transformation, postmodernism, pragmatism, and critical theory (race, feminist, queer, and disability) (Creswell and Poth, 2016, Lincoln et al., 2011). The philosophy of science, or in other words, the scientific paradigms, is characterized by a number of philosophical assumptions, namely ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological assumptions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, Denzen and Lincoln, 2005). Scientific paradigms view the world differently through different belief systems, each guiding researchers in their research activities in an overarching direction (Van de Ven, 2007). Positioning ourselves in different paradigms, we as researchers are informed by and bring attached assumptions to the research we perform, influencing the theories we choose, and how we design the research process. *Ontological assumption* concerns the nature and characteristics of reality. *Epistemological assumption* is about what counts as knowledge and how it can be obtained, mirroring the relationship between the researcher and the researched (Lincoln et al., 2011). The *axiological assumption* concerns the role of researchers' values in the research they perform. Finally, the *methodological assumption* is about the process and language of research.

My study is positioned within the qualitative research realm, following the *interpretivist* or social constructivist paradigm (Creswell and Poth, 2016). For an interpretivist researcher, there exist multiple realities and the way to gain knowledge is by getting close to the participants in the field in which they live and work, and obtaining subjective evidence. The multiple realities are interpreted, co-created, and presented by the subject of research and the researcher through the researcher's position in the field, and the researcher makes sense of and presents their view of the situation: "subjective meanings that are socially and historically negotiated" (Creswell and Poth, 2016), p. 25). In this way, the participants' historical and

cultural actions and interactions with others are taken into account. Interpretivist researchers often emphasize and report the process of interactions among individuals within certain contexts. The worldview of interpretivism puts individuals' understanding of the world under the spotlight and exposes the researcher to the complexity of views (Creswell and Poth, 2016).

Following the characteristics of interpretivist assumptions on ontology and epistemology, from an axiological point of view, an interpretivist researcher acknowledges the values they bring, and makes them known in their research by taking an active voice, and reporting values and biases in the produced work. The researcher's values have an impact on how they interpret and are positioned in the research. Methodologically, aligning with the other three assumptions of the interpretivist realm, attaining knowledge requires from-the-ground empirical work, rather than theory-driven knowledge development, meaning that patterns of meanings or theories emerge and develop inductively (Creswell and Poth, 2016), p. 20). The methodological issues or the approach to the inquiry thus have an inductive logic that generates or advances a theory or an increasingly detailed knowledge of the focused topic obtained through appropriate methods, e.g. interviewing, document analysis, or observation (Creswell and Poth, 2016). The questions and planned data collection are adjusted during the research process and the author clarifies that reported data represent both the author's and subject of study's interpretation and presentation (Denzin, 1989, cited in (Creswell and Poth, 2016).

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, this study takes an actor-centric view and explores the managers' participation in leading value creation in change programs. Examining this phenomenon requires obtaining managers' subjective narratives of their lived experiences in the field. To understand program managers' activities in their context, collecting viewpoints of relevant actors and other forms of evidence contribute to shedding light on the phenomenon in its setting. Furthermore, all of the questions posed in my thesis, summarized in section 2.4, are "how" questions and have an exploratory nature. Therefore, this thesis is aligned with and positioned within the interpretivist research paradigm. I thus identify my points of view mainly with the philosophical assumptions of interpretivism; nevertheless, from a methodological point of view, I found it difficult to adopt a fully "inductive logic" for the purpose of expanding or generating theory.

Methodologically, developing my research (particularly papers I and II), I found inductive logic neither fully appropriate nor practical as, in my view, we as researchers are informed by our knowledge of existing research and our readings during a specific research process. Moreover, entirely from-the-ground inductive theorizing may risk reinventing the wheel. Thus, although I consciously strove to take a neutral and open stand, free of pre-judgments/pre-expectations in my research processes, I found the theory a useful and necessary guide in shaping my work, keeping it relevant to the field, and preventing me from only confirming or rejecting the already existing theory. In other words, learning from and negotiating with the related literature as I was collecting and making sense of data played a key role in generating the developed results. This is aligned with the abductive logic or approach (Dubois and Gadde, 2002, Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2017), which inspired and guided the development of my theoretical contributions. The abductive approach suggests that it is the iterative process of going back and forth between the evolving theory and data analysis that enables unfolding novel and relevant theory (Bryman, 2016).

The abductive approach is particularly suited to the case study research strategy or design, which is used in this thesis and the attached papers. I describe the research design in the next subsection, but before that, I would like to relate abductive logic to case study research. Although generating theory through case study is often understood as a more or less linear, step-based process (as one can interpret from highly acknowledged works, such as that of Eisenhardt (1989), conducting case study research is remarkably iterative and difficult (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). It is suggested that developing theory through case studies based on in-depth insights into empirical phenomena and their contexts can best be done following abductive logic facilitated in an integrative framework that connects different elements in the case study research work (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). The underlying abductive logic underscores that researchers constantly go back and forth between empirical observation and theory and from one type of research activity to another, and simultaneously develop their understanding of theory and empirical phenomena (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). This way, as Dubois and Gadde (2002) describe, empirical observation cannot be understood without theory and vice versa, meaning that researchers form an *evolving* theoretical framework that guides the search for empirical data whose results may underscore unpredicted but relevant issues, leading to potential changes both in further data collection and the current theoretical framework. In short, there is a continuous confrontation between the evolving theoretical framework and the evolving data.

Aligned with the purpose of my thesis, my research processes included many rounds of moving between my flexible and evolving theoretical frameworks, data collection, and data analysis. Having my main interest in mind and establishing working topics for the papers, I started from open data collection and sense-making on an overall level, accompanied by reviewing potential theories. In doing so, I occasionally (re)formulated research questions, (re)shaped theoretical frameworks, adjusted interview protocols, and sharpened the evolving results. To show concretely how abductive logic characterized my research, I would like to distinguish two different aspects, namely thesis level and article level. At the level of the thesis, starting with an overall idea based on an understanding of what my four-year research project theoretically and empirically related to, and informed by the results of the three articles, I began to set a working research question and theoretical framework for the thesis, analyze/reinterpret the data (papers' findings), and develop a working analysis and discussion chapter. Working iteratively between these three elements, the analysis and discussion chapter proceeded ahead of, and finalized the theoretical framework of the thesis (the optimum fit). Intertwined with this, as an example of three elements, the main research question of the thesis changed from *how can program manager's performance and role in change projects get balanced between change and project functions*? to *how can program managers successfully deliver organizational change programs?* and finally to *how can program managers lead value creation in change programs?*

On a lower level, at the level of the attached articles, the abductive logic manifested as I started (preliminary) data collection and analysis in early 2018, developed my theoretical work during the year, and determined the cases and data I would need next in the process. Accordingly, with an adjusted interview agenda, I collected data again in late 2018 and early 2019 (depending on informants' availability); these data were then analyzed in a clearer way and accompanied by a review of relevant literature and (re)framing of the theoretical frameworks. Similar processes were followed during 2019 and in early 2020 as papers II and III were being written. As the data collection, data analysis, and theory reading proceeded,

setting a more mature skeleton in the papers, a close negotiation between the data coding and relevant theory was performed to generate the final results in the papers. This also refers to an abductive logic, which is explained in section 3.5 about data collection.

3.2. Research design: Single- and multiple-case study

A study's research design suggests how the research study can be best conducted to answer the posed research questions and realize the researcher's purpose of the study (Patton, 2015). Research design can be thought of as a logical plan for getting from here to there, in which "here" represents a set of questions and "there" represents a set of conclusions (Yin, 2017). Starting from the questions of interest in the thesis, which have an exploratory nature, following the scientific positioning described in section 3.1, I chose a qualitative approach because it is closely connected to the interpretivist approach, allowing for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon within its context, beyond what can be easily observed; gaining such an understanding is aligned with the interpretivist paradigm (Creswell and Poth, 2016). "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that transform the world and make the world visible […] qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011), p. 3).

Within qualitative research, there are five main research approaches to inquiry, namely narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory research, ethnographic research, and case study research (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Among these, (longitudinal) case study research (using the case study as the mode and method of inquiry; (Yin, 2017) was chosen for this thesis because it is appropriate for expanding or generating theory when there are less-defined theoretical insights into a specific phenomenon (Yin, 2017, Eisenhardt, 1989). I follow the view of (Creswell and Poth, 2016) on case study research as a methodology: "a type of design in qualitative research that may be an object of study as well as a product of the inquiry." The reviewed literature on the highlighted topics in the thesis (see subsections 2.1.6, 2.2.5, and 2.3.4) and in the papers reveal a lack of well-grounded theoretical explanations on the issues focused on in each subsection. Theorizing in case study research design is particularly connected to abductive logic (Ragin, 2018, Yin, 2017). Following the interpretivist perspective, using a case study as the method of inquiry allows for capturing the perspectives of various informants through detailed in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and focuses on how their different perspectives shed light on the topic of interest (Yin, 2017). Case study design includes variations, namely single- and multiple-case study. Sometimes in some fields, a comparative case method is considered as a distinctive form of multiple-case study (e.g. (Dion, 1998). Case studies focus on one or more cases over time, and through a comprehensive multi-sourced data collection, they concentrate on the dynamics of a particular setting (Eisenhardt, 1989). In a single-case study, the focus of the researcher is typically on illustrating an issue or concern through the purposefully selected case. In a multiple-case study design, again, the researcher focuses on illustrating an issue or concern, but through purposefully selected cases that mirror different perspectives on the issue. Comparison is key in multiple-case studies, revealing relationships and conclusions that would otherwise be inaccessible (Creswell and Poth, 2016).

Accordingly, positioned within the interpretivist research paradigm guided by abductive logic, I found case study research to be a suitable research approach or methodology for my work.

To conduct my research, at the thesis level, a theory-building case study design with multiple cases was chosen (Eisenhardt, 1989). Regarding the attached articles, paper I uses a longitudinal single-case study, while papers II and III are longitudinal multiple-case studies. There are several reasons for choosing multiple-case studies in my research. First, as mentioned, case study research can fit within the interpretivist paradigm as it particularly pays attention to in-depth understanding of the phenomena based on various subjective meanings (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Second, limited knowledge of the management of change programs requires a theory-building approach rather than examining existing literature (Eisenhardt, 1989). Third, the posed research questions are "how" questions, which are suggested to be best answered by case studies (Yin, 2017). Fourth, understanding the management of change programs is greatly dependent on considering the embedding context (Pellegrinelli, 2002), which can be satisfied by a case study, as it focuses on the real-life context of phenomena (Patton, 2015). Fifth, multiple-case studies allow identification of similarities and differences between a few well-studied cases, enabling the generation of more robust insights and analytical conclusions compared to single-case studies and preventing idiosyncratic inferences (Yin, 2017). This is neither to challenge the capability of single-case studies to generate reliable theory nor to confront myself with inconsistency as my paper I is a single-case study. Conducting both variations, I experienced the benefits of each design to serve different focuses in each paper and in the thesis. In paper I, employing a longitudinal single-case study for exploring how trust management unfolded during the project provided sufficient room for presenting a thick account of empirical details and analysis. In paper II, choosing two comparative cases with different dynamics of value creation processes, I was able to capture the solid influence of the dominating hosting institutional logic in one case, and to show the importance of the identified practices, which were practiced differently in each case. Similarly, in paper III, using four cases with contextual variations yet comparable performance, we were able to capture what program managers did to lead value creation appropriately in order to generate solid results. Details of the cases are presented in sections 3.3. and 3.4. Table 4 summarizes the methodology used in the articles.

Table 4 Methodology used in the articles

Title of paper	Type of study	Unit of analysis	Case selection
1. Sifting interactional trust through institutions to manage trust in project teams: An organizational change project	Single-case study	Project manager and trust building among the project team members	One change project
2. Navigating tensions to create value: An institutional logics perspective on the change program and its organizational context	Comparative case study	Relationship between change program and its permanent organizational context. Change program management team members and identified relationship	Two change programs
3. In search of competencies:	Comparative	Individual program	Four change

Title of paper	Type of study	Unit of analysis	Case selection
Accidental program managers leading change programs	case study	managers	programs

3.3. Empirical setting: Seven change programs in the form of municipality mergers

The empirical setting of this thesis consists of seven organizational change programs in the form of municipal mergers that were implemented from 2016 to 2020 in Trøndelag county, in Norway (programs 1–7, see Table 5). These change programs were part of a total of 47 merger programs that were conducted in Norway between 2016 and 2020 under a municipality reform plan initiated by the Norwegian government in 2014. The main goals of the national reform were to create fewer municipalities and focus on good and equal services for citizens, holistic and coordinated societal development, sustainable and economically robust municipalities, and strengthened local democracy (Moderniseringsdepartement, 2017). Translating the main goals of the reform to municipality/organizational level, the merger programs entailed extensive IT system modernization, renewal of organizational visions, structures, financial outlook, and culture. These aspects represent key characteristics of second-order organizational change or transformation (Gareis, 2010, Partington, 1996); therefore, I viewed the mergers as organizational change or change programs. I will come back to this in section 3.4.

In Trøndelag county, initially nine merger processes were started; of these, one is not included in my study because of the merger's very small size, and another one is not included as the program management was not interested in participating. The reason for selecting this county is two-fold. First, starting my "casing process" (Ragin, 2018, Sandelowski, 2011) at the beginning of my PhD project, I decided to look into change programs (mergers) in only one county to include multiple cases with potential variations at program and organizational levels, while keeping the broader context (county) stable, so that related contextual factors would not overwhelm my future analysis. Second, taking the geographic situation and resource requirements into account, I chose the closest county to my work location. From the seven cases included, four (programs 1–4 in Table 5) have been actively used to develop my papers and the thesis. The remaining three (programs 5–7 in Table 5) did not represent a major variation in the focused issues, thus were excluded from the papers. However, even after selecting the four cases for the papers, I used the three remaining change programs to compare with my papers' results and identify any significant deviations (which did not emerge).

Merging municipal organizations and communities is a very complex process that affects and is affected by various dimensions, from technical solutions to offering services to inhabitants to sociopolitical and identity complexities. Common to all the selected change programs (and similar to many other programs across the country), was the lack of project and program management knowledge and experience. Several informants referred to this, stating that they did not have "industrial project/program management" competency in the teams. To organize and implement the change processes, related organizations in the cases were given a certain timeline, a very basic program organizing framework (a few tools), the Subdivision Act (*Inndeligslova* in Norwegian), and several guidelines based on the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization (KMD) expertise and experience. The overall timelines of the change processes are illustrated in Figure 1. Depending on the size of the merger, the ministry

granted a budget of between about €2.5 million and €8 million. Moreover, the regional county governors (*Statsforvalteren* in Norwegian, *Fylkesmannen* before January 2021) and Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (*Kommunenes Sentralforbund* (KS) in Norwegian) received the responsibility of assisting the associated municipalities in their region in implementing the change processes. These two organizations acted as facilitator between the municipalities and the ministry, and coordinated seminars where program managers from merging municipalities in each county could meet, gain information from different authorities (*Kartverket* as an example), and exchange experience and concerns. Against these, the suggested agenda to organize and manage mergers, the legal basis, and county governor and KS assistance did not provide a detailed description of the program management of changes. Neither the project or program management governance themes, or tools and techniques (based on the disciplines' premises) were in place. The formal framework for organizing and managing the change programs was continuously developing as the programs unfolded, and questions and issues were raised by the municipalities and channeled towards KMD through KS and the county governor. The legal framework and guidance documents and tools were found to be limited in their contribution to creating a practical description and roadmap for managing the changes.
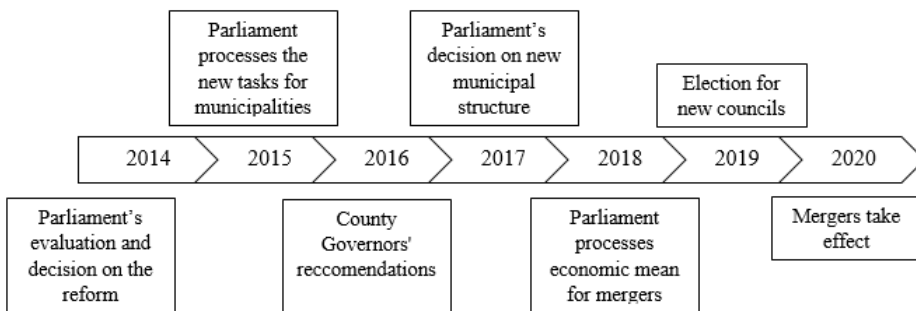
Figure 1 Ministry's overall milestone plan, and merger phases (relevant for all cases)

Furthermore, to implement the changes, similarly in all cases, a clear program organization was formed to lead the process. The program management actors created a clear mandate that described their temporary roles, authority delegation, and governance structure concerning reporting, processing decisions, and decision-making. Program organizations consisted of five clear levels, from the top:

1. *municipal councils* at the top where current council members could govern and influence the program decisions
2. *joint steering committee (JSC)* where selected politicians from the councils gathered to make the programs' decisions
3. *working committee and multi-party committee* consisting of a few JSC members and employee (union) representatives who were responsible for processing the cases and decisions before putting them to the JSC
4. *program manager (with their administrative reference group, ARG)* as the chief responsible for delivering the programs. The ARG consisted of the functional leaders

or directors, IT manager, economy manager, and human resource (HR) and archive manager, and was responsible for advising program managers

5. *project managers and project team members*, responsible for planning and implementing the functional changes.

The program management structure was stable during the programs, but grouping and configuration of experts were adjusted to the current requirements of the programs.

Under the overall framework and objectives for the reform, the cases had marginally different scopes for different types of value they wanted to generate. Thus, similarly in all cases, the desired outcomes to be achieved by mergers can be seen under two categories. First, the program management was focused on performing a defendable transition to fulfill employees' legal rights and maintain a good reputation in local communities. Second, the programs were supposed to generate a sustainable and new agile organizational structure, financial infrastructure, modernized IT systems, and a new united organizational culture. The second category was focused on centralizing specialist resources, establishing a balanced budget and financial plan aligned with future local development, and a united organizational culture with clear values and visions. All of the studied cases were closed by January 1, 2020, and generated the desired value considering each case's preconditions.

All cases were similar (with only minor differences) in that, to realize the value, the content of the change programs consisted of several working groups and other actions (e.g. communication, trust building) during the preparation, initiation, and a large part of the planning phases, and five to ten projects and other actions (e.g. trust building, communicating with citizens) during a small part of planning, and the entire implementation and closure phases. The working groups at earlier stages of the change programs were related to functions of the involved organizations, each gathering leaders and specialists from one specific function, such as healthcare. Taking the healthcare function as an example, one of the healthcare leaders from the involved organizations was then selected (by members of the working group) to be the leader of the working group. The goal of the working groups was mainly to map the current associated findings, and systematically seek to document improvement areas (financially and competence-wise). With the recruitment of future functional leaders taking place towards the end of the planning and beginning of the implementation phases, the working groups were reformed into projects and the chosen leaders took the role of project managers. The aim of the projects was to concretize the mappings from earlier work, devise proposals for the decision-making committee, act as advisors for the program manager and the decision-makers if needed, and implement the change in their respective new functions. A few projects, namely the IT system development project, culture-building project, leader-development project, and economy project were formed in the planning phase and remained relevant and active in the implementation phase. The shared structure of program organization in the cases, the content of change programs, and programs' lifecycles are illustrated in Figure 2.
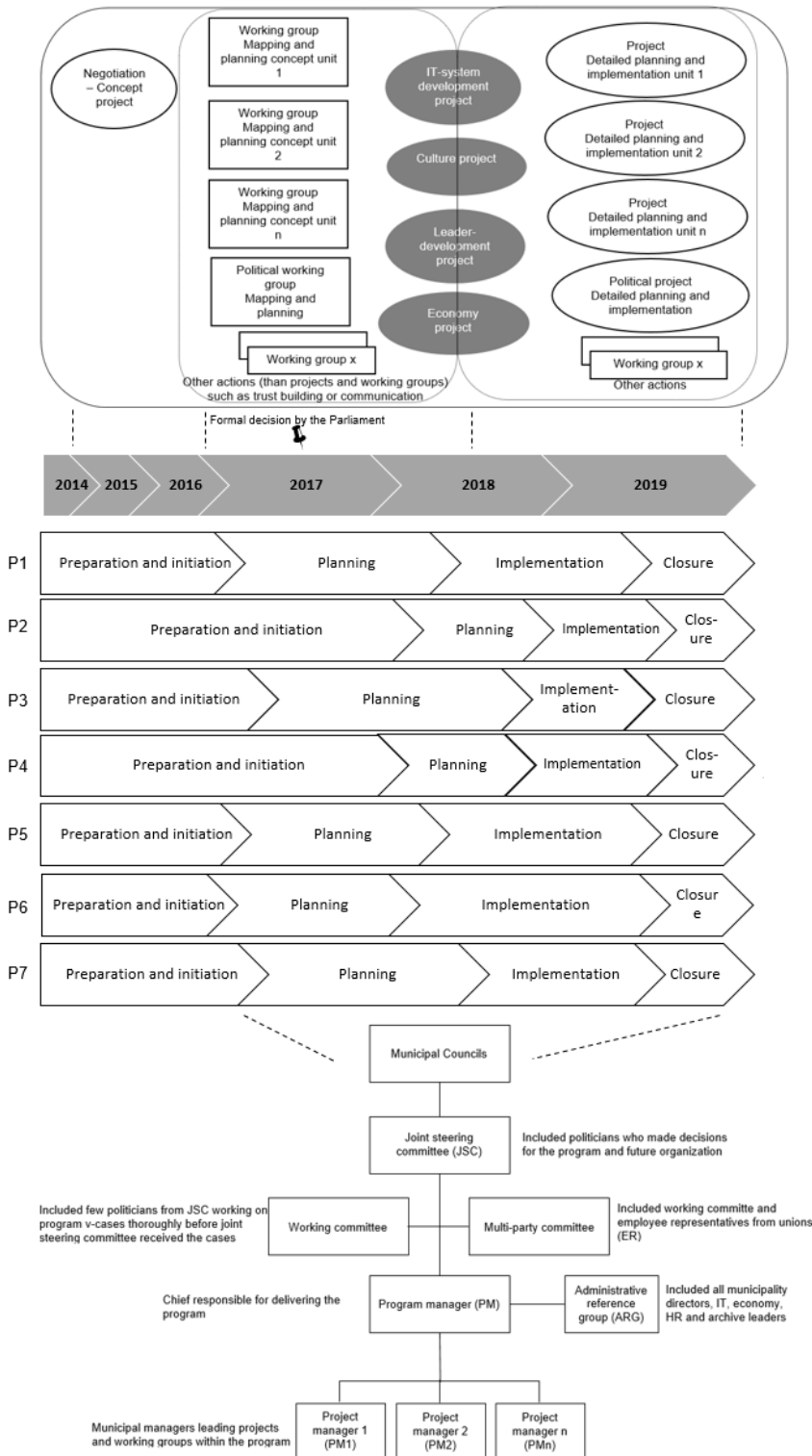
Figure 2 Change programs' content and lifecycles, and structure of program organization

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Considering the described similarities, the selected cases differed in some characteristics and aspects. Characteristics relevant for the purpose of this thesis include the number of organizations involved in the merger, the environment of the program and complexity and uncertainty dimensions, size ratio, and the work experience and education of the associated program manager. The managers also varied in age and gender. Concerning the second characteristic, an important aspect that varied across cases was related to (1) the environment of change programs (both at the outset and during further phases) regarding program actors' perception of and priorities for the proposed change and the implementation framework, and (2) complexity and uncertainty characteristics. These two dimensions refer to how program management actors perceived and showed willingness and support for the content of the change and the proposed method (program management/temporary organization); and, when performing their program management roles, what actions and behaviors they showed. The concept of complexity here is related to the sociopolitical dimension (Geraldi et al., 2011) and uncertainty was connected to the goals and method of the change programs. High complexity, uncertainty, and a turbulent program environment challenged the practicing of the few established governance themes of program management. I summarize the differences in the cases in Table 5. To keep the cases anonymous, the sizes of municipalities/organizations are not mentioned in the table, and I sufficed to mirror the sizes through a size-ratio reflection (e.g. symmetric, asymmetric). In a symmetric merger, the organizations involved were almost equal in size, and in an asymmetric merger, one of the merging parties was considerably larger than the others.

Table 5 Case overview

Difference dimensions Case	Number of organizations Size ratio	Work experience of program manager	Program manager's education	Concerning program goals and processes: • How was the environment at the program outset? • How was the environment during planning and implementation of program? ❖ Complexity and uncertainty characteristics
Program 1	4 Asymmetric	• Leadership in private organization • Project manager in a private company (undisciplined) • Political and administrative roles at municipality level • Municipal director	Social economics, Administration, Leadership and steering	• Very positive • Very positive ❖ Limited sociopolitical complexity ❖ High goal and implementation method uncertainty in early stage, resolved during the program
Program 2	2 Asymmetric	• Private sector • Leadership from hospital • Experience from county level • Municipal director	Economics, Administration	• Turbulent • Turbulent ❖ Moderate sociopolitical complexity ❖ High goal and implementation method uncertainty in early stage, some uncertainties during the program
Program 3	2 Highly asymmetric	Formal PM • Leadership experience in public organizations • Municipal director • Project manager in transformational change (undisciplined) • Journalist Operational PM • Political advisor • Leadership in public organizations • Municipal director	Administration and economy Public administration Project management subject Police academy, Innovation and knowledge management	• Very positive • Turbulent ❖ Limited sociopolitical complexity in early stage, moderate sociopolitical complexity during the program ❖ High goal and implementation method uncertainty in early stage, some uncertainties during the program

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Difference dimensions / Case	Number of organizations / Size ratio	Work experience of program manager	Program manager's education	Concerning program goals and processes: • How was the environment at the program outset? • How was the environment during planning and implementation of program? ❖ Complexity and uncertainty characteristics
Program 4	2 Symmetric	• Political experience from municipality level • Political and administrative experience from county level • Municipal director • Teacher	Teacher, Organization and administration	• Very turbulent • Very turbulent ❖ High sociopolitical complexity early and during ❖ High goal and implementation method uncertainty in early stage and during the program
Program 5	2 Asymmetric	• Leadership roles in public organization • Leadership role in university sector • Municipal director	Lawyer	• Very positive • Very positive ❖ Limited sociopolitical complexity ❖ High goal and implementation method uncertainty in early stage, resolved during the program
Program 6	3 Asymmetric	• Political leadership experience from the Parliament, county, and municipal levels • Municipal director (councilor) • Leader role in school • Responsible for county merger	History, Leadership	• Very positive • Very positive ❖ Limited sociopolitical complexity ❖ High goal and implementation method uncertainty in early stage, resolved during the program
Program 7	3 Asymmetric	• Public sector management (involved in new public management changes) • Municipal manager • Political leadership at municipality and county levels • Municipal director	Nursing, Leadership, Public administration	• Turbulent • Turbulent ❖ Moderate sociopolitical complexity ❖ High goal and implementation method uncertainty in early stage, some uncertainties during the program

3.4. Purposeful sampling strategy

One of the traditional criticisms of case study research relates to the issue of generalizability from the results of a case study. To consider and address this concern, the researcher's focus should be a rigorous case study design and research that aims to expand and generalize theory (analytical generalization) (Yin, 2017). Intertwined with a rigorous case study design, the issue of selecting appropriate cases is the cornerstone of conducting good case studies. Selecting appropriate cases is comparable to using purposeful sampling strategies or theoretical sampling (Bryman, 2016)), relevant for both single- and multiple-case studies (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Purposeful sampling means that "the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell and Poth, 2016), p. 158). There are several sampling strategies, of which one or more can be used in a single study. For example, maximum variation, critical case, snowball, typical case, criterion, opportunistic, and extreme or deviant case are some of the strategies (Miles and Huberman, 1994) cited in (Creswell and Poth, 2016). To serve the focus of this thesis, purposeful sampling was chosen to select information-rich cases to obtain in-depth understanding of how program managers lead value creation processes in change programs. There are two key dimensions in purposeful sampling: (1) concerning decisions about whom (or which sites) to select as informants for the study, and (2) concerning decisions on the size of sample to be studied (Creswell and Poth, 2016).

For the first dimension, I combined two sampling strategies. First, I gained access to a unique pool of large strategic change programs in the form of municipality mergers and based my study on them as representative cases providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of interest (Eisenhardt, 1989, Yin, 2017). The programs were in the planning phase, thus offered me the opportunity to conduct a longitudinal study and follow the managers in different phases and situations. In section 2.1, I mentioned that I viewed the municipality mergers as change programs as I evaluated the content of mergers to be closely comparable to characteristics of organizational changes. I elaborate on this later in subsection 5.1.2. I should also mention that at the beginning of my research project, I considered the selected cases to be change *projects* (as can be seen in my first paper); later I considered them to be change *programs* as my understanding of the cases and theory developed. In section 2.3, I argue that, with careful evaluation, change program literature and change project literature can be considered comparable. As a brief reminder, I make such a suggestion because of the characteristics of the organizational change (content) and based on observations of earlier research. Certainly, the divergent paths of projects and programs seems to be more obvious and actually necessary regarding other application areas (see (Pellegrinelli, 2011). The relation of paper I to the other two papers and the thesis follows the same thinking. In other words, I see the papers as complementary, without any specific conceptual issue.

As the second sampling strategy under the first dimension, following my interest in understanding program managers' participation in leading change programs to create value, I needed to choose informants within each of the selected change programs. The sampling logically began with selecting program managers within the cases, and in consultation with my supervisors and program managers, was followed by detecting and choosing key knowledgeable members of the program management teams. I particularly focused on selecting at least one person from each group of the program organization to obtain different

perspectives, as the groups had different roles and goals (Yin, 2017), from those who were intensely involved in the management of programs (Patton, 2015).

For the second dimension, considering sample size, as I had access to several change programs that were in progress in the chosen county, I decided to design my study as a multiple-case study to create an opportunity for identifying potential variations (Eisenhardt, 1989), and systematic, rigorous, and meaningful comparisons (Patton, 2015). There are two considerations in my choices. On one hand, focusing on one county kept the regional factors stable, allowing me to focus on the organizations and organizational characteristics. Two cases were excluded for reasons already described, and starting with seven cases seemed manageable. Collecting data from all cases in 2018, I learned about the cases, their characteristics, and developed my theoretical knowledge about the focused phenomenon. I thus discovered that four of cases had great potential for representing variations related to my evolving theoretical positioning and working research questions. I thus followed the four cases (programs 1–4 in Table 5) regularly until, and just after the mergers' closure. The most important differences in relation to the management of change programs were revealed to be the different environments and complexity and uncertainty characteristics. Further in my research process, the evolving papers, their formatting, constraints, and review process, guided my casing process, leading to the use of the cases in the papers and consequently in the thesis. As will be illustrated in the next subsection, I also followed programs 5–7 to keep my records updated and capture any specific changes or happenings in those cases. Although the three cases were not directly used in the papers, they were consulted to examine how relevant my analysis and results were, and identify any significant inconsistency. No inconsistency was found, thus, my confidence in the results and contributions increased without crowding the papers. This relates to attaining saturation both theoretically and methodologically (Yin, 2017). In sum, cases 5, 6, and 7 also contributed to forming my understanding of the empirical setting and studied issues in the field.

On the other hand, regarding the strategy of selecting multiple cases, one might think of choosing change programs from other sectors, such as the private sector, in order to examine potential variations. However, as is clear from the theoretical positioning and mentioned in section 2.2, I consciously decided to put the public sector setting aside theoretically and treat the cases neutrally, but also planned to keep the public sector setting stable in my study. Clearly, the most significant aspect of case study research is understanding the context or setting of the phenomenon (Yin, 2017). In other words, if one wants to gain insights from cases, one should strive to know what happens in the cases. Therefore, the more different settings that are included in a multiple-case study, the more difficult it is to have a reasonable multiple-case study design. Consequently, empirically, I kept the setting stable, and rather preferred to have several programs with the same background as it could strengthen the focus on the setting's importance for the selected program managers. This was particularly rational, as the merger programs followed a very similar managerial framework, timeline, and aids to implement the programs (see Table 5 and Figure 2), which enabled an excellent focus on their individual roles while many contextual factors were proved for all.

3.5. Data collection

Following the longitudinal case study design, the data collection process of the thesis occurred over the course of the selected change programs. Forms of data in qualitative research include interviews, observations, documentation, and audiovisual materials (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Interviews can be conducted one-on-one or as a focus group interview; observations can be conducted as a participant or an observer; documentation can include examining personal documents, analyzing organizational documents, analyzing public documents, or examining biographies; and audiovisual materials may include taking photographs, examining photographs or videos, collecting sounds, or gathering phone or computer-based messages (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Among these forms of data, the basis for this thesis is the longitudinal data from interviews, documentation, and observations, underlining the triangulation of data (Yin, 2017). In total, I conducted 57 semi-structured interviews. A few interviews were open-ended, especially when the program managers were asked to provide an update of programs' processes and major happenings. The interviews with participants within programs 1–4 occurred on several occasions during the programs, while the informants of programs 5–7 were interviewed in two periods. The longitudinal data collection facilitated obtaining information in real time, and mitigated retrospective biases to a great degree (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). Preparation and initiation were reflected retrospectively; I interviewed some of the participants of program 3 in the first and second quarters of 2017. Regarding programs 1, 2, and 6, I had the opportunity to observe the closing visits of the county governor (and their advisors) where the change programs were reviewed by program managers and their reference groups, issues were highlighted, and lessons learned were summarized. The visits were four-hour meetings in which I took notes, and had the opportunity to present my work and ask questions about the mergers at a regional level to the county governor and their advisors through informal conversations. The visits in cases 3–5 were canceled a few times, and I did not get the opportunity to attend. Regarding the main cases (1–4), I conducted interviews with at least one program management member from all the groups within the program organization. Program managers were interviewed several times during the programs, while other informants were interviewed formally once on site, and were contacted digitally during implementation and closure stages. The collected data from the interviews with county governor advisors were focused on gaining the regional expert opinion on the ongoing processes and is used complementarily.

Most of the interviews were designed and conducted to be semi-structured using interview guides, where I could ask follow-up questions (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Some of the participants appreciated receiving the interview guide in advance as they took some time to reflect on their participation in the change programs. As the process of interviewing proceeded, following my evolving theoretical positioning, research questions, and data analysis (preliminary results), interview questions were revised and interview guides were (re)devised for further interviews with participants (Eisenhardt, 1989). The interview guides for program managers used different questions to those for other roles within the program management team. Besides focusing on their engagement in managing programs, the informants from the groups (not program managers) were also asked certain questions that aimed to examine the informant's perspective on the program manager role and their contribution in the program. A few themes included in the interview guides over the course of my research are background for receiving the program role, central processes connected to the role of informants, tools and processes for planning the change, formal and informal meeting

trends, experience of collaboration across the roles, conflict management, budgeting processes, and the dual role of informants. At times between questions during the interviews, and before closing the interview sessions, every informant was asked to share any thoughts or concerns about the programs that they wished to raise. I purposefully did this to mitigate any rigidity in the interview, and establish a rather fluid conversation with the informant (Yin, 2017). All of the interviews were recorded. I personally transcribed the interviews shortly after conducting them, and updated my data profile regularly. A complete overview of collected data is summarized in Table 6, and the interview timeline is illustrated in Table 7. The lengths of interviews and observations are summarized under Table 6.

As my secondary source of data, since the change programs occurred in public organizations, I had almost free access to all documents and reports of the programs. In consultation with program managers, I managed to navigate the massive amount of documentation and selected a number of key documents, reports, and plans. I also followed the meeting threads of the JSCs by reviewing the minutes of meetings. The documents I included in the thesis are program proposals, core ministry documents and tools (e.g. Veien mot en ny kommune, Etablering av nye kommuner og fylkeskommuner, Prosjektveiviseren), project plans and documents, JSC meeting reports, Division Law, Local Government Act, transition agreement, 2020 budget, and financial plan for 2020–2023. Reviewing documents was an effective way to obtain valuable information that was complementary to the interviews. For instance, besides following processes and decisions in the minutes of meetings, I could gain an understanding of how short or long the meetings were, which activities were processed, and which activities were postponed to future meetings and why. Additionally, the documents from the ministry and the governing laws provided key information about how change programs were designed to shape a framework for program management work. Triangulation of data sources strengthens confidence in the research results, and decreases the risk of biases in handling impressions and retrospective views (Yin, 2017, Eisenhardt, 1989).

Table 6 Data overview

Empirical data	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5	Case 6	Case 7
	11 interviews, 1 observation	13 interviews	7 interviews + 8 interviews in 2017	11 interviews	5 interviews	2 interviews	2 interviews
Interviewees	1. Program manager (PM) 2. Administrative reference group member – project manager HR (ARGM 1) 3. Administrative reference group member – project manager communication (ARGM 2) 4. Administrative reference group - Project manager health and care (ARGM 3) 5. Employees representative leader (ERL) 6. Joint steering committee member (JSCM) 7. Joint steering committee deputy (JSCD)	1. Program manager (PM) 2. Joint steering committee leader – member in working committee (JSCL) 3. Administrative reference group – Project manager education (ARGM 1) 4. Administrative reference group – Project manager IT (ARGM 2) 5. Administrative reference group – Project manager HR (ARGM 3)	1. Formal program manager (FPM) 2. Functioning program manager (PM) (2 interviews in 2017) 3. Administrative reference group – senior advisor (ARGM 1) (2 interviews in 2017) 4. Administrative reference group – senior advisor (ARGM 2) (1 interview in 2017) 5. Program coordinator (PC)	1. Program manager (PM) 2. Joint steering committee leader – member in working committee (JSCL) 3. Joint steering committee deputy – leader of working committee (JSCD) 4. Program coordinator –project manager industry and culture (PM1) 5. Administrative reference group member – Project manager HR/IT (ARGM 1) 6. Employees representative leader 1 (ERL 1) 7. Employees representative leader 2 (ERL 2)	1. program manager (PM) 2. program coordinator	1. program manager	1. program manager
Archival document	Program proposal, Core ministry documents, Project-plans and documents, JSC meeting-reports, Division Law, Local Government Act, Transition agreement, Budget 2020, Financial plan 2020-2023						
Average interview length	Observation: 4 hours 63 min	81 min Observation: 4 hours	75 min Observation: not planned	82 min Observation: planned but cancelled	65 min	60 min Observation: 4 hours	70 min

In total, 59 interviews, 4000 min (ca. 67 hours). Three observation sessions (cases 1, 2, 4), 600 min (10 hours.).

Table 7 Interview timeline

Time / Case	Interview timeline								
	Q*1, 2018	Q2, 2018	Q3, 2018	Q4, 2018	Q1, 2019	Q2, 2019	Q3, 2019	Q4, 2019	Q1, 2020 (post-merger)
Case 1	PM (2 interviews)			JSCL – JSCD ERL – ARGM 1 ARGM 2 ARGM 3	PM	Digital communication			PM (2 interviews) Observation session
Case 2		PM			PM	PM – JSCL ARGM 1 ARGM 2 ARGM 3	Digital communication	PM Observation session	PM (2 interviews)
Case 3	ARGM 1 (2 interviews)	PC	Digital communication		PC	PM		FPM PM	
Case 4	PM	PM		PM	JSCL – JSCD PM 1 –ARGM 1 ERL 1 – ERL 2	Live streams, Media screening		PM	PM Planned observation session
Case 5	PM	PM, PC (program coordinator)			PM		PM		
Case 6		PM					PM	PM	Observation session
Case 7		PM							
County governor advisor	x			x					x

*Q denotes the quarter of the year

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3.6. Data analysis

In this section, I reflect on data analysis processes at two levels. First, I explain how I developed the thesis's analysis. Second, I briefly touch upon the analysis processes of the individual papers.

Data analysis in multiple-case studies is not a simple task. Often, in qualitative research, the processes of data collection, data analysis, and writing the reports do not follow each other in a linear process, but are interconnected and often simultaneous in a research project. While the analysis process requires a highly open, flexible, and iterative approach, the researcher needs to employ a clear set of data analysis strategies within a clear framework (Creswell and Poth, 2016). The framework is not a one-size-fits-all model, though; rather, it is revised and customized for a certain study by the researcher (Miles et al., 2014a). Crafting any analysis framework, the essence of data analysis in qualitative research is preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes using coding techniques and aggregating codes, and representing the data visually in figures or tables, or in the form of a discussion (Creswell and Poth, 2016). On the level of my thesis, the described process was adjusted as the collected data were actually the findings of the three articles. Therefore, data collection as a process was not directly relevant and the focus was on a highly iterative cyclic movement between analyzing data, developing the theoretical framework, and developing the results. Anchored in interpretivist epistemological and methodological assumptions (Creswell and Poth, 2016), to explore the posed research question of the thesis, I focused on capturing the subjective narratives of informants through a reinterpretation of the findings of three papers. Thus, as I developed the theoretical positioning of the thesis, the data were coded and categorized, which also influenced the theoretical framework. These processes follow abductive logic (Dubois and Gadde, 2002, Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2017).

At the level of the individual articles, the analysis process is described in each paper, and here I present a more detailed account. The data analysis for each paper, particularly papers I and II, was highly iterative, negotiating continuously the evolving findings with extant theory (Eisenhardt, 1989, Creswell and Poth, 2016) and data collection, and consisted of three main steps.

First, by transcribing the recorded interviews and collecting related documents, the data were prepared and organized in digital files for analysis (Creswell and Poth, 2016, Yin, 2017). A case write-up was prepared for each case, reflecting a coherent story of the management of change programs, using text, figures, and process graphs. Starting the analysis process, the overall analysis strategy of the papers was mainly working my data from the ground up (Yin, 2017), following an inductive logic. This strategy focuses on openly looking for a pattern in the data. As my analytic strategy, I took notes while reading the interview transcripts and summarized my reflections of them, which triggered reflective thinking (Creswell and Poth, 2016). As a result, I made some preliminary interpretations during and after the interviews, showing an overlap between data collection and data analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989). Developing preliminary interpretations was simultaneous with building up my theoretical knowledge of related streams that could be relevant to my initial interests. The two aspects affected and sharpened each other for further steps.

Second, to develop findings of papers I and II, I began a process to reduce the data through strategies of working with words (Creswell and Poth, 2016), and first- and second-cycle

coding (Miles et al., 2014a) to identify relevant codes for the questions at hand, and aggregate the codes to develop themes. This occurred while data collection was still underway, which helped me to further investigate emerging codes and themes. I particularly used emic and etic coding, where NVivo and descriptive coding (Miles et al., 2014a) were especially beneficial. Given the evolving problem statements in the papers, inspired by the data analysis structure of Gioia et al. (2013), first-order concepts and second-order themes were identified. As paper II was designed as a multiple-case study, after my within-case analysis process, I used the cross-case synthesis analytical technique (Yin, 2017) and compared the identified themes across the cases (considering differences in their characteristics) to search for potential similarities and differences, and any underlying novel explanations. When I conducted the coding processes in both papers, I reviewed relevant literature to identify potential concepts or relationships that could elaborate my findings (Eisenhardt, 1989). The iterative negotiation with the theory led to sharpening the identified concepts and relationships, and the research questions, so that the empirical support for the posed questions became optimized (Eisenhardt, 1989). The aggregated concepts that made contributions to trust management in temporary organizations were found to be preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering, and the ones contributing to value creation in change programs within their context were revealed to be problematizing, designing, and team building. I particularly used the "relating themes" analytical strategy for the purpose of generating contextual understanding, concepts, and relationships (Creswell and Poth, 2016). For concrete examples of how I structured the data from raw quotes to aggregated dimensions, please see Figure 2 in paper I (p. 511), and tables in the appendix of paper II.

The second step of analysis in paper III followed a slightly different analysis strategy. In developing the paper, following the inductive process in the first step, the negotiation with competency literature, we found that a preliminary theoretical framework could be formed to guide the data analysis for the purpose of paper. This resonated with what Yin (2017) calls relying on theoretical propositions as one of the analytical strategies for case study data analysis; however, my use of theory was different. We did not have any concrete propositions upon which to select cases, shape my data collection, or analyze the data. Rather, starting from the ground in my data pool and becoming interested in discovering how accidental program managers could handle their role in the interest of change programs, we continuously revised my theoretical positioning and data collection, but did not develop propositions to serve the purpose of paper III. Instead, the theory was revealed to contain useful models and concepts that could help us to purposefully analyze the data by coding the themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006) in each case. Simultaneously, as the accidental aspect of the program manager role was novel empirically and theoretically, an in-depth explanation building analytical technique (Yin, 2017) was used to explain how the managers dealt with their lack of program management competency. Establishing the results from within-case analysis, considering the variations they had regarding the environment of programs, and complexity and uncertainty characteristics, we then compared the cases to identify patterns, and potential similarities and differences. The goal was to push the boundaries of initial impressions and improve the analytical generalizability of the findings (Eisenhardt, 1989).

The last step of the data analysis process focused on displaying and reporting the data in the papers to provide an account of the developed findings (Creswell and Poth, 2016). This was done through a visual model in paper I, text in paper II, and a table in paper III.

3.7. The relationship between my PhD project and included articles

As previously described, this thesis reports a four-year PhD research project, which has its own methodological approach. Meanwhile, I have developed three papers created in special contexts, each with their own internal methodological approach. The papers serve as three episodes, each contributing to my overall PhD project with its distinct purpose and methodology. Until now in the current chapter, I have mainly reflected the methodology at the thesis level, and have marked in the text where I have explained the methodology of the papers. Before moving to evaluation of the trustworthiness of my study, I would like to raise a few points and reflections.

First, my research project at an overall level is characterized by abductive logic, while each paper has an adjusted inductive–abductive logical dynamic appropriate for the paper's purpose and framework. For example, paper II leans more toward an inductive logic, while paper I rests on a more abductive logic. Concerning paper III, while starting with an inductive approach to make sense of the data, the paper later benefits from an abductive logic closer to using extant theory, as the theory on competency was vast and we found it most reasonable to use an analytical framework. In addition, I would like to point out when a piece of research was created in collaboration with coauthors. Each scholar has their own philosophical viewpoints and methodological conduct, which can influence the methodological framework used in work collaboratively created.

Second, looking retrospectively, here I describe the process of developing the three articles. While setting an overall preliminary agenda to examine the role of change program managers in managing change programs during the early stages of my PhD project, the collected data, particularly the viewpoint of the county governor advisor as the main contact of the managers, soon revealed that trust management in change programs was critical. Encouraged by this, I embarked on a comprehensive literature review on trust, which revealed to be a massive theoretical topic within management and organization studies, and project management literature. The review of trust in the project context suggested a sound path for initiating my first paper on the topic of trust in temporary organizations. As I progressed in my project, two major ideas were formed. First, originally concerned with managing change programs, my reading of program management and change project/program management led to narrowing down the concept of management to value creation. Second, a crack between the context of change programs as temporary organizations and the municipality organizations as hosting permanent organizations loomed increasingly, which was difficult to explain based on extant change program management literature. The contrast between change programs and their organizational context emerged to be an almost permanent aspect of the data and was continuously expressed in various ways as informants were interviewed on different topics over time. Combining the first and second ideas, while attempting to theoretically set the change programs in their organizational context, I attended a doctoral course on different perspectives on organizations that offered me a toolbox, from which one of the tools, namely the institutional logics perspective, struck me (as described in subsection 2.2.3). I found that the logics theory could offer the system I needed to understand and present the temporary-to-permanent interface. At this point, bridging between value creation and the interface, work on paper II began. Proceeding with the second paper, the complex and challenging role of change program manager became particularly evident and triggered an interest in the individual level regarding what skills and competencies they used to handle such a difficult role. The literature

review also suggested that investigating change program manager competencies would be interesting and promising for the field as the extant literature is still very narrow. Therefore, the analysis of data and developing a theoretical framework for paper III began, alongside finalizing the second paper.

Third, as described in sections 3.3 and 3.4, to serve distinct purposes of the papers, I used case 1 in paper I, cases 1 and 4 in paper II, and cases 1–4 in paper III. Interviews from programs 5–7 thus occurred fewer times compared with other cases; however, I still tracked them carefully through document analysis. Reflecting on the use of cases, I see two potential consequences for my work. First, although the use of data led to developing the most concise and precise pieces of research with concrete contributions as was possible at the time, if I had freedom and space to consider other cases in the papers, I could probably have an extra problem statement and variation in the papers' results. For instance, in paper I, grounded in the data from case 1, a solid model of trust management is developed. Although it is a single-case study, many of the elements in the results can be found in other cases. Generally, for all three papers, conducting careful comparison with unused cases, I found that the excluded cases greatly support the results of the papers. However, there could have been some potential for additional dimensions in the findings. Returning to paper I, if case 4 had been used in the paper, for example, the highly turbulent environment of that case could have introduced a new dimension to the problem statement and the findings; hence, one could have gained a richer explanation of the phenomenon. Accordingly, the breadth of the findings would probably have looked different, and it would not have been very unnatural to have different dimensions and discussion points. Second, using the findings of the papers (based on the used cases) as the only input for the thesis, the writing of the thesis became set in a rather rigid framework. In other words, developing research articles not only excluded some cases from the papers but also automatically set those cases aside from being used in the thesis. I think this is a typical issue when one collects a large amount of data for a PhD project and then slices it up to write papers in a very specific format and following particular review processes. This makes it very difficult to use all the data one has collected, which may have an impact on the findings developed. Compared to the other tradition, namely writing a monograph to conduct a PhD degree, the issues described above, I believe, are to the disadvantage of writing an article-based thesis.

3.8. Trustworthiness of the study

To address the quality of qualitative research, diverging from the criteria to evaluate quantitative research, different terminologies and descriptions are suggested. Following the positivist's and interpretivist's fundamentally different views on what constitutes knowledge and how it can be attained, the positivistic evaluation criteria are replaced with other relevant principles when considering the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Miles et al. (2014a) suggest four criteria, which I use in the following to reflect on the quality of my conclusions in the paper and subsequently in the thesis.

3.8.1. Confirmability

The criterion of confirmability (objectivity/external reliability) concerns the researcher's awareness of their personal values and their influence in the research they conduct. While total objectivity can be impossible, the researcher needs to act in good faith and show that they have not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations to overpower the

process of research and related conclusions (Bryman, 2016, Miles et al., 2014a). To address the issue of confirmability, I considered three points. First, I devised rigorous research methods, followed clear structures, and presented the details of the devised methods and procedures of my research related to each paper and the thesis. Second, I supported the findings and conclusions of the papers with several quotes from interviews. The analysis descriptions in papers I and II contain condensed data that help voice the informants' perspectives and support my use of them. Third, inspired by inductive data analysis in the papers, although I considered the literature to guide the processes, I consciously attempted to acknowledge the subjective meanings of participants as they reflected on them through statements about how they lived and experienced things. All three points follow the suggestion by (Miles et al., 2014b).

3.8.2. Reliability

The reliability criterion (dependability/auditability) concerns adopting an auditing approach in conducting qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). The purpose of this specific criterion is to provide transparency in how the process of research has been done, by ensuring that complete records of processes of the research (problem formulation to case selection, fieldwork notes, data analysis decisions, etc.) are stored and accessible (Bryman, 2016). The point of this measure is to check that the study is consistent across researchers and methods. To address the issue of reliability, I considered three points. First, I thought carefully about the research questions I developed, and subsequently considered suitable research designs for each paper (Miles et al., 2014b). Second, I conducted all the interviews myself as agreed with informants, and in consultation with my supervisors, I collected data at appropriate times and from a relevant range of participants from within the program management groups (Miles et al., 2014b). Third, the interview content, the content of data analysis, and results were discussed with my supervisors and coauthors (Miles et al., 2014b).

3.8.3. Internal validity

Internal validity (credibility/authenticity) of a qualitative study is about how trustworthy and to what degree the results are convincing to the participants and the readers of the study; that is, to what degree the findings make sense to others (Miles et al., 2014a). Internal validity requires conducting the research according to principles of good practice, and requesting the members of the social world we studied to confirm that the investigator has correctly understood that social world (Bryman, 2016). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest several techniques for enhancing internal validity. The authors suggestions include triangulation, persistent observation, prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, member checking, negative case, and referential adequacy. To handle the issue of internal validity, I applied three strategies. First, I presented the papers' findings with thick descriptions supported by several pieces of empirical evidence (Patton, 2015) that mirrored explicit links to the extant or emerging theory (Miles et al., 2014b). Second, appropriate to the content of the findings in each paper, I strove to follow a systematic logical thread in my presentation (Miles et al., 2014b). Third, the sources of data were triangulated to strengthen the study (Patton, 2015, Yin, 2017, Bryman, 2016). Considering my main aim of understanding the engagement of change program managers in leading value creation in change programs, (1) I collected data from participants from several groups to complement the program managers' information, and (2) I reviewed documents and participated in observation sessions when possible. In addition, I employed several theoretical frameworks to understand the complex phenomenon being

studied. This refers to theory triangulation, using different lenses to explore a complex organizational issue (Miles et al., 2014b).

3.8.4. External validity

External validity (transferability/fittingness) relates to the degree to which the obtained results may be relevant and applicable in other contexts (Miles et al., 2014a). This criterion is of great interest and concern as qualitative finings tend to be closely related to contextual uniqueness and the highlighted dimension of the social world being studied (Bryman, 2016). One key requirement is thus providing a "thick description" of the case(s) and a detailed account of findings (providing a "database") so that the reader can make their judgments about the transferability of findings to other contexts (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To handle the issue of external validity, I applied two strategies. First, I attempted to develop an in-depth understanding of change program managers' engagement in leading value creation in change programs, and to build theory through analytical generalization (Yin, 2017). In each paper, I attempted to develop a best fit between the emergent findings and theoretical concepts and relationships, thus linking my findings to extant literature and improving transferability (Eisenhardt, 1989, Miles et al., 2014b). On several occasions, my findings were aligned with former research, yet expanded the theory. Second, I provided the characteristics of the selected cases so that the reader could compare the sample and context to others. Consequently, I discussed the need for taking context into account when interpreting my findings in relation to other issues and contexts (Miles et al., 2014b). One challenge I encountered in accounting for external validity was finding an efficient way to describe the findings and context sufficiently while adhering to the format and limitations of a research article.

3.9. Ethical considerations

Ethical issues can arise at different stages of conducting qualitative research. Ethical issues are directly related to integrity and quality of the research, thus cannot be ignored. The ethical issues revolve around the role of values in the research process (Bryman, 2016). Ethical issues can be of different forms, from concerns related to the participants being studied, to issues related to decision-making, media, or politics (in the non-party-political sense) (Bryman, 2016). Creswell and Poth (2016) summarize important issues to consider prior to conducting the study, at the beginning of the study, while collecting, analyzing, and reporting data, and when publishing the study. In the following, I highlight key ethical considerations that I addressed.

Overall, I carefully considered ethical principles concerning the participants in my study. As I embarked on my PhD project and began establishing contact with cases that did not have much interest in the outcome of the study (Creswell and Poth, 2016), I explained the purpose of the study to potential program managers (and later to other roles invited for interview) in writing, and asked them to take their time to freely make a decision about their participation (Creswell and Poth, 2016, Miles et al., 2014b). This was necessary to ensure informed, and avoid misled, consent (Bryman, 2016). As it was very hard to provide detailed information about what they may be asked about in future, I clarified that they could withdraw their consent at any time.

When collecting data, the interviews were conducted at participants' premises, and the collected data were immediately stored in secure locations (Creswell and Poth, 2016). When

analyzing and reporting the data, accessing the data was done according to the agreement with informants, and I took clear measures to anonymize cases and participants and to mitigate any harm to participants or invasion of privacy (Creswell and Poth, 2016, Bryman, 2016, Miles et al., 2014b). The size of the municipalities and organizations, and participants' age and gender were excluded from the papers and the thesis to ensure that informants were not recognizable. The background political negotiations and the voting results (for the merger) were also excluded. Finally, participants were provided with drafts of the papers to review my understanding of the context and processes.

Another major aspect of ethical considerations in my study is about my role as the researcher in the data collection and data analysis. Concerning this, first, during the early interviews, due to the nature of informants' professional role in the municipal sector, my project management background needed to be explained so that expectations of relationships in the research process could be established. I found that informants had an almost purely political view on their roles as program management team members at the beginning of the introductory meetings. Following clarifications, informants considered my interest in the process of change programs from a technical and managerial perspective. Furthermore, I made sure to send the interview guides in good time before the interviews so that the questions were not new during the interviews. Second, collecting data on several occasions, I was kindly trusted as the researcher, thus was given access to informants' experiences and perceptions on topics such as trust and competencies that touched not only the person's professional role, but also the person as a person. However, becoming familiar with my informants, particularly the program managers, meant an ethical consideration had to be addressed, namely how to take care of the informants when presenting them in my work. To address this issue, I checked the used quotes with informants before submitting the papers, and excluded a few personal comments that some of the informants made about their fellow team members, for example, about the program manager. Third, in order to keep a neutral stand in collecting and interpreting the data, I actively sought to cross-check the happenings of the programs by following minutes of meetings, and following the county governor's, KS's, and ministry's reports and news. Moreover, as an interpretivist researcher, I focused on rigorous methodology in the work I produced by carefully designing and documenting the structure through which I conducted my research.

Fourth, as some of the informants reported to the program manager as their superior, I tried to formulate the questions around the processes, tasks, and collaborations to obtain their perspectives on the performance of program managers in a somewhat indirect way. I also checked their information against the members of the JSC as the superiors of the program managers. Lastly, considering the longitudinal aspect of my research, following the change programs from planning until closure, another issue was related to the potential effect of me and my research on how the processes were shaped. I found that explaining clearly that I intended to be just an observer in the processes created of a degree of awareness of possibly a more professional project/program management outlook" in cases, especially in cases 1, 2, 3, and 4. In cases 1, 2, and 3, my perception of the degree of such an influence is that informants engaged in a thinking process to reflect on their role as a unique temporary role, and they tried to discuss some aspects of the management of the temporary organization with me. In case 4, the program manager explicitly expressed the influence of my research as the motivation for purchasing and using a professional project management tool in their program.

Besides ethical issues related to participants, ethical considerations related to the academic community (in my case, the project management community) for which the study will be published. To ensure offering good quality studies to the project management field, I presented all papers at academic seminars, and strove to document an accurate account of data analysis and methods used in the papers. Moreover, the comprehensive peer review processes from submission to publication of papers is one way to ensure ethically good quality research.

4. Results: Summary of the independent articles

In this section, I briefly summarize and present the independent papers, which are available at the end of this thesis to provide more detail. An overview of the papers and their current status is presented in Table 8. To remind the reader of the posed research questions, this thesis asks *how can program managers lead value creation in change programs?* The subordinate research questions are:

1. *How do program managers interpret and how do they practice the management of change programs to create value?*
2. *How is the management of change programs influenced by organizational context?*
3. *How do oft-accidental change program managers navigate their competencies to handle their temporary role?*

The answer to the first subordinate research question mainly rests on the empirical findings of papers II and III. Furthermore, some relevant findings from paper I relate to this question. Similarly, empirical findings of papers II and III are utilized to answer the second subordinate research question, while paper I also offers some relevant findings. Finally, the answer to the third subordinate research question is grounded in empirical findings of all three papers.

Table 8 Overview of the independent papers

Title	Status
Sifting interactional trust through institutions to manage trust in project teams: An organizational change project	Published in *Project Management Journal*, 2021
Navigating tensions to create value: An institutional logics perspective on the change program and its organizational context	Accepted by *Project Management Journal*, 2022 (in press)
In search of competencies: Accidental program managers leading change programs	Published in e-proceedings accessible to EURAM conference's registered participants, presented at the conference 15–17 June 2022, Winterthur, Switzerland

4.1. Summary of paper I

Farid, P. 2021. Sifting interactional trust through institutions to manage trust in project teams: An organizational change project. *Project Management Journal,* 52, 504–520.

This paper reports a single-case study of an organizational change project and was set to explore trust building in project teams by answering *how can project managers facilitate trust development among project team members?* Given the importance and challenge of trust in temporary teams, and the key role of project managers in facilitating how trust is created and maintained in project teams, the paper's findings offer four mechanisms, namely preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering, that managers can use to manage trust. Furthermore, interconnections between the practices are identified and illustrated in a model, figure 3, on p. 516 of the article. The empirical setting of the paper is case 1, a large, highly complex, and successful change process, which, beyond contributing to the literature on project trust management, makes the paper appropriate for understanding how the manager handled relationships and trust to successfully deliver a change project. Paper I constitutes an important episode of my thesis's story in two ways. First, it narrates the process of the project manager participating in the management of a change project to facilitate creating desired

outcomes, and second, it addresses a significant competency of change project/program managers, namely human competency in terms of relationship and trust management.

For the first point, the paper shows that the project manager perceived their project role to be complex, and they saw the need to establish a trustful project environment and use available project management basics (e.g. project plans, governance documents) to show their competency in managing and controlling the temporary organization. The paper's findings show the project's value creation began with a highly uncertain process where key actors in the project team were gathered in several, sometimes overlapping, groups and arenas to establish relations, engage in initial negotiations, and discuss potential objectives. Later in the change project, employing a flexible managerial approach (e.g. through reshaping project organization, theme-based processes, adhering to project plans, and evolving authority lines), the findings report that the project manager purposefully adjusted and managed the project group to ensure needed competencies and expertise throughout the transition, and that group leaders worked across groups and circulated the input and results to build a new, robust organization. The paper also registers that in processing controversial decisions, such as the financial plan, the project manager acknowledged that the "old priorities" (drawing on political and administrative priorities of a municipality) disturbed the project's processes. Besides the project happenings regarding the change initiative, the findings also highlight the manager's hybrid role where they were actively involved in handling the issues of the involved organizations.

For the second point, concerning trust management and managing (change) project team members, as the project was characterized by high complexity and uncertainty, the project manager recognized that trust among project team members was a critical success factor, and the terrain for developing trust was very difficult. The temporary organization's outcomes were highly abstract in the early stages of the process, and were subject to many changes during detailed planning and execution; the project team consisted of high-ranking executives, who kept their line roles and constantly had to deal with various priorities and develop a consensus about evolving goals and processes of the change; and the project represented a sensitive change to the individuals involved.

Under such conditions, the findings show that during the project, project managers should engage in preaching, involving, and sympathizing to establish, maintain, and repair interactional trust, which grows through interaction, exchange of information, and observation of actions and behaviors. By *preaching* trust (explicitly verbalizing the importance and value of trust) purposefully during the project, and acting as a role model, project managers can establish the expected values and behaviors in the team, foster constructive formal and informal interactions among team members, facilitate commitment, and repair trust through clear trust statements if it falls in a downward spiral.

The project manager's practice of *involving* focused on establishing and fostering formal and informal relationships and communication among the team members in order to ensure the necessary interactions within and across the project's working groups and processes for the purpose of developing and generating the desired outcomes. The involving theme shows that a flexible approach to involving can facilitate optimum and constructive participation and collaboration based on demand at different times during the project, and provide a solid basis for members to gain knowledge about each other and observe each other's behaviors. High

emphasis on purposeful involving ensures that interactions are carefully led, different voices are heard fairly, and the problem of the limited time in a temporary organization for the development of interactional trust is addressed.

Concerning the practice of *sympathizing*, the findings underline that different perceptions and personal/organizational priorities/orientations of project team members about the purpose and process of the project (particularly a change project) can create emotional dynamics that need to be addressed. The project manager's efforts of personally showing and enacting, and encouraging others to show sympathy (by acknowledging, understanding, and addressing) with existing positive and negative emotions enhance the interactional trust in the project. Sympathizing entails communicating emotions, strengthening the environment of the team by using positive emotions, and developing practical solutions to address underlying problems and concerns that can endanger the process of generating the desired outcomes. The findings of the paper further reveal that these three practices share a common backdrop, and their concurrent and tailored use influences the development of interactional trust.

Finally, regarding the practice of *adhering*, the findings show that for developing trust in the project team, project managers need to identify and benefit from institutional factors. These factors include both formal (e.g. project plans, project documents, relevant governing laws) and informal (e.g. community norms and practices) dimensions. The manager's practice of adhering to institutional factors during the project contributes to trust building as individuals trust each other and fulfill their responsibilities within a familiar and acceptable environment, and perceive a sense of fairness regarding the process and access to information. Furthermore, in addition to fostering institutional trust, findings show that consistent use of institutional factors (e.g. following the plans and fulfilling the requirements) in leading the project team and its environment facilitates and strengthens communication and interactions among individuals, helps resolve conflicts and discussions, and increases team members' confidence in the project manager's competence. Thus, team members commit to and engage in project processes to achieve the goals. I suggest that this aspect is connected to interactional trust, in that the development of interactional trust (preaching, involving, and sympathizing mechanisms) is moderated and colored by the use of institutional factors.

The abovementioned findings are reflected in a model that shows that project managers need to, in different situations during the project, tailor and concurrently use preaching, involving, and sympathizing to foster interactional trust, and identify and use formal and informal institutional factors to facilitate and moderate interactional trust among team members. Lastly, intertwined with the first and second aspects I mentioned from the paper, the paper shows that contextual dynamics of the change project, in terms of complexity and uncertainty, play a role in how the manager participates in the management of the change project and trust building. For instance, as uncertainty increases when controversial cases are being discussed in the project, the manager finds it necessary to emphasize sympathizing and preaching, and to adjust the project processes (e.g. working in themes and pacing down the process) to actually resolve the issue.

4.2. Summary of paper II
Farid, P. & Waldorff, S. B. 2022. Navigating tensions to create value: An institutional logics perspective on the change program and its organizational context. *Project Management Journal,* in press.

Paper II reports a comparative case study of two municipality merger programs (cases P and N), and aims to expand the knowledge on value creation in change programs. The paper answers *how do program management actors develop practices to navigate tensions between a change program and its organizational context in order to create value?* The selected cases in the paper shared a similar managerial framework for the program, program management organization and role allocation, governing laws, goal sets, and limited knowledge of project/program management in the program teams. The main differences between them include the higher sociopolitical complexity at the outset of case N than case P, which hindered a positive and quick start to the program; and the better goal fulfillment in case P than in case N. The findings of paper II constitute a key episode of my thesis's story in three ways. First, the paper positions the practice of a change program's value creation in its surrounding organizational context, and explores how accidental change program managers (and related program management actors) dealt with their challenging program role and attached demands to enable the program's value creation process. Second, the findings touch upon the role of accidental change program managers, the process of them dealing with their temporary role, and the dynamic of such a process in the shadow their permanent role and the hosting organizational context. Third, the paper explains the managers' perception and practice of change program value creation, the organizational context of change programs, and the tensions created when meeting the program management agenda for creating value, which had consequences for the management of these programs.

Answering the paper's research question, applying an institutional logics lens to explore the program's and its organizational contexts as institutional logics revealed two distinctive logics with different value creation characteristics, which conflicted with each other on different occasions during the change programs. Based on actors' reflections on how they perceived their own and others' actions in the value creation process, the logics revealed to be public management organizing and program management organizing logics, and the value creation characteristics of these were connected to the time dimension, structure, purpose, and process. These characteristics or attributes provide an explanation of a change program's organizational context. The identified conflicts or tensions between the logics represent the dynamics between the change program (as the new way of working) and its organizational context.

Establishing that the hosting organizational context(s) may entail a different view of how to manage and create value from the temporary organization's agenda to identify, plan, and generate value (creating tensions), the paper's findings then address how actors navigated the tensions in order to facilitate the achievement of the program's outcomes. In other words, the findings reveal that actors' engagement in value creation in change programs rested on their perception of tensions between the program and its context's value creation characteristics, and that they developed some practices, namely *problematizing*, *designing*, and *team building*, to navigate the tensions and enable their participation in value creation in the interest of the change program. The findings on practices of navigating tensions refer to actors handling their role in relation to a new work methodology, and the social sense-making of the change program, and show that actors entered a process of disrupting (pushing back) the "normal/old" logic and creating legitimacy and a culture for the new logic so that new roles, expectations, behaviors, and activities became normalized.

The core idea of *problematizing* suggests that to enable adherence to and practice of the program management organizing logic, actors made sense of the logic and created legitimacy and support for the program's purposes and temporary organization as the framework in which to deliver the objectives. The practice of *designing* refers to operationalizing the program structure by purposefully designing the program work through enrolling relevant expertise to develop processes based on the program's ongoing results, with a focus on planning, adjusting, and generating the change's identified value. Such a practice suggests the need to adapt the new methodology to the context. Finally, *team building* suggests that, under tensions between logics, program management actors, with the leadership of the program manager, performed relationship- and trust-building activities to draw the new roles and responsibilities "close," and build a unified team culture to deliver a common goal through cooperation and collaboration. Team building aimed at legitimizing program management practices, stabilizing delegated authorities in the program, and motivating actors to deal with contrary forces and align their focus on the program's value creation. Considering these findings, the paper underlines that practices are strategies for actors to push back the public management organizing logic and let the unfamiliar temporary role be manifested.

Although similarly acknowledged and established in both cases, the paper shows that actors in case N, which achieved a lesser degree of goal fulfillment, took a different approach and only partly performed the practices that affected the generation of value (especially decision-makers, which influenced program manager role). In the paper, this is explained by the dominance of the old logic; addressing the tensions at the program–organization interface is not always aligned with the purpose of the program, but owing to personal perceptions of the environment and preferences, actors might choose to latch on to the old logic and avoid committing to the roles, processes, and objectives of the temporary organization. In this paper's case N, the old logic (public management organizing logic) was so dominant that it caused stronger tensions and challenged actors in navigating practices. Therefore, resolving tensions between the logics to enable program management and related roles were followed by the shadow of the hosting, public management organizing logic.

Together, the findings on navigating practices suggest that employing temporary organizations to deliver change processes in a permanent organization does not automatically bring the benefits that one could expect and wish for, but conflicts may arise between the temporary and hosting management systems that need to be addressed by actors. On a higher level, the paper shows that program value creation is influenced by organizational culture and values (which can be both enabler and disabler), and that enactment of value creation is dependent on the position of the temporary organization in the hosting line organization(s).

Lastly, intertwined with these findings, the analysis also shows that the process of value creation in change programs occurs in the actor's perceptions and actions, where the desired value is identified through iterative sense-making processes and collaboration in earlier phases of the change program, and planned and generated through iterative (re)evaluation and (re)planning of the program at later stages.

4.3. Summary of paper III
Farid, P. & Vie, O. E. 2022. In search of competencies: accidental program managers leading change programs. In *e-proceedings of EURAM conference*. Presented at the conference 15–17 June 2022, Winterthur, Switzerland.

Given the key role of program managers in leading change programs to create the value that the program is set up to identify and generate, and the issue of accidental assignment of top executives from line organizations to set up and lead the temporary organizations, paper III examines *which competencies do accidental change program managers use to successfully deliver organizational change programs?* This paper reports a multiple-case study in which four change programs with different levels of complexity and uncertainty had program managers with limited knowledge of project/program management, but achieved acceptable delivery outcomes. To synthetize the program management competency research, we employed the managerial skill agenda by Katz (1955), including the three skill sets, namely technical, human, and conceptual skills, that are important in the manager role. By doing this, an *implicit* division between technical skills related to the nature of the associated business hosting the program, and technical skills related to the administration of temporary organizations was recognized. We addressed this by including business-related technical skill, project/program management technical skill, human skill, and conceptual skill categories in the framework. Our division of the technical category was empirically confirmed and, with the use of Katz's framework, yielded theoretical contribution.

The empirical findings of paper III constitute an important episode of this thesis's story in three ways. First, having an actor-centric focus on competencies, the paper narrates the oft-accidental program managers' participation in the management of change programs and the process of value creation. Second, the paper elucidates important competencies that oft-accidental program managers require to perform their program role and lead the programs toward success. Third, the paper refers to two attributes, namely sociopolitical complexity and uncertainty, to explain the change program's context, which has an influence on how managers use their skills to manage the change program.

For the first point, exploring the actions of program managers to facilitate value creation, the findings show that program managers perceived and participated in the management of change programs to create value considering (1) interdependencies among the projects and activities within the programs, and the program's dependencies and connections to wider environments; (2) contextual dynamics concerning complexity and uncertainty; and (3) a significant human aspect. To do so, they employed a flexible managerial approach.

For the second (and third) point, from thematic analysis of interviews, it is evident that using conceptual and human skills is fundamental. The findings show that the ability of a manager to take the entirety of the change program into account, and manage its relation to the wider environments contributed to identifying, planning, and generating the relevant value. Regarding the human skill, findings suggest that the ability of program managers to work with people from different groups connected to the change program acted as a glue for the program work, and significantly facilitated the attainment of outcomes. Commonly, regarding conceptual and human skills, the findings show that different levels of sociopolitical complexity and uncertainty in change programs' contexts influenced the ability of program managers to use their skills; in more complex contexts with higher uncertainty, program managers could not fully use their skills. This suggests we need to explore and understand the competencies of temporary organizations' leaders within the context they are embedded.

Concerning business-related technical skills, the paper offers new insights showing that exercising the profession/business-related specialization by program managers is a key factor

for change program's progress. In-depth knowledge of the organization's business and content of the program contributed to resolving challenges during the change transition, and led and shaped the relevant change. Furthermore, the findings report that having sufficient knowledge of managing temporary organizations could be beneficial in leading change programs. According to interviews and reviews of decision-making meeting reports, program managers intuitively and mostly unsystematically performed some important governance themes of program management (e.g. risk–benefits management) and felt the need to compensate for their limited program management skill. This led to a degree of ineffectiveness in the process of value creation.

To compensate for insufficient skills in program management, the paper identifies that emphasizing the use of human skills to ensure trustful relationships and resolve conflicts and concerns, accepting high work pressure, and committing to the program manager role beyond the original work description were key. These results are interesting because they highlight, from one side, the issue of accidental project/program managers in the change context, and from the other side, the need for skill in administrating temporary organizations to ensure the success of change projects/programs. In other words, while the paper acknowledges the benefits of having a competent program manager with sufficient program management technical skills, the findings suggest that, through mastering working with people (relationship, trust building, conflict management) and accepting a degree of personal burnout, accidental change program managers can deliver the change programs appropriately. However, building or having sufficient skill in program management can be a plus, helping managers to better handle uncertainties and shape and create more value from the invested resources.

5. Analysis and discussion

This section answers the thesis's subordinate research questions by using the empirical findings of the attached papers, summarized in chapter 4, in the light of the thesis's theoretical framework. Subordinate research questions are discussed separately in sections 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3. Next, I bring these discussions together and my overall research question is discussed in the conclusion, chapter 6.

5.1. The management of change programs and value creation

Section 2.1 presents a review of change programs, the concepts of value and value creation in change programs, and the management of change programs to create the desired value, and identifies a knowledge gap regarding an actor-centric view of the mentioned notions. I formulated my first subordinate research question as *how do program managers interpret and how do they practice the management of change programs to create value?* In subsection 5.1.1, I draw on findings from papers I, II, and III to develop my discussion points to answer the question in subsection 5.1.3.

Creating the desired value with an actor-centric outlook is an underlying interest in all three papers; thus, all papers contribute to answering subordinate research question 1. From the foci of the papers, I expected that paper II would offer the main input to answering the question; interestingly, paper III turned out to contribute strongly as well. In each case, the desired value included delivering a defendable transition process and creating a robust and sustainable organization with an effective and agile structure, financial background, and organizational culture that was prepared to offer quality services to citizens by the merger's closure, and capable of utilizing future opportunities, and tackling future challenges. This value has an interwoven financial/non-financial, and tangible/intangible nature, and is related to both short- and long-term perspectives. The findings of the three papers show that change program's values depend on and are shaped by program management actors' understanding of a program's content and processes within organizational and wider associated contexts. The most important stakeholders of the studied change programs included the merging organizations' administrative leaders, political leaders (representing the local community and political parties), and employees, who were represented by union representatives; thus, value creation in programs was mainly shaped by these actors from within the program management team. Other stakeholders played a minor role in value creation; for example, industry actors in communities were involved only in some orientation meetings, where ideas and concerns were shared with the politicians and municipality directors.

5.1.1. Program managers' interpretation and managing of change programs

A reinterpretation of paper III's findings on the participation of managers in the value creation process under themes of competencies shows that program managers interpret the management of change programs in relation to program management actors' perceptions, feelings, attitudes, and actions regarding the content and processes of programs within their context. Informants acknowledged that managing a change program through different activities, such as planning and risk management, is different from managing other types of program unique (Ives, 2005) as the borders of the program are highly permeable to the dynamics of the line organizations (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2009, Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018) and changes in the wider environment (Johansson et al., 2007). Moreover, a program's goal achievement is intertwined with a significant human aspect, both within and towards the

line organizations (e.g. (Beach and Coule, 2016, Shaw, 2017). I perceived and found evidence for such an interpretation in the following points from paper III.

First, my findings show that managers managed change programs through a flexible and tailored approach in which they adjusted their emphasis on different skills to align with a continuously changing process of sense-making, and influenced value creation by actors to initiate change under the reform framework. Second, program managers interpreted and managed change programs through acknowledging the entirety of the programs in which groups and individuals established and committed to common outcomes and worked across borders to deliver the agreed value, and through considering and addressing the external dynamics that influenced the work and results of change programs. Following this, empirical evidence demonstrates that program managers were (1) detectors of abstract objectives and concepts, political and cultural priorities and perspectives within and outside the program, and functional inputs and operations, and (2) translators of what they detected for the program management team to articulate relevant information, to facilitate identifying and establishing the desired value at the early stages of the change program, and to enable interactions and processes in order to (re)plan and generate the desired value. Third, to support the first and second points, managers greatly stressed the use of human skills to strengthen relationship and trust building, which implies that managers interpreted the generation of desired outcomes through what individuals thought and felt, and how they acted and interacted.

Comparing these findings with extant literature, regarding the first point, considering the characteristics of change programs (uncertainty, embeddedness, etc.) that require a flexible managerial approach (Crawford and Pollack, 2004, Crawford et al., 2003, Pollack, 2012), empirical findings show that to create the desired value, program managers formed such flexibility by using different skills. Regarding the second point, considering and managing the entirety of change programs, managing actions and interactions within and across programs' projects has been highlighted by former research (under the management debate in 2.1.5). Among other concepts, those of boundary spanning, integration, isolation, and control mechanisms refer to this (e.g. (Nieminen and Lehtonen, 2008, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Turkulainen et al., 2015, Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018). Resonating with these studies, my study goes deeper and expands the knowledge on this issue by illustrating one key reason why managers actively attend to the management of program boundaries: because a program's content and processes are shaped through the program management actors' perception and sense-making of the program and its context.

The same point contributes to the value creation debate in the change context, agreeing with studies that suggest value creation requires (1) coordinated interaction and collaboration among the associated stakeholders (stable program management members in my cases) at the early stages of the program (e.g. (Liu et al., 2019), and (2) a flexible governance system to enroll and ensure relevant and timely expertise, interaction, and collaboration during the program's planning, execution, and closure (e.g. (Miterev et al., 2020, Laine et al., 2016). The empirical evidence from my paper expands these studies by bringing the individual program managers to the fore and presents their experience on how to lead the change programs to create value throughout the program, which has not been explicitly explored in previous studies (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018). It is interesting that the experiences of managers without disciplined project or program management skills echo a process of value creation similar to that suggested in general theoretical descriptions (e.g. (Thiry, 2004), but reveal a

noteworthy facet of the process: that it occurs through the program management actors' perception, interaction, and action. This is in line with former studies that emphasize the subjective nature of program value, which is shaped, discussed, and co-created by program actors (Liu et al., 2019) through social sense-making and negotiation of program content and characteristics of context (Laine et al., 2016), and using different influencing strategies (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2019). Sharpening these for an organizational change program context, as the program management teams in my cases were stable throughout the programs, findings suggest the need for a strong human-oriented management approach. This point also relates to the third point from the findings.

For the third point, although the value creation debate explicates the key roles and contributions of individual actors (individually and collectively) in the value creation process, the role of program managers to consider this in terms of managing feelings, concerns, attitudes, and interactions between the program actors had been neglected. The third point thus adds to the value creation dialogue in the change program context and suggests that program managers should be aware of the need to handle human dynamics in program teams to manage value creation true to the desired change. Compared to former research on the management of change programs, on the other hand, my findings resonate well with previous results (second stream in subsection 2.1.4) that underscore the need to manage people for success in change programs (e.g. (Balogun and Johnson, 2005, Shaw, 2017, Beach and Coule, 2016). Such a dimension has been interpreted and argued to connect change management to project and program management.

Here I see the findings of paper I as supportive and useful. Paper I thoroughly describes the manager's engagement in managing trust to facilitate the change project processes and progress towards successfully delivering the desired value. Considering subordinate research question 1, a reinterpretation of paper I's findings implies that the perception of the case's project manager of managing the change project to identify, plan, and generate relevant and desired value is closely related to managing people in the team. Paper I's empirical evidence about how the manager practiced involving team members over the phases of project in a responsive manner suggests that value creation was interpreted as (a) highly open and learning-oriented to identify the desired value, and (b) targeted processes and interactions in an appropriate project structure to plan, replan, and generate the value. Additionally, from paper I, the concluding trust model mirrors four significant practices (preaching, involving, sympathizing, adhering) and their interrelationships, which together show how the project manager participated in and managed trust and relationships to realize the change project and promote value creation. This is related to the practice of managing change programs and value creation with a focus on stakeholder management and relationship management (OGC, 2011), which is only touched upon in the reviewed literature. For instance, interest in co-creation of value and the need for managing stakeholders in co-creation sessions (e.g. (Liu et al., 2019) in the value debate underscores the need for trust building, but does not lead to a comprehensive empirical understanding of how to create trust and manage relationships. Therefore, I argue that my findings from paper I, manifested in the model (figure 3, page 516 in the paper), provide novel, empirically grounded insights on an important, barely addressed, theme in managing change programs.

Back with paper III again, while the findings highlight managers' "softness" in handling the dependent nature of value creation, they also show that in the process of value creation,

program managers did not overlook their key role and expertise in building the new organization. My findings show that the program manager's knowledge and experience from the line organization's business, managing a municipality organization in these cases, was critically important for shaping and creating the desired value or building the new organization. Empirical examples regarding unique context-dependent solutions for the program under "municipal-management technical skill" and "conceptual skill" themes in the paper refer to this point and suggest that the program manager critically influenced the value creation process and the architecture of the generated value. As mentioned above, such an active role of change program managers in guiding and shaping the value creation process has not been echoed in former studies (and one might assume that managers are considered merely as orchestrators); thus, the findings add to the value creation debate in the change program context.

Regarding paper II, this paper focuses on value creation in change programs and offers important findings to answer the subordinate research question in the current section. The paper underscores how program management actors (including the program managers) interpret and practice the management of change programs and value creation in relation to their line organizational context, whose attributes are carried into the change program by actors, influencing actors' perceptions of leading the program and attaining desired outcomes. Following a lack of project/program management skill among program managers, findings show that organizational attributes can conflict with the program's agenda for value creation; thus, managing change programs and ensuring proper value creation demand a process to socialize and normalize program management's imbedded managerial ideas. Alongside the necessary efforts to do so (practices of problematizing, designing, team building), similar to the findings of paper III, paper II shows that program managers interpreted the management of change programs and the process of value creation as intertwined with (a) considering the congruity of projects and other activities within the programs for the purpose of change, (b) considering the dynamics in wider contexts, and (c) considering and leading actors' perceptions of program processes, interactions, and goals.

From the findings of paper II, in earlier stages of the studied change programs, program managers considered value creation in relation to managing open and explorative interactions and processes to establish the desired value. At later stages, the findings show that managers managed the program and facilitated value creation by keeping the program organization structure and enrolled expertise responsive to ongoing results and changes as the value was negotiated and renegotiated among the actors. Managers then picked up evolving results and negotiations as the basis for further planning and progress in the program, yet strove to handle political and cultural dynamics and relationships, to achieve the identified desired value by making compromises if needed. Moreover, coherent with the findings from paper III, paper II shows that associating the value creation process with the human aspect was particularly signified by program managers' consistent emphasis on the concept of trust building.

Similar to the discussion of findings from paper III, the abovementioned points from paper II show that (a) the process of value creation is an uncertain and evolving process (Thiry, 2007, Thiry, 2004), (b) value and value creation are subjective and are shaped and realized through actors' perceptions and actions (Laine et al., 2016, Eskerod and Ang, 2017), and (c) the program governance should be mirrored through a flexible organizing structure (Miterev et al., 2020, Yu and Kittler, 2012) so that informal, iterative sense-making and collaboration are

accommodated in the early phases (Martinsuo and Killen, 2014, Thiry, 2004), and iterative (re)evaluation of program content and processes are facilitated during planning and implementation (Thiry, 2004). Inextricably, the findings imply that the management of change programs for creating the desired value is related to managing the boundaries between the projects of the program, and between the program and its wider contexts (e.g. (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015, Johansson et al., 2007). In addition, the main findings of paper II on the influence of contextual views on a change program's agenda to create value show that managing value creation in change programs is not a "follow-the-roadmap" task for program managers. Instead, based on the position of temporary organizations in associated permanent organizations, the managers might be challenged to understand and adhere to the program management agenda to create value. I argue that this latter point offers novel insights to the value debate in change programs, making a significant contribution to the discussion by responding to the calls for longitudinal studies of value creation in the change program context (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018), while considering the role and impact of the permanent organization on change projects or programs (Martinsuo et al., 2020). This point is also highly relevant to the second theoretical topic of the thesis, section 2.2, which I discuss comprehensively in section 5.2.

The discussion points from the current subsection are used in subsection 5.1.3 to provide a united answer to my first subordinate research question. Before that, I would like to make an additional theoretical reflection, which is not related to my thesis's focus, but is an intriguing and useful point.

5.1.2. Reflecting on the type of change program

In this section, I connect my findings to a theoretical aspect that I briefly touched upon in section 2.1. When I was developing the theoretical section 2.1, taking the empirical setting into account, a theoretical question (a quite essential one for my thesis) emerged that needed to be answered. The question was simply *what type of change program are my cases?* Even without a detailed reading of the thesis so far, it is clear that I have considered my cases as organizational change programs. One could question this consideration, as the chosen cases are indeed municipality mergers that aim to primarily merge two municipal organizations. Theoretically, my understanding of former research concerning the connection between *change* and *temporary organizations* is that many types of change within or between organizations that have characteristics of second-order change or transformation (Gareis, 2010) are generally considered as, among other types, large changes, organizational changes, or transformational changes. For instance, in a study by Vereecke et al. (2003) that aims to theorize a classification of development programs, as examples of programs with high degrees of change whose projects should be formed for the purpose of the large-scale change initiative, both a new technology development for a new market and a post-merger development process equally represent the same phenomenon. As another example, Nogeste (2010) considers mergers and acquisitions (M&As) as representing strategically oriented initiatives that can be led through the program management framework. M&As have had very narrow representation in project management (e.g. (Meckl, 2004, Maire and Collerette, 2011, Nogeste, 2010, Birollo and Teerikangas, 2019, Sulkowski et al., 2018). Interestingly, in a recent call by the *International Journal of Project Management*, Martinsuo et al. (2020) invite new studies on "strategic projects and programs" (those having a significant change element) with an agenda to recognize four types of change projects and programs. These types include

(a) large-scale organizational change and transformation, (b) interorganizational strategic projects and programs, (c) new business ventures and radical innovation, and (d) major and megaprojects and alliances. Following this call, by the time that I am finalizing my dissertation, the *International Journal of Project Management* has published six papers that sharpen our understanding of change programs formulated as different types, for example, system transformation programs, interorganizational strategic change projects, divestments, and change towards cost-efficient construction projects (see (Bos-de Vos et al., 2022, van Marrewijk and van den Ende, 2022, Amiri et al., 2022, Beste and Klakegg, 2022). This is of course a valuable start, and motivation for further similar attempts.

Acknowledging that different types or forms of change projects and programs have been treated similarly in former research, following my personal interest, and considering the recent inspiration to sharpen studies of change projects and programs (regarding the content of changes), here I explain why I have viewed my empirical cases as organizational change programs. Based on the interviews, shortly after attaining and documenting the agreement to merge between the involved parties in each case, explicit dialogue and intense interactions were arranged for program actors to build a united team and establish common goals for the transition process. In practice, this led to pushing the concept of merger aside, considering all involved organizations as one organization/body that should be developed, and envisioning a common future. The *development dimension* included the development of a new structure for functions and services, a new financial basis and outlook, a new organizational culture, and development of IT systems. All cases, except for cases 2 and 4, managed to reach this stage very soon after the agreement. The merger dimension, for example, transition of employees or selecting the name and coat of arms for the new municipalities, became only a peripheral aspect of the organizational change process (the identity dimension was present but managed well). Even in cases 2 and 4, which were characterized by high complexity and uncertainty, and where the issue of common identity and problematic harmony between political interests overshadowed the change program's processes and results, the teams strove to keep the focus on the development aspect of the process. Therefore, I found it appropriate and fair to the data to view the processes as organizational change programs. By clarifying the type of change programs that I have selected for my thesis, my study considers the call for attention to the type of change projects and programs.

5.1.3. The answer to subordinate research question 1 and theoretical implications
Section 5.1 aims to answer *how do program managers interpret and how do they practice the management of change programs to create value?* While earlier research has a rather prescriptive outlook on how program management/value creation should take place in change programs, my study looks from the perspective of program managers, analyzes their experiences, and explains how managers interpret and practice the management of change programs. From the rather lengthy discussion in subsection 5.1.1, I would like to underline three points that constitute different parts of my answer to the subordinate research question.

First, as a backdrop to discussions of how program managers interpreted and practiced the management of change programs and created the desired value within the new organization, the findings from all three papers show that the objectives and processes of change programs are intimately linked, revealing the requirement for a strong fellowship among the involved actors. Following this, as my second point here, the discussion of findings from papers II and III show that the managers interpreted the management of the change program by

acknowledging and managing the entirety of the change program, and program actors' evolving perceptions, feelings, attitudes, actions, and interactions regarding "which value" and "how to achieve it." The informants reflected that the definition of the change program's value is found in an ongoing negotiation of goals and objectives, and the realization methodology in the mind and language of actors, which can be affected by different contextual factors. These agree with and build on earlier research that recognizes the uncertain and evolving process of managing value creation in change programs that is based on involved actors' perceptions and participation in the process (e.g. (Thiry, 2004, Laine et al., 2016). Subsequently, my findings strongly highlight that such an interpretation implies that managers connect the management of change programs to the management of the program team, relationships, and trust, which adds depth to former relevant findings (e.g. (Shaw, 2017, Beach and Coule, 2016). The trust model from paper I makes a leap and inductively reveals how the manager practices relationship and trust management as an important part of the management of change projects; referring to a human-centric approach to manage.

Intertwined with such an interpretation, as my third point, mainly based on papers II and III, I found the program managers' participation in, and managing of change programs manifested in several aspects. (A) Program managers facilitated and realized open, learning-oriented, and collaborative relations and interactions to enable sense-making, negotiating, and identifying the desired value in the form of the new organization at earlier stages of change programs. (B) Program managers acted as translator, communicator, and influencer of evolving inputs and results for the program actors, and as a strong leader and boundary spanner ensuring interaction and collaboration across the program's projects and activities to keep the program going and relevant as the programs proceeded. (C) Program managers negotiated and stood up for what they believed to be important values regarding the new organization, regardless of top management's interventions and conflicts. (D) Program managers showed a flexible managerial approach, adjusting their use of different skills to accommodate the changes in internal and external environments of program organization. (E) The managers strongly emphasized the use of human-oriented skills to create, maintain, and retain trustful relationships among the actors. A, B, C, D, and E are thus pieces of an answer that my papers offer regarding how the program managers practice the management of change programs to create value. With detailed empirical evidence, my findings unpack the needed "flexible approach" (Pollack, 2012, Crawford et al., 2003), for example, through adjusting their skill set to the program's dynamics or adapting the program structure to facilitate and participate in necessary activities during the program's phases. Activities include iterative sense-making in the early stages (Martinsuo and Killen, 2014), iterative (re)evaluation of and changing program's content and processes (Thiry, 2004), and integration management (e.g. (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Nieminen and Lehtonen, 2008). Moreover, the management of change programs to create value actually became positioned in the hosting organizational context and was affected by it, which offers novel insights to the value debate in change programs. These points together, analyzed from the individual perspective of program managers, fills the lack of explicit investigation into change program managers' experience of practicing "management" to create value.

To sum up, considering the second and third points, my study agrees with former research on the overall process of identifying, planning, and generating value throughout the program, and managerial considerations (e.g. boundary spanning) to facilitate these stages. Complementing

existing research, my discussions offer an actor-centric view of value creation and discuss that program managers interpret and practice the management of change programs to create value through acknowledging, facilitating, and shaping program management actors' perceptions, feelings, attitudes, actions, and interactions in terms of the concept of value and actors' participation in the value creation process. In addition, paper II exclusively highlights the potential impact of the permanent organization on the managers' understanding and their practice of program value creation, thus, offers novel insights. Explicating the program manager's engagement in managing change programs and producing desired value, this section contributes to the value creation debate in the change program context (context as type), which has not been comprehensively addressed in former research, particularly at an actor/program manager level (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018). My findings help to explain a challenging process as programs have different facets that change over time (phase by phase), making the value creation stages difficult.

5.2. The management of change programs in their organizational context

In section 2.2, I established that the management of change programs should be understood in relation to programs' wider, permanent organizational context. I underlined a lack of explicit agreement on how change programs' organizational context (hereafter context) can be understood, and how contextual dynamics at the temporary-to-permanent contextual interface (hereafter interface) influence the management of change programs by program managers. I formulated my second subordinate research question as *how is the management of change programs influenced by organizational context?*

 In subsections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, I draw on the findings of papers I, II, and III to develop my arguments for answering the posed question. I provide a running discussion in those subsections, which is summarized and provides a unified answer to the research question in subsection 5.2.4.

Serving different purposes, in different ways, the concept of context plays an important role visibly in papers II and III, and implicitly in paper I. Appropriately creating value in change programs is an underlying focus in all three papers, and paper II directly focuses on exploring the management of change programs as a part of a wider organizational context. Paper III takes a competency perspective and examines how program managers practice their competencies in change programs with different contextual situations, and paper I explores trust-building practices, which are tailored to the project and its contextual changes.

5.2.1. Attributes of organizational context

In this section, I explicate what my study identifies as attributes of the context of the change program or the temporary organization. When I developed my review in section 2.2, I chose to introduce the institutional logics theory as a lens to contribute to answering my second subordinate research question. Considering this, and the fact that the logics theory is directly used in paper II, I would like to clarify once again that using the logics perspective reflected in the findings of paper II is only one solid resource for my answer in this section. Indeed, the in-depth detailed empirical results of papers III and I that are based on other theoretical premises are also used and reinterpreted to complement the findings of paper II in answering my second subordinate research question.

Starting with the attributes of change programs' context, my findings in paper II disclose a set of characteristics as and embodied in institutional logics. Sharpened to examine how program

management actors dealt with the interface when engaging in value creation processes in change programs, the identified contexts and their characteristics emerged in relation to value creation processes, or the management of change programs. Based on actors' interpretations, the paper inductively arrives at two logics (contexts) entailing attributes of *time dimension (or orientation)*, *structure*, *goals/purposes*, and *value creation processes*. To understand these attributes, several sub-characteristics are recognized that together describe the context. I insert Table 2 from the paper (as Table 9 here) to present the identified attributes and their sub-characteristics. Following the empirical setting of the chosen cases, programs' organizational context manifested as a public management organizing logic, including an enduring time dimension, bureaucratic hierarchical organizational structure, relationships in which actors hold a lifelong career perspective, specific democratic and community development goals, and certain enduring administrative–political processes to realize the goals.

Table 9 The attributes of permanent organizational context embedding the change program (Table 2 from paper II; Farid and Waldorff, in press)

Value creation (VC) characteristics	Public management organizing logic	Program management organizing logic
Time dimension	• Enduring/permanent	• Temporary/phase-based
Structure	• Bureaucratic hierarchical levels of individuals and groups • Bureaucrats/administrative executives leading • Lifelong career perspective	• Adaptive collaborative organizing • United program management team leading • Temporary position
Goals/purposes	• Democracy • Continuity and functional competence to optimally serve the citizens • Development of the local community across electoral cycles	• Innovation and effectiveness around the task • Giving voice to experts temporarily to accomplish the task • Creating the desired value within a timeframe
Value creation process	• Enduring political–administrative interactions and negotiations • Making trade-offs to harmonize proposed value and political priorities • Synchronizing VC agenda across electoral cycles	• Temporary delegation of authority to experts in the program group • Basing decisions on program information and processes • Cyclic evaluation and revision within program lifecycle

To develop an answer to my thesis's second subordinate research question, given that the management of change programs and creating the desired value are intimately intertwined (see subsections 2.1.4 and 2.1.5), I argue that the identified attributes explaining the change program's organizational context in paper II make a key contribution to understanding the organizational context of change programs more generally. Although the identified sub-characteristics of each attribute are local to the empirical cases, I propose that time orientation, structure, goals or purposes, and value creation process are generic qualities that are valid when considering the permanent organizational context of change programs against the program's context in other settings. Indeed, the paper is focused on positioning the

temporary organization against its permanent organizational context(s), and the public management organizing logic appeared only because of the chosen setting. The paper thus suggests the idea of there being several (in my case two) contexts as logics that help improve the understanding of the issues of temporary organizations. In addition, the inductive process of arriving at such an understanding described in the methodology chapter of the paper (and mirrored in table 9) offers an explicit and novel way for capturing the attributes of the organizational context of temporary organizations, inspiring future studies in project management.

Regarding the issue of context, in paper III, change programs' context is captured through the concepts of sociopolitical complexity and uncertainty. The paper is set to explore competencies of oft-accidental change program managers used to successfully create the desired value in change programs; thus, context is not the focal concern. Nevertheless, the findings show that the characteristics of complexity and uncertainty played a key role in how managers managed the programs using their different competencies; in other words, what possibilities they interpreted for practicing their competencies throughout the programs. The identification of these characteristics is somewhat implicit in the paper, but are documented as sociopolitical complexity, referring to the support for the program and the power and interest alignment between top management of involved organizations (represented in the program team), and uncertainty regarding goals and implementation methods of the change process (program management as a managerial framework). Moreover, a reinterpretation of the findings on the program management technical skills from the paper suggests that the hosting organizations' view of and experience with management of temporary organizations (coinciding with program managers' limited knowledge of project/program management) against the "normal" (permanent organization's) time orientation, goals, and political–administrative processes shaped the practice of program management by managers. For example, the interview quote used on page 22 in paper III illustrates the associated program manager's acknowledgement and consideration of context in terms of goals and purposes, the process of evaluating and realizing the goals, and a specific time orientation when managing the program.

Similar to implicit notions of the change program's context in paper III, paper I, which investigates trust building in (change) projects, also offers implicit reflections on the interface. In the paper, we see that the practices related to trust building are adjusted following some contextual characteristics including uncertainty and complexity of top management support for the change and interest or power alignment between the temporary and permanent organizations. The paper refers to some main roots of such contextual qualities, for example, employing the project manager from the largest merging organization, and signs that the "old" way of thinking dominates (goals being prioritized based on line organization's premises). Intertwined with adjusting trust-building practices, we implicitly see that some aspects of the management of change projects is influenced by contextual dynamics. Moreover, a reinterpretation of the findings reveals that on some occasions (e.g. processing controversial financial decisions in the project) over the project's lifecycle, the "old priorities" (stemming from the line organizations' view) created a challenging situation for the management of the change project.

Together from all papers, grounded in an explicit empirical investigation in paper II, and supported by empirical evidence from papers III and I, my findings refer to a number of

important, concrete attributes to understand the permanent organizational context of change programs. These attributes include time dimensions (or orientation), goals/purposes, organizational structure, value-creation process, sociopolitical complexity, and uncertainty about temporary organization's goals and implementation method. Comparing these explicit, inductively built-up attributes to earlier research, my findings relate to the second (scope of program context: top management support, program's position against other organizational activities) and especially the third (characteristics of program context: stability, support, interaction) aspects of programs' context developed by (Shao and Müller, 2011). As mentioned in subsection 2.2.2, the contextual aspects developed by Shao and Müller (2011) trigger an important debate in program management and offer a useful preliminary understanding of program context. However, they remain limited to abstract notions. Therefore, the empirically elaborated attributes that my study suggests expand these generic aspects and unfold underlying meanings.

Comparing them with other earlier empirical findings in the literature (summarized in Table 1), I argue that my results can serve as one clear way to analyze and synthetize the rather scattered and mostly implicit findings on qualities of context. For example, organizational structure, norms, rules, and culture (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008), organizational hierarchy, identity, and rationality (Johansson et al., 2007), or organization's experience with project-based work, governance, and defined autonomy given to the temporary organization (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018) can noticeably relate to my findings concerning organizational structure, time dimension, goals, and the value creation process. Regarding sociopolitical complexity and uncertainty, the concepts of complexity, uncertainty, top management/organization's support for the change program, and political dynamics (Ritson et al., 2012, Turkulainen et al., 2015, Willems et al., 2020) seem to be supportive. In Table 10, I analyze and position the reviewed studies in subsection 2.2.2 under the attributes I identify. As the earlier research on context's attributes is neither fully explicit nor grounded, Table 10 is developed based on my evaluation of what the sources' understanding of context may refer to.

Serving the described role, my study explicates the concept of context and invites further studies to openly address and develop this concept further. This is important because, while the importance of the interface for the management of change programs is established, with the exception of the study of Shao and Müller (2011), the readings in the table seem to introduce some assumed qualities. Nevertheless, as documented in subsection 2.2.2, I have identified some inquiries that set an agenda to purposefully explore the interface concerning the management of change programs. Among these, the temporal characteristics in the context of large organizational change projects (Stjerne et al., 2019), temporal and hierarchical orientations of change programs and their context (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016), and the "way of working" in temporary and permanent organizations within change project settings (Lunkka et al., 2019) are considered as describing the context. I include these studies in the table, in gray. Even in these studies, what the suggested attributes entail and why they are considered in the studies are barely explained. As argued above, by providing concrete empirically grounded attributes of a change program's organizational context, my study expands these latter studies.

The last point before moving to the next section is that, although paper II specifically concentrates on exploring the context, owing to the format and requirements of the paper,

there was limited room to discuss the identified contextual attributes. Thus, a large part of the discussion I present in the current section is novel for the purpose of this thesis.

Table 10 Analysis of earlier, context-related studies in relation the identified attributes in the thesis

	Time dimension	Structure	Goals/purposes	Value-creation process	(Sociopolitical) complexity and uncertainty
Earlier studies	Experience with project-based work / project-based organizing practices (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015) Organizational learning, Management system for temporary organizations (Ritson et al., 2012) Legitimacy of the temporary organization in the organization (Turkulainen et al., 2015) Existing mandate and competencies regarding temporary organizations (Willems et al., 2020) Temporal characteristics (Sjterne et al., 2019, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016)	Organizational structure / organizational hierarchy (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Johansson et al., 2007) Governance, Autonomy given to temporary organization (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018) Experience with project-based work / project-based organizing practices (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015) Organizational learning, Management system for temporary organizations (Ritson et al., 2012) Legitimacy of the temporary organization in the organization (Turkulainen et al., 2015) Existing mandate and competencies regarding temporary organizations (Willems et al., 2020) Hierarchical orientation (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016)	Identity and rationality (Johansson et al., 2007) Experience with project-based work / project-based organizing practices (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015) Governance (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018) Organization's strategy (Ritson et al., 2012) Management system for temporary organizations (Ritson et al., 2012) Legitimacy of the temporary organization in the organization (Turkulainen et al., 2015) Existing mandate and competencies regarding temporary organizations (Willems et al., 2020)	Norms, rules, culture (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008) Identity (Johansson et al., 2007, Willems et al., 2020) Experience with project-based work / project-based organizing practices (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015) Governance, Autonomy given to temporary organization (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018) Organization's strategy (Ritson et al., 2012) Organizational learning, Management system for temporary organizations (Ritson et al., 2012) Legitimacy of the temporary organization in the organization (Turkulainen et al., 2015) Existing mandate and competencies regarding temporary organizations (Willems et al., 2020) Way of working (Lunkka et al., 2019)	Complexity, uncertainty, top management / organization's support for change program, political dynamics (Ritson et al., 2012, Turkulainen et al., 2015, Willems et al., 2020)

5.2.2. The interface and its implications for program managers

My arguments about understanding the context were established in subsection 5.2.1, and this section investigates the main focus of section 2.2, namely to identify potential dynamics at the interface and their possible influence on the practice of managing change programs and delivering the desired value by program managers.

Similar to the analysis of attributes of change programs' context, paper II provides a major contribution regarding the issue of contextual dynamics. Identifying the program and its context as two institutional logics mirrored in a set of attributes, the paper further reveals that a change program's and its context's views on what and how to create value cause tensions during the change program. The tensions stem from the multiplicity of institutional logics, mirroring possible collisions between the references of existing logics in organizations that challenge the actors to perform their roles in different ways under different circumstances. Therefore, the tensions refer to institutional tensions or institutional complexity (Thornton et al., 2012). The concept of institutional tensions thus defines the investigated dynamics at the interface in the paper. One of the underlying conditions that highlights such tensions is the limited knowledge and/or experience of program management among the program managers and their teams.

From the findings, we see that identified institutional tensions are manifested in actors' interpretations of their role and expectations about fulfilling associated responsibilities based on each logic's references, and then actually taking action drawing on the logics differently in different situations. The latter refers to the *influence* of perceived institutional tensions by program managers and their teams, demanding them to cope with the situation in order to enable practicing program management true to the purpose and process of the change initiative. Consequently, the paper focuses on what activities actors perform to navigate the tensions and manage the change programs throughout different stages of the value creation process. It is revealed that actors developed practices of problematizing, designing, and team building to navigate the tensions and enable introducing and practicing the program management of the change process through temporary organizing premises (e.g. establishing program organization, resource management, stakeholder management, boundary spanning). The findings show that on different occasions, while striving to accommodate the attributes of program management logic in actors' behavior and practice, actors chose to draw on the hosting logic, which limited the program's efficiency.

Papers I and III show a similar trend in that the context (captured by the described attributes) at the interface challenged the managers in creating the desired value of the change initiative. Such challenges are explained in paper III, where the exercise of conceptual and human skills is considered along with the scope and level of sociopolitical complexity and uncertainty dimensions throughout the program's phases, particularly in cases 2 and 4. To synthesize my discussions in the current section, I use "complexity and uncertainty tensions" to refer to the identified contextual issues in papers III and I. To address this, in cases 2 and 4 with high tension, paper III shows that, while acknowledging program management references for success, the managers adjusted their use of different skills and focused on handling tensions to avoid severe consequences (e.g. the collapse of merger process). For instance, under the conceptual skill theme in the paper, we see that when program managers engaged in planning and implementing the program following its evolving visions, the tensions at the interface challenged them to practice program management requirements. Instead, managers dedicated

a large amount of time and energy from their program role description to focus on trust building and relationships to minimize conflict and encourage commitment. Simultaneously, taking paper II as the analytical framework here, the emphasis on giving time to decision-making and compromising in value creation in paper III refers to the choice of relying on the hosting logic. To some degree, this reduced the ability to follow program processes as planned, thus to fully focus on building a robust, sustainable organization as the change initiative initially intended.

Similarly, in paper I, contextual attributes of complexity and uncertainty seemed to conflict with the project manager's actions to manage the temporary organization on account of program management. A reinterpretation of empirical evidence in the paper shows that the manager shaped the trust-building practices following contextual tensions, but perhaps most relevant to my focus here, the empirical material refers to some adjustments in the management of the change project at different times. For example, on the theme of involving, while practicing trust building to deal with complexity and uncertainty tensions, the manager shaped the management of the project to respond to the situation. For instance, they employed a theme-based approach for project progress rather than following the goal-oriented approach, reshaped the temporary organization's structure to avoid losing competence and commitment, and slowed the pace of the processes to minimize and/or handle potential concerns, thus create a sense of safety. Such measures to address contextual tensions impacted what the merger achieved and the conditions/processes used. Thinking about logics from paper II, a reinterpretation of mentioned points from paper I refers to making the logics coexist in the interests of the change initiative. However, the informants acknowledged that sometimes the "old school thinking" took over, and that a focused, disciplined project management framework could optimize the resources used to create what the merger actually created.

In sum, to understand the potential dynamics at the interface, the findings from the papers suggest dynamics in the form of institutional tensions (paper II) and sociopolitical complexity- and uncertainty-related tensions (papers I and III). The findings suggest that managers need to take these tensions into account and navigate them, which affects how the management of temporary organizations can be realized. The practices from paper II suggest that program managers strove to enable the practice of program management to serve the purpose of the change and adhered to their line roles when appropriate. However, they chose to draw on the hosting logic on some occasions as the logic was dominant. Paper I suggests that the actors navigated the tensions by creating an adjusted (combined with hosting logic) program management practice, so overlooked some degree of effectiveness that the temporary organizing logic could promise. Moreover, paper III shows that to navigate the tensions, actors recognized the need for enabling the program management logic, yet, sometimes had to surrender a degree of effectiveness and draw on the hosting logic for the program's processes.

Taking these together, I see the navigation of tensions at the interface in a new light. Considering the institutional logics theory as the basis, my findings together show that, in meeting tensions, actors engage in using and rejecting the references of program management against the hosting logic, as the program and situation unfold (Lounsbury and Boxenbaum, 2013). When rejecting, the references of the surrounding organizational context take over. The actors' lack of broad knowledge of the new logic leads to shifting between blending and segregating the logics occasionally. In more detail, from the empirical evidence, we see that to navigate the tensions all actors recognize the need for, and attempt to enable, the coexistence

of the two logics (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017). Acknowledging this, a group of managers (the case in paper I, case P in paper II, and cases 1 and 3 in paper III) manage to make the logics coexist and move between them in the interests of the change program, based on the dominant organizational issue at hand. For another group (case N in paper II, and cases 2 and 4 in paper III), however, although actors strove to realize the coexistence, the logics became somewhat competing frameworks (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017) where the hosting logic occasionally dominated the program's decision-making processes.

To discuss these findings against earlier research, I would like to make three points. First, the findings about the identified dynamics in the form of institutional tensions and complexity- and uncertainty-related tensions at the interface offer novel insights to the debate on the need to understand the change program as a part of its wider organizational context. Findings underline that the permanent organizational context has certain qualities that might conflict with and shape the management of change programs. Moreover, the institutional logics theory, which explicitly identifies institutional tensions between the change programs and its context (as two logics), presents a transparent and well-argued analysis process to elucidate such tensions. From reviewed studies in subsection 2.2.2, it is clear that the majority of relevant studies assume some sort of dynamics at the interface that authors use to explain some aspects of their focused phenomena. For instance, the issue of managing change program-to-permanent organization boundaries in studies on integration and isolation of change programs is connected with some sort of incompatibility or clash between the change program and its context (e.g. (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Turkulainen et al., 2015). Only a few studies concentrate on exploring the change program and organizational context link and so explicitly show the potential collisions. Among these, Stjerne et al. (2019) underscore temporal complexity tensions, Nasanen and Vanharanta (2016) underline temporal and hierarchical tensions at the interface, and Lunkka et al. (2019) contrast the way of working in the temporary and permanent organizational contexts. Accordingly, my findings and associated analysis process offer new knowledge and add thereto.

Second, the practices and strategies that program managers developed to navigate the tensions and enable the practice of program management offer a new, actor-centric understanding of the interface's implications for the management of change programs. Having different research interests (e.g. boundary spanning, program success, autonomy of change projects), the majority of the reviewed studies in subsection 2.2.2 do not explain the potential implications of the temporary-to-permanent contextual dynamics on the delivery of desired outcomes by program managers (e.g. (Willems et al., 2020, Turkulainen et al., 2015, Ritson et al., 2012). A minority that shed some light on the tensions suggest a number of practices that actors use to cope with the challenging interface; for example, Stjerne et al. (2019) identify framing, synthetizing, and hyping, and Nasanen and Vanharanta (2016) report discursive patterns that actors use to construct and reconstruct the tensions. Although the practices and strategies I identify resemble the latter studies, I argue that they complement those and offer novel insights for three reasons. (1) I explain the concepts of context and tension as inclusive and empirically grounded based on a tailored research approach. (2) My findings directly reflect on the management of change programs and value creation throughout the program's value creation phases. None of the earlier studies concerns the interface's characteristics and tensions in relation to their potential influence on the processes of managing programs and delivering value. For example, in their interesting study, without explicitly framing the

focused "program management work," Nasanen and Vanharanta (2016) suffice to talk about the activities that program actors engage in when implementing a change program. (3) The findings of papers I, II, and III together suggest that actors actively develop different strategies to creatively and pragmatically invoke the logics, which leads to relating the colliding logics either as coexisting or competing. From the three papers, we see that to different degrees, actors use their agency and choose to draw on references of the hosting, "known and comfortable" logic against the interests of programs. Thus, they not only offer these suggestions as new knowledge to the debate in (change) program management, but they also show that in institutionally complex situations, actors might ascribe several scenarios (here coexisting and competing) as they go forward in the situation. This can be an interesting dimension for institutional logics theory that needs further investigation (see (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017, McPherson and Sauder, 2013, Arman et al., 2014). In my research, I did not intend to discuss my data to contribute to the institutional logics perspective, thus I leave this point here for further research (see also section 6.1).

As my third point, following my discussions above, on an overall level, my findings suggest that when employing temporary organizations to deliver an organizational change process, the embodied managerial ideas of project/program management do not necessarily or automatically transfer to the responsible team to fulfill their roles based on related principles. Alternatively, existing management ideas in the hosting context(s) might influence such a transfer, namely create some tensions. This offers at least one explanation about the results from earlier studies, suggesting that the position of temporary organizations affects the implementation of projects and programs and their success to create desired outcomes (e.g. (Breese et al., 2015). This point is important as the oft-accidental employment of the managers of change programs increases the possibility of having immature program management and value creation systems.

5.2.3. Reflecting on the public sector setting

In the introduction of section 2.2, I briefly touched upon the main aspects of running temporary organizations within the public sector setting. In fact, handling the "publicness" of selected empirical cases was necessary in formulating my research papers and my PhD project as a whole. Highlighting a few central characteristics of public organizations, I concluded that the management of temporary organizations could be colored by the qualities of the public sector, but explained my decision to view and frame my cases as neutral change programs. One of my reasons is that, considering earlier research, I found that although project/program management has been increasingly used to organize planned organizational changes in public organizations as an efficient and flexible organizing alternative (Sjöblom et al., 2013), several studies with public change project/programs as the empirical basis contribute to the general debate of managing change programs without explicitly considering the public setting as a part of their theoretical framework, findings, or contributions (see Table 12 in appendix). Thus, when integrating the public sector aspect in my theoretical positioning, it would have had a thin theoretical foundation from research on public (change) program management. Besides the literature on public sector project management, I also negotiated with the theory on public sector organizational change, and municipality reform to ensure I would not miss any major relevant aspect in my papers and thesis.

Nevertheless, thinking beyond the scope of my thesis for a moment, one could rightfully wonder what explanations I could gain if the used cases were analyzed within a different

theoretical framework, a framework including relevant aspects of public sector, public organizational change, or municipality merger reform. Would the public organizational change or municipality merger settings have added any significant contextual attributes or consideration to my study? Would different findings have emerged? My guess is "yes" for both questions; but this, of course, is speculation and needs to be examined separately. However, if this were the case, concerning attributes of the wider context of change projects or programs, should project studies explicitly focus on the public change or municipality merger to underscore respective sectors?

From a glance of the theory presented in section 2.2, the management of change programs in the public sector seems to be affected by certain key aspects, such as unclear goals and objectives, and a complex political–administrative process of negotiating and creating value outcomes. These aspects were also evident in how each of my cases unfolded over the transition process. The specific case of municipality merger also seems to have certain requirements, such as handling identity challenges, that affect the process of implementation and results. Looking from a change program perspective, my reading develops two observations. First, as can be seen from Table 12 in the appendix, almost all papers investigating the organizational change program in the public sector do not frame their theoretical framework using public administration or other related literature. Subsequently those studies join the general debate on change programs. Second, M&As are only narrowly examined explicitly in relation to the management of temporary organizations (e.g. (Meckl, 2004, Maire and Collerette, 2011, Nogeste, 2010, Birollo and Teerikangas, 2019, Sulkowski et al., 2018). Among the already narrow research on integration and M&A projects or programs, the absence of municipality merger as a particular type of change project/program from a temporary organization point of view is noticeable. Thus, the questions I just posed seem relevant and encouraging to pursue.

In particular, considering the existing broad research on municipality mergers and public organizational change in other theoretical fields, the new drive to refine the general theme of change projects or programs into sub-types (Cameron and Green, 2015), including M&A projects/programs (see (Martinsuo et al., 2020), and the need to understand change projects/programs as a part of their wider organizational contexts, finding an answer to these questions even seems compulsory. It is also worth highlighting the disappointing results of municipal mergers, documented by former research, which have led to questions about the issues hindering successful mergers and whether municipal mergers are the solution to underlying problems at all (c.f. (Swianiewicz, 2018, Dollery and Crase, 2004)). I thus believe that there might be great opportunities for cross-disciplinary fertilization where project management literature interacts with relevant theories (municipality merger, public organizational change, etc.) to create novel and useful insights for all areas.

I would like to confess that I found it quite challenging to decide on the "most optimum" theoretical framework for analyzing my cases that would best serve my academic field and be most fair to the data. Thus, while I decided to understand my empirical setting using a more general theory from the project management perspective, I am fully aware that political science or public management scholars may understand my cases and conclude things in a very different way. I see this as a path to follow, to use relevant novel theories to sharpen the research on "strategic projects or programs" (Martinsuo et al., 2020).

5.2.4. The answer to subordinate research question 2 and theoretical implications

After rather lengthy discussions in subsections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, I would like to refresh the memory regarding my second subordinate research question, which is answered in the current section. The research question is *how is the management of change programs influenced by organizational context?* To answer this question, I underline three points that constitute different parts of the answer.

First, in order to investigate the research question, the findings of the three papers suggest a certain set of attributes that mirror the permanent organizational context of change programs. These attributes include organizational structure, goals/purposes, time dimension or orientation, value-creation process, and sociopolitical complexity and uncertainty. As the concept of context has not been explicitly and concretely defined by earlier research, identifying significant aspects that help to reflect the context seemed necessary. Even in the few studies that explicitly concentrate on change programs' context, there are few identified contextual attributes and the studies' designs are somewhat unfounded. Thus, my findings (Table 10) contribute to the debate on understanding the change program in its context, by complementing the latter studies (e.g. (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016, Stjerne et al., 2019), and synthesizing assumed dimensions of context in several studies that consider the subject (e.g. (Johansson et al., 2007, Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018).

Second, the discussion of findings from all three papers, particularly papers II and III, suggest that the change program context may collide with the program management agenda for running the process and creating the desired value. This is manifested as institutional tensions and complexity- and uncertainty-related tensions, confronting the program managers with a challenging situation when managing the programs and value creation processes. Analyzing the change program's interface within its context through institutional logics, it is shown that there are two logics that occasionally collide regarding what and how to create. This is highlighted when considering oft-accidental recruitment of managers in change programs, and different degrees of organizations' experience with temporary organizing. The complexity and uncertainty aspects of the interface are also revealed to create tensions for the management of change programs. Together, the tensions identified in my study and the analysis process used to identify them expand the earlier, rather implicit and thinly justified results on potential dynamics at the interface (e.g. (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015). This also strengthens and adds to the few proposed cases of contextual tensions in change programs; for instance, temporal complexity (Stjerne et al., 2019), or temporal and hierarchical tensions (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016).

Third, my discussions suggest that the identified tensions at the interface require the managers to take the tensions into account and navigate them to enable the management of change programs in the interest of change initiatives. In paper II, three practices are identified by which program managers facilitated the introduction and manifestation of program management, and pushed back the hosting logic. It is also shown that, occasionally, as the hosting logic dominated, actors chose to draw on the "old" references when they participated in managing the change program and creating the desired value; this minimized severe consequences for change programs but limited programs' efficiency. The latter is further highlighted by paper III's findings, which show that program actors sometimes chose to draw on the public management organizing logic's references. I believe that such a choice worked out in my cases because of the characteristics of the public sector. Together, the influence of

contextual tensions on the change program are found to challenge the actors, where their choices make the logics either coexist or compete (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017). This shapes the management of change programs and generated value. My empirically grounded discussions offer novel, and explicit insights and expand on the studies that rather narrowly refer to implications of tensions for the management of change programs (e.g. (Stjerne et al., 2019, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016).

The suggested understanding of the potential influence of change programs' context on their management from an actor-centric (program manager) perspective responds to calls to consider change programs as a part of their wider organizational context in relation to actors' engagement in managing change programs (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018, Turkulainen et al., 2015) and value creation processes (Martinsuo et al., 2019, Martinsuo, 2020).

In the current section, my discussions conclude that the context of change programs can collide with the management of change programs, challenging program managers who find themselves in a multifaceted role. Insufficient knowledge and experience with the management of temporary organizations that is typically a part of such a complex role needs to be understood to contribute to answering my overall research question. Thus, in the next subchapter, section 5.3, I look at how program managers perform their roles considering this potential knowledge gap.

5.3. The management of change programs from a competency perspective
In the last theoretical section of the thesis, section 2.3, I presented a brief review of research on the competencies of managers of temporary organizations, and further narrowed the focus to addressing earlier findings on competent change project/program managers. For the former, regarding competency research in project management, an observable asymmetry in how project and program manager competencies had been being examined was underscored. This made me think about and use a summary framework from project literature to build a preliminary categorization of program manager competencies before I focused on the most relevant competency literature for the thesis. I briefly reflect on that in subsection 5.3.2.

For the latter, which concerns my focus here, the review established that for successful delivery of change programs, program managers need to practice human competency, technical competency regarding both administration of the temporary organization and the business of the hosting organization, and conceptual competency. The issue of oft-accidental program managers was also highlighted, which led me to formulate my third subordinate research question as *how do oft-accidental change program managers navigate their competencies to handle their temporary role?* In subsection 5.3.1, I draw on the empirical findings of the papers to develop an answer for the posed question and discuss theoretical implications. Expectedly, the findings of papers I and III offer major contributions to the current focus, while paper II offers supportive important information.

5.3.1. Oft-accidental program managers and management of change programs
As described in the methodology in chapter 3, all of the examined change programs in my research project achieved an acceptable degree of success in delivering the value they identified during the merger transitions. Only two cases (case N in paper II, case 2 in paper III) were somewhat challenged in the value creation process; nevertheless, the merged organizations successfully started to operate and offer quality services to the inhabitants once the change process was closed. Given the cases' preconditions, the managers succeeded in

delivering the programs appropriately. Taking different perspectives to examine three different issues, the papers implicitly or explicitly show how program managers engaged in the management of change programs to deliver the desired value.

In paper II, the employment of program managers (and the program management team members) from within the merging organizations because of their knowledge of the organizations and leadership status constituted the key underlying issue of the study. Taking the organizational context of change programs into account to understand the management of these programs, a reinterpretation of the findings suggests that the newness of program manager as a role and program management as a way of working (regarding ideas, practices, norms, etc.) created a *complex role*. Such a complex role is also evident in the findings of papers I and III. Using institutional logics theory to view the change program in its organizational context reveals that managers found themselves in a formally and informally hybrid role, handling their permanent responsibilities and the new temporary job, with its new role description and demands. Formally, when given the responsibility of the temporary organization, most of the managers kept their line roles, and, informally, all of the program managers were required to consider and address the operations of the line organization until the closure of the merger.

Subsequently, paper II shows that managers needed to make sense of their program role, and clarify and establish the demands of the role against the work method(s) they were used to practicing. These can be understood from the three identified practices, namely problematizing, designing, and team building. Simultaneously, they were dependent on a similar process where other program management actors (both superiors and subordinates) made sense of their new roles and management situation. This, particularly considering superiors (JSC), meant the program manager role was perceived as especially vulnerable, as the JSC members' process of handling their new roles could change expectations of program managers and/or conditions in the program (a visible example is case N, paper II). For instance, when the public management organizing logic dominated (the contextual logic related to the permanent role) so that decision-makers drew on the logic's references to participate and manage the change programs, the financial conditions and decisions of the program were affected, setting a new framework for how programs were perceived to be managed. Subsequently, managers registered these changes and the need to handle them to minimize more severe consequences (e.g. stopping the program). Moreover, in the papers, we implicitly see that program managers' participation in their program tasks could change their perception of their program role demands. For instance, in case 4 in paper III, the manager's, strong emphasis on transparency led to their perception of what was expected from them, namely the need to inform the decision-making committee about issues for which the manager had been granted authority. As another example, in paper I, across all four trust-building themes, we see that the manager's activities to facilitate creating value in the program paved the way for further fulfilling their program role in the interest of the desired change. For instance, the project manager's focus on adhering to the program's institutional references, minimized some conflictual situations and eased the management and the change project to deliver the desired outcomes.

My interpretation of these points is that what the manager did in their program role could influence the demands they perceived for further performing the role. This was simultaneous with practicing the role and the influence of the public administration organizing logic

(related to the permanent role) on the dynamics of the temporary role. I visualize these in Figure 3, where one sees that the accidental change program manager is positioned in a novel program role with a set of demands, within a set of constraints. The figure demonstrates that as the manager makes sense of the new role, demands, and situation, and as they perform the role, their understanding of the demands and constraints might change, leading to less or more room to manage the change program according to the program management logic. This process is intertwined with and affected by the program managers' connection to their permanent role, for which they have a clear understanding of the related demands and constraints (illustrated by the rectangular shape for the role's demands and constraints). The illustration is inspired by the job demand-constraint-choices model developed by (Stewart, 1982).
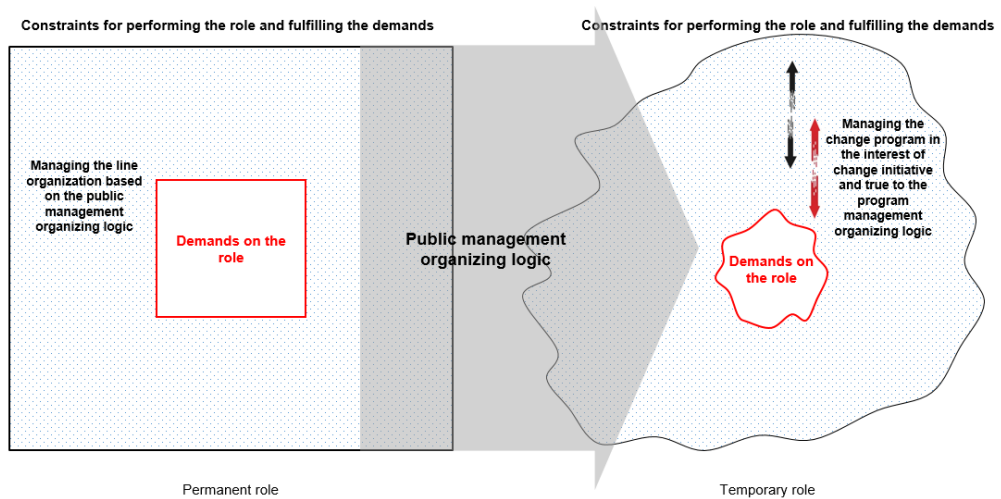

Figure 3 An illustration of the change program managers' temporary role against their permanent role

The analysis of the role of accidental program managers is not an explicit focus in any of my papers, but is underlined implicitly. The results described above are thus beyond the documented findings in the articles. Comparing such an understanding of the role of change program managers with the reviewed literature in section 2.3 (reflected in Table 3), my findings offer novel, empirically grounded insights from an actor-level perspective on the debate about the role of change project or program managers, particularly concerning the issue of often accidental employment. From section 2.3, earlier research either prescribes the role of project or program managers in isolation from the context (e.g. (Stummer and Zuchi, 2010, OGC, 2011), or underscores the potential newness of the role and attached institutional logic without really going in-depth to explore possible implications for individuals performing such a role (e.g. (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Lundin and Söderholm, 1995). My findings thus expand the latter and, from an actor-centric point of view, show one explanation of how oft-accidental managers perceive their roles. Establishing this, I now present my analysis and discussion on how accidental managers could deliver the change program successfully, considering the new role and their limited project/program management competencies. For this, the largest contributions expectedly come from papers I and III, which investigate the trust building and competencies of change

program managers for successful change programs. Paper I provides in-depth explanation of an important attribute of human competency, namely trust building. Trust building is found to contribute to change program managers' ability to handle their role and lead change programs in the interest of the change initiative.

Paper III explains how managers used four categories of competencies to successfully deliver change processes in line organizations. The categories include conceptual competency, human competency, business-related technical competency, and technical competency related to program management. The paper reports the managers' recognition of the lack of project and program management competencies in themselves and team members, which (although required adaptation to the setting) was understood to be important for better steering. To establish at least some basics of program management, paper II shows that program managers participated in legitimizing and collecting support for the new roles and work descriptions. This was done mainly through problematizing and team-building practices, which aimed to create a setting for program management and for people to gain experience with it. Although the tensions between the hosting logic and the new logic were navigated to enable practicing the new logic (in paper II), lack of competency in leading temporary organizations seemed to remain persistent (in paper III) as the hosting logic dominated on some occasions. Therefore, there was no significant learning or improvement in managers' technical program management competencies. I believe this implies that, while actors strove to make sense of their complex role and the situation to manifest the managerial ideas of the new role, they needed support and a learning platform to become good at the new logic, but these were not provided in the cases. I find this understandable because municipalities, as bureaucratic organizations, often lack project management competency at an organizational level, and typically outsource such needs.

In addition to the lack of program management technical competency, paper III further reports three other competencies, namely conceptual competency, human competency, and business-related technical competencies, as critical for the appropriate implementation of change programs. Findings show that program managers used their conceptual competency to ensure connectedness between the projects and activities within the change program, and between the program and its wider environments. The managers showed ability to translate the visionary, abstract ideas for their subordinates, keeping the program relevant to the evolving content of the change. Furthermore, in terms of business-related technical competency, program managers' knowledge and experience of the core operations of the line organization was vital for understanding and resolving the content and issues of change programs. Moreover, this paper shows that human competency was intensely used to facilitate the programs' processes and attaining desired outcomes. In particular, considering the complexity of the new role described at the beginning of this section, and the contextual tensions described in section 5.2, such a strong emphasis on relationship, team, and trust building seems very logical. Lastly, the paper underscores that using human competencies and accepting a degree of personal burnout helped the managers to compensate for their lack of program management competency.

A deeper understanding of practicing human competencies in the cases can be found in paper I, which focuses on how the manager of a temporary organization can facilitate trust building among the temporary team members. The paper reports four practices, namely preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering, used for establishing and maintaining trust in the

temporary change project team. Taking a new angle to understand the trust-building practices highlighted in paper I to handle the program manager role to successfully manage the program, I argue that through these practices, the manager (1) met the need to manage people in a change setting (practicing human competency / human-centric management of change programs), and (2) simultaneously supported efforts to handle the newness of the temporary roles (e.g. through providing room for practicing the temporary role). For instance, when controversial cases/issues were processed and team members could choose to draw on the hosting logic against the interest of the change initiative and project management agenda, the manager's emphasis on preaching not only helped with relations and commitment to the change, but also primed the terrain for managing people and their collaboration within the project framework. The latter refers to how the role of manager was being understood and shaped. Concerning the first dimension (1), the paper shows that creating an explicit conversation about trust, allocating time for team building, and acknowledging and managing emotions and concerns regarding the temporary organization are key practices that together can establish and maintain trust among temporary team members, facilitating the management of the change program. Furthermore, the findings show that actively recognizing and adhering to formal and informal institutional reference points related to both temporary and permanent organizations creates institutional trust and also enhances people management, namely, the engagement of team members in their roles and towards each other. The paper thus proposes a model where the three practices of preaching, involving, and sympathizing occur concurrently while being filtered through institutional factors. For a comprehensive introduction and review of trust literature in temporary organizations, particularly sharpened for the purpose of my PhD project, please see paper I. Although the findings of paper I constitute an important pillar in meeting the problem statement of this thesis, the theoretical discussions on trust from the paper do not fully fit the framing of the thesis as it is developed. Nevertheless, the trust discussions underpin a human-centered approach to managing change programs.

To sum up, I would like to underline three points. First, my findings show that to appropriately deliver a change program, there is a need for competent program managers who have and practice conceptual, human, technical (business-related and related to administration of temporary organization) competencies. Second, for change program managers with limited professional project/program management competency, the findings suggest that to fulfill related responsibilities, oft-accidental change program managers engage in making sense of their novel role to establish understanding and enable practicing it against their line roles. In this process, they find themselves in an evolving position with a set of demands and constraints, between which they find space to follow the program management agenda in the interest of the change initiative. This is intertwined with and affected by their practice of the hosting logic (related to the permanent role). Third, following the first and second points, findings show that in the context of change programs, it is possible to attain the desired value without having sufficient project or program management competency, but managers might encounter a high workload and they need to pay extra attention to managing people in the program. In other words, although my findings acknowledge the need for project/program management competency in change programs, I think they concurrently point to understandable reasons for employing change program managers accidentally. Yes, managers' lack of competency in managing temporary organizations had consequences for the effectiveness of programs to create value, and led to extra pressure on program managers to handle the new role. Nevertheless, paper III's findings show that managers' business-related

competency, their ability to see the program and organization from a helicopter view, and their strong competency to connect and lead people were also needed to realize the change process. From paper I, the extra attention to managing people can be realized through preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering practices. In other words, to implement such a large and complex change that engages almost all aspects of an organization, I argue that choosing a top executive with good experience in working with people and leading the organization internally and externally is a smart idea.

Taking the findings of the papers together, they underline a rather dynamic view on managers' technical program management competency that is not specifically highlighted in paper III. The paper's research design is a longitudinal multiple-case study and the format and limitations of the paper led to addressing the competency as a box. In the thesis on the other hand, I have now presented a sharper clarification of the concept of competency, referring to developable qualities, and have provided an analysis that opens this box to explain how actors dealt with their lack of program management competency during the programs. From the empirical evidence and case descriptions of all three papers, it is clear that program managers did not get any particular chance to learn how to manage temporary organizations, first because of high complexity and uncertainty around the program content and contextual environment, and second because of a lack organizational support. As described in the methodology in section 3.3, and in paper II, temporary thinking was imported from the ministry/regional authorities where some project management tools (e.g. benefits management) from development and infrastructure project contexts were introduced to guide program managers in handling the merger programs. The managers found these tools impractical as they were presented during the change process and with very limited explanation of their potential value.

Comparing my findings with earlier research, three theoretical implications can be developed. First, my findings provide empirical evidence on the importance of conceptual (e.g. (Buchanan, 1991, Pellegrinelli, 2002, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008), human (e.g. (Crawford and Nahmias, 2010, Hornstein, 2015), and technical competencies (Pellegrinelli, 2002, Miterev et al., 2016, Parker et al., 2013), as identified in earlier research. The human competency revealed to be extremely important to help change program managers fulfill their responsibilities. Thus, not only does paper I make theoretical contributions to trust literature in project management, but it also highlights and deepens the understanding of human competency in change program research (e.g. (Hornstein, 2015, Fiedler, 2010). In particular, trust management is not comprehensively a part of Katz's (1955) model; thus, paper I adds a rather new dimension to the understanding of the change manager competency, and presents a comprehensive elaboration. This is intertwined with the second theoretical implication from the findings, namely providing a simple yet inclusive terminology to enable an improved theoretical conversation about the competencies of a competent change program manager. As is stated, and is clear from Table 3 in subsection 2.3.2, former studies have offered valuable but fragmented insights about different attributes of a change program manager. Borrowing the framework of Alvarenga et al. (2019) from project literature, and using the managerial skill framework developed by Katz (1955), and using the contribution of paper II regarding the program manager's role in connection with hosting and temporary logics, my results provide a relevant categorization with clear definitions for each group, and subcategory themes to collect and translate previously identified fragmented attributes. Thus, the findings from paper III explicitly describe and exemplify the conceptual competency, a category that

has been vaguely talked about before, mostly represented by contextual understanding (e.g. (Parry et al., 2014) and cultural and political awareness (Crawford and Nahmias, 2010). Furthermore, in the same category, I prefer to position boundary management as one facet of the conceptual competency of a competent change program manager. Integration, isolation, or, in another words, managing the boundaries of change programs (project-to-project and program-to-organization) has been of great interest in the change program debate (e.g. (Pellegrinelli, 2002); nevertheless, the concept has not been considered as directly relevant to the qualities of change program managers for delivering change programs appropriately. This thus shapes and expands the former research.

Similarly, the explanation of technical competencies in my study expands earlier findings. The benefit of clarifying two specific themes of technical skills in Table 3, in subsection 2.3.2, and associated empirical evidence in paper III is that (1) a manager's knowledge and experience with the organization's business receive a clearer voice as one facet of technical competency, and (2) the implicit definition of "technical competency" as being only related to project or program management is adjusted. The former has been only implicitly referred to (e.g. (Miterev et al., 2016, Pellegrinelli, 2002), while this study clearly and suggestively refers to this facet of technical competency for the success of change programs.

Before moving to last theoretical implication of the current section, I would like to briefly reflect on the filtering of literature in subsection 2.3.2. Taking the framework used in paper III (Table 1 in the paper's appendix, using only Katz's (1955) framework), in the thesis I decided to expand it and apply the framework developed by Alvarenga et al. (2019) to visualize a structure for positioning identified attributes from the literature when analyzing them against Katz's agenda. I found this helpful to make the positioning of the attributes more visible, and to create a consistent analytical thread in section 2.3 as the same framework is used in subsection 2.3.1, which was not a part of paper III's framework. Reflecting on Table 3 as the result of my filtration, I think the relevant structure in the framework adds a new depth to what one can learn from paper III.

As the third, and perhaps most important theoretical implication of the findings in the current section, my study elucidates oft-accidental change program managers' experience of handling change programs while lacking sufficient competency of running a temporary organization. Although the unpreparedness of accidental managers for practicing a project or program role in an organizational change setting has been recognized (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016), a competency view of the issue to understand their needs and roles in delivering change programs has been almost entirely absent (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018). To contribute to filling this gap, from an actor-centric point of view, my findings offer novel insights and show that once accidental managers settle into their new temporary roles to some degree, to get the program to closure, they compensate for their lack of program management technical competency through a strong emphasis on human competency, and accepting some extra workload. As mentioned, in the cases I examined, except for some guidance by relevant regional and national organizations, program managers did not have any organizational support for learning and practicing disciplined program management, which meant the temporary role remained challenging during the program. On a general level, this implies that, with an increasing tendency to implement initiatives through temporary organizations at organizational, sectoral (e.g. public sector, (Darrell et al., 2010), or governmental levels (Jacobsson and Jałocha, 2021), it may actually be vital for organizations to consider providing

some support for their accidental project and program managers, for instance, through project management improvement initiatives (Fernandes et al., 2014). My findings, therefore, are relevant to the growing debate on accidental project and program managers (e.g. (Hunsberger, 2011, Richardson et al., 2015).

5.3.2. What program competency research can learn from project competency research

In subsection 2.3.1, when I presented a review of project and program competency literature, I underscored an asymmetry regarding the developments in program and project manager competency research. While several lists of competencies and different taxonomies are suggested to describe a competent project manager, less research focuses on program managers, leading to a number of fragmented attributes and scarcity of solid summary frameworks. Consequently, I wondered if project competency theory could help to lift the identified scattered program manager qualities to a more general ordered level. This was an interesting thought as, similar to many scholars who have worked in program management, I believe that issues of projects and programs should be examined in their own ways. Simultaneously, I think some common basic characteristics of projects and programs (e.g. temporariness, temporary management team, value creation as the ultimate goal) legitimize at least an attempt to evaluate whether project competency literature could contribute to program competency theory. Subsequently, to provide a framework for analyzing my review of the literature on program manager competency in subsection 2.3.1, I chose to apply the framework by Alvarenga et al. (2019), which consists of seven categories of important competencies. By carefully analyzing the attributes through the seven-category framework, I made the following observations. I could logically translate several program manager competencies under the chosen categories. In particular, communication, interpersonal, leadership, and self-management categories were revealed to be highly relevant for the program context (see Table 2). Among these four categories, the focus on self-management in project competency literature seems to underline the need for the ability to understand political and cultural dynamics around the project and personally show resilience to handle them and stay focused. Under this category, positioning relevant attributes, I found that the positioned elements from the program context refer to a broader demand, namely managing the program and its projects in relation to the dynamics of the program's environment (e.g. (Partington et al., 2005, Pellegrinelli, 2002).

Regarding the remaining categories, technical, productivity, and managerial competencies needed some consideration to see if they could well accommodate some of the attributes of program manager competencies. Translating the requirements of project management to program management, I classified a number of attributes under technical and managerial categories. The last remaining competency theme, productivity, seemed the least relevant for program managers. Based on these points, reflecting on whether program competency research can learn from the work done on project competency, I think my preliminary analytical step in subsection 2.3.1 underlines some possibilities. In my review, it is possible to draw connecting threads between the two research streams; thus, based on careful consideration, ideas from project literature may be helpful or inspiring to advance the theory of program manager competencies.

As my last point here, from the review and Table 2 in subsection 2.3.1, project and program management literature suggests, among other things, delivering the goals of a temporary organization depends on the manager's knowledge and experience of managing temporary

organizations using a project or program management's managerial framework. To serve the focus of my thesis, in an organizational change context, subsection 5.3.1 showed that, although program managers acknowledged the need for practicing program management competencies (as is theoretically suggested), they managed to compensate for their limited competency and delivered the change programs successfully to an acceptable degree. Zooming out from the change context, one might wonder if my findings can challenge the project and program competency research on a more general level (in different application areas), as it challenged the calls for project/program management competency for successful change projects/programs? In other words, can one understand my findings in a way where project or program managers can lead projects successfully without sufficient project or program management competencies? To answer this question, we will definitely need dedicated research; however, I think my findings implicitly show that it will not be very difficult to run any temporary organization, for example, an infrastructure project or program, without appropriate project/program management competency. In my study, one can specifically see that as one main underlying reason, it is the characteristics and conditions of organizational changes that makes it possible for an "unprepared" program manager to find it possible to manage the program. The content of change programs was so uncertain and evolving that, even if the managers had the necessary technical program management competency, it would have been difficult to practice several governance themes in the programs. These are, of course, not the focus of my papers or the thesis, and my discussions here have a somewhat speculative nature; thus, further research is needed to explicitly examine the posed issues. Thinking about the debate on accidental project managers, especially accidental transition of engineers, specialists, or middle managers to the role of project manager, it can be interesting and beneficial to explore what accidental project managers do once they get the new role. How do they deal with having so much unknown to lead, and how do they learn and develop their project or program management competencies?

Closing this subchapter, I develop my answer for the thesis's third subordinate research question in the next section.

5.3.3. The answer to subordinate research question 3 and theoretical implications
The theory presented in section 2.3 led to the formulation of the thesis's third subordinate research question, namely *how do oft-accidental change program managers navigate their competencies to handle their temporary role?* In subsection 5.3.1, I drew on the three attached papers and presented several points and arguments that are used in the following to develop an answer to the question. I would like to underline two points.

First, the findings of the papers underline the complex role of change program managers dealing with the novelty of the temporary role and the influence of the permanent role and related institutional logic. The findings further elucidate that managers made sense of their complex role and enabled their practice of related managerial ideas through problematizing, designing, and team building. Influenced by how they and other program management actors managed such a process, and shadowed by the dominant institutional logic, the findings imply that program managers are in an evolving situation where their perception of the demands and constraints of their temporary role reflect a constantly changing environment for managing the change program in the interest of the change initiative (Figure 3). These explanations challenge an isolated understanding of the role of change program managers and their assumed loyalty (e.g. (Stummer and Zuchi, 2010), and offer new empirically grounded

insights to earlier studies that highlight the issue of accidental managers but do not address potential implications at an individual level (e.g. (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016).

Second, to handle their temporary role and deliver the change programs successfully, findings show that managers navigated their competencies through two approaches: (1) they latched on to their strengths, namely using conceptual, business-related technical, and human competencies, and (2) while accommodating some basics of program management, they compensated for their limited program management technical competency by forcefully fostering relations and trust and accepting a degree of personal burnout. In doing this, the limited program management technical competency did not lead to severe problems. The findings from papers I and III regarding human competency, particularly trust management, for the success of change programs are in line with and expand the earlier research (e.g. (Crawford and Nahmias, 2010, Hornstein, 2015, Fiedler, 2010). Furthermore, based on paper III's results, the significance of conceptual competency is more explicitly elaborated (cf. (Parry et al., 2014), and the role of business-related technical competency receives a clearer voice (cf. (Pellegrinelli, 2002). Moreover, the fact that program managers delivered the change programs appropriately is interesting, as earlier research clearly calls for proper project and program management competencies to ensure program success (e.g. (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010b, OGC, 2011, Parker et al., 2013). However, it is acknowledged that better program management technical competency could enhance the effectiveness of creating the desired value and provide better control and a smaller workload for managers. This is also related to a lack of learning opportunity for the program managers to develop the associated competency so that related managerial ideas could be realized.

6. Conclusion

This thesis aims to answer *how can program managers lead value creation in change programs?* The preceding chapter analyzed and discussed the thesis's subordinate research questions, addressing the content, context, and competency perspectives of the management of change programs to create value. This chapter gathers the discussions from chapter 5 and suggests an answer to the main research question. As I have explicitly and comprehensively shown how each paper contributed to the answer of the subordinate research questions in chapter 5, I do not find it necessary to mention the papers again in the current chapter.

As the answer to the main research question, discussing program managers' participation in leading value creation in change programs through content, context, and competency, this thesis suggests that program managers can lead value creation processes through a flexible, human-oriented managerial approach to accommodate the complexity and evolving nature of change initiatives during different phases. Managers need to acknowledge and address emerging changes in the program, keep the change relevant, yet negotiate for what they believe the change program can professionally enhance in the permanent organizations in times of controversy. Moreover, change program managers need to (1) make sense of their novel temporary role and establish an understanding of the demands and constraints of the role, (2) engage in navigating potential institutional tensions at the temporary-to-permanent organization contextual interface, and (3) navigate their competencies to facilitate value creation in the interest of the program management agenda to deliver the change. My findings further find technical (related to the management of temporary organizations and the permanent organization's core business), human, and conceptual competencies central in managing change programs to create value. The answer to the thesis's main problem statement expands the literature on managing change programs (e.g. (Thiry, 2007, Gareis, 2010, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018), especially the value creation debate (e.g. (Miterev et al., 2020, Liu et al., 2019, Laine et al., 2016), as it shows how content, context, and competency are vital parts of the ongoing debate on change program management. Thus, a holistic understanding of the phenomenon is offered. The study thus responds to calls for the expansion of theory on change programs (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018) and advances the evolving landscape of program management (Lannon and Walsh, 2020) in the project management literature. The thesis also has implications for the theory about temporary organizations (Lundin and Söderholm, 1995) and the debate on oft-accidental project or program managers (Darrell et al., 2010). The suggested answer to the main research question is built upon the following points.

To gain an understanding of how change program managers can lead value creation, discussions from section 5.3 suggest that managers perceive and exercise a complex temporary role in the interest of the management of change programs. My findings highlight the distinctiveness of management ideas of program management to program managers, and disclose a complex situation with institutional tensions in which the managers attempted to handle their role to manage the change programs and lead create value processes. The managers' efforts to make sense of their temporary change program manager role alongside their line role were reflected in the identified tension-resolving practices, namely problematizing, designing, and team building. Developing these practices, program managers sought to establish and stabilize the demands and constraints of their temporary role.

Nevertheless, following program managers' and other program management actors' actions and behaviors in exercising the program roles, the permanent roles with attached management ideas, practices, and norms colored the managers room to manage the change program in the interest of change initiative and true to the program management organizing logic (see Figure 3). Such an elaboration on the role of the change program manager is novel, and challenges earlier studies that prescribe a set of responsibilities for the program manager role without taking the program context into account (e.g. (Stummer and Zuchi, 2010, OGC, 2011, Pádár et al., 2017, Pádár et al., 2019, Pollack and Algeo, 2016). Moreover, although the problem of oft-accidental employment of change project or program managers has been recognized (e.g. (Darrell et al., 2010, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016), and the dependence of program managers and their team on the hosting organizational context has been highlighted (e.g. (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Johansson et al., 2007, Stjerne et al., 2019), in-depth empirical investigations on the program manager role in relation to managing the program and leading value creation has been almost absent.

Taking the concept of content, discussions in section 5.1 provide an explanation of management and value creation processes in change programs from the perspective of change program managers. Findings show that managers acknowledged the evolving subjective nature of value creation as both a result and a process, in the minds and actions of program management actors, which highlighted the need to build relationships and trust in the team. In the change context, managers recognized noticeable concerns regarding the content and process of change programs, thus a conscious human-oriented management approach was taken when leading the program's value creation. Although the importance of human competencies in managing change programs has been reflected in the management debate (e.g. (OGC, 2011, Shaw, 2017) and in competency studies (e.g. (Muller and Turner, 2010, Miterev et al., 2016), such an explicit emphasis on relationship and trust building to lead value creation offers novel insights. Furthermore, the discussions show that program managers participated in leading value creation by: (1) facilitating open, learning-oriented, and collaborative relationships among the program actors to enable sense-making, negotiation, and identification of the desired value; (2) translating and communicating the program's evolving results and processes; (3) managing project-to-project and program-to-organization and wider environment boundaries; (4) negotiating and influencing decisions, and (5) adapting their flexible, human-oriented managerial approach and managing trust. Although resembling earlier findings on program management and value creation processes in change programs at different stages (e.g. (OGC, 2011, Thiry, 2004, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Laursen and Svejvig, 2016, Liu et al., 2019), my study reflects perceptions and experiences of program managers from their point of view. This actor-centric focus particularly reveals the importance of acknowledging, facilitating, and shaping program management actors' perceptions and the participation by change program managers in value creation, which expands the extant value creation literature. From the findings, it is interesting that change program managers without professional training or experience in managing temporary organizations and related processes, to a certain degree, participated in and realized value creation called for by program management.

While the discussions in section 5.1 disclose change program managers' interpretation and practice of leading value creation processes, the section also points to issues of the program's organizational context, and the typically new and ill-defined role of change program managers who might have various degrees of knowledge and experience in leading temporary

organizations. These are investigated and discussed in sections 5.2 and 5.3. Focusing on how program managers lead value creation in change programs, considering the concept of context, discussions in section 5.2 show that the manager's participation (alongside their team members) in leading value creation depends on the dynamics between the temporary and permanent organizations. Elucidating the hosting permanent organizational context through a number of distinct characteristics (see Table 10), and highlighting the distinctiveness of management ideas of program management for program managers, the discussions show that institutional, complexity, and uncertainty tensions between the program and permanent organization can affect the management of change programs. The findings show that temporary and permanent organizations' agendas to create value might collide occasionally over the course of change programs, influencing how program management actors could fulfill their program responsibilities in the value creation processes. To handle the contextual tensions, discussions in section 5.2 refer to three practices, namely problematizing, designing, and team building, through which the managers and their team members sought to establish their temporary roles and facilitate practicing related responsibilities. The managers developed these strategies to pragmatically invoke the program management organizing logic and push back the dominant permanent context; however, they still sometimes chose to draw on the dominant logic. The three papers together suggest that actors actively developed different strategies to pragmatically invoke the logics, relating the colliding logics either as coexisting or as competing. As an important aspect explaining how program managers can lead value creation in change programs, the revealed contextual tensions, in other words, the significant influence of the permanent organizational context, offer new empirically grounded insights to the debate on change program value creation following calls for relevant research (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018). Earlier research has already established the importance of considering the change program's organizational context, as it can be both enabler and disabler for the program's content and processes (e.g. (Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008), and can create some incompatibilities with program management (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016). Moreover, the oft-accidental recruitment of program management actors has also been highlighted. Nevertheless, an actor-centric view on value creation in relation to oft-accidental managers and hosting organizational context has been very narrow. In other words, there is lack of agency given to program managers concerning their participation in managing change programs (agency not in terms of agent-principle relationship). Such a perspective has rather resulted in findings on boundary-spanning (majorly as integration, isolation) activities and mechanisms (e.g. (Willems et al., 2020, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2009), which do not necessarily problematize program managers' participation in leading value creation while being affected by the context. My study thus adds thereto.

In institutionally complex situations, and with limited competencies to professionally lead the change programs according to program management organizing logic, taking competency into account, discussions from section 5.3 disclose the managers' way of using their competencies to manage change programs in the interest of change initiatives. The discussions suggest that, to lead change program value creation, program managers ideally need to have sufficient human competency, conceptual competency, business-related technical competency, and technical competency related to the administration of temporary organizations. Use of conceptual, human, and municipal-management (representing business-oriented) competencies in the cases was revealed to be extremely critical. Furthermore, for managers

with limited project/program management competency, based on individuals' lived experiences in the change programs, this study suggests that the insufficient program management competency and the institutional tensions (described in section 5.2) can be handled by managers through their use of other competencies. In particular, besides playing a significant part in managing change programs, using human competency was revealed to be extremely important. In addition, program managers acknowledged a high degree of personal burnout, and allowed a degree of ineffectiveness in identifying and generating value. As value in the studied programs was delivered to an acceptable extent (given the cases' prerequisites), the findings suggest that, although recommended as central (e.g. (Cowan-Sahadath, 2010b, Parker et al., 2013, OGC, 2011), it is possible to manage change programs without sufficient professional project/program management knowledge and experience. However, this should be compensated for with extra emphasis on using human competency to ensure trust and commitment to the change, and accepting a high workload to keep the complex and permeable program processes manageable. Elaborating on using human competency, discussions in section 5.3 reveal how managers fostered trustful environments in the temporary teams. Accordingly, referring to a human-centric approach to managing change programs, four practices of preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering are identified to contribute to establishing and maintaining trust. At an overall level, filtering the earlier research through two frameworks, my study provides a simple yet inclusive terminology to enable an improved theoretical conversation about the competencies of a competent change program manager

Regarding the discussions on competency, I would like to recall one point before going through further research, practical implications, and concluding remarks. This thesis focuses on value creation in change programs led by *program managers*. As mentioned in several places throughout the thesis, as change programs are *internal* (not externally contracted), the program managers and program management team are often representatives from the hosting permanent organization's top management and related managers or employees (Zwikael and Meredith, 2018). One of the underlying premises of this thesis has been this point, namely that program managers are chosen not because of their experience with professional project/program management (or change management), but because of other qualities they have. Thus, a situation can emerge where the selected program managers are not familiar with professional project or program management, but this is not necessarily the case. In other words, it can often happen that project or program management as a distinct way of working can be novel or less familiar to the oft-accidental change program managers, as registered (mostly implicitly) in earlier change program studies. However, it should be acknowledged that there could be situations where coincidently selected change program managers are well trained or capable of practicing professional project/program management. The questions of whether professional project/program management training is central to ensuring a competent project manager, and how well accredited project managers lead temporary organizations successfully are of course two different issues and considerations (cf. (Hosch, 2016). Although the former scenario is the case for this thesis, as selected managers had limited program management competency, my findings are not limited to this situation. For discussions on the context, I argue that the distinctness of the program management logic for managers refers to a generic issue in change programs, for example, due to the sensitivity of the change or limited program autonomy (resulted from high intervention from the organization side) that can cause the organizational context's logic to occasionally dominate.

For discussions on competency, this thesis shows the importance of four distinct competency categories, including the administration of the temporary organization. It further reveals the consequences of insufficient program management competency. These findings are indeed useful for all program managers.

6.1. Further research

This thesis studies value creation in change programs from the program manager's point of view and suggests four key contributions to program management literature; based on these, I propose some avenues for further research.

Overall, considering the content of empirical cases, municipality mergers are viewed as change programs. Nevertheless, as I partly reviewed related theories in my research process, I would like to propose some concrete research possibilities. I suggest it would be possible to integrate change project/program management literature with relevant aspects of organizational change in public organizations (e.g. (Van der Voet, 2016, Van der Voet and Vermeeren, 2017, Van der Voet, 2014, Kuipers et al., 2014), public mergers (e.g. (Tavares, 2018, Suzuki and Sakuwa, 2016, Hanes and Wikström, 2010, Hanes et al., 2012, Gendźwiłł et al., 2021), or M&As in general (e.g. (Meckl, 2004, Haleblian et al., 2009, Balle, 2008, Nogeste, 2010). Thus, novel insights could be developed and exchanged between the fields. Concerning strategic projects, including organizational change and transformation, and M&As, Martinsuo et al. (2020) report that cross-fertilization between knowledge bases to provide an integrative perspective on such projects has been very limited. Other recent studies also document the need for such cross-fertilization, for example, by using the acquisition theory to shed light on integration projects (Birollo and Teerikangas, 2019). Therefore, addressing relevant issues and improving the research on change programs could benefit the mentioned literature.

In particular, based on my observation in the field I gained access to, and especially considering the results of paper II, I see great possibilities to enrich the theory on temporary organizations and the theory on municipality mergers. Research exploring the impacts of such consolidations and their relationship to the functioning of local governments has produced many studies in different theoretical disciplines (e.g. local government studies, public administration studies, urban policy research, or political studies), including municipal merger reforms in many countries, such as Finland, Canada, Australia, Japan, Sweden, Netherlands (Moisio and Uusitalo, 2013, Kushner and Siegel, 2003, Verhoeven and Duyvendak, 2016, Suzuki and Sakuwa, 2016).

Many studies have examined the underlying arguments for embarking on municipality reforms (e.g. (Swianiewicz, 2018, Saarimaa and Tukiainen, 2015)); some have inspected significant factors affecting the implementation, such as managing local identity, size and income differences, emotional aspects, or common pool problem (e.g. (Brunsson and Sahlin-Andersson, 2000, Blom-Hansen, 2010, Hanes et al., 2012, Verhoeven and Duyvendak, 2016); and several academic works have focused on the mergers' effects (e.g. (Moisio and Uusitalo, 2013, Kushner and Siegel, 2003, Gendźwiłł et al., 2021). For the latter, earlier findings have arguably documented disappointing outcomes of government merger initiatives (Karkin et al., 2019). Tavares (2018) shows that (1) economic promises of municipal mergers to realize cost savings are largely unfulfilled, (2) managerial implications show unfavorable results from financial, service quality, and citizens' perception dimensions, and (3) there are often negative

consequences for democracy. Furthermore, the process of implementing municipality mergers has been rarely studied (Tavares, 2018). Given that temporary organizations are typically used to plan and implement processes of changes in the public sector (Arnaboldi et al., 2004), and considering the implications of my second article, I argue that studying the management of municipality merger projects or programs is necessary. In more detail, one might examine how applying project or program management's managerial ideas and principles to various extents in public organizations, where institutional logics are already established and there is usually limited project/program management experience and support, unfolds. Such studies might provide insights on difficulties of leading municipal merger projects and programs, contributing to project management and associated literature. Following these points, it could be interesting to explore how program managers lead value creation processes in public sector changes and municipality mergers.

Another avenue for further research may be using other empirical settings to compare this thesis's highlighted contributions, namely program managers' participation in managing change programs and value creation, the influence of organizational context, and managers' use of different competencies in managing change programs. It would be intriguing to see how the findings of this thesis play out in equivalent changes in the private sector. One can examine if change program managers in the private sector have different conditions in leading the program to create value. In the public sector, work is generally regulated, the budgeting process is difficult and influenced by opposing political agendas, and there are big statuses and informal power dynamics that affect the room for maneuver. Institutional systems in the public sector have rules, expectations, and defined roles with implicit expectations, and this is not necessarily the same in the private sector (cf. (Boyne, 2002).

Moreover, as a part of this thesis, using institutional logics theory to investigate change programs within their permanent organizational context yields important contributions to the program management literature. Therefore, this study calls for explicit attention to the concept of context in program literature, such that programs are investigated in relation to their context. In addition, as mentioned in the paper (II) and in subsection 5.2.2, I did not intend to shape my study to make contributions to the institutional logics theory. Nevertheless, this may be an exciting path for further research to link the theory of temporary organizations to institutional logics to offer new insights to the latter. My study shows actors' efforts to navigate the institutional tensions so that the logics sometimes coexisted and sometimes competed. This is in line with earlier studies within institutional logics theory (Johansen and Waldorff, 2017). Nevertheless, given that institutional tensions are often a temporary issue for change project and program actors and that they usually have personal interest in the change (future position, political agendas, etc.), it could be interesting to examine if the awareness of the temporality of the pressure and personal interest in the change influence how actors deal with the situation.

In addition, this thesis shows that program managers with limited competency of project and program management managed to deliver change programs to an acceptable extent by emphasizing the use of human competency and accepting a high workload and personal burnout. As underscored in section 5.3.2, further studies could examine if accidental project or program managers in other types of project or program, such as infrastructure or product development. Given the issue of oft-accidental project and program managers, and

considering the project competency literature emphasizing the need for professional project and program managers, this line of questioning would be very interesting to follow.

Finally, in conducting this study, concerning the concept of competency, I decided to focus on developable competencies of program managers, setting the managers' personal characteristics aside. In addition, following a similar decision and for the purpose of anonymization, program managers' gender and age were also excluded from the focus. Expanding the findings of the current study, it could be stimulating for further studies to examine if and how program managers' age, gender, or other relevant personal characteristics influence the way program managers lead the value creation processes. In that case, a relevant and solid theoretical framework would be very important.

6.2. Practical impact

In addition to establishing some avenues for expanding the findings of this study and further research, this thesis suggests some practical impacts. As the theoretical contributions of the thesis are summarized under four major points, I use the four points and suggest the most important practical implications.

First, this study suggests that the content and process of change programs are complex and evolve during the lifecycle of programs, and depend on the perceptions and actions of actors involved in governing and implementing the programs. Therefore, to lead change programs, employing experienced leaders with good knowledge of the permanent hosting organization, its operations, and goals, and actors at different hierarchical levels is essential. These leaders need to be well prepared to acknowledge, analyze, and translate the complexity of change in order to link the change program to the permanent organization, link the implementation of the change to the change targets, and manage the change in connection to its wider environment. This study also suggests that change program managers must master extremely good human competency to respond to change program requirements and create and maintain trust. To build and maintain trust in the temporary team, emphasizing trust, working with and involving change program actors and acknowledging and addressing existing concerns and emotional dynamics should be done together with adhering to institutional factors. Accordingly, the underlined importance of human competency in this study suggests that it is sensible to consider this aspect when recruiting program managers for implementing large change processes.

Second, this thesis shows that a lack of professional project and program management competency by program managers can lead to a degree of personal burnout, and a degree of ineffectiveness in value creation. The participants in this study acknowledged that more advanced competency in managing temporary organizations could contribute to their control and planning of the change processes, and to optimizing the value creation processes, stakeholder management, and risk management. Therefore, this study suggests that the initiators of changes in organizations can benefit from integrating project and program management training and support in their processes.

Third, following the preceding suggestion, this study cautions organizations in applying project or program management as a way of working or as a management framework for implementing strategic initiatives while relevant experience and systems are lacking. My findings show that the permanent organization's institutional logic(s) (ways of working) might collide with the new managerial ideas and practices, and so challenge project/program

management actors in fulfilling their temporary role and meeting associated demands. This is not to discourage utilizing the potential of temporary organizing to implement strategic initiatives, but to suggest conscious planning and integrating training, support, etc., for the temporary manager and team before and during projects and programs so that the new managerial ideas might be realized. This is one way that top management can support their program managers. In addition, top management might consider other types of support, such as, providing program managers with dedicated project or program coordinators. Alternatively, considering the key role of human competency (as underscored in my findings), another way of supporting program managers may be offering them the use of at least a small percentage of their time and resource allocation to attend potential leader-development/competency-development programs or other gatherings offered by associated organizations.

Fourth, to understand the management of change programs, this study applies a value creation perspective. The process of analysis and generating results in the thesis suggest that such a perspective is a fruitful path to accommodate the complexity of change and unfold the processes and management of complex change programs. Change programs often have ill-defined visionary objectives that evolve as the program unfolds. Thus, a goal- or control-oriented approach could not offer much possibility of analyzing the processes of change programs. As an additional reflection, thinking about the empirical setting of the study, the value creation perspective could well relate to the public sector characteristics, for example, focus on enhancing services, enhancing democracy, that could be captured by the underlying assumptions and vocabulary of value creation.

6.3. Concluding remarks

This study makes four main contributions. First, it elaborates the role of change program managers in relation to their organizational context to expand earlier findings (e.g. (Darrell et al., 2010, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Johansson et al., 2007, Stjerne et al., 2019), and challenges typical prescriptions on the need for professional project and program management for delivering change projects or programs properly (e.g. (Stummer and Zuchi, 2010, OGC, 2011, Pádár et al., 2017, Pádár et al., 2019, Pollack and Algeo, 2016). Second, it contributes to the literature on managing and value creation in change programs by explaining the value creation processes from an actor-centric perspective, based on the lived experiences of program managers (e.g. (OGC, 2011, Thiry, 2004, Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008, Laursen and Svejvig, 2016, Liu et al., 2019). Third, this study explains the organizational context of change programs through specific attributes and elucidates the dynamic interface between the change program and permanent hosting organization. In doing so, it adds to earlier suggestions on potential tensions on the edge between the change program and permanent organization (e.g. (Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018, Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016), and possible consequences for individual actors (e.g. (Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016). Fourth, this study highlights the use of different competencies by program managers, offering novel insights to program manager competency research (e.g. (Miterev et al., 2016, Pellegrinelli, 2002). The study provides a simple yet inclusive terminology to enable an improved theoretical conversation about the competencies of a competent change program manager. In sum, a holistic understanding of managing change programs to create value by change program managers is offered. The study thus contributes to calls for the

expansion of theory on change programs in the project management literature (Martinsuo and Hoverfalt, 2018).

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Appendix

Table 11 Previous literature on the management of change programs

Authors	Setting, content	Aspects discussed
(Cowan-Sahadath, 2010a)	Single case, business transformation program	An integrated change model, change and project management linked, importance of strong leadership, program management, and change ownership for success
(Lehmann, 2010)	Conceptual, change project/program	Different conceptualizations in change management and project management, communication as an example of various conceptualizations in both fields, attempting to bridge the two theories: highlighting the common shift from mineral to organic approaches in both fields, a mixed approach for studying the management of changes as projects based on notion of coherence
(Söderlund, 2010)	Conceptual, illustrative case, large-scale transformation (LST) projects	A knowledge entrainment perspective on managing LST projects, project facilitating knowledge integration where project management practices orchestrate knowledge integration within the project
(Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018)	Two cases (one public, one private), significant change, digitalization, new process development	Project-to-project and program-to-organization integration mechanisms, agency in program integration, five integration tasks, differences between cases explained by organization's maturity in project-based organizing, program/project manager competencies, and program's autonomy
(Johansson et al., 2007)	Two cases: development projects in social welfare offices in a Swedish municipality, quality development in a service in a city in Sweden	Developing a model of separation–integration for developing large projects, detachment-project-reattachment process when organizing development projects, difficulty of obtaining benefit from rigid project management, the implementation of projects calling for further projects
(Hornstein, 2015)	Conceptual	The need for integrating project management and organizational change management, project management and change management using different terminologies, methods, and highlighting different skills, that the two disciplines are complementary
(Nieminen and Lehtonen, 2008)	Single case, change program in public sector, a program within structural reform	Program initiation, boundary spanning, program–organization integration, iterative cycles of integration and isolation, actors interpret and shape the program boundaries, five boundary-spanning activities
(Boddy and Macbeth, 2000)	Quantitative research, implementing collaborative working relations as major organizational change projects	Ensuring agreement with goals, creating appropriate structures to manage the change, ensuring adequate resources, and setting up adequate controls influence the success of implementing organizational change projects

Authors	Setting, content	Aspects discussed
(Nasholm and Blomquist, 2015)	Single case, culture development program, Sweden	Co-creation as a strategy for program management, emergence of creative projects through co-creation, early stages
(Gordon and Pollack, 2018)	Multiple-case study, integration of healthcare networks, Canada, significant organizational change projects,	Project management (following its roots) falls short addressing change requirements, established project management processes only partly align to the needs of healthcare integration projects, a precise definition of project management or change management was not used to let the practice reveal actors' approach, combination of change management and project management is beneficial, combining can be difficult due to phase misalignment of the two approaches, actors take intuitive approaches to combine the two
(Levene and Braganza, 1996)	Single case, financial services industry, Business process re-engineering, organizational transformation, program	Proper decision-making, project definition, and planning links the program goal zone and project work zone to support changing shape of change programs
(Yu and Kittler, 2012)	Two cases: UK's regional electricity companies, large-scale multi-site information system change programs	Structure of program is a strategic decision and should be aligned with program environment, considering program and its environment through a homogeneity–authority matrix, decentralized structure and approach to address the dynamics
(Crawford et al., 2003)	Single case, complex organizational change projects, public sector,	Employing "standard" project management knowledge and practice in change context, results of attempts to link soft system methodology and project management practice
(Martinsuo and Lehtonen, 2007)	Single case, service system renewal change program, public sector	Program initiation, examining the theory on actual practice of program initiation, the concept and practice of program are compatible to some degree, inductive strategy formation should be followed by more deductive planning of goals, resources, and management practices
(Miterev et al., 2020)	Single case, multi-partner transport development change program, Sweden	Value creation in program is dynamic and context-dependent, program organization design must be aligned with different phases of value creation
(Pollack et al., 2013)	Multiple-case study, project management information system (PMIS) change program, public sector agencies	Using actor network theory, it is discussed that when implementing the PMIS change, contribution and change in effectiveness and capability come from a stable network of developers/practitioners and the PMIS
(Nieminen and Lehtonen, 2008)	Multiple-case study, four change programs with a significant IT component, public and private sector	Identified 23 control mechanisms that are categorized under bureaucratic control, clan control, and self-control, the control mechanisms are rather complementary, the mechanisms are used differently in different cases, which leads to different levels of control

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Authors	Setting, content	Aspects discussed
(Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2009)	Two complex organizational change programs, one structural reform (IT component) in a public sector organization, one service transformation in a private company	Contextuality of change programs regarding program–organization integration, various factors affect the need and practice of integration: integration activities, boundary management, and isolation activities, which shape the integration of program and organization and outcomes of the program
(Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008)	A change program within a structural reform, the program aimed to rationalize the organization's IT management, a public organization	Change program initiation, five boundary-spanning activities (integrating and isolating)
(Turkulainen et al., 2015)	Single embedded case study, a change program to promote and use biofuels for transport, a global Finland-based oil company	Project-to-project and project-to-organization integration, impersonal, personal, and group integration mechanisms
(Pollack, 2012)	Single case, a knowledge management organizational change program to create a culture of coaching and knowledge sharing, an Australian company	The benefits of a flexible and contingent program management approach with higher focus on visibility, momentum, and developing senior management support, than on definition, scope control, budgeting, and business case review
(Boddy and Macbeth, 2000)	Quantitative research, implementing collaborative working relations as major organizational change projects	Ensuring agreement with goals, creating appropriate structures to manage the change, ensuring adequate resources, and setting up adequate controls influence the success of implementing organizational change projects
(van Marrewijk, 2018)	Single case, one interorganizational change project, utility sector	Change and resistance, employees as change agents, middle managers as resistors
(Pollack, 2017)	Conceptual	Differences and similarities between project management and change management disciplines, integrating and fitting change into project management (project, program, portfolio) mold
(Lunkka et al., 2019)	Single case, a large-scale long-lasting organizational change in Finnish public healthcare that involved professionals from different positions, integration of two clinics and several small hospitals	Project participants making sense of change experience, discursive analysis revealed interpretive repertoires by which actors make sense of the project work in the change project, project work differed from actors' expectations
(Dietrich, 2006)	Multiple-case study, four change programs, renewal and development change, public sector	The integration mechanisms between projects of a change program are contingent on uncertainty and complexity
(Gorog, 2011)	Multiple-case study, six different programs, public and private sectors	Project management toolbox in executing programs, managing project interdependencies
(Pellegrinelli and Murray-Webster, 2011)	Conceptual	Using different paradigmatic lenses offers different explanations or narratives on program-based transformational change

Table 12 Review of studies on change programs in their context

Author	Topic	Context (program type)	Attribute of organizational context (either emphasized in the papers' theory or emerged in findings)	Key findings
(Johansson et al., 2007)	Separation or integration of change programs	Large development projects	Aspects of an organization: organizational identity, hierarchy, rationality	Depending on how well the distinction between development project and its parent organization is defined, project managers can either organize to facilitate innovation or achieve implementation
(Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2008)	Boundary spanning at change program initiation	A complex change program, rationalizing a public Finnish organization's IT management	Characteristics of organizational context: structures, norms, and rules of parent organization; way of operating; organizational culture and personnel's attitudes; pressure of other changes and projects on personnel	Boundary-spanning activities during the initiation of program categorized into five categories, characteristics of organizational context can challenge or enable the change program implementation
(Yu and Kittler, 2012)	Matching program structure to program environment	Large-scale multi-site information system change program	Initiating organizations characterized by the level of program authority and the level of homogeneity of the business processes in the participating organizations	The program structure (centralization/decentralization) should be adapted to program environment
(Lehtonen and Martinsuo, 2009)	Integrating change program with the parent organization	One change program in a public organization (restructuring activities, merging of units, closing down some units) One change program in a private company (transforming company's central service processes in its largest business area)	Contextual factors related to: - organization-level: e.g. organization's experience with project management - program-level: e.g. top management involvement and support to the program - individual-level: e.g. program manager's experience with program management, and with leadership	Integration mechanisms: organizing structures and formal control mechanisms, goal and content-based linkages, people and relationship-based mechanisms, adopting parent organization's procedures and standards Isolative mechanisms Boundary activities: information scouting, ambassadorial, boundary-shaping activities Isolative activities The contextuality of program-parent organization integration
(Vuorinen and Martinsuo, 2018)	Agency in program integration	A digitalization change program in a public organization, a new customer process-development change program in a private company	Given autonomy to change program by parent organization, organization support to change program, organization experience with project-based organizing, how organization governs the change program	Program-to-parent organization integration Project-to-project integration Agency in integration practice of multi-project change programs
(Nasanen and Vanharanta, 2016)	Discursive construction of program context	A spatial transformation change program, a large media company	Organizational and social context characterized by temporal and hierarchical orientations	Actors' construction and reconstruction of their temporal and hierarchical orientation Program group uses discursive patterns to separate itself from the parent organization, and withdraw itself from the responsibility to

Author	Topic	Context (program type)	Attribute of organizational context (either emphasized in the papers' theory or emerged in findings)	Key findings
(Turkulainen et al., 2015)	Managing different interfaces in change programs	A global operations expansion change program, Finland-based Oil company	Implicit: - Project-based organizing practices and policies - Project guidelines to ensure firm-level capability development - Uncertainty - Legitimacy	implement Impersonal, personal, and group integration mechanisms Different use of mechanisms at program-parent organization and project-to-project interfaces: explained by various uncertainties, legitimacy reasons
(Pellegrinelli et al., 2007)	Context perspective on program practices	Multiple cases, public and commercial organizations, programs	Fast-changing program environment characterized by stakeholders' views and interests, support from relevant departments, corporate perspective, ambiguity and uncertainty, sources of funds, powerful forces	Program managers are aware of the context they are embedded in and contextual factors make them make compromises and reshape the content and processes of the program Program team are influenced by and seek to influence their contexts Dynamic program environment cannot be responded to by reductionist/mechanistic perspectives
(Stjerne et al., 2019)	Temporal boundary-spanning practices in interorganizational projects	Multiple interorganizational projects under a large change program, change in governing Danish manufacturing industry and establishing a common political vision aligned with "Industry 4.0"	Temporal characteristics	Three practices of framing, synchronizing, and hyping to resolve temporal tensions (time-horizon tensions, pacing tensions, continuity tensions)
(Morris and Geraldi, 2011)	Institutional context of temporary organizations	Conceptual	Institutional aspects: - Organization's efforts to create a stable platform and system (e.g. human resource management, reporting system) for entire lifecycle of projects - Organization's efforts to gather, organize, and use tacit and explicit knowledge - Project management professional bodies - Governance/role of sponsor from organization - Influence of organizational groups external to the home project organization - Organization stability, resilience, and order vs its adaptability and innovation, which affect strategic resourcing - Integration of external groups (e.g. marketing) - Managing portfolios at the societal level - Leadership at the institutional level, leader as a powerful organizational actor who can shape own	Going beyond level 1 and 2 of projects, level 3 deals with institutional aspects

Author	Topic	Context (program type)	Attribute of organizational context (either emphasized in the papers' theory or emerged in findings)	Key findings
(Beach and Coule, 2016)	Approaching change projects as a contested and negotiated space	Conceptual, pre-initiation of organizational change projects	version of institutional culture and connects project issues to relevant organizational and institutional needs Sociopolitical dynamics	Need to consider a dynamic view of interrelations between various stakeholders
(Lunkka et al., 2019)	Project participants' understanding of project-based work in a change project, discursive sense-making perspective	A large-scale change project at a Finnish university hospital including integration of two clinics and several small hospitals, public sector	Project work against organization's way of working	Project participants make sense of their experiences during organizational change Six repertoires of narratives through which individual's lived experiences found meaningful
(Martinsuo and Geraldi, 2020)	Four theoretical viewpoints for project portfolios in their contexts can offer different explanations for managing the portfolios	Conceptual	Internal and external stakeholders Uncertainties stemming from the parent organization and broader context	Alternative theoretical views offer alternative explanations, towards a novel theory on the management of project portfolios
(Willems et al., 2020)	Temporary-to-parent integration vs autonomy	Two innovation change projects, one in Dutch railway network aiming to creating a national coordination center, one city development project in a large Dutch municipality aiming to develop innovative collaboration in public–private partnerships	Influence of parent organization, identity, cultural differences in a politicized domain (stakeholders), political context, organizational practices and practices of specific communities, organizational processes and governance, lack of needed competencies, lack of mandate	Triggers for project autonomy, practices of isolation (symbolic, discursive, spatial), consequences of isolation
(Ritson et al., 2012)	Alignment between formulation and implementation of business strategy and program success	Quantitative, different program contexts	Corporate strategy, program management, and organizational management systems Changes to the organizational and business environment Uncertainty and complexity Corporate objectives and internal and external environments Organizational learning	Program management factors and alignment factors relate to success of programs

Paper I

Article

Sifting Interactional Trust Through Institutions to Manage Trust in Project Teams: An Organizational Change Project

Parinaz Farid[1]

Abstract

Trust in project teams has been found to lead to positive project outcomes. However, the role of project managers in facilitating development of trust in projects is not well-understood. This article addresses this by exploring mechanisms to facilitate the development of interactional and institutional trust and explicating the interplay between those mechanisms. Drawing on longitudinal data from an organizational change project, findings suggest that to facilitate trust development, project managers must concurrently exercise four practices: preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering. Simultaneous and tailored application of the first three practices affects interactional trust; the latter not only fosters institutional trust but is also a necessary filter for the dynamics of interactional trust.

Introduction

Managing the development of trust among project team members can be challenging, as members situated together to collaborate and realize a shared objective under time pressure often carry different, occasionally conflicting, interests, priorities, expertise, and organizational cultures. In the project management literature, trust has been of interest over the past two decades, as it is key in contributing to generating outcomes desired by project management team members (Bond-Barnard et al., 2018; Rezvani et al., 2018). Trust has been found relevant to almost all dimensions of projects (Hartman, 2002) and its existence can facilitate work relationships, sharing information, and risk reduction (Pinto et al., 2009); thus, its management is critical (Strahorn et al., 2015) and its development and management can differ from those of *permanent* work relationships (Munns, 1995). Building on general management in a project setting, several studies have attempted to identify and examine factors or mechanisms contributing to trust development in temporary groups. The value of managing communication; ensuring frequent interaction and shared problem-solving; and using formal factors, including clear contracts, credit rating, and organizational policy to contribute to trust development are oft-examined mechanisms (e.g., Khalfan et al., 2007; Maurer, 2010; Wong et al., 2008), while it is recognized that close control and monitoring hamper trust development (Kadefors, 2004).

Although extant studies provide valuable insight into some possibilities for managing trust development in project teams, mechanisms have been investigated sometimes implicitly and often quantitatively (e.g., Maurer, 2010; Pinto et al., 2009).

Typical retrospective reflection on managing trust among project participants neglects the dynamic process of trust development throughout a project (Jiang et al., 2016). Therefore, more in-depth empirical studies are needed to investigate trust-building mechanisms with respect to the temporality of projects within different organizational contexts (Lander et al., 2004; Maurer, 2010), and to examine how project actors can enhance relationship management to enhance trust (Pinto et al., 2009). It is suggested that qualitative studies can handle the complexities of trust in projects and complement extant findings on team trust-building mechanisms (Buvik & Rolfsen, 2015; Maurer, 2010). Thus, to address the knowledge gap and abovementioned calls, the following research question is posed: *How can project managers facilitate trust development among project team members?*

Trust types vary but can be categorized under two main groups: interactional- and institutional-based trust (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011). Interactional trust concerns evolvement of trust based on interpersonal interactions and experiences, and institutional trust

[1]Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

Corresponding Author:
Parinaz Farid, Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway.
Email: parinaz.farid@ntnu.no

concerns trust development following informal (e.g., reputation, community norms and procedures) and formal institutional factors (e.g., guarantees, guidelines, policies, legal arrangements; Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011). Although the field of general management and organization recognizes that institutional factors are closely connected to interactions by serving "as a springboard for the creation of trust" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 400), discussing the interactional- and institutional-based trust mutually has been rather absent or implicit in project management (see Khalfan et al., 2007; Wong et al., 2008). Even in those few articles where some aspects of interactional and institutional trust are considered together, the scope of institutional trust at the contracting level and quantitative research methods have led to limited elaboration on trust at the interpersonal level and the evolving dynamics among individuals (cf. Maurer, 2010). Moreover, it seems assumed that institutional factors in projects comprise formal agreements and policies, whereas informal institutional factors remain neglected. Extant findings are thus inconclusive in that regard, with detailed exploration of the dynamics between the mechanisms of fostering interactional- and institutional-based trust lacking.

Considering interactional- and institutional-based trust, this article employs an in-depth longitudinal case study to explore practices or what a project manager does to manage or facilitate trust development in project teams. The case is an organizational change project, purposefully chosen since its setting represents a complex and uncertain team environment. Trust was vital for the case to achieve its goals and was successfully managed by the project manager leading to delivering the project's desired outcomes. The findings identify four practices employed to facilitate trust building in the project team by the project manager and disclose the dynamics among mechanisms of facilitating interactional and institutional trust. These are reflected in a model (see Figure 3) that fills the theoretical gap. The study thus contributes to the debate on managing trust in project teams in project management and provides practical implications for project managers. The remainder of the article is organized as follows: the next section outlines the theoretical framework and concludes with the theoretical gap. The methodology section presents the case description, methodological approach, and design. The article continues by describing the data analysis and outlines the results. The article ends with discussion of and conclusions on the findings, highlighting an outline of the article's contribution to knowledge, practical implications, and further research suggestions.

Theoretical Framework

Overview of Interactional- and Institutional-Based Trust

Mayer et al.'s (1995, p. 712) definition of trust—the "willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that party"—is one of the most often adopted definitions. Rousseau et al. (1998) suggest that trust is a psychological state wherein one accepts vulnerability based on positive expectations of another's intention and behavior. Such descriptions imagine actors and relationships where the trustor's characteristics and perception of the trustee's trustworthiness result in behavioral manifestations. Trust has a multidimensional character, including distinctive yet interrelated cognitive, emotional, and behavioral bases joined in a social experience (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Those bases create a *bandwidth* within which different types of trust are conceptualized, which will differ in the same relationship with time (Rousseau et al., 1998). The different, sometimes overlapping, types of trust include, among others, calculus-based, knowledge-based, identification-based (Shapiro et al., 1992), competence-based, integrity-based, intuitive-based (Hartman, 2000), affect-based, and cognitive-based trust (McAllister, 1995). These types of trust are considered interactional. Within the same bandwidth, some scholars added the role of institutions. Bachmann and Inkpen (2011) suggest that the interactional (psychologically grounded) view of trust should be complemented by institutional-based trust by acknowledging that individuals or collective actors develop trust "in the face of specific institutional arrangement in the business environment" (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011, p. 284). Institutions appear as formal institutional arrangements and entail informal, context-specific rules implied in local routines and practices (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011). Institutional-based trust can thus be conceptualized through situational normality and structural assurance (McKnight et al., 1998). Situational normality, or *informal institutional factors* (Parkhe, 1998), suggest that trust beliefs are based on shared understandings of a social system and a properly ordered setting where things seem normal. Structural-assurance aspects, or *formal institutional factors*, including regulations, guarantees, and legal recourse, compensate for parties' limited knowledge about each other, especially earlier in the relationship. Institutional factors can exist at levels ranging from macro societal norms and legal systems to meso industry-level logics (e.g., standards and regulations) to more local organizational-level institutions, including organizational norms, structures, culture, roles, and policies. Using tailored formal and informal institutional factors strengthens the legitimacy and trust of individuals toward managers or organizations (Sitkin & George, 2005).

Against these definitions, focusing on trust management among project team members, this article recognizes interactional and institutional trust, from which it considers three types of trust: (1) knowledge- and (2) emotion-based types *under the umbrella of interactional-based trust* and (3), an *institutional-based* type of trust. Knowledge-based trust concerns the development of trust based on rationality and information gained through interactions, where the trustor assesses the competence and behavior of the trustee (Shapiro et al., 1992); emotion-based trust concerns developing trust by developing bonds and identifying with each other (McAllister, 1995); and institutional-based trust focuses on the institutional environment as a constitutive factor in trust building (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011).

The Process of Developing Interactional and Institutional Trust

Generally, for interactional trust to develop time is needed to accommodate actions and interactions in organizational relationships. Trust is influenced by the experiences and outcomes of actions and interactions, along with other contextual happenings in the focal and surrounding environments where the relationship is embedded (Huang & Wilkinson, 2013). Clark and Payne (1997) posit that three major dimensions are involved in trust development among actors: (1) the modality dimension, entailing beliefs, feelings, and intentions to act; (2) the qualities dimension, involving integrity, consistency or fairness, competence, loyalty, openness, and respect; and (3) the context dimension, regarding micro- and macrolevel factors. Over time, when actual behavior becomes available, individuals accumulate knowledge about their peers and build a cognitive map that informs the nature and degree of trust and gain the opportunity to develop emotion-based trust (Huang & Wilkinson, 2013). Knowledge- and emotion-based trust interact but do not confront each other. In a project setting, having limited time for trust to develop is problematic (Hartman, 2002; Munns, 1995).

In new organizational relationships, and similarly in the early stages of temporary organizations, the notion of initial trust seems challenging, as trust develops over time. McKnight et al. (1998) suggest that in the initiation phase of undeveloped organizational relationships, in the absence of a sufficient basis for knowledge-based trust, hidden dimensions, such as prior cooperation, categorization processes, and institutional factors, might foster trust development among actors. Institutionalized structures and processes accompany interorganizational trust at an interpersonal level in a more stable and enduring fashion (Ring & Van De Ven, 1994). Development of institutional trust occurs when individuals trust one another, drawing on institutional factors that create an overlap between parties' knowledge realms without their demanding first-hand personal experiences (Shapiro, 1987). Bachmann and Inkpen (2011) posit that institutions can matter most in management situations when relationships are undeveloped, swift decisions must be made, specificity of assets is low in relation to products or services exchanged in a business, and relationships are embedded in mature industries.

Managerial Mechanisms to Influence Trust Development at an Interpersonal Level Within Institutional Environments

Interactional Trust

Trust building and communication are mutually dependent and, therefore, project managers need to enhance their communicative competence and practice when leading projects (Strahorn et al., 2015). Enabling interactional-based trust, repeated and multifaceted relationships, and regular communication (Shapiro et al., 1992) ensures information exchange about interests, preferences, approaches, and concerns, which enable parties to predict reactions and think alike (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). Courtship focuses on relationship building within social situations, observing individuals' different emotional states and learning how others view behavior (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). By developing a collective identity and committing to commonly shared values through interactions, individuals develop emotion-based trust (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996).

In project teams, diversity of project skills, limited prior interactions, complex tasks, interdependencies, and temporality might disturb the trust-building process, thus trust must be built swiftly (Meyerson et al., 1996). Munns (1995) argues that in the absence of situational trust in the beginning, the initiation of trust development can be informed by parties' global trust stance, which sometimes leads to a downward spiral of trust dynamics. This must be addressed by the project manager's interference to establish and communicate clear statements about trust. Over the course of a project, Maurer (2010) reports that ensuring a stable pool of project team members and their full-time and steady participation facilitate the needed interactions for trust to develop. Meeting and working together in team-building seminars, in formal and informal arenas, facilitate the exchange of information (Bond-Barnard et al., 2018); these also facilitate learning about one another and gaining common perceptions of objectives, difficulties, and possibilities, as well as project organization and planning (Khalfan et al., 2007). Alongside the essential element of learning instigated by interactions to foster knowledge- and emotion-based trust, involvement of individuals promotes the perception of procedural justice that affects trust development. Korsgaard et al. (1995) argue that considering individuals' input, giving voice to information regarding decisions so that they own those decisions, and giving them indirect control are important to building trust.

Moreover, exchange of information and experiencing the fulfillment of expectations and others' behaviors in the team can evoke positive or negative emotions (Yang, 2014). Via continuous interaction and communication, if parties show empathy (de Oliveira & Rabechini, 2019), invest emotionally, exhibit thoughtfulness and care, and focus on establishing a common identity, emotion-based trust is fostered (Lander et al., 2004; Wong et al., 2008). In their study of project team performance in large-scale projects, Rezvani et al. (2018) report that trust within the project team can be fostered through project team members recognizing their own and one another's emotions and displaying considerate behavior. Moreover, mutual sacrifice and professional and fair behaviors influence trust development (Khalfan et al., 2007). Partnering practices with shared goals and tools for resolving emergent dilemmas can also create an atmosphere of trust (Kadefors, 2004). Relational stakeholder management activities that require powerful project managers to lead relationships, solve problems, and prevent conflicts contribute to building trust in projects (de Oliveira & Rabechini, 2019).

Institutional Trust

Considering institutions as "relatively stable bundles of commonly accepted explicit or implicit rules of behavior to which most people orient their behavior," Bachmann and Inkpen (2011, p. 286) recommend four institutional factors—(1) legal regulation; (2) reputation; (3) certification; and (4) community norms, structures, and procedures—that affect how individuals trust each other in an interorganizational relationship. The authors maintain that formal institutional factors influence the antecedents of interactional trust, and informal institutional factors may affect the patterns of interaction processes (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011). Parkhe (1998) suggests that institutions can be drawn upon to signal competence and trustworthiness or might act as intermediary mechanisms to prevent opportunistic behaviors. In project settings, Wong et al. (2008) propose that institutional trust can be established and fostered through organizational policy, communication systems, and contracts and agreements. Initiating solid communication via organizational policies and contracts states the objectives, tasks, and roles that foster institutional trust in the project (Wong et al., 2008). Strahorn et al. (2015) echo that appropriate and clear mechanisms, guidelines, and procedures in project contracts ensure that unforeseen risks will be handled to satisfy all, thus fostering trust in the project; however, interactions, behaviors, and attitudes are the most important mechanisms in trust development. Maurer (2010) found that documented, clear, and measurable benefits contribute to building trust in project teams.

The theoretical discussions presented in the current section offer an overview of how fostering the development of interactional- and institutional-based trust in temporary organizations has been addressed. As highlighted in the introduction, there is a lack of in-depth inquiry to identify managerial mechanisms to promote trust in project teams (Buvik & Rolfsen, 2015; Lander et al., 2004; Maurer, 2010), particularly consideration of interactional and institutional trust together in detail. This article aims to address this gap through a qualitative case study, as explained in the following section.

Methodology

Research Design and Case Selection

Given the explorative nature of the posed research question, this study is guided by a constructivist (or interpretivist) research paradigm (Ponterotto, 2005). To explore managerial practices to foster interactional and institutional trust, the article's research design is an in-depth longitudinal case study. Case studies contribute to building and refining theory (Eisenhardt, 1989) and are especially useful for exploratory research in which in-depth knowledge of an underdeveloped phenomenon in its context is desired, particularly when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are unclear (Yin, 2018). Comprehensive access to data over time supports selection of a single-case-study approach (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The case selection for the article was purposeful (Patton, 2005), following criterion sampling (Miles et al., 2014). There were two selection criteria. First, the case's project team managed to engage in necessary relationships and interactions in a conflict-free environment, fulfill their delegated responsibilities, and keep their roles accountable to reasonably ensure identifying, planning, and generating the project's desired outcomes. The project was evaluated as an excellent example at regional and national levels, as having a conflict-free process and delivering the desired and agreed outcomes. This evaluation was based on opinions of the advisors in the regional county governor office, a review of reports in the local newspaper, and the perspectives of the project manager and team members. Second, as the case entailed more than two organizations involved in the change, the number of actors characterized the case as very complex, which highlighted the importance and difficulty of establishing and managing trust for the project to succeed.

Careful selection of the case, along with concentrating on conceptual relationships and focusing on the rigor of the research process, contributes to generalization from single case studies (Eisenhardt, 1989; Flyvbjerg, 2006). Case studies can shed light on theoretical concepts or principles and improve theory, where findings and lessons from one or multiple cases entail analytical generalizability (Yin, 2018) from concepts and relationships existing in a social construct.

Case Description

This article reports longitudinal data from a large municipal merger project in Norway, where more than two municipal organizations were amalgamated. This was a voluntary merger, initiated in 2016, and completed by the end of 2019, in response to the municipal reform program introduced and approved by the Norwegian government in 2014. Regarding the number of inhabitants, and consequently the sizes of the municipal organizations, one of the parties was considerably larger than the others. Nonetheless, equality and participation in building the new organization were key. An important condition in the merger was that in earlier project phases its goals were highly abstract, informed by the reform program's overall purposes. There were several laws, regulations, and guidelines governing project planning and execution, yet most decisions on project processes and goals should have been defined through negotiation among project management team members. To execute this merger (affecting around 1,600 employees), the project team encompassed a number of top political and administrative executives from the merging organizations who were united under the leadership of the project manager, appointed from the biggest organization. The political executives had decision-making and power delegation authority, and administrative executives had the responsibilities of serving the decision makers, preparing and revising project cases, and planning and implementing the processes. Project phases included early preparation, initiation, planning, implementation, and closure. The project manager had overall responsibility for planning and implementing the merger and was the chief municipal executive in the new organization. Considering that project planning and execution were almost completely consensus-based, and project team members had influential line positions, there was a high degree of sociopolitical complexity in the project team. As mentioned in the case selection section, the merger was delivered within expectations and, compared with other cases in the region, represented an excellent project regarding
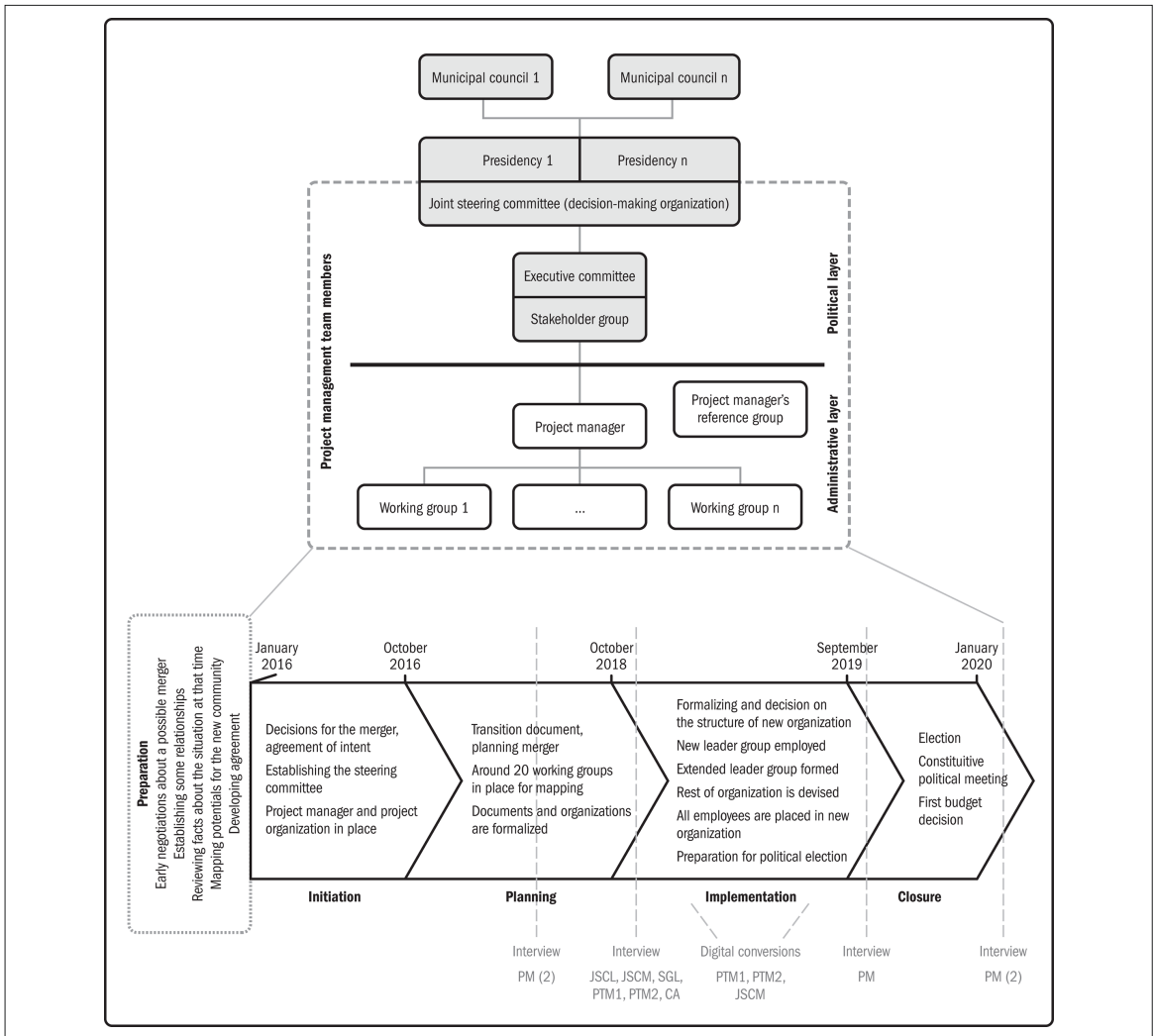
Figure 1. Project organization, project time line and phases, and interview occasions.

the processes and environment of relationships during the project life cycle. Figure 1 illustrates the project organizing structure, phases, and relevant processes and achievements at each stage and the interview time line.

Data Collection

This article's data include in-depth interviews executed at different times, from the planning phase to project completion, covering almost the whole project life cycle. Data collection over the project life cycle enabled the capture of managerial actions with respect to the establishment, enhancement, and repair of trust. Interviewees are listed in Table 1. Interviewee selection was based on the *role* principle, including roles from all the levels in the project organization: administrative (below

PM), political (above PM), employee unions (independent party). More than one informant from each group was selected (political: JSCL and JSCM—administrative: PM, PTM1, PTM2, and CA); only union representatives chose to participate in this research by their leader. The abbreviations referring to informants' roles are explained in Table 1. Informants were selected in consultation with the project manager based on the most active roles in the project and decision-making processes. Informants were asked to suggest other team members to add to the database.

Only the initiation phase was narrated retrospectively. The main informant was the project manager, who was interviewed formally on several occasions. Other informants were formally interviewed once in the implementation phase, and

Table 1. Data Collection Between January 2018 and January 2020

Source	Number[1]	Date of Interview	Duration (Hr)
Interviewees			
PM—Future councilman (PM)[2]	5	January 2018, February 2018, January 2019, January 2020(2)	10.5
Member in the joint steering committee—Mayor in one of focal parties (JSCM)[3]	1	December 2018	1
Leader of the joint steering committee—Mayor in one of focal parties (JSCL)[4]	1	December 2018, Digital conversations (summer and fall 2019)	1.5
Leader of stakeholder group (SGL)[5]	1	December 2018	1.5
Project management member—Future municipal leader (PTM1)[6]	1	December 2018, digital conversations (summer and fall 2019)	1.5
Project management member—Future HR manager (PTM2)[7]	1	December 2018, digital conversations (summer and fall 2019)	1.5
Communication advisor in project (CA)[8]	1	December 2018	1
Archival records			
Reports from joint steering committee and administrative meetings (minutes of meeting)	12		
The agreement of intent	1		
The transition document	1		
Internal presentations from project management meetings—public reports and documents on project progress	3		

three of them (PTM1, PTM2, JSCL) were contacted via email or telephone two or three times during the implementation and closure phases. Therein, several quotations were clarified, and updates on involvement and processes to check the information provided by the project manager were requested. Interviews were designed as semistructured with open-ended questions (Seidman, 2013). Example questions included: What processes are you involved with within the project? What are the major relationships that your role is dependent on to perform your tasks in the project? How do you evaluate the project's atmosphere regarding cooperation and collaboration with other roles? How were the communications and involvement important for the conflict-free relationships you mentioned you have experienced in the project? The interviews were transcribed immediately after execution, so that field notes and impressions from the sessions were added. To supplement the interviews, several archival documents were used, including internal presentations from project management meetings, reports from steering committees and administrative meetings, and some public reports and documents on project progress. Internal presentations and informative documents were reviewed to screen for processes and achievement of desired outcomes. Reports from committees (minutes of meetings) were screened continuously to capture the main happenings, significant or challenging cases, and time spans between proposals and decisions.

In qualitative research, validity and reliability are conceptualized under trustworthiness, as credibility and dependability, respectively (Bryman, 2016). To ensure the study's validity, a review of minutes of meetings, among other archival documents, was used to triangulate the data sources. Moreover, the informants were sent the manuscript for this article and asked to check the case description and findings (Creswell & Poth, 2016). All informants confirmed the understanding of the case, context, and processes. To address the reliability of this research, a comprehensive record of the research process and documents was developed and made available—from problem formulation to semistructured interview guides, field notes, transcripts, and coding documents (Bryman, 2016). In documenting the research process, the focus remained particularly on reporting the analysis steps, as presented in the following section.

Analysis

The article's overall analytical approach is aligned with abductive logic, where there was iteration between empirical observations and theory to expand theoretical understanding of the focal phenomenon, existing theory guiding the research (Dubois & Gadde, 2002); however, the first analysis phase was highly inductive. Throughout the iteration process, unfitting empirical observations to the theoretical framework led the researcher to "reframe perceptions into a new gestalt" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 546), which highlights the role of detailed case studies for building and refining theory.

A content-analysis approach was used to analyze and interpret data (Patton, 2005). The interviews and documents were read several times to become familiarized with the context. Focusing on the dynamics of interactional- and institutional-based trust within the project team, data were then sorted and categorized through an iterative process of interpretation and sharpening concepts between

the theoretical framework and data. In the iteration process toward forming the final themes, theoretical concepts associated with the development process, and managerial aspects related to the evolution of knowledge-, emotion-, and institutional-based trust, were constantly negotiated. Concerning institutional-based trust, both formal and informal institutional factors (Parkhe, 1998) were examined. Formal institutional factors appeared to be formal documents and mandates in the project, and two particular laws—the Local Government Act and the Subdivision Act—and informal institutional factors seemed to entail municipal-sector norms and practices that shape environmental interactions. Regarding dynamics between practices, the theoretical debate on the distinction between institutional and interactional trust was in focus.

To maintain rigor, data were drawn from Gioia et al. (2013) and first-order concepts and second-order themes were framed, which were then aggregated into the final dimensions. Figure 2 demonstrates the process, which started with coding the data, using emic and etic codes, where NVivo and descriptive coding techniques (Miles et al., 2014) were particularly beneficial. In the next step, identified themes were iterated to find meaningful aggregation possibilities and moved between the themes and the literature toward second-order conceptual groups or categories (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles et al., 2014). In the final stage, how the identified categories might relate to each other was inspected, and the literature was consulted for theoretical explanations for emergent relationships (Whetten, 1989). From the data analysis, based on second-order themes built on first-order concepts drawn from raw data, four themes emerged as managerial practices to facilitate trust development. As an example of the process, here the involving dimension, based on two second-order themes is considered. Inclusion, as one of the two themes, was related to five first-order concepts. Three exemplary quotes from the interviews constituting the first-order concept of "being heard, fair process" are presented: (1) "It is important to be invited to so many formal and informal arenas where we can say what we mean" (PTM2); (2) "Sometimes [we] do not get what we want, but we feel it is fair because we said what we mean and we were heard" (JSCL); (3) "The process is anchored and regardless of size, members feel free to discuss different input. I see a lot of positive stories when I attend the meetings" (CA). Quote 2 is also used later in this article.

Results

The data analysis yielded four major themes that are considered as managerial practices and affect trust development among project team members throughout the project life cycle. This section presents the four themes and relationships between them. In some quotes informants use the terms "we," "each other," or "they," rather than pinpointing specific team members. To clarify the context of quotes regarding the level of analysis, in such comments the remarks are directed at either one member or a group of members or representatives within the team.

Preaching

> "Trust is the key value for our process and we needed to talk about it constantly." (Project Manager)

In merger processes, the project manager made explicit efforts to speak about the importance of trust and focused on establishing values of honesty, transparency, and equality. This was particularly important since they were employed by the dominant organization, which became a source of suspicion about the fairness of merger processes. This employee initiated a specific conversation around trust and promoted taking the first step in a healthy relationship. Tailored to the project's conditions, the practice of preaching trust was evident throughout the project. For instance, when the level of uncertainty was very high in the preparation and initiation phases, the project manager explicitly emphasized the key value of trust. To provide the necessary platform, they carefully considered project complexity, employing an emergent managerial approach to establishing contacts among project team members. They employed an adaptive managerial approach for creating several, often overlapping and concurrent groups within various settings where project team members started interacting. By preaching trust and values, the project manager enhanced the project atmosphere, where interacting project team members learned what to expect from each other and provided a point of reference, facilitating further judgments.

> "We knew each other from before, but I think we needed to hear about what to expect in this process from them [the biggest organization] and also each other […] this is the main difference compared to failed dialogue in 2009." (JSCL)

By failed dialogue in 2009, the interviewee referred to an independent initiative by the merging organizations to negotiate possible unification for building a more effective municipality in the region, which ended in disappointment, because the biggest organization welcomed the idea only if it could lead the project and new municipality.

An exemplar from the initiation stage was connected to the project manager being employed from the biggest organization. Although it was based on consensus and followed laws and guidelines, there was a sense of uncertainty among project team members regarding whether decisions made about the project would be greatly influenced by the biggest party. The project manager perceived that this concern might hamper trust in the process and addressed this by communicating the significance of equality, trust, and project engagement, emphasizing that decisions would be made via participation of all members. Utilizing formal and informal gatherings or arenas associated with the project, the project manager emphasized:

> "[…] said merger will not happen in the dominant municipal hall, but through and with contribution of all parties in a game where all play with open cards." (JSCM)
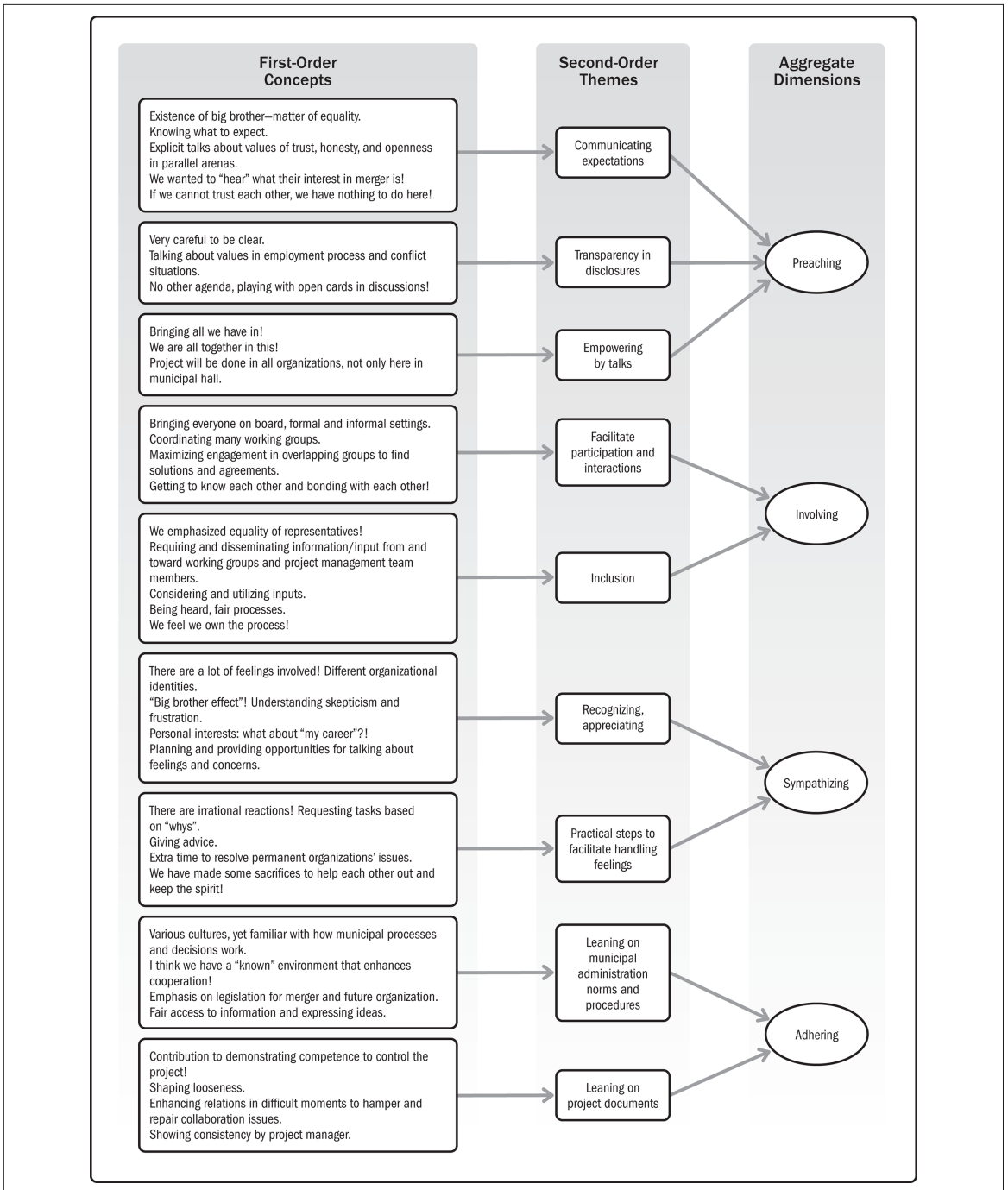
Figure 2. Data structure.

Later in the planning and implementation phases, the practice of preaching occurred less often, yet remained a salient activity. In a value-oriented environment created in previous phases, the relationships among project team members evolved as more knowledge was available to develop trust. Therefore, preaching happened when demanded, mainly in making unpopular or controversial decisions. Controversial decisions were believed to disturb the rhythm of project processes as they motivated project team members' old priorities to surface, which triggered stronger feelings connected to different organizational identities. For instance, a salient process in the execution phase was to prepare a four-year financial plan for the new organization, alongside the yearly budget for each organization that was recommended to be anchored in the four-year plan, so that daily expenditures and incomes are balanced for the new organization's benefit. Attempting to synchronize financial balances, the project manager learned that one organization had an extra source of income that would not be viable in the future. Therefore, that organization was asked to cut its income a year before its autonomy ended, which created unrest. To facilitate decision-making processes for the financial plan, the project manager used opportunities to interact with associated members in the joint steering committee, and promoted trust-based understanding:

> "We had to emphasize there is no hidden agenda here, we need to stand on trust and think about a common successful future for all." (Project Manager)

Clearly, giving speeches and highlighting the importance of trust, openness, and equality cultivated the terrain for actual work and operationalization. Preaching trust seems to introduce a foundation for interactions that help project team members learn about each other. The next theme addresses this in detail.

Involving

Throughout the project's life cycle, tailored to current requirements, the project manager demonstrated consistent attention to involving project team members, establishing and maintaining connections among them, and facilitating the flow of communication. Therein, they took a context-based or adaptive approach, by which groups and processes were organized and reorganized according to abstract objectives or overall themes:

> "We work with overall themes rather than detailed plans, it is very useful to give time and room for everyone to think through issues and decisions [...] it is a comfortable place, we are not under pressure." (JSCL)

In earlier stages, the project manager arranged overlapping groups in concurrent formal and informal settings for project team members to discuss preliminary elements, such as the name of the new organization, location of the new municipal hall, and so on. Simultaneously, about 20 working groups were established across departments under the leadership of municipal/functional managers. Although these collaborations were not specifically goal oriented, individuals started developing relationships across organizational and functional boundaries and negotiating possible solutions for the new organization and project processes. Involving so many individuals entailed heavy work for the project manager but was a way to engage departments in the absence of steering lines.

Later in the project life cycle, the project organization was reshaped to ensure the required involvement of relevant project team members. It was also interesting that the project manager strove for equality of representatives in groups, although this is not a legal requirement. In the implementation phase, for instance, where the agreement of intent and restructuring agreement were established and functional expertise was needed for further work, the new leader group was installed and the project organization was refreshed, so that new leaders started the work of structuring their domains with fewer people involved, but with clearer goals and power. The project manager chose to keep other council members in an extended reference group to retain the necessary competence to handle organizational problems within the project's perspective:

> "Competencies should be there where it is needed to discuss something [...] now, the tone is different, new leaders got assignment to involve those whose expertise is needed [...] it is also culture building among them." (Project Manager)

The project manager's practice of involvement affected the dynamics of interactional trust development in two major dimensions. First, their effort to create optimum participation in project management facilitated "the absolute requirement of forming and enabling relationships and creating a sense of ownership of the mergers" (Project Manager). On the one hand, allowing project team members to express their input in a transparent atmosphere was an invaluable asset for trust development:

> "We have been a part of the project, and I think all of us feel that we own this process and decisions." (CA, PTM1, PTM2)

The sense of ownership encouraged contribution to the project, identifying with processes, and cooperation. Interviewees highlighted a clear tendency to merge some areas even before the merger was complete, as parties "felt that we are already one organization" (JSCM).

On the other hand, this led to a comfortable and constructive working environment, where project team members brought their input into defining the project's objectives and methods, ideas were shared, and solutions were formed via cooperation, which itself reduced some project uncertainty and fostered a sense of fairness in decisions:

> "Sometimes [we] do not get what we want, but we feel it is fair because we said what we mean and we were heard." (JSCL)

Second, emphasis on the involvement of project team members provided a solid basis for members to gain knowledge about each other and bond on a personal level, which influenced their project evaluation and behavior. Project team members in each function—in internal meetings and project management meetings—gained several opportunities to learn about each other, listening to and observing one another's words and actions. This affected their trust in each other and their behavior, which again fell into the cycle of reevaluating and reshaping behaviors. Informal approaches were also employed to facilitate project team members' involvement and interactions. Such approaches were described as an effective method to ease the process of "getting to know each other […] realizing that we are not dangerous for each other" (PTM2). This is particularly relevant for political players in the project management group. An example of this was when the project manager recommended an informal bus tour around all municipalities, where each mayor talked about the past, present, and future visions of their municipality.

Sympathizing

"[No matter] how much we talk and ask people to join, still it is a rational process that triggers irrational reactions […] there is a matter of existence and identity here." (Project Manager, PTM1)

Another significant theme that emerged from the data relates to the importance of concerns and feelings involved in trust management among members. Interviewees in different roles described their own and others' concerns about the project, which influenced relationships and interactions.

Informants mentioned three major bases for the existence of noticeable feelings: (1) cultural differences between organizations; (2) presence of a dominant organization in the merger; and (3) a "natural irrational reaction" to a rationally grounded project, where core values were attacked. The latter relates to the significance of identity for each municipality that attached a sensational aspect to the organization, whereas reasons for the merger stemmed from solid numeric facts calling for the project to rescue a turbulent future. For the second, having the largest organization in leading position in the background of operations and decisions affected individuals' mindset and trust development, as they could assume that the largest organization was more informed about the change process, had more expertise or influence, or could more easily access the project manager. Regarding the first point, participants viewed the change differently based on their organizational backgrounds and cultures, different practices, and expectations. Interviews show that the project manager explicitly acknowledged such concerns and differences, exercising and encouraging sympathizing by facilitating any possible mitigation of negative effects. They had an open mind entering any meeting and were ready to lead interactions aligned with sympathy and contribution:

"Normally, the technical boss doesn't say that much, but in the last meeting they suddenly wanted to talk about many things […] you need to have an open mind and respect all the thoughts, expectations and expertise that others have." (Project Manager)

The most important tool for the project manager to address concerns was communication. They established an open and solid communication framework where positive and negative feelings could be recognized and valued. Communication and discourse enabled everyone to be heard, resulting in cooperative behavior. The project manager, listening to and understanding individuals' frustrations, paved the way for exhausting feelings that, at best, could make project team members passive or, at worst, cause distrust among them. It created a positive environment in the project and strengthened bonds among project team members, who felt comfortable expressing their viewpoints and concerns:

"There [were] a lot of feelings […] they were afraid! […] we saw the process of going in the meetings feeling uncertain and anxious earlier, and now feeling more comfortable and certain." (PTM1)

An example of sympathizing related to preparing the shared finance plan for the new organization in the implementation phase, as mentioned previously. The conflict for one party that had to cut a source of tax was reflected by one informant raising the following question:

"[Will we] all get better with this merger? We signed a document that promised a 'better' situation for everyone. But is that really so? […] But we are optimistic about it." (SGL)

Subsequently, one informant from the joint committee mentioned that this dilemma was responded to first and foremost by showing sympathy for that party:

"In that meeting regarding the budgets, we totally understood their concern […] we gave them our advice and they went to think it through, if they don't agree with cutting the tax, we understand and will open a new discussion to find a solution, which is good for them and the new organization." (JSCM)

Eventually, a solution with some income was reached to avoid short-term operational dilemmas for that municipality to 2020 and afterwards, until the stable long-term financial situation was settled. With the project manager as coordinator or motivator, project team members engaged in caring for one another and adjusted to one another's to-date requirements.

Another exemplar was when some executives lost several key personnel, and the project manager raised the issue from the merger perspective, highlighting uncertain or frustrating concerns and developing solutions. The data suggest that the project manager's approach to hybrid management, giving attention to focal organizations' daily operations and project processes, informed their practice of sympathy. This was not

decided by the project manager alone, although they had an active and key role in facilitating care and responding to issues. Working within themes rather than detailed plans provided space and time for processing feelings and issues and finding a suitable agreement for everyone. One informant expressed this well:

> "We are not worried that the train will leave, but taking our time to think through, discuss and come back fresh […] it is a pleasant and caring environment." (JSCL)

Showing and exercising sympathy in situations of anxiety or difficulty was an approach by which the project manager ameliorated the relationship environment, fostering productive interaction where agreement could be discussed and developed.

Adhering

> "We needed a sympathetic engaging project management approach, while not becoming paralyzed by compassion!" (Project Manager)

The fourth practice the data reveal relates to the project manager's effort to benefit from institutional aspects in fostering trust building and is conceptualized as *adhering*. Data analysis revealed this as a necessary piece of the puzzle, alongside the roles of the other three practices in managing the dynamics of trust development among the merger's project team members. Specifically, norms and procedures of communal work; laws and regulations; the agreement of intent; the restructuring/replacement agreement; project plans; and evolving authority lines in political and administrative layers offered the project manager institutional factors to adhere to and anchor processes by. These can be seen as informal and formal institutional factors (Sitkin & George, 2005). Data analysis shows that throughout the project, the project manager actively used such reference points to find and keep concentration and consistency in processes and relationships:

> "If attention is only given to feelings or behaviors in [the] project, we would have a loose process with fragmented relationships […] we need to have structures to follow." (Project Manager)

The practice of adhering yielded three important contributions to managing the trust-development process. First, in the early stages, familiarity with communal norms and work procedures helped project team members start the project in an acceptable environment, as "everyone is familiar with how processes are usually done in the municipal sector, so it was not an awkward situation" (PTM1). Later, the project manager exploited institutional references when required, mostly in harder moments or discussions where they utilized agreements or legislation to lift the discussion into a commonly agreed framework:

> "Sticking to the documents and norms gives us a distance from individualistic perspectives and put us on a 'known track.'" (Project Manager)

Second, by adhering to institutional factors, every member had common and fair access to information on how processes would progress within milestones and how decisions for the future organization would be made while roles were clarified:

> "We try to use the governance documents and plans actively so that processes could be shaped around established information we have created before." (Project Manager)

Adhering to shared agreements, laws, and guidelines brings transparency in processes and openness, which leads to perceptions of fairness and enhanced trust among project team members. The employment of the new leader group illustrates this point. There was high trust among project team members toward the project manager and the project itself, because processes were based on rules, and all requirements were closely followed and emphasized: the same mapping conversations, the same interview guides, the same involvement of relevant unions in every interview, and the same explanation to all candidates after employment:

> "It was very successful and pain-free, [a] very trustful process […] we think that it is fair to lose." (Project Manager, PTM2)

Third, it helped the project manager demonstrate competence by mastering project control through guidelines. This was itself an important factor in moving the project forward by operationalizing goals when developing trust.

In the interviews, the project manager highlighted an example where politicians in the project management group returned a merger-related case to the administrative level in the project team, said it was not good enough, or requested another solution. They explained that even though this was frustrating at an administrative level, they were aware of the rules and principles, and saw that making a difference through the system was possible. Without structure, there would be chaotic conversations where people viewed the project manager and one another as sloppy people who could not be fully trusted (CA). Structures put project team members' cooperation in an established and agreed perspective, providing a basis to predict behavior and evaluate consistency and commitment.

Keeping consistency through the structure enabled the project manager to establish, nurture, or repair trust in both constructive and destructive scenarios, either keeping the qualities needed for judgments, or adapting when trust is stuck and members are experiencing anxiety, confusion, or frustration.

Dynamics Between the Four Practices: Trust Formation as a Sifting Process

The four practices identified from the empirical data follow intuitively the literature on interactional and institutional trust

and their interface. The data indicated that the project manager's practices of *preaching, involving,* and *sympathizing* relate to influencing the establishment, retention, and repair of interactional trust among project team members. These practices share a common backdrop, with mutual underpinnings affecting the interactional facet of trust. The project manager's application of these practices promoted interaction, dialogue, sharing ideas and building solutions, expressing input and feelings, understanding and caring, which are fundamental for gaining knowledge and bonding with one another. Therefore, the interactional facet of trust in the project team was supported by the three practices. Moreover, the results indicated that these practices were essentially exercised throughout all the project phases simultaneously, with varying degrees of emphasis in accordance with current micro and macro aspects of context. The approaches together built and operationalized a platform for trust to develop. Therefore, they can be considered as three interwoven strategies that the project manager (perhaps intuitively) tailored to project processes and requirements at different times.

The results of the practice of *adhering* revealed several dimensions related to institutional trust and trust building. Institutional factors were found to provide a familiar environment for parties to start relationships. There was no preventive purpose in agreements or other governance documents, however. Furthermore, the results disclosed a significant dynamic between institutional and interactional trust, where institutional factors were employed to shape or moderate practices related to interactional trust, showing the project manager's competence and increasing confidence in their leadership and the project and facilitating information exchange among project team members. Within such dynamics, the project manager actively adhered and promoted adherence to current institutional factors to influence interactional trust and, subsequently, the general atmosphere of trust in the project team. The interviews delineated that this practice affected how members interacted and collaborated. Adhering to existing institutional factors seems to moderate project processes and interactions, encouraging a sense of fairness, resolving conflicts, facilitating discussions, and demonstrating competence and integrity throughout the project. This might be considered as an existing and influential container that can be used to shape the dynamics of the other three practices. To describe such a relationship, the concept of *sifting* was proposed to reflect the project manager's active role in using institutional references, because sifting something through a sieve is not an automatic action.

The sifting model proposed considers the process of choosing and inserting some referential frameworks in a sifter, which the project manager employed to set specific borders to the other mechanisms and manage possible indefinite expectations of the interactional aspects of trust building. The top of the sifter is open to receive material, but its bottom has sieves to let some material through when energy is used to purposefully sift the material. The sieves can be considered as relevant criteria that the actor wants to evaluate the material against or sift it

through. In this article, metaphorically, the project manager evaluated and sifted the interactional mechanisms and activities through institutional factors as sieves at the bottom of a sifter to shape those three mechanisms and screen out unnecessary focus or practice of them. The dynamics among the four practices are reflected in Figure 3. The sifter's color is reflected in when practices pass through the sifter, showing the influence of adhering on associated activities.

Discussion and Conclusions

This article aims to explore how project managers can facilitate trust development in project teams, considering interactional- and institutional-based trust. Performing a longitudinal case study of an organizational change project, four practices were identified as employed by the project manager to influence the development of interactional and institutional trust, and the relationships between mechanisms of promoting these two pillars were explored. The results suggest that to facilitate trust development among project team members, the project manager must work with interactional and institutional aspects simultaneously (Figure 3). It is argued that the four practices consider and address the time- and context-dependent attributes of trust development among members, so that the formative qualities of trustee can be revealed and evaluated, which influence and control the reflective consequences.

Interactional Trust

First, and unsurprisingly, the results highlight the importance of *involving* project team members in project processes that provide opportunities to interact, gain knowledge about one another, and develop a shared identity. The project manager employed a flexible managerial approach to keep a stable team for consistent interactions throughout the project (Maurer, 2010). Arranging numerous, often overlapping/parallel, settings for optimal interactions endorsed a viable environment where members had constructive conversations and co-created solutions. Consistent interactions enabled project team members to accumulate knowledge and (re)evaluate their cognitive map, intuitive feelings, and experiences based on contextual happenings, and to develop trust in one another, which also led the relationship toward emotional bonds and shared identity. The theme of involving is closely aligned with managing interactional trust, suggested by trust research in the field of general management and organization (Huang & Wilkinson, 2013; Lewicki & Bunker, 1996), and advancement of conceptualizing (interactional) trust in project management (Bond-Barnard et al., 2018; Kadefors, 2004). Involving suggests that time should be allocated to the relationships, and the project team members interactions must be carefully led (de Oliveira & Rabechini, 2019). Moreover, focus on involving in the case related to the temporariness of the project, compensating insufficient former collaboration and time constraints for trust development in the temporary organization (Meyerson et al., 1996). The outcome of involving provided space for swift learning and relationship building. Finally, involving individuals and hearing their voices strengthened their
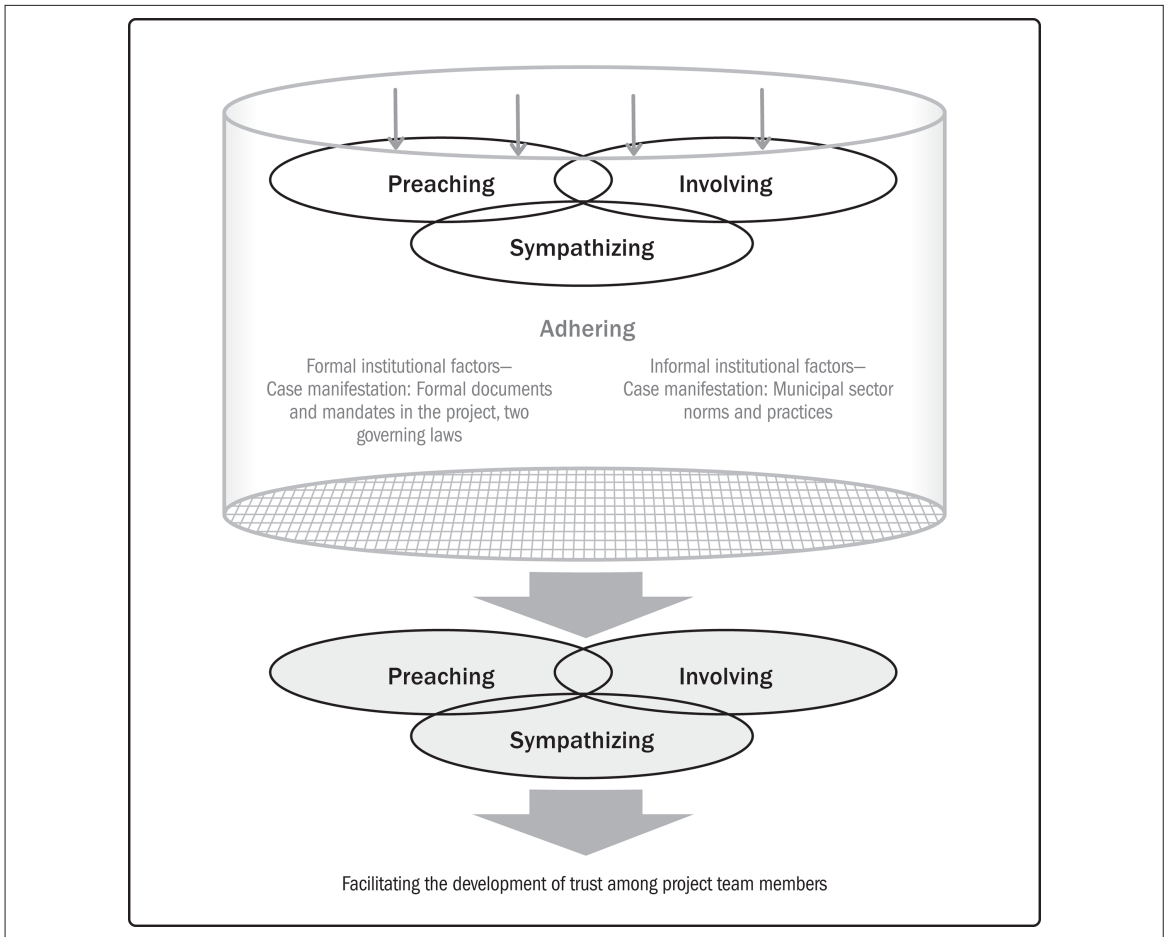
Figure 3. The management of trust development among project team members.

ownership of decisions and commitment to work and created a sense of fairness, affecting trust in one another and the project manager (Korsgaard et al., 1995).

Second, the findings suggest that simultaneous with involving, preaching the value of trust and showing care and sympathy are two important aspects for establishing a climate of trust. The arenas to involve members provided a basis for preaching and sympathizing. Through *preaching*, the project manager utilized members' participation in formal and informal arenas and commenced an explicit conversation to develop, explicate, and gain commitment to shared values of trust, openness, honesty, and equality. Through such conversations, not only were desired tenets pronounced by the project manager, acting as a role model for expected behavior (Yang, 2014), but concerns and speculations were addressed when unpopular situations surfaced. The significance of expressing explicit trust statements is not comprehensively elaborated in former studies. Munns (1995) pinpoints the importance of recognizing and explicating parties' intentions and stipulating clear statements about trust,

especially when trust falls in a downward spiral. This study expands Munns' (1995) findings and proposes preaching can have a more powerful role in explaining how project managers can intervene to boost interactional trust among members. It also invites further research to consider expressing *trust statements* in developing project team trust.

Regarding *sympathizing*, the findings revealed that the project manager established and encouraged recognizing and addressing concerns to enhance the atmosphere of trust. To the extent that the project manager could acknowledge its consequences, sympathizing represented a pathway to address feelings and concerns to affect trust development. One might hesitate if sympathizing was a property of power language, giving appealing talks without corresponding actions, but the results illustrated the actual employment of such an approach and accepting sacrifices (Khalfan et al., 2007). Sympathizing directly influenced the emotion-based trust, as team members moved toward identifying with each other through showing

explicit care and support and flexibility to adjust to each other's systems. The practice of sympathizing resonates with literature on the topic in the general management and organization fields that advocate emotional investments for creating trust (McAllister, 1995), and in project management that suggest the need for recognizing and responding to concerns and emotions in project teams (de Oliveira & Rabechini, 2019; Rezvani et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2008) to facilitate the development of interactional trust. Sympathizing was shown to motivate positive emotions, which promoted good cooperation in the temporary organization (Yang, 2014). Additionally, considering the literature's tendency to advocate *emotional investments* to develop project businesses in a long-term perspective (e.g., Gustafsson et al., 2010), this article suggests that managing emotional investments is a significant approach, particularly for short-term relationships during a project's life cycle.

In summary, to promote interactional trust, the findings delineate that the identified practices are inseparable and, based on the project manager's perception and evaluation of relationships and requirements during project phases, should be tailored to appropriate degrees and exercised concurrently. The practices together build a terrain on which to seed and cultivate interactional trust. The explanations mentioned, and the significance of concurrency of the three practices during the project life cycle, provide a detailed illustration of trust management in a project setting and contribute to the debate, which is arguably rooted in quantitative studies (e.g., Maurer, 2010; Wong et al., 2008).

Institutional Trust

Adhering to formal and informal institutional factors led to promoting not only institutional, but also interactional trust among project team members. Project team members trusted each other in the face of institutional arrangements; informal institutional factors contributed to establishing relationships earlier in the project by providing a familiar and legitimate environment for interacting. During the project, legislations and agreements secured trust by hampering individualistic influences beyond the initial agreement. These findings conform to discussions on the topic in general management that advocate using institutions as a way to develop trust in their work counterparts (Parkhe, 1998; Sitkin & George, 2005) and the significance of institutional trust in undeveloped relationships (McKnight et al., 1998). In project management, institutional-based trust is particularly associated with formal agreements and policies, examined mostly quantitatively. The findings not only emphasized and show the role of formal institutional factors in developing institutional trust (Strahorn et al., 2015; Wong et al., 2008) in detail but also identified the value of informal factors, specifically community norms and practices. This factor was not discussed in former studies.

Moreover, besides denoting the necessity of the institutional factors for complementing interactional trust, the practice of adhering suggests that institutions can be purposefully employed to moderate or filter involvement and discourses occurring among the members, the dynamics of interactional trust, and related mechanisms. The formal institutional factors were utilized by the project manager to ensure information exchange, create confidence in the project, exhibit the project manager's and project's competence and legitimacy, and hinder over-practicing interactional-related mechanisms. Using institutional factors as a reference framework encouraged transparency and sense of fairness and assured consistency by avoiding loose processes and chaotic conversations. These aspects are related to the antecedents of how individuals evaluate and trust each other (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011). Considering that institutional trust is mostly studied separately from interactional trust in project management, the findings on adhering suggest a wider perspective on how to facilitate trust, concerning the interface between institutional and interactional trust in projects. The identified dynamic expands on few studies that considered institutional aspects in the trust-building debate (cf. Maurer, 2010; Wong et al., 2008) but did not elaborate on it in detail, mainly because of their research design or the fact that the focus on the interface was implicit. Together, findings on adhering advocate the role of institutional factors, both as a background and a strategic technique to moderate antecedents and processes of interactions, affecting interactional trust, which suggests novel insights into the debate.

In summary, a consistent model of identified practices (see Figure 3), preaching, involving, sympathizing, and adhering, and the relationships among them, suggest a framework for facilitating trust development among project team members, which makes a twofold contribution: (1) providing an in-depth understanding of project managers' mechanisms to promote trust in project teams, and (2) explaining the dynamics among mechanisms. The findings are in line with those of Lander et al. (2004), who report simultaneous use of parallel mechanisms to facilitate trust in temporary groups, but extend their study, as they did not consider institutional trust as used herein. Moreover, the results of this article show that the bandwidth of trust (here knowledge, emotion, and institutional trust) evolves over time (Rousseau et al., 1998) and suggest concurrent mechanisms should respond to changes in different types at different times.

It is noteworthy that most studies on trust management in projects are executed within construction and engineering settings (e.g., Chow et al., 2012; Wong et al., 2008). Change projects, which naturally entail high degrees of complexity, seem to be absent in project trust studies. Specifically, sociopolitical dynamics are highlighted in such projects, which significantly necessitate trust management. Therefore, studying a change project provided a new methodological angle to research on trust management in project teams.

Practical Implications

From a managerial perspective, this study emphasizes the significance of institutional factors in relation to the management of trust development in project teams. To facilitate trust dynamics, project managers must explicitly emphasize the value of trust, encourage member participation, and show and operationalize sympathy with concerns, while actively benefiting from relevant and available institutional references to shape and guide interactions. Therefore, a project manager's awareness and knowledge of institutional environments and significant aspects equip them to lead relationships and interactions. The practices suggested are useful throughout the

project life cycle, and careful attention to contextual conditions and requirements influences how project managers tailor practices, especially the degree of emphasis on each.

The findings also show that employing a public executive manager to lead such a complex project was a smart solution, as the project manager was familiar with the institutional environment and had great leadership skills based on their experiences. In comparison, employing a project management practitioner with project management skills, could have become problematic, which highlights the need to critically evaluate project managers' skills, competences, and experiences when hiring them for different project types.

Limitations and Further Research

The context of working relationships affects both the need for trust and how individuals evaluate trustworthiness (Mayer et al., 1995). The context of the chosen case was neutral. The actors had a limited history of collaboration, the project started from a greenfield, and actors saw benefits in the project from the outset. Therefore, the findings might differ in any extreme relational context, both in positive and negative situations that affect actors' disposition to trust (McKnight et al., 1998). For example, strong positive or negative prior bonds between parties could have influenced the trust-development process and project commitment (Buvik & Rolfsen, 2015) and the project manager's possibility of managing the development. This could be an interesting area for further research to examine trust management in project teams where parties have had strong histories of collaboration, or when parties are forced into the project and do not own it from the outset.

Related to the context of the case, one must consider that temporary organizations and permanent systems are interdependent (Grabher, 2002). In the public sector setting, projects are often faced with highly institutionalized structures (Sjöblom et al., 2013). Therefore, the public setting of the case might have made the institutional factors easily visible in this study. Considering projects in the private sector, even though the mentioned point might be a limitation for the findings in this article, many of the private projects are also subject to established industry-level institutional factors, taking contractual aspects in construction industry for instance.

Acknowledging the limitations of the single case-study design and the limited number of interviews employed in the study, further research can consider performing multiple or comparative case studies to explore whether the identified practices would be important or neglected in similar projects or compared with a negative case where trust building has been unsuccessful.

Additionally, further research could alter the level of analysis. While this article focuses on interpersonal trust, the identified significance of institutional aspects in managerial approaches to trust management could be an additional motivation for performing multilevel studies of trust management, including organizational trust and its dynamics at the team and individual levels.

Notes

1. Total number of interviews was 11, resulting in 18.5 hours of interviews
2. Project manager
3. Joint steering committee member
4. Joint steering committee leader
5. Stakeholder group leader
6. Project team member 1
7. Project team member 2
8. Communication advisor

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Author Biography

Parinaz Farid is a PhD candidate, specializing in project management in the Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim, Norway. She obtained her master's degree in project management from Norwegian University of Science and Technology and an MBA from Multimedia University. Ms. Farid has been conducting research on project management in public sector organizations for over four years. Her current research interests include project management, program management, change management, public sector reform, and public sector management. She can be contacted at parinaz.farid@ntnu.no

Paper II

Article

Navigating Tensions to Create Value: An Institutional Logics Perspective on the Change Program and its Organizational Context

Parinaz Farid[1] 🆔 and Susanne Boch Waldorff[2]

Abstract

Research has emphasized the need to understand change programs' value creation (VC) within their organizational context. This article employs institutional logics to explore the change program–organizational context interface, and investigates how program management actors navigate the interface to create value. A longitudinal comparative study was conducted during the execution of two public-sector municipal merger programs. Contributing to the theory on change program VC by identifying change programs and contexts as different logics, findings show that perspectives on VC may conflict. We theorize navigation practices of problematizing, designing, and team building to resolve the tensions and facilitate program VC.

Keywords

value creation, change program, organizational context, public sector, municipality organization, institutional logics, practices

"We [traveled] around looking at municipalities, [including the] smallest. The mayor […] told [us] about this little municipality. This created a sense of ownership and motivation to commit so that all should contribute to achieving the goals […] so it was a chance to come out of old roles and try to see and talk to each other as a team for a purpose." (Case P: Joint Steering Committee Deputy [JSCD])

Introduction

Change programs aim to create a set of values in the initiator organization (Laursen & Svejvig, 2016; Thiry, 2002). Values (deliverables of value creation) are subjective and multidimensional and can be seen in different time perspectives and frames (Martinsuo & Killen, 2014). In change programs, value from a short-term perspective can include developing and establishing new work processes, whereas value from a long-term perspective may comprise increased organizational performance. Literature on the value-creation (VC) process in programs initially focused on developing stage-based models (Fernandes & O'Sullivan, 2021; Thiry, 2004). Such models advocate participation of program management team members (hereafter actors) (Zwikael & Smyrk, 2015) in organizing and managing identification, planning, generation, and capturing stages of VC. Although examined in various program types, the VC process in change programs has been neglected (Martinsuo & Hoverfalt, 2018). Specifically, we lack insight into how actors

in a change program and its initiator organization may engage differently with VC.

Thus, VC should be understood, concerning program context, to reflect actual practices and subjectivity (Martinsuo, 2020). Change programs need particular attention as their management hinges on a program–organizational context interface with possible tensions (Pellegrinelli et al., 2007). This interface highlights the temporary organization's embeddedness in the permanent organizational context, a dynamic border where the temporary organization's characteristics and its organizational context meet (e.g., Nasanen & Vanharanta, 2016). Context entails organizational attributes, including organizational structure, time orientation, and perspectives regarding goals and purposes, which shape achievement of the organization's ultimate objectives. This debate is important, as actors are often recruited from within the organization and continue at a high or full percentage in their functional roles in the permanent organization while contributing to the change program (Lundin

[1] Norwegian University of Science and Technology – Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management
[2] Copenhagen Business School – Department of Organization

Corresponding Author:
Parinaz Farid, Norwegian University of Science and Technology – Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management, Trondheim, Norway.
Email: Parinaz.farid@ntnu.no

& Söderholm, 1995). Thus, while being affected by organizational context, the oft-accidental actors manage programs through novel and ill-defined role and management ideas (Darrell et al., 2010), making them vulnerable to possible impacts of organizational context when managing change programs (Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2008). Accordingly, context can be both enabling and inhibiting in realizing change programs' desired values. This double-edged effect can be interpreted as possible tensions stemming from different organizational attributes that characterize change programs and their context.

To overcome the tensions, actors' agency is key in that achieving change program goals depends on how actors navigate the program–organization context interface (Nasanen & Vanharanta, 2016; Pellegrinelli, 2002; Pellegrinelli et al., 2007). Such navigation refers to developing practices to problematize and address associated tensions (e.g., through discursive construction of operational context [Nasanen & Vanharanta, 2016]). These have implications for VC in change programs; however, how a program's organizational context can affect VC and actors' ability to create value remains underexplored.

In addressing this gap, we respond to calls for further research on VC in change programs (Martinsuo & Hoverfalt, 2018), and the need to consider programs' contextual dynamics in VC studies (Martinsuo et al., 2019) at the microlevel (Martinsuo, 2020), by exploring such tensions concerning VC, and investigating how actors navigate these to create desired values. Investigating context-dependent managerial practices with a focus on actors in change programs' VC is expected to enrich theory (Martinsuo & Hoverfalt, 2018). Accordingly, we propose the following research question: How do program management actors develop practices to navigate tensions between a change program and its organizational context in order to create value? In answering this, we enhance understanding of VC in change programs, of tensions arising from managing change programs within their organizational context to create values, and of how actors navigate these tensions to facilitate VC.

We utilize institutional logics theory (Thornton et al., 2012) to unpack organizational context, which has yet to be concretely defined, with a focus on VC. This theory offers a framework for understanding references that shape and form organizations' and actors' behaviors, actions, and decision-making processes (Friedland & Alford, 1991). The tool is appropriate to explore tensions at the program–organization interface by unpacking context as distinct references regarding VC, identifying possible dynamics, and learning how individual actors address contextual dynamics. Institutional logics is a fairly new perspective within project management, with few studies demonstrating its contribution to project issues (e.g., Corbett et al., 2018; Winch & Maytorena-Sanchez, 2020). We also employ a phenomenological approach to conduct a longitudinal comparative case study of two municipal merger programs in Norway. These are characterized as change programs, with accidental program management actors, and provide an appropriate

empirical setting for our investigation. Additionally, under similar frameworks and goal sets, with somewhat different outsets, one case managed to create desired values while the other struggled, enabling comparison for more rigorous theorizing versus single-case study. We followed the cases from planning, to implementation and closure phases (the postmerger phase [value capture process] is excluded). To implement the merger programs, top politicians and administrators from within the organizations were recruited in the program management team to facilitate VC; they found the change's purposes and methods novel and challenging to fit them into their organizational context. By employing the institutional logics perspective, we inductively arrive at investigating two specific organizational contexts as logics that created tensions. As the opening quote implies, navigating tensions required developing resolving actions.

The following section presents three themes from extant literature. The subsequent section presents the research methodology. The findings describe the identified logics mirroring the program and its contexts regarding four attributes (structure, time orientation, goals, and VC process) and explain the three practices (problematizing, designing, and team building) actors developed to navigate tensions between logics, which are then discussed in light of extant literature. The conclusion highlights theoretical contributions to project management literature, managerial implications, validity and reliability issues, and further research avenues.

Literature Review

Value Creation in Change Programs

Organizational changes are complex initiatives with fuzzy and intangible goals (Martinsuo & Hoverfalt, 2018). Change programs encompass groups of projects and activities directed toward the shared objective of creating value (Pellegrinelli, 1997) and realizing the desired change and strategic visions of the initiating organization(s) (Vereecke et al., 2003). Program values are more than goals and outputs; they are multidimensional concepts incorporating all direct, indirect, financial, and nonfinancial benefits (Thiry, 2004) realized through stakeholders' perception of value while conditions, interests, and expectations evolve (Martinsuo, 2020). Depending on the time perspective, a change program's values can range from establishing and delivering the change program's evolving content (e.g., new organizational structure or new IT system and work processes) within or just after the program's time line, to longer-term objectives (e.g., enhancing organizational efficiency, position in associated industry, or organizational culture).

The VC process requires translating desired values into program objectives and associated performance indicators (Laine et al., 2016). Intertwined with program management phases (Thiry, 2004), VC occurs throughout programs, entailing identifying, planning, generating, and capturing during and (particularly) after generation (Miterev et al., 2020). For

VC, a systematic management framework is needed to establish necessary processes and secure the required structure, authorization, resource allocation, communication, interactions, and decision-making (Laursen & Svejvig, 2016). The identification of values influences definition of activities, working groups, and projects that are later needed to plan and deliver defined outcomes (Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2008; Thiry, 2002). Identifying values requires cooperation and communication to perform complex processes of analyzing stakeholders and expectations, collective sensemaking, ideation, and evaluation in a learning loop (Liu et al., 2019; Thiry, 2004). Subsequently, VC frameworks suggest assigning roles to actors, including program manager as the leader, to create a flexible plan for delivering value (Thiry, 2004), the link to top executives, and the supporter for other actors who coordinate projects' interdependencies. Detailed planning and generation coincide with continuous reevaluation of results and opportunities to pragmatically revise and develop the temporary organization (e.g., Maniak et al., 2014). Although existing findings provide some guidelines, VC does not happen in a vacuum.

Value Creation and the Change Program–Organizational Context Interface

VC is a contingency phenomenon that depends on underlying assumptions and activities (Lepak et al., 2007) and occurs in the minds and language of actors (Green & Sergeeva, 2019; Martinsuo, 2020). Earlier research highlighted the change program–organizational context interface, suggesting that the connections both enable and challenge actors' performance (Johansson et al., 2007; Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2008)—in other words, create tensions. Consequently, scholars have shown that the purpose and process of change programs are negotiated and shaped by actors at the change program–organizational context interface (Pellegrinelli et al., 2007). For instance, Lehtonen and Martinsuo (2008) reported that in the program's initiation phase, actors are urged to manage the program–parent organization interface as some context attributes (namely, the parent organization's norms and working style) could challenge program management practice. For this, the authors identified both integrating (e.g., creating legitimacy) and isolating activities (e.g., eschewing some parent-organization formal project procedures) developed by the program management team. Connecting change programs to their organizational context, Lehtonen and Martinsuo (2009) implicitly referred to possible tensions therein (characterized by project management experience and culture), which can be resolved by designing appropriate organizing structures and control mechanisms and adopting parent-organization procedures and standards. Nasanen and Vanharanta (2016) utilized a temporal view of contextual tensions in a change program, finding that actors resolve tensions by negotiating the activity scope through discursive patterns to shape the program purpose and process (e.g., by contrasting organizational context as past oriented and program as future oriented).

Similarly, assumptions regarding VC approaches have been challenged to address contextual impacts on VC and actors' contributions (Breese, 2012). Research has identified different degrees of enacting program management in projects and programs, relating this to the context—namely the temporary organization's position in the organizational context (e.g., Breese et al., 2015; Vuorinen & Martinsuo, 2018). Pellegrinelli et al. (2007) found that even when a complete program management guide is in place to guide change program management, actors' evaluations and actions based on the organizational context determine the practice of VC. Within this stream, Green and Sergeeva (2019) discussed VC as a part of actor identity work. Martinsuo (2020) suggests that project VC occurs through sensemaking, negotiation, and cocreation by stakeholders who carry different values as *beliefs*. The author recognized that organizations hold certain values and have cultures through which actors construct and reconstruct their understanding of project value. Studying value in new product development programs, Laine et al. (2016) took an uncertainty view and implicitly considered value management within the associated organizational context. They delineated actors' roles in negotiating the program–organization interface for VC, concerning organizational views of program goals and guidelines. The authors highlighted the need for a social sensemaking perspective to manage the interface. In a similar vein, while viewing values as deliverables of VC, we expand this by connecting VC to actors' sensemaking of program's content and process as a part of its wider organizational context.

Although research has considered change program VC regarding organizational context, empirical investigations are nascent. In particular, the theory of VC in change programs must include the effect of contextual tensions and how actors negotiate them when creating value. This article thus considers organizational context as an *inclusive* concept by employing institutional logics theory. Martinsuo and Geraldi (2020), who promoted understanding portfolios in their contexts, suggested that institutional lenses allow exploration of the relationship between temporary organizations and their contexts.

Institutional Logics Perspective

The institutional logics perspective has been influential in institutional theory for more than two decades. The strength of this perspective is in acknowledging and portraying the relationships among institutions, organizations, and actors. Institutional logics can be perceived as "the socially constructed, historical pattern of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). Institutional logics offer a framework for understanding the references that shape and form organizations' and actors' behaviors, actions, and decision-making processes (Friedland & Alford, 1991). The perspective hinges on the notion of institutional contradictions (Lounsbury & Boxenbaum, 2013). Organizations often represent multiple

Table 1. Data Overview and Interview Time Line

	Case N	Case P
Merging Organizations	2	More than 2
Empirical Data		
Interviewees	11 interviews	11 interviews, 1 observation
	1. Program manager	1. Program manager
	2. Joint steering committee leader – member in working committee (JSCL)	2. Administrative reference group member – HR (ARGM 1)
	3. Joint steering committee deputy – leader of working committee (JSCD)	3. Administrative reference group member – Communication (ARGM 2)
	4. Program coordinator – project manager industry and culture (project manager 1)	4. Project manager healthcare (project manager 1)
	5. Administrative reference group member – HR/IT (ARGM 1)	5. Employees' representative leader (ERL)
	6. Employees' representative leader 1 (ERL 1)	6. Joint steering committee member (JSCM)
	7. Employees representative leader 2 (ERL 2)	7. Joint steering committee deputy (JSCD)
Archival Documents	Program proposal, core ministry documents, project plans and documents, JSC meeting reports, division law, Local Government Act, transition agreement, budget 2020, financial plan 2020–2023	
Average Interview Length	82 minutes Observation: planned but canceled	63 minutes Observation: 4 hours

Interview Time Line

Case\Time	Q*1, 2018	Q2, 2018	Q3, 2018	Q4, 2018	Q1, 2019	Q2, 2019	Q3, 2019	Q4, 2019	Q1, 2020 (post-merger)
Case N	Program manager	Program manager		Program manager	JSCL / JSCD / Project manager 1 / ARGM 1 / ERL 1 / ERL 2	Livestreams, Media screening		Program manager	Program manager Planned observation session
Case P	Program manager (two interviews)			JSCL / JSCD / ERL / Project manager 1 / ARGM 1 / ARGM 2	Program manager	Digital communication: ARGM1, project manager 1, JSCD			Program manager (two interviews) Observation session

*Year quarter

4

logics that may come into conflict in a single situation, meaning that different prescriptions from multiple institutional logics may collide (Thornton et al., 2012). When an unfamiliar logic becomes a prerequisite for an organization's survival, hiring and socialization policies can become the basis of an organizational identity that finds a balance between the logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010).

Meeting multiple and sometimes colliding institutional logics, the organizational actors choose various strategies to mitigate the institutional pressure of logics. Under institutional pressures, actors interpret, translate, and embed elements of the logics into their work, routines, and values (Pallas et al., 2016). Considering many empirical studies, Johansen and Waldorff (2017) showed different relationships between the logics under competition and coexistence, hybrids, and bricolage themes. At the individual level, the *competing notion* focuses on how actors take competing logics as competing frameworks into account, where sometimes one logic gains dominance over another, or where logics offer divergent references in other situations. The *coexisting* theme suggests that competing logics can be cooperative, and thus mutually affect practices, and actors can move between the logics based on the dominant organizational issue (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017). The *bricolage* theme allows for actors to choose from and combine multiple logics, raising their agency and showing that they may resist an entire logic but choose and alter existing logics in their practices.

In project management research, the institutional logics perspective has been used to consider different issues in temporary organizations; for example, investigating how project organization influences institutional field changes (Winch & Maytorena-Sanchez, 2020). Tension navigation has been investigated in several settings. For example, to resolve competing institutional logics, Corbett et al. (2018) highlighted individuals' efforts to develop reinforcing microprocesses, including learning and building networks that support the traditional project logic (organizing for a series of tasks, emphasizing professional efficiency, etc.) and environmental logic (reducing environmental impact for the natural ecosystem, contrasting capitalist economic approach, etc.). Similarly, Frederiksen et al. (2021) identified a compartmentalized structural approach to handle multiple logics by responding to each separately yet with coordination. Augmenting this literature, we employ institutional logics to assess the change program–organizational context interface when VC occurs.

Research Methodology

This explorative research is guided by the constructivist research paradigm (Patton, 2005). A comparative case study design was chosen to examine two goal-oriented (Pellegrinelli, 1997) public change programs for implementing municipal mergers in Norway. This design is appropriate for conducting both in-depth analysis and case comparisons (Yin, 2017), as it enables detailed exploration of a phenomenon and the

development of conclusions while avoiding idiosyncratic results from a particular case (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Empirical Cases

In 2014, the Norwegian government initiated a national municipal reform that gave rise to 47 merger programs across the country. These are viewed here as change programs as they entailed extensive modernization of IT systems leading to work-process changes and to redesigning the organizational structure, financial plans, and organizational culture. These elements include several core characteristics of second-order change projects/programs (Gareis, 2010). Among the 47 programs, we study two (hereafter cases N and P) from the mid-Norway region, which were purposefully selected based on two considerations.

First, all organizations/actors involved in managing programs N and P had limited experience in program management and were recruited from within the municipal organizations, keeping most or all of their usual responsibilities. Moreover, municipality organizations, as public organizations, often differ from temporary organizations based on characteristics, including bureaucratic structures, adversarial political dynamics and conflictual goals (Wirick, 2009), lesser managerial autonomy, and limited possibilities to outsource expertise competencies (Boyne, 2002). Prior research has established institutional differences between private and public projects and programs regarding their management requirements (Löfström, 2010; Sjöblom et al., 2013). Hence, the actors and distinctive setting are appropriate for this study.

Second, under similar management frameworks and goal sets, the cases generated different results that enable us to compare the actors' VC-related actions. To clarify, the programs' long-term values included creating more robust and sustainable municipalities. Thus, the programs were tasked with (1) performing a defendable transition/change process to fulfill employees' legal rights and maintain a good reputation in local communities; and (2) creating a sustainable and agile organizational structure and financial infrastructure. This article focuses on these two value categories. The second dimension was to be realized by centralizing specialist resources and establishing a balanced budget and financial plan. Assessment of the programs' achievements of these values is based on perspectives of informants, review of financial documents, the county governor's evaluation, and coverage in the media. Case P largely achieved its planned values, whereas Case N only partly did so, leaving important areas unfulfilled. The new organization was not financially effective, and several events negatively affected the merger's public image.

Regarding the programs, Case N is a merger between two organizations affecting 900 employees, and Case P is a merger between more than two organizations affecting 1,700 employees. Both cases were formally confirmed by Norway's Parliament in June 2017; Merger P was initiated by the end
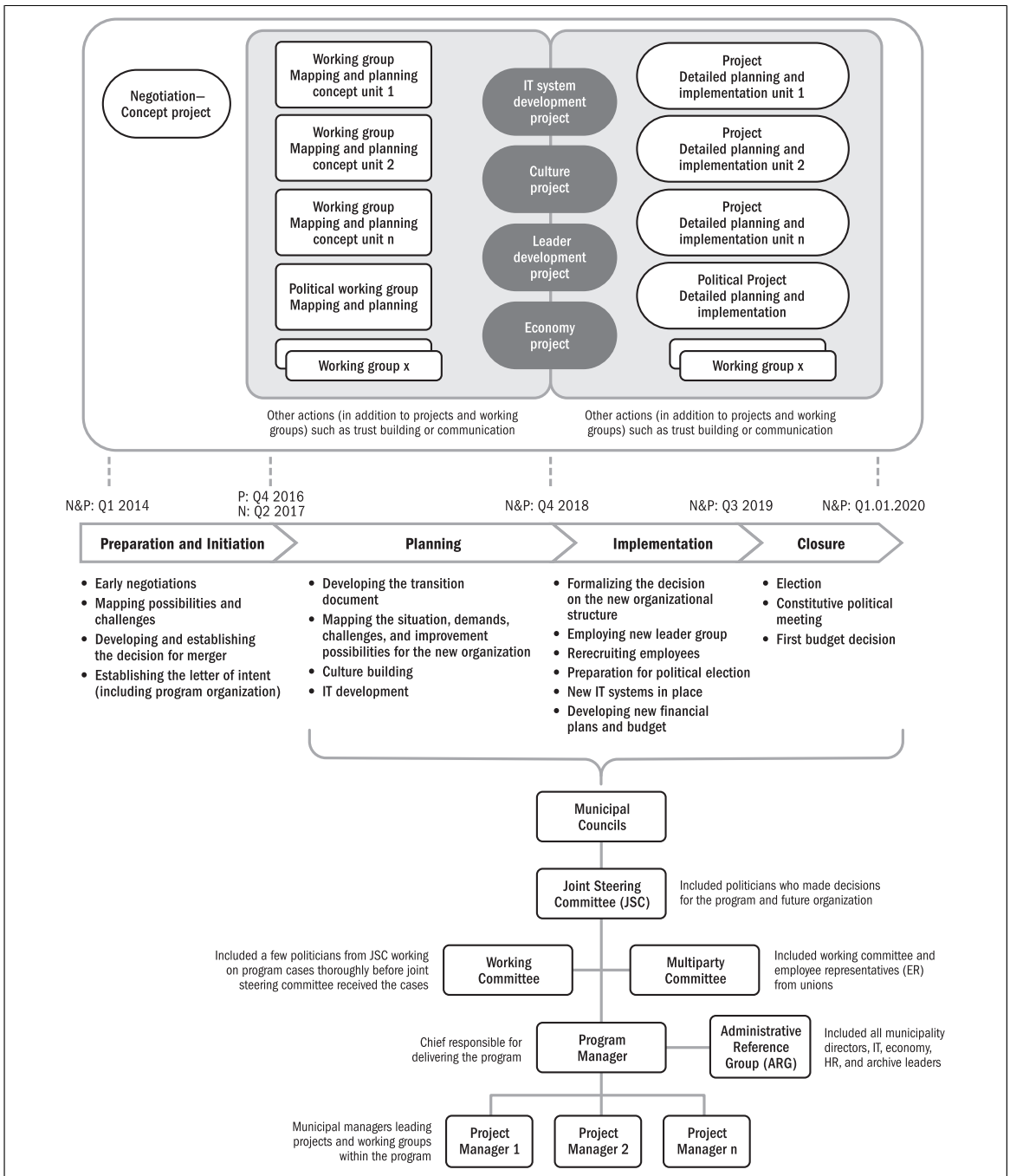
Figure 1. Programs' content, time line/important events, and structures.

of 2016, and Merger N by June 2017. Program steering committees in both cases were in place after establishing the agreements, while the program manager in Case N was formally hired later than Case P's program manager due to lesser initial enthusiasm in Case N as organizational interests and political agendas were not synchronized. Detailed background information is omitted to ensure the case and informants' anonymity. Both programs were closed by December 2020.

Both programs were organized and managed similarly, with an overall stage-based time line and a budget of €3 to 4 million. The *temporary thinking* was imported from the ministry/regional authorities and from experience of some former projects. Informants used the terms *project* and *large project* to describe the program. We substituted this with *program*, as the configuration and processes highly resemble the program management framework. There was no supportive program office; however, a clear program organization and themes were formed to plan and generate desired values in both cases. The program organization differed slightly between cases, comprising several working groups when conceptualizing and planning changes, and five to ten projects during implementation. Formal leadership of the programs was entrusted to one councilman as program manager, and political executives from all involved city councils were enlisted onto two committees—the joint steering committee and working committee—to discuss and make program decisions and delegate authority. The program manager in both cases had a reference group for discussing program processes, and functional managers as project managers to lead the projects and working groups. Figure 1 illustrates the programs' content, time line, and structure.

Data Collection

This study reports qualitative data collected from semistructured, open-ended interviews (Seidman, 2013), document reviews, and one observation session. Data were collected from planning in January 2018 to closure in January 2020. Interviewees were asked to reflect on important events in 2016 and 2017 (preparation/initiation and part of planning) retrospectively. An overview of the data collection and time line is given in Table 1. In the first interviews, program managers were asked about the history and context. When familiar with the cases and actors, several interviewees were chosen from all groups within the program organization, whereas the program manager remained the key informant during data collection (see Figure 1). Program managers were interviewed five times, and the other informants were interviewed formally in the implementation phase. Several participants in Case P were contacted by email one to three times for clarifications (see Table 1 for details). For Case N, local newspapers and livestreams of meetings were screened. The observation session for Case P occurred during the regional county governor visit to the merged municipality to receive a summary of the change process. An equivalent visit for Case N was planned but canceled by the municipality.

Data Analysis

To analyze data, we reviewed the interview data and documents and developed a coherent write-up for each case. The write-ups narrated the data in an earlier–later template of VC, where process diagrams were used to visualize the significant events in each case (Langley et al., 2013). We then categorized/analyzed the data thematically looking for institutional logics localized in the particular setting. Institutional logics are often explored and identified inductively as sets of norms, values, and principles that are enacted by the actors in the organization under study (Reay & Jones, 2016). More specifically, we looked for the actors' various interpretations of their organization's VC in terms of its time dimension, structure, goals/purposes, and VC process. We focused on what the actors took for granted when performing organizational roles, how they organized VC, and which practices they developed when engaging in VC. Our analysis resulted in the identification of two similar and influential logics in both cases (see Table 2). The first logic, which we label a public management organizing logic (PubMo), was identified as the actors' legitimate or normal way to run the organization and create values. The second logic, which we label a program management organizing logic (ProMo), was highlighted by actors as a new way to organize and create values.

PubMo–ProMo Dynamics

Next, we looked for possible dynamics between the two logics, because we realized that both logics were present simultaneously; in both cases, we observed tensions due to the impact of organizational context during VC. PubMo and ProMo came into conflict in many VC processes; however, three tasks stood out as making tensions visible and having major consequences for VC. During these tasks, actors experienced difficulty in adapting to the program's way of working to create value while they were affected by the organizational context and *old-school* thinking. We labeled the three tasks *setting up the program proposal* (hereafter, the proposal), referring to developing and reaching agreement for the merger (overall objectives, milestones, program structure, and authority delegation) at the beginning of the program; *structuring the new organization* (hereafter, the structure), referring to processes of designing and operationalizing the new organization, which lasted throughout the program; and *preparing the budget* (hereafter, the budget), referring to financial planning for the new organization, which also lasted throughout the program. An exemplary quote referring to tensions between the identified logics is:

"My role is personally quite challenging. I face different expectations in two different roles and get criticized! As mayor, I am expected to commit myself 100% to their perspectives when deciding the budget or leadership positions, and being Joint Steering Committee Leader (JSCL) I am expected, by politicians from my hometown, to do the same. But in the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) I should consider the merger as a new and shared initiative" (JSCL, about structure and budget tasks in Case N).

Navigation Practices

By establishing the logics and identifying the impact of organizational context as tensions between them, we could focus on how actors made sense of and coped with challenging situations. We looked for what they did during the three tasks that enabled them to enact their program roles concerning VC. Performing within-case analysis, the data were inductively inspected and coded regarding how actors approached decision-making about VC, to search for the rationale behind their decisions. We used emic (from within) and etic (from outside) codes, where NVivo and descriptive coding techniques (Miles et al., 2014) were particularly beneficial.

To maintain rigor, we grouped actors' activities into higher order themes, inspired by (Gioia et al., 2013). For first-order concepts, we identified how actors navigated logics as ways of highlighting one logic, which were then sharply elucidated in second-order themes. Simultaneously, emerging dimensions were iterated against the data and negotiated with institutional logics concepts, to identify aggregation possibilities (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles et al., 2014). Using cross-case analysis, we compared practices identified in each case, screening possible similarities and differences (Eisenhardt, 1989). The data analysis revealed three practices that actors in both cases identified similarly but performed differently. The practices were used during the implementation of tasks, and therefore relevant in all program phases. The Data Structure for the Three Practices in the Appendix illustrates the analysis process from raw material to the aggregated dimension for each practice.

Findings

First, we present the organizing logics revealed by our inductive data analysis. Second, we explain how the actors resolved tensions between the organizing logics when realizing VC. The identified logics and their value-related characteristics are summarized and contrasted in Table 2. The VC characteristics were used in the analysis to identify clashes between logics and how actors developed practices to navigate the tensions.

Organizing Logics

Public Management Organizing Logic. The first logic identified, PubMo, had an enduring time orientation. To realize VC, the organization was structured on bureaucratic hierarchical levels, attributing responsibility and accountability to political and administrative actors. Leadership was granted to political executives within city councils and administrative leaders. There was a life-long career path for actors where politicians aimed to win electoral cycles, and administrators aimed to serve the political leadership by providing expertise to develop small cases exemplifying the values that are desired to be created (setting budget for the new education function for example, hereafter v-cases) and implement decisions.

"There is typically a very clear line between administration and political level[s]; we work with functions and the bureaucratic structure connects all levels, and there is local-oriented thinking that pushes us [to work] toward the next election." (Case N: Project Manager 1)

Based on PubMo, values related to democratic principles and the continual community development strive to satisfy citizens' demands. Community development was an umbrella theme for v-cases that were intertwined with political short- and long-term views, and could be continuously negotiated. This could reveal dramatic changes in the v-cases when approaching elections or following internal or external dynamics.

To create values, administrators worked with politicians to develop and realize different v-cases with legitimate possibility of returning the v-cases for further work or postponing decisions without a concrete time line. There were often inconsistencies between proposed v-cases and political support when making decisions. Therefore, administrative leadership was involved in creating a mandate to facilitate problem-solving, and also challenged to sell the proposed v-case, renegotiate, and attain trade-offs.

"When I normally meet my people in the health sector, I bring information to my boss …. When there is an issue or problem, we need to propose something that is aligned with the yearly and financial plan of the organization …. We do our best, but can never have a concrete process. Many times, we get a rejection because politicians have their own priorities in shorter or longer agendas." (Case P: Project Manager 1)

Program Management Organizing Logic. The second logic, ProMo, entailed a temporary phase-based time orientation within an overall time line that included start and closure dates, and few major milestones. In this context, v-cases could be effectively assessed against the main milestones and evolving program plans. An explicit temporary structure was established to deliver intended change and create value. The structure was adaptive to ongoing processes and program requirements. Structuring concerned creating a tailored program management team to assign responsibilities to program roles in several groups, aiming to emphasize concrete, action-oriented, and quick decision-making processes. Although actors came from the line organizations and retained political and administrative positions, they were expected to act as a united team and engage in VC based on program responsibility allocations and cross-functional work. The program manager had accountability for ensuring VC processes, and decision makers in the JSC and working committee relied on evolving input from working groups, project managers, and the program manager to make decisions and delegate authority.

"This structure helps us to steer this extremely complex process. This is a steering method to avoid typical perspectives and ways

Table 2. Organizing Logics

VC Characteristics	Public Management Organizing Logic	Program Management Organizing Logic
Time Dimension Structure	• Enduring/permanent • Bureaucratic hierarchical levels of individuals and groups • Bureaucrats/administrative executives leading • Lifelong career perspective	• Temporary/phase based • Adaptive collaborative organizing • United program management team leading • Temporary position
Goals/Purposes	• Democracy • Continuity and functional competence to optimally serve the citizens • Development of the local community across electoral cycles	• Innovation and effectiveness around the task • Giving voice to experts temporarily to accomplish the task • Creating a set of values within a time frame
Value-Creation Process	• Enduring political–administrative interactions and negotiations • Making trade-offs to harmonize proposed value and political priorities • Synchronizing VC agenda across electoral cycles	• Temporary delegation of authority to experts in the program group • Basing decisions on program information and processes • Cyclic evaluation and revision within program life cycle

of approaching problems …. The principle here is to take the new role and commit to necessary steps and relations and dependability to achieve what we want." (Case P: Program Manager)

The agile program structure aimed to enable actors to be open and innovative, focus on the task, and step away from their usual processes. ProMo was concerned with creating concrete values from a one-time phenomenon within a predefined time frame using specific resources. The foundation for VC was the goal-oriented evaluation of current organizations and the ongoing work within and across the programs' projects and working groups. Compared to PubMo's standardized processes to solve operational tasks in the municipal organizations, ProMo focused on unique complex tasks through stakeholder management, planning and control, and benefits-management themes to ensure compatibility between projects and other activities during VC:

"I don't have much project experience …. It is different from what we normally do. Maybe we do not do "industrial project management" but I see that we try to look at the issues and processes differently and position ourselves differently. We have some concrete goal areas that we treat with program thinking in the dedicated team. Everyone can perceive them differently of course, but we know that we need to land on solutions and work as a team. This is different than letting things go on and on." (Case N: Program Manager)

While emphasizing the need for action-oriented contributions to perform the program, ProMo was enacted to keep the VC characteristics relevant to the setting. The most important dimension was considering sufficient flexibility in program decision-making to ensure actors' comfort in their new roles and accommodate changes in the context.

"We have used [a] generous amount of time for reviewing important cases and developing the final solution … we needed the familiar mentality that "the train won't leave right away!" Otherwise, people can get suspicious." (Case P: JSCM)

Practices of Navigating Tensions to Create Value

Problematizing. The first practice to navigate between PubMo and ProMo while performing the proposal, structure, and budget tasks was coded problematizing. We defined problematizing as how actors made sense of and created support for both the program's purposes and the temporary organization as the framework to deliver the objectives. In Case P, problematizing manifested in constructive discussions that legitimized the program and facilitated VC, whereas in Case N, problematizing was performed to dispute possible benefits of the change initiative and capability of the new framework to realize the change, which limited VC.

In Case P, realizing the proposal and identifying and defining desired values required focused goal-oriented meetings in which actors tended to base discussions on local community development and manage interactions to preserve current political interests and career horizons. To manage the situation, actors made sense of the reform promises, translated them into their local context, and built arguments for establishing the program steering group. Actors agreed that the proposal should contain goals and a description of an extraordinary collaboration to realize them, focusing on creating ideas, openness, and innovativeness for the task at hand. Evaluating current situations, and highlighting the potential benefits of the merger, built readiness, support, and legitimacy for the program:

"We discussed what we are today, what can be challenges in future and what we can achieve by this change … and we got to see how we should manage ourselves. I think we managed

to create a good anchor to the program through these discussions." (Case P: JSCD)

Alongside elaborating the proposal, program organization and role delegation were discussed. Several activities aimed to underline how program organization should contribute to achieving the outcomes, thus building legitimacy and commitment to the organizing system, ProMo. Training sessions were held to clarify major program management themes and what could be expected from a temporary organization. It was emphasized that the program organization enabled the temporary contribution of experts whose employment could have been problematic if the municipal organizations had defined the implementation.

Later in the program, when realizing structure and budget, actors were aware of the possibility of shaping VC based on PubMo, local-oriented input, postponing program v-cases, and deciding indefensible investments. To counter this, program's expert reports, and ongoing results were continually used to explicate the change purposes, and this contributed to keeping the program legitimate and the group committed:

"We never took the willingness for granted and we knew it could go wrong [at] any moment. For example, the desire for focusing on local investment was increasing so we had to talk about it and say what the reasons are for the change and what we want to achieve." (Case P: Program Manager)

Moreover, to enable decision-making based on ProMo during the tasks, its functionality was stressed by celebrating achievements owed to the adaptive capacity of the program. The minimal coverage of the merger in local newspapers was expressed as successful program performance. Consequently, collaboration and dependencies between the roles holding temporary authority were perceived as viable and legitimate ways of performing activities; as stated by one project manager: "we saw and showed that how we were doing actually worked!" (Case P: Project Manager 1).

In Case N, however, the problematizing was recognized, but instead of building legitimacy it seemed to dispute and undermine the change's purposes and implementation method. Choosing a position against the ProMo delimited the sense of ownership to the program and delegitimized VC. Performing the proposal task, actors expressed that the solution was irrelevant to the involved organizations and was built upon careless and incomplete analyses by the ministry. The concrete program meetings became forums for making guarantees so that current political interests would be kept in the agreement and future processes. The same practice was used during the structure and budget tasks where the leadership centralization, financial commitment during the program, and budget allocation in the new organization were discussed. It was argued that improving the organizations and communities was best assured by maintaining the political history and horizon in each community:

"They had made this reform on their big desks in Oslo, but we are the ones that know our issues and communities. So, to me, there is inconsistency in what these big goals are and what they mean for us here ... we are serving the citizens 24/7 here! And who says this is the solution to our problems? ... We have inconsistency in an understanding of what is a legitimate way to do this. It is a part of the problem for my role." (Case N: JSCL)

Thus, the idea of a temporary organization for delivering the change was seen as dubious and challenged across value tasks. The program's applicability to provide benefits in the municipal context was questioned, arguing that ProMo's elements were not functional enough. Instead, it was discussed that processing v-cases could be best done through political–administrative processing threads. By downplaying ProMo's contribution, space was provided for latching onto PubMo, where actors' legitimacy and power existed. Interestingly, while performing structure and budget tasks, the program manager strived to establish a systematic project management platform to systematize the program work; however, this was criticized as a marginal expenditure. The negative discourses damaged the public image of the program's processes:

"It was a huge challenge for us to establish the framework and make the commitment to the new way of working that is not as flexible as we wished for. This is a very strange way of steering, and ... I don't think anybody looks at this way as logical! As a result, the financial matrix we ended up with is not cost effective! The effective way to establish services was proposed but it was politically negotiated and a lot of sacrifices made." (Case N: JSCD)

To summarize, when performing VC tasks, the familiar PubMo VC characteristics clashed with ProMo and pushed actors to engage in value processes. To navigate the tensions, actors engaged in the practice of problematizing by, first, interpreting and elucidating the change purposes, and, second, evaluating and discussing the unfamiliar concepts and practices of the suggested program management. In Case P, problematizing led to creating legitimacy and commitment to the program's purposes and processes, creating the basis for adopting elements of the new logic into actors' behavior and actions. The actors managed to push the PubMo back and focus on the ProMo perspective of VC. In Case N, conversely, problematizing was used to downplay the ProMo perspective and legitimize adherence to the dominant PubMo VC characteristics in the new context. Consequently, elements of the ProMo were rejected.

Designing. The second practice that emerged from analysis was designing. The structure and budget tasks were perfect examples, where designing was used to navigate tensions between the logics. Designing concerns how the program work was continuously designed to formally and informally enroll relevant experts to perform concrete value tasks.

Designing the interactions and decision-making processes influenced how value characteristics of logics could manifest. Although similar in the agreements, designing in Cases P and N diverged in practice, which impacted VC.

In Case P, designing established and maintained the program framework, concentrating on authority delegation to relevant individuals, meeting flow, information exchange, and decision-making based on the program's circular inputs and changes. The availability of expert competencies and interactions through consistent meeting threads was ensured. Designing followed cyclic learning-oriented processes to reevaluate and revise the tasks. This included shaping and reshaping formal and informal interactions throughout the program. A reporting platform was established to circulate information and requests. Designing facilitated innovation and systematic stakeholder management:

> "We were faithful to the program organization, a clear space for us to do this specific job effectively, which allowed doing what the guidelines advised us …. We changed the program organization several times to adapt to different states over time, to keep needed competences in the program." (Case P: Program Manager)

The risk of resistance to ProMo was not neglected in designing. It was clear from the outset that VC could not survive if organizational context could not accommodate it. Pure temporary organizing was found to *be felt violent* (Case P: Program Manager) and endanger the trust among actors; thus, some adjustments were considered. Several ideas from PubMo were kept to maintain actors' confidence in ProMo. While designing focused on goal-oriented decision-making, extra room for political and administrative negotiations was added, for example, through theme-based, cross-project problem-solving. This offered space for reevaluations and changes until the end of the program, sustaining both actors and VC.

In Case N, designing showed the same backdrop but contrary dynamics. The practice was found to be essential; however, practically, enrolling expertise to perform value tasks was mostly formal and somewhat inefficient. When actors intended to adapt the program structure to accommodate interactions and decision-making around the tasks, either the meeting threads were neglected or the meetings were used to discuss irrelevant issues, leaving v-cases inconclusive. For instance, during the budget and structure tasks, processes were breached several times by neglecting meeting attendance, or throwing the v-cases back and forth to seek trade-offs.

It was argued that to safeguard democracy, centralization of services and financial decisions needed to go through the current administration and city councils; thus, v-cases were left for future negotiations. Moreover, several unfavorable investments in merging communities—unjustified construction projects, for instance—were made that gave rise to a weak budget for the new organization. Although the problematic investments were discussed in program meetings, input from

functional leaders from the line organizations was used to keep local VC agendas politically relevant. To enhance the designing process and facilitate necessary interactions, even the established systematic project-management tools were not used effectively. Furthermore, designing did not focus on the informal involvement of actors as they showed limited interest in discussing the value tasks outside meetings and workshops:

> "When the issues are sensitive, we see that other priorities 'hinder' them to come to the meetings … or we used several hours of an important meeting to discuss the coat of arms for the new municipality, for example …. So it [leaves] little space and attention to make effective decisions for the task at hand." (Case N: JSCD)

To summarize, to navigate tensions, designing aimed to introduce and operationalize the program structure to manifest the VC characteristics of ProMo and create a clear distance from the PubMo outlook on VC. In Case P, designing entailed creating an adaptive structure through formal and informal enrollment and processes to enable experts' collaboration and circulation of program input and results within the team. Moreover, designing included some old norms to hinder violent changes in actors' work identity. In Case N, conversely, the adaptive structure was formally introduced but was breached several times when creating values. Effective informal linkages were not promoted or realized. Subsequently, dependencies between experts and circulation of program input were not realized, but processes followed dominant PubMo.

Team Building. The third practice used to navigate tensions when implementing the proposal, structure, and budget was coded as team building, defined as performing a set of activities to build the relationships and trust among actors and a culture of the new logic. Potential concerns with the ProMo view of VC were acknowledged to create trust and legitimize practices and motivate actors to align their focus on the VC tasks. Although recognized by actors in both cases, team building differed across cases, leading to different results.

In Case P, team building started when the proposal was being developed. Formal interactions were used to discuss the change's potential benefits and explain the program's contribution to creating value. Informal interactions were particularly encouraged to allow actors to build bonds and develop commitment to ProMo. Through formal and informal team-building activities, the new expert roles in the program and the possibility of optimizing the change through the new roles were discussed. Creating a common positive contribution was expressed to develop mutual trust and a united team culture, and let program input flow in decision-making:

> "We arranged many gatherings, from bus trips and informal dinners to many meetings […] to seminars for employees where we shared a smile and talked about our new missions and roles for implementing the merger. This helped coming

out of the old roles and creating A TEAM, you know, which is loyal and committed to achieving goals and own the process."
(Case P: ARGM 1)

During the structure and budget tasks, the team emphasized communicating their commitment to fulfill program roles. Close formal and informal interactions focused on trust building, signaling small wins, and empowering the actors for further work. Actors experiencing the complex situation with contrary forces driving them in two different directions were frustrated, so resolving the tension by acting in favor of electoral perspectives and continuing local development seemed easiest. Team building was exercised to navigate these complexities, rhetorically explicating that goal achievement depended on a commitment to ProMo by sharing information and processing programs' results. Team building normalized the program roles regarding task-oriented dependency of actors on each other, rather than political–administrative relationships:

"Interaction and focusing on trust have been extremely important to downplay the issues that the entire steering framework [has], which is giving the lines legitimate power for preventing what we should achieve in the program. I am very proud of being able to talk about and become committed to the program gradually." (Case P: Program Manager)

As with the preceeding described practices, although recognized by actors of Case N, an opposing approach to team building was taken. All informants referred to the need for team and trust building, perceived as a solution to creating commitment to the new titles and trusting the program's processes to make task decisions. However, actors minimally engaged in team-building activities. The tendency to discuss the structure and budget through enduring political–administrative negotiations to ensure upcoming votes overtook the situation and hampered the willingness to focus on team building. Only a few gatherings were arranged to build the program culture, and discuss roles and dependencies of actors in the new adaptive organization. Eschewing formal and informal interactions for team building was problematic in how actors owned and exercised their participation in the value processes, the level of trust, and making the culture of the ProMo appealing:

"I did put culture as the largest or biggest risk in our process. Like a separate project but even now [in the closure phase], there is still a problematic situation because people don't talk to each other as 'us!' There is little acknowledgment and motivation for what we have done and I think it is unfair [given the] energy and resources we used."
(Case N: Program Manager)

In summary, team building aimed to facilitate actors' relationships and trust, stabilize their titles and authority for the temporary program to cognitively establish the new practices and norms. In Case P, in formal and informal team building gatherings actors used discourses to step away from their municipal roles and expectations to familiarize themselves with new program titles and expectations. The practice encouraged dependencies between the actors as experts in a team, rather than powerful managers representing organizational priorities. Team building legitimized the ProMo mindset and culture. In Case N, although the need for team building to normalize the ProMo's view of VC was clear, it was mostly neglected as PubMo dominated. This caused a lack of trust among actors, failure to appreciate dependencies between experts, and challenges in using the program's input for decision-making.

Discussion

This article explored how program management actors develop practices to navigate tensions between a change program and its organizational context to create value. Programs P and N represent two change programs with actors recruited from line organizations who were closely linked to the embedding organizational context and had limited knowledge and experience with program management. Exploring the program and its context as institutional logics, the cases demonstrated that different perspectives on VC stimulated tensions, as the context's VC characteristics (PubMo) were dominating the program and its agenda (ProMo) to create values. This challenged actors; thus, they developed three practices—problematizing, designing, and team building—to facilitate the programs' VC. Differences between the cases suggest that actors used their agency and acted differently to navigate tensions following how strongly the logics were perceived to confront each other. Thus, the findings suggest that actors' engagement in VC in change programs rests on their perception of tensions between the program and its context's VC characteristics, navigated through the constant exercise of at least three important practices. The findings make theoretical contributions concerning (1) understanding of the program and its organizational context as institutional logics and the tensions between them, (2) practices developed to navigate tensions to create values, and (3) VC in change programs.

Institutional Logics in the Project Management Field

The first contribution relates to explaining the VC in change programs by employing institutional logics. Documented by inductive and detailed empirical evidence, the identified attributes of contexts regarding time, structure, goals/purposes, and VC process characteristics enhance understanding of change programs, their organizational context, and their dynamic interface comprised of tensions (see Table 2). Namely, we offer a novel, clear, and inclusive understanding of the organizational context embedding the change program and the interface therein. Comparing these with earlier studies, although research has highlighted the embeddedness of change programs in context and the importance of this

interface in delivering change programs' desired outcomes (Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2009; Pellegrinelli, 2002), it is unclear what constitutes *context* and *dynamics or tensions* at the interface. Regarding context, extant literature seems rather implicit and selective about contextual elements when managing change programs. For instance, uncertainty (Laine et al., 2016) or temporal views (Nasanen & Vanharanta, 2016) comprise underlying contextual attributes in change programs. Concerning possible tensions, there exists a similar tendency. For example, Lehtonen and Martinsuo (2009) implicitly identified several organizational-level factors, including experience with change programs, associated with actors engaging in integration and boundary activities. Vuorinen and Martinsuo (2018) implicitly recognized tensions when parent organizations (principals) and change program actors (agents) have conflicting interests and actions regarding uncertainties. Nasanen and Vanharanta (2016) discussed possible temporal pressures at the change program–context interface. We thus complement these studies by providing new insights.

Additionally, using institutional logics to explain VC suggests a more general contribution to the project management field. Former research has called for employing independent theories (e.g., institutional theory) in VC studies (Laursen & Svejvig, 2016). In doing so, we uncovered one way of analyzing change program management to create value in certain situations and avoided idealistic assumptions about the applicability of temporary organizations to implement changes. Moreover, via the institutional logics perspective, our analysis framework and results represent a new tool for researchers and project and program managers to manage temporary organizations in associated surrounding environment (see Table 2). This is particularly relevant, as the need to handle multiple, sometimes conflicting institutional logics is a contemporary dilemma for many organizations and organizational actors. Institutional logics has already identified various ways of addressing this dilemma (Greenwood et al., 2017). As this study identified three specific navigation practices, we show the perspective's contribution to theoretical explanations for project or program issues.

While institutional logics has been used in project management to date, we examine it more fully as few studies have employed it as a lens. For example, Corbett et al. (2018) used institutional logics to identify microprocesses such as learning and building networks that enable the enactment of traditional project and environmental logic in institutionally complex green projects. Frederiksen et al. (2021) explored how programs integrate and coordinate resources and processes to handle multiple organizational logics. Adding thereto, our use of institutional logics at a microlevel enabled the development of a practice-oriented understanding of VC, providing greater depth.

Practices to Navigate Tensions to Create Values

Our second contribution concerns the identified practices to navigate tensions at the program–organizational context interface to create values. The data show that the practices were key in navigating tensions in both cases, creating different values as they were employed differently.

Comparing these practices to existing literature, they provide novel insights into growing research on the actor-centric view of VC in change programs within the organizational context (Vuorinen & Martinsuo, 2018). Practices shared a common foundation—social sensemaking—which led to shaping the program's purpose and program work (Pellegrinelli et al., 2007). Practices aimed to legitimize and create willingness to adhere to ProMo, disrupt the normal/PubMo working practices to allow ProMo to manifest, and build a culture to normalize the new roles, expectations, behaviors, and activities. The practices suggest that purposeful disruption of *old and comfortable* logic, and engaging in collective participation, framing, theorizing, and rhetorical culture building, contribute to suppressing contextual pressures and directing new practices. In Case N, the dominance of PubMo caused stronger tensions that challenged actors to exercise practices intended to navigate the tensions and facilitate VC.

Comparing our findings to literature on managing program–context boundaries, we find a tendency toward a mechanism-centric focus in the literature, where mechanisms either integrate or isolate change programs; for example, creating legitimacy, differentiating the program's working style from organizational work practices and culture (Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2008), and using discourse patterns based on temporal and hierarchical dimensions of program–organization contexts to negotiate the scope of activities and responsibility (Nasanen & Vanharanta, 2016). Vuorinen and Martinsuo (2018) identified that actors use similar integration mechanisms differently to serve the goals of a specific change program, and that plans for integrating change programs are subject to actors' subjective evaluation of the situation. Laine et al. (2016) found that VC occurs through verbal and nonverbal expressions of uncertainty within the program's context. Although the three practices this article identified analytically resemble these activities, existing research is rather implicit and inconclusive regarding implications of tensions between characteristics of contexts for individual actors and their potential reactions aligned with different management ideas and VC principles. We addressed this neglect by explicitly looking at and unfolding such tensions and the role of actors in handling the tensions to create value in change programs.

Indeed, we considered very subjective individual viewpoints in navigating the program–organization interface concerning how to create values. Moreover, the literature has largely assumed that actors will *fight* to navigate tensions for the good of change program results. In Case N in this study this was not the case; thus, actors might choose not to facilitate VC based on their personal perceptions and preferences under strong program–context tensions. Therefore, while our findings align with former studies in change program management regarding individuals' agency to manage the interface and influence program results, they explicitly show how actors navigate

tensions to facilitate VC, which contributes to the change program VC debate (Martinsuo & Hoverfalt, 2018).

VC in Change Programs

Differences between cases N and P show how varying interpretations led to divergent prioritizations of the content and processes of value, signifying the subjectivity and complexity of VC in different conditions. In Case N, actors regarded VC as a process where values undergo many negotiations to optimally serve public demands and political agendas. While PubMo legitimization was highlighted, the ProMo view of effective goal setting, resource allocation, and so forth, was found to disrupt VC and thus rejected. The findings, thus, suggest that the enactment of program management's design to create values is subjectively evaluated and depends on actors navigating available embodied perspectives on VC in a specific setting, which can impose constraints on actors enacting program value management. This augments former findings that actors' understanding of project/program VC is influenced by organizational culture and values (Martinsuo, 2020), and that enactment of VC depends on temporary organizations' position in line organizations (Breese et al., 2015; Vuorinen & Martinsuo, 2018).

Moreover, the identified influence of organizational context on change programs' agendas and practices to create values, supported by empirical details on the nature of tensions, complement research suggesting organizational context as both an enabler and a barrier for change program management (Johansson et al., 2007; Lehtonen & Martinsuo, 2008). The findings support VC as a contingent phenomenon (Lepak et al., 2007), indicating that the purpose and process of change programs are not necessarily closely linked (Pellegrinelli et al., 2007). This necessitates movement from rigid toward more flexible program management (Lycett et al., 2004).

Indeed, consistent with former research, the idea of VC through a systematic management system (Laursen & Svejvig, 2016) that specifies the management and resources required for learning-oriented sensemaking, ideation, and evaluation early in programs (Liu et al., 2019; Martinsuo, 2019; Thiry, 2004), and advocates adaptive structures and processes later to deliver values (Thiry, 2004), was vital to shape our analytical scope and understand VC. However, it was insufficient to mirror the process concerning the organizational view of VC. Existing suggestions neglect possible tensions and overlook actors' agency in understanding and attempting to navigate challenges. Thus, we found that generic VC designs and optimal prescriptions fail to reflect VC in practice (Breese, 2012; Breese et al., 2015). The findings challenge existing literature, which implicitly assumes that VC is developed by actors who recognize and enact program VC activities aligned with agreed changes, and separately from the contextual view of value. This assumption is misleading, as we found that what constitutes VC is negotiated across available logics or rooted perspectives within the program and its wider organizational context. Consequently, we contribute to research challenging

how to do frameworks, suggesting that VC occurs in sociopolitical environments and calling for research into actual practices used by actors with varying power and interests (Breese, 2012).

Conclusion

We show that VC in change programs is connected to tensions between the change program and its organizational context regarding how to create values. Framing our study through the logics perspective emphasizing actors' agency to make sense and handle the institutional complexity (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017; Pallas et al., 2016), the article's main contribution concerns actors' agency to navigate tensions to enable VC, which was highlighted through identifying three practices: problematizing, designing, and team building. Thus, this article provides actor-centric insights on the role of actors in VC in change programs. The findings follow research on change program work and the VC process as emergent phenomena occurring in actors' minds and language. We suggest that generic VC designs fail to reflect the actual process used by actors within the associated context; that it should not be assumed that actors will automatically apply the program management framework to create values; and that it takes time and individual and collective effort to develop the new management idea.

Practical Implications

This study emphasizes possible tensions between change programs and their organizational context(s) on VC. It shows that oft-accidental program management actors recruited due to their functional/leadership experience from the line organization(s) might be challenged to enact temporary organizing as a new way of working to create value because of the dominant organizational context(s). The study provides a new tool, institutional logics, to approach managing change programs. Moreover, it shows that actors understand and negotiate tensions between relevant logics to legitimize and enable VC. Purposeful relationship and trust building and consistent introduction and operationalization of the program management framework are important for program VC.

Validity and Reliability of the Study

To ensure the study's internal validity (Bryman, 2016), we reviewed archival documents to triangulate the data sources. We had free access to all program documents. Moreover, the informants were sent the manuscript and asked to check and confirm the empirical descriptions (Creswell & Poth, 2016). To enhance external validity (Bryman, 2016), we presented thick and detailed case descriptions to provide comprehensive background information for further interpretation. To ensure reliability, a complete record of the research process was developed and stored (Bryman, 2016). Regarding limitations, our cases are limited to two change programs from one country.

Moreover, the data regarding the preparation and initiation phase and a part of planning stage were reported retrospectively, which we supported by careful review of relevant documents.

Further Research

The case study research design was appropriate for developing knowledge on the studied phenomenon but cannot be used to generalize findings to large populations. We used an exploratory comparative case study; our detailed descriptions of two cases provide an opportunity to interpret the cases and findings regarding other settings. The public sector context was chosen because of the representativeness of the phenomenon and visibility of the temporary organization in the context. However, it would be interesting to study VC in change programs within other sectors and industries. The accidental recruitment of change program actors has long been recognized, but how actors enact program management and related VC perspectives has not been sufficiently explored, which encourages further research.

Although beyond the scope of this article, its findings relate to project management research on change projects/programs. Earlier studies have sought to explain how changes can be optimally organized to deliver desired outcomes (e.g., Gareis, 2010). Similarly, change management literature has been concerned with developing process designs for managing organizational changes. Although some studies have related management of change projects/programs to organizational context, they have largely focused on organizational performance or governance strategies (e.g., Parry et al., 2014). Following our findings, considering organizational context as an inclusive concept can enrich the literature on change project/program management.

ORCID iD

Parinaz Farid https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2016-8228

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Author Biographies

Parinaz Farid is a PhD candidate, specializing in project management at the Department of Industrial Economics and Technology Management at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway. She obtained her MBA and master's degrees in project management and has been conducting research on project management in public sector organizations for over five years. Her current research interests include project management, program management, change management, public sector reform, and public sector management. She can be contacted at parinaz.farid@ntnu.no

Susanne Boch Waldorff is associate professor at Copenhagen Business School. In her research, Susanne explores how ideas in the shape of contemporary reforms, policies, and steering technologies are implemented or translated into organizational practices. Empirically she investigates the healthcare, police, and social sectors, and her projects evolve around public sector governance, organizational change, discursive strategies, innovation, professions, and public value creation. In addition to book chapters and coedited books, Susanne's work has been published in international journals, including *Academy of Management Journal*, *Public Management Review*, *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, and *Journal of Change Management*. She can be contacted at sbw.ioa@cbs.dk

Appendix. Data Structures for the Three Practices.

Exemplary Interview Quotes	First-Order Concepts	Second-Order Themes	Aggregated Dimension
• We started with many working groups in early stages of the process, and then established dedicated projects and groups for mappings, evaluations, and creating reports for further work. There is a lot of functional and leadership expertise in these groups for the purpose of the program and we work for a common goal that becomes gradually clearer as we go on. There are many meeting streams that each project manager or group leader follows, but the program manager has an overview of everything and shifts their track across the groups .... After employing future municipal leaders who automatically became project managers in the program, in order to maintain needed expertise, we worked in an extended leader group, accommodating all related managers. (Case P, ARGM2, all tasks) • In the health department, we work together on our project to find a solution for how we want the new health department [to] look like, what citizens' needs are, and how they fit with the economy. If there is something uncertain and problematic in one of the organizations today that can affect our results here, we raise and formulate the problem into the program's point of view and process it in program meetings to use all relevant information. I see the danger of letting things follow the hierarchy in the line organizations [...]—things that should be seen from this new perspective and task. We spent time ensuring that we all are clear about the roles in this specific project. I feel we have good speed and determination in the program. (Case P, Program Manager I, structure task, implementation, and closure) • To solve this complex task [merger], we have the program structure established, where functional experts and related managers meet and work to prepare reports and the basis for making program decisions until 2020. So it is a unique dynamic during this period of time [merger's life cycle] that enables us to avoid typical hierarchical requirements and employment problems for the task. But, somehow we did not utilize them. The program manager sees that there is a possibility to actually organize and decide on many other projects for the good of the new organization. But, of course, in order to create some effects for the new organization, they both see and, rightfully I would say, fear that those possibilities are being diminished because all of us are making new projects that use the money that he is counting on [...] the old school thinking you know.(Case N, JSCL, budget and structure tasks, planning, implementation, and closure) • We are positioned in the projects and groups, and the program manager invites informal gatherings as well to facilitate information sharing across the groups, which did not really happen that much. But I think being one team and representing our true roles in the meetings are not anchored. The idea that "look, we have to respect the reports and plans to enable creating benefits out of this" is not transferred to our roles. The budget discussion will go into a new council after	• Establishing program organization to collect experts in projects and groups • Representing program roles in meetings and gathering • Continuous, tailored adjustment of the program organization • Extended-leader group after employing new functional leaders • Facilitating information and circulating results within the program • Facilitating informal interaction and discussion regarding program	• Ongoing, tailored, formal, and informal enrollment of experts related to an institutional logics • Enacting and facilitating interactions and decision-making related to an institutional logic	Designing

Exemplary Interview Quotes	First-Order Concepts	Second-Order Themes	Aggregated Dimension
the election. The real challenge, however, is that the authorities are not being delegated in the program and politicians are hesitating. This has to do with the common side of politics where parties have different standpoints and arguments that differ from what the program proposal and processes rest on. So the process of decision-making in the program is not fulfilled. (Case N, JSCD, budget task, planning)			
• We arranged many meetings and informal gatherings in the beginning, so we spent a long time building relationships and trust among team members to enable a dialogue about creating a common future by collaborating with one another across the lines in the program team. In fact, the urge to press the gas pedal was replaced by generosity to provide time and effort to get to know one another, giving room for anchoring new roles and commitment to the program. (Case P, Program Manager, proposal task, initiation, and planning)	• Establishing and nurturing formal and informal relationships and interactions	• Building trust and resolving conflict among actors as a goal-oriented team related to an institutional logic	Team building
• In the beginning, it was strange to understand your ad hoc role in this complex picture because you had this new process and goals, along with the old role and responsibilities with different perspectives. We worked on our relationships and understanding the dependencies in the groups, and learned that it is the project works that we need to trust to build the new organization. Now it feels that playing a role in a program is much more normal and you know who to rely on and report to. I have learned so much and we have been persistent about discussing what each person should contribute to in different arenas, like when discussing the new healthcare function. I think I have added a new tool to my toolbox. (Case P, Program Manager I, all tasks)	• Creating, maintaining, and retaining trust among actors as "program actors"	• Motivating actors to align their focus related to an institutional logic	
• From the start, I preached about amazement and curiosity to motivate people to talk to one another and build up positive relationships as a team for a common purpose. Then we set meeting plans to facilitate the interactions between groups and leaders, and we also thought about informal gatherings. These were necessary to bring people onboard so that the new organization could be based on the work of working groups and projects, not autonomous electoral premises. We were supposed to become familiar with one another across borders [cross-functions and groups] and build the new organizational culture. What happened were breaks in the flow of program processes and decision-making; thus, eventually, it did not help to have smart people making smart ideas when we could not act as one unit! (Case N, Program Manager, budget and structure tasks, planning, implementation, and closure)	• Motivating and empowering to commit to program's agenda for creating value • Celebrating small wins and sharing credit • Preaching the need for collective commitment and contribution to program	• Building work culture related to an institutional logic	
• I think it was important that top politicians meet in the working committee to have real discussions and get to know and learn about one another. This was important for more reasons than the topic itself, because it was a culture-building dimension for decision-making for this specific process. But what happened was the reluctance to discuss and spending time on minor and unimportant issues. (Case N, JSCD—all tasks)			
• We asked: What does this merger mean for us? Creating new jobs? Innovative solutions for the future? More important industrial roles in the country? Then,	• Creating sense of willingness and ownership	• Building readiness and	Problematizing

Appendix. (continued)

Exemplary Interview Quotes	First-Order Concepts	Second-Order Themes	Aggregated Dimension
• what and who do we need to put in the new group that can lead this complex process? Let us learn how others have done it before and what processes we need then! (Case P, JSCM, proposal task, initiation, and planning) • It is a very complex process to do the budget but …. the key numbers from external (governmental and consultancy) reports and the reports from the projects tell a lot about what our goals from the merger are and what we need to do in this unusual situation if we want to realize them in the future. (Case P, ARGM I, budget task, planning) • I mean taking leader positions away is not easy and result in protest […]. We used our reports and work documents a lot to show that "look, this new shape of organization that is happening leads to a better professional environment and better use of money" and we are achieving this together as a team. This was important to avoid the local thinking! (Case P, Program Manager, structure task, implementation, and closure) • We did not have legitimacy for the merger and needed to build up the enthusiasm, and when we were together we tried to negotiate on a deal and it was like a handshake deal. When you shake hands, you cannot smile, as you won't give that impression that you will give more than what you should! Everything in the municipality can be done again because it is still the decisions that count and every politician is aware that if it is not "concrete" it does not count. It did not matter what the ministry suggested, because we people suspected that the idea of this reform was not professionally thought through, and the law and guidelines were very generic. They didn't know themselves how things should be done. (Case N, Program Manager, proposal task, initiation, and planning) • I see that because some authorities are involved in the joint steering committee, but kept in original organizations, many politicians [within the program management group] hesitate to actually delegate authority to the committee. It should have been done for effective processes, to make it resource optimal, but the steering model is not functional! This definitely affects how soon we will be able to utilize or achieve the tasks and goals. (Case N, JSCL, budget and structure tasks, planning, implementation, and closure) • That is problematic but "law is law" and we are operating within commune law, but the program is governed by the Division Act. That is a different legislation. We are pretty much experiencing all the way throughout the program that it is not crystal clear how you should operate within the differences between two legislations, and what the legitimate thing to do is. It is challenging, when I as a politician say we have inconsistency. I go to the administration and ask what should we do now and they do not have a clear answer and they don't know how to go from A to B. (Case N, JSCL, budget and structure tasks, planning, implementation, and closure)	• Anchoring the process, its goals and the way it should happen • Justifying the change idea • Learning about the program format of working from The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities and County advisors • Defining program work in "normal processes" • Constructive versus destructive discourses	• willingness for change related to an institutional logic • Legitimizing the change content and implementation process related to an institutional logic	Aggregated Dimension

Paper III

In search of competencies: accidental program managers leading change programs

Abstract

Program managers (PgMs) play a key role in successfully delivering organizational change programs. Although inspiring, extant knowledge on the competencies of organizational change PgMs is limited. This paper seeks to contribute to such knowledge by presenting empirical evidence from four change programs in the form of Norwegian municipality mergers. Katz's (1955) managerial skills framework is adopted to filter the competency theory in program management (PGM) and shape this inquiry's necessary analytical scopes. Drawing on qualitative data, our findings highlight the importance of technical, human, and conceptual skills for PgMs in change programs and show that a lack of program management skills (as one facet of technical skill) can be compensated for by embracing a degree of burnout and placing emphasis on exercising human skill. However, these can endanger the effectiveness of the program and cause personal suffering for the PgM.

Keywords: organizational change, program, program manager, competencies

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