

IMPACTS OF AGILE WAYS OF WORKING ON WELLBEING AT WORK



Master's Thesis

Business Management and Entrepreneurship, Hämeenlinna

Autumn 2021

Satu Metsäterä

Author Satu Metsäterä

Year 2021

Subject Impacts of agile ways of working on wellbeing at work

Supervisor Helena Turunen

ABSTRACT

Aim of this thesis was to understand and point out the beneficial characteristics of agile ways of working regarding development of wellbeing at work. These two themes, agile ways of working and wellbeing at work are current and relevant topics when defining a competitive company from the perspective of employer, employees and stakeholders. In constantly changing business environment companies are adopting new operating models in order to improve performance and agile methods are one of the most popular ones today. Wellbeing at work is seen in this thesis work as a holistic individual experience including perspectives of emotional and physical health.

There exists little research data about agile organization linked to wellbeing at work. Similarities were found between the empirical research of this thesis and earlier studies made by Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. Results showed that agile methods had consequences in wellbeing at work and had a positive impact on motivation and satisfaction at work. Satisfied and wellbeing employees are also productive with fewer days of sick leave and experience life more meaningful. According to the empirical research of this thesis work, agile ways of working impacted most on the experience of meaningful work and continuous learning. The importance of well-functioning team and team spirit was highlighted. As the conclusion, an idealistic agile work environment is described from the perspective of holistic wellbeing at work.

Keywords Wellbeing at work, agile, agile organization, holistic wellbeing

Pages 84 pages and appendices 3 pages

Tekijä Satu Metsäterä

Vuosi 2021

Työn nimi Impacts of agile ways of working on wellbeing at work

Ohjaaja Helena Turunen

TIIVISTELMÄ

Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli löytää ja ymmärtää ketterien menetelmien piirteitä, jotka ovat hyödyllistä tunnistaa työhöyvinvointia kehittäessä. Ketterät menetelmät sekä työhyvinvointi ovat ajankohtaisia teemoja arvioidessa yritysten kilpailukykyä niin työnantajana, palvelun tai arvon tuottajana sekä sidosryhmäkumppanina. Organisaatiot uusivat toimintatapojaan menestyäkseen paremmin jatkuvasti muuttuvilla markkinoilla. Ketterät menetelmät ovat yksi nykypäivän yleisimmistä sovelletuista toimintamalleista. Opinnäytetyössä työhyvinvointi nähdään kokonaisvaltaisena yksilöllisenä kokemuksena, joka sisältää sekä emotionaalisen että fyysisen terveyden näkökulmat.

Ketterien menetelmien vaikutuksia työhyvintointiin on tutkittu vähän. Suomessa Työterveyslaitos on tehnyt tutkimuksia, joiden tulokset ovat samansuuntaisia opinnäytetyön tutkimustulosten kanssa. Näiden mukaan ketterillä menetelmillä on vaikutuksia työhyvinvointiin ja ne vaikuttavat positiivisesti motivaatioon sekä työtyytyväisyyteen. Tyytyväiset työntekijät kokevat työn mielekkääksi ja ovat töissä tehokkaita sekä hyvinvoivia. Työ tukee kokonaisvaltaista hyvinvointia. Opinnäytetyön empiirisen tutkimuksen mukaan ketterät menetelmät vaikuttivat eniten työn merkitykselliseksi kokemiseen sekä jatkuvaan oppimiseen. Hyvin toimivan tiimin ja tiimihengen merkitys korostui. Opinnäytetyön lopussa kuvaillaan ideaali ketterien menetelmien työympäristö puhtaasti kokonaisvaltaisen työhyvinvoinnin näkökulmasta.

Avainsanat Työhyvinvointi, ketterä, ketterä organisaatio, kokonaisvaltainen hyvinvointi

Sivut 84 sivua ja liitteitä 3 sivua

Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Background of the thesis	2
1.2	Research problem, goal and research questions.....	3
1.3	Theoretical background and key concepts used	4
2	Wellbeing at work	6
2.1	Concept of wellbeing at work	6
2.1.1	Holistic wellbeing at work	8
2.1.2	Physical wellbeing at work	10
2.1.3	Psychological wellbeing at work	11
2.1.4	Mental wellbeing at work	12
2.1.5	Social wellbeing at work.....	13
2.2	Optimal balance in working conditions	13
2.3	Promoting wellbeing at work – organizational level	16
2.3.1	Matter of values	16
2.3.2	Matter of management.....	17
2.3.3	Factors furthering wellbeing at work in organization.....	18
2.3.4	Work-life balance / Sustainable workforce.....	19
2.4	Promoting wellbeing at work – individual level.....	20
2.4.1	The importance of recovery.....	21
2.4.2	Vagus nerve	22
2.4.3	Sleep	24
2.4.4	Physical activity	25
2.4.5	The importance of nutrition.....	27
2.4.6	Monitoring vitality level	28
2.4.7	Improving own psychological asset and ability of acceptance	28
2.5	Impact of personal qualities	30
2.5.1	Personal character strengths	31
2.5.2	Introverts & Extraverts.....	32
3	Agile methods.....	34
3.1	The nature of agile organization	34
3.2	Five trademarks of agile organizations	36
3.3	Agile mindset	38
3.4	Agile method and agile practices.....	38

3.5	Applying agile-methods individually	40
4	Connections between agile organization and wellbeing at work	41
4.1	Studies of wellbeing at work in agile organizations.....	41
4.2	Connections between agile mindset and wellbeing (at work)	42
5	Empirical research	43
5.1	Research methodology	43
5.2	Subject and sample	44
5.3	Implementation of empirical research	45
5.4	Evaluation of empirical research	48
6	Results of the empirical research	50
6.1	Introduction - Holistic wellbeing at work in agile organization.....	50
6.2	Researcher's preconception	51
6.3	8 themes of wellbeing at work in agile organization at Company X	51
6.4	What are the factors impacting wellbeing at work in agile ways of working	60
6.5	How agile ways of working impact on wellbeing at work?.....	61
6.6	How can agile ways of working be benefitted in promoting wellbeing at work?	67
6.7	Suggestions for further development and topics to keep in focus	71
7	Conclusion	72
8	Afterwords.....	75
	References.....	77

Figures

Figure 1: Different views related to a definition of wellbeing at work (WW)

Figure 2: Discursive definition of WW: (1) affecting factors, (2) subjective WW, and (3) resulting factors

Figure 3: Wellbeing is a part of the workday experience and vice versa

Figure 4: Factors furthering wellbeing at work

Figure 5: The organs that vagus nerve affects

Figure 6: The 4 Stages of Sleep

Figure 7: Difference between introverts and extraverts

Figure 8: The 24 Character Strengths

Figure 9: Business Agility

Figure 10: Five trademarks of agile organization

Figure 11: Wellbeing is a part of the workday experience and vice versa

Figure 12: Business Agility

Appendices

Appendix 1 Agile Manifesto and Principles

Appendix 2 The Data Management Plan

1 Introduction

In today's world, where operational environment is constantly changing and organizations have to keep the pace to stay alive, companies are finding new flexible methods to operate. At the same time people are aging and fertility rates are lowering. The key of maintaining the functioning workforce is the concept of wellbeing. It includes expected state of health, also one's satisfaction with work and life. (Schulte & Vainio, 2010, p.422) My thesis topic is related to one of the common methods to improve performance; agile ways of working. This will be linked to another important and current topic; wellbeing at work. These two themes, agile ways of working and wellbeing at work are relevant factors when defining a competitive company from the perspective of employer, employees and stakeholders.

Agile methods have become popular world widely in past twenty years. When reading theory and practices of agile methods, there are some similarities with the concept of wellbeing at work. Yet, using agile practices doesn't guarantee wellbeing at work; agile organization doesn't fit for all and it can be even harmful if it isn't implemented carefully and successfully. Successful agile transformation is a shift in mind-set and generates agile culture at workplace. This requires, but on the other hand creates wellbeing at work. Does agile operating model reflect wellbeing at work?

Wellbeing in general has been trend for years now. At the same time there are more people paying attention to their wellbeing but also more people suffering from burnouts. After adopting better and healthier lifestyle, it's natural to continue spreading that ideology at workplaces as well. People want to do meaningful job and be well at work too! According to scenario report *Hyvinvointia työstä 2030-luvulla*, (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2020) in the future, all areas in life are regarded equally meaningful among population of working age. Time spent at work is equally valued to spare time, which indicates that people want to enjoy their life at work too. Paying more attention to wellbeing at work benefits except employees, also employers as it contributes to better performance and cooperative work community. When making changes in organizations and implementing new models like agile operating model, it shouldn't be bypassed to consider these changes from the perspective of wellbeing at work.

1.1 Background of the thesis

Agile method and agile practices are becoming common in all kind of organizations. Not just software companies but also companies from other fields use agile ways of working today. In 2001, a group of software developers launched Agile Manifesto and Agile Principles (Appendix 1) in order to uncover better ways to develop software. This was the starting point of the agile operating model. Even if it wasn't on purpose, in this Manifesto and its' Principles there are relations to wellbeing at work. According to Agile Manifesto (2001) it is essential to value individuals and interactions over processes and tools. Peoples' motivation and self-organizing teams, which actually require and produce motivated people, are mentioned in the principles. This implies that wellbeing at work is somehow one of the key words in an organization that applies the agile practices successfully. Yet, applying agile practices doesn't guarantee wellbeing at work. Agile practices can be harmful, if these are not implemented carefully and managers don't understand the factors affecting the adoption and the consequences to wellbeing at work. (Känsälä & Tuomivaara, 2013, p. 365)

According to scenario report *Hyvinvointia työstä 2030-luvulla*, published by The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (2020, s. 15) the majority of working aged people will consider all sectors in life equally meaningful in the future. They value more spare time than their predecessors. This might indicate either better working ability as people are living healthier and meaningful life but it can also lead to an incoherent development as the strive towards maximum wellbeing increases. People get stressed when doing their best to avoid it. Paradox of disablement means the situation, in which the health of working aged people is better than ever before, but in which still seems to arise more and more disablement. Percentage of the mental health problems in investigation of disablement is increasing, which is an example of incoherent development. This scenario report makes consider the importance of wellbeing at work.

This incoherent development is already on process. In Finland, among population of working age, especially among young adults, under 35 years old, there are more burnouts and sick leaves due to mental health than ever before. The number of sick leaves has increased 50% only in three years. (Yle, 2020) As burnout is not a medical diagnose, it's only estimated that work-based stress has effected on this increase of sick leaves as it is often diagnosed under

insomnia, anxiety or depression. In Finland one fourth is feeling work-based stress, which is average level in Europe (22%) (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, n.d.) Could successful implementation of agile ways of working be one of the solutions for working aged peoples' better wellbeing at work as well?

The competitiveness of an agile organisation was proven during spring 2020. In the time of COVID-19, many organizations have accelerated their shift to agile. According to Jurisic et al. (2020) recent research showed that agile organizations responded faster to the crisis, while those that do not embrace agile working may well forfeit the benefits of speed and resilience needed in the "next normal" after the COVID-19 pandemic. This is one indication proving the suitability of an agile organization in modern world, where changes in business environment can be unpredictable, fast and wide. Global companies like Google, Netflix and Spotify have implemented an agile organization model successfully and it is becoming more common worldwide.

As many companies are implementing an agile organization model today, in order to achieve better performance and competitiveness, there exists little research data about agile organization linked to wellbeing at work. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health has done researches of consequences of agile methods in wellbeing at work and according to these results there is a positive impact in motivation and satisfaction at work. (Lekman, 2018)

1.2 Research problem, goal and research questions

The target of this thesis was to consider the connection between agile method and wellbeing at work. By answering to the research questions my aim was to describe what are the things affecting wellbeing at work in agile work environment. Based on this consideration, I provided and highlighted the factors in agile ways of working which enhance the holistic wellbeing at work. My research questions of the thesis were following:

1. What are the factors impacting wellbeing at work in agile ways of working?
2. How agile ways of working impact on wellbeing at work?
3. How can agile ways of working be benefitted in promoting wellbeing at work?

1.3 Theoretical background and key concepts used

As the theoretical background of this thesis work there are theory of wellbeing at work, and theory of agile methods. Wellbeing at work is a concept widely researched in Finland so there is mainly used the Finnish concept and theory written by Manka & Manka, Virolainen and Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and their researchers. As my aim is to investigate the possibilities of agile methods regarding the support of individual experience of wellbeing at work in Finland, it is reasonable to use the Finnish definition of wellbeing at work. Wellbeing should be seen as a wide concept, in which wellbeing at work is just one part of the individual, holistic wellbeing. Promoting own wellbeing at work is an interdisciplinary research. Agile methods are world-widely researched and because of its' roots, the theory used in this thesis is based on international researches and studies.

Agile	Agile ways to do things means quick and easy way to do things. Agile is often an umbrella term relating to a method of project management used especially in software development. It is typical of agile that tasks are divided into small short phases of work and plans are frequently revised and adopted. (Oxford Languages, n.d.)
Agile culture	Operating environment, where the work community has adopted an agile method in a comprehensive way. In addition to doing agile, people also are being agile. Being agile is about consciousness. It's about the values, how we behave, what we appreciate and how we relate to others. (Sahota, 2016)
Agile method	The implementation of agile practices based on the core values and the principles of Agile Manifesto (Diebold & Dahlem, 2014) There exist different methods, for example different variations of Scrum.
Agile organization	Agile organizations include a system of teams in which rapid learning and quick decisions are made in a people-centred environment with a focus on utilizing technology to assist project management, according to Wouter A. et al. (2018). Agile organization can ideally combine velocity and adaptability with stability and efficiency (Brosseau et al., 2019). Agile principles are

	implemented in every facet of an organization; structure, people, processes and technology and strategy.
Agile practices	Doing agile. Implementing agile practices based on the core values and the principles of Agile Manifesto. (Diebold & Dahlem, 2014) Kanban is one example of a common agile practice.
Holistic wellbeing	Holistic wellbeing is looking at individual's state of health and lifestyle including diverse dimensions like physical, emotional, intellectual and social as a whole.
Holistic wellbeing at work	There is no commonly approved definition of holistic wellbeing at work. Especially in Finland it covers besides the traditional definition of wellbeing at work including physical and psychological wellbeing also social and mental wellbeing. (Virolainen, 2012)
Psychological asset	Psychological asset is linked to the possibility to be the master of own life but also to ability to feel peace of mind. It consists of self-efficacy, hopefulness, realistic optimism and resiliency. (Manka & Manka, 2018, pp. 161—167)
Psychosocial workload	Psychosocial workload factors refer to properties related to work content, work organisation and social interaction in the work community. These things cause harmful work related strain if they are not appropriately dimensioned and managed or if workplace conditions are poor. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland, n.d.)
Wellbeing at work	Subjective experience; "safe, healthy and productive work done by professionals and work communities in well managed organizations. The work is experienced meaningful and rewarding and it supports the control of life."(Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, n.d.)

Even though we adults are responsible for our own wellbeing, it is also important to recognize the factors at work, which effect on organizational and individual wellbeing. When organization is being well, there are also circumstances for individual wellbeing. This thesis is

a study of the link between an agile ways of working and wellbeing at work. Aspiration of this thesis is to point out the benefits but also pitfalls of an agile ways of working regarded to wellbeing at work.

2 Wellbeing at work

The roots of wellbeing at work help to understand the concept of this term today. When defining wellbeing at work, in Finland it includes today also mental and social wellbeing, unlike in many other countries. Physical and psychological wellbeing are often conceived worldwide the crucial parts of wellbeing at work, and there is no doubt about it. Though, the concept becomes more comprehensive when perspectives of mental and social wellbeing are added to it. These two perspectives are today very typical in discussions of wellbeing at work as we in welfare states consider meaningful work more and more important to our general wellbeing. When defining the concept, besides dividing it into different parts of experienced wellbeing, it is also interesting to separate the different views of it. What are the affecting factors of wellbeing at work and its' outcomes? What kind of subjective experience is wellbeing at work?

2.1 Concept of wellbeing at work

The history of research of wellbeing at work starts from the 1920's. At first the research was medical, physiological and stress related research, individual being as the research object. It was believed that different encumbered factors like toxic material, noise, cold, and physical arduous generated physical reactions regarded as stress. Negative feelings preceded physical reactions which could lead to development of diseases. (Manka & Manka, 2016, p. 64) Until 1960 the concept encompassed occupational safety and health. Later, psychological reactions and reactions affecting behaviour were linked to this theory and it enlarged to health and ability to work. The theory extended further, as environment, working conditions and factors causing stress were related to it. (Manka & Manka, 2016, p. 64)

In 1980 the research object changed from individuals to features of environment and from individual aspect to group aspect. According to this theory, the demands of work should be in balance with the working ability of an employee, otherwise the work is too stressful or

demanding. The concept focused on ability to work and know-how. Next step was to start to research negative or positive pressure, which either generates opportunities to learn and develop or decreases activity or in worst case makes ill. (Manka & Manka, 2016, pp. 64—65)

Later, in 1990 also social support, and developing know-how, which affect crucially wellbeing at work, were linked to this theory. At this point the theory didn't explain differences between individuals so next research objects were individuals' traits and skills and features of working environment and interaction between them. The question was what kind of recourses individual has to meet loss, threats and challenges? Health, exuberance, positive believes, skills in problem solving and interaction are recourses that stem from personality and decrease stress. Positive resources from environment preventing stress are social support and material requirements like wealth. Since 1990, occupational health care has had a legally crucial role as a partner of organizations' working ability in Finland. Today one of the emphasis is on everyone's own responsibility of taking care of own ability to work. (Manka & Manka, 2016, pp- 64—65) Wellbeing at work is seen as a part of persons' general wellbeing.

When considering wellbeing at work as a worldwide concept, it differs a little bit from the Finnish concept. In Finland the concept includes daily work fluency, when broadly speaking it has been often related to only occupational health and ability to work. (Manka & Manka, 2016, p. 75) When defining wellbeing at work, it should be done from the perspective of individual and organization. According to Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (n.d.), wellbeing at work is described as “safe, healthy and productive work done by professionals and work communities in well managed organizations. The work is experienced meaningful and rewarding and it supports the control of life.”

Another Finnish definition of wellbeing at work described in this thesis is from Kauhanen (2011, p. 28). Wellbeing at work can be divided in different sectors, which affect the experience of wellbeing at work. The sectors are:

- Individual health and working ability
- Working environment
- Management and communication
- Skills and possible development paths

- Work, measuring and organizing work
- Social skills and relations at work community

In this thesis the concept of wellbeing is covered as it is defined in Finland.

2.1.1 Holistic wellbeing at work

There is no definition that is commonly accepted as relevant definition of holistic wellbeing at work. Wellbeing at work is generally regarded as a subjective experience. Laine and Rinne (2015) have presented interesting definition of wellbeing at work. In this concept there is differentiated the subjective experience of wellbeing at work and affecting and resulting factors. These different views are all connected to each other tightly. They suggest that the subjective experience of wellbeing at work should be seen as the general indicator of wellbeing at work. There are affecting factors, which are components of wellbeing at work. They can be supportive or deteriorative in relation to wellbeing at work and they can have major impact on performance level or effect straight on general wellbeing at work. Third view in this concept is the outcome variables. (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Different views related to a definition of wellbeing at work (WW) (Laine & Rinne, 2015)

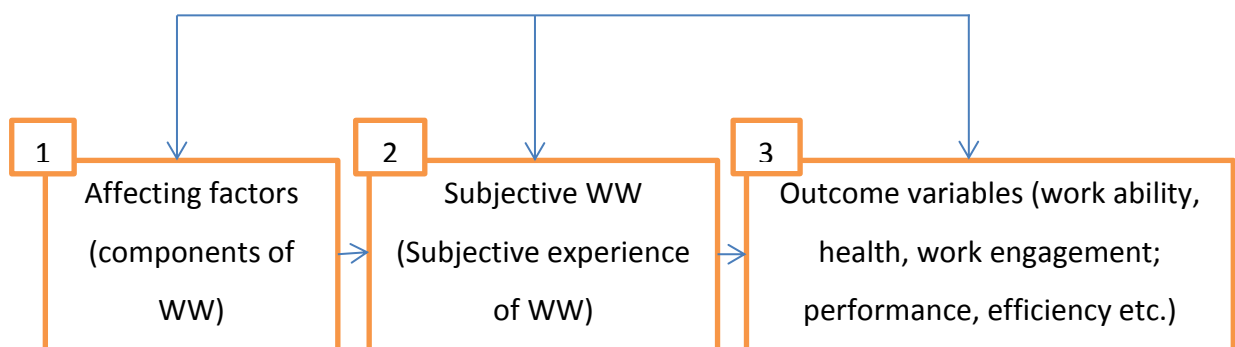
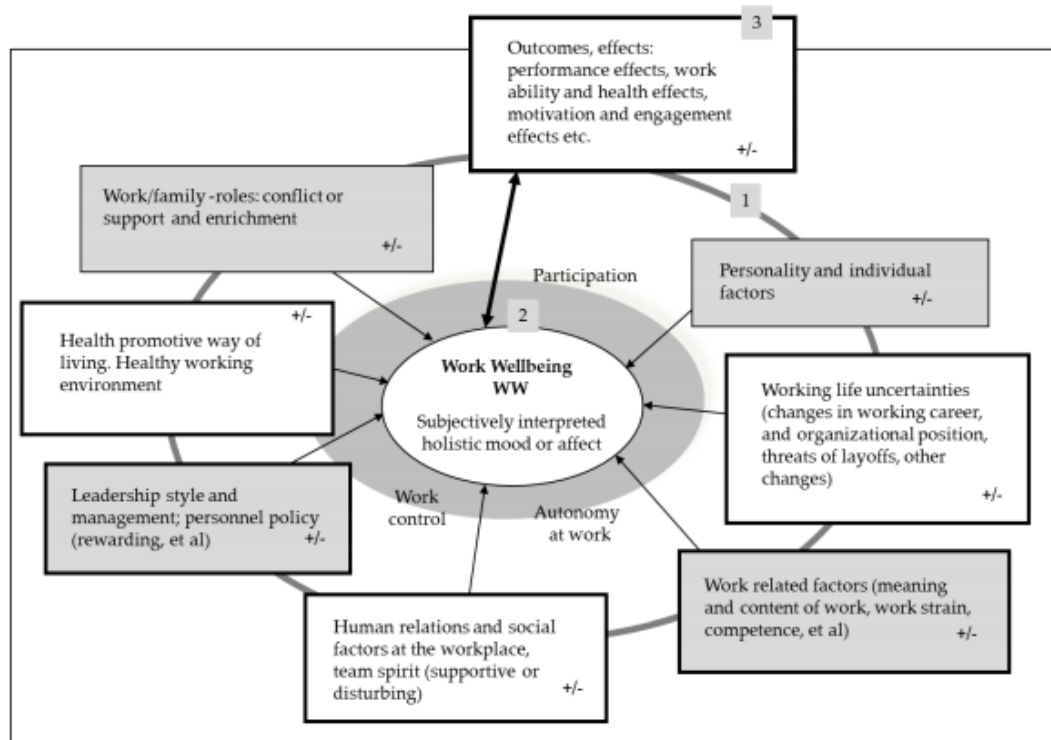


Figure 2: Discursive definition of WW: (1) affecting factors, (2) subjective WW, and (3) resulting factors (Laine & Rinne, 2015)



According to Virolainen (2012, p.11) the concept of holistic wellbeing at work consists of physical, psychological, mental and social wellbeing. They are all related to each other which leads us view the concept of wellbeing at work as a holistic concept; it isn't useful to study one particular part separately. For example, psychologically stressful work reflects to physical health in form of illnesses. From this concept it is also possible to differentiate three different views of wellbeing at work determined by Laine and Rinne, which was presented earlier.

Tikkanen (n.d.) describes wellbeing as a holistic and individual experience: wellbeing at work can't be divided from general wellbeing. Wellbeing at work is a part of holistic wellbeing. Wellbeing consists of small parts affecting on each other. If you are having hard times at home, the mood will follow you at work as well. If you are not performing well at work and you have psychosocial workload, it might effect on your sleep, unhealthy food choices, loss of motivation etc. Also personality impacts on it. And we all have different perspective for wellbeing. It is all about the balance.

Figure 3: Wellbeing is a part of the workday experience and vice versa. (Tikkanen, n.d.)



Society, organization and individual are all responsible for promoting holistic wellbeing at work. At societal level circumstances and opportunities to maintain wellbeing at work are created by legislating and supporting actions that promote health, learning, ability at work and profitability at work. Organizations have to comply with these laws, build up working environment where people feel comfortable and make sure the workplace is secure. At individual level people are responsible for their own lifestyle and following rules and regulations at work. (Virolainen, 2012, pp. 11–12) Today, during general wellbeing trend, the individual responsibility has been emphasized. Individuals have the responsibility to reflect own wellbeing at work and act according what is working best for them. For example, learning to recognize and manage with the stress-related factors at work but also in life in general. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health has also tense toehold in promoting wellbeing at work in Finland.

2.1.2 Physical wellbeing at work

The definition of physical wellbeing at work consists of many visible things, like physical working environment; the ergonomics of chair, table and posture when working. It contains also physical workload, so when the work is more physical, the meaning of physical wellbeing at work is emphasized in this holistic wellbeing at work. In more physical and routine work, for example in industry, it is recommendable to switch work tasks or switch working from side to another side so that the physical workload isn't encumbering body unilaterally for too long. At offices, changes in posture, little pauses and rotation at work are

all good and important ways to maintain physical wellbeing at work. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 17) Sitting is harmful as we do it too much at offices. Today, electronic tables are becoming more popular but still it isn't very common furniture at home. During COVID-19 pandemic people worked more from home without proper ergonomic workstation. This has affected many people's physical wellbeing. As this hasn't been the biggest problem of wellbeing at work for knowledge worker, increasing amount of remote work might effect on this in the future. Moving your body diversely (i.e. walking, stretching, and standing up) during the day is the best to do to improve physical wellbeing at work. As we know, people were born to move, not to sit statically.

2.1.3 Psychological wellbeing at work

Psychological wellbeing is the part of wellbeing at work that is crucial in today's discussions of wellbeing at work. Instead of psychological wellbeing, it is more common to discuss work-related psychological stress. Ergonomic work stations at offices ensure the eligible level of physical wellbeing at work, but the bigger problem has been psychological stress as working conditions have become more stressful in constantly changing world. Preventing psychological stress could help decrease the number of sick leaves and increase satisfaction at work. What is psychological wellbeing at work? It includes the experience of meaningful work. Interesting and meaningful work is advancing mental health and so affecting psychological wellbeing at work. (Virolainen, 2012, pp. 18) Another important point of psychological wellbeing at work is that people should be able to feel and express their feelings at work. People are emotional creatures and it is natural to express feelings. This doesn't mean people can misbehave at work but they should have a feeling that they have opportunities to express their feelings and opinions openly to their colleagues and managers. If feelings are smothered it causes anxiety and indisposition at work. (Virolainen, 2012, pp. 18—19)

Manka & Manka (2018, p. 158) describes psychological asset, and developing own psychological asset as a part of employees' experience of wellbeing at work. There exist both collective and individual psychological asset. Today, work is often organized so that performing is autonomous and there are numerous possibilities to impact on own job. Psychological asset is linked to the possibility to be the master of own life but also to ability

to feel peace of mind. It makes difference also to performance and behaviour at work. There are interfaces between psychological asset and satisfaction at work and commitment to work. Psychological asset is also linked to less absence. Developing own psychological asset improves the experience of wellbeing at work from the individual perspective. High level psychological asset means self-efficacy, hope, realistic optimism, and resiliency. From the employers perspective this is also important topic as we perform better with high level psychological asset and are less inclined to change job. (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 158) Collective psychological asset means the interactive and coordinating dynamics within a group of colleagues, which is bigger compared to individuals performing solo. Superiors have an important role in developing collective psychological asset (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 170). Collective psychological asset could be seen as part of social wellbeing at work.

According to der Kinderen & Khapova (2019), one element of psychological wellbeing is eudaimonic wellbeing. The definition of eudaimonic wellbeing has interfaces with the definition of mental wellbeing at work from Harri Virolainen, which is represented below. Eudaimonic wellbeing reflects the present time as it contains spiritual elements of wellbeing, like personal growth, positive relationships, autonomy and meaning. Eudaimonic wellbeing at work contributes our feeling of own strengths, to experience work meaningful and to find opportunities for developing skills and generating positive relationships. Eudaimonic has a positive impact on long-term wellbeing through behaviours and cognitions that are within our control and influence and which inspire striving and reaching goals. (Der Kinderen & Khapova, 2019) It is interesting to note that this part of wellbeing is increasingly in the focus in researches and studies of wellbeing at work worldwide.

2.1.4 Mental wellbeing at work

When talking about mental wellbeing at work, it is sometimes linked to psychological wellbeing at work. How these differ from each other is that mental wellbeing at work means more like how people treat their colleagues and customers at work, how they feel about the meaning of their work. It is more about the values. If a worker and a workplace don't share common values, it can cause conflicts and indisposition. When they collide, it has a positive impact on satisfaction at work and on wellbeing in general. Spirituality at workplaces isn't very old phenomenon though it has always been a part of humanity. Mental wellbeing at

work has become more common topic in recent years so it can be reasonably separated from psychological wellbeing at work. (Virolainen, 2012, pp. 26—17) Spirituality has become a trend in western world in forms of personal growth, mindfulness, mediation and yoga. These come from the eastern world, where different religious, for example Zen-Buddhism values meditation. This kind of spirituality has belonged to Buddhist monks' everyday life for hundreds of years. Spirituality, aspiration for meaningful life and harmony are important part of all main religious including also Christianity. After researches have proven that meditation has a positive impact on peoples mind in form of better ability to learn and focus, spirituality has become an interesting topic and trend in western world too.

2.1.5 Social wellbeing at work

Social wellbeing at work includes the possibility of interaction between colleagues and other members of work community. When social wellbeing at work is in good level, the atmosphere at work is open and friendly and people know each other personally as well. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 24) Having coffee or lunch together, chatting alongside a copying machine and other warm social moments are advancing social wellbeing. Friendships are common and often permanent even if the other changes workplace. Friendships at work make workplace more pleasant. Sometimes friendships can cause conflicts at work and negative impacts can last long. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 24) Generalising remote work affects social wellbeing unless there won't be new ways to keep up the good spirit and generate it.

2.2 Optimal balance in working conditions

There should be balance between requirements and control of work and resources at disposal, in order to guarantee wellbeing at work. If demands and control of work are low, work might passivate and it is not satisfying. If demands are too high and there is only little control of work, the work is stressful. If overly stressful situation continues too long, it might lead to tiredness and burnout. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 83) When the balance is optimal, there occur feelings of flow at work. Flow is a state of mind, in which there exist total concentration on the topic and pure happiness. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 85) Flow is truly desirable state as people are more productive and happy when experiencing it.

Work engagement is another concept which means also the positive vibe arising from satisfying circumstances at work. When flow is momentary state of mind, work engagement means more longlasting and motivating feeling that is not directed to certain factor, occasion, person or behaviour (Virolainen, 2012, p. 91). Work engagement in general means enjoying work, being proud and enthusiastic of it. Three dimension; gumption, dedication and immersion are characteristic of it. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 91) It still doesn't mean workaholism. The difference between these two is in positive energy that emerges from work engagement. Workaholic person values work over other important things like family and spare time. As humans are holistic creatures, who need other valuable things in life too, workaholic persons are not typically wellbeing at work. They tend to be unhappy with life and have more often mental health problems too. (Virloainen, 2012, pp. 198—199)

From the perspective of wellbeing at work, work tasks should be experienced meaningful. The point is how they are experienced, not what kind of tasks there actually are. This would be beneficial to consider closely at workplaces so that people could perform more meaningfully-experienced work tasks. If employees have the feeling of meaningful work they are more committed to work and can handle stress and random over work better. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 85) Sharing the same values is important perspective while reflecting meaningfulness of work.

According to Katri Saarikivi (YLE, 2016) we all should have the right to learn new things at work. A work, where we don't learn anything prevents us to use one of the best humane feature. That's the worst case scenario for both, employee and employer. There is a link between learning and inner motivation. From the perspective of optimal performance it is important to have a chance to choose the work or at least chance to impact on how it is done. If these are made possible, it improves the results of work. (YLE, 2016)

Imbalance between requirements and control of work and resources at disposal causes harmful psychosocial workload. Psychosocial workload effects significantly on wellbeing at work. Psychosocial workload factors refer to properties related to work content, work organisation and social interaction in the work community. When psychosocial workload is harmful, it impacts on employees' health and working ability as there is no opportunity to recover from work. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland, n.d.)

According to Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland (2020), there are three kind of psychosocial workload factors. First, factors that are relating to the content of the work, for example monotony, incoherent job description, frequent interruptions, need to be alert continually, high-level quality requirements. Secondly, factors that are related to work arrangements, for example either too high or low workload, too tight pace at work, unclear targets and responsibilities, inappropriate working conditions and equipments. Third factors are related to social dynamics of the work community. These could be, for example, having to work alone, inefficient teamwork, poor or even lack of communication, not enough support from managers or colleagues, harrasment at work, and inequality or discrimination at work. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland, 2020)

Psychosocial workload factors are always related to the content of the work or the working conditions. They impact on the whole work community and they can also have a harmful impact on employees's health. (Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland, 2020) Professor Minna Huutilainen gives here an important perspective when saying that work strain depends on a lot what kind of feelings we have at work; are we effective and do we have the feeling of control or are we just trying to survive form continuous alert situations. (Koho, 2018) Even if we had the same working environment and the same circumstances with colleagues, it depends on our feelings how stressfully we experience the work. Again it is noticed, that individuals have the responsibility to recognize the stress-related factors that impact on own wellbeing at work.

It is typical that harmful psychosocial workload appears in disucssions more than positive psychology related to wellbeing at work. Satisfaction at work could be increased by preventing harmful psychosocial workload. Today, in researhces and studies of wellbeing at work employee's responsibility is emphasized. Yet we shouldn't underestimate the role of superiors and managers, which are responsible for creating the best possible circumstances for work and preventing psychosocial workload. For example, supportive and coaching leaderships are related to management that aims to support employees to grow professionally, which also impacts their satisfaction at work and their wellbeing at work as well.

Harmful psychosocial workload generates psychological stress. According to Rabe et al. (2012) in work science there are different factors indicating psychological stress. Measurable external factors indicating psychological stress are time pressure and workload. Internal factors are often depending on individual's state of health, for example diseases effect on it. When measuring psychological stress, there are key models describing different perspective of work science such as the demand-control model (DCM), the effort-reward-imbalance model (ERI) and the job demands-resources model (JD-R). The commonly shared indicator generating psychological stress in these models is that job strain is the result of an imbalance between the demands employees are exposed to and the resources they have at their disposal.

2.3 Promoting wellbeing at work – organizational level

As the business strategies of companies often rely on resource-based view or theory it is reasoned aspect that wellbeing at work should have strategic importance (Laine & Rinne, 2015). In practice it is often discussed with lack of holistic view of wellbeing at work; concentrating on problems of ill-being only, the costs of sick leaves, for example. If the value of wellbeing at work would be seen holistically and the nature of wellbeing at work development would be understood as a part of decision-making process, it would make it easier for wellbeing at work issues to gain strategic importance (Laine & Rinne, 2015). It is truly difficult to move ahead in wellbeing at work development before the conditions have transformed into this. It is typical, that wellbeing at work is not seen as a strategic success factor important for the long-term success of companies (Laine & Rinne, 2015).

2.3.1 Matter of values

What can organizations do to promote wellbeing at work? Is wellbeing at work a matter of a leadership or a matter of an individual? Or even of a society? As this topic is often discussed today, it also seems to be a part of value discussions in many companies. This reflect isn't totally bypassed topic in decision-makers' meetings. What is the problem then? As wellbeing at work is subjective experience, it is difficult for organizations to support it as it can mean different things for everyone. Someone is happy with only nice colleagues and good ergonomics. For some of us it isn't enough.

From the subjective perspective considering mental wellbeing at work, it could be started from own values. If you are working in an organization sharing the same values, you probably experience more satisfaction at work and your work is meaningful to you. This is one of the aspects of wellbeing at work today (earlier referred as mental wellbeing at work). Mental wellbeing at work isn't easy for organizations to handle because of its' subjective character, yet organizations have an enormous effect on it. By taking along employees and stakeholders in dialogue discussing the topic is a good start. Another way to impact on mental wellbeing at work is to concretize the company's values, in order to emphasize what is important for the company. Virolainen (2012, p. 151) underlines that it's highly recommended to divide the noble words of wellbeing at work as a company's value into smaller concrete actions according to what they mean in everyday work. It clarifies what is recommendable and what is forbidden in organization. After that, it is easier for an employee to reflect own wellbeing at work and see if the values are representing own values too. If they contradict, it is easier for an employee to change the work community than change own values for the sake of own wellbeing.

If both wellbeing at work and productivity are part of the values of organization, there might occur some contradictions. These are both valuable things for organization to strive for, but sometimes productivity means overtime work and rush. If this isn't passing condition, it will turn harmful for personnel and deteriorate wellbeing at work. At the end it will also deteriorate productivity as well. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 151) On the other hand, when personnel are being well, they are also more productive.

2.3.2 Matter of management

The most successful companies are led by the best managers. Often there are also the most satisfied employees. Good management saves also costs. According to Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (Repo et al. 2015, p.2) subordinates led by a poor manager have even 60% more absences compared to a good manager. Poor management also brings costs as there appears continuous unwanted turnover among employees. Even 70 % of resigning employees are changing job because of the superior. Recruiting and briefing new employer isn't cheap as the procedure takes time and extra effort from the superiors and colleagues.

(Repo et al., 2015, p.2) Managing plays important role in wellbeing at work, despite that the accent in researches today has been on the aspect of individual possibilities to influence on own wellbeing.

Promoting wellbeing at work is a shared matter in organizations. Commitment of managers is important as they create the atmosphere of enthusiasm and decide about the resources and possible developing operations. Operating models, targets, communication and sharing responsibilities influence the atmosphere in work community. Superiors' and managers' actions effect straight on subordinates' wellbeing at work. (Virolainen, 2012, p.134)

According to Katri Saarikivi (Koho, 2018), it is good for the brains if we use them, but chronic work strain isn't desirable. Saarikivi is worried about the culture of valuing self-sacrifice, which occurs often at workplaces. Recovery has been underestimated. For a knowledge worker, long work days don't guarantee effectiveness. It can be even vice versa. Being able to concentrate fully for eight hours isn't typical unless there's randomly a state of flow at work (Koho, 2018). Saarikivi prefers the idea of the hero at workplace, who keeps enough breaks, sleeps well and is sometimes even lazy. (Koho, 2018) Managers could support recovery by acting as pioneers and showing example. Allowing atmosphere for different ways of working and having regularly pauses should be something desirable in organizations' culture. Another way to support recovery is to respect spare time; not send or read e-mails on holidays or evenings.

2.3.3 Factors furthering wellbeing at work in organization

Everyday work and how it is organized is important regarding wellbeing at work. According to Virolainen (2012, p. 153), besides the work of superior and coaching, there are many other factors furthering wellbeing at work (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Factors furthering wellbeing at work. (Virolainen, 2012, p.153)

- Caring, familiarization,
- possibilities to influence, performance appraisals, recognitions,
- work safety,

- agreeable work place, the atmosphere in organization,
- occupational health care,
- support, professional guidance, feedback,
- special days for personnel, brighten ups,
- sports clubs at work and other activities done together on spare time

The most critical ways to further wellbeing at work are those linked in everyday life at work, like support, possibilities to influence, common caring atmosphere and experience of meaningful work. (Virolainen, 2012, pp. 152 -- 153).

2.3.4 Work-life balance / Sustainable workforce

When a company values life-work balance, everyone is encouraged to keep working hours under control and there is less over work. The work environment is caring and not too stressful. There are feelings of freedom, autonomy and respect. Also personal and professional development is highly encouraged. (Kossek, et al., 2013)

In working environment like this, there certainly is wellbeing at work and it is the place of sustainable workforce. Work-life balance is taken care of as it impacts on recovery.

Employees have the energy to live comprehensive life in every stage and perform well over time even if struggling in their personal life. Controlled work-life balance and wellbeing at work helps them to keep working effectively until they retire. (Kossek et al., 2013)

Employees are acknowledged with both roles; the ones' they have at home and the ones' they have at work. Flexibility is required. This should be desirable for both sides; employees and employers. (Kossek et al., 2013) Somehow it still isn't always like this. Kossek et al.

(2013) state how sustaining wellbeing at work is one of the pathways to long-term workforce effectiveness and foster also long-term social benefits. Besides wellbeing at work, they emphasize the impact of sustainable workforce and work-life balance. Organizations vary in their ability to create, support and maintain sustainable workforce.

We all see the model of ideal work-life balance differently. There are as many models of ideal work-life balance as there are workers. Our values, demands and priorities impact on it.

We also have different lives, resources and possibilities to meet our demands. The model of ideal work-life balance changes during different points in worker's career and life. According to Kossek et al. (2013), work-life balance is highly valued among employees and it is linked to important performance-related outcomes. It is also challenging to achieve but it can be applied in many ways.

2.4 Promoting wellbeing at work – individual level

As today the responsibility of own wellbeing at work is emphasized, in this chapter there is described different ways to improve and take care of own wellbeing at work.

As Aki Hintsa has described in the book called *Voittamisen anatomia* (Saari, 2015), humans consist of small diverse components which all build success together. These components impact on each other and they compose a human as a whole. There is no difference between personalities of me at work or of me on spare time. Balance between these components is important. For example, if you succeed at work but at home there are difficulties in relationships or you don't sleep well, entirety isn't working. According to Hintsa's theory, it all begins from the core – self-knowledge; knowing who you are and where are you going to. When the core is straight and there is a balance between the components, you have the key of success. From this point of view wellbeing at work could be seen as a part of holistic wellbeing. The importance of own wellbeing regarding to wellbeing at work is enormous. These two can't be separated.

There exist many ways to promote our own wellbeing at work through developing own wellbeing. When separating holistic wellbeing in smaller parts it is easier to approach it and on the other hand solve which parts need to be improved. As mentioned earlier one good starting point could be considering own values and how they go with company's values. Following there are described different ways to improve own wellbeing at work. These are seen more as personal choices. The employer's role could be supportive and allowing as it is acknowledged that holistic wellbeing is important matter even in societal level.

2.4.1 The importance of recovery

Recovery is a key element for sustainable high-level performance and essential tool of general wellbeing. We need to rest our mind and body after accomplishing daily tasks as there are two aspects of recovery: physical and psychological (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 181). The more challenging the task, the longer time for recovery is needed.

According to Tuominen (2020), recovery is a physiological process leading to homeostasis, which is a balanced condition before physical and psychological strain. It's not easy to recognize the factors supporting and deteriorating recovery as own feelings don't always reflect the reality. Even if we want to recover and we are pushing towards it, trying our best, it doesn't mean we manage to do it. Recovery demands a shift in mindset, especially for those who are used to performance. If we are accomplishing, suffering stress, being sick and making bad choices continuously, we don't recover despite our hardest volition. Sometimes we have to learn to renounce things. (Tuominen, 2020).

Small amounts of recovery is needed daily at work as well. We have recovery mechanisms at work and outside work, which impact on the quality of recovery (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 181) Mechanisms suitable for someone doesn't fit for all. According to scientist Minna Huotilainen, (Koho, 2018) we should be active in seeking the best way to relax and recover; bravely try different hobbies and volunteer work and try to find the topics that catch our interest. When these are found, they should be highly valued and find the time to enjoy these things regularly. The more stress we have, the more we need these things that help us to recover. That's why we shouldn't skip our hobbies when we are tired or in a hurry. (Koho, 2018)

The demands of work and the structural quality of work effect on how we recover at work. For example physical strain or time pressure, responsibilities and decision-making or a lot of seasonal over work complicate recovery. (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 183) In other words, psychosocial workload and how we experience it effects on recovery. Even though this is individual, there are some common factors like the gender (female) and aging, that impact negatively on recovery and things like nature, which has a positive impact on recovery. (Manka & Manka, 2018, pp. 184-185)

If we don't recover and rest, we are not able to be creative. Creativity promotes wellbeing as a creative person finds new solutions to make things better and more reasonably. By nature we do things similarly like we are used to, with minimum effort from the brain and physics. Intellectual striving is good for the brains and helps the brain to stay healthy, says scientist Katri Saarikivi (YLE, 2016). We manage to do things even if we are tired, but being creative demands relaxed and recovered brains as we have to use the brain differently.

2.4.2 Vagus nerve

One crucial element of recovery is our vagus nerve. The vagus nerve is a major component of the autonomic nervous system (Howland, 2014). Autonomic nervous system can't be controlled by will and it is divided to sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. The vagus nerve is a part of the parasympathetic nervous system, also referred to as the rest-and-digest system (Yazdi, 2020). The other, sympathetic nervous system prepares for quick primitive reactions like run and fight, and the purpose of the parasympathetic nervous system is to balance and recover. If autonomic nervous system is alert too long, together with hormonal factors, it will cause harmful changes in our actions and behaviour. (Lindholm & Gockel, 2000) In that case, we suffer stress. The vagus nerve is the longest nerve in the parasympathetic system and it is regarded the most important because of its' far-reaching effects (Yazdi, 2020).

Figure 5: The organs that vagus nerve affects. (Yazdi, 2020)

Brain	Intestines	Stomach	Heart	Liver
Pancreas	Gallbladder	Kidney	Ureter	Spleen
Lungs	Reproductive organs (female)	Neck (pharynx, larynx, esophagus)	Ears	Tongue

From the perspective of wellbeing at work, we are mostly interested in the effects in the brain, as stress is one of the outcome of imbalanced psychosocial workload. In the brain, vagus nerve helps to control mood. Researchers suggest that imbalance implicates anxiety and depression. The vagus nerve is largely responsible for the mind-body connection as it goes widely all the major organs. (Yazdi, 2020) Yet we can't control the vagus nerve by willpower, we can learn to activate it. By activating the vagus nerve we can diminish impacts of stress in our body. The best way to activate this nerve by yourself is to breathe. Especially exhaling is an effective way to activate the vagus nerve. It takes only one specific exhale to activate it and heart beat and blood pressure starts to decrease. (Peltoniemi & Stammeier, 2020)

When learning to activate vagus nerve both mind and body become relaxed. Mindfulness meditation practices are one way to activate vagus nerve. Mindfulness meditation and breathing support recovery besides concentration. Many studies prove the efficiency of these. Mindfulness meditation and breathing bring both short- and long-term help. What is mindfulness mediation? In Harvard Health blog Corliss (2015) defines it as follows: "Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on your breathing and then bringing your mind's attention to the present without drifting into concerns about the past or future."

According to Corliss (2015), mindfulness meditation helps to give a pause of your continuously running everyday thoughts to evoke the relaxation response. The relaxation response is a deep physiological shift in the body, which is the opposite of the stress response. The technique used can be whatever feels right to you. If relaxation response is learned to evoke, it can help ease many stress-related diseases like depression, pain and high blood pressure. Sleep disorders are also closely tied to stress so this can be used as a tool for better sleep as well.

This was proven in a study published in 2015 in JAMA Internal Medicine. The study included 49 middle-aged and older adults who had trouble sleeping. Half of them was taught general ways to improve their sleeping habits and the other half was taught to meditation and other exercises designed to help them focus on moment-by-moment experiences, thoughts and emotions. Both group had six sessions of practising, once a week for two hours. The difference in results between the groups was notable. Compared to the sleep education

group, those participating in the mindfulness group had less insomnia, fatigue, and depression. (Black et al., 2015)

2.4.3 Sleep

Sleep is probably the most important recovery mechanism, which impacts on the quality of recovery. Energy stocks and hormonal balance recover during sleep, which is why enough sleep is vital to us. (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 181)

Sleep is vital element of healthy life and recovery. Recovering sleep improves and maintains immune system and helps managing and monitoring stress. Sleep has four stages, during each of them different functions are progressing in our bodies. The four stages of sleep are divided in two main types of sleep: Non-rapid Eye Movement (NREM), also known as quiet sleep and Rapid Eye Movement (REM), also known as paradoxical sleep (Picture 1). (Kendra, 2019)

When we sleep, our brain is working. One of the most important tasks for brain during sleep is to cleanse it from all the metabolic waste. The glymphatic system is responsible for clearance of waste via influx. This glymphatic influx is highly activated during the third stage of sleep, NREM3-sleep. (Hablit L., et al. 2019) As brain is an active organ, it performs all the time. A lot of metabolic waste is generated in brain during days, and proper detoxification is needed – otherwise a human becomes ill. Sleeping well promotes cleansing brain from the daily strain. (Kiviniemi, 2018) After recovering sleep we have better abilities to learn new things and manage the whole busy day with an energetic attitude.

Figure 6: The 4 Stages of Sleep. Kendra, C. (2019)



It is problematic, that even knowing the benefits of sleep, it still isn't appreciated. People generally don't sleep enough. When sleeping enough, an alarm isn't necessary. According to Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare Report (2018, p.42), sleeping disorders are common, even 3 million adults in Finland experience them. Sleeping is obvious way to improve personal wellbeing. Appreciating more sleep would be beneficial in this performance-centred society. It should be considered as the best possible resource for better performing, not as a necessary time thief.

2.4.4 Physical activity

Efficient way support recovery is to exercise in preferable way. It is nothing but natural for human beings to act physically. We need to move our body to stay healthy as much as we need to eat and sleep. Short moments of physical activity during workdays help to gain recovery needed in the middle of a busy workday.

When new physical activity recommendations were launched in Finland in 2019, there were some new emphases compared to earlier recommendations. Unlike before, short physical activity in daily routines like taking stairs instead of an elevator, walking to grocery store/school/work, taking your dog out are regarded as a part of physical activity. When

earlier it was recommended at least 10 minutes physical activity at a time, now moderate short-term physical activity is important, only few minutes is counted as well. Also having pauses during stationary work or static sitting and small movements as often as possible are recommended. The other totally new emphasis is the importance of sleep. This hasn't been acknowledged earlier in Finnish physical activity recommendations. Now it is regarded as the base of a healthy lifestyle. There are no recommended hours of sleep as the need of sleep is individual. When you sleep enough, you wake up lively. Sleep is important as during sleep brains are analysing your thoughts and you recover from daily strain. (UKK Institute, 2020)

Every third Finn doesn't do any sort of exercise on their spare time. (YLE, 2019) This reflects that we don't know the importance of physical activity for our brain. According to Kiti Müller (Kokkonen, 2019) physical activity activates widely different nervous systems in brain. The effect is wider compared to solving mathematical tasks or linguistic problems. Physical activity helps controlling anxiety as it activates neurotransmitters which participate for example gratifying. That is why physical activity is truly important for our brains as well it is for our body. Physical activity in this context can be as simple as walking. Small amount of physical activity like walking is good for our brains. If physical activity is linked to music, the results are the best, as music itself activates many parts in the brain. Besides our brains are thankful if we are physically active, it impacts on our general wellbeing too. After exercising, if it is not done too late, we also sleep better.

Regular daily physical activity, 20-30 minutes per day, is proven to have balancing effect on our circadian rhythm and improving quality of sleep notably. Especially weight training (when done with weights that strain enough) improves all aspects of sleep. After weight training, body needs more time to recover, which leads to longer time period of deep sleep, referred to as delta sleep (stage 3 sleep, figure 6). (Sovijärvi, 2019) The effect is though bilateral. If we train hard but don't sleep enough, it complicates recovery.

What happens in body after physical activity that improves sleep? Physical activity starts opposite reaction in body; the risen body temperature caused by physical activity starts to lower even below the normal level. This makes falling asleep easier. This temperature effect impacts as well on breath- and circulatory system by activating them, which relax the same way as sauna does. (Sovijärvi, 2019) Physical activity also increases the production of

adenosine, which is directly linked to the energy metabolism of cells and sleep homeostasis (Partanen-Kivinen, n.d. ;Porkka-Heiskanen & Kalinchuk, 2010). In other words, adenosine makes us feel tired and sleepy. Other hormonal effects of physical activity are helping us monitoring stress better. Physical activity increases the production of endorphin, serotonin and dopamine in brain. This means physical activity raises mood and improves the ability of monitoring own feelings. The better your physical condition is, the better you can manage also stress. (Partanen-Kivinen, n.d.) The fact is, as well, that physical inactivity on the other hand deteriorates sleep. (UKK-Institute, n.d.)

2.4.5 The importance of nutrition

Nutrition undoubtedly effects general wellbeing, recovery and wellbeing at work as well. The problem is that there are too many recommendations and theory of different diets, which can mislead us and make us forget the basics. Eat regularly healthy meals, avoid to drink too much coffee and remember to drink water during day are probably the best and the most common nutrition advices regarding wellbeing at work. If we all would do so, there would be more health and wellbeing workers out there. According to the research, the nutrition of Finnish adults is far from the recommendations. For example, the average cholesterol level of Finnish adults is 5,5, which proves that we still eat too much salt and adipose despite the negative effects of both are commonly known. (THL, Finn-Ravinto -2017 tutkimus)

Except nutrition effects on health in general, it also has impact on the brain through gut microbiome. Definition of a good gut microbiome doesn't exists, but more versatile the better. The imbalance of gut microbiome is linked to many neurological diseases, cancers, allergies, asthma, autoimmune - and central nervous system diseases, depression and anxiety. (Kaltiala, 2018) There are researches proving indirectly that a diet including minimum portion of probiotics, certain fatty acids, vegetables and fruits and with a lot of sugar and soft drink increased the risk to get ADHD for children (Kalliomäki et al., 2018)

As nutrition affects on the brain this much it shouldn't be bypassed when discussing knowledge-workers holistic wellbeing. In addition to the recommendations mentioned earlier, we should eat the diet that supports our gut microbiome in order to affect the brain in most favourable way. There are ongoing researches of this topic. Before the results are

launched, the best way is to keep following general Finnish diet recommendation as it contains a lot of fibres, good fatty acids, protein and probiotics in form of i.e. vegetables, berries, fruits, and fish.

2.4.6 Monitoring vitality level

One, yet not scientifically proofed, way to reflect wellbeing is to consider own vitality level. As Emilia Vuorisalmi (Vuorisalmi, 2020, 3.30) highlights, it is important to recognize your optimal vitality level: In different vitality levels we use different part of our brains when making decisions. When the vitality level is optimal, we can make considered decisions and conscious choices. When we are stressed out, our vitality level is too high and we use other parts of our brains, which send alert and survival messages to keep us alive. In that case our choices can be impulsive. If we continue working in too high vitality level, it takes a lot of energy and in the end it will lead us to too low vitality level. This refers to a condition where we are feeling inefficient and even depressed.

According to Vuorisalmi (Vuorisalmi, 2020, 3.30) our personality traits impact on how we react and behave. By learning to recognize our operating models, that stem from our personality traits and by learning to tune our own vitality level, we can reach and maintain the best performance and still stay healthy. Listening your body and mind regularly during day, and recognizing your accessible resources and operating models before making choices, are the best ways monitoring your vitality level.

2.4.7 Improving own psychological asset and ability of acceptance

Earlier, on the chapter of psychological wellbeing at work there was mentioned the concept of psychological asset. According to Manka & Manka (2018, p. 159) psychosocial asset consists of self-efficacy, hopefulness, realistic optimism and resiliency. Genetics, raising and living circumstances impact on psychological asset but it is also a skill that can be learned and improved.

Self-efficient people believe in themselves. The more self-efficient, the more challenging goals are being sought. Self-efficient people have also patience to accomplish the goals with

less feeling of stress. To improve self-efficacy the feeling of control should be obtained and also take small risks. Modelling and peer learning, social influencing and gathering feedback from superiors and colleagues are relevant tools for improving self-efficacy. Paying attention to factors that increase wellbeing at work and being physiologically and psychologically tuned help to achieve better self-efficacy. Holistic wellbeing is important factor too. (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 162)

Hopefulness is willingness to set and reach targets and if necessary, find optional paths to reach them. Hopefulness person is self-oriented and needs space and independency. Increasing hopefulness at work it demands possibilities to contribute target setting and ways to reach them. Targets should be challenging but realistic and measurable. Rewarding when reaching targets is important. Especially challenging targets should be divided into smaller targets or waypoints. Spontaneous education and practising further hopefulness. Searching alternative ways to reach commonly accepted targets increase hopefulness at work. (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 163)

Realistic optimism is seeing problems as challenges and having the willingness to solve them. Problems are caused by external circumstances and they are only momentary. To increase realistic optimism it demands focusing on positive feelings. Conserving and sharing positive feelings and success in work community by utilizing intranet and other common tools. This increases positivity. Finding things to be grateful for and recalling moments when succeeded at work and in life helps to increase realistic optimism. Relaxation and calming down trigger positive energy and creativity. (Manka & Manka, 2018, pp. 165—166)

Resiliency means flexibility and decisiveness of not giving up. Resilient people are always finding the energy to start over despite possible failures. Implementing resource-based way of thinking and developing own skills, attitudes and social asset are effective ways to improve resiliency. Taking risks is legitimate in order to not be scared of trying again after one small failure. Preventing adversities and preparing to meet obstacles develop people's resiliency. It also matters how to interpret adversities. Developing mindfulness skills and self-reflection support interpreting adversities in favourable way and improve resiliency. (Manka & Manka, 2018, p. 167)

When managing and organizing own work, it's typically decided beforehand how everything will be performed at work. If and when there will be exceptions from perceptions, for example changes in schedules due to external reasons, which effect on work load, it generates stress if there is no abilities to accept things how they are. Acceptance is a strength that helps in situations when everything isn't under own control. It's a part of psychological flexibility which helps managing everyday situations. According to Pietikäinen (2009/2019, 5.46) the fundamental of practising acceptance is acting according own values even if having feelings of insecurity. It's about giving up the control and giving space to occurring feelings and trying to accept them. The wisdom of Serenity Prayer summarises the message; "grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference. "

What is important, from the perspective of psychological wellbeing, is that when communicating and receiving feedback it should be separated from the personality. Job descriptions or work tasks and the feedback given, are totally different from the person performing these tasks. It is estimated that from all of our thoughts about 80 % are judging and negative (Pietikäinen, 2009/2019, 6.18). Not surprising that problems in self-esteem are regarded as common. We have difficulties in accepting ourselves as the way we are. Acceptance is different from a good self-esteem. Acceptance is linked to treating oneself indulgently and caringly as treating the best friend – seeing own personality separated from assessments produced by own mind. (Pietikäinen, 2009/2019, 4.17)

2.5 Impact of personal qualities

It's obvious that personal qualities impact on wellbeing at work and how we reflect it. For example, a person who feels comfortable in social situations might prefer jobs that include more team work than working alone. If she/he has to work alone for a long time, it doesn't feel natural and in time it impacts on wellbeing at work as it can be stressful. The other example is remote work, which would be preferable way of working for those who feel comfortable to be and work alone. For social people working remotely for long can feel like a punishment. It's important to recognize own personal qualities and act by acknowledging them. There exist different suitable career paths and ways of working for every personality.

If these are found, it has a positive impact on wellbeing at work as this increases satisfaction at work and increases the feeling of controlling own life.

A personality impacts on the approach of work and working. There exist many kinds of theories and divisions of personality types and traits. One way to categorize people according their personalities is to divide them into three; A-, B- and C-types. No one is pure type “A” or “B”, but one type can be a dominant. According to Virolainen, (2012, p. 197) typical traits for A-types are impatience, continuous hurry, and difficulties in relaxing, competitiveness, aggressiveness, violence and weak self-confidence. A-types are also typically independent and they tend more likely to be workaholics. They are excited to have new challenges and they don’t mind changes. On the opposite, routines are not their cup of tea. (Virolainen, 2012, pp. 196—197) Type B is an opposite to type A. B-types are relaxed and patient and they get along with people easily. B-types like to be in the centre. (Virolainen, 2012, p. 197) C-types are self-sacrificing, resigned, selfless and patient. For C-types there is a risk of not knowing how to say “no”. That’s why they might have a lot of work and own resources are limited. (Virolainen, 2012, pp. 197—198)

2.5.1 Personal character strengths

Observing character strengths is one interesting perspective for categorizing different personal types. When we recognize our strengths, we can learn to activate and utilize them in the best possible way. This undoubtedly effects on wellbeing at work as well. There are studies proving that the character strengths impact on how the work is experienced. For example, in the study of the character strengths of counsellors, there were certain strengths appearing more often than others. These were love of learning, perspective, and social intelligence. While strengths like prudence, hope, love, perspective, and zest predicted meaningful work, the opposite result was shown with strength combination of prudence, hope, forgiveness, honesty, and self-regulation, which predicted burnout. (Allan, et al., 2019)

VIA Institute on Character has listed 24 different character strengths. They have a survey which reveals personal character strengths and it is world-wide known and used. According to VIA Institute on Character there are 24 different character strengths, listed according to six different upper level strengths. These are (Appendix 2)

Figure 8: The 24 Character Strengths. (VIA Institute on Character, n.d.)

Wisdom	Courage	Humanity	Justice	Temperance	Transcendence
Creativity	Bravery	Kindness	Fairness	Forgiveness	Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence
Curiosity	Honesty	Love	Leadership	Humility	Gratitude
Judgment	Perseverance	Social Intelligence	Teamwork	Prudence	Hope
Love of Learning	Zest			Self-Regulation	Humour
Perspective					

2.5.2 Introverts & Extraverts

One of the most popular and influential personality typology is created in early 20th century by Carl Gustav Jung, the father of analytical psychology. One of Jung's key contributions was the development of the concept of Introversion and Extraversion. According to his theory each of us is predisposed to be dominant either Extraversion or Introversion, indicating where we direct our energy (Dallas, 2020). We are either focusing on the internal world (Introvert) or the outside world (Extravert). The dominant attitude type influence on our personal growth and the development of all other "functional types," such as Thinking, Feeling, Sensing, and iNtuiting (Dallas, 2020).

Jung formulated 8 types of personalities, which are:

- Extraverted Thinking
- Introverted Thinking
- Extraverted Feeling
- Introverted Feeling
- Extraverted Sensation
- Introverted Sensation
- Extraverted Intuition
- Introverted Intuition (Dallas, 2020)

Traits of Judgement and Perceiving were added to this theory later by Isabel Briggs-Myers, who launched theory of 16 personalities (Dallas, 2020). Full list of these personalities and their traits are found in www.16personalities.com.

According to Jung there are only complex psychologies and there can never be a pure type of a personality. We all have more and less developed traits. The ones less developed he called repressed and they reside in our unconscious. These traits will rise from time to time, for example in our dreams, as a part of the process of becoming aware of yourself. (Dallas, 2020) More developed traits are the ones that determine our behaviour consciously.

Based on his theories there are many further developed theories explaining different categorising of personality types. Yet, personality is just one of many factors that determine our behaviour. The influence of environment, our experiences and our individual goals shouldn't be bypassed.

Figure 7: Difference between introverts and extraverts. (Houston, E. 2021)



As Figure 7 shows, there are essential differences between these two attitude types. These are emphasized in social situations, decision making, and communication and also at workplace. In social situations extroverts tend to seek, engage in, and enjoy social intercourse, whereas introverts are more likely to be reserved and withdrawn in social situations. They might even prefer to avoid them. (Houston, 2021) In decision-making introverts avoid impulsive decisions and prefer thoughtful consideration while extraverts make more decisions based on what feels most natural at the moment. Extraverts also need more conducting when they face important decisions. (Houston, 2021) In workplace this difference is seen in extraverts' more positive evaluations of their career and life in general. They also tend to remedy unsatisfactory circumstances at work more often than their introvert colleagues. (Houston, 2021)

In communication the difference is more obvious, as it is generally known but also studied that extraverts talk more often and use louder voice, they are more initiative and they have broader gestures when speaking. On the other hand noise distractions in the workplace are more of a problem for introverts than for extraverts (Houston, 2021).

3 Agile methods

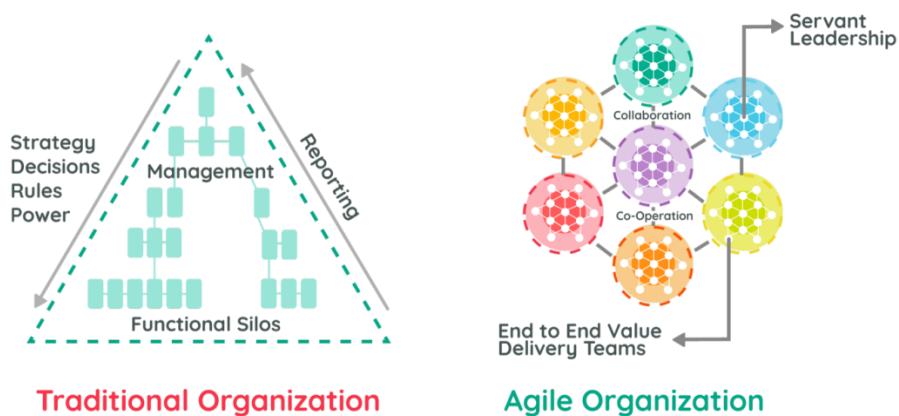
Agile methods and agile ways of working are becoming more and more popular. Besides, companies need to improve their competitiveness continuously, they have to find also better ways to lead and promote sustainable workforce. As agile methods seem to offer a suitable platform for these both, it has to be said that these are rarely adopted totally. Usually companies use scaled versions of agile or implement just few practices of agile methods or use similar practices that make them more agile. In this thesis the emphasis is not to evaluate how agile method in its entirety supports wellbeing at work, but more highlight the practices and principles of agile methods, which impact on wellbeing at work.

3.1 The nature of agile organization

The roots of agile organizations are from Agile Manifesto and its principles launched in 2001 by a group of software developers (Appendix 1). Their purpose was to uncover better ways

to develop software. Today these principles and thoughts are applied more widely in almost every field, especially in service and technology industry. The need for agile organization arose from the constantly changing business environment and accelerating competition. Betterteam (2020) has launched quite descriptive definition of an agile organization: in agile organisation the focus is in ability to react and adapt quickly changing circumstances. Agile organisation is more customer-centric rather than profit-centric, adopting fast learning and decision cycles, and building a network of empowered teams and individuals enabled by technology and driven by a shared purpose. When traditional organizations are built around strict structural hierarchy and decision-making flows down in the hierarchy, agile organizations are characterized as a network of teams operating in rapid learning and decision-making cycles. (Brosseau et al., 2019) Rights to decision-making are given to the teams which have always the newest information concerning the topic. The strength of agile organisation is its' ability to combine velocity and adaptability with stability and efficiency. (Brosseau et al. 2019)

Figure 9: Business agility (Yitmen, 2018)



The principles of an agile organisation are:

- Focusing on the customer
- Power to the Teams (of Teams)
- Embracing Change and Making decisions fast


3.2 Five trademarks of agile organizations

Agile organizations include a system of teams in which rapid learning and quick decisions are made in a people-centred environment with a focus on utilizing technology to assist project management, according to Wouter A. et al. (2018). There are five specific trademarks of agile organizations. These trademarks include 23 practices for organisational agility; 18 are based on survey research. The others have emerged from recent experiences from global organisations transforming into agile organisations. (Wouter A. et al. 2018)

By acknowledging these trademarks and implementing these practices, organization is on a way to shift to an agile organization.

Figure 10: Five trademarks of agile organization. (Wouter A., et al. 2018)

There are five trademarks of agile organizations.

	Trademark		Organizational-agility practices ¹
Strategy	North Star embodied across the organization		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared purpose and vision • Sensing and seizing opportunities • Flexible resource allocation • Actionable strategic guidance
Structure	Network of empowered teams		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, flat structure • Clear accountable roles • Hands-on governance • Robust communities of practice • Active partnerships and ecosystem • Open physical and virtual environment • Fit-for-purpose accountable cells
Process	Rapid decision and learning cycles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid iteration and experimentation • Standardized ways of working • Performance orientation • Information transparency • Continuous learning • Action-oriented decision making
People	Dynamic people model that ignites passion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive community • Shared and servant leadership • Entrepreneurial drive • Role mobility
Technology	Next-generation enabling technology		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolving technology architecture, systems, and tools • Next-generation technology development and delivery practices

Gruessner (2020) has reflected these five trademarks in her blog in quite demonstrative way:

Strategy includes creating value for customers and investors. Agile organizations are very customer-focused and attempt to meet the needs of various individuals. By focusing on creating value, companies are working to meet the needs of employees, stakeholders, partners, and local communities. (Gruessner V. 2020)

The second trademark, **structure**, requires fostering collaboration, good communication and developing accountability and transparency. Structure should be a flexible network of teams with a leader running things from the top. In this structure employees have greater freedom and the leader can continue to coordinate work efforts. (Gruessner V. 2020)

Within the third trademark, **process**, agile organizations implement learning cycles and rapid decision-making. This means that the model or scale of a product is rethought every step of the way at every level of development. (Gruessner V. 2020) This means work and projects are evaluated and checked in two-week time frames or “sprints”. Also daily checked-ins are usual to see what progress is being made and how to solve any potential problems. Projects are also reviewed retrospective.

The fourth trademark, **people**, means a people-centric way of leading and constructing an organization that empowers employees and fosters passion. This means increasing engagement and cooperation at work. It is vital to invest in strong and effective leadership to achieve co-operative and talented teams. Leaders need to be more like visionaries and coaches to help their team achieve goals. (Gruessner, 2020)

The last trademark of agile organizations, **technology**, considers using the right technologies. (Gruessner, 2020) During the era of emerging technologies this is vital as they enable develop work in many directions.

3.3 Agile mindset

According to Sahota (2016) it is relevant to recognize the difference between doing agile and being agile. Neither should be seen as a goal of adopting agile ways of working, but both are needed to success in transformation. Doing agile is all about the practices. Being agile is a mind-set. Being agile brings benefits like continuous learning, joy at work, customer delight, and innovation and creativity (Sahota, 2016). Doing agile practices benefits the organization in things like improved visibility, increased productivity, improved quality, reduced risk and ability to manage changing priorities. (Sahota, 2016) Sahota continues (2020) that in order to be agile organization, everyone needs to shift to the agile mind-set. Especially leaders should be pioneers in living the agile mind-set so that the organization can gain the full benefits of agile. Environment plays the key role allowing teams to make this, and leaders are responsible for creating the right environment. (Sahota, 2020) To create the agile culture, agile mind-set is needed. According to Jurisic et al., (2020), the biggest challenge in agile transformations is to especially change the culture. In other words, the most difficult thing in agile is to find the agile mind-set. Changing the culture is indicated in the State of Agile –Report (CollabNet Inc.,2020) the highest-ranked challenge for companies transforming agile year after year.

3.4 Agile method and agile practices

The implementation of agile practices is based on the core values and the principles of Agile Manifesto (Diebold & Dahlem, 2014) There exist different methods and practices for implementing agile, for example different variations of Scrum-method and different commonly used tools for “doing agile”, for example Kanban. Agile methods include agile practices which are widely but differently used in different fields of industry. Generally, companies adapt these methods by using just some of the practices or part of the method, in other words they don’t apply it completely. (Diepold & Dahlem, 2014)

Scrum is the most widely-practiced agile method (CollabNet Inc., 2020). Scrum is often reported to be implemented only partially. There are also variations of scrum like Scrumban, or scrum of scrums, which collaborates different techniques. The idea of Scrum is to generate value as self-regulating teams. Scrum is traditionally implemented in project works

but today it is also adopted, often partially, as an operating model in all kind of organizations. The Scrum team consist of the Scrum Master, the Product Owner and designers (Scrum.org., n.d.). The Scrum team is usually small and they focus on one common goal at a time. In Scrum team there are no hierarchies or sub-teams. (Scrum.org., n.d.) The Scrum events are characteristics for Scrum team work. The typical events are Sprint, Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum, Sprint Review, Sprint Retrospective (Scrum.org., n.d.). The aim of these events is to generate regularity. The purpose is roughly to plan the following project, forecast ongoing process, keep the team posted and in the end assess the finished project in order to improve team work and learn from mistakes and success. The point is to evaluate and improve the developing project continuously (*continuous learning*) which enables to act with adaptability and velocity but still be efficient and stabile.

SAFe (Scaled Agile Framework) is suitable way of implementing agile practices when the project is especially large. The first *SAFe (Scaled Agile Framework)* version was generated in 2011 from the model called "Lean and Scalable Requirements Model for Agile Enterprises" developed by Dean Leffingwell. (Hietaniemi, 2016)

Agile techniques are concrete ways of doing agile. These are tools and practices like, (in order of popularity) daily standup, retrospectives, sprint/iteration planning, sprint/iteration review, short iterations, Kanban, planning poker/team estimation, dedicated customer/product owner, release planning... (CollabNet Inc., 2020) Different techniques are adopted in different methods, like in Scrum described above. Continuous learning and improving is in common for the techniques.

Kanban is a board of visualizing all incomplete work. It is probably the most common tool of agile practices. It can be physical, for example post-it notes on a whiteboard or it can be built by using excel or another software. Kanban is visible tool and everyone can see it or have an access to it. Single tasks are expressed with post-it notes in different colours depending on their status. For example tasks in line (to do), tasks in the making (doing) and finished tasks (done). (Herranen, 2020, p. 168)

3.5 Applying agile-methods individually

Agile mind-set is also turned into a guideline for life management. According to Niemi and Hietaniemi (2020) ideology behind agile organization is regarded to be a supportive factor of wellbeing in general. This method can be refined for personal life. They see agile mind-set as a way to do things effectively enough without exhausting oneself. In other words, agility means managing work tasks intently and efficiently but in a way that there is still energy left after work days. It means the habits to find the motivation for reaching long term goals in life.

When transforming into agile, there are the same rules whether the transformation is done by an organization or an individual. Agility means the ability to change direction quickly when needed. Evaluating regularly own actions and development and checking if they are still leading towards the goal is essential. It is also important to evaluate the goals regularly as well. Even though the core of agile models is to optimize team work, they include many good advices for independent knowledge work and for making own work more agile (Niemi & Hietaniemi, 2020, p.45). The tools of agile models like kanban, lean-thinking and scrum, which are usually used in organizations, can be utilised personally. For example, it is efficient to split work in smaller stages in order to clarify the target and to schedule and prioritize the most important tasks to reach the target. When you note that task after task is done you have the feeling that work is on progress and it is easier to evaluate if right things are done and the work is still heading towards the goal wanted. Using stages is effective and motivational. Straining improves effectiveness and finally finishing a stage increases motivation. Before starting the next stage it is perfect time to estimate the flow of work in past stage. (Niemi & Hietaniemi, 2020, p. 46)

After finishing a stage it is time to reflect the work done, have a retrospective and consider following questions:

1. How the work has progressed
2. Are you accomplishing your tasks? At what pace? Is the pace fast enough to reach your goals?

3. Is the pace sustainable so that you can keep it up without exhausting yourself?
4. Have you promoted the tasks that bring you the most added values? Have you succeeded in prioritizing?
5. How does it feel to work? Do you have still motivation and eagerness? (Niemi & Hietaniemi, 2020, p. 47)

4 Connections between agile organization and wellbeing at work

4.1 Studies of wellbeing at work in agile organizations

In Finland there have been done few studies about wellbeing at work in agile organizations during years 2013 - 2017. The connection between these two concepts has been studied by The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. According to these studies there are clear signs of better wellbeing at work in agile teams and organizations. Researches Tuomivaara and Käsälä state (Lekman, 2018) that when an agile method is applied successfully, it supports the flow and sensibleness of project work. It also evens work load in teams. Self-regulating teams seem to be a supportive resource of wellbeing at work for a single worker by increasing psychological safety, motivation and autonomy. Common responsibility and control in relation to workload decrease individuals' work pressure when there is fluent communication and division of work in teams. Teams share success and failures. (Lekman, 2018)

According to one of these studies, (Tuomivaara et al. 2016, p. 120) agile dimensions predict team coherence and wellbeing at work. The characteristic features of agile methods that significantly predicted team coherence are the continuous improvement and customer relation dimensions. Positive experiences of work, i.e. satisfaction at work were also predicted by active continuous improvement. (Tuomivaara et al., 2016, p. 120) According to this study, agile ways of working generate environment, where are sources and potentials for wellbeing at work. Especially continuous improvement is the key word for better team coherence and positive aspects of work. It also diminished the experience of the stressfulness of work. (Tuomivaara, et al., 2016, p.122) Thus, hypothesis that agile ways of

working decrease the experience of stress and workload was not supported in the results of this study. (Tuomivaara et al., 2016, p. 122)

Lekman (2018) has analysed the results of these studies as well. Continuous development of the product/service and practices of continuous improvement of team work are the crucial elements of the experience of monitoring and controlling own work and along have the experience of successful work which motivates and is satisfying. (Lekman, 2018) One of the important factors in implementing agile methods is that there is time for developing know-how and skills. In Finnish culture people are often initiative and individual know-how is emphasized. This supports the idea of self-regulating teams where high-skilled and motivated people are needed. (Lekman, 2018)

4.2 Connections between agile mindset and wellbeing (at work)

There are certain connections between agile mindset and wellbeing at work. As today work life is hectic, the key factors of managing work are the abilities to focus and recovery. According to Niemi and Hietaniemi (2020) agile operating model supports these both, which are also essential for wellbeing at work. In order to advance work the most effective and best way, you have to concentrate on it totally. Harmfully, at work we have a lot of disturbance and often multitasking is regarded as even admirable skill. Human brains are not designed for multitasking, so in order to do our best, we need the total focus on one task at the time. Professors of Metropolia University of Applied Sciences Harilainen and Mäkilä lectured the downsides of multitasking, which are; reduces efficiency, kills prioritization, decreases quality, shrinks your brain, drains energy, kills creativity, rewires brain and reduces wellbeing (Harilainen & Mäkilä, personal statement, 16.9.2020) As we are already used to multitasking and continuous interruptions, we have to practice being conscious and focus. Two rules of mental effectiveness are focus on what you choose and choose your distractions mindfully (Harilainen & Mäkilä, personal statement, 16.9.2020).

Recovery is the other important factor to keep the pace at work. If work can't be divided evenly, it means overtime work at some point. Overtime work prevents recovery, especially when it happens repeatedly. As in agile-methods work is done in small self-regulating teams,

which focus on one common goal at a time, it helps focusing on one task at a time and dividing work evenly in team.

5 Empirical research

The objective of this thesis was to study what are the factors impacting wellbeing at work when adopting agile ways of working. The research questions of this thesis were set as follows:

1. What are the factors impacting wellbeing at work in agile ways of working?
2. How agile ways of working impact on wellbeing at work?
3. How can agile ways of working be benefitted in promoting wellbeing at work?

Besides through the theory, the research questions are approached through an empirical research, implemented in Company X where agile ways of working are adopted. The empirical research covers especially the research questions 1 and 2. The answer for the research question 3 is provided by applying the literature review together with the empirical research.

5.1 Research methodology

The empirical research of this thesis work is approached with qualitative methods. Qualitative methods are linked to hermeneutical approach. The aim is to understand and describe the situation and the subject is interpretations of actors. Research results are descriptions of cases when approaching studies with qualitative methods. (Tuomivaara, 2005) Semi-structured theme interview is used as a method to collect empirical data in this thesis work. Semi-structured theme interview is a conversational discussion about topics decided earlier. It is not necessary to go through all topics with every interviewee, or discuss them as widely with everyone. (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006) As wellbeing at work is individual experience, I found semi-structured, theme interview the best way to collect information as results I'm seeking are more descriptive and subjective.

As the order of topics is free in interviews, the goal is to maintain conversational approach through the interview. In semi-structured theme interview researcher has minimum notes about the topics for better concentration on listening and interviewing. Bullet points are a good way to list the topics, along with few additional questions and keywords that might help to keep up conversation. (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006)

Semi-structured theme interview enables to add questions during the interview in order to clarify the given answers. If the research topic isn't in daily discussions among the interviewees they might have some difficulties in dismantling their experiences. If the interview is like an open discussion it's easier to ask addition questions, for example about background and understand better the given answers. (Anttila, n.d.)

In semi-structured interview the interviewee can lead the discussion when there is less space for researcher's preconceptions (Anttila, n.d.). The personality of the interviewee and the atmosphere in the interview sessions effect on the course of discussion. As the semi-structured theme interview is quite arduous it is most suitable for case studies where there is only few to interview (Anttila, n.d.). Semi-structured theme interview is a suitable method if object isn't well known and researcher can't guess all possible answers (Anttila, n.d.), which was one of the main reasons for the selection of the research method.

5.2 Subject and sample

As the topic of this thesis was built up according to researchers own interests, without a mandatory, it wasn't easy or quick process to find the subject for empirical research of this thesis work. Finally, there was a chance to interview six knowledge workers from a Company X, in which Agile method is implemented. The company is operating in the field of insurance and these knowledge workers are working with ICT-development. The selection of interviewees was based on their own willingness. All of the interviewees have experiences from the traditional organization and scaled agile framework for at least a year. There is no pure agile implementation, but as mentioned earlier, it is the trend that companies adapt agile method partly and take "the best part" of it for them. From the interviews it was found out what are the features of agility in this organization that impact their wellbeing at work.

Interviews covered mainly the first and second research questions. Answer to the third research question is reflection based from both; the interviews and the literature review.

As the topic of wellbeing at work is a subjective experience and it can be really sensitive topic as well, it was useful to interview the selected individuals personally, not implement for example group interviews. Their names are not revealed in this study as it wouldn't bring any additional value.

5.3 Implementation of empirical research

Interviews were implemented by using Microsoft Teams as the Covid-19 pandemic is still affecting. This enabled interviewees to be in a neutral environment like their own home or at workplace. After calendaring the meetings, the topics were sent to the interviewees, so that they could have a chance to familiarize the topics and questions beforehand. With Microsoft Teams, it was possible to record the interviews as well. This was told to interviewees before recording.

In order to conduct thoughts to the topic, every interview started with a short presentation of definitions of holistic wellbeing at work and presentation of Schulte's and Vainio's thought (2010, p.422) of the key of maintaining the functioning workforce with the concept of wellbeing. This concept includes expect state of health, also one's satisfaction with work and life.

Definitions of subjective experience of holistic wellbeing were presented as Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and Tikkanen have defined it:

“safe, healthy and productive work done by professionals and work communities in well managed organizations. The work is experienced meaningful and rewarding and it supports the control of life.” (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, n.d.)

Figure 11: Wellbeing is a part of the workday experience and vice versa. (Tikkanen, n.d.)

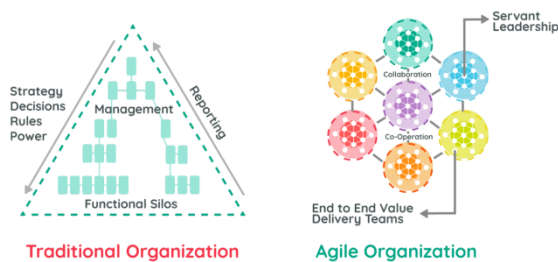


Also the term of paradox of disablement was presented (free translation) from the study of Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, as it encapsulates the concerning and already ongoing situation:

“Paradox of disablement means the situation, in which the health of working aged people is better than ever before, but in which still seems to arise more and more disablement. “ (Finnish Institute of Occupational health, 2020)

As the point of reference was a traditional organization, also picture of traditional organization next to an agile organization (Yitmen, 2018) was presented before starting to discuss the topics and research questions.

Figure 12: Business agility (Yitmen, 2018)



In order to perceive the extent of implementation of agile ways of working, interviewees were asked to characterize how agile ways of working are applied in their team or organization. The longitude of working experience in both ways was essential to find out in order to evaluate the relevancy of the comparison as well.

All the interviews took 1-1,5 hours per interview. In most cases they were implemented with the camera on, but it wasn't necessary as interviews were carried out successfully also without it.

The baseline of the interviews was the comparison of these two ways of working but in a way that could highlight the benefits and pitfalls of agile ways of working. As there are Finnish studies pointing out that agile method have a positive impact on wellbeing at work, it was interesting to find out if it applies to this organization. The aim wasn't to find out the status quo of the wellbeing at work, but more, what are the features of agility and factors that can be impacted in order to improve or maintain work engagement and wellbeing at work.

Wellbeing at work is interdisciplinary topic and as described earlier, it is a holistic concept impacted by individual factors, organization and society. In qualitative research, in which the results are rarely something that can be calculated or measured, the concept requires empirical counterparts in order to be studied (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006). Empirical counterparts are also important for interviewees, who understand the topic better when terminology and concept are explained clearly in a more concrete way. The concepts or empirical counterparts need to be considered carefully what they mean and what kind of things they include. (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006)

Empirical counterparts of this thesis work and topics for the interviews were as follows:

- What features have negative impact on wellbeing at work when adopting agile ways of working? / Mikä ei toimi ketterässä työhyvinvoinnin kannalta?
- What factors effect on wellbeing at work in agile teams / organizations? Mitkä seikat vaikuttavat ketterässä työhyvinvointiin?
- Reflection of own holistic wellbeing at work / Work reflecting holistic wellbeing – Has agile method effected on holistic wellbeing? Oman hyvinvoinnin heijastuminen työhön – tai työn heijastuminen omaan hyvinvointiin - Onko ketterä vaikuttanut omaan hyvinvointiin?
- Recovery – How has agile method effected on recovery (at work)? Onko ketteryydellä ollut vaikutusta palautumiseen?

- Recovery and creativity. Has agility impacted your creativity? Palautuminen ja luovuus; Onko ketteryys vaikuttanut luovuuteesi?
- Is there enough room for different personalities and individuals? Voidaanko yksilöllisyyttä huomioida paremmin/huonommin ketterissä menetelmissä?
- Is the work experienced meaningful? Koetaanko työ merkitykselliseksi?
- How do you feel at work? Do you have the feeling of control or more like feelings of chaos after applying agile ways of working? Miltä sinusta tuntuu töissä? Onko olo, että kaikki on hallinnassa, vai onko tunnetta kaaoksesta?
- Social wellbeing and effects of agility on it? Do you feel that you belong to the group? How is team work? Is work divided evenly and how agility has effected on this? Sosiaalinen hyvinvointi – tunnetko kuuluvasi porukkaan? Miten tiimityö sujuu? Onko työnjako tasainen ja miten ketteryys on vaikuttanut tähän?
- Has agile ways of working increased or decreased the feelings of flow or work engagement? Onko työssä flown tunnetta tai työn imua ja onko ketteryys vaikuttanut siihen?

The data collected through interviews was organised by themes that emerged from the discussions. In chapter 6, these are described more closely and reflected from the theoretical perspective.

5.4 Evaluation of empirical research

As there were no subject in the beginning of the thesis work and it wasn't easy or quick process to find one, the finally found subject wasn't very well-known. On the other hand, there were no preconceptions but the research questions would have been more precisely targeted if the subject would have been more familiar. In this way, this research would have offer more specific information for the Company X.

The evaluation of qualitative research is based on the research text. As it is important to assure readers about the authenticity of the description of the sample, research and the logic conclusions, these are described in details in this report. Reliability and validity are in the centre of evaluation of research. The evaluation of reliability applies to not only the results of research but the whole research process as researcher and his/her personal

experiences and life effect on the research. According to Eskola & Suoranta, (1998) in qualitative research, the main criterion of reliability is the researcher oneself. The interpretation of sample is reliable when there are no contradictions (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998).

For this research, six interviewees were enough for collecting data. The same themes with different emphasizes were repeated in the interviews, despite diversity of sample. When evaluating the reliability of this research, there are certain things to consider. First, the background of researcher; work experience in agile organization for two years, and knowhow and enthusiasm for wellbeing in general and wellbeing at work. Second, the relation between the researcher and the sample; the sample is unfamiliar with the researcher in order to avoid preconceptions. Saturation in the interpretation of sample was gained. Saturation of the material stands for the situation when new cases don't bring new information from the research questions' perspective (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998, p. 46).

In this thesis work, the chosen research method suited very well to the research topic and the results it brought were the kind of that was expected to be. Validity is about the competency of research; is it carefully conducted, are the given results and interpretations "real" (Saaranen-Kauppinen, Puusniekka). In this thesis work the results are described carefully. The reasons behind conclusions are brought in text in form of examples. It can be stated that the validity of this thesis work is sufficient.

The criterion of generalizability is gathering the sample rationally (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). Interviewees were all women, and they all had 1-3 years of experience in working with agile method. They were all interested in the topic of the thesis work as they were volunteers and their interest emanated in discussions. Yet, different positions were represented as the sample included a supervisor, subordinates and team leaders. Comparison with other researches improves the generalizability (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). As mentioned earlier, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health has researched the connection between agile method and wellbeing at work, so this enabled the comparison with these researches.

6 Results of the empirical research

6.1 Introduction - Holistic wellbeing at work in agile organization

The answers to all research questions were reflected to the definitions of holistic wellbeing at work described in literature review. According to Virolainen (2012), holistic wellbeing at work consists of physical -, psychological -, mental -, and social wellbeing at work. These were considered from the perspective of agile organization. According to the empirical research, agile ways of working impacted mostly on psychological -, mental -, and social wellbeing at work. As Laine and Rinne described (2015), holistic wellbeing is an individual experience, which was also considered when interpreting the answers. According to Kauhanen (2011, p. 28), holistic wellbeing at work consists of different parts, which were also found in the answers to the research questions:

- Individual health and working ability
- Working environment
- Management and communication
- Skills and possible development paths
- Work, measuring and organizing work
- Social skills and relations at work community

In the literature review it was already stated that agile methods include many factors, which impact on holistic wellbeing at work. The empirical research of this thesis strengthened this perception. According to the results from studies made by Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, agile ways of working had had a positive impact on wellbeing at work. Yet it can't be deduced that the impact is always and only positive. The biggest challenge worldwide for companies transforming into agile was to change the organization culture. Is it possible to work using agile ways if the organization culture doesn't eventually support it? If this contradiction exists too long it impacts on wellbeing at work because it leads to confusions. Today when psychological - and mental wellbeing are considered more and more important and they are payed attention to, these kinds of contradictions might destabilize wellbeing at work. One factor affecting how agile ways of working impact on wellbeing at work is the success of transformation into agile organization.

6.2 Researcher's preconception

Due to earlier researches, the preconception was that agile ways of working have positive impact on wellbeing at work. After familiarizing with the theories of agile method and wellbeing at work, it was assumed that things like possibility to influence on own work in different ways would have had a positive impact on wellbeing at work. It was also assumed that working in self-regulating teams increases self-confident when succeeding after making decisions independently with the team. One of the preconceptions based on literature review was, that continuous learning impacts on wellbeing at work.

6.3 8 themes of wellbeing at work in agile organization at Company X

Below, there are listed the themes that arose in the interviews most often when discussing wellbeing at work in agile organization. As their point of view about wellbeing at work in agile organization was asked, these themes represent only one situation in one organization, but there are many similarities with other researches made earlier in Finland by Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. Anonymous quotes are from the interviews and they are free translations into English.

Meaningfulness of work

One of the cogent factors improving wellbeing at work was the meaningfulness of work, which was mentioned in every interview. Mostly it was considered as a positive impact of agile ways of working. The experience of meaningful work was present in most cases, and there were different factors effecting on it. Self-regulating teams and working self-regulative way have increased the experiences of meaningful work as there are better possibilities to impact on own work, goal setting and developing own work.

“ Valuation of own work has increased”

“ The meaningfulness (of work) can be experienced everywhere but among Safe there are many possibilities at work for people ... high demands at work... it is easy to experience own work meaningful. “

“Agile has effected on own engagement...”

The meaningfulness of work brings flow and work engagement. Every interviewee had experienced these at work. The downside of flow and work engagement was that it's easy to slide to work too much in an agile organization. It was experienced that in self-regulating teams there are both freedom and responsibility to organize work independently. According to the interviewees, it is easy to take too much work, as work requires self-management and working hours are flexible.

“There can be so much work engagement that the boundaries (working too much) are crossed.”

Among interviewees, some of their job descriptions were expanded after implementing agile ways of working in a way that actually helped them to see entities at work more clearly. This created also the increasing feeling of meaningful work. What was better compared to the traditional way of working was that when using agile method everything started to proceed faster and some finished concrete work was perceived earlier. The results of own work could be seen earlier and more clearly as a part of the entity, which increased the feeling of effectiveness and the importance of own work contribution. These were all factors mentioned improving wellbeing at work.

“Agile has had a positive impact on work engagement and on the experience of the import of work. “ ”... self-regulating way to work makes work meaningful.”

” ... in self-regulating teams, own work becomes much more clearly visible. “

On the other hand, the lack of experience of meaningful work decreased wellbeing at work as it was something still to strive for and so requiring an extra effort. As a reverse side, the import of work affected negatively on wellbeing at work as the work seemed to cause more stress when experienced more meaningful.

“Agility has impacted in a way that work comes to my mind more easily (on spare time)... “

Especially in the beginning, after one has just started in his/her new job, it is important to support the experience of meaningful work as it might have an impact on work engagement. The import of work can be also a diminishing factor of wellbeing at work, especially in cases where everything is still new at work, or where there occurs too much work for too long period.

Continuous learning and creativity

Agile method has impacted on creativity as it was experienced to be a factor forcing to be creative and find new solutions continuously. Agile method was considered as a suitable platform for encouraging to be creative and developing own professional skills from different perspectives. Along with agile ways of working there emerged learning, which was experienced to increase the level of enthusiasm and creativity. Continuous learning and creativity were experienced to be present in agile teams, which was said to increase wellbeing at work.

“... (agility) has taught creative thinking after learning to think the entities more widely and after widen the job descriptions (due to agile transformation).”

Continuous learning and creativity was seen in general as a positive impact of agile ways of working. Yet, there were some points concerning as well. As continuous learning was seen as a natural part of agile ways of working, there was a feeling that it was taken sometimes for granted that no support is needed when there is a need to learn something new. As the tempo at work can be hectic, learning and being creative was experienced sometimes straining. This was especially emphasized when there was no permanence in team members in different projects.

“ In different projects there are different ways to work and different people.... This can be straining. “

According to interviewees, organization culture impacts on creativity. It was mentioned that if there is no room for mistakes, it kills all the creativity. This applied also in traditional organizations, so it wasn't linked to only agility, but it was experienced to be emphasized in agile organization. It was mentioned multiple times that open atmosphere where everyone is encouraged to say their opinions loud at work impacts besides on successful communication, on team spirit, but also on creativity.

"..., I'm able to understand solutions further and find diverse solutions. " ..., I'm more creative in current job."

Interaction and communication

The importance of interaction and communication can't be denied in any organization. Yet this was highlighted when discussing agile organization with the interviewees. In agile organization, the targets are reached as a team and work requires a lot of co-operation with different distances. In self-regulating teams people had experienced the freedom to impact and develop own job but without careful and clear communication and interaction they couldn't anticipated and organized the work in the best way. If there was a lack of interaction or communication, stressful situations emerged when anticipation and organization weren't possible. This was experienced to effect besides on efficiency, also on experience of stressful work and team spirit. According to the interviewees, in agile organization the importance of interaction and communication and especially the quality of these were emphasized. These factors impacted on wellbeing at work by increasing or diminishing it, depending on the quality, clearance and the amount of interaction and communication. Also the responsibility of own activity was emphasized.

"Interaction plays a key role here, but the way one is active matters too."

When applying agile ways of working, there are certain regularly and frequently kept meetings. This was also applied in the organization in question. This created theoretically the base for regular interaction and communication. In almost every interview these meetings were mentioned in a way or another. Often, they were seen as factor improving communication and interaction but it was also mentioned that they can be straining factors

as well. Especially, when there was an experience of too many meetings during the day or week. When people were strange to each other, it affected how people expressed their thoughts as there appeared sometimes shying.

“... especially in the beginning of new projects, if there is turnover among people in team when people are yet unknown to each other, daily-meetings can be straining as people are quiet and there is shying... “

It was pointed out that some personality traits benefit in agile teams.

“You have to have a certain grip of work... You have to be open, active, brisk, self-imposed...”

“You have to have the courage to examine and ask.... and say things out loud when needed.”

These personality traits were accounted as factors affecting how people communicate and interact. Having these traits doesn't guarantee clear or good interaction but obviously these were regarded as beneficial personality traits when working in agile teams. It was also mentioned that diversity in personalities among team members is only beneficial. It's all about the balance.

The importance of the team

As agile ways of working means working in self-regulating teams, it wasn't surprise that the importance of the team came up in most interviews. It was linked for example to good interaction and communication and the meaningfulness of work.

“ ... at best it is... if there's just the right group..., no matter what kind of swamp there is, it's got through together. “

“After having managed to get people engaged, we have grown together as a team.”

“Self-regulating work in a team boosts self-confidence when succeeding after making decisions independently among team members.”

It was experienced that it's not enough whether you are brisk, active and self-imposed. To success in reaching goals, a great team is required. A team with a good team spirit and an open atmosphere were experienced furthering wellbeing at work by creating work environment where everyone feels comfortable expressing own thoughts and opinions. Also saying no was felt to be easier then. This was experienced to have an impact on self-confidence and it supported people to tell when they have too heavy workload.

If there were frequent changes in teams, for example each project was started with a new team, there were no support experienced in creating team spirit. Traditional ways to improve team spirit were implemented with the team of colleagues, with so called administrative team, which wasn't necessarily the team with whom projects were managed. The level of team spirit depended on its' members, their personalities and activeness.

According to interviewees, team leaders and supervisors had a specific role in creating the atmosphere in teams. When asked what kind of leadership interviewees would prefer when using agile ways of working, there arose different answers. It was mentioned, that team leader should see the role as supportive and put the team always first. In the end, it's always about the team. It was considered important that leaders push others to find the right direction and support the specialists to bring up their professional skills. The literature review supports this as for example, according to Gruessner (2020), leaders need to be more like visionaries and coaches to help their team achieve goals.

Most of the interviewees had experienced it successful having two different directions who coach; an administrative supervisor and a team leader. This enabled also different support from those two. With a team leader it was more typical to discuss the ongoing work while the administrative supervisor supported more in professional growth and career path. The interaction between these two was also mentioned to be highly important.

Self-management and responsibility of own wellbeing

Feelings of freedom and requirements of self-management skills were mentioned in the interviews multiple times. When working in self-regulating teams, you have to know yourself very well; know your own limits, strengths and weaknesses. Also, it was mentioned that working in agile way increases your self-knowledge. Freedom was experienced mostly as a positive factor. It increased the experience of the meaningfulness of work. Yet, it also increased the risk of working too much. There were two reasons causing this risk. One of them was the uneven working stroke caused by external factors. The other reason was the facility to take too much work if having high-level work engagement and high level demands towards own work. Self-management and time management were definitely skills affecting own wellbeing at work.

“Today (when using agile) there is a bigger risk to burn out. It requires continuous time management of own in order to keep up with work and that too much work is not collected for oneself. “

“ What is affecting wellbeing at work..., is in general, that there is the specific position-based decision-making power that can be exercised... certain people ask to be committed to these kind of development work... I would see these people are the ones who have the need to challenge themselves and who like to work with challenges. “

“With Agile method there is a risk to work too much.”

“Self-regulating means also that people need to have the ability to take feedback from somewhere else... it can't be expected that it's always the supervisor who is giving you feedback...”

It was said, that work which requires self-orientation can cause stress if there aren't enough tools for self-management. Tolerating stressful situations and having the ability to organize own job was mentioned as skills needed in agile organization. These were also factors impacting on recovery and how do you feel at work. Some of the interviewees mentioned though that agile ways of working has taught to know yourself and your boundaries better. This was definitely a factor improving wellbeing at work as it is a part of the way on professional growth.

Possibilities to take into account individuals

“In self-regulating teams individuals has to be taken into account better”

According to the interviews, in agile ways of working, there are often situations when many things have to be handled at the same time. It's common that people have different reactions to these. They also have different abilities to manage with these situations. This was mentioned as an example of a situation, when differences between people have to be taken into account. It also applied to transformation into agile organization. It was said that when ignoring different personalities in transformations, there might emerge resistance of change. The differences between personalities were mentioned to emerge also when working in teams; in co-operation and in communication. It was valued to be important for management to notice differences and give support to people in different ways. This was acknowledged to be a challenge in management.

“ ... in agile (organization) different personalities seem to be highlighted”

As organizing own job is emphasized in agile teams, it was mentioned that it could be clearly acknowledged that differences between the ways work is organized are ok. According to one of the interviewee, manifesting that it's ok to be uncertain at first would be beneficial. It's important that in the beginning possibilities are offered to acquire different transferable skills to perform well at work and support people in changes. If and when there is resistance of change it was highly valued to receive tools and help as a team to manage with the situation. Otherwise, it will cause delays. As a team member, it was important to be able to see own skills that could be developed and have willingness to develop them.

“In traditional organization, your work isn't visible at the same extent ... In self-regulating teams the peoples' work, thoughts and personalities are more visible.”

Recovery

As recovery impacts on wellbeing at work, it was also asked to describe it in the interviews. In general, recovery seemed to be a factor impacted by personalities and organization

culture more than agile methods. Yet, many things that came up in agile ways of working impacted on recovery. As recovery is something really individual, also factors affecting it are individually experienced. For example, a challenge-oriented person, who experiences high level work engagement has a risk to get burn out in agile organization due to the freedom and responsibility of organizing own job. Recovery was something all recognized as an important step toward better wellbeing at work.

Recovering moments during work day did exist among interviewees' work days, but remote work had impacted on this. Some of the interviewees experienced it easier to have these moments at home but some of them found it more difficult and mentioned that those moments were rarer at home. According to interviewees, the organization also encouraged to recover. In organizational level, there were actions done in order to improve recovery. For example, meetings were recommended to last 45 minutes instead of an hour. These 15 minutes were experienced to be important for recovery and focus when there are meetings one after the other. This was still quite new habit, so there were no results showing how it has worked. The recovery as a theme was considered to be useful to discuss in teams or in organization together as it was acknowledged to be highly valued among interviewees.

Remote work

As COVID-19 pandemic has effected globally during recent years, it was a topic that couldn't be bypassed in the interviews. The biggest impact of COVID-19 from the perspective of wellbeing at work was that people worked remotely. Remote work has been common in all kind of operating models in organizations worldwide due to COVID-19 pandemic. It can't be linked to agile methods but is one way to work in agile organization. Remote work had a positive impact on most of the interviewees from the perspective of wellbeing at work. All interviewees preferred the model where both ways of working would be in use based on own valuation where is best to work each day. It wasn't surprise that remote work was experienced often as a better way to work as at home there were often more peaceful and better possibilities to concentrate on certain tasks.

Having no need to shuttle means longer spare time, which promotes better recovery. On the other hand workdays lengthened easily when worked at home. It was experienced that the

amount of over work had increased when working at home. Also, there were no such clear endings on workdays as there was no need to move or shuttle after workdays. These endings were missed. No doubt, the social effect of working at office was missing and this was also mentioned many times when discussing the atmosphere at work and team spirit.

Another perspective regarding remote work and the subject is that when needing supportive and coaching leadership, it is more difficult to implement when working remotely. Coaching and supporting leadership requires at some level physical presence as listening and noticing the signs of enthusiasm, tiredness or any other important feeling is easier when working physically at the same workplace.

After interviewing six persons working in different positions in the company, there was a strong feeling that the attitude towards agile method was favourable and agile ways of working really had a positive impact on wellbeing at work among the interviewees. The most often mentioned themes in interviews were predictable to some extent but there were some surprises as well. The occurred themes and the conclusions could be also considered as factors affecting wellbeing at work in agile work environment. In other words, the answer to the first research question was deduced from these themes.

6.4 What are the factors impacting wellbeing at work in agile ways of working

The answer to the first research question is deduced from the themes discussed in interviews. According to the results of empirical research of this thesis, supported by the literature review, the factors impacting wellbeing at work in agile ways of working are as follows:

- 1. Self-oriented way to work, self-regulating teams;** the power and responsibility to impact on own job and develop it and impact on goal setting. This wasn't surprising as it impacts many ways.
- 2. Continuous learning and increased creativity;** These are essential part of agile ways of working as it includes continuous developing of work and reflecting work from the retrospective perspective in order to perform better in the future. Creativity means the ability to see alternative ways to solve problems and to reach goals and see solutions further as a part of the entity.

3. **Team spirit and working team;** this theme wasn't surprising but the way it was valued among interviewees surprised at some level. The wise words of Aristotle "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts" really seemed to apply in the results of empirical research of this thesis work.
4. **Interaction and communication;** no doubt, these are factors impacting wellbeing at work in any organization but especially in agile organization their value was emphasized from the perspective of wellbeing at work as the work is based on working in teams and in co-operation with different distances.
5. **Self-management;** this skill is needed when working in self-oriented way.
6. **Possibilities to take into account individuals;** the feature that traditional organization don't have at the same extent than agile organization does.

When reflecting this answer to the literature review and the concept of wellbeing at work defined by Virolainen it could be noted that each factor is linked to different part or parts of wellbeing at work (physical, mental, psychological and social). According to the empirical research, the mental, physical and social parts emphasize in agile ways of working.

Themes had different emphasizes among interviewees according to their personalities. As there were only six interviewees it wasn't possible to divide different emphasizes according to the personality types as it wouldn't be reliable and valid. Even though it was interesting to notice how individual experience the wellbeing at work can be.

6.5 How agile ways of working impact on wellbeing at work?

According to the empirical research of this thesis work, the agile organization and the method used had reflected to wellbeing at work. Agile method had improved the experience of meaningful work. On the other hand, in some cases, it had impacted on experienced stress. The importance of individual responsibility and self-management were emphasized. After transforming into agile organization, people had clearer vision of their work. In literature review it was noted that agile organization needs people who are enthusiastic, yet it also generates ones. This sentence applied definitely to the sample. The factors effecting on wellbeing at work are reflected to the definitions of holistic wellbeing at work

represented in literature review of this thesis work. It can be noted that impacts of agile ways of working on wellbeing at work are holistic in a way it is described in literature review.

In following chapters there are mentioned the specific parts of wellbeing at work, which are influenced by the founding in question. Yet, it must be remembered that because of the holistic way wellbeing at work is defined, the impacts spread widely affecting later on the other areas of wellbeing at work as well. For example, decreased mental wellbeing at work might cause sleeping problems, which can deteriorate physical- and psychological wellbeing. Deteriorated physical- and psychological wellbeing impact on the performance and in the end decrease holistically wellbeing at work. General wellbeing impacts straight on wellbeing at work, so the consequences are pervasive.

The answer to the second research question describes more specific how agile ways of working and the found factors resulted from the empirical research impact on wellbeing at work. Following, there is provided the answer to the second research question.

The meaningfulness of work – impacts on mental and psychological wellbeing at work

According to the empirical research of this thesis work, transformation into agile organization and agile ways of working had a positive impact on the meaningfulness of work among interviewees. They had experienced the transformation positively as it had impacted on their mental -, and psychological wellbeing at work. Mainly, this was seen as a result of the self-oriented way to work; the freedom and responsibilities that self-regulating agile teams and agile organization can offer. Agile organization is a suitable platform for experiencing work meaningful for those who are self-oriented and willing to have that power and responsibility, seek challenges and adore continuous learning. At the same time, it was also noted in the empirical research, that due to the increased meaningfulness of work, the work was experienced easily more stressful and work stayed in mind after work days more often.

Self-management – impacts on mental wellbeing at work

The theme of self-management came up many times in the interviews of empirical research: discussion was about either having it, lacking it, or wishing to get more support in it. This was an interesting theme that is unfortunately missing in literature review.

People have different resources regarding self-management. According to the empirical research of this thesis, it was considered positive, that in agile organization this skill is developing inevitably. Yet, it was mentioned as a skill required. According to the interviewees, in agile teams there is a risk of burnout as gathering too heavy work load is easy in agile organization. Especially, when high level work engagement exists, this risk was assessed to be elevated.

According to one of the interviewees, agile ways of working improves self-knowledge as agile method fosters to consider own boundaries while challenging oneself. As in the literature review of psychosocial asset was mentioned, self-oriented way to work improves also self-knowledge. According to the interviewees, recognizing own resources and skills, and ability to say no when needed, are required but also learned in agile teams. If burnout occurs, it declines the trust of own professional ability.

At best, agile promotes professional growth. But there are components of indisposition if self-management is not supported when needed. At worst, this might lead to the edge of indisposition.

The power of team – impacts on social wellbeing at work

As it was highlighted in the empirical research of this thesis work, the agile team creates wellbeing at work through team spirit. Agile teams had impacted on social wellbeing at work. By succeeding in creating a great team with good team spirit, wellbeing at work could be impacted in many ways. Secondary products of a well-functioning team were straight forward communication and interaction. When operative teams changed often, it was considered to be challenging to find good team spirit in every team. The importance of different non-work related events among team members was mentioned in the interviews. Work can be done in any kind of team of professionals, but when striving for better

wellbeing at work and more effective way to work, the importance of team spirit and well-functioning team is highlighted.

As wellbeing at work is an individual experience, it definitely applied to social wellbeing at work in agile organization according to the empirical research of this thesis work. Different personalities represented different emphasizes especially when discussing teams and team work. All the answers had positive vibe but the importance of the team spirit varied in cases. It's natural that some of us need more contacts with people during the day (introverts vs extraverts) and value for example friendships with colleagues more than others. It was mentioned in the interviews that also the stage of life is effecting on this. A great team spirit was experienced in different ways. For example, expressing own opinions or saying when having too heavy work load was easier in a team of good team spirit. This implies that when social wellbeing is taken care of, it impacts on psychological wellbeing at work as well. As in agile organization teams are in the core, it's obvious that the better team spirit, the better wellbeing at work.

Interaction – impacts on social and psychological wellbeing at work

According to the empirical research of this thesis work, it was obvious that the quality of interaction and communication impacted on wellbeing at work. This applies to all organization types as communication and interaction are needed everywhere but in agile organization it seemed to be emphasized. It was said that due to clear and quality communication it's easier to organize and anticipate own work. This implies better psychological wellbeing at work. When own work can be anticipated and organized well, it is possible to pay attention to the amount of recovery and organize work evenly. It was mentioned in the interviews, that some support from managers would be necessary in this point. When recovery and organizing work effectively is taken care of, it leads to less over work, less stress and satisfied employees. This is important from the perspective of psychological wellbeing at work.

According to interviewees, when the quality of communication and interaction was occasionally poor, it was more difficult to anticipate and organize own job in self-regulating teams where cooperation is inevitable. Due to poor interaction and communication more

misunderstandings and lack of information occurred. These factors can cause the risk of uneven workload and the need for over work. Unpredictability generates stress, and this influence on psychological wellbeing at work. The impact of interaction and communication is bipolar.

The second aspect of interaction and communication is the feedback and the way things are communicated. This has impacts on social - and psychological wellbeing. When working in self-regulating teams and co-operating with many distances there might emerge challenges in giving and receiving feedback and communicate things clear without misunderstandings. Frequent communication and multilateral feedback are natural in self-regulating teams. As it was mentioned in the interviews, working in agile teams requires skills of interaction and ability to receive feedback also from others than superiors. Especially receiving or giving constructive feedback or negative message can be difficult. This aspect should be noted in management when coaching and supporting teams in agile organization as it has large impacts on social -, and psychological wellbeing at work.

Psychosocial asset – impacts on psychological wellbeing at work

Theoretically speaking, agile organization offers a platform for developing individual and collective psychosocial asset. High level of collective psychosocial asset equals a team with good team spirit. Individual psychosocial asset consists of self-efficacy (believing in oneself; the more self-efficient, the more challenging goals are being sought yet staying patient to accomplish the goals with less feeling of stress), hopefulness (willingness to set and reach targets and if necessary, find optional paths to reach them), realistic optimism (seeing problems as challenges and having the willingness to solve them), and resiliency (flexibility and decisiveness of not giving up).

Factors constructing individual psychosocial asset are the same as the traits mentioned in the interviews when discussed what kind of person performs best in agile teams. It was also mentioned that people with this kind of traits often ask to be committed in agile teams. On the other hand, performing in agile team seemed to require at least decent level of psychosocial asset. Agile ways of working improved these traits as well. According to Manka & Manka (2018, p. 158), psychosocial asset is seen as a part of employees' experience of

wellbeing at work. Improving psychosocial asset impacts on wellbeing at work and there are interfaces between high-level psychosocial asset and satisfaction at work.

Accomplishing small stages as a part of bigger entity – impacts on psychological wellbeing at work

Accomplishing a task evokes feelings of happiness and satisfaction. From the perspective of wellbeing at work, these feelings should be seeded. Taking smaller steps to work with generates the feeling of effectiveness. If the goal is far away, it can be unmotivated. It was pointed out in the empirical research of this thesis work that when the final target is unknown in the beginning of the project, and it develops during the project, small taken steps towards the final target and finishing one step at a time was rewarding. When thinking about how an agile team delivers work in a small but consumable increments, instead of getting everything ready once on a “big bang” launch, it is obvious that this way of working impacts also peoples’ wellbeing at work. Feelings of effectiveness and seeing your work more clearly as a part of the entity due to agile ways of working were mentioned in the interviews. Also, it was experienced that this influenced on wellbeing at work. This influences on psychological wellbeing at work.

Continuous learning and creativity – increasing psychosocial asset and improving psychological wellbeing at work

As the empirical research of this thesis work resulted, continuous learning and creativity are initial parts of agile ways of working. These were also factors that improved wellbeing at work among interviewees. According to them, people who seek challenges and are willing to improve skills continuously ask to be committed often in agile organization. At best, agile organization is a platform that offers working conditions for employee to develop own skills and learn continuously. This influences on creativity. Besides developing the ongoing work, the way work is done is also developed and reflected. The final target is not known in the beginning of an agile project, but it’s supposed to be assessed and evaluated during the whole process by reflecting own work and hearing customers’ and stakeholders’ needs. According to the empirical research of this thesis work, this also taught to perceive further

solutions. Continuous learning and the usage of creativity increase wellbeing at work for those who really enjoy learning and challenges.

On the other hand, it was considered sometimes arduous to learn continuously something new, for example new ways to work in different projects or familiarizing frequently with new people involved in new projects. When the workload is too heavy for too long, it's exhausting, which diminishes creativity. As mentioned in literature review, diminished creativity deteriorates the ability to see diverse solutions and impacts on working habits. When feeling exhausted, it's easy to slide on autopilot-mode at work. This means nothing is questioned as it's just important to accomplish the tasks. This affects straight on holistic wellbeing at work. Paying attention to recovery is important for all, but theoretically speaking in agile organization it seems to be, if possible, even more important. Less recovery equals less creativity, which impacts straight on performance and ability to find new solutions.

The third aspect of continuous learning, which was mentioned in the interviews, is related to professional growth. Continuous learning was linked to mental wellbeing at work and seen as a factor improving it as well.

6.6 How can agile ways of working be benefitted in promoting wellbeing at work?

The answer to the third research question is deduced from the empirical research and from the literature review. From the perspective of a regular knowledge-worker at office, the most common reasons diminishing wellbeing at work are factors that affect psychological -, social -, and mental wellbeing. When discussing agile methods, it can be stated that there are components impacting on these parts of wellbeing at work. The keywords of the answer to the third research question are self-oriented work and the concept of self-regulating teams.

Self-oriented way to work as the means to improve holistic wellbeing at work

Possibility to impact on own job was listed as one of the most important factor improving wellbeing at work both in literature review and in the results of empirical research of this

thesis. It can be stated that by increasing possibilities to work in self-oriented way, holistic wellbeing at work can be improved if there are capabilities in self-management. When the work environment is already supporting self-oriented way to work, the skill of self-management is emphasized and it improves inevitably. In agile organization, self-management is required and it has bipolar influence on holistic wellbeing at work. Supporting self-management and offering tools for developing it, generates wellbeing at work in agile organization and in similar work environments where self-oriented way to work is applied.

Assessing values

When organizing own job, own values are assessed at the same time. This is one part of self-management and the valuation is one way to ensure better psychological-, and mental wellbeing at work. Prioritizing tasks means also valuing them according to employer's values and expectations and reflecting them to own values. Prioritizing tasks according employers' and own values makes to consider what is truly important and points out possible contradictions. Working according to own values improves mental- and psychological wellbeing at work. Contradiction between own and companies' values generates stress and dissatisfaction. In self-oriented way to work these contradictions become visible, as work is organized and prioritized more independently. It's easier to perform tasks that someone else has told to do and complain about dissatisfying work, than independently decide to work against own values. Self-knowledge and willingness to act according own values and interests are required if striving for better mental- and psychological wellbeing at work. Sometimes improving own mental-, and psychological wellbeing at work can mean looking for new challenges from new surroundings.

Considering individual aspects

Self-oriented way to work enables to take care of individual aspects when it comes to ways to improve own wellbeing at work and for example recovery. Self-oriented way to work and self-management are strongly linked to each other. Managing own time and resources are key elements of self-oriented way to work. For example, if the most effective time to work is in the morning, the work requiring a lot of concentration should be organized and done

during mornings – at least as often as possible. When feelings of tiredness emerge, one is responsible to recognize them and act according to them. The impacts of self-oriented way to work can be bipolar, depending on skills of self-management and self-knowledge.

When self-knowledge and self-management are possessed, factors like recovery, sleep and physical activity can be considered better in self-oriented way to work. This leads to better wellbeing at work through better general health. The responsibility to take care of own wellbeing is demanded but according to the empirical research of this thesis, these are topics that require support and reminding from the organization and managers.

Organization culture, managers and clear rules at work support and enable individuals to consider these aspects, but the willingness to act according needs is essential.

According to the literature review, many ways to impact on individual wellbeing at work are in our own hands. Mindfulness practices, which improve the skill of being present and concentration, physical activity, taking care of recovery and healthy nutrition impact on wellbeing at work through better holistic wellbeing. This topic arose as well in the interviews of the empirical research. When working in self-oriented way, there are more options to implement these as there are better possibilities to arrange own workdays according own resources and individual needs. In the interviews this was referred to the freedom and the responsibility to manage own job. As it is individual what it is supposed to do for better wellbeing and how much recovery is needed, self-management seems to be an important skill in agile organization from this perspective as well. This theme was highlighted in the interviews.

Cherishing the diversity of people and finding optimal balance in working conditions

Diversity of people enriches work environment. Literature review pointed out the importance of different personalities and personality traits and how wellbeing at work is individual experience as well. This implies that people have different strengths, abilities, values and things they are enthusiastic of. Even in agile organization the team is in the core, the individuals that build the teams matters as well.

When work environment supports self-oriented way to work, there are possibilities to develop and organize own job according to own skills, resources and interests. It also offers

possibilities to challenge oneself. Optimal balance in working conditions is achieved when the work is not too demanding, yet, it offers enough challenges in relation to personal skills and resources. As optimal balance is individual, monitoring own working conditions as much as possible is satisfying. Self-confidence increases when achieving the feeling of control after taking small risks, setting targets, and making decisions even partly independently; accomplishing tasks that are challenging enough. This improves individual psychosocial asset and highlights the diversity of people in a positive way.

At best, when diversity of people is acknowledged, it implicates better performing and satisfaction at work as work is experienced meaningful and rewarding. Creating circumstances for cherishing diversity of people generates wellbeing at work and implicates the value of sustainable workforce. As in literature review was mentioned, environment plays the key role allowing teams and individuals to perform at best, and leaders are responsible for creating the right environment (Sahota, 2020). Again, supportive organization culture and - managing and clear rules at work are fundamental.

Power to teams and focusing on smaller targets

The way teams are valued in agile organization is exceptional. This brings possibilities regarding wellbeing at work and effectiveness at work. In well-functioning team the dynamics, communication and team spirit are paid attention to. "Power to the team" is one of the principles in Agile Manifesto. If teams don't have that power, agile transformation can be questioned. In powerful team there is clear and open communication which helps organize the work, divide and assess it. Circumstances for continuous learning exist in agile teams. As the team has one common target, the competition between colleagues is not that visible. Colleagues were important factor for better wellbeing at work according to some of the interviewees in the empirical research of this thesis. It depends on personality how much interaction is needed during work day from the perspective of wellbeing at work. According to the empirical research of this thesis, working totally remotely impacted on team spirit when physical interaction diminished.

Smaller targets are achieved faster. This increases the feeling of effectiveness and satisfaction. The way work tasks are planned and accomplished in smaller parts is typical of

agile organization, but it could be used in any other kind of organization as well. It impacts on wellbeing at work, especially the psychological part of wellbeing at work and individual psychosocial asset.

6.7 Suggestions for further development and topics to keep in focus

Based on the empirical research of this thesis work, in this chapter there are pointed out few aspects that should be maintained and improved or added in order to develop wellbeing at work in the organization at Company X. These aspects reflected factors that were accounted as useful and improving regarding wellbeing at work. Some of them already existed and these were appreciated. These aspects are suggested to maintain or take in focus:

The interviewees appreciated encouraging and supporting management that exists but still it was factor to be improved and added when considering developing wellbeing at work. Especially support in self-management arose many times in discussions as self-management seemed to be important theme regarding wellbeing at work in agile organization. In order to recover, people were encouraged to have pauses or have holidays when needed. Still, at work, where state of flow emerges often, this support can't be highlighted too much. Also support in continuous learning was regarded important as people are not always receptive to new things to learn. As teams play key role in agile organization, the value of well-functioning team is acknowledged. Supporting teams in creating open atmosphere helps communication which furthers effectiveness and good team spirit.

As wellbeing at work is an individual experience and the tools to improve it can be different for everyone, this isn't straightforward aspect to give support. Yet, the importance is high. One suggestion to make it easier, from the perspective of support and the individual responsibility, would be to create common rules that are the frame and the baseline for everyone to search own methods to take care of own wellbeing at work. When and if there are already some rules regarding for example organizing work, remote work or working hours, it would be useful to point out these from the perspective of wellbeing at work and satisfaction at work. As the sample stayed quite unknown during the process of the empirical research, it is difficult to give more precise examples.

7 Conclusion

As a conclusion idealistic agile work environment is described from the perspective of wellbeing at work. The description is written according to the literature review and the empirical research of this thesis. It seems to be partly exaggerated as it's not supposed to be totally realistic. In reality, there are many other important aspects to take into consideration, besides wellbeing at work. These are bypassed in this description as the point is to concentrate on wellbeing at work. In this unreal work environment people are wellbeing and work is satisfying and supporting their control of life. There exist no typical challenges of agile organization like problems in cultural change due to transformation into agile.

An ideal agile organization consists of well-functioning teams, which are the core of agile organization. Teams are performing well due to their high-quality communication and straightforward cooperation. Teams operate mostly independently, and employees take part in target setting and have many possibilities to impact on own job. Work is divided evenly due to straight forward communication. The management of this agile organization is coaching and supportive.

In self-regulating teams individual psychosocial asset is developing, which impact on wellbeing at work. Working in self-regulating teams improves self-confidence when independently made decisions concretize and results of own work become visible. Also taking small risks and having the feeling of control are characteristic of work in agile team and boost self-confidence. Increased experience of meaningful work means also increased amount of stress. The management has acknowledged the importance of supporting skill of self-management and people are developing this required skill continuously. Due to self-management these stressful situations are short-term and handled well.

Possibilities to impact on own jobs are various and everyone is aware of these. Continuous learning is daily, in suitable amounts, which improves the experience of meaningful work and impacts on wellbeing at work. Continuous learning occurs according to peoples' interests, skills and resources. It supports the experience of meaningful work.

In this ideal agile organization, individual aspect is taken care of; the flexibility in working hours and the possibility to choose the place to work are normal independent decisions for employees. There are rules to be followed which give the base for daily working habits and everyone is aware of them. Circumstances for finding optimal balance regarding challenges and pace at work exist. Small amounts of recovery are possible to obtain during work day, which contributes performance at work. There are possibilities for short breaks to practice for example mindfulness or physical activities or even take short naps. These are even encouraged to do if possible. The pace at work is organized individually, so different personalities and stages at life are taken care of. Employer supports healthy life style by providing possibilities to eat healthy and nutritious meals and snacks during work days at office. When working remotely, it's encouraged to keep pauses and go for a walk for example during remote-meetings, if possible.

There is trustful and open atmosphere in the team and the team spirit is taken care of daily. Management supports teams in developing interaction and creating an open and friendly atmosphere where everyone is allowed to say their opinions and thoughts. In order to guarantee continuous development, in agile teams, employees express freely their thoughts and opinions. They are used to receive and give feedback continuously and keep up constructive conversations in order to develop their work and working habits. The feelings of hopefulness increase in agile team as there truly are possibilities to impact, be creative and come up with new ideas of way to work and reach goals.

The way agile team is responding to changes, increases resiliency and ability to manage with changes. Connection between resiliency and wellbeing is strong. In agile team, where interaction is emphasized, visibility, open atmosphere and trust are factors increasing resiliency. Resiliency helps also agile teams to react calmly to stressful situations.

As this agile organization is operating successfully, it generates motivated employees as people have possibilities to follow their interests and take into account their resources in use, when organizing own job. On the other hand, in this ideal agile organization, people are capable to recognize own personalities, values and interests and are willing to act according to them. This means that people, who are not satisfied in this organization or job, ask to be committed in other jobs or positions in same or different organizations. As professional

growth is supported by employer, the turnover is moderate as people seek new challenges primary from the current organization. There is no dissatisfaction and bitter atmosphere as unhappy employees start looking for new challenges when experiencing those feelings.

Motivation has interfaces with flow and work engagement and in this organization these are common. Flow requires enough and continuously emerging interesting new challenges.

Project work in agile organization supports this. The most effective factors promoting work engagement are possibilities to impact on job, support from superior (ensured with coaching leadership in agile organization) open and good atmosphere, innovativeness, clear communication and organization culture which is experienced to be warm and close.

(Virolainen, 2012, p. 92)

Factors affecting negatively wellbeing at work in this agile organization are for example personality traits and habits that can't be changed because of their nature. In agile organization, people have to communicate actively and be ready to bring own thoughts to teams and colleagues and make independent decisions. If this doesn't happen naturally, due to for example shyness or other personality traits, it might have impacts on wellbeing at work. Also the dynamics of the team plays key role in wellbeing at work. Well-functioning team isn't created by chance. Instead, it is something worth all the effort and work it takes to be created. If there is continuous turnover among team members, or in every project there is a new team to work with, it is difficult to create open and steady atmosphere in the teams. It impacts straight on wellbeing at work and on teams' results. Individual willingness to improve professional skills and develop self-management seems to be factor impacting wellbeing at work in this organization.

Especially the following principles of Manifesto for Agile Organization are applied in this organization:

Build projects around motivated individuals.
Give them the environment and support they need,
and trust them to get the job done.

The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.

8 Afterwords

Acknowledging the importance of wellbeing at work is not something new. The topic has been common for tens of years. Sustainability is the key word in many contexts today and it's also linked to workforce sometimes. Sustainable workforce is something to strive for as the number of working-aged people is decreasing while the need for competent workforce increases. It can be hard to prove or see the results of actions towards more sustainable workforce. Especially, economic benefits of wellbeing personnel are difficult to point out. As we know wellbeing personnel is loyal to the employer and more efficient as well. This indicates smaller turnover rate among personnel and better results at work. Sustainability linked to workforce as a value could be the determinant in the competition for the best workers in the future.

According to Saarikivi (YLE, 2016) the skills needed in work life in the future are ability to learn, creativity, empathy, curiosity, interaction, ability to solve problems and attitude of a researcher. These apply as well to description of an ideal worker in agile organization. It is obvious that recovering from work is needed in order to achieve and maintain these skills. That's why wellbeing at work emerges as an important theme when discussing successful agile organization, as in terms of recovery, holistic wellbeing at work is required.

According to Tuominen, S. (2020/2014, p.242), at best, creativity is about well relaxed and recovered people in all levels of organisation and in all sectors of life, searching bold ways to improve all kind of things, without pondering too much if the ideas are too small or too big – and they are not afraid to act according to the bigger ones. Tuominen, S. continues (2020/2014, p. 219) that creative rationality is about changing attitudes permanently and seeking and seeing automatically alternative choices to find solutions. When it comes to agile organization, these thoughts sound relevant and reasonable. In creative rationality, the point is to take few steps forward from endless planning to a more experimental culture. This is something in agile organization should be cherished.

References

(2001) *Agile Manifesto* <https://agilemanifesto.org/>

Allan, B., Owens, R., Douglas, R., (2019) Character strengths in counselors: Relations with meaningful job and burnout. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 27/1, 151 – 166.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1069072717748666>

Anttila, P. (n.d.) Haastatteluun perustuvan tutkimuksen suorittaminen. *Ylemmän AMK-tutkinnon metodifoorumi*. Virtuaaliammattikorkeakoulu.

http://www2.uiah.fi/virtu/materiaalit/tuotetiede/html_files/1364_empiir.html#teemahaas

Betterteam, (16.7.2020) *What is an agile organization*. <https://www.betterteam.com/what-is-an-agile-organization>

Black, D.S., O'Reilly, G., Olmstead, R., Breen, E.C., Irwin, M.R. (2015) Mindfulness Meditation and Improvement in Sleep Quality and Daytime Impairment Among Older Adults With Sleep Disturbance - A Randomized Clinical Trial. *Jama Internal Medicine*. 04/2015.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/2110998>

Brosseau, D., Ebrahim, S., Handscomb, C., Thaker, S., (10/2019) The Journey to an agile organization. *McKinsey & Company*. [https://www.mckinsey.com/business-](https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/the-journey-to-an-agile-organization)

[functions/organization/our-insights/the-journey-to-an-agile-organization](https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/the-journey-to-an-agile-organization)

Corliss J. (18.2.2015) Mindfulness meditation helps fight insomnia, improves sleep. *Harvard Health Publishing / Harvard Health Blog*. [https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-](https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-meditation-helps-fight-insomnia-improves-sleep-201502187726)

[meditation-helps-fight-insomnia-improves-sleep-201502187726](https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-meditation-helps-fight-insomnia-improves-sleep-201502187726)

Dallas, M. (27.1.2020) How Psychologist Carl Jung Described Our Personality Types. *Truity's Personality and Career's blog*. [https://www.truity.com/blog/how-psychologist-carl-jung-](https://www.truity.com/blog/how-psychologist-carl-jung-described-our-personality-types)

[described-our-personality-types](https://www.truity.com/blog/how-psychologist-carl-jung-described-our-personality-types)

Der Kinderen, S., Kahpova, S. (2019) Positive Psychological Wellbeing at Work; The Role of Eudaimonia. *The Palgrave Handbook of Wellbeing at Work* (pp. 1–28). Springer.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02470-3_79-1

Diebold, P., Dahlem, M. (05/2014) Agile Practices in Practice - A Mapping Study –. *Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Evaluation and Assessment in Software Engineering*. 30, 1–10. ACM Digital Library

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/2601248.2601254>

Digital AI (26.5.2020) 14th Annual State of Agile Report

[https://stateofagile.com/?_ga=2.226351059.89731329.1612532301-](https://stateofagile.com/?_ga=2.226351059.89731329.1612532301-1507022963.1612532301#ufh-i-615706098-14th-annual-state-of-agile-report/7027494)

[1507022963.1612532301#ufh-i-615706098-14th-annual-state-of-agile-report/7027494](https://stateofagile.com/?_ga=2.226351059.89731329.1612532301-1507022963.1612532301#ufh-i-615706098-14th-annual-state-of-agile-report/7027494)

Eskola, J. & Suoranta, J. (1998) *Johdatus laadulliseen tutkimukseen*. Vastapaino.

<https://www.ellibslibrary.com/book/978-951-768-035-6>

Finnish Institute of Occupational Health . (n.d.). *Työyhteisö.Työhyvinvointi*.

<https://www.ttl.fi/tyoyhteiso/tyohyvinvointi/>

Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. (n.d.). *Työntekijä. Työstressi ja uupumus*.

<https://www.ttl.fi/tyontekija/tyostressi-ja-uupumus>

Finnish Institute of Occupational health (2017). *Ravitsemus Suomessa – Fin Ravinto 2017 - tutkimus*. Julkari- STM:n hallinnonalan avoin julkaisuarkisto. [http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-](http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-238-3)

[343-238-3](http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-238-3)

Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. (25. 11 2020). *Hyvinvointia työstä 2030-luvulla - Skenaarioita suomalaisen työelämän kehityksestä*. Julkari- STM:n hallinnonalan avoin

julkaisuarkisto. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-261-943-3>

Gruessner Vera (2020) Using Agile Methodology to Improve Business Management.

Retrieved 14 November 2020 from <https://blog.runrun.it/en/agile-methodology/>

Hablitz, L., Vinitzky, H., Sun, Q., Staeger, F., Sigurdsson, B., Mortensen, K., Lilius, T., Nedergaard, M. (27.2.2019). Increased glymphatic influx is correlated with high EEG delta power and low heart rate in mice under anesthesia. *Science Advances* Vol.5 No:2.

<https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aav5447>

Herranen K. (2020) *Ketterä kasvu*. Alma Talent. Helsinki

Hietaniemi, J. (17.5.2016) SAFe tuo ketteryyttä XL-kokoiselle. *Gofore*.

<https://gofore.com/safe-ketteryytta-xl-kokoisille/>

Houston, E. (27.2.2021) Introvert vs Extravert: A Look at the Spectrum and Psychology.

Positive Psychology.org. <https://positivepsychology.com/introversion-extroversion-spectrum/>

Howland, R. (7.3.2014) Vagus Nerve Stimulation. *Current Behavioral Neuroscience Reports* 1(2), 64–73. <https://doi:10.1007/s40473-014-0010-5>

Jurisc N., Lurie M., Risch P., Salo O. (4.8.2020). Doing vs being: practical lessons on building an agile culture. Four global success stories offer insights and lessons learned on achieving organizational agility. *Mc Kinsey & Company*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/doing-vs-being-practical-lessons-on-building-an-agile-culture>

Kalliomäki, M., Käyhkö, S., Mykkänen, M., Isolauri, E., Lähdesmäki, T. (2018) Suoli-aivoakseli – mikrobiston ja hermoston monimuotoinen yhteys. *Lääkärilehti* (73)4, 203—207.

Kaltiala, U. (01/2018) Suolistomikrobit voivat edistää sekä terveyttä että sairautta. *Saima-Lehti*. University of Eastern Finland. <https://archive.uef.fi/fi/web/saima/suolistomikrobit/>

Kauhanen, J. (2016) Työhyvinvointi organisaation menestystekijänä. Kehittämisohjelman laatiminen. *Kauppakamari*. 18-19. <https://kauppakamaritieto->

[fi.ezproxy.hamk.fi/ammattikirjasto/teos/tyohyvinvointi-organisaation-menestystekijana#kohta:Ty\(\(f6\)hyvinvointi\(\(20\)organisaation\(\(20\)menestystekij\(\(e4\)n\(\(e4](https://kauppakamaritieto-fi.ezproxy.hamk.fi/ammattikirjasto/teos/tyohyvinvointi-organisaation-menestystekijana#kohta:Ty((f6)hyvinvointi((20)organisaation((20)menestystekij((e4)n((e4)

Kendra, C. (31.10.2019). The 4 Stages of Sleep (NREM and REM Sleep Cycles). Sleep disorders. *Verywellhealth*. <https://www.verywellhealth.com/the-four-stages-of-sleep-2795920>

Kiviniemi, V. (16.3.2018). Aivojen viemärijärjestelmä – aivot puhdistuvat unessa. *Tiedeykkönen*. [podcast]. YLE. <https://areena.yle.fi/audio/1-4349114>

Koho, S. (5.9.2018) Jos työkaverin päiväunet herättävät närää, kannattaa miettiä, olisiko omissa työelämäkäsityksissä jotain päivitettävää. *Talouselämä*. <https://www.talouselama-fi.ezproxy.hamk.fi/uutiset/jos-tyokaverin-paivaunet-herattavat-naraa-kannattaa-miETTia-olisiko-omissa-tyoelamakasityksissa-jotain-paivitettavaa/71390f92-e4c7-357a-8910-4d5f171fff50>

Kokkonen, J. (2019) Liikunta pistää kaikkiin aviojen hermoverkkoihin vipinää ja liikettä. *Liikunta ja Tiede –Lehti*, 4(2019). <https://www.lts.fi/liikunta-tiede/artikkelit/liikunta-pistaa-kaikkiin-aivojen-hermoverkkoihin-vipinaa-ja-liiketta>

Koponen, P., Borodulin, K., Lundqvist, A., Säöksjärvi, K., Koskinen, S. (toim.), (2018). Terveys toimintakyky ja hyvinvointi Suomessa - FinTerveys 2017 -tutkimus. *Finnish Insitute of Health and Welfare. Report*. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-105-8>

Kossek, E., Valcour, M., Lirio, P. (2013) The Sustainable Workforce – Organizational Strategies for Promoting Work – Life Balance and Wellbeing. *Work and Wellbeing: Wellbeing: A Complete Reference Guide*, 3/2014. (295—319). <https://doi:10.1002/9781118539415.wbwell14>

Känsälä , M.;& Tuomivaara , S. (2013). Do Agile Principles and Practices Support the Wellbeing at Work of Agile Team Memeber? *The Eighth International Conference on Software Engineering Advances* (s. 365). Helsinki: International Academy, Research and Industry Association.

Laine, P., & Rinne, R. (2015). Developing wellbeing at work: Emerging dilemmas. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 5(2), 91—108. <https://doi:10.5502/ijw.v5i2.6>

Lekman, L. (22.3.2018) Ketteryys on terveellistä. <https://lekman.fi/2018/03/22/ketteryys-on-terveellista/>

Lindholm, H., Gockel, M. (2000). Stressin elinvaikutuksen mittaaminen. *Lääketieteellinen aikakauskirja Duodecim*. 116(20), 2259—2265. <https://www.duodecimlehti.fi/duo91828>

Manka, M.-L.;& Manka, M. (2016). *Työhyvinvointi*. Talentum Pro. Helsinki.

Niemi A. & Hietaniemi J. (2020) *Just sopivasti ketterä. Ketterällä kehityksellä kohti parempaa elämää*. Art House Oy. Tallinna.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland (n.d.) *Psychosocial workload*. https://www.tyosuojelu.fi/documents/95118/2556216/Psychosocial_workload/d3bb836e-02a8-ec0f-bce9-1ec57e9cf2cb

Occupational Safety and Health Administration in Finland. (30.4.2020). *Psychosocial workload factors*. <https://www.tyosuojelu.fi/web/en/working-conditions/psychosocial-workload/factors>

Oxford Languages (n.d.) <https://www.lexico.com/definition/agile>

Partanen-Kivinen, T., (n.d.) Liikunta ja uniterveys. https://sleepandwork.karelia.fi/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/LIIKUNTA-ja-UNITERVEYS_Sleep-well-work-well.pdf

Peltoniemi, T., Stammeier, J. (13.12.2020) Tärkein aivohermosi saattaa olla avain kehosi ja mielesi terveyteen. Voit herättää sen jo yhdellä tietynlaisella uloshengityksellä. Kokeile itse. *Yle Tiede*. <https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2020/12/12/tarkein-aivohermosi-on-avain-kehosi-ja-mielesi-terveyteen-voit-herattaa-sen-jo>

Pietikäinen, A., (2019) *Joustava Mieli*. (J. Rajalin; lukija) [äänikirja]. Duodecim. (Alkuperäinen teos julkaistu 2009)

Porkka-Heiskanen, T., Kalinchuk, K. (2011) Adenosine, energy metabolism and sleep homeostasis. *Sleep Medicine Reviews*, 15(2), 123-135.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smrv.2010.06.005>

Rabe, M., Giacomuzzi, S., Nübling, M. (2012) Psychosocial workload and stress in the workers' representative. *BMC Public Health*. 12(2012)

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2458-12-909>

Repo, S., Ravanti, E., Pääkkönen, R. (2015) Johda tuottavasti – Opas työhyvinvoinnin ja tuottavuuden lisäämiseksi esimiestyön keinoin. *Institute of Finnish Occupational Health*.

<https://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/134834/Johda%20tuottavasti%20%20%20Opas%20ty%C3%B6hyvinvoinnin%20ja%20tuottavuuden%20lis%C3%A4%20miseksi%20esimiesty%C3%B6n%20keinoin.pdf?sequence=1>

Saaranen-Kauppinen, A., Puusniekka, A. (2006) *KvaliMOTV - Menetelmäopetuksen tietovaranto*. Yhteiskuntatieteellinen tietoarasto.

https://www.fsd.tuni.fi/menetelmaopetus/kvali/L6_3_2.html

Saari, O. (2015) *Voittamisen anatomia – Aki Hintsa*. WSOY.

Sahota, M. (2016) Doing agile vs being agile. *Shift314 evolve performance*.

<https://shift314.com/2016/04/doing-agile-vs-being-agile/>

Sahota, M. (2020) Mind the Gap: Leading with an Agile Mindset. *Shift314 evolve performance*. <https://shift314.com/2020/11/agile-mindset/>

Schulte, P.;& Vainio, H. (2010). Wellbeing at work - overview and perspective. *Scandinavian Journal of work, Environment & Health*, 36/5, (422—429).

Scrum.org. (n.d.) *What is Scrum?* Retrieved 24.2.2021 from

<https://www.scrum.org/resources/what-is-scrum>

Sovijärvi, O. (10.4.2019) Syvän unen optimointi ja biohakkerointi: kokonaisvaltainen katsaus unen laadun ja syvän unen parantamiseen. *Biohakkerin käsikirja*.

<https://biohakkerit.fi/2019/04/10/syvan-unen-optimointi-ja-biohakkerointi-kokonaisvaltainen-katsaus-unen-laadun-ja-syvan-unen-parantamiseen/>

Tikkanen, S. (n.d) Wellbeing is a part of the workday experience and vice versa. *Edenred*.
<https://edenred.fi/en/blog/wellbeing-is-a-part-of-the-workday-experience-and-vice-versa/>

Tuominen, S. (07/2020) Mitä palautuminen tarkoittaa. *Firstbeat*.
<https://www.firstbeat.com/fi/blogi/mita-palautuminen-tarκοittaa/>

Tuominen, S. (2020) *Luova järkevyyys - Arkisen luovuuden ylistys*. (S., Tuominen, lukija) [äänikirja]. Kustannusosakeyhtiö Otava. (Alkuperäinen teos julkaistu 2014)

Tuomivaara, S., Ala-Laurinaho A., Ylisassi, H., Valtanen, E. (2016) *Connections between agile way of working, team coherence and well-being at work*. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-61-2192-5>

Tuomivaara, T. (2005) Kvantitatiivinen ja Kvalitatiivinen tutkimus. *Tieteellisen tutkimuksen perusteet*. <https://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/ttuomiva/Y125luku6.pdf>

UKK Institute (2019) *Liikkuminen. Liikkumisen suositukset*. [Suositus]
<https://ukkinstituutti.fi/liikkuminen/liikkumisen-suositukset/>

UKK Institute (29.11.2020) *Liike lääkkeenä. Liikunta ja uni: Laadukasta unta liikkumalla*.
<https://ukkinstituutti.fi/liike-laakkeena/liikunta-ja-uni/>

VIA Institute on Character (n.d.) *The 24 Character Strengths*.
<https://www.viacharacter.org/character-strengths>

Virolainen, H. (2012). *Kokonaisvaltainen työhyvinvointi*. Helsinki: Books on Demand.

Vuorisalmi, E. (2020) *Rakkaus haltuun*. (E. Vuorisalmi, lukija) [äänikirja]. WSOY.
 (Alkuperäinen teos julkaistu 2020)

Wouter, A., Ahlback , K., De Smet, A., Lackey , G., Lurie, M., Muraka, M. & Christopher, H. (22. 01 2018). The five trademarks of agile organizations. *Mc Kinsey & Company*.

<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/the-five-trademarks-of-agile-organizations#0ompany>.

Yazdi, P. (6.1.2020) What Is the Vagus Nerve? Function & Related Disorders. *Selfhacked*.
<https://selfhacked.com/blog/what-is-the-vagus-nerve-function-related-disorders/>

Yitmen, M. (5.7.2018) Business Agility. *Scrum.org*.
<https://www.scrum.org/resources/blog/business-agility>

YLE (3.4.2016) *Tulevaisuuden työ on vaikeaa, mutta se pitää aivot vireänä*. [A-studio]. YLE.
<https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-8779854>

YLE. (10.2.2020) *Sairausloma voi venyä vuoden mittaiseksi – alle 35 vuotiaat nuoret ovat mielenterveysongelmien tilastojen kärjessä*. [Uutiset]. YLE. <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-11191722>

YLE. Yle Uutisluokka Triplet. (19.12.2019) *Joka kolmas suomalainen aikuinen ei harrasta vapaa-ajallaan lainkaan liikuntaa*. [audiopodcast]. YLE. <https://areena.yle.fi/1-50396430>

Appendix 1: Agile Manifesto and Principles, 2001

Manifesto for Agile Software Development

We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing **Manifesto for Agile Software Development**

We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it.

Through this work we have come to value:

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools

Working software over comprehensive documentation

Customer collaboration over contract negotiation

Responding to change over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

Principles behind the Agile Manifesto:

We follow these principles:

Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.

Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage.

Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.

Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.

Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done.

The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.

Working software is the primary measure of progress.

Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.

Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.

Simplicity--the art of maximizing the amount of work not done--is essential.

The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.

At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.

Appendix 2: The Data Management Plan

General description of the data and responsible conduct of research

This thesis proceeds independently without any assignment or thesis agreement. The data for the empirical research of this thesis is collected by interviewing and observing six people from Company X, where agile methods are applied. The aim is to investigate how the way they work impacts on their wellbeing at work. The field or their actual work don't play important role and isn't essential to discuss. This data is reflected to the literature review. The permission to collect data and interview people is asked for the company through the leader/supervisor, who gathers also the group of volunteer interviewees. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, the interviews are implemented remotely by using Microsoft Teams and they are recorded. The research permits are asked by e-mail and then by sending the invitation to Teams meeting. The permit for recording is asked second time in the beginning of every interview. The permit is affirmed by e-mail and by accepting the Teams invitation. The data is collected by following the principles of research ethics and the legislation of on the processing of personal data and data protection.

Storing data during the thesis process

During the thesis process, the collected data is stored in personal One Drive in form of recordings. Only researcher has access to this data. Also handwritten notes are kept in safe at home and no other has access to these. Personal data like the names of the interviewees and their years of working experience is asked but no sensitive personal data is collected. In thesis work no names or other personal or confidential data is expressed.

Processing data after completing the thesis

The collected data is destroyed after completing the thesis work. As there is no agreement or assignment, the research data belongs to the researcher and there is no need to keep it after completing the thesis.