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Transferring of organizational culture across national borders – Case Elekta and Sandvik in India

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Examiner: Akmal Hyder
Abstract

Title: Transferring of organizational culture across national borders – Case Elekta and Sandvik in India

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Aim: The aim of this study is to analyze the impact of national culture on organizational culture across borders from a cultural dimension approach. In order to find out how the national culture of a company's host-country impacts the organizational culture throughout the company, we examine Swedish companies that have established business in a culturally distant nation, namely India.

Method: A multiple case study is used for this research that includes qualitative data gathering from 7 interviewees from the Swedish companies Sandvik AB and Elekta AB. The main criterion of selecting the interviewees was to find people who have first-hand experience from both the Swedish and the Indian working environment.

Findings: The study shows that national cultural values seem to be an unchangeable, nontransferable property, but that organizational culture practices can be learned, adopted, and thus transferred. The research indicates that personal interaction could be the key element in adopting foreign culture element; in this case, supervisor-subordinate relationship styles and attitudes towards rules.

Contribution: This study contributes to the literature by shedding light on the process, how elements from a company's home-country national culture can be transferred to overseas facilities through company practices and personal interaction. Future studies are recommended to address the topic in different settings and also by using longitudinal quantitative methods.

Keywords: National culture, Organizational culture, Cultural values and practices
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We would also like to express our gratitude to our families and friends who have supported us during the process of making the study.

Gävle, January 2015

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1. Introduction

In this chapter we present the background and the setting of the research, as well as the problem and aim of the study. The focus is on the cultural issues of organizations in international business. The significance and the originality of the research are argued, and finally, the disposition of the study is presented.

1.1 Background

During the age of accelerating globalization and business internationalization, it is inevitable that different people and cultures will collide, as information, capital, technology, personnel and goods move around the globe 24 hours a day (Peng, 2009). This phenomenon creates dilemmas in everyday work when different organizational cultures meet (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012).

Embedding the company organizational culture to a culturally distant host-country environment is not a straightforward task. As it is noticed by Sheth (2011), acting in emerging markets' business environment is not fully compatible to the advanced economies. Culture's effect on, for example, marketing and management in international business is substantial; a company has to take into account multiple social, cultural and institutional factors (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010; Sheth, 2011; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012).

According to Wilson and Purushothaman (2003), the emerging markets are predicted to surpass the advanced economies measured in GDP by the year 2035. This makes the emerging markets one of the most attractive domains to obtain growth and new business opportunities. Also, because of the European sovereign debt crisis (Lane, 2012), even many economically well-doing European countries such as Sweden are confronting indirect economic problems due to a slump in demand as well as increasing credit problems in the Euro-zone (OECD, 2009a; OECD, 2009b).

1.2 Cultures in business

For the setting of the study we have particularly chosen two Swedish companies, Elekta AB and Sandvik AB that operate in the Indian market to address, in addition to the cultural aspect, the business-integration of the stagnating European market and the rapidly growing emerging
markets such as India (MSCI, 2014). Different countries are associated with different national cultures (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012), and the national culture of a country can be connected to dominating characteristics in organizational cultures of local companies, i.e., differences in work values, orientations and beliefs that are influenced by nationality (Hofstede et al., 2010), although caution must be taken to avoid pure generalizations (Li & Glaister, 2009; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). There is a notable cultural distance on both national and organizational levels between the chosen countries (Hofstede et al., 2010; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012), namely in the levels of power distance, individualism and universalism, which makes Sweden and India a fitting pair to investigate in the study.

On one hand, certain standards in business need to be met, but the influence of local culture to the way of working cannot be neglected either (Hyder & Fregidou-Malama, 2009; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). This dilemma is known especially in marketing as the rivalry between adaptation and standardization approaches, a rivalry that has lasted for over 50 years (Schmid & Kotulla, 2010; Theodosiu & Leonidou, 2003). We argue that controlling the organizational culture and the behavior of humans within an organization help meet predetermined standards like laws, quality requirements and regulations is essential in industries where the nature of business requires world-class standards and quality.

A direct link between organizational culture and company performance has been studied by various authors, but the results have been inconclusive (Abu-Jarad, Yusof & Nikbin, 2010). Instead of examining the correlation between organizational culture and profitability directly, we argue that the connection between organizational culture and control, in the sense of predictability and standardized performance, is a more relevant narrowing as proposed by Li and Glaister (2009). In some industries, such as the healthcare sector, the quality of service, legitimacy and world-class standards are required in order to operate successfully in international markets (Hyder & Fregidou-Malama, 2009). Any deviations in quality standards can pose a threat to these essentials. Having control over the organizational culture is characterized by Jaeger (1983) as one of the mechanisms that multinationals can use to impose control of standards in achieving the ultimate purposes of the organization. It is further confirmed by Schneider (1988) that organizational culture gives the means to control, integrate and to coordinate company subsidiaries. According to Li and Glaister (2009),
effectively managed differences between national and corporate cultures can create competitive advantage.

Hasegawa and Noronha (2009) point out that in addition to having control and homogeneity of quality standards, a company where a parallel organizational culture prevails throughout the structure of the corporation, enables a high level of decentralized decision-making, reducing the amount of bureaucracy between the headquarters and the subsidiaries. For example, according to Hulbert and Brandt (1980), this is the case in Japanese organizations where the domestic organizational culture is evident even across borders, including possible subsidiaries. We argue that by having similar characteristics of organizational culture, company performance can be enhanced in international business.

1.3 Aim, research question and delimitations

This aim of this study is to investigate the transferring of organizational culture across national borders in international business from a cultural dimension approach. The study contributes to the literature concerning cultural issues in international management. A research gap exists in describing the impact of the national culture of a company's country of origin to its organizational culture (Bhaskaran & Sukumaran, 2007; Bird & Stevens, 2003; Gerhart, 2008; Gulev, 2009; Li & Glaister, 2009), and how the degree and focus of control over cultural differences affect the performance of foreign branch offices or subsidiaries (Li & Glaister, 2009).

Based on the aforementioned, the following research question of the study is:

*How does the national culture of a business affect its organizational culture across borders?*

A multiple case study is made on Swedish companies, which offer high-quality products and services, and are operating in India, using a qualitative research approach and semi-structured interviews for data collection. The perspective of the study is from both managerial and employee perspective.

The case-approach, which limits the number of investigated countries and companies, is considered as the main delimitation of this study: by only studying Sweden and India, detailed case-based information can be obtained, but which limits generalizability of the findings to other nations.
1.4 Disposition

Firstly, the setting of the study is set in the introduction chapter, where introduction, motivation and aim of the study are presented. Secondly, a theoretical study follows, which is constructed of the two main topics regarding the study, national culture and organizational culture. Country profiles are constructed based on secondary data from previous literature and a country comparison is made. Deriving from the comparison, research propositions are presented. These propositions address the research question and are used as the key elements to construct interview questionnaires. Next, the methodology of the study is discussed and justified, and the empirical data is presented and analyzed reflecting to the theoretical framework. Finally, the results and limitations of the research are discussed, presenting the answer to the research question, and finally the findings are concluded.
2. Literature study

This section presents the theoretical framework that the investigation is based on. First, the concepts of national culture and organizational culture in terms of cultural dimensions are examined. As the literature on these topics is extensive, it is also reasoned how the chosen theoretical approaches have been selected amongst others to best suit the purpose. Secondly, the national cultures of the case countries are compared based on secondary data from previous research, from which national profiles are constructed. The connection between national and organizational culture is discussed, and based on theory and the national profiles, propositions are formed relating to the research question of the study.

2.1 Culture and cultural dimensions approach

According to the Oxford dictionary (Oxford, 2014), one definition of culture is stated as

“The ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society”

The Merriam-Webster dictionary (Merriam-Webster, 2014) describes culture as

“the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization”

Hofstede et al. (2010, p. 6) state that culture is learned from people living within the same social environment, and it is formulated as

“[...] the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others”

After taking into consideration these three definitions of culture, we argue that the common traits of the definitions saturate into the following: culture is a concept of shared ideas such as values and customs, which affect practices and behavior of the people within the particular society.

The first theory regarding cultural dimensions can be assumed being, according to previous literature, written by Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils who explain in five patterns, namely affectivity, self-orientation, universalism, ascription, and specificity, how human action in
different cultures can be defined (Parsons & Shils, 1951). Around ten years after this, Florence R. Kluckhohn and Fred L. Strodtbeck, by the means of empirical research, distinguished five orientations (human nature, relationship to natural environment, time orientation, orientation toward activity, and relationships among people), that can be used to analyze value differences between social groups (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). As time went by, modern approaches were derived from the baselines set by these authors, but most of them disregarding geographical factors, and the use of comprehensive empirical data (Hofstede, 2011). The next milestone in the evolution of cultural theory, with help from robust empirical backing, was made by Geert Hofstede who used a sample of well over 100,000 employees of the company, IBM, working in altogether 50 countries around the world (Hofstede, 2011). His theory of cultures and organizations defines six cultural dimensions today (Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede et al., 2010). Hofstede's model is the most influential and used theory in the field of cultural studies in business (Fang, 2010; Tsui, Nifadkar & Ou, 2007).

The GLOBE-study (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) was a study made in the 1990s by scholars, and it was based largely on Hofstede's studies, although the empirical database of the study was smaller and consisted primarily of managers' responses (Magnusson, Wilson, Zdravkovic, Zhou & Westjohn, 2008). Even though considered an extension of Hofstede's work, the research brings a more leadership-centered point of view to cultural effects on international business due to its manager-centered research population.

Later on in 1993, Fons Trompenaars addressed cultural problems from a pragmatic point of view (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). The main approaches being: to show that there is no one best universal way to organize or manage; widening peoples' overall understanding of culture and cultural differences, and applying it to business context; and addressing the glocalization (global vs. local) issue of multinationals. He also explains differences between organizational culture alongside with national cultures (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). Trompenaars' method includes seven cultural dimensions, which have been developed based on Parsons' earlier work (Magnusson et al., 2008) and his method is, along with Hofstede's, and the GLOBE-study, one of the most popular approaches to study practical cultural problems (Tsui et al., 2007), although unlike Hofstede, he does not
statistically prove the connection between the nations' qualities and the dimensions (Hofstede et al., 2010; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012).

In his 1994 work Shalom Schwartz created a theory similar to Trompenaars', based on Parsons' work from 1951, and discovered altogether 45 cultural values that he compressed into seven cultural dimensions (Magnusson et al., 2008; Schwartz, 1994). As a distinction to Trompenaars' work, Schwartz's population from which the empirical data was gathered consisted of teachers and students from 31 countries, as Trompenaars studied managers from 54 countries (Magnusson et al., 2008).

The most recent theories by Hofstede, Trompenaars, Schwartz and the GLOBE-study are taken into consideration when choosing the components for the theoretical framework, excluding Parsons & Shils, and Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck as groundbreaking but yet outdated theories. Even though some time has passed since Hofstede collected his data from IBM in the 60s, it is still a usable theory when compared to other, more modern theories (Magnusson et al., 2008). By definition the change in culture is slow (Hofstede et al., 2010), and therefore the core values of cultures are unlikely to change over a few decades. And as Hofstede's theory is one of the most used, if not the most used, cultural framework tool in international business studies, it has also been studied and tested the most (Fang, 2010; Tsui et al., 2007). Geert Hofstede is also one of the most cited names in the Social Sciences Citation Index (Fang, 2010).

The GLOBE-study is an extension of Hofstede's work and is similar in many ways, but as the data is collected from mainly managers, the approach to cultural issues is more related to leadership, which narrows the usability compared to Hofstede. Therefore it is argued that the original study of Hofstede is better suitable in examining national culture in this study.

Trompenaars' theory has an elaborate contribution to the organizational culture theme and therefore it can be seen complementing well the national culture perspective. As for why Trompenaars should be preferred over, for example Schwartz, is that both theories are based on the same five dimensions of Parsons, but Trompenaars has gathered data from managers instead students and teachers like Schwartz (Magnusson et al., 2008), making Trompenaars' theory likely more adaptable to business environment, and thus more suitable in investigating the organizational culture perspective in international business.
Due to the multifaceted nature of culture, limitations exist when researching the subject. By directly associating a nation with a culture, such as Sweden is to the Swedish culture and India is to an Indian culture, a level of inaccuracy has to be taken into consideration. First of all, the role of sub-cultures needs to be addressed: Bhaskaran and Sukumaran (2007) propose that siding with national culture, there are sub-cultures within countries which can have a strong effect especially in certain areas in Asia and Africa. They continue that even if a country is labeled with a single culture, the actual variety of different cultures within the country can be vast, thus bringing uncertainty to the comparison of national cultures by generalizing under a one national label. Wild, Wild and Han (2012) echo the concept that cultural borders do not follow nation-states' borders, and that many cross-border cultures and region-specific sub-cultures are embedded alongside them.

2.2 Culture dimensions by Hofstede and Trompenaars

Hofstede et al. (2010) describe national culture with six dimensions: power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long- and short-term orientation, and indulgence vs. restraint.

*Power distance* describes peoples' relation to authority and vice versa. The higher the value of power distance, the more inequality is tolerated between people and those who have authority over them. In business this dimension can describe for example the roles of the supervisor and the subordinate (Hofstede et al., 2010).

*Individualism vs. collectivism* measures the individual's role in a society. In individualistic societies it is presumed that individuals have the power and the freedom to take care of themselves, whereas collectivist societies are characterized by integral networks where one is a part of a group rather than a self-sustained unit (Hofstede et al., 2010).

*Masculinity vs. femininity* refers to the orientation toward soft or hard values. Masculine societies encourage competitive behavior and achievement, whereas feminine societies are characterized by modesty and preferring quality of life and free time over competition (Hofstede et al., 2010).

*Uncertainty avoidance* describes how people in a society feel towards the uncertainties of the future. The more people feel uncomfortable, the higher the level of uncertainty avoidance and the more control measures are seen in a society (Hofstede et al., 2010).
Long term orientations (LTO) vs. Short term normative orientation (STO) refer to how people orientate towards time. In nations with LTO-culture the time span of events is seen longer than in STO-cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Indulgence vs. restraint is related to people acting on their wants. High indulgence in a cultural context means there is a low level of formal and informal norms directing how people should live their lives. In a restraint society more rules and regulations are imposed to direct people in gratifying their needs (Hofstede et al., 2010).

In the data gathered by Hofstede regarding national cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010) each country is rated by index points regarding each cultural dimension. Country data regarding Sweden and India have been gathered for comparison below in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Country comparison - Hofstede dimensions**

![Country comparison - Hofstede dimensions](image)

Source: Adapted from Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 57, 59, 95, 96, 142, 143, 194, 256, 282, 284 and own construction.

The bigger the absolute difference of a cultural dimension between cultures is, the more divergent a culture is to another. Interpreting the data in Figure 1, the biggest differences in national culture between Sweden and India are related to the dimensions of power distance, individualism, masculinity and indulgence (Hofstede et al., 2010). Based on this, the
The aforementioned dimensions are the most relevant in studying differences between the national cultures of Sweden and India. Pertaining to the primary research question, *How does the national culture of a business affect its organizational culture across borders?* and the investigation of secondary data of Hofstede et al. (2010), the following theoretical propositions are formulated:

P1) The *power distance* indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming from higher to lower over time

P2) The *individualism* indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher individualism over time

In the propositions, the foreign office refers to an office or facility in India as per the case study definitions. Even though the indulgence-dimension shows a notable difference between the two countries, it is described by Hofstede et al. (2010) that indulgence vs. restraint in the workplace reflects more the way people express, or are expected to express, certain emotions like happiness. We argue that this dimension is therefore too ambiguous to formulate questions for interviewees that would answer with a high level of certainty whether the organizational culture in their company is indulgent or restraint. Therefore this dimension is not included in the propositions.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) on the other hand describe culture through seven dimensions: universalism vs. particularism, individualism vs. communitarianism, affectivity vs. neutrality, specificity vs. diffuseness, achievement vs. ascription, time-orientation and relation to nature. According to them, the dimensions are defined as follows: *Universalism vs. particularism* measures the balance of importance between obeying rules and the context of rules (relationship, status, external factors etc.). In universalistic societies rules play a large role in all aspects of life, and they are expected to be the same for everyone, whereas in particularistic societies the big picture is more important than nuances. *Individualism vs. communitarianism* -dimension resembles the aforementioned Hofstede's dimension, individualism vs. collectivism (Hofstede et al., 2010). The interests of an individual are supported in an individual society, whereas in communitarian societies, the group is the corresponding unit. *Affectivity vs. neutrality* expresses the range of feelings that are expressed during communication. In affective societies, there is a lower threshold for showing emotions
than in neutral ones, reflecting the way of communication and gestures. *Specificity vs. diffuseness* measures the difference between the level of involvement in tasks, relationships or authority. The difference can be characterized for example as the persistence of the role a person has in work life. In diffuse cultures the work-role permeates also the life outside work, but in specific cultures the person is in his work-role only at work. *Achievement vs. ascription* reflects the means of acquiring status. As the words suggest, achievement involves according merits by doing things and ascription by having certain traits such as (higher) age, preferred gender, personal connections or formal qualifications. *Time-orientation* has a resemblance to Hofstede's long- vs. short-term orientation (Hofstede et al., 2010). Cultures have a difference between the length of the time horizon, and also what value is given to the past, the present and the future. *Relation to nature* tells how different cultures relate to their environment (nature and events): is it being controlled, or is it controlling us? Cultures which believe in controlling their environment are internally controlled, whereas cultures that are associated with being controlled by the environment are externally controlled (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012).

In their study, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) posed questions and statements relating to imaginary situations where the respondent would choose the most suitable option from where the orientation towards each dimension could be extrapolated (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). In the following table (Table 1), the differences between India and Sweden are presented, relating to the cultural dimensions and aforementioned imaginary situations. The letter S stands for *situation*, and the corresponding value is the percentage of answers correlating with the dimension, i.e., if the value for individualism is 60, then 60% of the answers preferred individualism and 40% preferred communitarianism. Concerning time-orientation-related questions, the value reflects the length of the time-horizon, overall length, past and future. (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). The data gathered by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) regarding national cultures has been compiled for comparison below in Table 1.
The data gathered by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) shows the following: findings related to universalism tell that Swedish respondents seem to opt for acting by the book as Indian respondents tended to relate more to the circumstances. The results regarding individualism echo what Hofstede's data presented: Sweden can be characterized as a country with a more individualistic culture, although the difference is not massive (Hofstede et al., 2010). Indian respondents on the other hand opted mostly for the group-oriented answers in the imaginary situations, implying to a collectivist culture. As for affectivity, a remarkable difference cannot be seen. Both values are close to 50, meaning that the tendencies for affectivity or neutrality are quite evenly distributed among the countries. Furthermore, there is only one imaginary situation (S7) in which to relate to. A difference can be seen between the responses reflecting specificity: the majority of Swedish respondents reflecting a specific culture, whereas Indian respondents were more prone to diffuseness. As per previous comparison of parities between dimensions, this dimension has similarities to Hofstede's power distance (Hofstede et al., 2010). In a collectivist, high power distance country such as India it is more likely that supervisors have more authority, which could permeate also roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Absolute difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universalism vs. particularism</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism vs. communitarianism</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affectivity vs. neutrality</td>
<td>S7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specificity vs. diffuseness</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S9</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>89</td>
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<td>Achievement vs. ascription</td>
<td>S10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time-orientation</td>
<td>Time horizon</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past-orientation</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Future-orientation</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relation to nature</td>
<td>S12</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S13</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2012, pp. 46, 49, 50, 66, 70, 72, 88, 109, 115, 129, 130, 158, 159, 175, 176 and own construction.
outside work, seen as diffuseness. In Sweden, a low power distance country with high level of individualism, the results mean that workplace authority is not seen penetrating all aspects of life. Interpreting the data related to achievement, it can be seen that Swedish respondents are more prone to reflect an achievement-orientated culture, and the Indian respondents’ answers tell about an ascriptive culture. As for time-orientation, it seems that both of the countries reflect a long rather than short time-orientation, the Swedish culture being associated with slightly longer time-horizons overall. The first value (S12) indicating relation to nature, internal and external control of environment, tells that both Sweden and India are not cultures where most of the people believe in trying to gain control over one’s life, i.e., both are externally controlled cultures. Moreover, a high percentage of people opted for internal control regarding Situation 13. The results seem contradictory.

Based on the examination of the secondary data from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012), and the research question “How does the national culture of a business affect its organizational culture across borders?” the following theoretical proposition is formulated:

P3) The universalism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher universalism over time

The methods and variables, such as cultural dimensions in this case that are used to study culture vary amongst scientific literature and there is no consensus on what is the single most important theory (Magnusson et al., 2008). It is also doubtful that the cultural dimensions alone are sufficient to address issues in culture and management (Fang, 2010; Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez & Gibson, 2005). The field of different approaches is vast and therefore narrowing has been done regarding the chosen literature. Even though the multitude of cultural variables in international business cannot be fully interpreted with modern theories, it is argued that the selected theories are sufficient for the purpose of this study.

2.3 Organizational culture

Barney (1986, p. 657) defines organizational culture as

“A complex set of values, beliefs, assumptions, and symbols that define the way in which a firm conducts its business”
That means that every organization develops different inherent characteristics such as values and beliefs over the years, which define its existence and constitute to its culture. Theorists suggest that there are certain attributes in an organizational culture that correlate with the performance of the organizations (Barney, 1986; Denison & Mishra, 1995; Sørensen, 2002; Weick, 1987). As Barney (1986) argues, organizations, which obtain three attributes: valuable, rare, and imperfectly imitable, can produce a source for sustained competitive advantage and superior financial performance. A bordering study by Martin, Feldman, Hatch and Sitkin (1983) explains that an organizational culture that lacks uniqueness, distinctive competence over others, and a collective understanding of unique accomplishment will not proliferate amongst people.

Hofstede et al. (2010, p. 47) characterize organizational culture as

“*Shared mental software of the people in an organization*”

This means that decisions and actions taken by people can be predefined, to an extent, based on the assumption that people are influenced by the particular culture that they have been exposed to previously. Furthermore, Hofstede et al. (2010) argue that organizations are different kinds of social systems compared to nation states, based on the idea that the people involved in an organization did not grow up inside it, and that the decisions to join, to be involved and to leave an organization are individual.

Weick (1987, p. 124) states that organizational culture is a requirement for the proper operation of an organization due to the fact that it develops

“*Homogeneous sets of assumptions and decisions premises which preserve coordination and centralization*”

In addition, he states it is the only way the centralization and decentralization can exist synchronously in an organization and function properly. Hasegawa and Noronha (2009) also point out that a company where a parallel organizational culture prevails throughout the structure of the corporation; the culture enables a high level of decentralized decision-making, reducing the amount of bureaucracy between the headquarters and the subsidiaries.

Schein (1984) argues in favor of a new awareness of organizational culture, formally defining organizational culture by analyzing the dynamic evolutionary forces that affect it, i.e., how it
is learned and changed. He sheds light on the processes how culture is perceived, taught and alternated, and also suggests that further considerations should be taken into the opportunities and constraints that organizational culture offers. Later on, Schein (2010) also addresses the distinction between an organizational culture and a corporate culture by stating that organizational culture is the culture of private, public, government and nonprofit organizations, whereas corporate culture concerns only the private sector.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, p. 193) argue that

“The organization [...] is a subjective construct and its employees will give meaning to their environment based on their own particular cultural programming”

The concept means that the employees will create, influence and define the organizational culture based on their own cultures.

It is found that there are different definitions to what an organizational culture is and how it is built, but what these studies agree on, is that it correlates with company performance through multiple variables. Organizational culture also plays an important role in the effectiveness of transferring organizational knowledge across national borders (Bhagat, Kedia, Harveston & Triandis, 2002). This is due to the fact that differences in cultural patterns can affect the transferring of knowledge between two distinct organizations, which is a major issue as the competition between international, multinational and global firms is increasing (Bhagat et al., 2002). Denison and Mishra (1995) investigate the correlation of organizational culture and effectiveness. They base their study on four cultural traits: involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission. It is shown that there is a positive relation between the characteristics and performance, return on assets and sales growth. Moreover, Sørensen (2002) states that there is a relation between corporate culture and the firm’s performance. His investigation shows that strong corporate cultures from a more stable environment show more reliable performance.

In their research, Lok and Crawford (1999) study organizational culture and subculture, namely the correlation between these and commitment. They argue that different types of organizational subcultures, such as supportive-innovative organizational subcultures and bureaucratic organizational subcultures have different types of correlations with commitment.
While supportive-innovative organizational subcultures have a positive correlation with the level of commitment, bureaucratic organizational subcultures show a negative relationship.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) examine types of organizational cultures and categorize them into four types: the family, the Eiffel tower, the guided missile, and the incubator. They state that there are three aspects of organizational structure influencing corporate culture: the general relationship between employees and organization; the vertical or hierarchical system of authority defining the relationships between superiors and subordinates; and the general views of employees about the organization’s destiny, purpose and goals and their place in this. From these three aspects, two dimensions (equality vs. hierarchy, and orientation to the person vs. orientation to the task) are derived to categorize different organizational cultures according to the four aforementioned types. Figure 2 illustrates the dimensions' relation to the organizational culture types of the Trompenaars’ and Hampden-Turner’s (2012) model.

*Figure 2. Types of organizational culture*

![Figure 2. Types of organizational culture](image_url)

Based on the study of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) the organizational types are described as follows: The incubator culture is characterized by a high emphasis on the egalitarian structure, and an orientation towards the person instead of the task. The hierarchy of an incubator culture is low and non-authoritative, and unlike in more formal cultures, authority is based on the assumption that motivation can direct other members to cooperate. A guided missile culture is a project-oriented culture, with also a low level of hierarchy but which is prone to be oriented more towards the task than the people. Authority is stemming from expertise rather than hierarchy. Processes, resources, as well as structures show emphasis on accomplishing the specified tasks and project goals. A family-type organizational culture is power-oriented and the members of the organization are expected to fulfill their tasks as directed by their leader. It is expected that the members of the organization perform and act beneficially to the organization over their individual goals. Authority is usually exercised by common consent and the obligation to follow orders, and it is based more on ethics than legal bindings. The Eiffel Tower organizational culture is also a centralized high-hierarchy model, but it is more orientated towards task and formalities. The specificity of the roles of employees in the organization is important: a manager specifies the tasks that an employee has to fulfill, and one is expected to work only within the boundaries of his role. Status is ascribed, it is not achieved in accordance with one's achievements but by taking into account traits and characteristics such us age, class, formal education, gender and so on.

Based on the data gathered by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012), Sweden is categorized as a country with low-hierarchy organizational cultures that have a slightly more person- than task-orientated working environments, positioning Sweden into the incubator-quadrant. India on the other hand is seen as a country with more hierarchical organizational cultures and more orientation towards person over task, reflecting India as a country with family-orientated organizational cultures.

2.4 The connection of national and organizational culture

Research on the relationship between national and organizational culture is fairly new, and no commonly accepted theory exists yet (Gulev, 2009). Nazarian, Irani and Ali (2013) argue that some of the national culture dimensions have insignificant correlation to organizational culture but some show a significant relationship. Gulev (2009) concludes that organizational culture does emulate national culture characteristics. Kalkschmidt (2013) found supportive
evidence for a hypothesis that presumes that the organizational cultures of international subsidiaries share the organizational culture of their headquarters in case that the national cultures of the two are similar. Furthermore, Nazarian, Atkinson and Greaves (2014) confirm that there is a relationship between national and organizational culture although they are moderated differently by the organization's size. In conclusion, multiple correlations between the national and the organizational cultures are reported by previous research, even though there is no generally accepted theory on the process itself.

The approach that has been selected in this study connects national culture to organizational culture by using Hofstede's cultural dimensions that have direct effect on Trompenaars' organizational culture types, namely power distance and individualism vs. collectivism (Hofstede et al., 2010; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). As previously discussed in the section 2.4 Organizational culture, the Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner model of organizational culture types is based on two main variables: egalitarianism vs. hierarchy, and person vs. task. We argue that by definition, power distance reflects the level of hierarchy in an organization: the higher the power distance, the steeper the hierarchy is. Secondly, the individualism vs. collectivism reflects the orientation to the task or to the person, meaning that in collectivist societies more emphasis is directed on the aspect of peoples' inter-relation and status in the community.

Hofstede et al. (2010) state that organizational and national cultures are two different phenomena: The national culture constitutes the mental software that people acquire in young age, affected by the social environment including family and school, and is the mechanism of embedding fundamental values. However, the organizational culture is formed by the influence of peoples' experiences at work, and it does not have the same level of effect on core values. It is primarily affected by organizations’ practices, as is shown in Figure 3.
Figure 3. The balance of values and practices for levels of culture

Source: Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 347.

Figure 3 shows how people’s values are affected more by for example the family rather than the working environment, while in the case of practices the situation is reversed.

As for universalism-dimension, it can shed light on the connection between the organizational structure and its employees' views on their place in the organization they work in, as universalism is connected to norms in an organization which dictate the correct behavior within the environment. The view of the employees place in the organization is an essential part of how organizational structure affects its culture (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012)

Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2012) explain that culture consists of peoples' norms and values. Norms reflect the sense of right and wrong within a group whereas values define what is good or bad. Due to the fact that values are less affected by the work environment (Hofstede et al., 2010), only the connection of universalism to norms will be pursued in our research. Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2012) continue, that universalism is related to norms in an organization through formal (laws, regulations etc.) or informal rules (social control).

Based on the aforementioned, a theoretical concept is formulated as shown in Figure 4. The concept shows the effects of national culture on values, and values effect on practices within the culture. It also shows that national cultures themselves cannot affect one another, and that
same goes with the values, which are a stagnant property of a culture. According to the theory (Hofstede et al., 2010; Schein, 1984), it is possible that organizational culture practices could be transferred from one culture to another. In Figure 4, “Practices” are implying to organizational practices in the context of this study.

Figure 4. Theoretical concept on the transference of organizational culture across borders

Based on the theoretical concept seen in Figure 4, it is argued that the propositions (P1, P2, and P3) could be confirmed through empirical findings to occur through organizational practices.

P1) The power distance indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming from higher to lower over time

P2) The individualism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher individualism over time

P3) The universalism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher universalism over time
3. Methodology
This part explains and argues the selection of the research strategy. The method of data gathering, research approach and analysis are addressed. Lastly, the trustworthiness of the study is discussed.

3.1 Research design and approach
Cooper and Schindler (2013) argue that there is no comprehensive definition of research design that encloses the full scope that it covers, due to the fact that all definitions differentiate through the focus being on different details. Cooper and Schindler (2013, p. 125) present multiple definitions, one of them stated as follows:

“Research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data”

Other definitions refer to it for example as the holistic plan of research that will lead to answers through research questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2013). Meaning that research design is the path that one follows in order to receive answers to one’s research question. Simply put, it is the overall work plan of the study.

Bryman and Bell (2011) discuss two main research approaches: deductive and inductive. The purpose of a deductive approach is to create theory from previous literature and test it in practice through for example empirical data analysis. The inductive approach on the other hand requires an observation or phenomena, from which theoretical models will be derived through data analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2011). An abductive approach is a combination of the previous two approaches and it allows the examination of connections between theory and empirical data in both directions to create new theories (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). Since the purpose of this research is to obtain an answer to a research question derived from previous theories and secondary data, a deductive approach is argued to be the most suitable for the cause.

3.2 Case studies
According to Eisenhardt (1989), a case study is a way to connect theory into real life, where one or multiple cases are investigated in relation to theoretical arguing and data analysis. A
case study can be used for example to build new theory or examine existing theory in distinct settings. She continues that a case study is focused on understanding the dynamics existing within certain settings. Yin (2014) considers that a case study that incorporates more than a single case is called a multiple-case design, and in some fields of research, the single and the multiple case studies can even be considered two different methodologies.

The upsides of a multiple case study compared to a single case study are that the evidence it provides is considered more compelling (Yin, 2014) and robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). The multiple-case study is also less vulnerable to errors than a single case study (Yin, 2014). However, there are also downsides: for one, the requirement for a high amount of time and resources (Herriot & Firestone, 1983; Yin, 2014), and secondly, the rationale in single-case designs is not usually met in multiple case studies, as there are multiple observations that can vary in nature (Yin, 2014).

In this study multiple-case approach is selected because the phenomenon of national culture affecting organizational culture is argued to occur in all companies that fulfill the prerequisites: Swedish origin, high-quality and high-standard service/manufacture, operating in a culturally distant environment. Therefore it is seen that concentrating on the evidence of the phenomena is more important than comparison of companies as individual cases.

3.3 Qualitative and quantitative data

Eisenhard (1989) argues that there are different methods to gather data in case studies, such as interviews, questionnaires, archives and observations. The evidence, or empirical data, of the case studies is qualitative (words), quantitative (numbers) or both. Phelps, Fisher and Ellis (2007) define qualitative data as something that is mostly in form of text, is nonnumeric, but can also consist of images, audio or other formats. They add that qualitative data can be time consuming to gather and analyze. Cooper and Schindler (2013) argue that the focus in gathering qualitative data is to obtain a detailed and thorough understanding of each situation.

Quantitative data is data that can be measured in numerical terms. Quantitative data can be inherent in a research design where the collection, measurements and perceived data in the terms of the type of analysis is more important than what is actually collected (Phelps et al., 2007). Cooper and Schindler (2013) add that in quantitative research the focus of gathering
data is to make sure that the data is properly measurable, particularly in business research of consumer characteristics, knowledge, and notions.

3.4 Case companies

Two companies have been selected for the case-study of this study. Firstly, Elekta AB, which is a human care company pioneering innovations and clinical solutions for treating cancer and brain disorders. The company has 3,800 employees, from which 105 are located in India. The company was founded in 1972 and provides its services in 6,000 hospitals, supplying treatment for more than 100,000 patients globally (Elekta, 2014). Secondly, we examine Sandvik AB, which is a global high-technology industrial group offering products and services to enhance its customers' productivity, profitability and safety. Sandvik has 47,000 employees worldwide from which over 2,700 in India. The company was founded in 1862 and holds today over 8,000 patents. Its sales exceeded 87 billion SEK in 2013, operating in more than 130 countries worldwide (Sandvik, 2014).

What connects these two companies is that they are both of Swedish origin, and both of the companies' headquarters are located in Stockholm, Sweden. Also, both Elekta and Sandvik employ people in an emerging market, India (MSCI, 2014), which is the target country of this research (Elekta, 2014; Sandvik, 2014). Secondly, they are both companies with high-end manufacture processes and hold high standards in servicing. Elekta develops sophisticated, state-of-the-art tools and treatment planning systems for radiation therapy (Elekta, 2014), whereas Sandvik manufactures high-technological products in hard metal, basing its business on state-of-the-art material technique and knowledge in customer processes (Sandvik, 2014).

3.5 Argumentation of the selected method

This research is qualitative in nature. A multiple case study regarding a limited environment (two culturally distinct working cultures) is performed using semi-structured interviews as the data collection method.

The importance and the relevance of using a case study approach in this study are justified by the notion that the focus is on a narrow segment of international business. As Cooper and Schindler (2013) argue, case studies are used when conducting an investigation that focuses on examining and analyzing a particular segment in-depth rather than having a wider scope. This can lead to a more comprehensive perception of the subject under investigation (Cooper
& Schindler 2013). By using a case study approach, the aim of examining a narrow segment, Swedish high-quality service and manufacture multinationals operating in India, will thus be justified and more valuable understanding of the subject can be achieved.

A qualitative approach is selected for the study because cultural differences between two environments (people working in a single office) require gathering data regarding human behavior, which consists of various phenomena, as echoed by Hofstede et al. (2010). Social studies such as examining cultural differences can consist of multiple relations and interactions between people and measuring these type of connections by quantitative methods is usually done using massive databases such as Hofstede et al. (2010) and Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2012) have used. Instead of relying on massive databases, we argue that especially a change in organizational culture is best monitored and described by people with extensive knowledge and experience in observing the respective population, and that a narrow but deep insight can be obtained on cultural phenomena with the proper use of qualitative data collection. It might be hard to collect quantitative data from people themselves regarding how the behavior in their organization has changed over time as there is a certain level of turnover in the staff of the observed population (office employees) over time. Large distribution of questionnaires would lead to obtaining large amounts of data from employees with only short-term working experience, and describing changes in culture with this type of data could prove to be a difficult task.

Bryman and Bell (2011) express that in qualitative research, the most common styles of interviews are the semi-structured and the unstructured approaches. Semi-structured interviews are used in this study to allow flexibility due to the multifaceted nature of culture, and gathering also data that has not been predicted to appear as per research questions, but that might derive from the insights of the interviewees. Potential new perspectives require the possibility of elaboration and ad hoc questions.

As for why unstructured interviews are not used is due to the need to specifically address the propositions derived from theory. Each proposition is related to certain interchangeable characteristics in human behavior that should be addressed in order to get valid data (e.g., addressing a power distance-related proposition requires questions related to relationships between employees and their supervisors and so on).
3.6 Presentation and analysis of the data

Yin (2014) explains that there is no standard style of reporting a qualitative research. Eisenhardt (1989) argues that qualitative studies can be hard to analyze in the sense that usually the gathered data is vast, or rich in details, and many interconnections can appear. Trying to capture and describe them all will result in reducing the understandability of the result and make it too complex if the right perspective is not chosen.

There are different ways how a researcher can analyze qualitative data. One way of doing this is to interpret the data analysis manually without the help of technology, or with technological assistance such as computers and different types of software (Phelps et al., 2007). During the data collection period it was seen that the data could be credibly presented and analyzed without the use of computer software. Some of the research interviews were conducted face-to-face whereas others were conducted via email. The live interviews were recorded and transcribed, and notes were written. Email-interviews were collected as such, and any unclear statements were confirmed afterwards by additional questions. To be able to analyze the amount of collected data more practically, summaries of the full interview transcriptions were made.

Eisenhardt (1989) discusses that in order to construct qualitative data in multiple case studies in a usable way; the data can be categorized into themes or dimensions. After that the similarities within the themes can be investigated, in addition to intergroup differences. Three main themes reflecting the theoretical propositions arose from the interviews, according to which the majority of the data was parsed: relationship of the supervisor and the subordinate, rules and regulations, and individualism. Rest of the data that derived from interviewees' experiences relating to the topics could be categorized into the following themes: gender equality, the means of homogenizing global ways of working, and the importance of organizational culture in business. Categorizing the responses was helped by the fact that the questionnaire was based on the said theoretical propositions, and each question corresponded to a proposition and thus a distinct theme. Some data came up that was related to another question than which was posed, as some of the responses were very elaborate, but that did not cause considerable problems in categorization.
In the final step, the acquired data is analyzed with respect to the theoretical framework of the study to see how it corresponded with the theoretical propositions, and how accurately did it provide an answer to the primary research question.

3.7 Data collection with interviews
There are various types of interviews that can be used to gather data, from which we present the structured, the semi-structured and the unstructured interview. The majority of qualitative researches adopt a semi-structured or an unstructured interview-style (Cooper & Schindler, 2013).

Bryman and Bell (2011) state that the structured interview is a research instrument that is used to standardize the procedure of asking questions and recording the answers, it can be conducted for example in person or by phone. The structure minimizes any interviewer-related errors as the characteristics of the interviewer can have an influence on the replies and the gathered data unless the process is standardized.

Semi-structured interviews are a research instrument characterized by flexibility. The interviewer can directly impose changes in the flow of the interview by for example changing the succession of the series of the questions or by asking additional questions when necessary. The questions in a semi-structured interview are more general in nature than questions in structured interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Cooper & Schindler, 2013).

An unstructured interview incorporates flexibility, and it is used when the interviewer doesn’t have neither a particular structure for the interview nor specific questions, but perhaps just the main issues, which can be covered by adopting an informal style of questioning (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Cooper & Schindler, 2013)

3.8 Operationalization
The theoretical propositions are connected with the data gathering methods by transforming them into interview questions, which constitutes the operationalization process. A pilot study was done to test the preliminary questionnaire (Appendix 1).

The theoretical propositions (P1, P2, P3) imply that if national culture transfers overseas, the organizational culture in an Indian office of a Swedish company should be "Swedenized" by the effect of the company's host country national and organizational culture, showing less
characteristics of the Indian culture, and more characteristics of the Swedish culture. Below (Table 2), the connection between the propositions and interview questions are presented.

Table 2 presentation reflects to question numbers on the pilot study (Appendix 1). Due to reformulation of the questionnaire, some question numbers differ in the finalized questionnaire (Appendix 2) albeit the content remaining the same.

Table 2. Connection between the theory, propositions and interview questions (pilot)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Proposition</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Culture</td>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Q5, Q6, Q7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masculinity-Femininity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individualism-Collectivism</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Q17, Q18, Q19, Q20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Culture</td>
<td>Universalism-Particularism</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time Orientation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Q21, Q22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction.

Table 3 represents the question numbers in the final study (Appendix 2).

Table 3. Connection between the theory, propositions and interview questions (final)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
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<td>Power Distance</td>
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<td>Q5, Q6, Q7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individualism-Collectivism</td>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Culture</td>
<td>Universalism-Particularism</td>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction.

As for why the individualism vs. communitarianism -dimension was not included even though a difference was found between the countries (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012) is due to its similarity to P2, and the fact that it would result in repetition in data.

Other dimensions where differences could be noticed, namely masculinity and time-orientation, were included in the pilot interview, but were seen not to relate well to the model where national and organizational cultures are connected (presented in section 2.4 The connection of national and organizational culture), and thus these dimensions were disregarded. Dimensions where difference was not seen or the result seemed contradictory (affectivity, achievement and relation to nature) were discarded due to data being inconclusive and not providing enough evidence to form relevant propositions.
3.9 Ethical considerations
The ethical considerations of this study constitute taking into account the interviewees right to give information anonymously. As according to Malhotra and Birks (2007, p. 172):

“The researcher and the client must respect participants when conducting qualitative research. This should include protecting the anonymity of participants (…)”

A limiting factor in the presentation of the data is that on the condition of anonymity, no statements deriving from the empirical data have been linked to a person. This does not allow the reader to make a connection for example between what was said in a direct quotation and the experience/task of the person. Some of the interviewees did not wish to be identified through the gathered data, and thus the condition of anonymity was applied throughout the research. Supporting this method, it is argued that in this way, people are able to describe the working environment and company culture more openly, enhancing the credibility of the data. Using one’s name might limit what statements can be made regarding one’s employee.

3.10 Validity and reliability
Validity of a research is the degree that the conclusions correspond to the stated allegations and it is divided into two main types, internal and external (Cooper & Schindler, 2013). The internal validity answers to the question whether the conclusions that have been proposed suggest causality or not, while the external validity answers the question pertaining to the possible extent that the causal relationships could be generalized (Cooper & Schindler, 2013,). Meaning that the internal validity is influenced by the settings and the whole design of the research and the external validity is the degree of the generalizability of the research results. Merriam (1995) states that there are ways to strengthen the internal validity in qualitative research such us triangulation (i.e., using different authors, multiple sources) and peer examination (i.e., asking peers to examine the data and results, which have been applied in the study).

According to Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001) validity in qualitative research can be examined by investigating primary and secondary criteria. Primary criteria are reflecting things such as the authenticity of the individuals, conditions and phenomena, and the integrity during the analysis. Secondary criteria meaning the sensitivity aspects, the ethical and moral parts of conducting the investigation, and congruence between different parts of the research
In this study, the validity is enhanced by the knowledge and experience (business- or culture-wise) of the people participating in the study. Integrity and sensitivity towards the research procedure has been taken into account throughout the process, which can be seen for example as neutrality in the interview question settings even though the theory already suggests what type of answers might possibly be received. The congruence of the study can be seen as the red thread that starts from the research question, which is connected to a theoretical framework, from which prepositions are argued. The empirical data is then gathered with a questionnaire that is based on the propositions, and finally the empirical data can be connected back to the research question through analysis.

Reliability means the accuracy in the measurement process (Cooper & Schindler, 2013, p. 257). Cooper and Schindler (2013) argue that a measurement, in order to be considered reliable, has to provide with consistent outcomes, and that reliability can be a crucial factor for validity but not adequate by itself. Meaning that if there is no validity in the measurement, it does not matter if there is high reliability or not. Merriam (1995) states that reliability tells us whether the research results can be replicated or not, and that reliability in social sciences such as the examination of human behavior is problematic. This based on the notion that investigating people and their behavior is highly complex, and not considered static. Therefore social science research results can vary. In order to enhance the reliability of this study, we've taken into account that the complexity of human behavior could affect our results: the way people see and describe subjective concepts such as change, or closeness of a relationship is dependent on the person. To avoid answers being biased by national culture origin, people from both respective countries (Sweden and India) have been interviewed. Also to avoid any subjectivity bias, people from different levels of business have been chosen for the source of empirical data. The interviewees are introduced in Table 4, and their experience in the respective company, the industry overall, and in Sweden-India business are presented in Table 5.
Questions 1-4 (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) have been used to gather data related to the trustworthiness of the interviewees. The experience levels of the interviewees vary from a couple of years to multiple decades of Sweden-India business experience. It is argued that by having a broad spectrum of different levels of experience, and interviewees from different positions within the companies, a more profound picture of the organizational culture situation can be achieved. Even though more experience can correlate to a deeper knowledge on the subject, people with less experience can present valuable information as a person who hasn't been affected by the organizational culture of the company itself that much. In this way, we can also obtain the perspectives of both managerial and employee levels. We argue that a heterogeneous spectrum of experience can produce a richer image on the investigated topic than concentrating on only people with a certain minimum amount of years in the field.

Furthermore, similar studies on evaluating national culture's effect on organizational culture have previously been already conducted by other researchers (Bhaskaran & Sukumaran, 2007; Bird & Stevens, 2003; Gerhart, 2008; Gulev, 2009; Li & Glaister, 2009) and by minimizing
the bias of subjectivity, and ensuring data source credibility, it is expected that previous results can be matched in terms of reliability.

The three first themes of the empirical data (employee-supervisor relationship, individualism and the group, attitudes towards rules) reflect the theoretical propositions (P1, P2, P3) and the two last (gender equality, common global ways of working) came up during the discussions about how people have otherwise seen transference of culture, topics which supply supportive evidence on the research question, adding internal validity to the study.
4. Empirical data

This partition of the study presents the empirical findings, divided into the main themes that were found during dissemination of data: employee-supervisor relationship, individualism and the group, attitudes towards rules, gender equality, the means of homogenizing global ways of working, and the importance of organizational culture in business. On the condition of anonymity, interviewees and their quotations are not made identifiable.

4.1 Employee-supervisor relationship

The interviewees were asked to describe employees’ relationships with their supervisors in their company. In terms of management, people described Swedish organizational culture in their company generally as a consensus-society, strong equality and mutual respect environment, and a state of collaboration in leadership.

A Swedish interviewee continued that in Sweden the supervisor, before taking decisions, will discuss with her or his subordinates, and an agreement amongst everybody is attempted to be achieved. Another person from Sweden stated that in Sweden employees are more familiar with their supervisor. Transparency and open-mindedness towards employees was also mentioned as a trait of Swedish managers by an employee of one of the companies. The same person continuing that the employees are given more freedom in Sweden with respect to work and responsibilities, and that more consideration and recognition for the work can be seen.

Indian working environment was described as containing more bureaucracy, and the leadership to be prone to high hierarchy, as one Swedish person put it – you are really the manager. Collaboration was seen to be visible in teams but not as much between the supervisor and the subordinate. An Indian interviewee echoed this by saying that more micromanagement can be seen in the Indian working environment, which can affect the space for creativity at work. The Indian leadership culture was also characterized as a “Yes Sir”-culture with large compliance and too little debate. All in all, a difference in working cultures could be seen by all of the interviewees.

When asked about how the interviewees would describe differences in giving feedback to the supervisor, or justifiably criticizing his or her actions, the aforementioned closeness of
supervisor-subordinate relationship came up. It was seen that in Sweden, the supervisor is easier to be approached, questioned or even corrected if needed. People are generally not afraid of repercussions, and communication is more open and immediate concerning criticism.

Whereas it was seen that in India so called bad news, critique as an example, are not conveyed as easily due to the distinct authority of superiors, or the critique is downplayed and presented in a softer way. Two Swedish interviewees described almost identically, that employees do not criticize the boss out loud, instead they discuss the situation among peers, and finally critique will be directed to the supervisor through perhaps the senior member of the peers who speaks for the group. The communication process can take a long time. It was noted by a Swedish interviewee that naturally any illegalities (breaches of the law by an employee) and such will not just be discussed, they will be reported, but in more indirect means of communication than in Sweden.

To conclude, a Swedish interviewee explained that in Sweden employees challenge and question their supervisors whenever needed. A single employee can come up to the supervisor and speak his or her mind if something is seen flawed. Communication is seen more imminent and direct, and constructive criticism is seen as an improvement chance. Whereas in India, it was generally seen that employees do not challenge their supervisors that much. One Indian person exemplified this by saying that giving constructive feedback on negative issues can be interpreted as merely pointing out your supervisors flaws and trying to be sarcastically smart, not as an attempt to raise discussion. It was also mentioned that the personality of the supervisor has its effect: There is an inherent respect for the senior, which makes it hard to suggest that perhaps the supervisor is mistaken, but for an amenable supervisor, corrections can be suggested.

Two of the Swedish interviewees stated that no visible change in the supervisor-subordinate relationship has been seen, meaning that the Indian working culture is not forming into having more informal relationships. One Swedish person told that one of their managers in India had attempted to befriend his subordinates for example by inviting the employees for dinner at his house, but despite the attempts the relationship remained formal and hierarchical.

Two Indian employees told that slow and steady improvement can be seen. Supervisors in India are turning into being more open-minded, and constructive criticism is interpreted as
chance for improvement. The influence of their Swedish colleagues was seen to gradually affect the change through interaction and observation. It was mentioned that under the influence of the Swedish work culture, there is a tendency towards informality. Also feedback and debate is encouraged as well as group discussions.

One Swedish interviewee mentioned of a case where after a certain expatriate managing director had left the organization in India, the organization had become more formal compared to what it was during this person. That person had accomplished to form good personal relationships with employees with less formality and more freedom of employees, but these issues were returned to their original state after the departure of the MD.

The findings of employee-supervisor relationships have been compiled in Table 6 below, showing the organizational cultures comparison. As we can see, the differences in the level of power distance are clearly visible in relation to hierarchy, formality and communication.

Table 6. Conclusion of the characteristics of employee-supervisor relationships in Swedish and Indian offices derived from empirical data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low hierarchy</td>
<td>High hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informality</td>
<td>Formality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imminent feedback to supervisor</td>
<td>Delayed feedback to supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open criticizm</td>
<td>Reserved criticizm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction.

4.2 Individualism and the group

We asked the interviewees to describe whether people have differing views on private and public matters in the respectful working cultures.

One Swedish person saw that employees have the same views on private and public matters despite in which country they work, that everybody enjoys the good parts of them. Three interviewees from both countries on the other hand characterized Swedish as more private
people, and that there are a lot of things they do not wish to share with people they do not know. It was continued by a Swedish interviewee that in India, people do not have this level of need for privacy, and people will for example more easily invite you to their homes. Although it was seen by the same person that when the relationship is deeper, though, Swedes might be more intimate and share more private things with each other. It was elaborated by an interviewee from India that Swedish people are more reserved regarding their personal life, and they like to separate it from work, whereas in India there is a certain close bonding with the colleagues both at work and outside of work as well, which helps bring people closer and helps getting along together.

The next topic was related to whether employees are individual- or group-oriented in how they work. The results were slightly inconclusive as two people described Swedish as more group-orientated people, who usually work in a team, but that Indian employees tend to be more individual, and rather do the tasks by themselves. Whereas the majority expressed Indian employees being more group-oriented and their Swedish colleagues being more individual, even though they also do work in groups but the preferred group size is generally smaller; two to three people. It was exemplified by a Swedish interviewee that for Swedish employees it is important to be able to show that one is contributing by him- or herself even though the work is done in a group. Two Swedish people characterized the Swedish inclination towards teamwork as a combination of group collaboration and individual responsibility over the daily tasks. Indian teamwork was seen by an Indian interviewee to have a higher level of cohesion because of the more powerful effect of the supervisor who is directing the work.

All in all, even though the majority of the interviewees regarded Swedish employees more individualist, it was not seen that this has a negative effect on the efficiency of teamwork. It was seen by people from both countries that employees in Sweden and India work in groups in the same ways and with same motivations: it helps improving the work quality and efficiency, thus improving the output of the group significantly. In the other company the working environment in India was even renovated so that it helps promote teamwork even more.

A factor that has an effect on the inconclusiveness of the results was brought up by two interviewees from both countries who both noted that different business activities require
different levels of team work. For example that sales is a more individual process than production. Sometimes it is not necessary to work in groups and it can even be inefficient.

Two of the Swedish interviewees did not see a change in the Indian office culture in terms of people starting to work more individually, counter to what the proposition P2 states. Both of them add that it is not probably even necessary from the company perspective, as the group work is done in groups, and individual work such as certain mechanical maintenance tasks is done individually.

One Swedish interviewee speculates that individualization in India could be seen in the future as more specialized and demanding tasks could be transferred abroad from Sweden, jobs which require a high level of specialization, but that this is yet to be seen.

Two Indian persons on the other hand said that compared to earlier work experience, teamwork has continuously improved in both countries' working cultures: both cultures becoming more group-oriented in ways of working, as it also is one of the core values of their company.

Table 7 below presents the differences in the level of individualism in the investigated offices. As can be seen, the preference of working individually is higher in Sweden, and lower in India. Although, the data reveals that team work is promoted and used whenever possible in both countries.

Table 7. Conclusion of the characteristics of individualism and group work in Swedish and Indian offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small groups preferred</td>
<td>No distinct preference on group size detected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual results important</td>
<td>Group-collaboration important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity a prerequisite for personal closeness</td>
<td>Low threshold for openness amongst peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual responsibilities within group</td>
<td>Group cohesion due to effect of a dominant supervisor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction.
4.3 Attitudes towards rules

Rules and regulations were generally discussed from two different points of view: formal and informal. It was seen that in both companies, the formal rules apply to all the offices worldwide, whereas informal rules are culture-related.

“Everybody has to have that basic understanding, that if a machine is not functioning, someone might be missing medical treatment.” – Swedish interviewee

One Swedish interviewee exemplified that in Sweden, the unwritten rules affect the acceptability of doing personal errands during work-time, or pausing of the work. Using the Internet for personal surfing is not generally accepted but not specifically prohibited either. Also in Sweden there are distinct times such as the coffee-break at two o’clock, which most people use to take a break from their tasks, whereas in India, according to the same person, this does not exist and people rather take smaller mini-breaks in between the work. Another person from India stated that for example the dress code is more casual in Sweden. One Indian interviewee explained that in Sweden there is more flexibility and freedom in the time-schedule at work. As an example the person mentions society-related parental-leave. Another Indian person explained that the Indian environment is seen stricter and military-like disciplined, whereas in the Swedish office there is more freedom regarding the work.

The interviewees were also asked to describe the reactions on how a breach in rules is reacted to in these two cultures, using an example of breaking an informal rule of cutting in line. No distinct difference was described by anyone. The behavior would not be seen more or less acceptable in either of the countries; people from both cultures would see it unacceptable. Furthermore, it was noted that employees from both cultures would likely to be tolerant and non-confrontational towards the breach of a rule, albeit not accepting it.

When asked to describe the general attitudes towards rules, one Swedish person said that in Sweden, people want a certain elemental level of order in the work life, a certain baseline of rules on how things are done, and which to fall back to if something seems questionable or uncertain. Indian way of rule-construct was seen to rely more on a higher level of bureaucracy. The attitude towards rules, as one Indian person mentions, is more absolute (e.g., rules are rules), and that it is difficult to question them. The high level of bureaucracy in India
was explained by one Swedish and one Indian interviewee by saying that often contradictory rules are remnants of massive British bureaucracy.

It was stated that even if the rules cannot be questioned as easily in India than in Sweden, there is a different level of importance regarding rules overall. As a general example, two of the interviewees from Sweden and India brought up traffic rules, which are generally obeyed by the book in Sweden, but that act more as guidelines than absolute rules in Indian traffic. The attitude towards rules depends therefore also on the context, and the discipline to obey different rules vary. Additionally it was described that Swedish people follow rules more strictly, but in India the rules are related to the context of the event where rules are applied:

“However for not very harmful breakages of rules like attendance timings, there is a higher level of tolerance. But safety rules are sacrosanct.”- Indian interviewee

When asked about the change in attitudes towards rules, two Swedish interviewees saw that there is no change in the Indian working environment, whereas one Indian person had noticed that updating the rules if needed has become more acceptable, and the “rules are rules” way of thinking is decreasing. Another Indian person said a slow but steady change could be seen, rules becoming more open to be questioned and fair for the employees. A key to add the general growth of respect towards rules was said to be simplification, referring to the massive amount of bureaucracy.

The findings regarding rules have been compiled in Table 8, showing the organizational cultures' comparison. No difference was seen in the flexibility towards formal rules, but the differences between informal rules indicate discrepancies, such as regarding time-usage in the offices. Indian culture seems to have inherited a bureaucratic structure of rules whereas in Sweden, a baseline of elemental rules is detected. This can be characterized as a set of elemental rules that exist, but that bureaucracy is not as far reaching. There are fewer restrictions on the nuances of work.
Table 8. Conclusion of the characteristics of rules and attitudes of rules in the workplace in Swedish and Indian offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No flexibility on formal rules</td>
<td>No flexibility on formal rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-context-related informal rules</td>
<td>Context-related informal rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-usage flexible</td>
<td>Time-usage more structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach of rules generally not seen acceptable</td>
<td>Breach of rules generally not seen acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences on the importance of rules not detected</td>
<td>Importance of rules depends on context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline of elemental rules</td>
<td>Bureaucracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction.

4.4 Gender equality

Despite discarding the gender equality-related questions from the questionnaire after the pilot interview, the topic was still addressed by also other interviewees relating to Swedish culture's effect on the company's organizational culture. It was generally recognized that companies have overall less female employees and supervisors in India than in Sweden, but in addition to cultural factors, also the type of work was seen as an influence (i.e., positions of physically demanding work are usually occupied by male employees). Two Swedish interviewees mentioned the paternal-leave that exists in Sweden but not in India.

An example of promoting gender equality in India was given by a Swedish interviewee who said that the company he represents has kindergartens in its manufacture facilities in India. Kindergartens help to balance the gender gap in countries where parental leave is short or nonexistent, and mothers have to stay at home with children after giving birth. In this company gender equality is thus promoted by giving women the possibility to pursue a career in spite of having children. The phenomenon of supporting women at work was exemplified by the need for flexibility in Sweden as there, both family members are more commonly working, and there is no baby-sitter to take care of the kids, said by a Swedish interviewee.
Because the Swedish parental-leave adds this flexibility, another means of conveying the same possibilities were needed in foreign offices.

One Swedish interviewee stated that a female employee within the company, who had transferred after an acquisition of a portion of another Swedish company operating in India, said that the culture at her new employer is more inclusive in terms of diversity and gender equality. Thus, even though we can see feminine cultural characteristics of a Swedish company transferring to a more masculine country, there are also differences in the level of transference between companies with the same home-country.

4.5 Common global ways of working

One Swedish interviewee named the means of ensuring high-quality products and service all over the globe as training, certification, testing and supervising. This was echoed by another Swedish person saying that key points of ensuring quality are having the same framework, standards and methods worldwide. Representatives from both companies admitted promoting a certain company culture globally.

A Swedish representative of one company explained that their company culture derives from its mission and its values. The organizational culture is formed when these values are implemented and reinforced in the workplaces worldwide. Furthermore, it is seen that cultural literacy and familiarity with the concept of equality is a merit when hiring people. Mobility between international offices promotes cultural literacy and also broadens knowledge and skills within the company.

In the other company they promote “global common ways of working”. It was further said by a Swedish person that common ways of working are more easily achieved in nearby places, as it is easier to personally meet and communicate with people. Moreover, the focus is not only in training people, but also even more importantly, reviewing, following-up and implementing the training in everyday work. It is important to make people pedagogically understand why something has to be done in a certain way. There are challenges in a global perspective, and it is seen that the process is needed in order to further enhance the level of cross-border collaboration.

Two of the Swedish interviewees discussed that Sweden as a country has a good reputation in global business, but that foreign facilities shouldn't be “Swedenized” in an ethnocentric way
nevertheless. If the employees feel that the way of working is too different from their own values or habits, this might make them uncomfortable at workplace. An interviewee coined this by saying that local offices should be local, but that people should yet be aware of the origin of the company.

“...people should be aware that [we are] a Swedish company, for that we stand for certain values. That’s the part which should go to the culture of local office.” –Swedish interviewee

He continued that the “good parts” of the home-country culture should be implemented in foreign offices, for example, caring for the employee and the Swedish way of thinking that there is much more to business than how the short-term profit can be maximized this quartile. In that sense, a difference in the company culture can be seen in a local office whether it is affected by Sweden or another country.

“[Organizational culture] always matters – but equally important is mutual respect for different cultures”-Indian interviewee

It is agreed by three interviewees from both companies and countries, that acquiring and assimilating companies originating from different countries shows a difference in organizational cultures compared to the Swedish companies foreign facilities, and that differences in organizational culture of a Swedish company's subsidiary that is similarly operating in India can be seen. Not only the local culture, but the organizational cultures of acquired companies pose a challenge. The challenge is to assimilate the good parts of each organizational culture. Also the variety of culture within India was mentioned.

Another Swedish person characterized that their company culture has had effect from the Swedish lagom (Eng. adequate) culture, finding balance and refraining from extremities. He continued that a positive character of the Swedish culture is that differences and diversity are well tolerated, which is important in addition to having global, common ways of working. What one interviewee from India said about unifying the ways of working in two different cultures:

“East is east, west is west, but the two can definitely meet.”
4.6 The importance of organizational culture in business

The importance of organizational culture was addressed by interviewees from various perspectives. A Swedish person referred to the low turnover-rate of their company, which the person thinks to be partially because of the nice company culture, because a good company culture affects well-being and makes people feel home at work. Although, the expansion of the company has made the company culture more formalized and less entrepreneurial, as compared to its early stages. An Indian interviewee said that it is welcoming to see openness and the fair attitude in the Swedish way of working. A Swedish interviewee characterized the importance of organizational culture that it also reflects to the customer as quality and ways of doing things, and therefore affects how wanted the company is as a partner.

4.7 Summary of the empirical data

The empirical data has been combined in the Table 9 below to conclude what was found, and how the findings relate to the interview questions as well as respective cultural dimensions. The connection between the cultural dimensions and the questions are as per defined in the methodology-section, and the question numbers refer to the final questionnaire (Appendix 2).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power distance</td>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>Low power distance -leadership in Sweden, high power distance -leadership in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>Low communication threshold in Sweden, high communication threshold in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>Characteristics of low power distance partially seen in India, but inconclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universalism vs. Particularism</td>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>Higher level of bureaucracy in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>No flexibility on formal rules in either country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>Attitudes towards informal rules universalistic in Sweden, particularistic in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism vs. Collectivism</td>
<td>Q11</td>
<td>Ambiguity on the level of bureaucracy seen in India, change indicators inconclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q12</td>
<td>Less collectivist traits at work preferred in Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q13</td>
<td>More collectivist traits at work preferred in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>Level of collectivistic (group work) way of working high in both countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q15</td>
<td>Swedish employees opt for more privacy on a personal level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction.
5. Analysis

Analysis of the empirical data is constructed as per theoretical propositions P1 (The power distance indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming from higher to lower over time), P2 (The individualism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher individualism over time) and P3 (The universalism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher universalism over time). The propositions will be validated or disproved in the summary.

5.1 P1 - Power distance and supervisor-subordinate relationship

This study shows that the Swedish organizational culture and the Indian organizational culture are influenced by the Swedish national culture and the Indian national culture in the power distance dimension, respectively. It was found that strong equality; mutual respect and open-mindedness towards employees exist in the Swedish organizational culture, which indicates low power distance, while in the Indian organizational culture the hierarchical leadership and the relationships between manager and subordinate, which are based on the authority that one has, indicates high power distance (Hofstede et al., 2010). These results support the theories of Gulev (2009), Nazarian, Irani and Ali (2013) and Nazarian, Atkinson and Greaves (2014) about cultural dimensions’ correlations between national-organizational cultures.

It was not unanimously seen that company culture in an India facility would be changing from high-hierarchy organizational culture into a more egalitarian system due to the effect of the Swedish national culture through a Swedish business’ organizational culture. The differences amid the relationships between supervisors and employees in the two countries are visible. For example the level of hierarchy is higher in India and relationships between supervisors and subordinates are more formal. This discovery echoes Hofstede et al. (2010) findings on high power-distance difference between Sweden and India.

One Swedish manager (not an interviewee of this study) had tried to befriend his subordinates in India by promoting informality in the supervisor-subordinate relationship, but nevertheless the subordinates' behavior remained unchanged. Another Swedish manager said he had asked
his subordinates in India to be more open and direct in their feedback, so that any problems or dissatisfaction in everyday work would be heard by the superiors in time to react immediately, but also these requests have not had the desired effect. The supervisor-subordinate relationship has remained more distant and formal in Indian facilities than in Sweden. It can be seen that there have been attempts to change the organizational culture on a personal level but these attempts have not had the desired effect. The cultural values of the local employees of thinking of their superior as an authority above them did not allow them to actually identify themselves at the same level with him, no matter how well-meaning the gesture and the power distance and the communication gap remained. In Kalkschmidt’s (2013) investigation the organizational cultures of international subsidiaries share the organizational culture of their headquarters and show positive correlation, when there is a similarity between the national cultures. In our case the selected countries have culturally distant national cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010). Consequently, our study indicates that some organizational practices could not successfully be applied.

On a general level some changes can be seen in the Indian working culture pertaining to the employee-supervisor relationship, due to the influence of Swedish colleagues’ behavior. The fact that some Indian supervisors tend to be more open-minded and encourage criticism and debate are characterized as signs of change. The effect of interaction and observation of colleagues was mentioned implying to the possibility of organizational culture change via observation and personal interaction. This is echoed by the case of an expatriate MD, who had established an informal level of leadership in his time, but which after he left, the level of hierarchy returned to its original state. The findings in the cases imply that a change in organizational culture is described to happen when personal interaction takes place, meaning that a person from another culture is working and cooperating amongst the host-country employees in person, contrary that organizational practices would be implemented through impersonal or short-term methods such as by third-party consultants or by dictating foreign facility practices from the company home-country.

Changes in organizational practices submit into alternation the organizational culture (Hofstede et al., 2010). In this study the acknowledged changes towards relationships between supervisors and employees indicate changes in the Indian organizational culture. We argue that the power distance -indicators of the Indian national culture did not submit into
alternation. The reason why we incline to support this notion is that change in values has not been identified, but merely changes in practices, and that the national culture is correlated and influenced by values as proposed by the theoretical concept in section 2.4 *(The connection of national and organizational culture)*.

5.2 P2 – Individualism and group work

Based on the results, Swedish employees were generally seen to prefer more individualistic and Indian employees more collectivist inclination towards the preferred style of working, although the results were not unanimous and some contradicting opinions were presented.

Despite the differences in culture, team-orientated interaction seems to be the main approach of working in every office of both case-companies whenever the task requires it, no matter what the country is. The team-orientated interaction constitutes a part of the company’s culture; both organizations promote those interactions throughout the company’s processes. This interaction of employees from both countries can be characterized more collectivist than individual in the way of contributing to the company. The finding could be explained by the Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) types of organizational cultures which describe both Indian and Swedish organizational culture as more person- than task-orientated. Therefore, even though culture is more individualistic in Sweden on a national level (Hofstede et al., 2010) the way businesses are organized does not fully reflect this fact. The finding that Swedish employees *prefer* individualistic tendencies at work as described in the data, but *act* more collectivistic implies to an external effect. The aforementioned low power distance leadership can have its own repercussion, as more freedom and responsibility is given to the employees themselves. Even though they work as a group, everyone can achieve a high level of individual effect on his/her personal tasks through personal responsibility invested in them by the manager. This enables effective inter-relations between employees in a group whilst still allowing people to fulfill any need for individual achievement.

The level of individualism is task-related in both countries, because it is seen that some tasks are done more efficiently in groups, while other tasks provide better results when done individually. Efficiently managing the differences between national and organizational cultures by managing the predetermination of collectivistic and individualistic behavior in completing tasks, showed having a positive effect on the company’s task performance, which
shows an agreement with Li’s and Glaister’s (2009) theory about managing the differences of national and organizational culture and the positive effects on company’s performance.

In this case it can be seen that even though there is discrepancy in the preference of group-work through tendencies of behavior, the organizational cultures of the companies are uniformly group-orientated. The proposition P2 suggested that the working culture in India would be transferring into being more individualistic, but on the contrary, the results indicate that both of the countries reflect increasingly collectivist practices. The fact that in the other company the working environment was modified so that it helps develop teamwork even more is an indicator that individualism is not promoted through the Swedish company's values. It can be concluded that on an organizational culture level Sweden and India are similar in relation to person vs. task orientation of the Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) model as the effect of low power distance leadership promotes the coexistence of person-orientated interrelations and individual performance. This is also confirmed by the fact that Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) characterize India as a family-culture and Sweden as an incubator-culture, both inclined to being more person- than task-related. A finding also supported by Li and Glaister (2009), who found that efficiently managing the differences of national and organizational cultures will have positive effect on company performance. Respectively, in India the high power distance leadership (i.e., dominant supervisors promoting group cohesion) and collectivist national culture sum up to the person-orientated organizational culture.

5.3 P3 – Universalism and attitudes towards rules

Norms that can be divided into formal (laws, regulations etc.) and informal rules (social control), of the organization had been addressed in the interviews. Norms of an organization direct what is seen right or wrong in professional behavior (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012). The data indicate that the amount of rules and bureaucracy is clearly higher in India, but that there is variation between attitudes towards norms, namely informal rules.

The data shows that informal rules at work are related respectively to the local culture. An example of an informal rule is the pausing of work. A dependence on the location of the office can be noted, as for example Swedish have the tradition of fika (Eng. snacks and coffee) during which work is usually collectively paused at a certain time. The pause gives employees a chance to have an everyday informal break to interact amongst their colleagues.
and disconnect from their tasks for a set period of time. Scheduled meeting times were seen fixed in Sweden but flexible in India. The informal rules of the two countries were seen different and no adoption of Swedish culture was seen.

When it comes to formal rules, the content and attitudes towards them can be seen universal all over the companies' offices. Formal rules, such as safety regulations and quality standards, are seen obeyed and enforced the same way despite the location of an office, and there is no flexibility, or relation to external context. This behavior implies universalistic tendency in both countries towards formal rules (Hofstede et al., 2010) as suggested by P3. The universalism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher universalism over time.

The general attitudes towards the absoluteness of rules on the other hand shows a difference, as it came out that some rules in India are “more important” than others and dependent on the context, implying a particularistic tendency as suggested by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012). For example, agreements on meeting schedules are not seen sacrosanct, and might depend on the context of the meeting or the person who is met. The differences between the importance of different rules in Sweden didn't come up this clearly from the data. It can be concluded that the universalistic Swedish national culture (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012) has not had an unanimous effect on the particularistic organizational culture in India (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012), as the context of rules is still easily detected in the Indian environment, albeit a discrepancy can be seen from the formal rules' perspective. The attitudes towards formal rules are seen universalistic in the case-companies' Indian offices as well as home-country offices.

As argued by Hyder and Fregidou-Malama (2009) as well as Li and Glaister (2009), in high-quality industries high level of service quality, legitimacy and world-class standards are required in order to operate successfully in international markets. Standards require enforcement of rules, which on the other hand requires universalistic attitudes towards them. We argue that the concurrent practices of the case companies have affected the orientation towards rules in foreign facilities, lowering the level of particularism to some extent, as both Elekta and Sandvik have identified themselves as state-of-the-art manufacture and service companies (Elekta, 2014; Sandvik, 2014).
5.4 Feminine practice in masculine India

It was seen that the kindergarten's gender-promoting phenomenon, which is an organizational practice that can influence the organizational culture, has elevated the level of workplace equality in Indian facilities. This finding supplementing the theory that a unique company culture can affect the well-being of the people and the turnover-rate of the employees: an organizational culture with unique characteristics and adopted practices can result in proliferation amongst people, as well as company’s performance (Barney, 1986; Martin et al., 1983). Kindergartens being the unique factor in Indian work life.

India as masculine culture (Hofstede et al., 2010) had adopted a feminine practice through the Swedish company’s organizational practice. It can be argued that an imminent effect on the local culture cannot be seen in terms of changing attitudes or the *software of the mind* (Hofstede et al, 2010), but during a longer period of time, when women are able to pursue a career and not having to stay home with the children as before, changes in for example attitudes could occur.

5.5 The importance of common global ways of working in organizational culture

It was stated that the company culture derives from its mission and values, and that the implementation of the culture is worldwide. This correlates with Denison’s and Mishra’s (1995) study about the correlation of organizational culture and effectiveness based on four cultural traits: involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission. Therefore, the idea of creating a global way of working, combining traits of several cultures, is supported. Joining the “good parts” of both cultures coins the solution of creating a functioning global organizational culture, but the idea also raises more questions than answers in its abstractness. How can we know what is a *good* part of a culture and what is not? Some individual examples can be brought up though: one being the issue of communication gaps between the home country managers and foreign country employees due to differentiation in power distance. It seems probable, referring to the case of an expatriate MD (p. 45), that the gap could be closed without trying to force a change in the values of employees by promoting low power distance leadership through expatriate managers who in time, and with personal interaction and example, help elevate the level of equality between supervisor and employee.
An element affecting the turnover-rate of a company was indicted in the additional data of the study. It was stated that an accepting organizational culture affects the well-being of employees and makes them feel home. This is echoed by another statement from an employee originating from India, that it was welcoming to see openness and the fair attitude towards employees in the Swedish way of working. The previous statements echo what Lok and Crawford (1999) consider about the correlation of commitment and organizational subcultures. They argue that a supportive-innovative organizational culture, such as that in Sweden, correlates positively to employee commitment. It can be concluded that as long as the practices, or the global common ways of working of a company, agree with the values of its employees they can be adopted in a distant culture setting.

Common global ways of working require a set of global standards, echoing the notion of Hyder and Fregidou-Malama (2009), that certain standards and regulations in high-quality international business, such as the medical sector, are required even though the influence of local culture to the way of working cannot be neglected. Both case-companies take into account the local culture when implementing organizational culture practices to foreign locations: local cultural habits are to be respected but the company clearly retains its Swedish origin. If the organizational culture is forced based on the company home-country values, and it differs too much from the national culture in an overseas facility, employees might be dispelled by forcing them to act the way they naturally wouldn't. Furthermore, customers might respond badly to employees acting differently to their culture.

The way that universalism had been transferred through formal rules (norms) can be seen as an example of well-functioning common ways of working. The importance of obeying certain vital rules, such as the imperativeness of service quality standards in the medical sector or the safety regulations in the engineering sector, through implementing practices had been accomplished without contradictions to the values of the employees. This reflects Weick’s (1987) theory on the importance of organizational culture as an efficient organizational function based on proper coordination and the level of centralization that an organizational culture offers.
5.6 Summary of the analysis in relation to propositions

**P1)** The power distance indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming from higher to lower over time.

The power distance indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company have not seen unanimously transforming from higher to lower over time, but there are indicators of change caused by close personal interaction in the practices of the two companies in the Indian offices. Some managers had succeeded to lower the power distance through personal interaction but the situation had returned to its original state after they'd left the post. Attempts to request people to change their behavior, or other short-term influence had not been successful.

**P2)** The individualism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher individualism over time.

The individualism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company have not been seen transforming towards higher individualism over time. Results indicate lower indicators of individualism on organizational cultures overall. It was found out that the organizational culture in the Swedish companies themselves did not promote individualism, contrary to the national culture. Peoples' values on the other hand reflected a preference towards individualism. Low power distance leadership is argued being the mediator which allows a combination of personal achievement and inclination towards working in a group.

**P3)** The universalism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company should be transforming towards higher universalism over time.

Attitudes towards informal rules seem to be tightly related to local culture and show no noticeable signs of transference. The universalism indicators of an organizational culture in a foreign office of a Swedish company have shown a discrepancy in the attitudes towards formal rules by being highly universalistic instead of particularistic, indicating a possible partial transform towards higher universalism over time.
6. Conclusion

The findings of the study are concluded and discussed in this section along with limiting factors, implications and suggestions for future research.

6.1 Results

Previous research has addressed the dilemma of whether the national culture affects the organizational culture in business, and multiple correlations are reported (Bhaskaran & Sukumaran, 2007; Bird & Stevens, 2003; Gerhart, 2008; Gulev, 2009; Li & Glaister, 2009). Nevertheless, the literature does not offer a widely accepted theory of how does this process happen. Approaching the dilemma by addressing the research question, *How does the national culture of a business affect its organizational culture across borders?* This study attempts to complement the topic from a cultural dimension perspective in a distant culture setting, and shed light on the mechanism how it happens.

As Hofstede et al. (2010) state, the values of a culture are a highly static and invariant phenomena, but that practices within an organizational culture can be learned, adopted, and thus transferred, a concept also echoed by Schein (1984). Our study contributes to this statement as it shows that no apparent change is seen on the value-based structures of a company's overseas facility, such as the supervisor-employee relationship, general attitudes towards rules, or individualism. On the other hand, several practices that reflect the national culture values of a company’s home-country can be seen adopted in overseas company culture. They are presented as per theoretical propositions:

P1) It was seen that there are leaders who are able to adopt low-power-distance leadership into a high-power-distance cultural environment

P3) An increasing level of universalistic tendency towards formal rules was seen in a culture that is particularistic

Thirdly, supportive evidence was found that a feminine practice through promoting equality at workplace was successfully implemented in a masculine culture.
In relation to P2, it can be argued that no transference of a more individualistic way of working has been seen in the data of this study because national cultural traits might not directly affect a company culture, even in its home-country. Both of the companies showed a high level of group-orientation in the way of working despite differences in national culture. We argue that individualism has not been transferred from the company home-country national culture because it contradicts with the overall values of the two companies already at the home-country.

Our research also shows that a change in organizational culture is best described to happen when personal interaction takes place, meaning that a person from another culture is working and cooperating amongst the host-country employees in person. It was reported that by observing and cooperating with the company home-country employees, some of the home-country characteristics had been seen adapting to the subsidiary’s work-culture. An expatriate manager has a challenge in adapting the practices of a company to the values of the employees, but a personal level of interaction seems to give the most successful results.

Figure 5 is a concept illustration of the interdependencies of national and organizational cultures and how they are (or are not) expected to transfer based on the analysis of the empirical data. National culture affects the organizational culture in the respective countries through values of the people in the company. These then again translate into the practices of the organizations.
Figure 5. The effect of home-country national culture to a company's organizational culture across borders

Explanations:
- \(\rightarrow\) = Functional influence
- \(\leftarrow\) = Nonfunctional influence
- \(\ldots\ldots\ldots\) = Transference through personal interaction

Source: Own construction.

In Figure 5, it is displayed how the home country’s national culture can be transferred and direct influence (functional influence) cultural values, companies' organizational culture and practices. The evidence shows that parts of organizational culture in the form of company practices can be transferred across cultural barriers through personal interaction. Additionally, no sign of possible direct influence (nonfunctional influence) of the home country’s national culture and cultural values on the host country’s national culture or cultural values respectfully has been detected.

In conclusion, the study shows that personal interaction could be the key mean in the successful transference of organizational culture, and therefore it is recommended that in
future studies this perspective, and the components of personal interaction, should be addressed in order to validate or contradict the finding.

6.2 Implications

On a theoretical level, our study adds to the literature by addressing the long-term personal involvement in cultural practice transference, meaning that impersonal or even short-term personal means of developing a company’s organizational culture could prove to be fruitless. This will be exemplified by practical implications and suggestions as follows.

The level of power distance can affect the way people communicate in the workplace. Managers from other countries are more used to the low power distance-type of imminent and direct feedback as well as questioning the supervisor by the employees than others. This study indicates that in some cultures employees do not want to be the ones telling the bad news, or they downplay it, whereas in others people were not found to be afraid of repercussions in the workplace, and are seen more open in communication concerning criticism. The phenomena can be seen potentially causing problems with expatriates or managers who are leading an international team. The most effective way to address cultural gaps in distant locations was found to be personal interaction, which will be exemplified as follows.

When applying the practices of a certain organizational culture and company values in a foreign subsidiary, it should be vital for that to be done by expatriates from the company home-country who by personal interaction distribute the company values through practices, as observation and co-operation were found to be the key elements of closing the cultural gap. Sometimes the process might require multiple expatriates, as for example, low power distance values such as the closeness of a supervisor and a subordinate requires multiple people performing accordingly; it could prove difficult for one person to achieve this.

Our study indicates that in order to achieve high-quality products and service all over the globe, some practices such as for example training, certification, testing, supervising, and the same framework of standards and methods must be adopted worldwide. In order to achieve efficient performance, a level of uniformity in organizational culture plays a significant role. The way of working also reflects to the quality a customer sees in service and products, and affects how wanted the company is as a partner. Therefore it is encouraged for organizations
to build and develop a unified organizational culture based on company values, which overlaps, but does not dictate, the local culture of the company's facilities worldwide, with the help of personal involvement and the utilizing of expatriates.

On a societal level, the idea of transference of cultural practices addresses the problems in international business which are caused by globalization. By studying the business collaboration of people from culturally distant countries, problems related to cultural differences can be taken into consideration when expanding to other countries, avoiding culture-related pitfalls.

6.3 Critical reflection and suggestions for future research

In relation to the selected methodology, a qualitative study gives only a very specific and narrow image on a global phenomenon such as the culture. The selected method is argued to being able to show the change in culture, as the selected interviewees have observed the respective cultures for a period of time, and their answers are not narrowed by quantitative formulation. Nevertheless, also a longitudinal quantitative study could provide credible data relating to change in culture if multiple studies would be performed in a distinct setting over time, although this would require considerably more resources and time. A quantitative method would help minimize factors related to the persona of the interviewees as well as elevate the level of generalizability through a bigger sample.

Pertaining to the concept of subcultural differences within a culture (Bhaskaran and Sukumaran, 2007; Wild et al., 2012), it needs to be stated that the companies' foreign office locations within the host-country have not been taken into account. Even though the cultures in different parts of the country can vary considerably, it cannot be stated with certainty that a company’s location reflects the cultural background of the employees in that particular location. Employees can move from different parts of the country to another place to work, and thus the mere location of an office cannot be linked to a distinct subculture of the location. Our study did not provide enough evidence to determine the origin of each individual employee in the described situations.

The fact that only two countries, Sweden and India, were studied means that the results are not directly transferable to another pair of countries. Further studies regarding different countries are recommended to address the effect of home-country national culture to a
company's organizational culture across borders. It would be interesting to know if a replicating study of the two case-companies would provide similar results from another country that they both are operating in.

Moreover, in this study only the country-of-origin effect of Swedish companies on their offices and facilities in India has been studied. As this is but one side of the coin, it needs to be noted that the effect might also work in reverse. By inverting the setting the other way around, a foreign country's national culture might equally have effect on the organizational culture of a global company on its home-country. Therefore future studies are recommended to investigate the effect of the national culture of a company's overseas offices' host-country to its organizational culture domestically, or even globally.

Regarding any inconsistencies found in the data, an employee's attitudes and experiences can also be affected by his or her personality in addition to the culture. Family values derive from the culture, but everyone has yet a different upbringing. For the interviewee, it would be an impossible task to consider every employee’s personality, which can cause variation in perceived attitudes, or inclination towards different cultural dimensions. For example the concept of individualism could be highly related to the personal characters of an employee and not entirely the sum of cultural factors. Furthermore, as the work that the employees in the offices do is heterogeneous, the type of work they do also effects on the perception of individualism or collectivism -dimension, meaning the employees that the interviewees have described. A person can have collectivist values but if he or she is working in a position where the type of work is individual, or otherwise restricts interaction with other employees, there could be a distortion in the perception of the inclination towards individualism vs. collectivism. It is suggested that a quantitative study on the same topic could cancel out the effect of the type of work, and possibly a bias caused by the personality of the respondent by using a questionnaire where these perspectives are addressed with questions regarding the respondent.

The industries in the study were narrowed into engineering and the medical sector, although there are vastly more industries, which fill the requirement for state-of-the-art manufacture and service quality. Furthermore, the size of the organization can affect the relationship between the national and the organizational cultures as studied by Nazarian et al. (2014). Therefore studies within different industries and varying company sizes are recommended.
Appendices
Appendix 1- Pilot study interview questionnaire

1. What is your position in the company?

2. How long have you worked for the company?

3. How long have you worked in the medical/healthcare industry overall?

4. How many years of work experience do you have regarding Sweden-India business collaboration?

5. What do you think about Swedish and Indian employees’ relationships with their supervisors in your company?

6. Do you think there are differences between Swedish and Indian employees in how they would correct their supervisor if they know the supervisor has made a mistake?

7. Have you noticed any change in the style of relationships between employees and the supervisors in the Indian working environment over time?

8. Do Swedish and Indian employees in your company have a differing orientation towards working long hours in the workplace?

9. Is free time and flexibility at work seen more important in Sweden than India by the employees?

10. Have you noticed a change in the Indian working environment in attitudes towards flexibility of working hours?

11. Are there differences in how females are regarded as co-workers and supervisors compared to men in Sweden and India?

12. Have you noticed a change in the Indian working environment regarding equality of female and male workers?

13. Is there a difference between the number of rules and regulations (written and unwritten) between Swedish and Indian offices?
14. If someone breaks one of these rules, without causing any damage or loss whatsoever, do you think the breach will be tolerated differently in Sweden than in India?

15. Do you think the attitudes towards rules and regulations differ between Swedish and Indian employees?

16. Have you noticed a change in the Indian working environment regarding rules?

17. Do you think Swedish and Indian employees have differing views on what is private and public?

18. Do you think Swedish employees would rather work individually or in a group?

19. Do you think Indian employees would rather work individually or in a group?

20. Have you noticed any change in the Indian working environment regarding working in groups or individually?

21. Do you think there is a difference towards deadlines and schedules between employees in Swedish and Indian offices?

22. Have you noticed a change in the Indian working environment regarding following deadlines and schedule?

23. Is there anything you would like to add regarding Swedish and Indian work culture?

24. Is there something else you wish to point out that we forgot to ask you?

25. What do you think about the future? Does culture matter?

26. Do you think there is a person in your organization that would also be interested in sharing her/his insights on this topic?
Appendix 2 – Interview questionnaire (final)

1. What is your position in the company?

2. How long have you worked for the company?

3. How long have you worked in the industry overall?

4. How many years of work experience do you have regarding Sweden-India business collaboration?

5. How would you compare Swedish and Indian employees’ relationships with their supervisors in the company? Is there a difference?

6. Do you think there are differences between Swedish and Indian employees in how they would correct their supervisor?

7. Have you noticed any change in the style of relationships between employees and the supervisors in the Indian working environment over time?

8. Can a difference be seen between the number of rules and regulations (written and unwritten) between Swedish and Indian offices?

9. If someone breaks one of these rules, without causing any damage or loss whatsoever, do you think this will be tolerated differently in Sweden than in India?

10. Do you think the overall attitudes towards rules and regulations differ between Swedish and Indian employees?

11. Have you noticed a change in the Indian working environment regarding rules?

12. Do you think Swedish employees in your company would rather work individually or in a group?

13. Do you think Indian employees in your company would rather work individually or in a group?
14. Have you noticed any change in the Indian working environment regarding working in groups or individually?

15. Do you think Swedish and Indian employees have differing views on what is private and public?

16. Do you believe that the fact that your company is Swedish, is changing the working culture in the company's offices and facilities globally?

17. Is there anything you would like to add regarding Swedish and Indian working culture?

18. What do you think about the future? Does culture matter?
References


