



What happens with company culture when high and low masculine cultures merge?

A case study of the Joint Venture Sony Ericsson

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Foreword

Over the past 3,5 years we have learned and experienced a lot. We have learned that hard work is rewarding and that there is no such thing as giving up. This dissertation is our final assignment and it will put an end to our education at Kristianstad University. It will also symbolize a semester of ups and downs and we have learned the value of good co-operation.

We would like to thank our tutor, Håkan Pihl, for his great knowledge and his way of sharing it. His guidance has been valuable for us. Annika Fjelkner is another person who deserves a great thank you. Her knowledge in the English language has been priceless to us. A special thank to our interview persons. Without their participation, this dissertation could not have been written. Finally, we would like to thank our families and friends for their support.

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Abstract

In today's global market, international mergers are very common. Different companies with various cultures, start working together. There is a limited amount of literature about what really happens with the company culture when companies merge. There are also few case studies on culture integration of merging companies. Therefore, we would like to make such study and Sony Ericsson provides us with a perfect case, because of their cultural background.

The purpose with our dissertation is to investigate what happens with company culture when a company with high masculinity and a company with low masculinity merge. To study this subject we will try to identify important dimensions concerning masculinity and to develop hypotheses about what happens with company culture when the companies merge. Empirically, we want to try this theory by investigate the company culture, with focus on masculinity, at Sony Ericsson today, five years after their merger. Since Sony and Ericsson have roots in Japan and Sweden and these two countries are very dissimilar when it comes to company culture and the level of masculinity, this specific company provide us with the perfect example to study.

We have made a qualitative study at Sony Ericsson, because our research is descriptive. We conducted an interview and interviewed five persons at Sony Ericsson, one woman and four men.

After conducting our study we have concluded that the integration of masculinity at Sony Ericsson has been very successful. There have been no major culture shocks, according to our respondents.

Keywords: Merger, Company Culture, Masculinity

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1. Introduction

The background of the dissertation is presented. The problem, research questions, purpose and limitations are described. The outline of the dissertation is briefly presented. Finally, a short summary of the chapter is given.

1.1 Background

The world is filled with all kind of cultures. Cultures could be very dissimilar and people within it hold a different set of values. Different cultures can create both opportunities and threats for the operating organization. This is undoubtedly shown in many international companies today. One single company can contain all kind of cultures, because of the broad co-operations between countries. It is defenetly a challenge for companies to merge two entities into one. The most crucial task is to mix and transform the two cultures into a new one which is suitable for the new organization (Wood, 2005).

Cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&A), Joint Ventures (JVs) and alliances have grown explosively during the 1980s, but the phenomenon can be traced back to the early 70s and even the late 60s. Many studies have demonstrated the culture's influence on the performance of M&A, JVs and alliances. It is a fact that cultural differences are more likely to destroy an ongoing cooperation than market issues. The most common reasons for merger failures are lack of a shared vision, cultural mismatch and poor communication (Morosini, 1998).

According to an international study made by Hofstede (2001) concerning culture, national cultures and company cultures are strongly linked together. This means that a company's culture is very influenced by the national culture, in which they operate. Company culture is the term given to the shared values and practices of the employees. Hofstede identifies five different dimensions concerning national culture. These five dimensions are applicable in a workplace as well. He named the

dimensions power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity and long-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001).

When people hear the expression masculinity, the first thing that comes to ones mind is the difference between genders. But in practise, masculinity is much more complex. After analysing Hofstede's study we found several other aspects with major importance. Those are work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees. We have chosen to focus on the masculinity versus femininity dimension. There are several reasons for this choice; one of those reasons is the lack of written material about the impact of masculinity in connection with mergers. The motive for studying Sony Ericsson is because the company is an international merger with roots in both Japan and Sweden. According to Hofstede (2001) Japan has the highest level (95) of masculinity and Sweden has the lowest (5) and therefore Sony Ericsson is a perfect case to investigate. The second reason is that the chosen aspects, which explain masculinity, also cover parts of Hofstede's other four dimensions. There is also a limited amount of literature about what really happens with the company culture when companies merge.

Sony Ericsson is a Joint Venture established in 2001 by the Japanese consumer electronics company Sony Corporation and the Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson that make mobile phones. Both companies have finished making their own mobile phones, though they now make phones together. The reason for the merger is to mix Ericsson's technological leadership in the communications sector with Sony's global marketing skills (Wikipedia 1).

Sony Ericsson is a global company that constantly develops. We find it interesting to investigate how the merger has affected the company culture, concerning the level of masculinity. We find it interesting to see what happens when one high MAS culture (Japan) and one low MAS culture (Sweden) meet. We know from other researchers, such as Hofstede and Bjerke, that Japanese and Swedish level of masculinity is very different and we will investigate how the company has managed the integration, in a Swedish perspective.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose with our dissertation is to investigate what happens with company culture when a company with high masculinity and a company with low masculinity merge. To study this subject we will try to identify important dimensions concerning masculinity and to develop hypotheses about what happens with company culture when the companies merge. Empirically, we want to try this theory by investigate the company culture, with focus on masculinity, at Sony Ericsson today, five years after their merger. Since Sony and Ericsson have roots in Japan and Sweden and these two countries are very dissimilar when it comes to company culture and the level of masculinity, this specific company provide us with the perfect example to study.

1.3 Problem and research questions

In today's global market, international mergers are very common. Different companies with various cultures, start working together. Some parts of a culture are easy to integrate, like working routines and rules. Other parts, such as values and beliefs, are more complex and evolve over time. One of the biggest challenges for companies that want to create a Joint Venture is the difference in company culture. There is a limited amount of literature about what really happens with the company culture when companies merge. There are also few case studies on culture integration of merging companies, as mentioned above. Like mentioned earlier Sony Ericsson provides us with a perfect case for our study, because of their differences when it comes to cultural background.

The research is based on the following questions:

- What is company culture?
- What is the difference between low and high masculinity cultures?
- How does the Swedish part of Sony Ericsson experience the level of masculinity at the company today, five years after the merger?
- Was the integration of the Joint Venture culture successful, concerning masculinity? Did culture shocks occur?
- How important is it to identify a new common culture when companies merge?

1.4 Limitations

One of our limitations is that we only study one company, Sony Ericsson. We find it interesting because the two companies, Sony from Japan and Ericsson from Sweden which have merged recently, have different views on masculinity. Another limitation is the expression company culture; we only look at the level of masculinity. We believe that masculinity has a very big impact on company culture. Further on we only study the level of masculinity in work place, not in general and we only consider Swedes perspective.

1.5 Chapter overview

The dissertation has the following outline.

- Chapter 2:** Presentation of the method, research approach and strategy.
- Chapter 3:** Presentation of the theoretical framework. First, we investigate the literature concerning international mergers, company culture and masculinity. Second, we evaluate the theories, and focus on information that is the most applicable to our study.
- Chapter 4:** Presentation of the empirical method. We discuss the research strategy, sample and limitations. We also discuss the validity and reliability.
- Chapter 5:** Presentation and evaluation of the result from our interviews.
- Chapter 6:** Analysis of the result.
- Chapter 7:** Presentation of conclusions and summary of the dissertation. Presentation of self criticism, practical implications and future research.

1.6 Abbreviations

Here we present our definitions most commonly used in this dissertation.

LPD- Low Power Distance

HPD- High Power Distance

LUA- Low Uncertainty Avoidance

HUA- High Uncertainty Avoidance

Low IDV- Low Individualism

High IDV- High Individualism

Low MAS- Low Masculinity

High MAS- High Masculinity

Low LTO- Low Long-term orientation

High LTO- High Long-term orientation

SEMC- Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications

1.7 Summary

The world today contains of many different cultures. Culture is very complex. This dissertation will focus on company culture, especially on the level of masculinity. Masculinity has a very big impact on company culture. Hofstede has made an important study concerning national cultural differences. He identifies five dimensions, of which the level of masculinity is one. Our result will be based on a study conducted at the Joint Venture Sony Ericsson, where we will study low and high masculinity from a Swedish perspective.

2. Methodology

The choice of methodology is presented. The data collection, both secondary and primary, is described. The research approach and philosophy are presented and discussed. Finally, a short summary of the chapter is given.

2.1 Choice of method

First of all, we collected general information about mergers and company culture. We also read about the history of Sony Ericsson to get a better understanding of the company which we focus on. Second, we contacted the company and started to plan interviews. Our goal was to interview Swedish employees at Sony Ericsson, both male and female. The reason for the choice of interviews is that it is the most suitable for this kind of qualitative study. There are several reasons for why interviews are the most appropriate way for us. The first reason is the nature of our problem and purpose. Our purpose is descriptive and we want to explain a current situation. When conducting interview we have the opportunity to ask follow-on questions, which gives the respondents an opportunity to explain their answers further. Another reason is the personal contact. We believe that the validity of our dissertation will increase because of the trust we create with our respondents. We think that it is important for us to make the interviews at the work place Sony Ericsson. This will provide us with the opportunity to experience the atmosphere at the company. There are several advantages with interviews, such as the degree of control of the interview situation. Another advantage is that interviews are not time constraint. Although, we make deep interviews, the collection of data is faster than for example questionnaires. Yet, there are disadvantages with interviews as well. It is not suitable to ask sensitive questions during an interview, such as questions about wages. Another disadvantage is that the analysis of data is often very complicated (Christensen, Andersson, Engdahl, Haglund, 2001).

Our study will hopefully show if Japanese and Swedish company culture match with the literature we have read and our hypotheses, regarding the level of masculinity. That will help us to understand the general situation at the company and discover any possible problems with the integration of the different company cultures. It will also help us to be able to give suggestions about what to consider when merging.

2.2 Data collection

We have used both primary and secondary data in the dissertation. This part will explain how we collected the data and how we processed it further.

2.2.1 Secondary data

When we started collecting the secondary data, our first focus was on the topic mergers. There was a big amount of written material about mergers, especially about successful mergers and cultural management. One group of authors who write about this is Gancel, Rodgers and Raynaud, (2002). They write about successful mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances and how to bridge corporate cultures. Another famous author on the topic is Morosini, (1998). He focuses on the topic, how to manage cultural differences in corporate alliances. Mainela (2005) has studied international joint ventures and the article is about how to manage this kind of mergers.

Our second focus was on company culture. Many researchers have investigated this as well. The most famous and outstanding one is Hofstede. He is a role model for other researchers on the topic. Hofstede, (2001), made an important study about national culture. He argued that national culture is linked together with company culture. We have investigated the part concerning organizational culture and culture at work place. Hofstede identified five dimensions concerning national culture. These dimensions can also be applicable when studying company culture. After reviewing literature about company culture, we investigated culture shocks. Hofstede, Pedersen and Hofstede (2002) have explained the concept culture shocks. Other researchers such as Fenwick, Edwards and Buckley (2002) explain culture shock in their article as well.

Our third topic to investigate was masculinity and femininity. This topic came to our mind when investigating Hofstede's five dimensions. Masculinity is a big part of company culture and there is limited research on the topic. All Hofstede's five dimensions are linked together. Our interpretation is that masculinity has influences from all the other dimensions. After taking part of his study, we got interested in the topic and decided to make further research. Another researcher in the field of culture and masculinity is Bjerke, (1999). He has listed the most typical factors in cultures with high and low masculinity.

2.2.2 Primary data

As we explained earlier, the most appropriate way of collecting the primary data was to do interviews. Our study was qualitative, which means that the data was non-numerical and not quantified (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007).

The purpose with our dissertation is to investigate what happens with company culture when a company with high MAS and a company with low MAS merge. As we mentioned earlier our study was made on the Joint Venture Sony Ericsson. Our interview questions were connected to four different areas which we chose. Those were work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees.

We started by sending an e-mail with a cover letter and information about our dissertation to Sony Ericsson. We got access to a suitable person that we were told could help us. She was willing to help us by sending material to us and to get interviewed. Through our contacts that we have at Sony Ericsson, we were able to make four more interviews as we planned. Totally, we made five profound interviews. These interviews will hopefully provide us with the data we need.

2.3 Research approach

There are two main research approaches one can adapt to reach the purpose of a study. The chosen approach guides the authors and readers through the methodology. An inductive research approach involves the development of a theory as a result of the observation of empirical data. A deductive research approach involves the testing

of a theoretical proposition by the employment of a research strategy specifically designed for the purpose of its testing (Saunders *et al*, 2007).

2.3.1 Deductive approach

A deductive approach was the most appropriate for us, since our purpose is to try a modification of an existing theory. We began by reading the literature and found suitable theories. We modified existing theories into hypotheses, which we tried later on.

2.4 Research philosophy

Research philosophy describes the way of thinking when it comes to development of knowledge. There are three different research philosophies; positivism, realism and interpretivism (Saunders *et al*, 2007).

2.4.1 Positivism

The positivistic philosophy can be divided into two steps; in the first step, one starts by using existing theory to develop hypotheses. The second step involves testing and confirmation of the hypotheses (Saunders *et al*, 2007).

According to Saunders (2007), the deductive approach is linked with a positivistic research philosophy. Since we apply a deductive approach, our dissertation is based on positivism. Our dissertation focuses on a problem which is independent from us, which also states that we have a positivistic view. As can be seen above, we have used existing theories to develop hypotheses. After that the hypotheses were tested and accepted or rejected.

2.5 Summary

We started by collecting secondary data, to be able to create our hypotheses. We applied a deductive research approach, which means that we tried already existing theory. Our research philosophy was based on positivism, since it is linked together with deductive approach. Our primary data was collected through interviews.

3. Theoretical framework

The theoretical part of the dissertation is presented. First, theories concerning mergers, company culture and masculinity are presented. Second, the factors used in our study are explained. Finally, a short summary of the chapter is given.

3.1 Introduction

We have found a lot of written material about international mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances which we will present in this chapter. We also concentrate our theoretical part on company culture and the relation between national and company culture. Hofstede made one of the biggest studies in this field and we will present his results in this chapter. As we mentioned earlier in the dissertation, Hofstede has identified five dimensions concerning national culture. These dimensions are, according to Hofstede, also applicable to company culture. One of these is masculinity versus femininity, which we have chosen to focus on. Therefore, we have investigated this factor additionally.

3.2 Merger theories

The expression mergers and acquisitions, or M&A, refers to the occasion when a number of companies merge into one. Generally, mergers occur in a friendly way when the executives participate in the process of doing a successful combination of their companies. Mergers and acquisitions can also happen in a more aggressive way, like a hostile takeover. This means that one company buys the majority of the outstanding shares in another company (Wikipedia 2).

A strategic alliance is an equally beneficial long-term relationship between two, or more, companies to reach goals or to meet a competitive market together, while still remain separate organizations. Each of the participants brings their different strengths and capabilities into the arrangement. Strategic alliances bring enterprises different

kind of benefits. First of all, the company gets access to knowledge and expertise beyond their own. Second, the company can easier enter a foreign market. Strategic alliances can be created in several sizes and forms (Wikipedia 4).

A Joint Venture is a way for two, or more, companies to join in economic activity together. The companies agree to create a unit, where both companies contribute with shares. The Joint Venture can be created for just one project or it can be a continuing cooperation, like Sony Ericsson. There are many internal reasons for a company to form a Joint Venture. One reason is access to new technologies and customers. Another one is economies of scale and advantages of size (Wikipedia 3). When talking about these merger theories, one must keep in mind that all economic activities are embedded in relationship between individuals. This means that social skills are reflected in all other operations of an organization. The business relationships are often built in multicultural and turbulent settings where the managers need to interact and establish relationships with actors with diverse cultural backgrounds and interests. This is especially shown in international joint ventures (Mainela, 2005).

Today, we see globalization everywhere. Most companies strive after becoming bigger and gaining a larger market share. Globalization has increased the number of mergers and joint-ventures across the world. Different companies in numerous countries work together in joint-ventures, which mean that different cultures also meet. One of the biggest challenges for companies that want to create a Joint Venture is the difference in company culture. According to Gancel, Rodgers and Raynaud, the authors of the book named *Successful mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances - how to bridge corporate cultures* (2002), the culture issue is very complex to deal with. It is demonstrated that this problem is the first cause of “merger disappointment.” It is possible to mix culture at a personal level, but when it comes to a bigger group of people, the cultural integration is much harder to cope with. That is why companies, which join and become global, may have problems with cultural differences (Gancel *et al*, 2002).

Cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&A), Joint Ventures (JVs) and alliances have grown explosively during the 1980s, but the phenomenon can be traced back to the early 70s and even the late 60s. These internationalization modes have grown

most rapidly in Europe and in the US. The wave of M&A:s has resulted in them becoming a major strategic tool for multinational enterprises. During the late 21st century, M&A has become one of the most common internationalization modes. M&A, JVs and alliances all focuses on combining the companies' resources across borders. The numbers of JVs, in particular, have been facing a growth during the late 80s and 90s. This internationalization mode is now a dominant one along with M&A. Both M&A and JVs are often associated with the creation of economic value, but many companies face difficulties as well, e.g. cultural differences (Morosini, 1998).

Modern researchers have devoted a lot of time to the impact of company culture in M&A, JVs and alliances. The decision of entry mode appears to be significantly affected by both the country of origin and the culture of the firm. A number of studies have found that firms in Europe are more likely to engage in Joint Venture activity overseas than are American firms. There are also important differences among American, British and Japanese companies. A study was made by two Americans, Kogut and Singh, which proved that there is a clear link between national culture and entry mode. These two researchers came up with two main hypotheses. The hypotheses investigated how national culture was linked together with choice of entry mode. One focused on cultural distance between countries and the other on attitudes towards uncertainty avoidance. Kogut and Singh tested their hypotheses on 228 companies, which were about to enter the United States market through acquisitions, Joint Ventures and wholly owned Greenfield. They found empirical support for their hypotheses about the effect of national culture on entry mode (Morosini, 1998).

Many studies have demonstrated the culture's influence on the performance of M&A, JVs and alliances. It is a fact that cultural differences are more likely to destroy an ongoing cooperation than are market issues. The planning before the merger is therefore very important; it is the foundation for the future cultural compatibility between the merging companies. The most common reasons for merger failures according to Morosini (1998) are listed below:

- *Lack of shared vision*
- *Leadership clash*
- *Inadequate integration planning*

- *Exclusive focus on cost savings*
- *Cultural mismatch*
- *Low management commitment*
- *Failure to manage customer attention*
- *Unclear financial case*
- *Poor communication*

The performance of an M&A, JVs or alliance is seen as a function of elements that are either internal or external. Internal elements are financial assets, strategic vision or their marketing assets of the firm. On the other hand, external elements are the firm's market position or the marketplace. Apart from the internal and external factors, a company must be described by its social elements, to be completely understandable when it comes to the impact of the cultural values. First of all, the social factors include how a company interacts with the internal and external resources. Second, the social factors include to what extent the company learn from their experience and mistakes. Third, it concentrates on how people communicate and create the company identity (Morosini, 1998).

3.3 Managing successful mergers

To be able to manage cultural differences in connection with mergers there are some things to keep in mind. According to Harris and Elashmawi (1998) there are some main points one should keep in mind when dealing with multicultural mergers.

- *Define the common desired culture for the organization.*
This first point is the foundations for the whole organizational culture. This is a tool to survive, but one must be aware of that the culture might change over time. People should also keep in mind that their daily behaviour's are being influenced by the values set by an organization.
- *Culture consists of many dimensions and all must be taken into consideration.*
The dimensions are language, non-verbal communication, religion, art, food, space and time orientation.

- *Organizational culture reflects the people within the organization and their life experience.*

The culture in an organization is based on people's life experience and the group which they are associated with.

- *Be aware of each others differences.*

When interacting with each other one should start by searching for common values and be aware of differences. With this knowledge, co-operation is easier to manage.

Finally, the most important thing is to recognize ones culture and be aware of its strengths and weaknesses. This makes it easier to interact with people from other cultures.

The authors of the book *Successful mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances – how to bridge corporate cultures* have, as well as Harris and Elashmawi, identified guiding principles that contribute to successful integration of culture. They named those guidelines *Culture Bridging Code*. After reading the book, we selected the most important factors, which are presented below. To be able to merge successfully, it is crucial to have a well defined strategy. The first step is to put culture on the agenda. This is to create awareness among the managers and to make them give priority to culture. The next step is bending with differences. First, create awareness of each others similarities and differences. Second, see the similarities as a great advantage and try to make something beneficial out of the differences. Third, just like any other business challenge, differences have to be managed over time. The next step is to build a map of the desired culture. It is important to define the desired culture but it is not always easy. An unclear culture can create confusion among employees and decreases efficiency and the level of performance. When creating the desired culture it is crucial to communicate openly and honestly. Both employees and managers have to be open and communicative. From the very beginning of a merger, people have the right to know what is going on in the organization. This is a perfect way of creating trust in the organization (Gancel *et al*, 2002). Glaister, Husan, and Buckley (2002) have also been studying how to manage international joint ventures. Their article is based on experiences from partners and managers. The authors identified three areas

of learning: the management of the international joint venture formation process, the management of the boundary relationship between partners and the management of the operation of the joint venture. In the article, they present different ways of learning and managing a joint venture. They also point out that there is no general way to success, because every organization is different and need to be managed in its own way. The most crucial thing for the companies to keep in mind is that they strive for the same goal.

Jan Thornbury (2003) wrote the article “Creating a living culture: the challenges for business leaders.” The article is about cultural management and how business leaders could manage bigger cultural changes. She starts by pointing out that one of the most important task for business leaders are to establish common values for the organization. These values should be a basis for any operation in the company. If the values are unclear, or not existing, it is a risk that employees only look at their own interests instead of the stakeholders. But how can a common organizational culture be managed? This is the question that Jan Thornbury wants to answer in this article. She starts by explaining how values are connected with basic believes. Then, she presents a process for changing a company culture. Finally, she discusses the major role of a business leader in the changing process.

3.4 Company Culture

Culture is something that you cannot see or touch. Yet, it shapes the thoughts and actions of each and every one of us. According to the Oxford University Press *Dictionary of Business* culture is defined as “the values, beliefs, norms and traditions within an organization that influence the behaviour of its members.” Björn Bjerke (1999) explains the meaning of values, believes and norms. Values is what is important, believes is how things work and norms is the way people does things in an organization. Company culture is also a framework for acceptable business behaviour. It is something that evolves and that you learn over time. Organizations develop certain, norms and patterns of speech and behaviours that make them unique and it also bonds members of the company together. Every company have its own kind of culture, even groups within the same company can have diverse cultures. It is said that the founders of a company builds up a mixture of their own company

culture. It is generally defined as a mix of basic assumptions that they have developed. The term company culture has been used for a very long time, but there has been more focus on company culture over the last two decades. One of the reasons for the focus on company culture is the increased competition. This means that organizations are more often compared and contrasted with each other. The second reason is internalization, which has lead people with different thoughts, backgrounds and education to come together and plan a mutual future (Gancel *et al*, 2002).

Many people believe that globalization will lead to a homogenization of culture. National cultures will become one over time; people get this impression from the environment they live in. If we look around us and at other countries, we will see practical similarities, for example, people dress the same way and buy the same products. This is the first impression of the similarities between different nations and cultures today. But in reality, national culture is more complex than all these practical similarities. There is a deeper level of values and beliefs when it comes to national culture (Hofstede, 2001). The big issue with the mix up between company and national culture is that the national culture has a complex meaning, it is something that goes on from generation to generation. Company culture is something that is built up within an organization. Every company has its own culture. But still, national and company cultures are related to each other. The founders and leaders in many companies have different backgrounds and they implement their norms and beliefs into the organization. It is possible to relate company and national culture to each other, but at a certain level (Ibid). Other researchers such as Kanter and Corn (1994) made a study to gain more knowledge about managerial issues that could be caused by cultural differences. They also had a focus on difficulties that came up and how they were solved. The goal was to search for organizational changes that can come up when two different companies merge together. Their hypothesis was that they would find out that cultural differences plays an important role when it comes to integration of several cultures. But after the study they found out that national culture was one of the smaller variables that affected the integration of the different companies and organizational success. The managers who were interviewed could identify some ways in which they differed culturally from their foreign colleagues, in values

interpersonal style and organizational approach. One of the biggest issues that came up during the interviews was language problems (Kanter *et al*, 1994).

3.5 Culture shocks

The expression *culture shock* can be explained as a sort of confusion and anxiety that one might feel when operating in a different country or culture. In the book named *Exploring Culture - Exercises, Stories and Synthetic Cultures* the authors Hofstede Pedersen and Hofstede (2002) explains culture shock as a process of initial adjustment to an unfamiliar culture. They also point out that it is important to keep in mind that culture shocks are a personal experience. This means that people are affected differently, and have diversified opinions towards changes. According to the authors above, there are several signs that one is experiencing culture shock. One sign could be that the values that one believes are good and desirable might not be respected by another culture. Another sign is that one feels anxious, disoriented, depressed and dissatisfied with the new ways of operating. Further on, if one notices that the social skills are not working as they used to do, it is a sign of culture shock. According to the authors, there are several stages that one is experiencing when dealing with culture shock. The first stage is called honeymoon. At this stage everything is exciting and fun. Although, it is very important to keep in mind that ones basic identity is still rooted back home. The next stage is disorientation. Here, one tries to cope with the new culture and environment. At this stage one can feel disoriented and confused. Further on, the third stage is irritability and hostility. Usually at this stage one feels a lot of anger towards the new culture, because of the difficulties that one might experience when adapting. The fourth stage is adjustment and integration. At this point, one is feeling more positive towards the new culture. The positive and negative sides of both cultures are easy to recognize at this stage. The last stage is the biculturalism. In this stage, one feels comfortable in both the old and the new culture. Other researchers such as Fenwick, Edwards and Buckley (2002) explain culture shock as a confusion experienced when individuals confront new beliefs, attitudes and values. When people have to deal with this kind of feelings of resentment it might impact the managerial work as well. Frustrations and tensions may arise between the manager and the subordinate if they have different national

background, for example the manager rejects the local ways of managing by imposing home country ways (Fenwick *et al*, 2002).

3.6 Geert Hofstede

One of the most important researchers on cultural differences is Geert Hofstede. He made a thorough study during the 1970's. His work was based on IBM, a world leading Computer Company. He defined four factors, and later on, a fifth one. Hofstede created an index score for each of these five dimensions. The scale was from 0 to 100 and a high score meant high individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity. Hofstede focused on national cultural differences, but this dissertation only covers culture at work places. Many researchers after Hofstede have used his research as a starting point for their own research, and therefore we find it natural and self-evident to use his research as one of our main references. The reason for presenting all Hofstede's dimension is because it provides us with a greater understanding of his entire research. The five dimensions are strongly linked together and the masculinity dimension is influenced by them all. You will find some examples on how they are linked together bellow. Since our main focus is on the masculinity versus femininity dimension we investigate this dimension further in this chapter (Hofstede, 2001).

3.6.1 Power Distance in organizations

Power distance focuses on how a society deals with the fact that people are unequal in both physical and intellectual capabilities. Inequality can appear in different fields, for example wealth and power or prestige. When it comes to companies, the inequality is usually formalized in boss-subordinates relationship. For example, in some companies the employees always call their boss by their surname. This is one way of showing the inequality in a company. Japan's power distance index (PDI) is 54 and Sweden's PDI is 31. It is not that big difference between these two countries, in this particular factor.

In organizations with low power distance (LPD), flat organizations are common. This means that the organization is decentralized, which implies that the power is widespread among the employees. The decision making is decentralized as well, and

the authority is less concentrated. The proportion of supervisors is small in LPD organizations. The supervisors have confidence in their personnel and their experience. Hierarchy in LPD organizations means an inequality of role and is established for convenience. This means that there are different roles in the organization just because it is necessary and that everybody is just as valuable. Every kind of work is valued the same in LPD organizations. The relationship between subordinates and superiors are simple and practical in LPD organizations. Subordinates in LPD organizations expect to be consulted. The ideal boss in a LPD organization is a practical democrat who relies on support from co-workers. Satisfaction, performance and productivity are the goals in many organizations. To get there, LPD organizations use consultative leadership. The salary differences between the top and bottom of organization is narrow in LPD organizations. The managers are satisfied with their salaries and are pleased with their career (Hofstede, 2001).

The structure of organizations differs a lot depending on the power distance index. In high power distance (HPD) organizations, the decision structure is more centralized and the authority is concentrated. This means more power to the top managers and less power to the employees. Tall organizations are common in HPD cultures. The number of supervisors is high and they believe in formal rules. In HPD organizations the boss is an autocrat or seen as a good father, with good intentions. He sees himself as a caring decisions maker. HPD organizations use authoritative leadership and close supervision. In HPD there is no defence against power abuse by superior. The managers are not at all involved in everyday decisions. Salary differences are wide in HPD organizations and the managers feel underpaid. Many feel unhappy as well. The employees are frequent overloaded and there is a role uncertainty. The subordinates are more used to be told. At the same time, the subordinates are inspired by formal authority and sanctions (Ibid).

3.6.2 Uncertainty Avoidance in organizations

The uncertainty avoidance (UA) dimension measures the extent to which different cultures socialize the members into accepting ambiguous situations and tolerating uncertainty. Uncertainty means the insecurity about the future. Insecurity is a basic

fact of human life with which we try to cope with technology, law, and religion. When it comes to companies, they cope with this kind of uncertainty through technology, rituals and rules. Japan's uncertainty avoidance index (UAI) is 92 and that rank Japan number seven. Sweden's UAI is only 29, which put Sweden on 49/50 place. Japan is clearly among the top five of the list, while Sweden is at the bottom. This fact is strong evidence that there are some big cultural differences between these two countries (Hofstede, 2001).

In low uncertainty avoidance (LUA) organizations, like Sweden there is a preference for smaller organizations. In work places with LUA, exactness and punctuality have to be learned over time. People in LUA organizations are relationship oriented and they often believe in generalists and common sense. There is a lot of scepticism towards new technological solutions in LUA cultures, and innovators feel independent of rules. The frame of minds towards innovations depending on the uncertainty avoidance index, but normally innovations are welcomed, but not always taken seriously. The top managers have different roles depending on the uncertainty avoidance index. In LUA organizations, the managers are involved in the overall strategy. There is a high tolerance for doubt in structures and procedures in LUA organizations. The power of superiors depends on position and relationship in LUA cultures. In LUA organizations there is a strong appeal for changes when it comes to leadership. The superiors in LUA cultures are optimistic about employees' ambition and leadership skills (Ibid).

High uncertainty avoidance (HUA) organizations, like Japan, prefer large organizations. The loyalty is much stronger in these kinds of organizations and there is a shared belief that people feel limited by rules and they are strongly task oriented. People in HUA organizations are positive towards new technology. In HUA organizations, the managers are less involved in the everyday operation and there is a strong tradition of hierarchical control, and the power of superiors mainly depends on control and uncertainties. The managers feel very pessimistic about employees' ambition and leadership skills. In HUA organizations there is a clear image of how the management should work. Precision and punctuality come naturally and do not have to be managed (Ibid).

3.6.3 Individualism versus Collectivism in organizations

The individualism versus collectivism dimension focuses on the relationship between the individual and his or her fellows. In individualistic societies, the ties between individuals are loose and individual achievement and freedom is highly valued. In societies where collectivism is emphasized, the ties between individuals are tight and individual achievement and freedom is poorly valued. Japan's level of individualism (IDV) is about average with 46 points, comparing to the 50 selected countries that were studied. Sweden's level of individualism is a bit higher with 71 points; it is one of the highest in the selected group of countries. When the IDV is low it is associated to the collectivism. Below we have listed some of the differences between the collectivism (Low IDV) and individualism (High IDV) (Hofstede, 2001).

If the IDV is low in an organization, the employees work for the whole group and this means that employees and managers like team work. For example, when it comes to performance, the employees perform best in groups. Another issue that points out the importance of teamwork in collectivistic organizations is training. If an organization wants to train its employees, the training is most successful when focused at a group level. Organizations with low IDV are relationship oriented and this means that the personal relationships overcome task and company. In practice there is a wide range of types of relationships between the employer and the employees. The relationship between the manager and the employee in an organization with low IDV is based on basic moral. It is similar to a family link between the two parts. This leads to collective decision making (Ibid).

If the IDV is high in an organization, the employees perform best as individuals. They like to work individually and to solve different tasks by themselves, which is the opposite of organizations with low IDV. The level of individualism is also revealed when it comes to the training of employees in an organization; training is most effective when focused on the individual. Organizations with high IDV are task oriented. This means that the task and company are more important than personal relationship. The relationship between the employer and the employee is like a business deal in a "labour market". This means that if the two parts have reasons to end the work relationship it is socially accepted. Some of the reasons could be poor

performance of the employee, or a better pay offer from another employer. When it comes to decision making in organizations with high IDV, decisions are usually made individually (Ibid).

3.6.4 Long- versus short-term orientation in organizations

This fourth dimension is completely independent from the others. The dimension deals with two sections. The first one includes family, work and social life. The other one deals with ways of thinking, and includes religious and philosophical themes, e.g. to what extent honest living is a goal. It is also related to the ability to solve problems. Long term orientation is strongly linked to national economic growth (Hofstede, 2001).

In low LTO organizations it is important to have a good short-term result. It is also strongly recommended to keep family and business separated. On the other hand, in high LTO organizations, it is much more important to build a good relationship and a favourable market position. Vertical and horizontal coordination are also more common in high LTO organizations. Control and ways to adapt are important factors in both high and low LTO organizations (Ibid).

3.6.5 Masculinity versus Femininity in organizations

The masculinity versus femininity dimension looks at the relationship between gender and work roles. In masculine cultures gender equality is sharply differentiated and they mainly value competitiveness and confidence. In feminine cultures, gender equality is less distinguished, and little differentiation is made between men and women performing the same tasks. Some of the values in feminine cultures are compromising and listening to ones intuition. The masculinity versus femininity dimension shows most difference between the Japanese and Swedish company culture. Japan's masculinity index (MAS) is 95 and that rank Japan to the first place, while Sweden's masculinity index is 5, which rank Sweden at the very last place. These cultural differences affect the value of work in people's life. Since our main focus is on the level of masculinity, this dimension is illustrated in a figure later on. Below, you will also see some examples on how this dimension is linked with the other dimensions. This will provide us with a greater understanding of this dimension (Hofstede, 2001).

In low MAS organizations, like Sweden, people believe that one should stress on equality, team work and the value of the work life. The low uncertainty avoidance organizations, such as Swedish organizations, are relationship oriented and this fact is related to team work in low MAS organizations. This shows us the link between these two dimensions. In low MAS organizations the managers are seen as employees at the same level as the others. Female managers are also seen as softer, and they always try to use their intuition, they are more emotional and usually open to compromise. This aspect is linked to the power distance dimension. The relationship between subordinates and superiors are simple and practical in low power distance organizations. In low MAS organizations the management consists of both men and women and the wage gap between the genders is small. Feminine organization strives for equality. In organizations with low MAS, people prefer small organizations. According to a researcher mentioned in Hofstede's book *Culture's Consequences* (2001), low MAS stood for "small is beautiful". Less working hours is also preferred in low MAS organizations. This is one of the reasons that employees experience lower work stress, which means less burnout symptoms in the company. The main factors regarding low masculinity, according to us, are presented below in Figure 3.1 (Ibid).

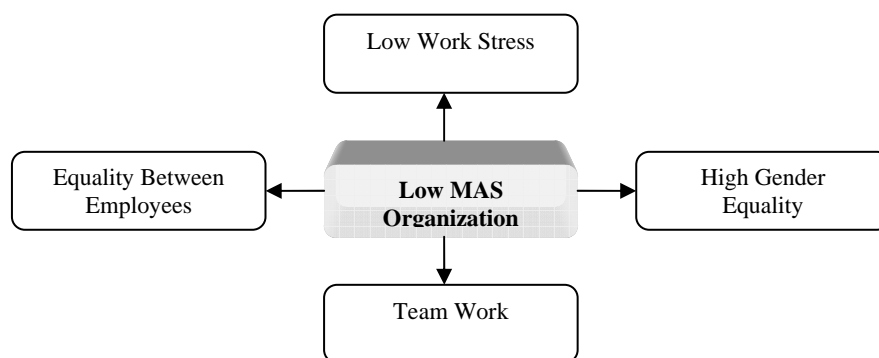


Figure 3.1 Low Masculinity Organizations

In organizations with a high level of masculinity, like Japan, one should stress fair play, internal competition and accomplishment. Compared to low MAS organizations where the managers are seen as employees at the same level as the others, the

managers in organizations with high MAS are seen as heroes. The managers in masculine organizations are expected to be very determined, confident and aggressive but also fair. There is an inequality between employees in high MAS organizations, for example in some companies the employees always call their boss by their surname. This is one way of showing the inequality in a company. This inequality is also shown in the power distance dimension. In an organization with high power distance, the subordinate have a high degree of respect towards his or her boss. In high MAS organizations there are fewer women in management, there are also large wage gaps between the genders compared to low MAS organizations. In organizations with high MAS, people prefer large companies and higher pay. According to a researcher mentioned in Hofstede's book *Culture's Consequences* (2001), the high MAS stood for "big is beautiful". The level of stress is high in high MAS organizations, which also leads to more burnout symptoms among the workers. It is shown in the high power distance dimension that the employees are frequent overloaded and there is a role uncertainty, which shows us that there is additional link between these two dimensions. As we can see there are many aspects that are linked to the masculinity versus femininity dimension. High masculinity is illustrated in Figure 3.2 (Ibid).

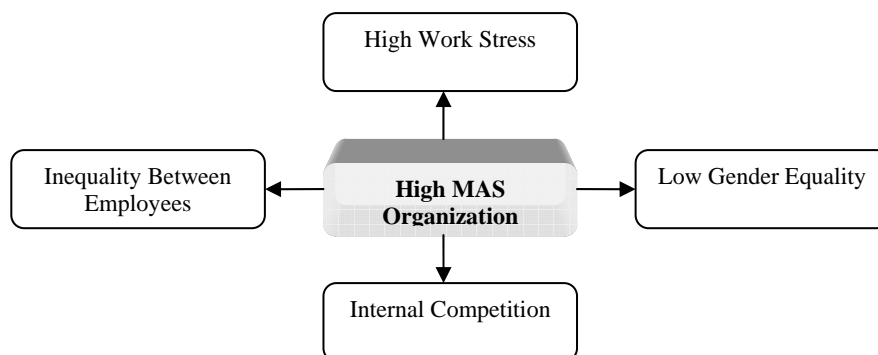


Figure 3.2 High Masculinity Organizations

3.6.6 Critique against Hofstede

There are several aspects about Hofstede's research that have been criticized. One aspect is that his research does not capture the fact that many cultures are influenced by more than one. Another one is that he only studies one industry and one particular company, IBM. He also excluded certain social classes from his study, for example unskilled manual workers. One also has to take into consideration that this is an old survey, which means that peoples' opinions might have changed over time (Hill, 2005). Hofstede has been criticized for using surveys; the critics mean that this is an inappropriate way of measuring cultural differences. Yet, Hofstede's research has been the starting point for following researchers and therefore been tested and confirmed. This proves that Hofstede's study is still valid and reliable.

3.7 Further research concerning masculinity and femininity

Other researchers, apart from Hofstede, have been investigating masculinity and femininity at work places. Björn Bjerke (1999) is one of them. He studies how business leaders think as a result of their national culture and how this is shown in practice. He focuses on five different cultures; American, Arab, Chinese, Japanese and Scandinavian culture. These cultures differ a lot. Bjerke, as well as Hofstede, argues that Japan is a very masculine culture and that Scandinavia is very feminine. Below, characteristics of both high and low masculine cultures according to Bjerke are presented.

3.7.1 Characteristics of low masculinity cultures

Bjerke identified factors that are typical for organizations with a low level of masculinity, such as Swedish organizations. People in low masculinity organizations work to live. This means that work plays a pretty small part in live. Bjerke claims that it is important with freedom and challenging jobs. He believes that people get motivated by challenging jobs and that people feel more comfortable having freedom. People in organizations with low masculinity have a need to make friends at work. This means that they are relationship oriented, rather than task oriented. Another characteristic of low masculinity, according to Bjerke, is the importance of variety and individual financial security. Variety is important for motivation as well. Individual financial security is crucial for people's calmness at work. People in low

masculinity organizations believe that value standards should apply to everybody in the organization. This means that everybody in an organization have the same value and should have the same benefits (Bjerke, 1999).

3.7.2 Characteristics of high masculinity cultures

According to Bjerke, there are a number of things that are typical for high masculine organizations, such as Japanese culture. Bjerke claims that people in high masculine organizations live to work. This means that work plays a significant role in ones life. The power in those organizations is often centralized. Large organizations are more attractive than small. The equality between genders is small in high masculine organizations. This means that the number of men and women in organizations differs a lot. There are also fewer women in more qualified jobs. These jobs are often better paid, which increases the wage gap. People in masculine organizations are materialistic; they are money and things oriented. Young people in these kinds of organizations are expected to make a career. If they do not, they see themselves as failures (Bjerke, 1999).

3.7.3 Critique against Bjerke

After studying both Hofstede and Bjerke, we explored many similarities in their research. We believe that those similarities have occurred because Bjerke use Hofstede's research as a starting point. Hofstede has made a more thorough research than Bjerke and therefore his study seems more valid. Yet, Bjerke's study is much more modern. To our advantage, Bjerke has confirmed some of Hofstede's results.

3.8 Explanatory factors concerning masculinity and femininity

After studying masculinity and femininity we identified four important factors. According to us, these factors explain whether an organization is masculine or feminine. The factors are work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees. All the factors play an important role in an organizations company culture. The factors are chosen completely from our point of view, and another researcher might choose another set of factors. Each of our factors is explained below.

3.8.1 Work stress

The degree of work stress differs a lot depending on the level of masculinity in an organization. As mentioned before, in organizations with high MAS work stress is often high and in organizations with low MAS work stress is often low (Hofstede, 2001). At every kind of work place, people feel pressured and stressed. The pressure can be motivating for the workers and managers at a company, but it can also affect them negatively. It is the uncontrolled pressure that can lead to negative stress. This kind of stress can undermine employees' performance and also make people ill. Stress is explained as a response to pressure. As we already mentioned, the pressure can to some degree be beneficial, for example it can inspire the employees to motivation and commitment, whereas too much pressure can be damaging for people. Some of the early obvious signs of what one could notice on ones colleague or manager are changes in behaviour, increased sick leave, reduced performance, over working or failure to delegate and reduced willingness to co-operate. Work related stress is also explained as the result of a conflict between the role and needs of an employee and the demands of the work place. Some of the factors that can lead to stress are unclear job description, long hours and no reward for a well done job or unpleasant working conditions (Draper, 2006). According to the authors of the article named *Part-Time and Casual Work in Retail Trade – Stress and other Factors Affecting the Work Place* (2004), the negative effects of gendered work environments which often include male-dominated organizational cultures and climates, discrimination against women, prejudice and sex stereotyping, are all well known to increase stress symptoms of women. Since this factor concern masculinity dimension it is important to be aware of this fact.

3.8.2 Team work

The number of team players and individualists differs a lot depending on if an organization is masculine or feminine. People's attitude towards co-operation is also very dissimilar depending on the organization. According to Hofstede, internal competition is favoured in high MAS organizations and we interpreted this as low degree of team work. Another reason for our way to interpret the low degree of team work in high MAS organizations is because our received material from Sony Ericsson states that the workers in Japan are seen as individualists. According to us, individualism at work places means that the workers prefer to work alone instead of

in groups. Even though Hofstede states that Japan is a collectivistic culture, it is important to keep in mind that masculinity/femininity and individualism/collectivism are statistically wholly independent. The individualism/collectivism is about “I” versus “we” and independence versus dependence on in-groups, whereas the masculinity/femininity is about ego enhancement versus relationship enhancement, regardless of group ties. Hofstede says that people in low MAS organization prefer team work, instead of individual work and internal competition. This means that they favour group work and co-operation. There are advantages and disadvantages with both individual work and team work. In today’s international organizations, there is often room for both individual work and team work and this mixture makes organizations really strong. After reading and analysing the factor team work, we interpreted this factor in this way. We are aware of that some people might think differently about this specific area.

3.8.3 Gender equality

The difference between genders is a very important issue, when discussing masculinity and femininity. This is probably the first issue that comes to people’s mind. The way men and women behave towards each other and co-operate with each other is one area. Another area is the number of males and females, and how many female managers there are in the organization. In many companies there is also a big wage gap between male and female employees. The clear gender roles have been changing for a long time and the roles are not so clear anymore. But still, in some cultures, like high masculine cultures, the gap between genders is still very big. This can be shown in many different ways; wage, positions and behaviour towards each other. According to Hofstede (2001) the gender equality is high in organizations with low masculinity and low in high MAS organizations.

3.8.4 Equality between employees

Equality is a complex expression. In companies, one can experience all kinds of equalities or inequalities between employees. It can consider equality or inequality between the genders, or race. Those are some of the inequalities that can occur in companies. Another problem that occurs in many companies is the inequality between managers and subordinates. For example, if a subordinate wants to present his or her opinion to the boss, it is not always acceptable; some people do not even dare to say

what they think. In general, managers at high positions have a lot of work to do, and because of this, employees can experience that the managers are unavailable. This can lead to a misunderstanding, where subordinates believe that the managers do not cooperate with them as they should. The level of equality between employees differs a lot depending on whether an organization has low or high masculinity. In low MAS organizations there is equality between employees and in organizations with high MAS there is an inequality instead.

3.9 Summary

To be able to conduct this study we had to make a thorough review of the existing literature. Since we are studying international mergers and company culture we had to find relevant literature about mergers and company culture. Mergers and acquisitions are very common today. Many companies want to gain competitive advantages and market shares by merging with other companies. They strive to become global. But when companies from different countries merge together, the diversified cultures can affect the merger and cause different kind of failures. Because of this, it is very important to make good preparations before a merger. As we studied national culture, it was natural for us to enter deeply into Hofstede's study about national culture. He has identified five dimensions in his study concerning national culture. Those are; power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity and long versus short time orientation. After evaluating those dimensions, we found it interesting to focus on the dimension about masculinity versus femininity. Further on, we found additional literature that was written by Bjerke which we summarised in this chapter as well. After reviewing the literature, we selected four factors that we thought are the most important ones to investigate when it comes to the level of masculinity versus femininity. Those are work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees.

4. Empirical framework

The empirical method is presented in this chapter. Our hypotheses are presented. The population, reliability, validity and generalisability are discussed. The chapter is finished with a short summary.

4.1 Research strategy

Our research approach is deductive by its nature. We collected and read an extensive amount of literature concerning mergers, company culture and masculinity. Out of that base we developed some hypotheses, which can be found below. We conducted an empirical study to test the hypotheses. Our goal was to both try our hypotheses and to gain a deeper knowledge of mergers, company culture and masculinity. With this knowledge we hoped to be able to give suggestions about what to consider when merging. To try our hypotheses we decided to make some qualitative interviews. This method was the most suitable for our case. We believe that the answers will give us valuable information. Since we already have contacts at Sony Ericsson, this is time saving (Saunders *et al*, 2007).

4.2 Hypotheses

After reading the relevant literature for our research we developed some hypotheses. These hypotheses are presented below.

H 1. *High work stress is dominant and takes over low work stress.*

- High work stress is most common in organizations with high masculinity and people in organizations with low masculinity are often less stressed at work. We believe that high level of stress is dominant, because it is more noticeable when people are stressed than calm. We also believe that stress passes on to people rather than calmness does. Out of the fact that both Sony and Ericsson are very engineer dominant companies, we believe that the company (Sony Ericsson) is dominated by men since engineers are more often men than

women. The negative effects of gendered work environments which often include male-dominated organizational cultures and climates, discrimination against women, prejudice and sex stereotyping, are all well known to increase stress symptoms of women. Even if the low MAS organizations are less stressed according to the literature, we believe that the dominating number of men at Sony Ericsson could increase the level of stress at the company. Another reason for our hypothesis is that the tempo at work places is significant higher today than ever before. Therefore, we assume organizations with both low and high masculinity, such as Sony Ericsson, will be dominated by high work stress rather than low work stress.

H 2. *High team work is dominant and takes over individual work.*

- In organizations with high masculinity, individual work and internal competition is the most common way to work. One should take into consideration that this is our own interpretation of this factor. On the other hand, in organizations with low masculinity, team work and co-operation is favoured. We believe that team work is the most attractive and efficient way of working at Sony Ericsson because both Sony and Ericsson desired team work from the very beginning of their collaboration. With that in mind, we believe that Sony Ericsson will be dominated by team work.

H 3. *High male-dominance takes over femininity.*

- Male dominance is very common in organizations with high masculinity. Femininity is on the other hand very common in low MAS organizations. Out of the fact that both Sony and Ericsson are very engineer dominant companies, we believe that the company (Sony Ericsson) is dominated by men since engineers are more often men than women. The first obvious way to see whether an organization is male- or female-dominated is by the number of male and female employees. Although, one should take into consideration that this is only one of the factors that shows if a company is male- or female-dominated.

H 4. *Equality between employees will be at a high level in low MAS organizations and at a low level in high MAS organizations.*

- Equality between employees is very dissimilar depending on the level of masculinity in an organization. There is high equality between employees in organizations with low masculinity and a low equality between employees in high MAS organizations. As we mentioned earlier, equality is something that is deeply rooted in ones culture and is not affected that easily.

H 5. *Culture shocks have occurred because of the big gap between the two cultures concerning the level of masculinity.*

- Culture shocks are something that often occurs when two or more different cultures meet. Culture shocks create anxiety among the people involved and make them feel insecure about the situation. Culture is something that is deeply rooted in people and takes time to change. Because of the cultural differences between Sony (Japan) and Ericsson (Sweden), especially when it comes to the level of masculinity, we believe that culture shocks have occurred.

4.3 Sony Ericsson and our interviews

The Joint Venture Sony Ericsson started its operation October 1, 2001. The company is owned by 50% of Sony and 50% of Ericsson. The head office is situated in London, but there are offices in Sweden, Japan, China, the UK, Germany and in the US. The company has around 6000 employees all over the world. Sony Ericsson consists of several different departments such as R&D, design, distribution, marketing, sales and customer service (Wikipedia 1). Sony Ericsson's vision is to "establish Sony Ericsson as the most attractive and innovative global brand in the mobile handset industry," and their mission is "to develop and sell wireless terminals, applications and accessories for the global mobile telecommunications market." Sony Ericsson's company values are *passionate, innovative and responsive* (Interview, Malin Boulwood). Figure 4.1 below explains how Sony Ericsson developed its company culture. The purpose of phase 1 was to create awareness for the need of a common company culture. The first phase was implemented through different seminars. The meaning of the second phase was to prepare the way for a cultural

change and to create a new culture for the company. This phase was carried out with work shops. Phase 3 is an ongoing phase with the significant purpose of managing the new culture. This third phase is aimed to educate leaders in the organizations and the goal is to do this by leadership programs (Ibid).

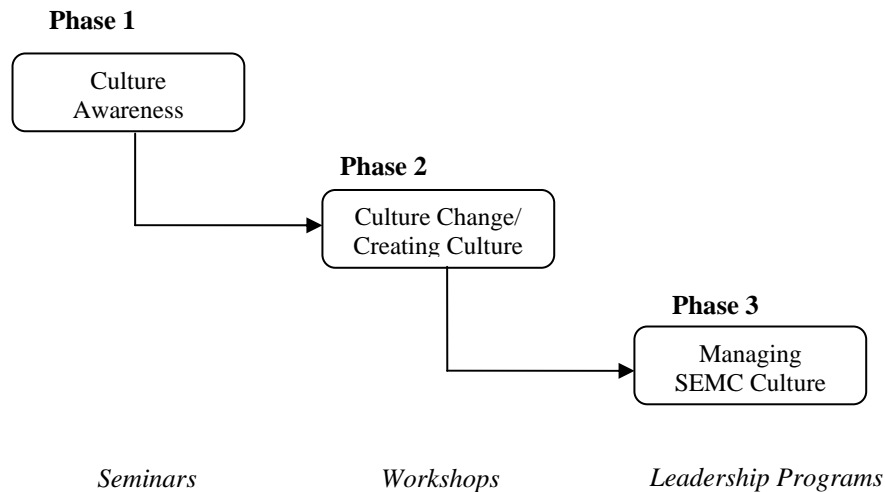


Figure 4.1 Developing the Sony Ericsson Culture

The purpose of the whole operation was to create awareness of the differences and similarities between the cultures of Ericsson and Sony. Another reason was to define the gap between the present situation and the desired Joint Venture culture. The people responsible for the cultural change at Sony Ericsson made a survey concerning the similarities and differences between employees from Sony and from Ericsson. The result is presented below in figure 4.2. As can be seen there are a number of strong areas in both companies. There are similarities such as the importance of communication channels. But, there are also differences such as the level of creativity (Interview, Malin Boulwood).

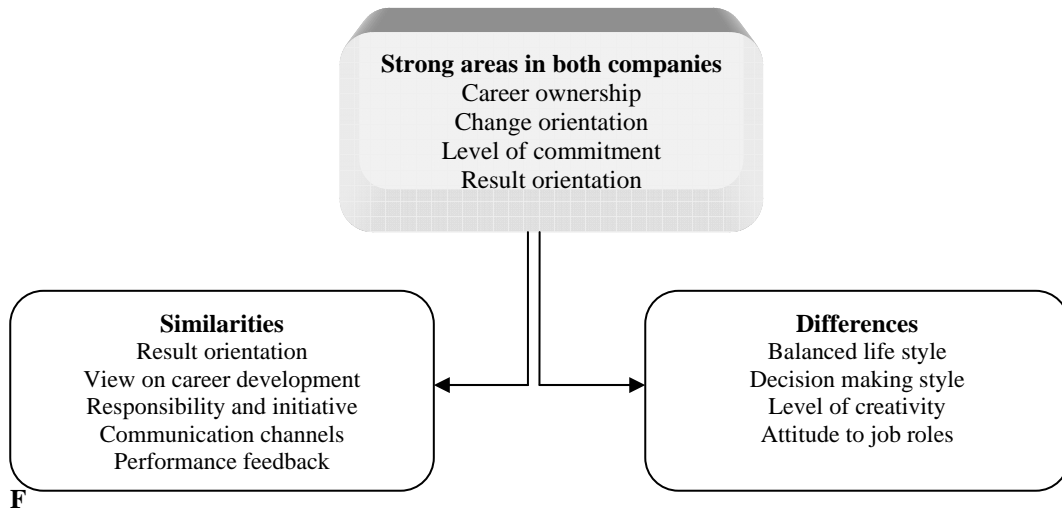


Figure 4.2 Similarities and Differences between Sony and Ericsson

During the same survey the employees at Sony Ericsson were supposed to explain which factors that was most important to them. The result was surprisingly similar for employees from both Sony and Ericsson. The real question was whether Sony Ericsson would succeed or fail to integrate the two cultures into the desired Joint Venture culture.

As mentioned earlier we created an interview to collect the material we needed. There are several circumstances when interviews are the most advantageous way to collect primary data. According to Saunders *et al* (2007) it is appropriate to use interviews when there are a larger number of questions, when the questions are either complex or open-ended and when the order and logic of questions may change during the interview. When constructing the questions, each question was carefully considered. This was because we wanted to avoid misunderstandings. We used a simple language and did everything we could to avoid any kind of misleading.

Our interview-guide consists of 30 questions. These questions are first divided into two major parts and then divided further into four parts. We also have a short introduction and after the two major parts we finish with a conclusion. We started by asking general questions like name, position, working years at Sony Ericsson. Then we ask what the respondent associates the word *company culture* with. Our first part is about the Swedes' situation at Sony Ericsson. The second part is about the Swedes' perspective towards the Japanese employees at Sony Ericsson. The two parts are then divided into four smaller ones. These four are about work stress, team work, gender

equality and equality between employees. The first part about work stress consists of questions about stress at work and number of working hours. In the second part about team work we asked whether our respondents mostly work alone or in groups and their attitudes towards this. The third part was about gender equality. Here we wanted to find out how big the gap is between men and women at the work place. We asked about the number of men and women and how they co-operate with each other. The last part was about equality between employees. We wanted to find out what the relationship between managers and workers looked like. The second major part was about the Swedes perspective towards the Japanese employees. We asked almost the same question as in the first part, but about the Japanese instead of the Swedes. Since we only asked Swedes, the whole survey is seen from a Swedish perspective. This is very important to take into consideration when analysing the results.

Four out of our five interviews are semi-structured interviews. This means that the researcher has a list of themes and questions that he or she will cover. These questions may vary from interview to interview. The order of the questions can also vary depending on the flow of the conversation. Additional questions may also occur to give the respondent a better understanding. It is common for the interviewer to record the interview and take notes (Saunders *et al*, 2007). Our fifth interview was a telephone interview. Telephone interviews are associated with advantages like access, speed and low costs. There are also some practical problems connected to this kind of interview form. One problem is that the respondent might refuse to answer sensitive questions, or worse, no questions at all. Another problem is that you do not have time to take notes or record. One-to-one interviews, like telephone interviews, are only appropriate in particular situations (Ibid). In our case, the respondent did not have the time to meet us personally and, therefore, he suggested a telephone interview. Although, he did not refuse to answer any questions and we were able to take notes, since we both interviewed the respondent. This interview was very meaningful.

When deciding to contact Sony Ericsson, we started by writing a cover letter with a presentation of ourselves and the study we planned to make. Further on, we called our contact at Sony Ericsson and asked for the most appropriate person to help us with our study. When we got access to the most suitable person, we contacted her by e-mail with our cover letter attached. Her name is Malin Boulwood and she works with

competence and culture integration at Sony Ericsson. She has been working at Sony Ericsson since the merger in 2001 and before that, she worked at Ericsson since 1996. Since this is her field, we asked if she had any material she could provide us with. She supplied us with information about Sony Ericsson, which gave us a better overview of the way they work at the company and what kind of company culture they strive for. After receiving the material, we summarized it. Malin Boulwood was also willing to let us make an interview with her, which we aimed to do from the start. Since we had some contacts at Sony Ericsson, we were able to book four more interviews. We contacted them in the same way as we did with Malin Boulwood, by sending an e-mail with a cover letter. After being in touch with them both by email and by phone, we were able to book a date for the interview. Two of the interviews took place at Sony Ericsson, two of them took place outside the company and one was a telephone interview.

4.4 Population and limitations

Since our study is based on Sony Ericsson, the population was limited from the beginning of the research. We found it interesting to concentrate our study on Sony Ericsson, because it is a Joint Venture with origin in two different countries with different cultures. Our goal was to interview the employees at the Joint Venture Sony Ericsson. Since our study is concentrated on a Swedish perspective, the population was even more limited, to the Swedes. We have chosen a population with Swedish employees who come from different departments and work at different positions. Because of this and the deep interviews we got a general overview of the situation in the company and also of Swedes attitudes towards Japanese employees.

One of the population criteria was to interview at least one woman, since our study is concentrated on the level of masculinity and femininity at workplace. This criterion was fulfilled by the interview with Malin Boulwood. Another important criterion was to interview Swedish employees, who work with Japanese people and not only in a department with Swedish people. Since the company is mixed with employees from both countries, it was easy to fulfil this criterion as well. Four out of our five respondents have daily co-operation with Japanese colleagues. A third criterion is the time of employment at the company. We wanted to have both people who worked at

Ericsson before the merger and people who were hired after the merger. We wanted to get a general impression of the attitudes towards the integration of the JV culture.

Hereby we will present our five respondents that participated in our study. Our first contact was Malin Boulwood, who works with Competence and Cultural Integration. She has been working at Sony Ericsson since the merger in 2001, and also at Ericsson before the merger since 1996. The second respondent is Sören Just Pedersen and he is the Information Director at Sony Ericsson. He has been working at Sony Ericsson for the last three years. Lars Kruise is our third respondent. He has been working at Sony Ericsson since august 2005. He is a Project Manager focusing on launching new products. Our fourth respondent is Robert Najdenovski. He is the Application Area Manager and he has been working at Sony Ericsson since the merger in 2001. Before the merger he worked at Ericsson since 2000. Our fifth and last respondent is Dario Ondelj. He is Development Engineer and he has been working the shortest period at Sony Ericsson, for about six months.

4.5 Reliability

One important thing when talking about reliability is that the answers reflect the reality at the exact time the data was collected. This situation in particular might change from one day to another (Saunders *et al*, 2007). Saunders identified four different threats to reliability; subject or participant error, subject or participant bias, observer error and observer bias. Subject or participant error reflects the human behaviour, people's mood vary. We solve this issue by doing our interviews on different week days; people's mood might vary from one day to another. Subject or participant bias is when respondents give answers that they think will please their manager. Since we asked whether they prefer to be anonymous or not, we reduce the risk of participant bias. All of our respondents agreed on that we could use their real name, they obviously feel comfortable and secure with their boss. Observer error is when the structure of the interview is unclear. This can occur when there are many people creating the interview or many interviewers. We conducted the entire interview together, which reduces the risk of observer error. We were also very clear during the interview and asked questions one at the time. Observer bias occurs when the replies are interpreted in different ways. We have discussed our answers very

carefully. Two of our interviews were made by only one of us. This might have the effect that some answers will be interpreted in a different way than the other three interviews (Ibid).

4.6 Validity

Validity is the extent to which data collection method accurately measure what they are intended to measure (Saunders *et al*, 2007). Saunders identified threats against validity as well. The first threat is history, which means if a major business change recently occurred at the company, this can be misleading and effect the validity. Another threat is testing. This means that if the respondents believe that the result will affect them, they answer in a way that will benefit them, regardless if it is true or not. A third threat is instrumentation. This means that the interviews might vary and contribute with different kind of answers to the research. Maturation is another threat to validity. Other events might occur during the study and this could affect the research (Ibid).

Sony Ericsson is nowadays a very successful company and this will probably affect the result from our interviews. The respondents feel happy and the atmosphere at the company is favourable for the workers. This might lead to more positive answers than if the company were in a bad situation. Another issue is that we only interview one woman; this might affect our results as well. Finally, the desired culture might affect the attitudes of the employees. Since the company has worked hard to identify a common Joint Venture culture, it could be that the employees do not feel any confusions or anxiety towards each others way of working.

4.7 Generalisability

Generalisability is often referred to as external validity; this could be whether your research can be applicable to other organizations. This may be a problem if the study is conducted in one organization or in a small number of organizations. If that is the case, like in this particular study, the purpose is not to make general conclusions. The task will simply be to explain one case in particular (Saunders *et al*, 2007). Qualitative research using semi-structured interviews will not be able to generalize

about an entire population, while the research is based on a small number of cases (Ibid). As we mentioned earlier, we only study one organization and we made only five interviews, which means that we are unable to draw any general conclusions.

4.8 Summary

We started this chapter by presenting our research strategy which is deductive. After reading and summarizing literature we developed five hypotheses. The last hypothesis is that we believe that culture shocks will occur at Sony Ericsson because that the merging cultures are so different. Four of our five interviews are semi-structured and the last one is a telephone interview. Our population is concentrated at Sony Ericsson and consists of five people. Reliability, validity and generalisability are discussed in the end of this chapter. We also had to find facts about the Joint Venture Sony Ericsson since our study is focused on this company. Further on we summarised the material that we got from Sony Ericsson. We presented the Joint Venture culture that they strive for and the differences and similarities between the two companies that have merged into one.

5. Results

The results from our study are presented. The study is divided into four parts; work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees. The study also covers a fifth part that concern overall thoughts about the integration of the new culture. The chapter is finished with a short summary.

5.1 Introduction

When investigating masculinity, we identified four factors. These factors are work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees. Since the questions in our interviews are directly connected to these four areas, we will present the answers in the same way.

We started the interview by asking what the respondents think when they hear the expression *company culture*. The answers are presented below. The first answer, *the way people work in an organization* was a common thought among the respondents. The overall answers go along with the literature we presented earlier.

- *The way people work in an organization*
- *Values and norms*
- *Leadership*
- *How rather than what*
- *How to behave toward each other*
- *Unwritten rules*

Below, the four factors are presented in figures. After our study we conducted figures of the answers. The figures are divided into five parts. The first part is the number of questions and the second part describes what the questions are about. The third part shows which factor the questions lead to. The fourth part shows what result we

expected, according to theory. The fifth, and last part, shows the result from our study.

5.1.1 Questions related to Work Stress

Work stress is an important factor, when talking about company culture. The level of stress has a great influence on the employees. Work stress can have both a positive and negative impact on people. In our study, we wanted to find out how much people work and how that affects them. We asked questions about the level of stress and working hours. According to Hofstede’s study, the level of work stress is low in organizations with low masculinity. On the other hand, organizations with high masculinity have a high degree of work stress. In organizations with low MAS, people prefer less working hours. This is one of the reasons why employees experience lower levels of work stress, which means lower burnout symptoms in the company among the workers. In organizations with high MAS people work more and experience a higher level of stress, which also leads to more burnout symptoms among the workers. Below, the result from the part about work stress is presented. The most important question about work stress, according to us, is if the employees are stressed at work. Further on, we also asked questions about their working hours and sick leave. Out of these questions we concluded that there is a low work stress overall at Sony Ericsson. Figure 5.1 shows the results of questions 1 to 3.

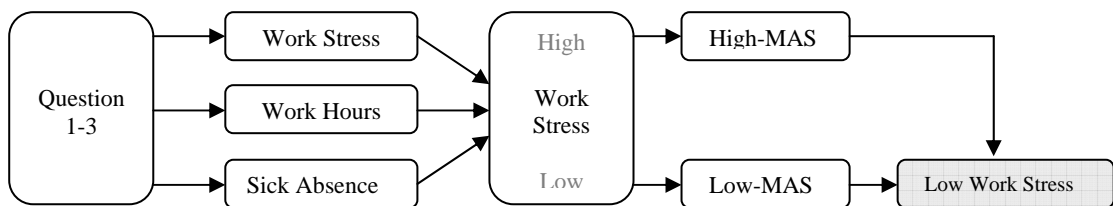


Figure 5. 1 Work Stress at Sony Ericsson

The majority of Swedes does not feel stressed but points out that there are periods with stress. An example of such a period is when working towards deadline on a project or in the end of the year. All respondents say that it is a high work speed at Sony Ericsson, but they experience the work speed in a positive way and believe that they can handle it. One of the interviewed persons did comment that he often feel stressed at work. He mentioned that the coordination between different departments

in the company could be problematic, which causes more stress than usual. Since the level of stress is low at Sony Ericsson, the stress related sick leave is low as well.

The Swedes have the impression that Japanese employees work a lot, but that does not mean that they feel stressed at work. The Japanese have been raised with a “live to work” concept, which means that they are prepared to work a lot. The reason for their stay in Sweden is work, and that is another reason why they work so much. Yet, according to our respondents, it is not obvious that they are more efficient than the Swedes. The Swedish expression “burnout” is not common among Japanese, but if it occurs they call it “stress vacation.”

5.1.2 Questions related to Team Work

Team work is another important factor which we find interesting to study. The degree of team work is crucial for the company culture. The organization differs a lot depending on the number of team workers and individual workers. According to Hofstede’s study, in organizations with low MAS, employees are often good team workers and prefer working in groups. On the other hand, according to previous studies made by Sony Ericsson, in masculine organizations people rather work on their own and are very competitive. Out of these facts, we made the conclusions that masculine organizations such as Sony have little team work. We made our own interpretation of this factor and we are aware of that it does not totally match with Hofstede’s thoughts. Our main questions about team work consider group work, trust between employees and attitudes towards internal competition. We asked whether they work in groups or individually and what they prefer. After asking these questions we were able to draw the conclusion that team work is favoured overall at Sony Ericsson. Figure 5.2 shows the results of questions 4 to 7.

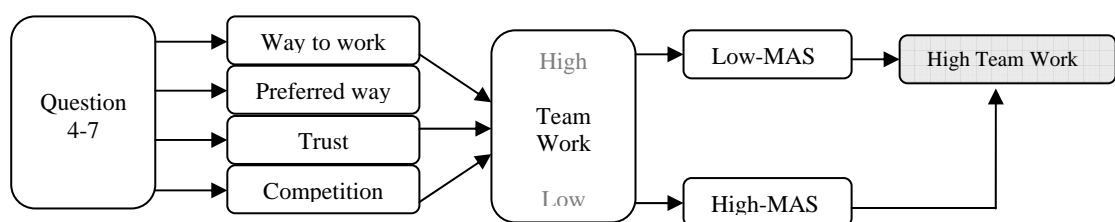


Figure 5. 2 Team Work at Sony Ericsson

All the interviewed Swedes preferred working in groups, but they did point out that it also depended on the task. When it comes to trust between employees in general, they trust each other. Naturally, it depends on the individual. They believe that people want to help each other but it is often a matter of time. The respondents think that internal competition is a way of motivating each other, which leads to better results.

The Swedes feel that the Japanese have the same attitude towards co-operation and that it works fine. One of our respondents pointed out that the Japanese culture is very collectivistic and they often solve problems together. In the beginning of a process it takes time to understand each others' way of working. One example from one of our respondents is the way to build a house. Swedes start by building a foundation and see the project as a whole unit. On the other hand, the Japanese start by building one single room at the time. When it comes to arranging meetings the two cultures differs a lot. The Japanese come well prepared to every meeting, while the Swedes are not that prepared. The Japanese' attitude towards internal competition is almost the same as the Swedes. The Japanese feel motivated by internal competition and it is a natural part in many organizations.

5.1.3 Questions related to Gender Equality

An additional factor is the difference in gender equality. According to Hofstede, the managers in organizations with low MAS are seen as softer, and they always try to use their intuition. They are also more emotional and usually open to compromise. In low MAS organizations the management consists of more women and the wage gap between genders is small. Managers in masculine organizations are expected to be very determined, confident and aggressive but also fair. In high MAS organizations there are fewer women in management, and the wage gap is larger between the genders. Our main questions about gender equality consider the amount of men and women at Sony Ericsson and at higher positions. We also wanted to find out if the two different genders co-operate with each other and if there are any differences in the way they do it. The results from these questions show us that the gap between genders is big at the company, which means that there is low gender equality at Sony Ericsson. The results of questions 8 to 10 are shown in Figure 5.3.

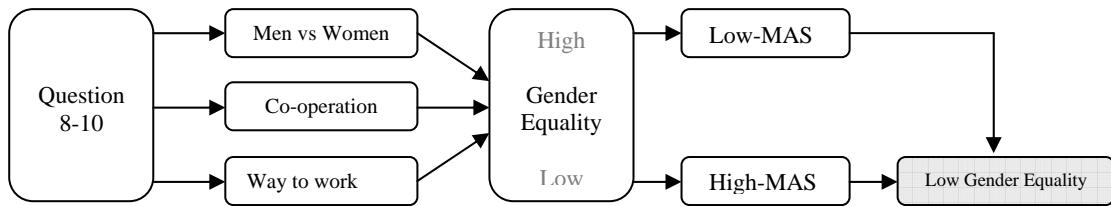


Figure 5. 3 Gender equality at Sony Ericsson

According to the Swedes there is a big variation between the number of female and male employees at Sony Ericsson overall. For example, in one department there are four women out of twenty-five employees. One of the reasons for the big gender difference is that Sony Ericsson mostly consists of engineers and that is a very male-dominated section. The respondents say that they do not experience any differences in the way men and women co-operate with each other. The way people co-operate have nothing to do with gender, it depends on the individual. The respondents also mentioned that the higher work positions are normally possessed by men rather than women.

According to our respondents there are no Japanese women working at Sony Ericsson in Lund. The overall attitude is that Japanese men work and that the women take care of the house and children. Some Japanese women work, but not after having children. Although there are no Japanese women at Sony Ericsson in Lund, Japanese men are comfortable co-operating with women in general. When it comes to higher positions in the company, they are often possessed by men rather than women.

5.1.4 Questions related to Equality between employees

Finally, the degree of equality between employees is very important when talking about company culture. The way an organization work, depends a lot on the level of equality. This includes weather the power in an organization is centralized or decentralized. According to Hofstede’s study, in low MAS organizations the managers are seen as employees at the same level as the others. Feminine organizations strive for equality. Compared to low MAS organizations, where the managers are seen as employees at the same level as the others, the managers in organizations with high MAS are seen as heroes. Our main questions about equality between employees consider managers availability and the contact between the manager and his or hers employees. We also asked whether the employees feel free or

not, to present their opinions to their manager. These questions show us that there are still high equality between Swedish employees and low equality between Japanese employees at Sony Ericsson. The results of questions 11 to 13 are presented in Figure 5.4.

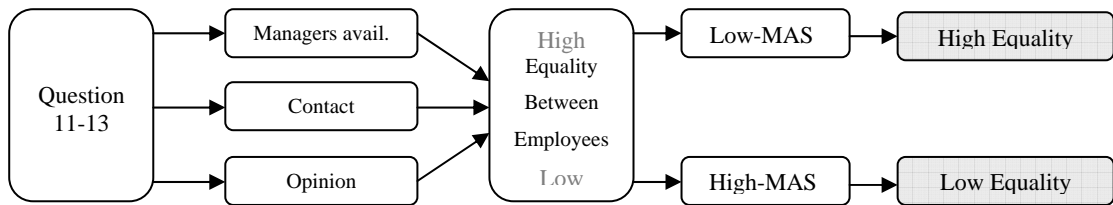


Figure 5. 4 Equality between Employees at Sony Ericsson

In general, the managers seem to be very available. It is also acceptable to have another opinion than the manager and to say that. One respondent also mention that his manager sends emails regularly to all employees at his department and provides them with the latest news about what is going on.

The respondents agree that there is a difference in availability when it comes to Japanese managers, compared to Swedish managers. The opinion is that Japanese managers are not so available. The relationship between a worker and a Japanese manager is characterized by a high degree of respect. The Japanese workers always call their manager *San* followed by the last name. Japanese workers always follow order, with no hesitations or complaints. One of the respondents said that good leadership is to listen to everybody’s opinion. The Japanese managers might listen, but it does not necessarily mean that they consider the suggestion. The Japanese workers are not so eager to present their opinion as the Swedes. But as time goes by, they are getting more like the Swedes on this specific point.

5.1.5 The overall thoughts about the integration of the Joint Venture culture at Sony Ericsson

Last in our interview we asked whether they feel that the integration of the Joint Venture culture was successful or not. The respondents agree on that the integration was successful in general. But they also say that there are always ups and downs. Since the company is multinational and, therefore, consists of many different cultures, everybody has been forced to adjust to the new company culture. Because of the

multinational staff, the company possesses a greater understanding of their target groups around the world. The company's success has contributed to an easier adjustment for the employees. Different managers have their own way of handling things and this fact provide the company culture with a constant change. The employees at Sony Ericsson are now happy with the Joint Venture culture and are proud to identify themselves with it. There is no feeling of *us* and *them* anymore. The respondents do not notice any symptoms of culture shocks at Sony Ericsson five years after the merger. There is one factor that could be a problem at some degree, the language issue. Although, the respondent that mentioned this pointed out that this is a small problem. Kanter and Corn (1994) also mentions that one of the biggest issues that came up during the interviews that they made during their study, was language problems. Just like our respondent mention, this is not the biggest problem when it comes to the integration of two merging companies. Finally, as we mentioned earlier, everybody have adjusted to the Joint Venture culture and that is why there are no significant culture shocks.

According to Malin Boulwood, Sony Ericsson follows up the situation regularly. Every fall, they conduct a survey internally on the web. They want to measure motivation, knowledge about the company strategy, and how the company lives up to its values. The response rate has been very high the last years, about 90%. It is also important to mention that when Sony Ericsson employs new people, the new employees get an introduction about the company culture and its values.

5.2 Summary

When we asked our respondents to explain the expression company culture, we got similar answers from them. The most common answer was *the way people work in an organization*. When investigating work stress, we found out that low work stress was dominant at Sony Ericsson. The factor team work was at a high level, which means that the employees at Sony Ericsson prefer team work above individual work. Our case study showed us that there is low gender equality overall at the company. The last factor that we investigated was equality between employees. This factor has not been affected of the merger. Finally when asking the respondents whether culture

shocks have occurred or not, they were all very pleased and agreed on no culture shocks. This means that the merger was successful, according to our respondents.

6. Analysis of results

Analysis of the results is presented. The four factors are analyzed one at the time. The chapter ends with a short summary.

6.1 Introduction

After presenting the results in chapter five, we will analyze the results further in this chapter. Each factor and result are briefly presented and then analyzed one at the time. Our hypothesis is also discussed and analyzed together with each factor. Below, the four factors are presented in tables. After interviewing the respondents at Sony Ericsson, we made these tables out of the received answers. The low MAS in the tables show how the Swedes at Sony Ericsson feel about the different factors at this point. A high MAS describes what the Swedes think about the Japanese when it comes to the four different factors. Each factor is divided into high and low level. After analysing the answers from the interviews, we came up with this way of dividing the factors in these two levels. The X in the parenthesis stands for the expected answer according to our hypothesis. Finally we have summarized all the factors in one figure to be able to see which level is dominant.

6.2 What is Company Culture?

When reading about company culture we learned that company culture is an organization's value, beliefs and norms. When asking our respondents about their thoughts concerning company culture we received similar answers. The respondents believe that company culture is the way people work in an organization. Company culture reflects people's behaviour, values and norms. The leadership style is also an important part of company culture. These answers make it very obvious that people at Sony Ericsson are aware of the concept company culture and its meaning. Although, it is possible that people mix up the concept company culture with national culture. The meaning of these two cultures is overall the same. The reason for the similar answers could possibly depend on that Sony Ericsson has been very clear on and

eager to assign their Joint Venture culture. People at Sony Ericsson have a similar way of working and behave. This can contribute to the similar way of thinking of company culture. Another important reason for the similar answers might be that Sony Ericsson is a very engineer-dominant company and it might attract the same kind of people with similar way of thinking.

6.2.1 Hypothesis 1 *High work stress is dominant and takes over low work stress*

After reading relevant literature, we made the assumption that Swedes are less stressed than the Japanese. According to Hofstede's study, the level of work stress is low in low MAS organizations, whereas organizations with high MAS have a higher degree of work stress. In organizations with low MAS, fewer working hours are preferred. This is one of the reasons that employees experience lower levels of work stress, which also leads to lower burnout symptoms in the company. In organizations with high MAS, people work more and experience a higher level of stress, which leads to more burnout symptoms among the employees. We believe that high level of stress is dominant, because it is more noticeable when people are stressed than calm. We also believe that stress passes on to people rather than calmness does. Out of the fact that both Sony and Ericsson are very engineer dominant companies, we believe that the company (Sony Ericsson) is dominated by men since engineers are more often men than women. The negative effects of gendered work environments which often include male-dominated organizational cultures and climates, discrimination against women, prejudice and sex stereotyping, are all well known to increase stress symptoms of women. Even if the low MAS organizations are less stressed according to the literature, we believe that the dominating number of men at Sony Ericsson could increase the level of stress at the company. Another reason for our hypothesis is that the tempo at work places is significant higher today than ever before. This leads to a higher degree of stress. Below in Table 6.1, the results from our study are presented, as well as what we expected. The X stands for the results from our interviews and the X in parenthesis stands for the expected answer according to our hypothesis.

<i>Work Stress</i>		
	Low	High
Low MAS (Swe)	X	(X)
High MAS (Jap)	X	(X)

Table 6. 1 Work Stress at Sony Ericsson

After interviewing our respondents, we found out that Swedes at Sony Ericsson are not particularly stressed at work, just in line with the literature. The result differs from our hypothesis. The respondents mentioned that there are some periods that are more stressful than others. Because of the low level of stress at Sony Ericsson, the sick leave is also reduced. Of course, the employees get sick, but not often because of stress.

When we asked Swedes about Japanese employees, they have the impression that Japanese people work a lot. Still, Swedes do not have the impression that Japanese are more stressed. According to the literature, the results of the interviews do not go along with it. As we mentioned earlier, high MAS organizations (the Japanese in this study) are supposed to be more stressed and have a higher sick leave, but in this case they are not.

The result is that our hypothesis is rejected. When using the expression, rejected, we mean that this is an indication of the current situation at Sony Ericsson. We are aware of that we are not able to draw any general conclusion out of this hypothesis. The reasons for the variation from the literature and our hypotheses could be many, since the company has their own Joint Venture culture. The company culture has made Japanese employees adjust to a lower stress level. One reason for the Japanese adjustment could be the high number of Swedes and their tradition of low work stress. We also have to take into consideration that this is the Swedes' perspective, which could affect the results. Maybe the Japanese feel stressed at work and the Swedes just do not notice that. The Swedes can only notice the number of hours the Japanese work at the office and not whether they feel stressed when leaving the office

or if they work at home. According to Ian Draper (2006) some of the signs that tell if a person feel stressed are changes in behaviour, increased sick leave, reduced performance, over working or failure to delegate and reduced willingness to cooperate. We asked especially about sick leave and found out that it was very low. This is a result of the low stress level. Although people at Sony Ericsson do not feel stressed in general, stress is something that one should always think about. Stress can emerge at any time. Factors that can lead to stress are unclear job description, long hour's cultures, and no reward for a job well done or unpleasant working conditions. One of our respondents pointed out that the coordination between departments is sometimes unclear and this makes him stressed when this happens. This coordination problem could be interpreted as an unclear job description. When employees at Sony Ericsson perform well they get rewarded and receives bonuses. This is something that can both increase and lower stress level. People in regular want more money and this makes them work harder to receive a bonus. This can both make them more stressed but also less stressed because they feel that the work they do is appreciated and rewarded. Out of the results concerning work stress, we can make the conclusion that the work conditions at Sony Ericsson seem very good and this makes the people feel comfortable at work and less stressed.

6.2.2 Hypothesis 2 *High team work is dominant and takes over individual work*

According to Hofstede we found that in organizations with low MAS, the employees are often good team players and prefer working in groups. On the other hand, in masculine organizations people rather prefer internal competition and working on their own. The reason for our hypothesis is that we believe that team work attract more people than individual work does because both Sony and Ericsson desired team work from the very beginning of their collaboration. Our own attitude towards team work might also influence the choice of hypothesis. It is very common to work in groups and projects overall and therefore our choice of hypothesis feels natural. Our main questions about team work consider group work, trust between employees and attitudes towards internal competition. Below in Table 6.2, the results from our study are presented, as well as what we expected. The X stands for the results from our interviews and the X in parenthesis stands for the expected answer according to our hypothesis.

defining it. This interpretation might have affected the results. Internal competition is also an issue that can be interpreted in many ways. In our point of view, internal competition leads to low team work. But our respondents both prefer group work and internal competition and believe that these two are linked together. They say that internal competition is a way to motivate each other and they see this as something positive. Team players are often good at allocate people's strengths and weakness and this make them very efficient. This is very typical at Sony Ericsson. The employees work in different departments but work together in projects across these departments. In this way, people with different strengths have the possibility to work with high-skilled people from other departments. Individualists are often more competitive and task oriented than team players. Since our respondents favour internal competition this can be integrated naturally to the daily group work. They find internal competition motivating which leads to better performance. One have to take into consideration that internal competition is only favoured to a certain level and that the employees are not directed by this. We have interpreted individual work and internal competition as low team work. This might be a mistake from our side because, as seen before, both internal competition and individual work can exist and be positive even in organizations with high team work. This misinterpretation might lead to decreased validity in the results.

6.2.3 Hypothesis 3 *High male-dominance takes over femininity*

When reviewing both Hofstede (2001) and Bjerke (1999), we found out the following. In low MAS organizations the management consists of more women and the wage gap between genders is small. In high MAS organizations there are fewer women in management, and there are often larger wage gaps between men and women. We did not ask questions about wage, because most people feel uncomfortable answering these kinds of questions. It is also hard to draw any valid conclusions out of wages, just because there are many aspects affecting wages. These aspects are, for example, position, years in the company and earlier experiences. When we asked questions about gender equality at Sony Ericsson, we concentrated on the amount of female and male employees at the company. We also wanted to find out if men and women co-operate with each other and if there are any differences in the way they do it. Below in Table 6.3, the results from our study are presented, as

well as what we expected. The X stands for the results from our interviews and the X in parenthesis stands for the expected answer according to our hypothesis.

<i>Gender Equality</i>	
	Low High
Low MAS (Swe)	X (X)
High MAS (Jap)	X (X)

Table 6. 3 Gender equality at Sony Ericsson

According to the respondents there is a big variation between the number of female and male employees at Sony Ericsson. For example, in one department there are four women out of twenty-five employees. One of the reasons for the big gender difference, in the Swedish part of Sony Ericsson, is that it mostly consists of men since it is a very engineer-dominant section. Today, the amount of women at this section is increasing. This is the first factor which has differed from the literature, in low masculine organizations. Earlier, when the results have varied from the literature and hypothesis, it has been the Japanese that have differed according to Swedes. Now, it is the Swedes that vary and this makes the results even more significant, since it is from their own perspective.

One issue that came up when we asked Swedes about Japanese thoughts of gender equality was that there are no Japanese women working at Sony Ericsson in Lund. This, itself, is a clear answer to our questions about gender equality. The overall attitudes are that Japanese men work and women take care of the house and children. Some Japanese women work, but not after having children. Although there are no Japanese women at Sony Ericsson in Lund, Japanese men are comfortable co-operating with women in general. When it comes to higher positions in the company, they are often possessed by men rather than women.

Finally, the result is that our hypothesis is accepted. When using the expression accepted, we mean that this is an indication of the current situation at Sony Ericsson. We are aware of that we are not able to draw any general conclusion out of this

hypothesis. The reason for our interpretation regarding low gender equality in both high and low MAS organizations are first of all because of the number of men and women. There are significantly more men than women at Sony Ericsson. Another reason is that there are no high positions possessed by women. Both Hofstede's (2001) and Bjerke's (1999) research, stand behind this result. This is a clear sign of low gender equality. Hofstede's masculinity index shows that Japan has an index at 95 and Sweden at 5, which proves that there are very big differences in this area. Because of this, Swedes might consider gender equality more than Japanese. Swedes are more eager to reach equality between genders than Japanese. This attitude might be reflected in the answers about co-operation and the way to do it. Inequality between genders is a problem all over the world. Even if Sweden is a very feminine country, it does not mean that they do not have these kinds of problems. Inequality between genders is a problem even in Sweden and it is reflected in Sony Ericsson as well. Especially in this factor, one has to take into consideration that we interviewed four men and only one woman. This might reflect the result. The result is also based on the questions about the number of men and women and this might be misleading. Yet, we believe that the number of men and women effect the entire climate in the organizations and therefore is very important to considerate. As we mentioned earlier, we are aware of the fact that Sony Ericsson is very engineer-dominant and that this is a reason for the big gap between genders. One also has to take into consideration that the number of men and women does not tell us anything about the attitudes towards equality between genders. Overall, we have seen that men at Sony Ericsson have a positive attitude towards co-operation with both men and women. They do not notice any differences in the way men and women co-operate either.

6.2.4 Hypothesis 4 *Equality between employees will be at a high level in low MAS organizations and a low level in high MAS organizations*

According to Hofstede, in low MAS organizations the managers are seen as employees at the same level as the others, compared to high MAS organizations, where the managers are seen as heroes who are determined, confident and aggressive. When investigating this factor, we asked questions concerning the availability of managers and how often the employees are in contact with their manager. Another important question that we asked was, whether they feel free to present their opinion,

and if it is accepted to have another opinion than the manager. As we mentioned earlier, equality is something that is deeply rooted in people and takes time to change. Therefore, we believe that the equality between employees will be at a high level in low MAS organizations and a low level in high MAS organizations. Below, in Table 6.4, the results from our study are presented, as well as what we expected. The X stands for the results from our interviews and the X in parenthesis stands for the expected answer according to our hypothesis.

<i>Equality between employees</i>		
	Low	High
Low MAS (Swe)		X (X)
High MAS (Jap)	X (X)	

Table 6. 4 Equality between Employees at Sony Ericsson

When asking Swedes, they felt that in general the managers are very available. They mentioned that they usually have daily contact with their manager. They also point out that, if they cannot reach their manager, he or she always calls back. One of the respondents says that his manager sends e-mails regularly, to subordinates with news and information. According to the respondents, it is acceptable to have another opinion than the manager and to present ones thoughts as well. The Swedish managers often welcome different opinions. Discussions are a natural part of the daily work at Sony Ericsson.

The respondents agree that there is a difference in availability when it comes to Japanese managers, compared to Swedish managers. The impression is that Japanese managers are not so available. The relationship between a worker and a Japanese manager is characterized by a high degree of respect. Japanese worker always calls their manager *San* followed by their last name. Japanese workers always follow orders, with no hesitations or complaints. One of the respondents says that good leadership is to listen to everybody's opinion. The Japanese managers might listen, but it does not necessarily mean that they consider the suggestion. The Japanese

workers are not so eager to present their opinion as the Swedes, but if they need, they will do it.

The results of this factor are in line with the literature and our hypothesis is accepted. When using the expression accepted, we mean that this is an indication of the current situation at Sony Ericsson. We are aware of that we are not able to draw any general conclusion out of this hypothesis. One reason for the acceptance could be that the Joint Venture culture has not taken equality between employees into consideration. Japanese managers might seem less available because they often work abroad or because they possess high positions. The availability of managers also varies from department to department. At certain department, employees might have closer contact with their manager than others. As mentioned earlier, national culture is reflected in company culture. When talking about respect, this is an issue that is deeply rooted in culture. An obvious sign concerning respect is that the Japanese employees always bow and call their manager *San* followed by the last name. This example is in line with Hofstede's findings about the differences between managers and subordinates in high MAS organizations. Bowing was something that we noticed ourselves the minute we stepped into Sony Ericsson. The degree of respect also influence the way people present their opinion. It is harder for the Japanese to walk into their manager's office and present their opinion. The Japanese feel inferior and not able to speak their mind. Yet, our respondents told us that the Japanese are adjusting on this specific point. The Japanese have probably seen how the Swedes behave towards their managers and they follow their example. One of our respondents told us that the last president of Sony Ericsson, who was Japanese, had an "open door policy". This means that he preferred to be seen as one of the ordinary employees and favoured equality between employees. To reach a common level concerning equality between employees, Sony Ericsson needs to identify their desired level of equality. To be able to reach the desired level, they need to stay focused and have patience. As we mentioned earlier, equality is deeply rooted and takes time to change. One should also be aware of that equality is hard to measure. The questions that we asked are only part of the entire meaning of equality; which limits our ability to generalize.

6.2.5 Hypothesis 5 *Culture shocks have occurred because of the big gap between the two cultures concerning the level of masculinity*

According to literature, such as Hofstede and Bjerke, there are significant differences between Japan and Sweden concerning the level of masculinity. The most self-evident conclusion for us to draw is that culture shocks have occurred, this because of the big differences between the two cultures that we have presented earlier. Below in Table 6.5, the results from our study are presented, as well as what we expected. The X stands for the results from our interviews and the X in parenthesis stands for the expected answer according to our hypothesis.

<i>Sony Ericsson</i>		
	Yes	No
Culture Shock	(X)	X

Table 6. 5 Culture Shocks at Sony Ericsson

Last in our interview we asked whether they feel that the integration of the Joint Venture culture was successful or not. Here, we wanted to find out if there had been any cultural shocks. This hypothesis was rejected. When using the expression, rejected, we mean that this is an indication of the current situation at Sony Ericsson. We are aware of that we are not able to draw any general conclusion out of this hypothesis. The respondents agree that the integration was successful in general, but they also say that there are always ups and downs. Since the company is multinational and, therefore, consists of many different cultures, everybody has been forced to adjust to the new company culture. The success of the Joint Venture might have contributed to an easier adjustment for the employees. The employees at Sony Ericsson are now happy with the Joint Venture culture. They feel proud to identify themselves with the company. They also point out that there is no feeling of *us* and *them* anymore. As we mentioned earlier, everybody have adjusted to the Joint Venture culture and that is why there are no significant culture shocks. Some of the factors concerning successful mergers that are very important to considerate according to Gancel *et al* (2002) and Harris and Elashmawi (1998) are

communication and openness. The authors also claim that it is important to create a common culture. One must also be aware of each others similarities and differences when merging. According to Malin Boulwood (Interview), Sony Ericsson has put a lot of effort to find out the similarities and differences between Sony and Ericsson. Sony Ericsson has also identified its own Joint Venture culture, with communication and openness as some of the top priorities. Since Sony Ericsson has succeeded with its merger according to our respondents, the identification of the desired culture and awareness of each others differences have proved to be some of the keys for a successful merger. As we mentioned earlier, the success of the company also shows us that the Joint Venture culture has progressed in the right direction. Although Sony and Ericsson had different cultural background from Japan and Sweden with high and low level of masculinity, the desired Joint Venture culture was very similar.

6.3 Conclusions from analysis

After analyzing and presenting the results from our survey, we are able to conclude that three out of our five hypotheses were supported. Below, four of our five factors are presented together and the table shows which level, high or low, that is dominant at Sony Ericsson. Our fifth factor, about culture shocks, is excluded since it is a separate part of our research. Yet, we have made some conclusion concerning culture shocks anyway. These conclusions are presented later on.

	Low MAS	High MAS
Low Work Stress	X	
High Team Work	X	
Low Gender Equality		X
Low and High Equality between Employees	X	X

Table 6. 6 Results from all four factors

As we can see, the low MAS organizations' level of low work stress has taken over as well as the high team work. When it comes to gender equality, the high MAS organizations level of low gender equality has taken over at Sony Ericsson. Whereas the last factor that considers equality between employees has remained the same, at both low and high level, just in line with the literature. Out of these results we are able to make following conclusion that the low MAS organizations level has taken over the biggest part of the factors. We believe that one of the reasons for this result might be the focus on the Swedes perspective. Since Sweden is associated with low MAS organization and we only asked Swedes about their opinions, the results might have been affected by this. Another reason is that the majority of the employees in Lund are Swedish, which is obvious since Lund is situated in Sweden. This might also have affected the results. Maybe the results would be totally different if we asked Swedes that are working at Sony Ericsson in Japan and living in Japan as well. Since they are in a high MAS environment they might sense the opposite. Although, the overall result of our survey make it possible for us to draw our major conclusion that it is very important for merging companies to identify their desired company culture. We base this conclusion on the fact that our respondents have not noticed any significant culture shocks at Sony Ericsson, as shown in Table 6.7. We believe that the reason for this is Sony Ericsson's way of identifying both Sony's and Ericsson's similarities and differences. With this base, the company has put a lot of effort in identifying their desired company culture.

<i>Sony Ericsson</i>		
	Yes	No
Culture Shock	(X)	X

Table 6. 7 Culture Shocks

6.4 Summary

When we asked our respondents about their thoughts when it comes to company culture we received similar answers. The respondents explained company culture as

the way people work in an organization. Company culture also reflects people's behaviour, values and norms. Further on we have analyzed the results from our study and drawn conclusions out of our hypotheses. Our first hypothesis about work stress was rejected. We thought that high stress was dominant and would take over, but the low level of stress was most frequent at Sony Ericsson. Our second hypothesis about team work was accepted but it was not in line with the literature. The third hypothesis concerning gender equality was accepted as well and it was also not in line with the literature. This is particularly interesting because it is the part of Swedes that differed from the literature. Our fourth hypothesis about equality between employees was accepted, just in line with the literature. Finally, our fifth hypothesis was rejected; there were no significant culture shocks at Sony Ericsson according to our respondents. When analyzing the results it is important to take into consideration that we only asked Swedes. We have also summarised our results from all four factors in a table and presented which level has taken over, low MAS or the high MAS. Our main conclusion out of the analysis is the importance of identifying a new common culture when companies merge. It is also important to be aware of each others similarities and differences.

7. Conclusions

The conclusions are presented. The dissertation is summarized. Reflections concerning the hypotheses, methodological criticism, practical implications and future research are discussed.

7.1 Summary of Dissertation

Mergers and acquisitions are very common today and have increased rapidly over the last decades. There are a number of reasons for companies to merge. One reason could be access to new technology or to gain market shares. Although, one must keep in mind that there often occur problems, or at least challenges, when merging. One of these challenges is culture. When companies from all over the world start working together, culture shocks might occur. According to Hofstede (2001), national culture is strongly linked with company culture, and therefore culture has direct influence on an organization. One of the most important issues when talking about culture in general and especially company culture is masculinity versus femininity. After reading relevant literature, such as Hofstede and Bjerke, we identified four factors that characterize and determine the level of masculinity. These factors are work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees. Work stress is high in organizations with high MAS and low in organizations with low MAS. Team work is favoured in low MAS organizations, while individual work is more common in high MAS organizations. Gender equality is high in low MAS organizations and low in high MAS organizations. The equality between employees is also high in low MAS organizations and low in high MAS organizations. The determination of high and low level is all according to Hofstede's study. We have developed our own hypothesis, which we wanted to try.

After reading relevant literature and choosing work stress, team work, gender equality and equality between employees, we developed five hypotheses and conducted an interview. This interview contained 30 questions, all related to the four factors we identified. We contacted Sony Ericsson, because we thought that this specific

company would provide us with the perfect example for our research. After getting in touch with Sony Ericsson, we got access to five persons who were willing to be interviewed, one woman and four men. After conducting our five interviews, we presented and analyzed the results. This is discussed further in this chapter and possible explanations are given.

7.2 Reflections concerning the hypotheses

As mentioned earlier, we developed five hypotheses. Our first hypothesis about work stress was rejected. When using the expression, rejected and accepted, we mean that this is an indication of the current situation at Sony Ericsson. We are aware of that we are not able to draw any general conclusion out of this hypothesis. We thought that high work stress was dominant at Sony Ericsson, but it was not. Our respondents say that there is a high working tempo at Sony Ericsson, but they are not stressed in general. The reason for the low stress level might be the high number of Swedes and their tradition of low work stress. Our second hypothesis about team work was accepted, though we showed that high team work is favoured at Sony Ericsson. The reason for this is probably that the Joint Venture culture, which Sony Ericsson desired, favoured team work. Our third hypothesis concerned gender equality. We thought that low gender equality was dominant at Sony Ericsson. This hypothesis was accepted. The most crucial reason for this is that the higher positions are possessed by men and that the number of men is dominant at Sony Ericsson. Our fourth hypothesis was about equality between employees. Before our interviews we thought that this factor had not changed, which means that the equality between employees is high in low MAS and low in high MAS organizations. The reason for this is that equality is something that is deeply rooted in people and it takes time to change. This hypothesis was accepted. After identifying the factors and the four hypotheses, we developed a fifth hypothesis as well. This one concerned culture shocks. We believed that some culture shocks had occurred because of the two very dissimilar cultures. But this hypothesis was rejected and no major culture shocks had occurred at Sony Ericsson. The main reason for this might be that Sony Ericsson has put a lot of effort in gaining knowledge of each company's similarities and differences and also because of the clear identification of Sony Ericsson's Joint Venture culture.

7.3 Self criticism

When writing our dissertation, we have gained knowledge over time. We have experienced both ups and downs. We now know what we could have done differently to make this dissertation even better. To be able to try our hypotheses, we conducted interviews. The interviews focused on the four factors we identified. In a perfect world we would liked to conduct 200 interviews, but naturally and unfortunately that was not possible. Another issue is that Hofstede and other researchers asked employees directly from their own perspective, whereas we asked Swedes about themselves as well as about Japanese employees. The answers about Swedes and their situation mostly go along with other studies, but not when asking about the Japanese's situation. This could have an impact on the validity of the answers because the Swedes might have the wrong impression about the Japanese. It could also be the case that the Swedes feel insecure and a bit careful when answering questions about the Japanese, since they might not know anything for sure. We had wanted to interview Japanese employees as well, to gain knowledge about their situation and their attitudes towards Swedish employees. Unfortunately, we did not have access to these persons. Because of the small sample, we are not able to draw any general conclusions.

One should also take into consideration, that the questions in our interview are not the same as other researchers'. Since we made our own hypotheses, we also made our own questions. We asked questions related to the four factors which we identified. Therefore, it might be confusing to compare our results with others', especially Hofstede. One example of a misinterpretation could be the link between team work, internal competition and individual work. According to Hofstede, internal competition is favoured in high MAS organizations and we interpreted this as low degree of team work. Another reason for our way to interpret the low degree of team work in high MAS organizations is because our received material from Sony Ericsson states that the workers in Japan are seen as individualists. According to us, individualism at work places means that the workers prefer to work alone instead of in groups. Yet, we have Hofstede's research as a starting point and the most important assumptions are the same. We should also mention that the results from our study are very positive, it seems like everything is perfect at the company. We are aware of the

fact that the reality is not that perfect. We believe that there have been ups and downs the last 5 years during the integration of the two company cultures. Our assumptions are that the great success of the company at this point might have affected the respondents' point of view and their answers.

7.4 Practical implication

We hope and believe that this dissertation will be helpful for people within merging companies. This includes companies from the same country. Although they come from the same country their company cultures are probably totally different from each other. Every company has its own mission and vision, which are based on its values and beliefs. Therefore, it is important for those companies to identify their desired culture and to be aware of the fact that differences exist even though they have similar national culture backgrounds. It is even more crucial for companies from different countries to identify their desired culture, because their national and company culture often differ a lot. The problem is more complex because these companies need to deal with both national and company culture. Finally, the most important thing is to recognize one's culture and be aware of its strengths and weaknesses. This makes it easier to interact with people from other cultures. It is also important to keep in mind that the merging companies should make the most of the strengths within both companies and reduce the weaknesses.

7.5 Future research

After conducting our survey, we got a number of ideas for further research. Those ideas are presented below.

- As we mentioned earlier, our study is based on a quite small sample which makes it hard to draw general conclusions. As future research, it is possible to make a larger study on the Joint Venture Sony Ericsson and to include Japanese employees in the study as well.

- Another way to increase the sample is to make a study with more companies involved. By increasing the sample one can bring more validity to the conclusions.
- Further on one can investigate how important it is to identify a new common culture when companies merge. This is one of our research questions that we have answered to some extent. Although it is possible to make an entire study on this specific questions. One could study both successful mergers and less successful ones. This kind of study would be very time demanding.

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Interview guide

APPENDIX 1

Introduction:

- Do you want to be anonymous?
- How long have you been working at Sony Ericsson?
- What is your title?
- What comes up in your mind when you hear the expression company culture?

Questions to the Swedes about themselves

Work stress:

- Do you feel stressed at work?
 - If yes; what do you think is the reason?
 - If no; is it temporary or usual?
- How many hours do you work?
 - Normal working shift?
 - Additional work?
- Do you have a high degree of sickness leave?

Team work:

- Overall, do you work individually or do you like to work in groups?
 - If group; how does the co-operation work?
 - If individually; does this depend on the task or is there any other reasons why you work individually?
- Do you prefer to co-operate with one or few persons?
- Do you believe that your colleagues will be there for you if you need any help?
 - For example when it comes to solving a task or a problem?
- What is your opinion towards internal competition?

Sex roles:

- How many women respectively men work at your department?
- Do you co-operate both with women and men?
- When it comes to co-operation, do you see any difference in co-operation, depending on if it is a woman or a man?

Equality between employees:

- How available is your manager/boss?
- How often are you in contact with him/her?
- If you have another opinion than your manager, is it going to be accepted by your manager and other colleagues? Do you feel free to present your opinion to your manager?

Questions to Swedes and their point of view on Japanese

Work stress:

- Do you notice any difference between how much Japanese and Swedish employees work?
- What is the big difference?
- Are they more stressed at work than the Swedes?

Team work:

- What do they think about co-operation?
- How is it to co-operate with the Japanese?
- What is their opinion about internal competition? Are they very competition oriented?

Sex roles:

- Do you notice any significant tendency when it comes to Japanese inställning to co-operate with women?
- Is there a big difference between Sony/Japan and Ericsson/Sweden concerning the amount of female employees?

Equality between employees:

- How available are the Japanese managers/boss? What kind of relation does one have to with a Japanese manager?
- Is there any significant difference between Swedes and Japanese employees, when it comes to respect towards the manager?
 - First name or the surname when you speak to the boss?
- Do the Japanese employees feel free to present their opinion to their managers?
 - How do they do this?

Conclusion:

- Do you believe that the integration of the JV culture has been successful?
- Do you notice any cultural shocks, today after five years?
 - Which are the most problematic issues?

Intervjuguide

APPENDIX 2

Inledning:

- Vill du vara anonym?
- Hur länge har du arbetat på Sony Ericsson?
- Vilken position har du?
- Vad tänker du på när du hör ordet *företagskultur*?

Frågor om svenskars uppfattning om sig själv

Work stress:

- Känner du dig stressad?
 - Om ja; vad tror du att det beror på?
 - Om nej; är detta tillfälligt eller vanligt?
- Hur mycket jobbar du?
 - Normal arbetstid?
 - Övertid?
- Är det mycket sjukskrivningar på din avdelning?

Team work:

- Jobbar du till största delen ensam eller i grupp?
 - Om mest med andra; hur fungerar detta samarbetet?
 - Om mest ensam; beror detta på dina arbetsuppgifter eller kan du tänka på en annan anledning?
- Föredrar du att samarbeta med en eller flera?
- Litar du på att dina arbetskamrater ställer upp för dig?
 - Om du har ett arbetsrelaterat problem, hjälper dom dig?
- Hur är din inställning till intern konkurrens?

Sex roles:

- Hur många är män respektive kvinnor på din avdelning?
- Samarbetar du med både kvinnor och män?
- Märker du någon skillnad i sättet att samarbeta beroende på om det är med män eller kvinnor?

Equality between employees:

- Hur tillgänglig är din chef?
- Hur ofta är du i kontakt med honom/henne?
- Om du har en annan åsikt än din chef, accepteras det av din chef och av andra anställda? Vågar du framföra dina åsikter?

Frågor om svenskars uppfattning om japaner

Work stress:

- Uppfattar du någon skillnad på hur mycket japaner och svenskar jobbar?
- Hur skiljer det sig åt?
- Verkar japaner mer stressade?

Team work:

- Hur är japaners inställning till samarbete?
- Hur fungerar det att samarbeta med japaner?
- Hur är japaners inställning till intern konkurrens?
 - Är dom mycket tävlings inriktade?

Sex roles:

- Märker du någon tendens angående japaners inställning att samarbeta med kvinnor?
- Är det stor skillnad mellan Sony Ericsson Japan/Sverige när det gäller antal anställda kvinnor i företaget?

Equality between employees:

- Hur tillgängliga är japanska chefer?
 - Vad har man för relation med en japansk chef?
- Kan man se någon tydlig skillnad mellan svenskar och japaner när det gäller respekt mot cheferna?
 - För eller efternamn när man tillkallar chefen?
- Är japaner angelägna om att framföra sin åsikt?
 - Hur gör dom detta?

Avslutning:

- Tycker du att integrationen av JV kulturen har fungerat bra
- Märker du av några kulturkrockar idag efter 5 år?
 - Vilka är de stora svårigheterna?

APPENDIX 3

Dear Sir / Madam,

We are two girls, Caroline Ohlsson and Sanja Ondelj, and we have been studying together for three years. We are students at Kristianstad University and we are now about to finish our bachelor in international business. We are now writing our dissertation and we are focusing on international mergers and company culture.

The purpose with our dissertation is to investigate what happens with company culture when a company with high masculinity and a company with low masculinity merge. To study this subject we will try to identify important dimensions concerning masculinity and to develop hypotheses about what happens with company culture when the companies merge. Empirically, we want to try this theory by investigate the company culture, with focus on masculinity, at Sony Ericsson today, five years after their merger. Since Sony and Ericsson have roots in Japan and Sweden and these two countries are very dissimilar when it comes to company culture and the level of masculinity, this specific company provide us with the perfect example to study.

We hope that you will be willing to co-operate with us and that you will find our research interesting and valuable.

Sincerely yours,

Caroline Ohlsson and Sanja Ondelj

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