A STUDY ON THE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND THE LEADERSHIP STYLES IN SCANDINAVIA AND SOUTH KOREA

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A Master thesis written in collaboration with Statoil ASA, Oslo, Norway and the Management department at Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH), Karlskrona, Sweden

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Abstract

Many Western companies are developing and choosing to expand in South Korea among other Eastern countries due to reasons such as economic benefits and/or lack of resources in the home country. This result in the need of understanding the local culture followed by the necessary adjustments in the leadership style(s) to achieve project success.

The aim of this study is to determine the cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea, the different leadership styles(s) practiced by Scandinavian leaders in South Korea and the strategies used for adjusting to the South Korean working environment.

This study has used journals, books, websites and interviews to determine and describe the cultural differences and leadership styles followed by the strategies for adjusting to the South Korean working environment. It was found in the theory that there are cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea, which lead to different leadership styles that should be practised. The most efficient leadership styles for Scandinavia are almost the opposite of the most efficient leadership styles for South Korea.

Based on the empirical results, it was found that Scandinavian leaders have a cultural understanding and have mostly used a combination of two or more leadership styles when working in South Korea. Even if some leaders did adjust their leadership style to the new environment, they did not completely practise the leadership styles that suit South Korea the best. It was also found that participants prepare themselves by reading books and talking with colleagues for exchanging ideas and experiences before departure to South Korea. Few of the participants had the chance to attend a course/workshop related to South Korea prior to the move.

It is concluded that the overall leadership styles practised by Scandinavians in South Korea are more of the Scandinavian character and therefore there is a need of adjustments for achieving leadership effectiveness in the South Korean working environment. There is also a great need of pre departure and post arrival training for easier relocation to South Korea. However, the authors got the impression during the interviews performed that the communication and cooperation between leaders and team members in South Korea were not a big issue as such, rather the issue was the communication and cooperation between Scandinavian teams and the South Korean suppliers.

The findings are believed to be valuable for companies transferring Scandinavian expatriates to lead in the Confucian cultures in general and in South Korea in particular.

Keywords: Scandinavian and South Korean culture, Scandinavian and South Korean leadership styles, strategies for adjusting to the South Korean working environment, Statoil ASA.
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Abbreviations

BTH  Blekinge Tekniska Högskola, Blekinge Institute of Technology
CEO  Chief Executive Officer
FEED  Front End Engineering Design
GLOBE  Global Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness Research Program
IBM  International Business Machines Corporation
NCS  Norwegian Continental Shelf
TR  Technical Requirements

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1. Introduction

This chapter will describe the relevant background information for this master thesis (hereafter called study), the problem discussion and the problem formulation and purpose.

1.1 Introduction to the study

Many Western companies are developing and choosing to expand in the Eastern/Middle Eastern world due to many reasons, such as economic benefits and/or lack of resources in the home country. Even if the project assignments seem to be the same in theory the actual practices might not be performed as expected as the language, the culture and the traditions in the Eastern/Middle Eastern countries can differ from the Western countries. These factors, among others, can contribute to make the progress of the project inhibited or that the teamwork in the project group doesn’t work as expected or as optimal as anticipated. One important factor is the attitude of the project leader and the leadership styles that are framed in each country. Many projects’ success can be reflected on the leader’s leadership style (Gehring, 2007; Hyvari, 2006). One leadership style might work very well in one part of the world while it is a disaster in another part of the world. This has been a focus in many international companies that are having expatriates (project leaders, engineers, workers etc.) working on projects in foreign countries with cultural differences.

The company used for empirical data input for this study is the Norwegian Oil and gas company, Statoil ASA, hereafter called Statoil. Statoil was contacted as the authors were informed about the great interest Statoil had in exploring the working environment in South Korea due to the international expansion they have recently had and still having in this part of the world. Both authors have had the great opportunities to work for Scandinavian companies (Scandinavia consists of the countries Denmark, Norway and Sweden) abroad in multicultural working environments. The experience gained and the interest of learning and understanding even more about cultural differences and the different leadership styles practiced in other parts of the world (in this case, South Korea) made this study of interest. In addition, the authors believe there is little research done on comparing Scandinavian culture differences and leadership styles with South Korean.

A short introduction about Statoil, with facts and figures can be found in section 2.3.

1.2 Research background

In connection with the fact that more projects are carried out abroad, as the Western enterprises establish themselves into the new emerging markets such as South Korea, it requires that leaders of these different projects have knowledge and experience in handling situations that may arise while working in multicultural environments. An understanding of the local culture and how it affects Western leadership practices and behaviours is the key matter in order to become a successful leader (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; Hofstede 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004; Nicholas, 2011). Scandinavian companies that are expanding abroad need representatives that must be present, monitor and follow up the suppliers from close distance to achieve project success. A good leadership style is of importance and can save time, money and resources for the project(s) (Dubrin,
Dubrin define a leader that successfully performs in such an environment as a multi-cultural leader with the following characteristics: “a leader with skills and attitudes to relate effectively to and motivate people across race, gender, age, social attitudes, and life styles” (Dubrin, 2010, p.385). A project’s success, efficiency, profit etc. can easily be reflected back to the manager’s performance or way of leadership style (Dubrin, 2010; Gehring, 2007; House, 2004; Hyvari, 2006; Nicholas, 2011).

This study will explore the cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea and the different leadership styles practiced by Scandinavians in South Korea. Further, the study will compare the cultural differences with each other and determine which leadership styles are the most efficient in South Korea. In the end of the study, practical implications and recommendations will be given on what way leaders can relate to the South Korean working environment and in what way this can be used to avoid or minimize misunderstandings, communication errors, quality deviations and/or other important factors that can effect a project’s success and efficiency.

Many books, journals, websites and studies indicate the differences between leadership styles performed in Scandinavia and South Korea, mostly due to cultural differences.

1.3 Problem discussion

According to Hofstede’s study there are five different cultural dimensions that effect leadership and these are Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism, Masculinity and Long-term Orientation. It’s concluded in that study that there are differences between Scandinavia and South Korea for these five cultural dimensions, which in turn tells us that there are cultural differences between them. Cultural differences affect the different leadership styles practiced in each of the countries. One example is the cultural dimension, Individualism, where South Korea scores much lower than Scandinavia which indicates that South Korean team members take care of each other in exchange of loyalty as they have a collectivistic society. Also, the relation to the leader is built up as a father and son relationship where lots of respect is shown. In Scandinavia, the relationship between leaders and the team members is based on a contract and the feedback is given to each other in a direct way (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede 2013).

Another major research study that has been developed to create a universal cultural framework is GLOBE, which is an abbreviation for Global Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness Research Program. GLOBE is a ten year long research program that has been studying, conceptualizing and validating the impact of culture in leadership and organizations. 160 professionals were studying societal culture, organizational culture and attributes of effective leadership in 62 different countries. GLOBE uses nine cultural dimensions as follows: Assertiveness, Institutional Collectivism, In-group Collectivism, Future Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism, Humane Orientation, Performance Orientation, Power Distance and Uncertainty Avoidance.

GLOBE classifies the 62 countries into different clusters. South Korea belongs to the Confucian Asia Cluster together with China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan and Taiwan. The study defines that the Confucian cultures are characterized by having a focus on networks and trust (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; Lowe 1998; Pyatt, Ashkanasy, Tamaschke and Grigg, 2001). GLOBE also indicates that the Confucian Asia cultures tend to have fewer women in position of authority and have more
occupational sex segregation. Norway is not part of this study but so are Sweden, Denmark and Finland. They are defined as the Nordic Europe Cluster and characterizes, among other things, as practicing equal rights for men and women and equally share power among people at all levels in the society. As shown above, there are cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea which results in different leadership styles that should be practiced (House, 2004).

Alston describes the South Korean leadership style to be hierarchical and inspired by the Korean concept of inwha, which focuses on the inequality between people from different rank, power and prestige (Alston, 1989; Brett, Behafer and Kern, 2006; Dorfman and Howell, 1997; Hofstede 1980; Hofstede, 2013). It is also of importance that no types of situations with confrontation or blame occur in the group. In Scandinavia, on the other hand, the team members and the leaders are having an informal relationship with open communication. Respect is not gained by title or position but rather by one’s actions. Every decision made by the leaders is, more or less, consulted together with the team members before the decision making which can be time consuming sometimes (Brett et.al., 2006; Grenness, 2003; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede 2013; House, 2004; Williams and Devine, 2005).

Dorfman and Howell believe that, based on their observations, that the Directive- and Supportive leadership styles would be suitable to practice in South Korea in contrary to Participative leadership style (Dorfman and Howell, 1997). The GLOBE study has concluded by examining the South Korean culture that Self-protective leadership style is the most efficient leadership style to be used in South Korea and that Participative leadership style is seen as less contributing to leadership effectiveness (House, 2004). Fahr, Podsakoff and Cheng have found that leader contingent reward/punishment is a powerful tool in cultures characterized by the Confucianism, but a study made by Dorfman and Howell implies that reward/punishment can disturb the internal peace and harmony in the group therefore it is not clear if contingent reward/punishment has a positive impact or not in South Korea (Fahr, Podsakoff and Cheng, 1987; Dorfman and Howell, 1997). The Transactional leadership style is based on rewards and punishments and even though it is not fully obvious it might be suitable in South Korea in some certain situations. The South Koreans are known as a collectivistic society and therefore the Team oriented leadership style is seen as one of the most efficient leadership styles to be practised in South Korea (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004).

In Scandinavia, it is most likely to use People-oriented leadership style as they believe in equal rights and treat everyone equally regardless of background (House, 2004; Williams and Devine, 2005). As stated by Grenness, the Scandinavian organizational behaviour is focusing on achieving consensus, cooperation on all levels and decision makings through democratic processes and therefore Participative leadership style is suitable for Scandinavia (Grenness, 2003; House, 2004). Brytting and Trollestad describe Scandinavian leaders with characteristics such as “vision management” and/or “value based management” which are behaviours of Charismatic/Value-based and Transformational leadership styles (Brytting and Trollestad, 2000). Turner and Muller believe that it is essential for leaders to be visionary in addition to direct and motivate the team members for achieving common goals which are behaviours of both Charismatic/Value based and Transformational leadership styles (Tuner and Muller, 2005).

It was found in the literature that some of the most efficient leadership styles practised in Scandinavia had the opposite effect in South Korea. As an example, the Participative leadership style is one of the most efficient leadership styles in Scandinavia but one of the least efficient leadership
styles in South Korea (Bjerke, 1999; Dorfman and Howell, 1997; Grenness, 2003; House, 2004; Wren, 2005).

Based on the literature review described above, it’s concluded that there are cultural differences between Scandinavian countries and South Korea. This in turn, leads to the fact that different leadership styles are practiced.

1.4 Problem formulation and purpose

The fact that multicultural working environment is getting more and more common in today’s society which is an important part of the future workplace and at the same time as the theory shows that different cultures do have different expectations and needs in regards leadership styles, makes it an interesting area to investigate.

The main purpose with this study is to get a deep knowledge of the cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea and the different leadership styles that should be practiced by Scandinavians in South Korea to achieve leadership effectiveness. Also, the integration process for Scandinavian leaders to the South Korean working environment is a part of the main purpose of this study. By obtaining leadership effectiveness the leaders can avoid or minimizing misunderstandings, communication errors, quality deviations and/or other important factors that can affect a project’s success.

To be able to achieve this purpose, the study will focus on the following problem formulation:

“What leadership styles do Scandinavian leaders practice in South Korea and what strategies do they have for adjusting to the South Korean working environment?”

Once the empirical data is obtained this study will combine it with the theory, analyse it and in the end of the report answer the main problem formulation with practical implications and recommendations on how Scandinavian leaders can, if needed, adjust their leadership style(s) to better fit in to the South Korean working environment as well as what strategies can be used for adjusting to the South Korean working environment.
2. Method

As stated in the previous chapter, the aim of this study is to gain an understanding of the cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea, the different leadership style(s) practised by Scandinavian leaders in South Korea and the strategies used for adjusting to the South Korean working environment. The main problem formulation that has been focused on and will be answered is:

“What leadership styles do Scandinavian leaders practice in South Korea and what strategies do they have for adjusting to the South Korean working environment?”

To be able to obtain the aim, a study with the following process flow has been performed:

A literature review was done from different academic sources as a base to be able to answer the main problem formulation. The Hofstede and the GLOBE studies definition of the cultural dimensions were used in the literature review and analysis. The reason why these two studies were used is the fact that they are both often academically quoted studies in this field. To get a deeper knowledge of the Scandinavian and South Korean leadership practices, theories and strategies, a number of different literature sources were used.

The sections below will describe the research approach of this study and why this method was chosen, how the empirical data were conducted followed by a short introduction about Statoil.

2.1 Research approach

Qualitative research aims to collect and analyse people’s experiences and their views about a certain topic. The purpose is to describe, explain and interpret (Ahrne, 2011). Qualitative studies often involve a small number of participants, but try in return to examine them deeply (McCraken, 1988; Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010).

The research approach in this study is qualitative due to the aim is to obtain the participants (Scandinavian leaders) individual experiences in different working situations in South Korea. This is believed to be the best suitable method as it is difficult to capture the participants’ experiences from other angles.
2.2 Data collection method

According to Robert Yin, data collection for the empirical results can be performed in six possible ways. Table 1 below is taken from his book, “Case Study Research”, where the advantages and disadvantages of these empirical sources are listed (Yin, 2008). According to Bassey there are three major methods that can be used namely; asking questions, observing events and reading documents and according to Blaxter, Hughes and Tight there are four different research techniques that can be used, which are data collection through interviews, documents, observations and questionnaires (Bassey (1999; Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010).

Table 1 – Data collection methods for the empirical results (Yin, 2008, p. 86).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Method</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document</td>
<td>• Stable - can be reviewed repeatedly&lt;br&gt;• Non-intrusive - are not created as part of the case study&lt;br&gt;• Exactly - contains exact names, references and details of a case&lt;br&gt;• Broad coverage - long time horizon, many cases and many environments</td>
<td>• Affordability - may be low&lt;br&gt;• Unilateral choice, if collection is incomplete&lt;br&gt;• Partial telling - reflects the authors' (unknown) bias&lt;br&gt;• Access - may be intentionally blocked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archive</td>
<td>• [Same as above for documentation]&lt;br&gt;• Precise and quantitative</td>
<td>• [Same as above for documentation]&lt;br&gt;• Accessibility due to integrity reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>• Targeted - focused directly on the case study question&lt;br&gt;• Insightful - meet the perceived causal inferences</td>
<td>• Bias due to poorly worded questions&lt;br&gt;• Partial response&lt;br&gt;• Incorrect because due to poor memory&lt;br&gt;• Reflextivity - the interviewee responds with what the interviewer wants to hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct observation</td>
<td>• Reality - covers cases in real time&lt;br&gt;• Contextual - covers context of cases</td>
<td>• Time-consuming&lt;br&gt;• Selectivity - if not broad coverage&lt;br&gt;• Reflexivity - the case can proceed differently because that observed&lt;br&gt;• Cost - hours required by the human observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation observations</td>
<td>• [Same as above for direct observations]&lt;br&gt;• Provides insight into interpersonal behavior and motive</td>
<td>• [Same as above for direct observations]&lt;br&gt;• Impartial due investigator's manipulation of the cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifacts</td>
<td>• Provides insight into the cultural traits&lt;br&gt;• Provides insight into the technical operation</td>
<td>• Selectivity&lt;br&gt;• Availability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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In order to achieve our goals a qualitative research method based on personal interviews with open ended and structured questions have been used. Open ended questions are questions that encourage people to talk and share experiences with their own words. Structured questions imply that the same questions are asked in the same order to all the interviewees and those questions are devised in a methodical way to cover all necessary aspects and the complete scope of the research question. By using the interview method one can get insight in the subject as well as getting in direct contact with the persons actually working with leadership to better understand their experiences and their perspective of leading a group or a team. Also when performing an interview, the concentration is to receive as much information or data as possible related to the study question. The other data collection methods described earlier, are either too time consuming or not relevant for this study and therefore excluded.

As mentioned in section 1.1, Statoil has been used as the company for the empirical data collection. Statoil picked out 29 possible candidates with the relevant working background for this study and shared their contact details with the authors for further contact. The primary criteria for being selected for interview were as follows:

- Preferably one to two years, or more, of leadership experience from a project that Statoil have had or currently having in South Korea.
- Have worked in Scandinavia in a leader position or higher.
- Have been brought up in Scandinavia and/or is very familiar with the Scandinavian society.

The authors believed that having at least one years’ experience in South Korea the interviewees would have the experience needed to be able to understand how the society works and how the working culture differs from Scandinavian. As this study is focusing on Scandinavian leaders (or higher) in South Korea and their leadership styles, it is important that the interviewees have been working in Scandinavia as leaders (or higher) and have the Scandinavian mindset.

Out of the 29 candidates seven did not answer on the authors’ inquiry, another ten were not interviewed at all as they did not fulfil the requirements above or did not have time. The last twelve participants were interviewed but two of them were found later not to be relevant and their answers have not been included in this study, simply because they did not fulfil the requirements above. That gives in total ten interviews that have been used for this study. All the interviewees have today a leadership position in South Korea or in Scandinavia and have leadership experience from South Korea. There was one woman interviewed among the ten relevant Statoil employees and the age distribution within the group was between 35 and 60 years old. Statoil has not been active with projects in South Korea for a very long time so all the Scandinavian leaders interviewed have been working in South Korea between one to four years.

Due to limitations in time for this study, travel to South Korea was not feasible. Instead, face to face interviews in Oslo at Statoil Fornebu was concluded as the best option for this data collection to get a better contact surface as well as personal touch with the interviewees. But as not all the interviewees had the opportunity to travel to Oslo some of the interviews were conducted via video conference. Prior to the interviews every participant was explained the purpose of the interview as well as the goals of the study. The questions were not handed out beforehand but the interviewees were informed about the possible topics for discussion (see Appendix A for more details).
All the answers were treated as anonymous and the time of each interview was approximately one hour to one and a half hour. The interview questions were formulated in a way that reflected and helped answering the problem formulations based on the literature review. All the interview questions are gathered in Appendix B.

The challenges with the interviews were to get in touch with the interviewees followed by finding a time and place that suited them, in regards their location and working load. Even though these minor issues occurred, the authors were able to perform the interviews with sufficient amount of participants and the results are believed to be academically acceptable and good enough to answer the problem formulation. The findings are believed to be valuable not only for Statoil which is looking for leadership effectiveness and ways to prepare their leaders for an easy and successful transfer to South Korea, but at least also indicative to any Scandinavian leader looking to lead in the Confucian cultures in general and in South Korea in particular.

It was very important that the interviews were done in a proper manner so that the study becomes credible. In order to preserve the chain of evidence it was important to:

- Think about interviewing techniques to get reliable and unaffected answers.
- Assure that the interviewees and the interview situations were prepared as well as possible beforehand.
- Make sure that the interviews provide sufficient information of interest.

In the next sections, the subject interview techniques will be discussed.

2.2.1 Interview techniques

For an interviewer, it is important to be able to explain the purpose of the interview. Another important aspect of the interview is to make demands on the respondent. The following aspects are required by the respondents (Ekholm and Fransson, 2012):

- Time: It is important to agree on a time that suits both parties. It is also important to inform the respondent how long the interview is expected to take place so he or she can put aside the amount of time needed for the interview and not feeling stressed during the interview.

- Effort: The candidate should make an effort to come up with an answer that is appropriate to the question. If there would be a problem with a question, the respondent has to return, preferably by phone or mail, to answer or clarify the question.

- Sincerity: An important point is that the answers on the questions asked must be sincere. In cases where the respondent is responsible for the quality of what the interview is to investigate, it can happen that he or she would present an ideal image that does not always cover the external reality. Respondent may do so by the unwillingness to acknowledge their personal shortcomings. Especially if he or she responds to a superior who will take part in the survey results.
The time and place for the interview was agreed with each interviewee in advance and all the interviewees were informed that their answers will be treated as anonymous. All the interview questions were answered by the participants during the time frame put aside for the interviews.

### 2.2.2 Planning of the interview

Before the interview it is essential to be well prepared and plan well. The following points are good to take into consideration before the interview (Ekholm and Fransson, 2012):

- **Problem Analysis:** Why should the interview take place? Who and what are the results for? What questions will the interview answer?

- **Clarification and prioritization of topics for discussion:** What question areas are most important? Is it possible to get answers to questions with regards to resources such as time, money and personnel?

- **Development of work plan and detailed outline:** Prepare interview questions and decide who to interview and book a meeting time that is suitable for both parties.

- **Test Interviews:** Is the way the questions are constructed neutral in the sense that they do not affect the answers?

- **Reviewing the interview plan:** Is the interview questions good enough to lead to the targets?

When the questions will be held the interviewer should think about the following:

- **The questions shall be addressed or written one by one:** One question at a time!

- **Avoid too extended questions.**

- **Do not ask leading questions, for example:** “Isn’t it so that there are cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea?”

- **Use any open questions, so the respondents customize their own responses. An open question is, for example:** “What challenges do you face in your daily work?”

The planning for the interviews that were performed and the selection of the interview questions were decided by the authors, taking into consideration the above mentioned details. A test interview was performed and feedback was received that resulted in minor changes of the interview questions.

### 2.2.3 During the interview, and after

During the interview it is important to continuously record your answers in the form of short notes. One option is to record the interview in case it is OK for the respondents. Then the interview can be listened to retrospective and the most important information can be reviewed afterwards.
When the respondent will be followed up it is important not to be too soft. The interviewer must persistently question on until he or she is satisfied with the answers, even if it can be difficult and unpleasant for the respondent. The response uncertainty must be accounted because it plays an important role in the analysis. After the interview it is important to compile the interview in a report as soon as possible (Ekholm and Fransson, 2012).

All the interviews were recorded as all the interviewees agreed on that. This was helpful as it was possible to go back and listen to the answers all over again. In addition written notes were taken and later reviewed and put into a Word document.

During the interview, it is common for a beginner to make the following general errors (Ekholm and Fransson, 2012).

- The interviewer forgets to introduce the purpose of the interview, name and where he or she comes from.
- The interviewer has not prepared any questions to ask. Then the roles can be reversed and the respondent is the one conducting the interview.
- A common error is that the interviewer is not listening carefully because he or she is focusing on formulating the next question. The interviewer has to take one question at a time and listen to the respondent and follow up the answers.
- Inexperienced interviewers typically use too little breathers between the questions. During the interview it is important to make pauses so that the interviewer has the chance of making notes.
- The interviewer draws up the tempo for questions and answers. Respondent must have a chance to in a calm way have time to think before answering a question.
- The interviewer forgets to summarize the interview after each question.
- If the interview answers need to be supplemented at a later date, it is important to have helpful respondents.

All the interviews started with the authors introducing themselves followed by a short introduction about the study and its aim. All the interview questions were prepared beforehand and asked in a tempo that gave the interviewees enough time to think and formulate answers.
2.3 Facts about Statoil

This section will give the reader an understanding of the company that is a part of this study.

Statoil is a historically Norwegian energy company that over the years has developed internationally and has today operations in over 40 countries. Statoil is headquartered in Norway with approximately 21 000 employees worldwide and was listed on both the New York and Oslo stock exchanges in 2001. The president and CEO of Statoil is Helge Lund (Annual Report, 2011).

Statoil was registered as a limited liability company in 1972 under the name Den norske stats oljeselskap AS (The Norwegian State Oil Company). The Norwegian State owned the company and its role was to be the government’s commercial instrument in the development of the oil and gas industry in Norway. Statoil has its history from late 1960s and has been growing parallel with the emergence of the Norwegian oil and gas industry. In the beginning, Statoil’s operations were mostly focused on exploration for the production and development of oil and gas on the Norwegian continental shelf (NCS) as a partner. In the 1970s Statoil made important discoveries and begun their own oil refining operations which have been helping the further development of the NCS. Statoil grew significantly in the 1980s through the development of large fields on the NCS, such as for instance Statfjord, Gullfaks, Oseberg and Troll. They also became an important player in the European gas market by securing large sales contracts for the development and operation of gas transport systems and terminals. In the 1990s Statoil made extensive improvements in the production performance of their large fields after technological developments on the NCS. As a result of large investments on the NCS continental shelf and internationally, Statoil and their business has grown since 2000. In 2011 Statoil decided to increase their renewable energy portfolio which includes more focus on offshore wind power (Seeking Business Opportunities In offshore wind, 2012).

In 2001 the company changed name to Statoil ASA and in 2007 to StatoilHydro when the oil and gas department of Norsk Hydro ASA merged with Statoil. In end of 2009 the company changed its name back to Statoil (Annual Report, 2011).

Figure 1 – View from the platform Sleipner, Photo: Kjetil Alsvik, Statoil.
Some key figures for Statoil (Annual Report, 2011):

- Equity production of 1.85 million barrels of oil equivalent per day in 2011.
- Market capitalisation of about USD dollar 85 billion.
- 5.426 billion barrels of oil equivalent in proved reserves.
- Operator of more than 40 producing oil and gas fields.
- One of the world's largest net sellers of crude oil.
- The second-largest exporter of gas to Europe.
- The world's largest operator in waters deeper than 100 metres.
- A world leader in the use of deep-water technology.
- A world leader in carbon capture and storage.
- The largest retailer of oil products in Scandinavia, and one of the leaders in the Baltic States.
- Statoil consists of seven business areas:
  - Development and Production Norway
  - Development and Production International
  - Development and Production North America
  - Marketing, Processing and Renewable Energy
  - Technology Projects and Drilling
  - Exploration
  - Global Strategy and Business Development
3. Theory

This chapter will provide the relevant theoretical background for this study and is divided into three subchapters. The first subchapter introduces and defines cultural differences, with special focus on matters related to Scandinavia and South Korea. The second subchapter is taking the reader through the different leadership styles that could be used in Scandinavia and in South Korea for leadership effectiveness followed by a deeper review of Scandinavian and South Korean leadership styles. The third and last subchapter discusses what strategies can be used for Scandinavian leaders for adjusting to South Korean working environment.

Even though Statoil is a Norwegian company, the study will not only compare the differences between Norway and South Korea as such, but between Scandinavia and South Korea. Empirical studies show that “management in the Scandinavian countries does not differ from one another in a significant way” (Grenness, 2003, p.11). Another way of measuring similarities between countries may be by using “cultural distance”. According to Inglehart the cultural distance between Sweden and Norway, and Sweden and Denmark, based on a study shows that the three Scandinavian countries make quite similar ratings and the author concludes that “(. . .) Norway, Denmark and Sweden form a compact cluster (. . .)” (Inglehart, 1998, p. 17). The reason for the above mentioned statements are that the differences within Scandinavian countries tend to be smaller compared to other countries outside Scandinavia due to similar history and languages, the same religion, very close political systems and geographical proximity (Brodbeck, 2000; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004; Söderman, 1983).

3.1 Culture differences

The cultural differences are one important part of the theory behind this study. By gaining an understanding over the different cultures and values in Scandinavia and South Korea, it is believed that it will give a better understanding of which leadership styles are practiced in these countries and why they are successful.

There are many different studies regarding multi-cultural leadership. This study will review two quantitative studies, the Hofstede and the GLOBE. The reason why these two studies have been used is the fact that they are both often academically quoted studies in this field and these two studies are believed to give a common platform to understand the culture differences as well as to give the study a higher reliability and validity.

The study has used the mean values for Scandinavia, calculated from the Hofstede and the GLOBE studies, separately (see appendix C, for the values of each Scandinavian country).

3.1.1 The cultural dimensions defined by the Hofstede study

Hofstede’s study covers today 74 different countries. He started in 1967 to analyse the multinational company; International Business Machines Corporation, (IBM), in 64 different countries and later extended it to other businesses and other countries.
Hofstede has defined five different cultural dimensions that effect leadership and each country attains a score for each of the dimensions, were maximum score for each dimension is 100. These cultural dimensions are as follows (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013):

Table 2 – Hofstede’s five dimensions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimensions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>This refers to the degree of inequality that exists and is accepted in a society. If a society has a high score on this dimension it means that the society accepts an unequal distribution of power and that the people knows “their position” in the society. A low score on this dimension means that the person in the society sees himself/herself as equal as anyone else in the society. In a company a high score indicates that there is a high hierarchy and a gap between leaders and the team members is present while a low score indicates flatter organization and that the leaders and the team members are equally treated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>This refers to if a member of the society feels threaten in uncertain and unknown situations. A high score indicates that the society avoids unclear situations as much as possible. Low score indicates that the society welcomes differences and that there are few rules to follow. In a business environment a high score means that there are many rules and policies (formal business) that have to be followed and differences are avoided. A low score indicates an informal business attitude and a high acceptance of risks and changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>This refers to the bonding people have to the community. A society with high score has lack of relation connections with other people except close friends and family. A low score society indicates that people care about each other’s wellbeing and have a large respect and loyalty towards friends, colleagues and elders. In a business environment a high score would mean that team members have respect for each other’s privacy and that they enjoy challenges. A low score indicates that the team members work for the basic rewards and prefer harmony rather than honesty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity</td>
<td>This refers to how much a society believes in and values the traditional women and men roles. A high score indicates that the society expects that men are stronger, tougher and family providers. In a low score country women and men work together, are equally positioned and men can be sensitive. In the business environment a high score means that men are masculine and women are feminine. A low score means that women can do everything men can do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is related to the belief of Confucius. The society is searching for profit and has future oriented perspectives rather than short term point of views. A high score indicates that families are the basis of the society and that people are avoiding “loss of face”. A low score society characterizes by high creativity and individualism. In the business environment a high score means that people should avoid situations were other persons would “lose face”. A low score indicates that people do not resist to changes.

The scores for each cultural dimension for Scandinavia and South Korea are presented in the table 3 below (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Dimension</th>
<th>Scandinavia</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Orientation</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The column chart below, figure 3, shows a clear picture over the cultural dimension differences between Scandinavia and South Korea (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013):
Power Distance
Scandinavia scores low on this topic which means that Scandinavians are independent, believe in equal rights and that leaders coach their team members. Team members expect to be consulted and control is disliked. The communication is direct and participated oriented. South Korea scores 60 on this topic which means that the South Korean society is very hierarchical. The people of South Korea accept a hierarchical order and understand “their position”. In the office environment the team members expect to be told what to do by the leaders who are seen as friendly dictators (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013).

Uncertainty Avoidance
Scandinavia scores 34 which means that the society believes that there should not be more rules than necessary and that work tasks should be done properly, otherwise one should be replaced. There is a focus on planning and short notice events are not appreciated. People in Scandinavia are relaxed; they don’t show emotional feelings and are not afraid of changes. South Korea scores 85 and is one of the most uncertainty avoiding countries in the world. Countries with this kind of score are intolerant for unconventional ideas and behaviours. In the South Korean culture security is a motivating factor, they are urged to work hard, innovation is most likely not welcomed and there is an emotional need for rules (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013).

Individualism
Scandinavia scores 71 and is considered as an individualistic society which means that people theoretically look after themselves and their direct family. Personal opinions are valued and expressed freely. The right to privacy is important and respected. The leaders focus on the supervision of the team members and the relationship between them is based on a contract. The leaders and the team members give feedback to each other in a direct way and favouritism is not encouraged. South Korea scores 18 and is considered as a collectivistic society. This means that loyalty to family, relatives and close friends are more important than general rules. The team members take care of each other in exchange for loyalty. The relation between the leaders and the team members is seen more like a father and son relationship and lots of respect is shown to the leaders. To openly criticize a team member is seen as a shame and “loss of face” (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013).

Masculinity
Scandinavia scores 10 which is one of the lowest scored in the study of Hofstede. This means, among other things, that to show off is not encouraged and to take care of the environment is important. Effective leaders give the team members support and involve them in the decision making processes. South Korea scores 39 which is considered as a feminine country. This means, among other things, that the focus is on working to earn enough money to survive and that leaders attempt to keep equality in the groups (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013).

Long-term Orientation
Looking at Scandinavia and the score of 37 shows a more short-term orientated country. The people highlight their free time, honesty and stability in their daily lives. Quick results are also expected. South Korea is one of the long-term oriented societies and scores 75 in the category long-term orientation. They live their lives guided with good examples and energy. In business environment this is practiced by putting focus on the steady growth in the market instead of quarterly profits. It is believed that the company exists to make money for the stake holders and society for many
generations rather than make money every quarter for the shareholders (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013).

### 3.1.2 The cultural dimensions defined by the GLOBE study

The GLOBE study has nine different cultural dimensions and each dimension has double nature. That is, that the society on each dimension has two values, the practical value “As Is” and the cultural value “Should Be”. The “As Is” score is how the society is practicing the dimensions today and the “Should Be” score is describing how the society should be practicing the dimensions according to their cultural values. The score range for each dimension is from one to seven, where seven is the maximum score.

GLOBE is the first study to empirically measure and verify the differences between cultural values and practices. GLOBE defines culture as “as shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations” (House, 2004, p.15).

If two countries have different “As Is” scores but very similar “Should Be” scores then the knowledge transfer between the two countries should be easier than if they would have similar “As Is” scores but different “Should Be” scores (Javidan, Stahl, Brodbeck, and Wilderom, 2005).

It is important to know that even if some of the GLOBE’s nine dimensions have the same name as Hofstede’s five dimensions, the context of the dimensions for the two studies can differ (House, 2004). The cultural dimensions in Hofstede’s study is associated with values and practices whereas the cultural dimensions for GLOBE are related to how the society is practicing the dimensions today (“As Is”) and how the society should be practicing (“Should Be”) the dimensions according to their cultural values.

Norway is not a part of the GLOBE study and therefore the mean values of Sweden and Denmark have been used in this study. The nine different cultural dimensions are as follows (House, 2004):

**Table 4 – The GLOBE nine cultural dimensions.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimensions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>The degree to which individuals in a society or organization are (should be) assertive, confrontational and aggressive. A Society that scores high on Assertiveness tends to, among other things, value assertive, dominant and tough attitude for all citizens and has sympathy for the strong persons. While a low score society tends to view Assertiveness as a social unacceptable behaviour and value humility and sympathy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Institutional Collectivism
The degree to which organization and people are (should be) motivated by institutions to work in an integrated way in groups even if their own goals are not obtained. An organization that scores high on Institutional Collectivism tends to, among other things, take important decisions in groups and not individually while a low score society tends to have people that move from company to company frequently and at their own convenient.

### In-group Collectivism
The degree to which individuals in a society are (should be) taking pride and feel loyal towards the organization, employers and families. A society that scores high on In-group Collectivism tends to, among other things, have indirect communication. A low score society tends to have people that look after themselves and their close family members.

### Future Orientation
The degree to which individuals in a society or organization are (should be) engaged in future oriented activities such as investing in the future, planning for the future and delaying individual or collective satisfaction. A society that scores high on Future Orientation tends to, among other things, have a flexible and adjustable organization and leaders. A low score society tends to have inflexible and not adjustable organization and leaders.

### Gender Egalitarianism
The degree to which individuals in a society or organization are (should be) supporting gender equality. A society that scores high on Gender Egalitarianism tends to, among other things, have more women in positions of authority and have fewer differences between the genders. A low score society have less women in positions of authority and have more differences between the genders.

### Humane Orientation
The degree to which individuals in a society or organization are (should be) kind, generous, caring and act fair towards others. A society that scores high on Human Orientation tends to, among other things, think that others are more important than themselves and that kindness, love and generosity have a high priority. A low score society believes that self-interest is important and that self-enjoyment and comfort have a high priority.

### Performance Orientation
The degree to which individuals in a society or organization are (should be) rewarding and encouraging group members for their performances. A society that scores high on Performance Orientation tends to, among other things, value knowledge development and training. A low score society emphasizes seniority and experience.

### Power Distance
The degree to which individuals in a society or organization are (should be) expecting and accepting that power is unequally shared. A society that scores high on Power Distance tends to, among other things, see power as something that brings social order, relational harmony and role stability. A low score society sees power as a potential source of corruption and dominance.
Uncertainty Avoidance: The degree to which individuals in a society or organization are (should be) trusting already formed social norms, rules and procedures to avoid future uncertainty. A society that scores high on Uncertainty Avoidance tends to, among other things, think that a spoken agreement needs to be documented in legal contracts while a low score society relies on words of the other party rather than contractual arrangements.

The scores for “As Is” for each cultural dimension for Scandinavia and South Korea are presented in table 5 below (House, 2004):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Dimension</th>
<th>Scandinavia (Norway excluded)</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>4,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Collectivism</td>
<td>5,0</td>
<td>5,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-group Collectivism</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>5,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Orientation</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>4,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Egalitarianism</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>2,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane Orientation</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>3,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Orientation</td>
<td>4,0</td>
<td>4,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>5,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>5,3</td>
<td>3,6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The column chart below, figure 4, shows a clear picture over the “As Is” cultural dimension differences between Scandinavia and South Korea (House, 2004):
The scores for “Should Be” for each cultural dimension for Scandinavia and South Korea are presented in table 6 below (House, 2004):

Table 6 – The GLOBE cultural dimensions “Should Be” for Scandinavia and South Korea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Scandinavia (Norway excluded)</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>3,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Collectivism</td>
<td>4,1</td>
<td>3,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-group Collectivism</td>
<td>5,8</td>
<td>5,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Orientation</td>
<td>4,6</td>
<td>5,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Egalitarianism</td>
<td>5,1</td>
<td>4,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane Orientation</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>5,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Orientation</td>
<td>5,7</td>
<td>5,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>2,7</td>
<td>2,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>3,7</td>
<td>4,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The column chart below, figure 5, shows a clear picture over the “Should Be” cultural dimension differences between Scandinavia and South Korea (House, 2004):

Figure 5 – The GLOBE cultural dimensions “Should Be” for Scandinavia and South Korea in a column chart (own figure).
Assertiveness “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 3,6 and South Korea scores 4,4 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a low score society while South Korea is rated as a high score society. This means that Scandinavians tend to, among other things, value people and warm relationships as well as cooperation. South Koreans, among other things, value completion of work and have a “can do” approach (House, 2004).

Assertiveness “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 3,5 and South Korea scores 3,8 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia and South Korea are rated as mid-score societies (House, 2004).

Institutional Collectivism “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 5,0 and South Korea scores 5,2 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia and South Korea are rated as high score societies. This means that both countries tend to, among other things, create work tasks to be solved in groups rather than individually to maximize the creativity (House, 2004).

Institutional Collectivism “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 4,1 and South Korea scores 3,9 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia and South Korea are rated as low score societies. This means that Scandinavians and South Koreans should, among other things, prefer to solve conflicts in a direct and solution-oriented way (House, 2004).

In-group Collectivism “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 3,5 and South Korea scores 5,5 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a low score society while South Korea is rated as a high score society. This means that Scandinavians tend, to among other things, stress on rational thinking. South Koreans on the other hand are more integrated into solid groups (House, 2004).

In-group Collectivism “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 5,8 and South Korea scores 5,4 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a mid-score society while South Korea is rated as a low score society. This means that South Koreans should, among other things, have a faster tempo of life (House, 2004).

Future Orientation “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 4,4 and South Korea scores 4,0 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a high score society while South Korea is rated as a mid-score society. This means that Scandinavians tend to, among other things, obtain economic success and that individuals are more essentially motivated (House, 2004).

Future Orientation “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 4,6 and South Korea scores 5,7 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a low score society while South Korea is rated as a high score society. This means that Scandinavians should among other things have a tendency to spend money now rather than to save for the future and South Koreans should, among other things, value long term success (House, 2004).
Gender Egalitarianism “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 3.9 and South Korea scores 2.5 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a high score society while South Korea is rated as a low score society. This means that Scandinavian females, among other things, have same level of education like Scandinavian males and have a greater role in the community decision makings. South Koreans have, among other things, lower percentage of women in the labour force (House, 2004).

Gender Egalitarianism “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 5.1 and South Korea scores 4.2 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a high score society while South Korea is rated as a low score society. This means that Scandinavians tend to, among other things, have less work-related gender segregation. The South Korean females, among other things, have lower level of education than South Korean males (House, 2004).

Humane Orientation “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 4.3 and South Korea scores 3.8 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia and South Korea are rated as mid-score societies (House, 2004).

Humane Orientation “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 5.7 and South Korea scores 5.6 of 7 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia and South Korea are rated as mid-score societies (House, 2004).

Performance Orientation “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 4.0 and South Korea scores 4.6 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a mid-score society while South Korea is rated as a high score society. This means that the South Korean society, among other things, gives reward for great performance and expects challenging targets (House, 2004).

Performance Orientation “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 5.7 and South Korea scores 5.3 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a mid-score society while South Korea is rated as a low score society. This means that South Koreans should, among other things, highlight traditions and value who you are more than what you do (House, 2004).

Power Distance “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 4.4 and South Korea scores 5.6 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a low score society while South Korea is rated as a mid-score society. This means that Scandinavians, among other things, have a strong belief in freedom, believe that public corruption is low and that the society has a large middle class level (House, 2004).

Power Distance “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 2.7 and South Korea scores 2.6 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia and South Korea are rated as mid-score societies (House, 2004).
Uncertainty Avoidance “As Is”
Scandinavia scores 5.3 and South Korea scores 3.0 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a high score society while South Korea is rated as a low score society. This means that the Scandinavian society, among other things, tends to have minor tolerance for breaking rules and take more thoughtful risks. The South Korean society tends to, among other things, show more tolerance for breaking rules (House, 2004).

Uncertainty Avoidance “Should Be”
Scandinavia scores 3.7 and South Korea scores 4.7 and according to the GLOBE study, Scandinavia is rated as a low score society while South Korea is rated as a mid-score society. This means that the Scandinavian society should, among other things, be flexible towards changes and should have an informal way to interact with people (House, 2004).

Below are two figures presenting the GLOBE cultural dimensions between “As Is” and “Should Be” for Scandinavia and South Korea.

![Figure 6](image)

The biggest differences in scores between “As Is” and “Should Be” for Scandinavia (see figure 6) are Uncertainty Avoidance and In-group Collectivism, which means that they have a strong practise score for Uncertainty Avoidance than they should and they have a weak practise score for In-group Collectivism than they should. These differences can maybe be explained by influences in their daily lives that are differing from their cultural values, such as internet, television programs, travels to foreign countries etc.
Figure 7 – The GLOBE cultural dimension differences between “As Is” and “Should Be” for South Korea presented in a radar chart (own figure).

The biggest differences in scores between “As Is” and “Should Be” for South Korea (see figure 7) are Power Distance and Humane Orientation, which means that they have a strong practise score for Power Distance than they should and they have a weak practise score for Humane Orientation than they should. These differences can maybe be explained by influences in their daily lives that are differing from their cultural values, such as internet, television programs, tourists/expatriates in their country etc.

3.2 Leadership theory

In this subchapter several definitions of leadership styles are expressed; the one described by the GLOBE study followed by a detailed description of the Scandinavian and South Korean leadership styles. The most and the least efficient leadership styles for Scandinavia and South Korea are presented in the end of this subchapter. A general description of leadership can be found in Appendix D.

3.2.1 Leadership style dimensions defined by the GLOBE study

The cultural dimensions identified by the GLOBE study have resulted in identifying 21 main leader characteristics that are viewed, worldwide, as contributors to leadership effectiveness and eight that are universally viewed as inhibitors to leadership effectiveness. Additionally, 35 leader characteristics were identified as contributors in some cultures and inhibitors in other cultures. All the above mentioned findings resulted in framing the six global leadership dimensions (from the initial cultural dimensions identified by the GLOBE study) that contribute or inhibit leadership effectiveness. See table 7 below (House, 2004).
Table 7 – The GLOBE leader behaviours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader behaviours</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic/Value-based leadership</td>
<td>Charismatic/Value-based leadership is a leadership dimension that inspires and motivates the team members and expects them to work hard. This leadership style includes, among other things, being visionary, self-sacrifice and encouraging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team oriented leadership</td>
<td>Team oriented leadership is a leadership dimension that uses team building as a tool and creates a common purpose within the team. This leadership style includes, among other things, being cooperative, diplomatic and administratively skilled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative leadership</td>
<td>Participative leadership is a leadership dimension where the leaders involve their team members in making and implementing decisions. This leadership style includes, among other things, being participate and democratic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane-oriented leadership</td>
<td>Humane-oriented leadership is a leadership dimension that is supportive, compassionate and generous towards the team members. This leadership style includes, among other things, being kind to people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous leadership</td>
<td>Autonomous leadership is a leadership dimension where the leaders are independent and prefer to work by their own without including others. This leadership style includes, among other things, being autonomous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-protective leadership</td>
<td>Self-protective leadership is a leadership dimension that guarantees safety and security for the leaders and the team members. This leadership style includes, among other things, being egocentric and face saving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scandinavian leadership dimension

Charismatic/Value-based leadership, Participative leadership and Team oriented leadership contribute to leadership effectiveness in Scandinavia. Autonomous leadership is seen as neutral leadership style and Humane-oriented leadership has a small positive impact on the leadership effectiveness. Self-protective leadership is seen as a very negative style that should not be used in Scandinavia (House, 2004; Northouse, 2007).

The most efficient leadership dimensions in Scandinavia, defined by the GLOBE study, are in the following order:

Table 8 – Scandinavian leader behaviours in ranking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader behaviours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic/Value-based leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team oriented leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane-oriented leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-protective leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reasons why Charismatic/Value based leadership is the most efficient leadership style and why Self-protective is the least efficient leadership style are as follows:

- Scandinavia scores low on Assertiveness, In-group Collectivism and Power Distance which indicate, among other things, that they value corporation and people, have a direct communication and a flat none-hierarchical society.

- Scandinavia scores high on Institutional Collectivism, Future Orientation and Gender Egalitarianism, which indicate, among other things, that they prefer to solve work tasks in a team, they have flexible and adjustable organisations and leaders as well as smaller differences between females and males.

South Korean leadership dimension

Self-protective leadership, Team oriented leadership and Humane-oriented leadership contribute to leadership effectiveness in South Korea. Autonomous leadership and Charismatic/Value-based leadership are seen as neutral leadership styles and Participative leadership style is seen as less contributing to leadership effectiveness.

The most efficient leadership dimensions in South Korea, defined by the GLOBE study, are in the following order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leader behaviours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-protective leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team oriented leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane-oriented leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic/Value-based leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reasons why Self-protective leadership is the most efficient leadership style and why Participative leadership is the least efficient leadership style are as follows:

- South Korea scores low on, Uncertainty Avoidance which indicates, among other things, that they rely on words of the other party rather than contractual arrangements.

- South Korea scores high on Assertiveness, Institutional Collectivism and Performance Orientation , which indicate, among other things, that they value completion of work and have a “can do” approach, prefer to solve work tasks in a team and that they give rewards for great performances.
3.2.2 Scandinavian and South Korean Leadership styles

The Scandinavian and the South Korean leadership styles are discussed below.

**Scandinavian Leadership styles**

Scandinavia consists of, as mentioned above, the three countries; Denmark, Norway and Sweden. They all share a similar history, the languages spoken are quite similar to each other so no translation is needed, they share the same religion (Lutheran) and they have very close political views (Social democratic ideology). Different studies indicate that the Scandinavian countries form a rather tight cluster and value gender equality, power sharing and participation (Douglas and Douglas, 1989; Heller and Wilpert, 1981; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004).

According to Grenness these factors are known as the Scandinavian Model or Scandinavian Management which usually means (Grenness, 2003):

- Stable labour relations based on two strong groups were salary negotiations are discussed and decisions made.
- The salary negotiation system is introducing and supporting any reform in working life rather than by legal regulation.
- Strong governments (Social democratic) that are in alliance with the unions and strongly committed to a wide welfare and social security system and with an absolute goal of full employment for the citizens.

The Scandinavian Model is based on cooperation between employers, employees, and politicians (Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004; Söderman, 1983). This brings along a non-competitive school system, a high degree of unionism and a universal military service. The main behaviours of the Scandinavians are to obtain consensus, and in one study, Scandinavian managers saw themselves as more “consultative” than for instance British managers (Brewster, 1993).

The Scandinavian leaders are characterized by decision making processes via negotiations and a consensual leadership style (Kets de Vries, 2006). Empirical studies show that Scandinavian leaders differ significantly from non-Scandinavian leaders (Grenness, 2003). He describes the typical Scandinavian organizational behaviours as aiming for achieving consensus, cooperation on all levels and decision through democratic process, which is in line with the GLOBE study were Scandinavia scores high on Institutional Collectivism (House, 2004). Other characteristics for Scandinavians are their desire for harmony and mutual understanding and their “strive to avoid overt conflicts” (Grenness, 2003, p. 13; Lindkvist, 1991). Swedes have been described as “the Japanese of the north” (Daun, 1986, p. 102) because both countries seem to focus on harmony and mutual understanding and strive to avoid open conflicts (Grenness, 2003; Daun, 1986). Steinberg and Åkerblom believe that this is something that tends to be experienced in Scandinavian companies as well but should be seen as a cultural norm and not necessary as a behaviour of Scandinavians as individuals (Steinberg and Åkerblom, 1992).

The Scandinavian leaders believe in equal rights, coach their team members, give feedback in a direct way and are not afraid of changes. That’s why People-oriented/Relation-oriented leadership would have a successful impact in Scandinavian as leaders care about the wellbeing of the team members as
well as team equality (Williams and Devine, 2005). This is also indicated by their low score on the cultural dimensions Power Distance and Uncertainty Avoidance and their high score on the cultural dimension Individualism in the Hofstede study (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013).

As the Scandinavian culture reveals, the Participative leadership style is known as one of the most efficient leadership styles to be practised in Scandinavia. The leaders are more oriented towards developing and maintaining interpersonal relations among the team members and other employees (Bjerke, 1999; Grenness, 2003; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004; Wren, 2005). Trompenaars describes it as “management by enthusiasm” (Trompenaars, 1995, p.160) which he means is a way of motivating and rewarding the employees to feel involved. Berg states that as a result of refusing the traditional, formal authority structure the Scandinavians concept of management is a cognitive and empathic process where an organization initiates from an idea of its task and position to create, shape and direct ideas, values and actions (Berg, 1986). Participative leadership, which is a part of the path-goal theory and explained further down, is divided into three subtypes: consultative, consensus and democratic (Lewin, Lippit and White, 1939). The Participative style is well suited for managing competent people who are eager to accept responsibility. The potential disadvantage of this leadership style is the extensive time consuming meetings and committee work that comes along. Sometimes team members are involved in decision makings of very simple matters that the leaders easily could handle independently (Wren, 2005). Consensus and democratic leaders are sometimes believed to provide the group members with too little direction or being leaders with minimal supervision (Harris, 2009).

In other articles Scandinavian leaders are also reflected and emphasised on “shared visions” (Beckerus and Edstrøm, 1988) or “strategic dialogue” (Borgbrant, 1987). One of the most visible characteristics of Scandinavian leaders is a focus on corporate and business values, also referred to as “vision management” or “value based management” (Brytting and Trollestad, 2000). Turner and Muller believe that one essential characteristic every leader must have is to have a vision and be able to direct and motivate its group members towards that vision and eventually reach the desired outcome (Turner and Muller, 2005). To be visionary is one of the leader behaviours described for the Charismatic/Value-based leadership style, as mentioned in chapter 3.2.1. In the 1990s Bass and Avolio identified two types of leadership styles, Transactional and Transformational (Bass and Avolio, 1995). Transactional leadership style is more efficient in South Korea and will be described under the South Korean leadership style section. The Transformational leadership style should be used in Scandinavia to achieve leadership effectiveness and is described below.

Transformational leadership was developed by Burns and is one of the most popular leadership models used in modern world (Burns, 1987). This theory believes that if a leader is passionate and have a vision he or she can succeed remarkable achievements, that people will respond to a person that inspire them and that enthusiasm and positive energy will bring results (Straker, 2004). A Transformational leader brings positive major changes in an organization and to the group members by motivating its team members beyond their own goals and seeks to satisfy their higher needs (Dubrin, 2010; Kelloway, Barling, Kelley, Comtoise and Gatien, 2003). This leadership style is suitable in Scandinavia as they score low on the cultural dimensions Power Distance and Masculinity and high on the cultural dimension Individualism in the Hofstede study (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013). To be able to apply this type of leadership style there must be an emotional relationship between the leaders and the team members (Jung, 2010), which seems to be the case in Scandinavia as they score low on the cultural dimension Assertiveness in the GLOBE study (House, 2004).
A project manager with Transformational leadership style must be able to lead the team under any changes or variations in the project and working environment. The traits of this type of leadership are charismatic, intellectual, honest, caring and inspirational (McCrimmon, 2008). These types of leaders are a pleasure to work for due to their positive influence (Straker, 2004).

The three articles, Schramm-Nielsen, 2000; Grenness 2000; Zander, 2000, are discussing Danish, Norwegian and Swedish management and all three of them are describing a typical Scandinavian leader as “Primus inter pares” (first among equals). The statement that the Scandinavian leadership styles do not differ from each other in a significant way has been discussed in previous empirical studies. Gibson did a study in 1996 and found that Swedish and Norwegian leaders are similar to each other and named them both as Scandinavian leadership style in his analysis (Brodbeck, 2000). A study made of cultural differences of leadership models across 22 European countries showed support in the statement that the cultural values and the leadership style of the Nordic cluster differ from those of the countries outside that cluster (Brodbeck, 2000; Ronen and Shenkar, 1985). That can be formulated as; viewing from the outside the Scandinavian countries seem to form a rather tight cluster with a homogenous leadership style which in many ways is different from other countries around the world (Ronen and Shenkar, 1985; Hoppe, 1993).

**South Korean Leadership style**

South Korea has developed rapidly and acts as an important manufacturing competitor to USA and Japan. Culturally, South Korea is similar to Taiwan due to its high Collectivism and high Uncertainty Avoidance (Dorfman and Howell, 1994; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013). South Korea is very influenced by Confucianism, maybe more than any other Asian country (Dorfman and Howell, 1997). The basis of business activities includes maintenance of harmonious relationships and trust as the Confucian code of ethical behaviour. It is required that absolute loyalty to the leaders or the president of the company is maintained (Steers, Shin and Ungson, 1989). These features give leaders who accept a personal interest in the well-being and development of the group members and who emphasize group harmony and smooth and conflict-free, interpersonal relations (Steers, Shin and Ungson, 1989).

The leadership style in South Korea is hierarchical and inspired by the Korean concept of *inwha*, which emphasizes the inequality between people from different rank, power and prestige which is also reflected in Hofstede’s study were South Korea scores high on the cultural dimension Power Distance (Alston, 1989; Brett et.al., 2006; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013). The leaders in South Korea expect that their instructions to the team members are obeyed, which in general gets fulfilled and which is also in line with Hofstede’s study as South Korea scores high on the cultural dimension Uncertainty Avoidance. South Korea scores low on the cultural dimension Individualism in Hofstede’s study which means that the leader is seen as a father who, in return for loyalty, respect and obedience, gives the team members support and help at all times. It is also very important that no type of confrontation or blame situations occur in the group at any time which reflects their high score on the cultural dimension Long-term Orientation in Hofstede’s study (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013).

A good leader spends a lot of time and effort making sure that the team is working well together and that all team members feel fully integrated. This is in line with the GLOBE study as South Korea scores high on the cultural dimension Institutional Collectivism (House, 2004). Basically, South
Korean team members are very much following the Confucian directives of respect and obedience to leaders who in return support and care for them. According to Dorfman and Howell, if these values are combined with generally vague job descriptions and training, this would result in leaders with considerable power to direct activities. And based on these observations, Dorfman and Howell predict that the Directive- and Supportive leadership styles, that are a part of the path-goal theory described below, would be suitable in South Korea (Dorfman and Howell, 1997).

The chaebols, large spread companies primarily owned and managed by founders and/or family members, are dominating the South Korean business world. These companies have centralized planning and control and have strong opinions on how to direct the company. Due to very centralized and formalized organizational structures, the important information normally concentrates at the top management levels in South Korea. The top to down decision making process would probably result in the team members having a passive role in communication (Chen, 1995). It’s very common that team members have difficulties in expressing their views, in particular when they are different from their supervisors’. According to the above observations, Dorfman and Howell, predict that Participative leadership style would have little or no impact in South Korea and the same prediction did the GLOBE study (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; House 2004).

The path-goal theory says that a leader should choose one of four different leadership styles to achieve best results in a given situation (Dubrin, 2010). This leadership style predicts that one style does not fit in all different situations and depends on the motivation and the capability of the followers (House, 1971). The leaders will adapt their leadership style to fit the group member’s engagement and willingness to achieve their tasks (Helms and Cengage, 2006). To use the path-goal theory the leaders have to have access to all relevant changes in the environment and thereafter choose one of the following leadership styles which are described in below table 10 (Dubrin, 2010; House, 1971):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership style</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directive style</td>
<td>A directive leader focuses more on planning, organizing and controlling. This style is good to use when it is necessary to follow up followers closely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive style</td>
<td>This type of leader creates an emotional supportive climate with the group members and cares about the group member’s wellbeing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative style</td>
<td>Explained under the Scandinavian leadership style section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement-oriented style</td>
<td>This type of leadership style pushes the team members to higher goals and has high expectations on the team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participative leadership style is a part of the path-goal theory and as mentioned above not suitable in South Korea. The authors have not found any findings or literature that is supporting the Achievement-oriented leadership style to be suitable in South Korea. Therefore, based on the literature review, the conclusion has been that out from the path-goal theory only the Directive-and Supportive leadership styles can be used in South Korea.

In South Korea, there is a clear emphasis on collectivism, rather than individualism, achievement and if implementing rewards among individuals, this would be believed as a disturbance in the
needed harmony (Steers, Shin and Ungson, 1989). Dorfman and Howell believe that leaders’ contingent reward/punishment behaviour is not workable in South Korea due to the combination of trying to keep the internal peace and harmony of others, kibun, and not passing on bad news or news that someone does not wish to hear (Dorfman and Howell, 1997). It is known that negative feedback may undermine harmonious relations and leaders often try to evaluate team members very mild and will temper criticism if the individual puts forward reasonable endeavour (Chen, 1995; Dorfman and Howell, 1997). But a study performed on leaders showed that South Koreans prefer concrete recognition as rewards (Hayashi, 1988). And leader contingent reward/punishment behaviours have been found powerful in cultures characterized by Confucianism (Fahr, Podsakoff and Cheng, 1987). It is not very clear if the contingent reward/punishment behaviour of leaders always have a positive impact in South Korea as there is different information regarding this topic found in the literature.

Transactional leadership is basically based on giving the team members punishment or rewards (in form of bonus) and routine transactions (Dubrin, 2010; Northouse, 2007). It is established on transaction between leaders and team members thus were the leaders command the team members to perform a task which he or she accepts to perform to be able to receive a reward. This leadership style can be workable in South Korea as they score high on the cultural dimensions Power Distance and Uncertainty Avoidance in the Hofstede Study and high on the cultural dimension Performance Orientation in the GLOBE study (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004). The team members should not try to solve the tasks in any other way then it is told and if the task is not performed or if it is not performed properly the team member will be punished (Northouse, 2007). To use this kind of leadership the team members have to be of the sort that get motivated to receive a reward but afraid of being fired (Straker, 2004; Ferraro, 2008). By performing this leadership style the leaders will not be able to find out the complete potential work force the team members can perform (Dubrin, 2010; Straker, 2004; Ferraro, 2008). This type of leadership style can be used in South Korea in some situations and is more focused on satisfying the leaders than the customers (Straker, 2004).

In certain situations, Koreans use consensus decision making which is comparable to the system of nemawashi found in Japan. This system is meant to make the team members feel involved in the decision at the same time as it ensures the leaders to maintain an influence over the outcome (Dorfman and Howell, 1997).

### 3.2.3 The most and the least efficient leadership styles in Scandinavia and South Korea

Based on the literature review done for this study, the most and the least efficient leadership styles for Scandinavia and South Korea were found. They are listed in the tables 11 and 12 below, without any specific order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The most efficient leadership styles in Scandinavia</th>
<th>The least efficient leadership styles in Scandinavia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic/Value-based leadership</td>
<td>Self-protective leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative leadership</td>
<td>Transactional leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People-oriented/Relationship-oriented leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformational leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12 – The most and the least efficient leadership styles in South Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The most efficient leadership styles in South Korea</th>
<th>The least efficient leadership styles in South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-protective leadership</td>
<td>Participative leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team oriented leadership</td>
<td>Transformational leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive- and Supportive leadership</td>
<td>Transactional leadership (in some situations)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen in the tables above, the most and the least efficient leadership styles for Scandinavia and South Korea are differing extremely. In some cases the most efficient leadership style to be used in Scandinavia is the least efficient leadership style to be used in South Korea. The reason for this is the cultural differences that exist between Scandinavia and South Korea, which has been discussed in the above subchapters.

3.3 Strategies for adjusting to South Korean working environment

International projects involve people from different parts of the world with various languages and cultures, which in turn influences communication, attitudes, behaviours, work practices, decision patterns, and, eventually, project performances (Nicholas, 2011). It is important being aware of the different cultures and be open and flexible for adjustments when working in an international environment to become successful (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004; Nicholas, 2011; Tung 1981).

Many studies have found that by giving cultural training to the employees they can adjust themselves faster and easier to the host country (Mendenhall, Stahl, Ehnert, Oddou, Osland, and Kuhlmann, 2004; Romero, 2002). This gives them the chance to mentally prepare themselves for the coming changes and know how, in what way, they need to adjust to the new environment to achieve success and full effectiveness. A good start could be to have a general positive attitude towards the host country and its culture and people followed by general flexibility against changes and willingness of integrating to the new environment.

For a better understanding of the host country, the leaders and the team members should before and after arrival attend courses, seminars and workshops to gain the necessary information needed about its society, culture/working culture, religion, climate etc. (Tung, 1993). Another way of experiencing the host country before moving there is to visit the country and be in direct contact with the society and the people (Tung, 1981). These preparations will help the leaders and the team members to easier adapt to the new environment (Bonache, Brewster and Suutari, 2001).

It is important for those who are going to work in South Korea to be aware of the fact that communication or communicating in the right way is very essential for project success. It should be expected that language difficulties can arise as the team is often constituted by South Koreans that have a different mother tongue. Even if the common (business) language is English there can be difficulties found and words that can be interpreted differently. By being prepared to always use the simplest, clearest and most concis words and sentences, unnecessary misunderstandings can be avoided. To make sure that everyone has understood the important messages, one idea could be to
let the South Koreans repeat what has been said in a way that will not make them “lose face” (Brett et al., 2006; Nicholas, 2011). Also learning (try to learn) the language, in this case South Korean, is a good initiative that would surely be appreciated by the South Koreans (Tung, 1993).

It should be considered as very important to build a good relationship and trust with the South Koreans in the team and the South Korean suppliers as it is fundamental to the business process. The relationship building and much of the formal business activities happen after the working hours. According to Hofstede and the high score Scandinavia has on the cultural dimension Individualism, the Scandinavians do not prioritise spending time with their colleagues or attending other social activities after working hours as their private life is number one (Hofstede 1980; Hofstede 2013). Also, the low score on the cultural dimension Long-term Orientation reveals that Scandinavians highlight their free time (Hofstede 1980; Hofstede 2013). This is something that Scandinavians should think of and be prepared to before departure. It is a must to understand and in the best way follow the local norms and customs to be able to develop trust with South Koreans and gain their acceptance (Nicholas, 2011; Yeung and Tung, 1996).

Security is a motivating factor for South Koreans and they value long term success as they score high on the cultural dimension Uncertainty Avoidance in Hofstede’s study and mid on the cultural dimension Future Orientation in the GLOBE study (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004). Therefore it is good to keep in mind that the leaders must “sell” the project and its outcome to the South Korean leaders and team members. The more the Scandinavian leaders show that the project will help the South Korean region to, for instance, develop within employment, services, infrastructure etc., the more the South Koreans will commit to the project (Nicholas, 2011; Yeung and Tung, 1996).

Problems that can occur during an international project are many but the ones that regard the team members like sickness, injuries, arrested for a local traffic violation etc. are issues that leaders should help solving. That is why it is important that leaders are prepared to, not only deal with issues related to the project, but also with issues related to the team members after working hours. By staying in touch with the team members at all times and be available assisting them when they need help, the leaders earn the team members’ gratitude, respect and commitment to the project (Nicholas, 2011).

The relationship to time and punctuality can differ depending on where you are. For some Western countries time is viewed as something very valuable and as a limited resource. People not respecting being on time are considered as disrespectful and wasting others’ time. In other parts of the world, such as in the Middle-and Far East for instance, it is focused more on doing a task in a right way than on time. The team members will be insulted by feeling that the leaders are stressing on time wasting and start questioning their loyalty to the team members (Nicholas, 2011). South Korea scores high on the cultural dimension Assertiveness in the GLOBE study which can indicate that a milestone is inviolable for them but the short term tasks between the milestones might not be as highly prioritised (House, 2004). It is important for leaders in South Korea to have a flexible attitude towards time and have patience towards its team members and suppliers (Tung, 1981; Tung, 2008).

In South Korean culture wisdom and age is directly associated with respect as they score low on the cultural dimension Individualism in the Hofstede study (Hofstede 1980; Hofstede, 2013). It is very unusual that younger leaders can command the same level of attention, respect or authority as senior leaders and that is regardless of background and experience. Senior leaders in senior positions tend
not to listen to or deal with anyone much younger than themselves. When having a meeting it is very common that the senior leaders are dominating and that the younger leaders never express their views, in particular if they disagree with the senior leaders’ opinions, even if they would like to (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; Hofstede 1980; Hofstede, 2013; Yeung and Tung, 1996).
4. Empirical results

The interview questions have been divided into three sections, where the first section is dealing with the culture differences, the second section is treating leadership styles and the third and last section is handling strategy/adjustment questions. An option was given in the end of each interview for adding any other business related topics. All the interview questions have been formulated based on the theory retrieved from the literature review for helping answering the problem formulations. All the interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

The answers were in general quite similar to each other with some differences that sometimes coincided in two groups, but all in all the material was homogenous. All the responses received from the ten interviews performed have been collected and summarised in the below tables 13 to 16.

4.1 Culture related questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Short summary of the responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the most significant differences, in your opinion, when comparing South Korean culture to your own culture?</td>
<td>All the interviewees answered that the South Korean society is very hierarchical, that all decisions are made only on top management level, that they have high working ethics but difficulties in prioritizing work tasks, that age and colour of your hair is correlated to respect and power, that they avoid confrontation in public due to “loss of face”, that respect is based and earned by title and not by knowledge, that they do not appreciate innovation/changes and that there are differences between males and females in the South Korean society and work places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you have any previous experience of South Korean culture before moving there and is your observation of South Korean culture changed since?</td>
<td>All of the participants had no or little experience of South Koreans and their culture before moving there.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Leadership related questions

Table 14 – Leadership related questions asked during the interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Short summary of the responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How many subordinates do you supervise and what are their nationalities?</td>
<td>The Scandinavian leaders in South Korea did supervise teams consisting of people from Europe, Scandinavia and South Korea. The average percentage of the South Koreans in each team was 20-50%. The size of the teams could vary from four persons up to 60 persons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do/did you develop/build up trust/confidence and cooperative relationships towards your team members?</td>
<td>The majority answered that they spent time after work such as attending dinners, drinking at bars, singing karaoke and other social activities. Trust was also gained by Statoil leaders by backing up the South Koreans in the team in any situation, taking the “tough” discussions and decisions with the South Korean suppliers, making the South Koreans feel part of the team, giving concrete instructions to them, showing interest to their history, culture etc. and by showing respect. Some of the interviewees mentioned that by giving the team members more responsibility and freedom they built trust and good relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do/did you inspire team members achieving their own goals/learning new skills/developing themselves?</td>
<td>The majority showed interest, followed up the team members and their achievements as well as showed respect and treated South Koreans in the same way as Statoil employees. A few had open and informal discussions with their teams members, included everyone in some of the decision makings, discussed long term possibilities and organized team building sessions including family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How much freedom and choice do/did you give your team members in deciding how to do their work?</td>
<td>The answers were divided into two parts; some did not give much freedom to the team members for solving problems whereas others believed that they should give freedom of choice like in Scandinavia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How or in what way do/did you communicate strategies and visions to your team members and how do/did you make sure that everyone has an understanding of the goals?</td>
<td>The interviewees tried to communicate the strategies via meetings and some also asked the South Koreans to prepare a presentation within a specific subject to make sure that they had understood the goals. Also informing about Statoil’s strategies and visions were a theme on team buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. In your opinion, does South Korean expect more or less defined rules</td>
<td>The majority of the interviewees answered that it is important to have clear and concrete rules and instructions for South Koreans whereas the minority believed that they could give less defined rules. But all thought that Statoil gives too wide working frames which make the South Koreans unsure. South Koreans can’t differ from small and big issues and generally, they don’t take any initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and procedures in other to reduce uncertainties and risks when</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performing a work task? Why/why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. In your opinion, should a leader focus more or less on long-term</td>
<td>All of the interviewees thought, more or less, that the focus in projects should be on short term goals and focus on long terms goals when it comes to friendship with South Koreans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goals? Why/why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. In your opinion, how important is planning, organising and</td>
<td>Some of the interviewees believed that bigger projects need more focus on controlling and less focus on detailed planning whereas others believed that all three are as important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>controlling for you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How do/did you show authority towards your group members at the</td>
<td>The interviewees showed authority by doing at least one of the following: emphasise their title, taking own decisions, having full control of the situation, dominating at meetings and by always keeping promises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>same time be humble and firm?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How do/did you expect the team members to behave towards you?</td>
<td>All the interviewees expect to have team members that are honest, respectful and giving feedback as soon as a problem occurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Before a decision is made, who do you involve in this process?</td>
<td>Almost all of the interviewees involve others in their decision making processes but in few cases they made decisions by themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. In your opinion, if a task outcome is successful/unsuccessful</td>
<td>When a project result is successful the primary responsible for that, according to all interviewees, was the entire team including the leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who is primary responsible for that?</td>
<td>The team members got rewarded in form of cakes and dinners but no bonus were paid when a project result was successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Half of the interviewees believed that the primary responsible person for an unsuccessful result is the leader and the other half believed that it is a common responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No form of punishment was used when the project result was unsuccessful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4.3 Adjustments/strategies questions

**Table 15**– Adjustments/strategies related questions asked during the interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Short summary of the responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. How do/did you show compassion and generosity towards your team members? In what situations do/did you show compassion and generosity (team members’ private lives, problems, etc.)?</td>
<td>All the interviewees mentioned that they invited team members for dinners or other social activities and tried to be available for the team after working hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How do/did you react if a group member expresses a work related idea or opinion that differs from yours?</td>
<td>Almost all of the interviewees clearly showed that they did not agree but that they are open for discussions. The minority encouraged the South Koreans to express their “real” opinions to involve them in discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. How do/did you handle conflicts within the team, towards you and/or towards other departments?</td>
<td>Some of the interviewees did not experience any conflicts in the team whereas others did and handled it either by themselves (discussions) or took it higher up in the system. If the situation did not get any better, meetings were held and possible replacement within the organisation or contract terminations were discussed. All of the interviewees that had been involved in a conflict situation did handle it behind closed doors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. How do/did you show your team members appreciation and support for their contributions (celebrate a good result, cake, lunch etc.)?</td>
<td>All the interviewees did it by emphasising good results and/or inviting the team members for dinner or other social activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. In your opinion, was the preparation process you received from your company sufficient? In what way? What could have been done better or what did you miss when you look back?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All of the interviewees thought that the preparation process Statoil offered was not sufficient enough. They wished to receive more information about South Korea and their culture by, for instance, attending seminars and workshops.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

3. How did you adjust yourself and your leadership style to the new environment? Steps and time frame of this process? What was the difficult part(s) and why? What was the easiest part(s) and why?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost half of the interviewees mentioned that they did not change themselves or their leadership style in South Korea. For those that changed thought that they had to communicate in a clearer way and repeat themselves over and over again to make sure that the team and the suppliers understood them, they had to show authority by taking decisions and gained respect for doing that, they had to be more tolerant, they had to show more interest to the individual and treat all nationalities equally. They also pointed out that they had to be more “hands on” by spending more time out in the fields. The timeframe to adjust to the new environment were estimated to take between four to six months.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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The most difficult part was that the South Koreans had little knowledge in the English language which easily resulted in unnecessary misunderstandings.

4. How did you receive acceptance/respect from your team members/colleagues in South Korea?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most of the interviewees received acceptance/respect by being open minded, showing respect to the team members, supporting the team members and by having control of the situation. Some of the interviewees experienced that the title, age and grey hair gave them respect and acceptance from the South Koreans.</td>
<td></td>
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5. What challenges do/did you face in your daily work? And in what way do/did you solve or handle them?

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<tr>
<td>The daily challenges the interviewees faced were at least one of the following: lack of communication with the suppliers, that the suppliers were not prepared for the meetings, that the suppliers did not know how to prioritise the work tasks, that the suppliers had to redo the tasks due to quality deviations (which resulted in delays) and the time difference between Norway and South Korea which caused late working days. These challenges were solved by, among other things, being patient, communicate in a clearer way and have a tight follow up against the suppliers. As one participant said: “you get what you inspect”.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
6. What is the most important leadership experience (lesson learnt) you bring with you from your stay in South Korea?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Short summary of the responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many of the interviewees believed that learning more about an organisation and its contents (organisation chart) is something they will bring with them back home as well as improving in communication at all levels. Some other things that they bring with them back were to be more social after working hours, be humble and show respect to all nationalities and that there are different ways of solving a problem (Statoil is not always right).</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. In your opinion, was your stay in South Korea successful/unsuccessful? In what way? Did you complete your stay; did you extend your stay?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Short summary of the responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All the interviewees were happy with their achievements in South Korea and completed their stays.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Is there any leadership experience you have taken with you back to Scandinavia and that you practice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Short summary of the responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All of the interviewees answered that there were no leadership style(s) that could be practised in Scandinavia. Some interviewees will focus more on creating a common understanding in the team and communicate in a clearer way, to be more patient and to adapt their leadership style to the situation.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Any other business

**Table 16** – Any other business question asked during the interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview questions</th>
<th>Short summary of the responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any other comments or opinions you would like to share with us?</td>
<td>The interviewees shared some of their advice and thoughts to leaders that currently are in South Korea or are planning to work there in the foreseeable future:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-be open minded, curious and positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-be social, use your spare time to networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-show respect to everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-focus on your work tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Analysis

With help of the literature review presented in the theory, chapter three, and the empirical findings in chapter four, the problem formulation for this study, “What leadership styles do Scandinavian leaders practice in South Korea and what strategies do they have for adjusting to the South Korean working environment?”, will be answered.

This chapter is divided into three subchapters; the first one is dealing with the leadership styles used in South Korea, the second one is handling strategies for adjusting to the South Korean working environment and the third and last subchapter is summarizing the findings.

The experiences the interviewees have had regarding cultural differences are in line with the theory, chapter 3.1. This indicates that the interviewees are fully aware of the cultural differences that exist and that their leadership style(s) needs to be adjusted for gaining support and obtaining leadership effectiveness in South Korea.

To make it easier for the reader to follow the below analysis in chapter 5.1 and 5.2, the authors have indicated the question number where the analysed section has been referred to. For instance Q2 in 5.1 stands for question number two in the leadership related questions etc.

5.1 Analysing leadership styles used by Scandinavians in South Korea

All the leadership related questions asked during the interviews (see section 4.2), are related to the different leadership styles mentioned in chapter 3.2. This has been done to determine which leadership style(s) Scandinavian leaders used in South Korea.

As mentioned in subchapter 3.2.4 the efficient leadership styles in Scandinavia that should be practised, according to our literature study and without any specific order, are: Charismatic/Value-based, Participative, People-oriented/Relationship-oriented and Transformational. The least efficient leadership styles and without any specific order are: Self-protective and Transactional. In South Korea, the efficient leadership styles that should be used and without any specific order are: Self-protective, Team oriented, Directive- and Supportive and in some cases Transactional. And the least efficient leadership styles in South Korea and without any specific order are: Participative and Transformational.

The majority of the interviewees built up trust towards their teams by spending time with them after working hours, backing up the teams, giving clear instructions and showing interest to the host country (Q2). This indicates that the leadership styles used can be Transformational, Directive –and Supportive and Team oriented due to supportive and integrity characteristics (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; House, 2004; McCrimmon, 2008). Some other participants answered that by giving more responsibility and freedom to the team members, like they did in Scandinavia, gave them good relations and they gained trust (Q2, Q4) which indicate that the Participative leadership style has been used as lots of responsibility is given to the team members (Wren, 2005). South Korea scores high on the cultural dimension Uncertainty Avoidance in Hofstede’s study which means that they have an emotional need of rules (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013). Not all Scandinavian leaders...
seem to be familiar with that but on the other hand some leaders mentioned that they started to give South Koreans clearer instructions for solving a work task as they believed that Statoil had given them too wide working frames (Q6). This behaviour is a part of the Transactional leadership style when the work tasks are clearly defined and there is no room for own interpretation. By using this leadership style in South Korea, leadership effectiveness can be achieved.

The South Koreans are very family oriented as their low score on Hofstede’s cultural dimension Individualism reveals and high on GLOBE’s In-group Collectivism dimension (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004). They believe in future oriented perspectives as they score high on the cultural dimension Long-term Orientation in Hofstede’s study and mid on the cultural dimension Future Orientation in the GLOBE study (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; Yeung and Tung, 1996). This is something worth keeping in mind when doing business with them. By inviting family members to gatherings and dinners for getting to know them better and discuss long term possibilities with the team members and suppliers is a way of gaining their trust and loyalty (Q2, Q3, and Q7). The leadership styles that have been used, based on the answers, are Participative, Transformational, People-oriented/Relationship-oriented and Directive- and Supportive as they all include relationship building (Grenness, 2003; House, 2004; Jung, 2010).

The leaders mentioned that they had communicated Statoil’s strategies and visions well to the team members at meetings and team buildings (Q5), which is a sign of the Team oriented leadership style because strategies are communicated and one of the features is to create a common goal (House, 2004). Another leadership style that is aiming at conveying visions and strategies is the Transformational leadership style (Straker, 2004). The Directive-and Supportive leadership styles (House, 1971) as described earlier are focusing on planning, organisation and controlling, as some of the interviewees believed they are important (Q8). This leadership style as well as Team oriented is, according to the theory, two of the most efficient leadership styles to be practised in South Korea (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; House, 2004).

To show authority is very important in South Korea because of its hierarchical structure and this has support in Hofstede’s study where South Korea scores high on the cultural dimension Power Distance (Alston, 1989; Brett et.al., 2006; Dorfam and Howell, 1997; Hofstede 1980; Hofstede, 2013). Some of the interviewees showed authority by title or keeping promises (Q9). When it comes to decision makings, Scandinavian leaders are involving the whole team (Q3, Q11), which indicates the Participative and the Charismatic/Value-based leadership styles but that should not be efficient to practise in South Korea as it not a part of their working culture (Chen, 1995; Dorfman and Howell, 1997; House, 2004).

The Scandinavian leaders expect their team members to be direct and informal in their way of communicating and giving feedback (Q10, Q14), as expected in Scandinavian working environment by using Charismatic/Value-based, Participative, People-oriented/Realionship-oriented and Transformational leadership styles. As the South Koreans have difficulties expressing their views and especially if they are different from their supervisors’, the above mentioned leadership styles are not preferred to be practised in South Korea (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013). This is in line with South Korea scoring high on the cultural dimension Power Distance in Hofstede’s study which means, among other things, that there is a gap between the leaders and team members. Thus, the Scandinavian leaders should not expect feedback from the South Korean team members (Hofstede 1980; Hofstede, 2013).
The Transactional leadership style is based on, among other things, giving the team members reward or punishment and the opposite of this leadership style is the Transformational leadership style. These two leadership styles are related to question 12 and according to the answers, the leaders were using Transformational leadership style as they did not reward (in form of bonus) or punished the team members when a project result was successful or unsuccessful.

Scandinavian leaders in South Korea showed a big compassion for their team members by being available after working hours (Q13) and by inviting them for dinners or other social activities (Q16). This is according to what South Koreans are expecting as they score high on GLOBE’s cultural dimension In-group Collectivism and low on Hofstede’s cultural dimension Individualism (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; House, 2004). These actions are sign of Directive –and Supportive leadership style as well as Team oriented, Participative and People-oriented/Relationship oriented leadership styles.

No confrontation or blame situations in front of people should occur as the South Koreans believe in “loss of face” and as they score low on the cultural dimension Individualism and high on the cultural dimension Long-term Orientation in Hofstede’s study (Dorfman and Howell, 1997; Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede 2012). This is something the Scandinavian leaders seem to have been aware of (Q15). One of the behaviours of Self-protective leadership style includes face saving which is the most efficient leadership style to be used in South Korea according to the GLOBE study (House, 2004).

5.2 Analysing strategies for adjusting to South Korean working environment

All the adjustment/strategy related questions asked during the interviews (see section 4.3) are related to the different adjustments/strategies mentioned in chapter 3.3. This has been done to see what strategies the participants have used for adjusting themselves, before and after departure to South Korea.

Most of the participants prepared themselves by reading books related to the cultural differences and contacted colleagues that had been working in South Korea for exchanging ideas and experiences. Two of the participants did attend courses and/or workshops organized by Statoil as a preparation work for their stay in South Korea. Many of the participants did not get the offer from Statoil to attend any seminars and/or workshops related to South Korea, which they believed would have been helpful for their relocation (Q1, Q2). This is supported by the theory (Mendenhall et.al., 2004; Romero, 2002).

The biggest challenge for the participants during their time in South Korea was the language skills of the South Koreans that could easily lead to misunderstandings (Q3, Q5). The lack of communication with the South Korean suppliers was also mentioned as a daily challenge that could slow down the project progress. To minimize the communication errors, the leaders tried to be clearer in their way of communicating messages and show more patient (Q3, Q5), which is line with the theory mentioned in chapter 3.3 by Brett and Tung (Brett et.al., 2006; Tung, 1993). Another action was to follow up the suppliers more frequently and direct them in solving problems and as one participant stated: “you get what you inspect” (Q5). In the study done by Hofstede it was mentioned that South Koreans do prefer having predetermined rules and regulations that they follow strictly.
with no room for own initiatives or ideas (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2012), which seems to be the case here as well. Surprisingly only half of the participants did adjust themselves to the new environment (Q3) as described above.

The participants did receive acceptance by, among other things, being open minded, supporting the team members and having control over the situation. Some of the participants mentioned that they got respect and acceptance by their seniority, by their age and having grey hair (Q4). These are findings that are also mentioned in the theory were age and work title have important impacts on the respect earned in South Korea (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013; Yeung and Tung, 1996). Many of the participants seem to have understood the importance of being active with their teams after working hours (Q6), which is a part of building relationships and trust towards their South Korean team members and suppliers (House, 2004; Yeung and Tung, 1996).

No leadership styles experienced from South Korea could be practised in Scandinavia, according to all of the interviewees (Q8), and that can be linked with the conclusion expressed in subchapter 3.2.3.

5.3 Summary of the findings

From the analysis done in 5.1 it is found that Scandinavian leaders have used, based on their answers, either one single leadership style or a combination of two or more leadership styles when working in South Korea. In cases where only one leadership style has been practised it has been the Participative or the Transformational leadership styles, which are seen as one of the most efficient leadership styles in Scandinavia. But as the theory has pointed out, these are one of the least efficient leadership styles to be practised in South Korea. In two specific occasions, features of the Transactional and the Self-protective leadership style have been used.

When the Scandinavian leaders combined two or more leadership styles they used these combinations of leadership styles:

- The Transformational, the Directive- and Supportive and the Team oriented.
- The Participative, the Transformational, the People-oriented and the Directive- and Supportive.
- The Transformational and the Team oriented.
- The Participative and the Charismatic/Value-based.
- The Charismatic/Value-based, the Participative, the People-oriented/Relationship-oriented and the Transformational.
- The Participative, the People-oriented/Relationship-oriented, the Directive- and Supportive and the Team oriented.

Even if some leaders did adjust their leadership style to the new environment, they did not completely practise the leadership styles that suit South Korea the best. For instance, they did involve the teams in decision making processes and gave the team members full freedom to solve the work tasks in their own way (like they used to do in Scandinavia). In general, it seems like the Scandinavian leaders have understood the cultural differences and adjusted themselves to the South Korean culture by for instance spending time with their colleagues after working hours or avoid
uncomfortable situations in front of people as South Koreans believe in ‘‘loss of face’’, but the overall leadership style is still more of Scandinavian character. Maybe one of the reasons why the Scandinavian leaders had difficulties to adapt their leadership style to the South Korean could be because the teams consisted of people not only from South Korea but also from Europe and Scandinavia.

The authors got the impression during the ten interviews performed that the communication and cooperation between leaders and team members in South Korea was not a big issue as such, rather the issue was the communication and cooperation between Statoil and the South Korean suppliers. Further it was found in 5.2 that the strategies the Statoil employees used before departure to South Korea was reading books and talking with colleagues for exchanging ideas and experiences. Only two of the participants had the chance to attend a course/workshop related to South Korea before the relocation.
6. Conclusions

This study has focused on the cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea and the different leadership styles practised by Scandinavians in South Korea, with the following problem formulation to be answered:

“What leadership styles do Scandinavian leaders practice in South Korea and what strategies do they have for adjusting to the South Korean working environment?”

With help of the literature review on the cultural differences between Scandinavia and South Korea, the most and the least efficient leadership styles for Scandinavia and South Korea have been determined. Based on these findings, the interview questions were created and divided into three sections; cultural, leadership and adjustment/strategy questions. The answers received from the interviewees have been analysed with help of the literature review and are sufficient to answer the problem formulation stated above.

The analysis done on the interview answers indicate that the Scandinavian leaders in South Korea do not fully practise the efficient leadership styles suited for the South Korean working environment. One reason for that might be the fact that the teams consisted of other nationalities than only South Koreans. The Scandinavian leaders have used Charismatic/Value-based, Participative, People-oriented/Relationship-oriented, Transformational leadership styles and partly Team oriented and Directive- and Supportive leadership styles. In two specific occasions, behaviours linked to the Transactional and the Self-protective leadership styles were used.

Strategies used by the participants for adjusting to South Korea have been to read books and exchanging information from colleagues with experience from South Korea. Two of the participants did also have the chance of attending a course related to cultural differences, which was helpful for their relocation to South Korea.

It is also concluded that the cooperation and communication within the Statoil teams seem to be satisfying whereas the communication and cooperation between the Statoil teams and the South Korean suppliers seem to be challenging.

6.1 Limitations

In this study there are some limitations that are worth mentioning. The time frame for this study was limited and contributed to limited time for literature search and limited time for collecting empirical data (interviews). All the interviews were conducted in May 2013. This study has not evaluated all cultural features or dimensions available in academic studies but has used two often academically quoted studies in this field. Even though there are limitations for this study, the authors believe that the findings are useful for Statoil and other companies’ employees and their future relocation to South Korea.
6.2 Practical implications and recommendations

Most of the Scandinavian leaders need to adjust their leadership style when working in South Korea to achieve leadership effectiveness. This can be done by trying to practise the Self-protective, the Team oriented, the Directive- and Supportive and the Transactional leadership styles. Attend seminars, workshops and/or courses that is informing about the different leadership styles practised in South Korea is helpful for the relocation. The basic information about cultural differences is not enough and needs to be combined with deep knowledge about the different leadership styles and their impact on the working environment. Statoil should, whenever possible, prioritize sending expatriates with respect to their cultural intelligence.

As mentioned in 5.3 the communication and cooperation between Statoil leaders and team members in South Korea was not a big issue as such, rather the issue was the communication and cooperation between Statoil and the South Korean suppliers. One suggestion would be that Statoil tries to integrate more with the suppliers and form a ONE team spirit were they emphasis on common goals to be achieved together. This might also result in multidiscipline coordination as well as better team work. Statoil should also promote the great chances the South Koreans have for future projects once the project with Statoil ends. Other suggestions for minimizing misunderstandings or own interpretations with Statoil’s suppliers would be to describe the Front End Engineering Design, (FEED), study more in detail. Statoil’s technical requirements (TR) and specifications in general should also be as detailed as possible for minimizing room for misunderstandings or own interpretations by the South Korean suppliers. By being clear with the requirements from the beginning, the risk for “shortcuts” or quality deviations can be avoided due to lack of time by end of the project.

It was found in 5.2 that improvements could be made regarding pre departure and post arrival training for Statoil employees. A good start could be to read books or other literatures about the host country and the general information about the society, the culture and the leadership styles. It is believed that Statoil has many leaders that have been working in South Korea and their knowledge and experience should be shared with those who are planning to work in South Korea. By this way Statoil employees can prepare themselves and mistakes can be avoided by using the “lesson learnt” advices. It is concluded that attending courses, seminars and workshops related to South Korea both before and after arrival is needed for Statoil employees for a smoother and easier relocation.
References

Books and journals


Turner, J.R., Muller, R., 2005. Choosing Appropriate Project Managers: Matching Their Leadership Style to the Type of Project. Project Management Institute, 4(2):178-214


**Websites**


Appendix A: Information letter to the interviewees

Introduction to the study
Many Western companies are developing and choosing to expand in the Eastern/Middle Eastern world due to many reasons, such as economic benefits and/or lack of resources in the home country. Even if the project assignments seem to be the same in theory the actual practices might not be performed as expected as the language, the culture and the traditions in the Eastern/Middle Eastern countries can differ from the Western countries. These factors, among others, can contribute to make the progress of the project inhibited or that the teamwork in the project group doesn’t work as expected or as optimal as anticipated. One important factor is the attitude of the project leader and the leadership styles that are framed in each country. Many projects’ success can be reflected on the leader’s leadership style (Dubrin, 2010). One leadership style might work very well in one part of the world while it is a disaster in another part of the world. This has been a focus in many international companies that are having expatriates (project leaders, engineers, workers etc.) working on projects in foreign countries with cultural differences.

This study will explore cultural differences and different leadership styles practiced in Scandinavia and South Korea, compare them with each other, collect empirical data and in the end give suggestions and recommendations in what way leaders can relate to a multicultural working environment and in what way this can be used to avoid or minimize misunderstandings, communication errors, quality deviations and/or other important factors that can effect a project’s success.

Background information needed from the interviewee
1. Name:
2. Age and gender:
3. Preferred language for the interview: Swedish/Norwegian □ OR English □
4. Is it okay for you that we record the interview: YES □ NO □
5. What is your field of study, educational background? (if exchange student-what studies, where and for how long time?)
6. Title and area of responsibility today?
7. Number of years within the company and number of years in present position?
8. Have you worked outside Scandinavia? If Yes, were, what position(s) and how many years?
9. What leader position(s) did you have before going to South Korea and in South Korea?
10. Number of years in leader position before leaving for South Korea?
11. Number of years in leader position in South Korea (different positions in South Korea)?
Appendix B: Interview questions

Background questions (questions marked in blue were be sent out in beforehand)

1. Name:
2. Age and gender:
3. Preferred language for the interview: Swedish/Norwegian □ OR English □
4. Is it okay for you that we record the interview: YES □ NO □
5. What is your field of study, educational background? (if exchange student-what studies, where and for how long time?)
6. Title and area of responsibility today?
7. Number of years within the company and number of years in present position?
8. Have you worked outside Scandinavia? If Yes, were, what position(s) and how many years?
9. What leader position(s) did you have before going to South Korea and in South Korea?
10. Number of years in leader position before leaving for South Korea?
11. Number of years in leader position in South Korea (different positions in South Korea)?

Culture questions

1. What are the most significant differences, in your opinion, when comparing South Korean culture to your own culture?

1. Om du jämför Sydkoreansk med Skandinavis, vilka är dem mest signifikanta skillnaderna?

2. Did you have any previous experience of South Korean culture before moving there and is your observation of South Korean culture changed since?

2. Innan du reste till Sydkorea, hade du någon erfarenhet med eller uppfattning om Sydkoreansk kultur och har den ändrades något sedan dess?
**Leadership questions**

1. How many subordinates do you supervise and what are their nationalities?

2. How do you develop/build up trust/confidence and cooperative relationships towards your team members?

3. How do you inspire team members achieving their own goals/learning new skills/developing themselves?

4. How much freedom and choice do you give your team members in deciding how to do their work?

5. How or in what way do you communicate strategies and visions to your team members and how do you make sure that everyone has an understanding of the goals?

6. In your opinion, does South Korean expect more or less defined rules and procedures in order to reduce uncertainties and risks when performing a work task? Why/why not?

7. In your opinion, should a leader focus more or less on long-term goals? Why/why not?

8. In your opinion, how important is planning, organising and controlling for you?

9. How do you show authority towards your group members at the same time be humble and firm?
9. Hur visar du auktoritet gentemot dina gruppmedlemmar samtidigt som du är ödmjuk och bestämd?

10. How do/did you expect the team members to behave towards you?

10. Hur förväntar du Dig att gruppmmedlemmarna skall bete sig/uppträda mot Dig?

11. Before a decision is made, who do you involve in this process? Why/why not?

11. Innan ett beslut fattas, vem/vilka involverar du i denna processen? Varför/Varför inte?

12. In your opinion, if a task outcome is successful/unsuccessful who is primary responsible for that?

12. Enligt din åsikt, vem är primärt ansvarig för om ett resultat tex projekt resultat är lyckat/misslyckat?

13. How do/did you show compassion and generosity towards your team members? In what situations do/did you show compassion and generosity (team members’ private lives, problems, etc.)?


14. How do/did you react if a group member expresses a work related idea or opinion that differs from yours?

14. Hur reagerar du om någon gruppmmedlem uttrycker en arbetsrelaterad ide eller åsikt som skiljer sig från din?

15. How do/did you handle conflicts within the team, towards you and/or towards other departments?

15. Hur hanterar du konflikter inom gruppen, mot dig och/eller mot andra avdelningar?

16. How do/did you show your team members appreciation and support for their contributions (celebrate a good result, cake, lunch etc)?

16. Hur visar du dina gruppmmedlemmar uppskattnings och stöd för deras bidrag och arbetsinsats? (ett bra resultat firas tex genom tärta, lunch etc)?
Adjustments/strategies

1. How, in what way, did you prepare yourself before leaving to South Korea?
   - courses
   - workshops
   - reading in the literature (cultural differences, leadership styles etc.)
   - visiting South Korea, meeting local people
   - exchanging knowledge with colleagues with South Korean working experience
   - changing your way of leading? (if no, why? if yes, how, in what way?)

2. In your opinion, was the preparation process you received from your company sufficient? In what way? What could have been done better or what did you miss when you look back?

3. How did you adjust yourself and your leadership style to the new environment? Steps and time frame of this process? What was the difficult part(s) and why? What was the easiest part(s) and why?

4. How did you receive acceptance/respect from your team members/colleagues in South Korea?

5. What challenges do/did you face in your daily work? And in what way do/did you solve or handle them?

6. What is the most important leadership experience (lesson learnt) you bring with you from your stay in South Korea?
7. In your opinion, was your stay in South Korea successful/unsuccessful? In what way? Did you complete your stay; did you extend your stay?

7. Enligt din åsikt, var ditt uppehåll i Sydkorea lyckad/misslyckat och på vilket sätt? Slutförde du din vistelse? Förlängde du din vistelse?

8. Is there any leadership experience you have taken with you back to Scandinavia and that you practice?

8. Finns det någon erfarenhet av ledarskap som du har tagit med dig tillbaka till Skandinavien/Norge och som du utövar?

Any other business

Any other comments or opinions you would like to share with us?

Övriga kommentarer eller åsikter som du skulle vilja dela med dig?
Appendix C: The cultural dimension scores for each Scandinavian country and their mean values

The cultural dimensions defined by Hofstede study:

The cultural dimension scores for each Scandinavian country and their mean values are presented in the table C1 below (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Dimension</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Mean Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Orientation</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The column chart below, figure C1, shows a clear picture over the cultural dimension differences between the Scandinavian countries and their mean values (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2013):

Figure C1 – Cultural dimension scores for each Scandinavian country and their mean values in a column chart (own figure).
The cultural dimensions defined by the GLOBE study “As Is”:

The score for “As Is” for each Scandinavian country and their mean values are presented in table C2 below (House, 2004):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Mean value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>3,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Collectivism</td>
<td>5,2</td>
<td>4,8</td>
<td>5,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-group Collectivism</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>3,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Orientation</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>4,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Egalitarianism</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>3,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane Orientation</td>
<td>4,1</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>4,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Orientation</td>
<td>3,7</td>
<td>4,2</td>
<td>4,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>4,9</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>4,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>5,3</td>
<td>5,2</td>
<td>5,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The column chart below, figure C2, shows a clear picture over the “As Is” cultural dimension differences between the Scandinavian countries and their mean values (House, 2004):

**Figure C2** – The GLOBE cultural dimensions “As Is” for each Scandinavian country and their mean values in a column chart (own figure).
The cultural dimensions defined by the GLOBE study “Should Be”:

The score for “Should Be” for each Scandinavian country and their mean values are presented in table C3 below (House, 2004):

Table C3 – The GLOBE cultural dimensions “Should Be” for each Scandinavian country and their mean values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Mean value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>3,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Collectivism</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>4,2</td>
<td>4,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-group Collectivism</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5,5</td>
<td>5,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Orientation</td>
<td>4,9</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>4,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Egalitarianism</td>
<td>5,2</td>
<td>5,1</td>
<td>5,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane Orientation</td>
<td>5,7</td>
<td>5,5</td>
<td>5,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Orientation</td>
<td>5,8</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>5,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>2,7</td>
<td>2,8</td>
<td>2,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>3,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The column chart below, figure C3, shows a clear picture over the “Should Be” between the Scandinavian countries and their mean values (House, 2004):

Figure C3 – The GLOBE cultural dimensions “Should Be” for each Scandinavian country and their mean values in a column chart (own figure).
Appendix D: General description of leadership and styles

General description of leadership and styles

Leadership can be defined in many different ways and one of the definitions is the ability to inspire confidence and support people to achieve the goals of an organization (Dubrin, 2010). A leader also has to act as a mentor, coach, motivator, team player, team builder, role model, spokesperson, negotiator, technical problem solver, entrepreneur and strategic planner (Dubrin, 2010). For a better understanding of leadership, a framework with the four key variables of leadership can be drawn and examined, namely: group member characteristics, leader characteristics and traits, leader behaviour and style and the internal and external environment. See figure D1 below (Dubrin, 2010).

Leadership effectiveness is referred to as achieving a desirable result such as productivity or quality in a certain situation. The model demonstrates that a leader is dependent on the four variables to be an effective leader (Dubrin, 2010).

Figure D1 – A framework explaining leadership (Dubrin, 2010, p.21).
Group member characteristics
Effective leaders are in need of good followers that are self-management, commitment, have competence and focus, and courage (Robert E. Kelley, 1988). An important role for the followers is to collaborate with leaders in achieving organizational goals. Barbara Kellerman has defined five different types of followers by the level of engagement with the leader or group, described below in table D1. At one end of the scale is “feeling and doing nothing” and at the other end is “being passionately committed and deeply involved” (Kellerman, 2007, p.84-91).

Table D1 – Group member characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group member characteristics</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isolates</td>
<td>Are followers that are not taking any action in making changes, do not care much about their leaders and only aims to do their job without having an interest in the general organization. These types of followers need coaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bystanders</td>
<td>Are free riders that have low internal motivation and the leader needs to work hard to find the right motivators to get the bystanders into action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Are sometimes for and sometimes against the leader and the company. The leader needs to carefully follow up the work of these types of followers to see if they are productive. They show enough engagement to learn something that's of own interest and that would help the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activists</td>
<td>Are followers that are very engaged, show interest in people and process and eager to show their support or opposition. They have strong feelings about the leader and the organization, either positive or negative, that they show and act accordingly. The leader needs to be alert whether the activist is for or against the company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diehards</td>
<td>Are extremely engaged followers and can be an asset or a problem for the leader. They have an even stronger tendency to be whistleblowers than the activists. The leader needs to keep an eye on the diehards to see if their energy and effort is in line with the organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows the major challenge a leader can face when the followers have different characteristics, including the level of engagement from feeling and doing nothing to total passion, commitment and involvement.
Leader characteristics and traits

Effective leader’s personality traits can be divided into two groups: general personality traits such as self-confidence and trustworthiness, and task-related traits, such as passion and courage. General personality traits are defined as traits that are observed both at work and private related situations whereas task related traits are defined as traits that are associated with work and task accomplishment. Below is the general personality traits listed in table D2 and that contribute to successful leadership, followed by the task related personality traits listed in table D3 (Dubrin, 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General personality traits</th>
<th>Task-related traits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self confidence</td>
<td>Passion for the Work and the People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>-Self awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>-Self management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>-Social awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>-Relationship management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm, Optimism and Warmth</td>
<td>Flexibility and adaptability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of humour</td>
<td>Internal locus of control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Courage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leader behaviour and style

To understand leadership attitudes, behaviours and practices a task-related versus relationship-related classification is used as a framework (Dubrin, 2010). They are both identified and described below.

Task-related behaviour, attitude or skill of an effective leader is defined as when more focus is on the task to be performed than on the interpersonal aspect of leadership. Below in table D4 is the listing for the task-related leadership attitudes and behaviours followed by table D5 for relationship-oriented attitudes and behaviours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task related leadership attitudes and behaviours</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability to the situation</td>
<td>A leader who adapts well to the situation and the group members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction setting</td>
<td>A leader who sets a direction, creates a vision and a strategy to be followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High performance standards</td>
<td>A leader who holds group members to high standards of performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrating on strengths of the group members</td>
<td>A leader who makes good use of the strengths of group members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk taking and execution of plans</td>
<td>A leader who is willing to take risks and implement risky decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands on guidance and feedback</td>
<td>A leader who provides the group members with hands on guidance and frequent feedback on performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ability to ask tough questions

A leader who asks the right questions to the group members and makes them reflect on their work and work results.

Table D5 – Relationship-oriented leadership attitudes and behaviours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship-oriented leadership attitudes and behaviours</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aligning people</td>
<td>A leader who gets group members pulling in the same direction and collaborating in a smooth way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to worker opinions</td>
<td>A leader, who is engaged, interested and open to workers opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating inspiration and visibility</td>
<td>A leader, who inspires others, is visible and available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfying higher-level needs</td>
<td>A leader who helps group members grow professionally or inspire them in other ways and by doing so build good relationship with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving emotional support and encouragement</td>
<td>A leader who gives frequent encouragement and praise and also shows caring and kindness even for outside work related topics or matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting principles and values</td>
<td>A leader who promotes values and principles that contributes to the welfare of individuals and organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a servant leader</td>
<td>A leader who desires to help others to achieve their goals and not the leader’s own goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A leader’s combination of attitudes and behaviours leads to a certain regularity and predictability in dealing with group members. Leadership styles are the relatively consistent pattern of behaviour that characterizes a leader.

**Internal and External environment**

As mentioned earlier, there are four sets of variables that influence leadership effectiveness. The *internal and external environment* also impacts on leadership effectiveness. In an environment where, for instance, creativity and flexibility is promoted, leaders are more likely to give expression to their tendencies toward creative problem solving and flexibility. A leader working in a multi-cultural environment, for instance, will need to have multicultural skills to be effective.

**Summary of general description of leadership and styles**

*Group member characteristics* describe attributes of the group members that could have an influence on leadership effectiveness. Bright and motivated group members can, for instance, help the leader to do a good job. *Leader characteristics and traits* relate to the inner qualities of a leader, such as passion and courage that help a leader work effectively in many situations. *Leader behaviour and style* refers to the actions a leader is performing including his or her characteristic approach that is related to his or her effectiveness. A leader who is often coaching a team and uses Participative leadership, for
instance, might be effective in many situations. The *internal and external environment* is affecting leadership effectiveness and therefore it’s important that the leader can handle different types of people and cultures as well as adapt to new environments.