Master Thesis

Food For Thought
- An Exploratory Study of the Potentials of Collaborative Food Preparation

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Abstract

This thesis has explored how collaborative food preparation influences team dynamics and problem-solving capabilities of a team. A number of interviews were conducted to capture the essence of the collaborative food preparation experience and a comprehensive Five Dimension Framework emerged from the narratives. Additionally, an experiment was created where four teams of students were observed while solving a complex business case. During the process two teams participated in a session of collaborative food preparation the other two teams were considered control teams and did not participate in collaborative food preparation. An expert review group assessed the teams' solutions which were presented in concise executive summaries.

The research found that the collaborative food preparation experience had a positive influence on the food teams' intra-team social atmosphere and intra-team attitudes, which was found to influence problem-solving capabilities positively. Moreover, indications emerged that the teams' attitudes and general enthusiasm during the collaborative food preparation had an effect on the subsequent effects in terms of relational changes and team problem solving.

The potentials of collaborative food preparation as a method have not been systematically and empirically explored before. The results are interesting not only in relation to the general massive public interest in food and gastronomy but also in an organizational context. Global structural and economic drivers combined with an increasing demand for meaning from Western consumers and employees force organizations and business leaders to think alternatively to obtain long-term competitive advantage. Crucial parts of the solution to accommodate the new framework conditions are organizational creativity and innovation (Austin & Devin, 2010; Christensen, 2007; Adler, 2006).

Austin & Devin (2010) belong to a school of management academics who believe in aesthetic innovation as a future competitive capacity based on organizational strategic intangibles. Equally Adler (2006) is among the scholars who argue for the cross fertilization of arts and business. Art-based methods can help organizations strengthen intangible attributes which in the long run can lead to competitive advantage (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). The research results of this thesis proved the same potentials in the food-based method of collaborative food preparation.

Possibly delayed by the current financial crisis, it is the believe that what have been called organizational aesthetics or intangibles will come to play an increasing role in organizations' race for competitive advantage. Hence, there will be an increasing demand in academia for empirical evidence and writing on the topic of strategic management of intangibles.

This thesis project contributes on two levels. On the practical level, the Five Dimension Framework is a well-documented tool to understand, communicate, and design experiences around collaborative food preparation. Furthermore, empirical evidence was found regarding the use of collaborative food preparation as a method to strenghthen group problem solving capabilities. Thus, on the academic level, contributing to the discussion about organizational aesthetics and strategic intangibles.

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1.0 Introduction

> *"Today, food and food items satisfy much more than the basic need for nutrition. A meal is also to satisfy other needs of the modern individual such as the need for socialization and self-realization."* (Translated from Danish, Erhvervs- og Byggestyrelsen, 2008)

Food and gastronomy remain a major topic of attention in modern Western societies. Their role in socialization and self-realization are increasingly attracting research attention, especially their role in value creation. As indicated in the above quotation from a report published by the Danish Enterprise and Construction Authority, food is currently being considered in other contexts than pure gastronomic and nutrition-related contexts.

The 'identity argument' presented above is one context that is a likely driver of the general public interest in the food topic. In fact Danish sociologists have argued that the food arena is the greatest value-related battlefield at present. The trend is further evident from the huge number of cookbooks and from the TV programs about food constituting a significant share of the broadcasting on Danish as well as international TV channels such as for example the BBC (www.dr.dk).

The New Nordic Cuisine Movement with restaurant NOMA as its flagship has re-enforced the general public interest in food and has also added to the supply of cookbooks and TV programs. In addition, the movement has further elevated the profile of the food of Nordic countries on the global gastronomic world map to a comparable level with reputable French and Italian cuisine. This profile has resulted in international and national recognition and media interest as well as political and academic interest.

The focus of the debate in academia and media about the New Nordic Cuisine typically focusses on the obvious 'identity-issue', discussing whether the New Nordic Food as a brand should aim at a niche segment or at a broader public segment in order to optimize its brand value. Likewise, the commercial potential of the brand in both a national and regional context is widely discussed. These discussions are by all means relevant and interesting for this thesis project.

However, there is an emerging interest in alternative potentials related to food and gastronomy. Claus Meyer, who is one of the founders of the New Nordic Cuisine Movement, and his companies in the Meyer Group work with projects that may have their point of departure in food, gastronomy, and the principles of the New Nordic Cuisine, but all have the ambition of exerting wider societal impact.

One example is the extensive research project, OPUS. OPUS (OPtimal trivsel, Udvikling og Sundhed) is the world's largest research project on the optimal well-being, evolution, and health for Danish children through a healthy nutrition based on the principles of New Nordic Cuisine. The aim of the project is to diffuse the knowledge obtained in the research to the public and to create a foundation for public and societal change in food culture and behavior conducted through schools and other institutions (www.foodoflife.dk).

Additionally, initiatives by the Claus Meyer Foundation called 'Melting Pot' are examples of projects. Another project concentrated on the use of cooking in the resocialization process of inmates in the Danish state prison, Vridsløselille. Yet another large project is initiated in the spring 2012 in La Paz, Bolivia, where experiences and knowledge of the New Nordic Cuisine will be implemented in a Bolivian context, aiming at creating development, jobs and in time economic growth for the native population in Bolivia based on work with food and local produce (www.clausmeyer.dk).

Private companies' social responsibility and engagement in society is interesting but nothing new, despite Porter and Kramer's recent contribution with the idea of 'Shared Value' (2011). However, the underlying notion that food and food activities, like art and music, have inspiring potential, not necessarily related to branding and nutrition, has been largely ignored to date. Such notions of the potentials in art and art-based methods are difficult to measure and validate which is why they often remain clichés without systematic empirical background.

For the same reason, art was not found in the academic management and leadership literature until recently. However, during the 21st century the framework conditions facing organizations have changed (Adler, 2006). Technological development, globalization, and to a larger extend homogeneous access to traditional resources such as land, capital and labor have changed the competitive situation among organizations and have made organizations' ability to adaption and innovation new sources of competitive advantage (Christensen, 2007). In the hunt for innovative ideas, art has found its way to businesses and academia. At CBS for instance, can be found both a center for Art and Leadership and a center for Creative Industries Research (www.cbs.dk).

This thesis aims to contribute to the art-in-business school of thought but with focus on food-based methods rather than art-based methods. More specifically, the thesis was inspired by the phenomenon of gastronomic teambuilding. Like in the case of potentials related to art, the phenomenon of collaborative food preparation has not been the subject of systematic research, instead the claimed potential of for instance gastronomic teambuilding is based on undocumented clichés and anecdotes.

This can be illustrated from a number of random statements taken from various suppliers of gastronomic teambuilding:

> *"Experience shows that an extraordinary atmosphere emerges when a team hit the kitchen together, and sometimes, really nice results arise. It is a fantastic ice breaker in international teams across different cultures."* (Translated from Danish, www.efficientprojectmanagement.com, 2011)

> *"The experience of working together in the kitchen – to taste, smell, talk and enjoy – creates a fruitful sense of community. The experience can be among colleagues, friends, for clients or when a new team is to get to know each other. It is our experience that culinary work in the kitchen unites people and creates a vivid team spirit, which is why it is suitable for teambuilding. When the meal has been prepared and the chefs gather around the table – well, then a sense of satisfaction and just the right atmosphere emerges."* (Translated from Danish, www.groupshafi.com, 2011)

> *"Gastronomic teambuilding is about much more than food. It's about breaking old habits. Discovering new paths. Exploring each other's strengths. About timing and delivery. About utilizing and developing ones competences in brand new ways."* (Translated from Danish, www.meyersmadhus.dk, 2011)

By addressing the phenomenon of collaborative food preparation in a structured and systematic way, it is the hope that this thesis can contribute to a wider understanding of the potentials of food and food-based activities and inspire further research in the area of organizational aesthetics and intangibles.

1.1 Research Question

Inspired by the New Nordic Cuisine Movement, literature on arts and leadership, and finally by undocumented statements about the phenomenon of collaborative food preparation, the aim of the thesis is to contribute to the wider understanding of the potentials embedded in collaborative food preparation related to creative problem solving which is very relevant in an organizational context.

The study is an exploratory study evolving around the following research question:

How does collaborative food preparation influence team dynamics in terms of problem solving capabilities?

3 sub-questions under the overall research question guide the research design, these are:

What are the characteristics of a collaborative food preparation experience?

How does the experience of collaborative food preparation influence team dynamics?

How do team dynamics influence a team's process of solving a complex business case?

Thesis experiment at Meyers Madhus – February 11th 2012

1.2 Structure

Figure 1 presents an overview of the overall structure of the thesis.

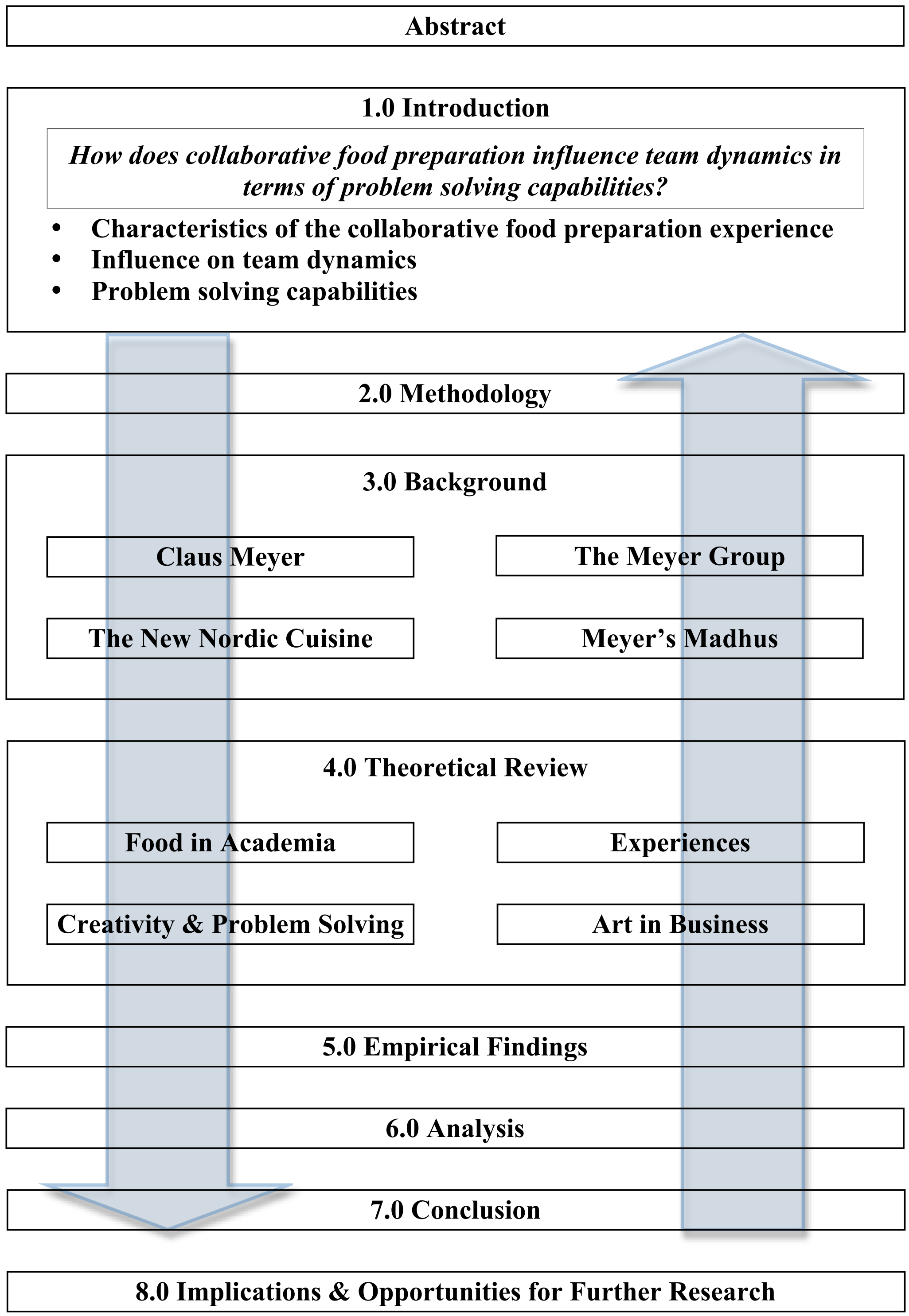


Figure 1 – Thesis Structure. Source: Own creation

2.0 Methodology

The purpose of the methodology chapter is to describe and argue for the research design of the study. Inspired by Yin in Sørensen (2010), research design is understood as the red line linking the central research question, the data collected and the conclusion of the thesis. Hence, the research question is the foundation of the research design and methodology, which is supported by Silverman:

> *"Any good researcher knows that the choice of method should not be predetermined. Rather you should choose a method that is appropriate to what you are trying to found out"* (Silverman, 2005, p. 6)

Following the argumentation from Silverman (2005) and Sørensen (2010) a logical starting point for this chapter is the actual research question. An elaboration of the research question gives a clear indication of what this thesis project is to find out, and equally important, what is considered out of scope of the study.

> *"How does collaborative food preparation influence team dynamics in terms of problem solving capabilities?"*

The key concepts of the research question are *collaborative food preparation*, *team-developing dynamics*, and *problem solving capabilities.* As illustrated in fig. 2 each concept relates to a sub-question that will be treated in the above mentioned order as the answer to one sub-question feeds the next and finally, the answers to all three sub-questions are the foundation for the conclusion to the central research question.

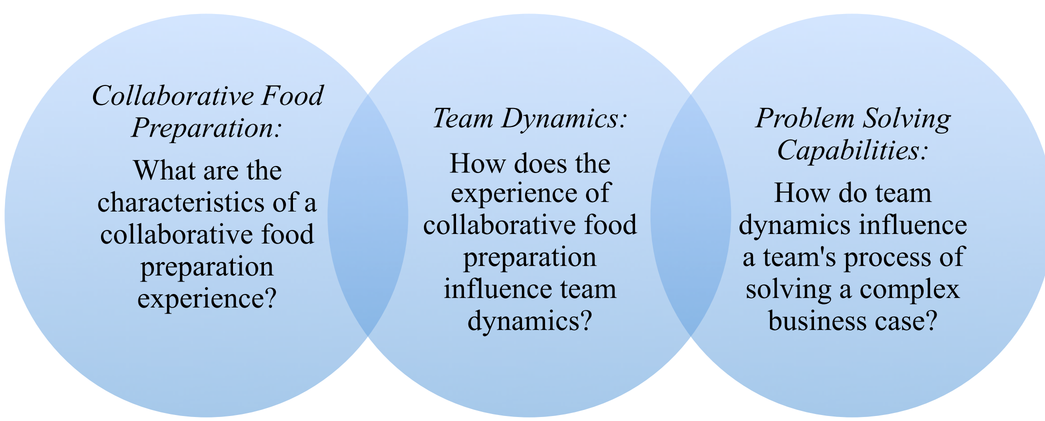


Fig. 2 – Research Sub-Questions. Source: Own creation

2.1 Delimitation

Before embarking on the considerations about which data-collecting methods that are more suitable in this study and before presenting the arguments for which concrete methods that were chosen, it is important to clarify how each sub-question is to be understood in the context of the thesis. Equally important, it should be clear to the reader of the thesis, which elements that have been considered out of scope of the project to avoid what Silverman (2005) calls the 'kitchen-sink gambit'. That is the risk of being able only to *"say a little about a lot"* (Silverman, 2005, p. 80).

Even though the research question is inspired by statements about the specific discipline of gastronomic teambuilding as described in the introduction, the term *collaborative food preparation* has deliberately been used in the research question and in the first sub-question. Collaborative food preparation is a broader term that gastronomic teambuilding, which refers only to one specific discipline. To gain the most reliable notion of the collaborative food preparation experience, it is preferred to include different experiences from persons, who have participated in collaborative food preparation activities. The data addressing the first sub-question would be insufficient had it only been based on experiences from gastronomic teambuilding. However, even though sub-question 1 is preferred be wide in scope, the focus is on collaborative food preparation in large groups contrary to e.g. joint cooking in the family or among friends. The reason being that sub-question 1 feeds sub-question 2, which focus on team dynamics.

The second key concept, *team-developing dynamics*, is once again inspired by the un-documented statements about gastronomic teambuilding. As mentioned in the previous section, the purpose is to investigate whether characteristics of the collaborative food preparation experience can be linked to changed dynamics in a team. However, it should be emphasized that the aim of this research is not to do an assessment of gastronomic teambuilding compared to other kinds of teambuilding activities. The purpose of the thesis is to reach a documented and systematic understanding of the potentials of the collaborative food preparation experience in terms of team dynamics and problem solving. That being said, the research might very well contribute to a clearer picture and inspire to the development of gastronomic teambuilding concepts. Nevertheless, it is not the main purpose and therefore any assessment of other sorts of teambuilding will not included in the research.

The final concept of *problem solving capabilities* can be viewed from several angles and it is to a large extent dependent on the applied ontological model or paradigm in a given study (Silverman, 2005). The applied ontological model of this thesis project belongs to the interpretive philosophy. The next section elaborates further on the overall ontological paradigm.

In relation to problem solving, there are two classical approaches (Hélie & Sun, 2010; Mayer, 2008). The *psychometric* approach focuses mostly on the individual and his or her performance in psychometric tests. Tests could include rebuses or remote associate tests (RAT) (Dodds et.al, 2004) and the applied method would be to compare the individual objects' scores on these tests (Hélie & Sun, 2010). From the psychometric perspective problem solving capability and creativity are viewed as personal traits and the purpose of the studies is to develop measurable tests, which makes it possible to relate quantitative scores of creativity to other variables (Mayer, 2008). The other approach, the *psychological* approach, is concerned with the processes involved in problem solving. The individual's cognitive processes involved in problem solving and creativity might be object of study but some psychological studies also focus on factors that either hinder or improve problem solving abilities (Hélie & Sun, 2010; Mayer, 2008).

The latter approach is applied in this research as it about factors influencing problem solving capabilities. Moreover, in this study, focus is not on the individual but on a team's joint ability to solve a given problem. The concrete problem is a business case, which will be elaborated further on in the section 2.4.2a about the experiment design.

2.2 The Ontological Model

The overall framework that a researcher applies when viewing and interpreting reality – the ontological model or paradigm – is determining for the choice of specific theories and methods in the research design (Silverman, 2005).

In this thesis the applied ontological model belongs to the interpretive philosophy. A key concept in the interpretive approach is reflexivity. By reflexivity is understood the fact that both researchers and the objects of study in social science are human beings, who are self-conscious and thus, possess the ability to reflect on themselves, situations, and relationships. Hence, reflexivity is determining for how reality is comprehended (Benton & Craib, 2011). Contrary to the positivist tradition, where the aim of science is to discover universal truths of the world (Okasha, 2002), there is no such thing as a universal truth in interpretive philosophy. Reality should be studied and interpreted in terms of the meaning the people observed give to their actions and to their conception of rationality (Benton & Craib, 2011).

Within the interpretive philosophy there are variations in the interpretation of reality. For illustration one can imagine a continuum. At the one end of the continuum is the Weberian point of view. This perspective focuses on the individual's perception of meaning and claims that individuals and interaction among individuals construct reality. Thus, human behavior is the result of rational choices of individuals rather than social structures or overall social phenomena (Benton & Craib, 2011). At the other extreme of the interpretive continuum is the hermeneutic approach where human action is a result of the individual's connection to wider social groups, and thus, the key to understand and study human action is through in-depth understanding of traditions and cultures (Benton & Craib, 2011).

The point of view adopted in this thesis is found somewhere between the two extremes on the interpretive philosophy continuum and is a combination of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Phenomenology suggests that people behave according to meaningful contexts of reality based on individual and socially constructed typifications of the world. Symbolic interactionism is also concerned with context and argues that reality is a collective negotiation of meaning between individuals (Benton & Craib, 2011; Ballis, 1995). According to Benton & Craib (2011) it is not necessarily crucial to choose between the various interpretations of the interpretive philosophy: *"they can each be seen as appropriate to some level of analysis or particular object of meaningful social action"* (p. 92). To repeat from the beginning, reflexivity is the critical acknowledgement in all variations of interpretive philosophy.

2.3 Research Methods – Theoretical Considerations

In the following sections the theoretical considerations of the research design will be described. Following these considerations, the concrete methods applied in practice during the data gathering process for the thesis are presented.

2.3.1 Exploration

As indicated already on the front page of this thesis, the study is conducted as an exploratory study. It was argued in the introduction chapter that the initial research idea emerged partly from an observed notion of increased interest in alternative potentials of food and gastronomy and more specifically from statements about the use of collaborative cooking in relation to corporate teambuilding and development. Hence, the research idea was actually a result of serendipity, which trickered curiosity.

> *"Researchers explore when they have little or no scientific knowledge about the group, process, activity, or situation they want to examine but nevertheless have reason to believe it contains elements worth discovering"* (Stebbins, 2001, p. 6)

The initial investigation of the topic of collaborative food preparation revealed no scientific or systematic empirical data; only undocumented statements, which is why the exploratory approach is suitable for the study (Stebbins, 2001).

The purpose of exploratory research is to be able to infer generalizations about the phenomenon of interest based on systematic and purposive research. Given the limited existing data and scientific knowledge, flexibility and open-mindedness in regards to how and where to gather data about the phenomenon are important virtues in the exploratory research process (Stebbins, 2001). The specific methods will be addressed later in the section.

2.3.2 Scientific Reasoning and Data Gathering

Inductive reasoning often predominates in exploratory research as that the researcher aims at making generalizations based on flexible and open-minded data rather than testing hypotheses (Stebbins, 2001). However, it depends on the degree of knowledge about a given phenomenon. Besides occasions where a phenomenon is under-researched, Stebbins (2001) also argues that exploration can be preferred under circumstances where a phenomenon has been over-research and hence *"begs to be explored anew"* (p. 9). As knowledge and generalizations about a phenomenon begin to emerge the researcher can also include deductive reasoning in her research, where the generalizations are tested (Stebbins, 2001). This also applies in this thesis as will become clear in the description of the utilized methods in section 2.4.2b.

Like inductive reasoning, qualitative data is commonly dominant in exploratory studies but as argued above, the methods depend on the research question and should not be predetermined. However, Silverman also argues that researchers should not necessarily re-event the wheel in each study they perform. If most scientific data on a topic is either quantitative or qualitative it makes sense to be inspired by those, but the research question is determining (Silverman, 2005).

The advantage of qualitative data is the ability to encompass a variety of variables and their interactions and thus provide a more holistic interpretation of a given phenomenon (Sørensen, 2010). On the contrary qualitative data might be accused of sacrificing scope for detail, whereas quantitative data have the force of being able to include very larger samples, however, with the risk of leaving important details out, since quantitative data usually encompass predetermined variables (Sørensen, 2010; Silverman, 2005).

In this thesis a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods is used. Section 2.4.2b describes how quantitative measures in the form of fixed-response questionnaires and observation sheets emanated from qualitative research in the form of interviews. A combination of methods in many cases is very meaningful, however, one should be aware of the risk of becoming a 'kitchen-sinker', recalled from above, where the researcher loses control of the study due to the amount of data (Silverman, 2005).

2.3.3 The Problem of Validity and Reliability in Exploration

Validity and reliability are crucial measures of quality of any research whether it is quantitative or qualitative (Silverman, 2005; Stebbins, 2001). Validity concerns the question of whether the applied methods in a research provide an accurate impression of the phenomenon under study (Silverman, 2005; Stebbins, 2001). In qualitative research as well as in quantitative, validity is strongest when generalizations emerge from a representative sample, hence, the sampling method is crucial for representativeness (Stebbins, 2001).

Despite the fact that quantitative data usually covers a larger sample, as mentioned in previous section, it cannot be implied that quantitative data is by nature more valid than qualitative, because the representativeness needs still be argued for in quantitative data. However, in qualitative data the researcher needs to verify that generalizations are not just based on *"few well chosen examples"* (Silverman, 2005). Stebbins (2001) argues:

> *"Proof, to the extent it is possible in exploration, and validity rest on the number of times a regularity of thought or behavior is observed in talk or action, which must be often enough to seem general to all or to a main segment*

> *of the people in the group, process, or activity being examined."* (Stebbins, 2001, p. 45)

Besides the problem illustrated in Stebbin's quotation, which Silverman (2005) calls anecdotalism, qualitative researchers also need to be aware of a range of other possible interrupting effects: The researcher's personal presence during e.g. observations and interviews, the risk of personal bias in interpretation of data, and the fact that one researcher's ability to observe all relevant aspects of the phenomenon is limited (Stebbins, 2001). Concrete techniques applied in this study to overcome the above mentioned challenges are described in following sections.

In general, exploratory studies are dependent of concatenated exploration; a process where a chain of studies are focusing on the same phenomenon. Thus, the cumulative generalizations increase validity of each single study. Concatenation in exploratory studies is crucial because sample representativeness is usually a problem in exploratory studies. Either the phenomenon is highly under-studied and thus initial studies can only concern a small area of the phenomenon or alternatively the phenomenon is over-studied, which result in a data amount so large, that it cannot be encompassed in just one single study (Stebbins, 2001).

This study represents the first situation and is considered a pilot study within the phenomenon of collaborative food preparation, however, it is an acknowledged fact that sample representativeness and thus validity is less than perfect.

> *"Exploratory researchers should concern themselves with validity – about that, there should be no doubt – (...) They should do their best to ensure it, recognizing, however, that their efforts in this regard for any single study will be only partially successful and that they will have to wait for future explorations before the tale of validity is fully told."* (Stebbins, 2001, p. 49)

The second quality measure is reliability, which has to do with the possibility of replication of the study (Silverman, 2005; Stebbins, 2001). The same challenges about the presence of the researcher and the researcher's personal bias, raised in relation to validity, exist in relation to reliability, since these influences cannot be standardized. Moreover, even though for instance the same questions are asked in an interview, Silverman emphasizes that *"asking and answering any question can never be separated by mutual interpretation"* (p. 221). This problem exists in both qualitative and quantitative methods e.g. questionnaires. In terms of exploratory research, concatenation increases reliability (Stebbins, 2001).

2.4 Practiced Research Methods

The three key concepts and the related sub-questions of the overall research question presented in fig. 2 have been explored using different methods. The overall research design consists of combined qualitative and quantitative methods. The methods used in relation to each key concept are addressed in the following sections.

2.4.1 Interviews

The method used to collect data to the sub-question about the specific characteristics of the collaborative food preparation experience was semi-structured interviews. In total 9 interviews were conducted. The interviewees were selected on the basis that each had been engaged in collaborative food preparation in some way. The aim was to obtain a flexible and open-minded approach to the phenomenon, and thus collect inputs from a wide scope of perspectives. Among the interviewees were employees at Meyers Madhus, customers of Meyers Madhus, the Prison Inspector at the Danish State Prison Vridsløselille, who as mentioned in the introduction, had experience from a re-socialization project for inmates through the use of cooking, a management consultant at a large Scandinavian management consulting company, who had used cooking in a so-called student marketing event, and finally, a MSc. and Ph.D in Social Science from University of Aalborg, who have studied the potentials related to the meal. A presentation of each interviewee is available in appendix 1. Audio files and full transcripts are available on the enclosed CD-rom.

Symbolic interactionism, explained in the paragraph about the ontological model, was the guiding principles for the conducted interviews. The purpose was to obtain an understanding of the interviewees' perception of the characteristics of the collaborative cooking experience through their personal narratives.

In order to get the interviewees to tell their stories freely, the interviews were to resemble an unstructured dialogue as much as possible (Silverman, 2005). An interview guide was created prior to each interview (app. 2), but was only guiding for the researcher. Sometimes the interviewees were asked questions, which were not relevant to the goal of the interview, but which were asked for the purposes of getting the interviewee to relax or interviewees were allowed to elaborate without interruption by the researcher. In such situations the interview guide served as a guideline to get 'back on track' in the interview.

As already noted, there is a problem of reliability connected to this type of interviews despite interview guides and sound recordings. Given the nature of symbolic interactionism, all the interviews were unique in the sense that another researcher, due to his or hers personal bias and reflexion, would produce a different interview; even if they were to interview the same persons. However, as will be clear in the description of the data processing, a phenomenological approach to the data was applied and in analyzing the interviews it was attempted to look for *"regularities of thought"* as mentioned in section 2.3.3 in order to avoid emphazing single interviews too much.

Moreover, as touched upon in section 2.3.3, sample representativeness can always be discussed in exploratory studies and hence, also in this particular study. A purposive sampling method was used in relation to the interviewees. The number of interviewees was considered representative for generalizations when taken into account the ability of one single researcher. However, as previously mentioned, validity would certainly benefit from concatenation.

In order to allow the researcher to focus on dialogue with the interviewees and to ensure the largest possible amount of data for later processing, all interviews were audio recorded and afterwards transcribed (CD-rom). One interview was not recorded due to technical problems with the recording device; instead a written summary based on the researcher's notes was created and approved by the interviewee.

The method applied for the processing of data was phenomenological reduction, an attempt to set aside common-sense beliefs about a phenomenon, and then trying to understand how such beliefs emerge (Benton & Craib, 2011). In the context of this thesis, all the interview transcripts were thoroughly read and each time a statement about the experience of collaborative food preparation occurred, it was copied into a new document. The result was 4 pages of statements, which then could be analyzed again, this time looking for patterns or typifications. Resembling statements were put together and after the sort- out, there were 5 categories of statements.

Each category was subject to further interpretation and finally, the 5 dimensions of the collaborative food preparation experience became clear. The 5 dimensions are: The Relevance

Dimension, The Social Context Dimension, The Inclusivity Dimension, The Egalitarian Dimension, and finally, The Metaphorical Dimension. The 5 dimensions are described in detail in section 5.1.

Once again it should be acknowledged that the researcher's personal reflexion may influence the data interpretation. However, in order to increase the validity, without the use of concatenation, the notion of the 5 dimensions has been presented to some of the interviewees, who found them plausible. As will be described in the section 2.4.2b, the 5 dimensions of the experience of collaborative food preparation served as guideline for the experiment created in Meyers Madhus.

Finally, it should be emphasized in the light of the overall ontological model, that the use of quotations from the interviews in chapter 5, serve as illustrations of the points presented and not as proof or validation of generalizations (Stebbins, 2001).

2.4.2 The Experiment

In order to address sub-question 2 and 3 of the research question regarding the influence of collaborative food preparation on team dynamics and further the relation to problem solving, an experiment was designed and executed on the 11th of February 2012 at Meyers Madhus.

In brief, the purpose of the experiment was to investigate how a team's experience of collaborative food preparation influenced the team dynamics of that team, compared to a team, which did not have the same experience and moreover, to investigate whether the food preparing team would display better problem solving abilities compared to the other.

When using experiments as a method of research it is important to be able to control the environment for the researcher to be able to isolate variables of interest (Mayer, 2008). The variables at play in this experiment were: the experience of collaborative food preparation, team dynamics and problem solving as already described in section 2.1.

2.4.2a Facts and Experiment Design

The subjects of the experiment was 2nd an 3rd year undergraduate students from different lines of studies at Copenhagen Business School, working in teams of 3-4 persons. The students had signed up for participation in case competitions, representing CBS at different universities around the world and had prior to the experiment received training of various forms for 2 weeks. Thus, teams were already formed and the members of each team were familiar with each other.

However, they did not know each other until the 2 weeks prior to the experiment. A total of 6 teams were invited to participate in the experiment of which 4 showed up.

The design of the experiment was inspired by one of two classical approaches to do experimental incubation studies (Dodds et.al., 2004). In the interpolated activity approach:

> *" ... subjects in an incubation group work on a given problem for a predetermined period of time, are given an incubation period away from it, and then return to finish work on the problem. Their performance is generally contrasted to that of a control group that works continuously on the same problem. The contrasts typically include such dependent variables as whether or not the problem was solved, the amount of time required to solve it, the originality of the solution, and how many solutions are given."* (Dodds et.al., 2004, p. 2)

In the conducted experiment in Meyers Madhus, the four teams all worked with the same problem and had the same amount of time to solve the problem. But like in the interpolated activity approach, two teams who can be considered the actual subject of study were interrupted in their problem solving work to participate in a collaborative food preparation session, after which they returned to finish the problem. The other two teams, being control teams, worked continuously on the problem.

In incubation theory of problem solving there is a notion that in the process of solving a given problem human beings go through 4 phases: Preparation, Incubation, Illumination, and Verification (Hèlie & Sun, 2010). If a problem is complicated to an extent that does not allow the person to reach a solution during the preparation phase, the point of impasse will lead to frustration and the person is likely to handle that frustration by entering the incubation phase. The incubation phase is a phase during which the person stops attempting to solve the complex problem by taken his or her mind on something different until the illumination phase emerges as a sudden manifestation of the problem and its solution (Hèlie & Sun, 2010). The incubation phase can last for few minutes up to several years. According to Hèlie and Sun (2010) *"the incubation period has been empirically shown to increase the probability of eventually finding the correct solution."* (p. 995).

However, it is important to emphasize that this thesis project and the experiment is not a study of incubation. Incubation theory belongs to the psychometric approach to problem solving, as described in the delimitation section. Thus such studies concentrate on the individual and work with quantitative measurable test (Hèlie & Sun, 2010) as described in section 2.1. As already mentioned, a psychological approach to problem solving (Hèlie and Sun, 2010) is applied in this thesis, where the subject of investigation are factors that influence problem solving; more specifically the variables are collaborative food preparation and team dynamics in this thesis.

The problem presented to the teams in this thesis' experiment, was a business case about global innovation published by Harvard Business Review. A business case was found suitable for the experiment, as it resembles the kinds of complex problems with which companies deal in the daily operations, as indicated in the introduction chapter. Moreover, the students who participated are to become those who are going to solve such problems in the future. The teams were asked to write a one-page executive summary presenting their respective solution to the problem. Besides that there were no requirements as to how to come up with a solution.

The collaborative food preparation experience was lead by a professional chef employed at Meyers Madhus and was inspired by one of the gastronomic teambuilding concepts offered by Meyers Madhus to companies. In chapter 3 there are more information about the activities of Meyers Madhus. The teams were presented to the menu and were provided with recipes. The professional chef started the session with a general instruction and some demonstrations but afterwards the teams were to organize the work by themselves hence, the chef was not interfering unless he was asked for help. The cooking session lasted for 2.5 hours and the teams prepared a 5-course menu (app. 3).

Prior to the experiment, the students had not been informed about the purpose of the study or about any details of the day except that it would be a full day event. Upon arrival the team were split and placed in separate rooms where they were presented separate time schedules for the day. Table 1 presents the time schedules for both the "Food teams" and the "Control Teams" and illustrates that all teams had equal amount of time to solve the case. As a gesture from Meyers Madhus, the control teams were invited to experience the collaborative food preparation session after finishing their case work and it took place while the food teams finished their case. The entire event ended with a joint dinner where the participants had the chance to enjoy the food they had been preparing. The closing dinner and the control teams' kitchen experience was not part of the study, and was not subject for analysis.

After reading about incubation previously in this chapter, one might suggest that possible differences in solutions to the case found in the teams' executive summaries would be due to the kitchen experience serving as an incubation phase. However, research on incubation shows that in experiments with incubation periods of 15 minutes or less there is no evidence of differences in performance due to the length of incubation. Incubation periods of more than 15 minutes seems to increase performance until the period reaches 30 minutes, after which performance seems to be unaffected until the period reaches a length of more than 3.5 hours (Dodds et.al, 2004). As can be seen from table 1, the experiment was designed in a way that ensured both the food teams and the control teams incubation periods of between 30 minutes and 3.5 hours (lunch break and cooking session). Thus, possible differences in solutions cannot be explained by incubation. Finally, research on activity during incubation has found no clear evidence of an effect of activity during incubation (Dodds et.al., 2004).

Time Schedule		Food Teams	Control Teams
09:00	09:30	Breakfast and introduction to the day	Breakfast and introduction to the day
09:30	11:30	Case handout and case work	Case handout and case work
11:30	12:15	Lunch break	Lunch break
12:15	15:00	Joint food preparation	Finish case work
15:00	17:45	Finish case work	Joint food preparation
18:00	21:00	Dinner and closing of the day	Dinner and closing of the day

Table 1 – Experiment Time Schedule. Source: Own creation

2.4.2b Data Gathering and Processing

Having elaborated on the facts and the experiment design, attention is drawn to the practical data gathering and the methods applied for data processing.

Multiple methods were used to address the question on the influence of the collaborative food preparation experience on team dynamics. First of all, the teams were observed during all phases of the day. There was one observer attached to each pair of teams, moreover there was one video camera filming each of the four teams.

Prior to the event observation sheets and some hints for the observers were created (app. 4 & 6). The 5 dimensions of the collaborative cooking experience, which were induced from the interviews, were used as guideline in the preparation of the observation sheets. The observers were to fill out one set of observation sheets for each team for each session of the day. The food teams went through 3 sessions: One case session prior to lunch and afterwards, a cooking session and a final case session (table 1). The control teams only went through 2 case sessions, one before lunch and one final afterwards.

The observation sheets consisted of a range of pre-determined elements under each of the 5 dimensions, and the observers were to rank each element on a scale from 1 – 5 according to their observations. 1 meaning that the element was displayed to a low degree and 5 meaning that the element was displayed to a high degree.

Under the Relevance Dimension the observers were to take note of each team member's expressed attitude towards food and cooking e.g. *"Expressed excitement about cooking"*. The Social Context Dimension included elements about the atmosphere displayed by the teams e.g. "*Tense*" or "*Fun*", and about the types of conversations among the team members e.g. "*Case-related*" or "*Personal*". The Egalitarian Dimension was about the displayed hierarchy and roles taken by the team members and eventually observed changes in those roles. The observers were to observe each team member and note to which degree they appeared e.g. "*Dominant*" or "*Reserved*". The Inclusivity Dimension was about the team members' displayed attitudes towards each other e.g. "*Helpful*" or "*Competitive*". Moreover, it was about the expressed personality types of each team member e.g. "*Rational*" or "*Emotional*".

Working with an observation sheet as structured as in this experiment ensures that the results are easier to work with in the analysis; however, there is a risk of losing details (Silverman, 2005). As an attempt to overcome the problem of losing the observation details, the field notes of each observer and a review of the videotapes were used to make a brief summary of the entire process for each of the four teams (sections 5.2.2 A – D). This procedure included the cumulative observations of two different observers, however, the many timed mentioned problem of the researcher's bias cannot be ignored.

To address the researcher's bias-problem and in the spirit of the symbolic interactionism, the team members' own evaluation of the team dynamics was included in the data set through questionnaires. The questionnaires were created on the same premises as the observation sheets asking the team members questions around the 5 dimensions. The participants were not informed about the 5 dimensions; moreover, when answering questionnaires, respondents tend to answer according to what they expect to be the "right" answer and according to interpretation as mentioned in section 2.3.3 (Silverman, 2005). Therefore, the questions in the questionnaires were not directly about the five dimensions and sometimes the same question was formulated in different ways e.g. "*I felt it was difficult being heard in the team*" and "*One or more of the other team members appeared quick on dismissing the ideas of other team members*". Like the observation sheets, the respondents were asked to rank on a scale from 1 – 5 how they would evaluate the different statements presented to them in the questionnaire. The teams were presented a questionnaire after each session (app. 5.1 – 5.4).

The advantage of using the same scale in the observation sheet and the questionnaires was that the results could be compared and used together in the analysis. However, the risk that the respondents interpret the questions differently from the researcher should be acknowledged. After the experiment the numerical results of the observation sheets and the questionnaires for each team were entered into a spread sheet (CD-rom), the average scores were calculated, and then put together in one sorted sheet encompassing all the data. Finally, the sorted data were illustrated using bar charts (app. 7.1 – 7.19).

The greatest methodological problem in relation to the experiment was the well-known problem of validity. The CBS students are representative in relation to the problem presented; however, the number of teams participating in the experiment weakens the representativeness. Even though the study is considered a pilot study within the phenomenon of collaborative food preparation, it would have been preferable to have included the 6 teams, which were initially invited to participate in the experiment. However, through concatenation the validity of the results is expected to increase in time.

2.5 Expert Panel

In order to address the final and third sub-question the analysis had to focus on the teams' solutions to the case presented to them at the experiment in Meyers Madhus. The teams were to present their solutions in a one-page executive summary.

A panel of expert judges was then asked to perform evaluations of the executive summaries. They were asked to evaluate the presented ideas on 3 parameters being: Novelty/Originality, Realizability, and Impact, which are typical features of creativity in problem solving (Mayer, 2008).

The panel was asked to rank each parameter on a scale from 1 – 7, 1 being to a very low degree and 7 being to a very high degree. The rankings were made in order to make the different evaluations comparable; however, it should be emphasized that the judges' personal interpretation of the three parameters as well as their personal reflexivity over the executive summaries might vary and thus might influence the results.

2.6 The Use of Theory

Given the characteristics of an exploratory study, which are described in section 2.3.1, not much specific literature on the topic of the thesis exists. Therefore, the theoretical review in this thesis also has certain characteristics given to the exploratory nature of the study:

> *"Literature reviews in exploratory research are carried out to demonstrate that little or no work has been done on the group, process, or activity under consideration and that an open-ended approach to data collection is, therefore, wholly justified."* (Stebbins, 2001)

Chapter 4 demonstrates an open-ended approach by encompassing areas of theory which in combination address the research question. The chapter includes theory of Food and Gastronomy, Experiences, Team Development and Team dynamics, Creativity and Problem Solving, and finally, Art in Business.

Chapter 3 elaborates on some of the tendencies presented in the introduction and provides background information on Claus Meyer and the Meyer Group in which Meyers Madhus is a part. Meyers Madhus, represented by a number of key employees, has been partner in the research.

The purpose of chapter 3 and 4 is to justify the choice of conducting an exploratory study, as stated in the quotation above. Additionally, chapter 4 provides the theoretical framework which combined with the empirical findings in chapter 5, make up the foundation for the discussion in chapter 6, 7 and 8.

3.0 Background

This chapter provides background information about the entire Meyer Group, Claus Meyer as food-entrepreneur, Meyer's Madhus, and finally, about the New Nordic Cuisine Movement. As indicated in the introduction, the activities of the Meyer Group and especially Meyers Madhus combined with the principles of the New Nordic Cuisine Movement formed the primary source of inspiration to this thesis.

3.1 The Meyer Group

Claus Meyer Holding A/S, owned by Claus Meyer, holds a number of companies, which in total employ almost 400 people (Annual Report 2010). The latest annual report from 2010 show a positive result of DKK 13.3 million and equity of DKK 26.7 million. Despite the international financial crisis, the key figures show an increase in the result of the group every year since 2006. The increase was most noticeable in 2009 with a 15.9% increase from a modest result in 2008 of DKK 2.4 million to DKK 8.6 million in 2009 and in 2010 with an increase of 19.5% (Annual Report 2010). The noticeable increase in result has happened simultaneously with the entrance of CEO, Tage Nielsen, in the group. Tage Nielsen joined the group in September 2008 (Complete Report, 2010).

An overview of the group is displayed in fig. 3 adapted from the Annual Report of 2010. Since the publication of the report a trust named "Melting Pot" has been established. It was founded in July 2011 under the company Meyer Aps. The following statement about the purpose of the trust can be found in the by-laws:

> *"The purpose of the foundation as a trust foundation is to improve the quality of life and the future opportunities among vulnerable and marginalized groups of people in Denmark and selected developing countries with food, food craft, and entrepreneurship as bearing elements. The target group is primarily, but not limited to children and young people, persons with a criminal record, refugees and immigrants."* (Translated from Danish, Vedtægt for Claus Meyers Fond, 2011)

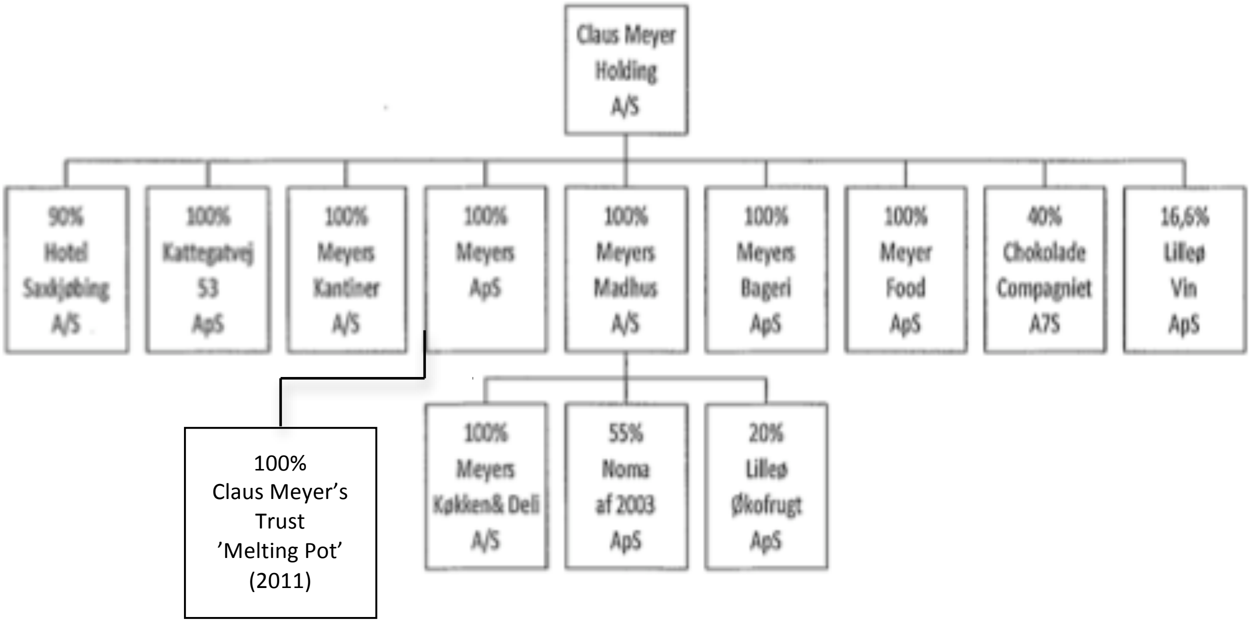


Fig. 3 – The Meyer Group. Source: Annual Report 2010

All the activities and companies in the group revolve around food and food produce, but the activities include research, teaching and communication, regional development, business consulting, business development, food politics, children & food, and charity (Økologisk Fødevarerådgivning, 2010).

All companies and activities in the Meyer Group are inspired by and have a foundation in Claus Meyer's personal motivation to change the Danish food culture. He believes that more savor and quality in food will make a healthier and happier society. Hence, profit is not the key driver of the Meyer companies; creating change is instead the main driving force (Interview 5). However, as formulated by Claus Meyer in an interview: *"Sound business is a prerequisite for the force of change"* (Radio broadcast, Besøgstid på P1, 2011).

Despite an investment policy, which as stated in an article in the Danish newspaper Berlingske, might sound somehow "*romantic*", the business is managed very professionally and Claus Meyer himself and the board is very aware of the brand value attached to the brand 'Claus Meyer' (Berlingske Business, 2007).

The valuable brand is also the main cause for the criticism found of the Meyer group. In 2008 Claus Meyer hosted a number of TV programs about The New Nordic Cuisine where he traveled around the Nordic countries to explore and educate the viewers about the potential of local produce (www.dr.dk). Behind the programs was the joint Nordic project ‘New Scandinavian Cooking’ (www.dr.dk) sponsored by a number of large Nordic companies.

The viewers and listeners’ independent editor at the Danish Broadcast Corporation accused the editorial staff from the Norwegian production company, Tellus A/S, which produced the programs, and Claus Meyer of product placement. Product placement is illegal in Denmark and according to the viewers’ editor, Tellus A/S used the brand ‘Claus Meyer’ to do indirect marketing for e.g. Carlsberg, DFDS and Linie Aquavit; some of the main sponsors of ‘New Scandinavian Cooking’ via product placement in the programs (www.dr.dk, 2008).

More recently and more directly addressed at some of the Meyer Group’s companies there has been some writing about lacking quality in the canteen in the Danish parliament run by Meyer’s Canteens (www.jp.dk) as well as a serious remark by the national Danish Veterinary and Food Administration on the hygiene in one of the delis in the chain “Meyer’s Deli” (www.jp.dk). Finally, at the time of writing this thesis, Claus Meyer and his companies have experienced negative reactions resulting from a TV program about the prison food-project mentioned in the introduction and from allegations about unethical working conditions in the bakeries in the chain “Meyers Bageri” (www.politiken.dk). The criticism of the prison project was initiated by a chronicle written by the victim of one of the inmates, who not only took part in the project but afterwards was employed in the Meyer Group (www.politiken.dk). The core of the debate was whether the Danish society let the victims of violent crimes down while helping the perpetrators through projects like Meyer’s prison project and whether the group unethically used the project for PR.

In spite of all kinds of publicity and opinions, it is clear that Claus Meyer as a person, remains a significant asset for the entire group (Berlingske Business, 2007).

3.2 Claus Meyer – The Food Entrepreneur

The story of Claus Meyer gives insight to his personal drive and motivation that is deeply integrated in all of the companies and activities of the Meyer group.

Claus Meyer was born in 1963 on Lolland, an island in the Southern Denmark. He grew up in a dysfunctional home influenced by divorce and alcohol. He felt love mostly from his grandparents who died respectively when Claus Meyer was 12 and 13 years old (Radio broadcast, Besøgstid på P1, 2011).

Claus Meyer's memories of food in his childhood are bad: Powder-based mashed potatoes, canned hamburgers, and sandwiches for school lunch made a week in advance and frozen. His parents' attitude towards food was based on his father's philosophy of life. Very rational and without passion: The cheaper, easier and faster the better (Radio broadcast, Besøgstid på P1, 2011). Bad nutrition combined with an obsession of eating resulted in severe obesity for Claus Meyer in his young teenage years followed by a traumatizing diet and a sudden massive weight loss resulting in an actual eating disorder (www.bt.dk).

At the age of 19 coincidences took Claus Meyer to the French village Agan, Gascogne, where he met his mentor in gastronomy and life, pastry chef Guy Sverzut. Initially, Claus Meyer left Lolland and Denmark for Paris. He wanted to get away and through friends and relatives he could get a job as an au pair for a Parisian dentist. He stayed with the dentist for some months until he got infected from infectious hepatitis from a needle in the dentist's clinic (Radio broadcast, Besøgstid på P1, 2011).

For recreation he got to stay with Guy Sverzut and his family in Agan, Cascogne. That stay was a turning point in Claus Meyer's life. With the Sverzut family Claus Meyer was introduced to the proud traditions of French cooking and a feeling of belonging to a family for the first time in his life. He experienced the savor, the passion, the family traditions, the produce, and the family meal as almost religious, which changed his perspective on food completely (Radio broadcast, Besøgstid på P1, 2011).

Guy Sverzut not only taught Claus Meyer the craft of cooking but also challenged the perspectives of life that the young Claus Meyer carried from his father. Through his conversations with Guy Sverzut Claus Meyer experienced the sense of a call in his life. The call for Claus Meyer was to change the Danish food culture. He believes in the notion that a good and healthy food culture is a driver for quality of life, happiness, and a better society.

After his return to Denmark Claus Meyer went to Copenhagen Business School and got a master degree in Entrepreneurship and Business Development and simultaneously started his first food related company. Surprisingly to some, Claus Meyer never trained to be a chef, but combined his business education and his passion and experience with food and today he calls himself "Food

Entrepreneur". He considers change as the DNA of his entrepreneurship and he regards it an *"essential duty"* to release potential whenever he discovers it. He always strives to exceed any projects he has done in the past. *"Things have to really change something, that is much more important than making money"* he says (Radio broadcast, Besøgstid på P1, 2011).

Besides owning the companies in the Meyer group and partnerships in associated companies Claus Meyer has published 20 cookbooks in his own name since 1992. He has written several articles, debate pieces and has been the associated author to an educational textbook on nutrition. He has been assigned adjunct professor at The University of Copenhagen where he teaches and supervises Ph.D. students. He has held more than 700 public talks and is active in the public debate on food matters. He was the initiator of the New Nordic Food Symposium that led to the New Nordic Cuisine Movement and has been initiating several projects and activities. He has won several prices for his engagements in various projects (www.clausmeyer.dk).

3.3 Meyer's Madhus

Meyers Madhus (Meyer's Food House) was established in 1999 as:

> "*A place for the wider public, food enthusiasts, and the elite within Danish food culture to gather and experience the thrill of preparing and enjoying a delicate meal*" (www.meyersmadhus.dk).

The activities of Meyers Madhus are diverse but are all based on the mission of facilitating an increase in quality of the gastronomic standards in Denmark. The motto of the house is: "*The shortest possible path to the highest possible savor*" (Interview no. 2; www.meyersmadhus.dk).

Most of the activities take place at the Madhus in Copenhagen. The Madhus provides cooking and baking courses for amateurs, professionals and children as well as gastronomic teambuilding for companies, meetings and receptions, tasting arrangements and parties in-house. A minimum of 3 arrangements a week is executed in Meyer's Madhus (Interview no. 2).

Moreover, some of the employees at Meyer's Madhus work as project managers on various projects out of the house. E.g. they have been involved in among other projects: Cph Dox Food on Film, development of cookbooks for children "MADGLÆDE" and "MADMOD", the research project OPUS, mentioned in the introduction, the pop-up restaurant in state prison

Vridsløselille also mentioned in the introduction, and the recipe service “Mad på Farten” (Food on the Run) in collaboration with Danish State Railways.

Among the corporate customers of Meyers Madhus there is a strong demand for gastronomic teambuilding (Interview no. 5). More than 60,000 persons have participated in gastronomic teambuilding in the Madhus since the opening in 1999 (Meyersmadhus.dk).

Meyers Madhus offers a wide selection of predetermined teambuilding sessions of various lengths. Despite different lengths of duration the predetermined sessions follow a common structure. Upon arrival, the participants are welcomed by one or more hosts and hostesses who serve the participants a glass of wine or the like and provide some practical information about the house.

After the welcoming participants are introduced to the instructing chef of the evening who gives an introduction to the 5 basic tastes in gastronomy: Sweet, sour, salt, bitter and umami. The main focus is on taste rather than visual presentation at Meyers Madhus. Following the basic introduction is a presentation of the menu which the participants are to prepare. The participants are then divided into smaller teams and provided with recipes ready to work in the kitchen for a couple of hours preparing a number of dishes (Interview no. 2).

The way the various sessions differentiate from each other, besides duration and the degree of luxury in wine and ingredients, is the overall theme. There are 3 main themes under which the various sessions fall: ‘Fellowship’ with focus on a social gathering in different surroundings, ‘Competition’ where competitive elements and judging of the work by the head chef has been integrated in the social gathering, and ‘Communication’ where the different groups are to pass on and continue working on each other’s dishes. Despite the overall themes embedded in the different teambuilding sessions, at the moment, it is not common practice to elaborate on the teambuilding elements with the participants. Focus is mostly on the food. Upon request, but very rarely in demand, very stressing sessions with focus on the participants’ ability to cope with pressure are executed (Interview no. 2).

Most of the executed teambuilding sessions are social arrangements, where participants come with the purpose of having a good time with colleagues or clients, but the Madhus is experiencing an increasing demand for more process oriented sessions and would like to develop some new types of sessions to accommodate that demand (Interview no. 5).

3.4 The New Nordic Cuisine

In 2004 Claus Meyer, and the head chef of Restaurant Noma in Copenhagen, René Redzepi, together with 8 other chefs from the Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Faroe Islands, Iceland, Finland and Denmark) developed a manifesto for the New Nordic Cuisine Movement (www.clausmeyer.dk). The manifesto was the foundation for the Nordic Kitchen Symposium that took place on the 18th -19th of November 2004 (a copy of the manifesto is available in appendix 9). The purpose of the symposium was to re-define and re-construct the Nordic cuisine by bringing together various stakeholders to discuss the central values of the New Nordic Cuisine and the potential for the entire food industry to adopt the principles of the manifesto (www.clausmeyer.dk).

The New Nordic Cuisine Movement was a counter reaction to a tendency defined by Claus Meyer as a food culture where the multiplicities of regional cuisines were being embattled by American fast food culture (www.clausmeyer.dk).

From a Danish historical and socio-cultural perspective, the tendency started in the 1960s where the women's entrance on the labor market created a demand for more simple dishes on ordinary weekdays. Moreover, increased public wealth in general and technological development such as refrigerators and freezers meant opportunities for the food industries and the hard working families in terms of e.g. ready-prepared meals (www.clausmeyer.dk). In the 1980s and 1990s foreign food, especially Italian and Asian, became very popular among Danish families (www.clausmeyer.dk). In that relation Claus Meyer has pointed to a lack of proper refinement, processing and not least communication of the quality and stories behind Nordic food and produce, contrary to e.g. the French and Italian traditions, as a reason for the lack of identity and integrity in the Nordic cuisine as claimed by the movement (www.clausmeyer.dk).

The New Nordic Cuisine Movement and Claus Meyer argue that the success of restaurant Noma and other Nordic restaurants have proven the high quality and potentials in the principles of the New Nordic Cuisine. However, what can be called the New-Nordic-Everyday-Cuisine lags behind which is the reason that the movement is asking for higher ambitions from leading institutions and organizations in relation to local, Nordic quality produce and food culture (www.clausmeyer.dk).

In order to create an ambitious new Nordic cuisine the persons behind the movement believed in the collaboration of a broad range of stakeholders in society. In order to establish that collaboration they believed it was necessary to formulate a number of requirements to the food industry and the political system and that was the purpose of the Nordic Kitchen Symposium in November 2004 and the goal of the movement in general (www.clausmeyer.dk).

3.4a Reactions to the New Nordic Cuisine

The New Nordic Cuisine Movement has succeeded in attracting political attention and support. In the summer of 2005 the Nordic Council of Ministers, the official forum for Nordic governmental co-operation (www.norden.org), engaged itself in the New Nordic Cuisine with the so-called Aarhus Declaration and the establishment of the project ”New Nordic Food”. The program was initially established for a 4-year period and in 2010 the program “New Nordic Food II” was launched for additional 4 years.

According to the Aarhus declaration, the purpose of the program is:

> *”…to stimulate the Nordic consciousness about Nordic food and ingredients and increase the collective Nordic identity that can promote mutual inspiration and food related cultural development among the Nordic countries*.” (Translated from Danish: Århus Deklarationen, 2005)

New Nordic Food II is a continuation of the first New Nordic Food program. In the framework program for New Nordic Food II it is stated:

> *“The Nordic Council of Ministers is emphasizing the intersectorial nature of the collaboration which embraces food, culture, tourism, and industries; and that the intersectorial collaboration is to be an inspiration in the countries to initiate own activities or harmonize existing activities, which thematically exploit the potential in the New Nordic Food program (...) The goal is to execute a range of campaigns, each of which inspires new, innovative initiatives in the affected sectors in the Nordic countries. Moreover, it is the goal to utilize the New Nordic Food concept in branding activities”* (Translated from Danish, Rammeprogram NNM II, 2009)

Not only has the New Nordic Cuisine gained political interest but also massive media coverage. On infomedia.dk the leading Danish provider of media intelligence, a search on "New Nordic Cuisine" for the last 2 years returned 913 articles and "restaurant Noma" returned 4578 articles from the last 2 years (www.infomedia.dk).

Since the rise of the New Nordic Cuisine Movement there have been ongoing discussions in academia and media about the commercial potential and the sustainability of The New Nordic Cuisine. Some academics argue that the export potential is modest and that the New Nordic Cuisine is most likely to grow slowly and saturate in the high-end niche market (www.videnskab.dk) while others believe in huge potential in the brand (www.lf.dk; www.bureaubiz.dk).

Thesis experiment at Meyers Madhus – February 11th 2012

4.0 Theoretical Review

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, there is not much literature on the exact topic of this thesis given the exploratory nature of the study. However, section 4.1 gives insight into how food and gastronomy have been addressed in academia before and the following sections review areas of theory that can contribute interestingly to the analysis of the data collected to answer the research question and provide theoretical content to the further discussion.

4.1 Food and Gastronomy in Academia

Food and gastronomy is widely represented in academia and can be addressed from a broad range of perspectives. However, as mentioned, it has not been possible to find any research on the experience of collaborative food preparation. Only a few articles have been found which address the topic of food and activities involving food on a meta-level and by doing that deviate from the more traditional fields that encompass food and gastronomy.

A review of the research areas and projects about food among the Danish universities provides an overview of the way food and gastronomy is traditionally addressed in academia. There are two major distinct areas, which belong mostly to the natural sciences: Food Science and Nutrition. Food science includes a range of disciplines including (www.ku.dk; www.au.dk; www.sdu.dk):

- Food chemistry; focusing on chemical and physical processes occurring in food
- Food microbiology; focusing on e.g. fermentation, human metabolomics, fortification and food safety
- Sensory science; focusing on human sensory and understanding of food quality, food choice, and food acceptance
- Quality and technology in food production and use of resources
- Diary technology

The other major area, nutrition, includes research in areas like (www.ku.dk; www.aau.dk; www.sdu.dk):

- Prevention of diseases and cancer
- Appetite regulation
- Obesity
- Pediatric nutrition and growth

- Micronutrients
- Public health
- Food and dietary habits

Secondly, food has been addressed by business schools where focus seems to be mostly on consumer behavior, branding and consumer self-presentation, which was referred to as the ‘identity issue’ in the introduction e.g. Andersen et.al. (2011), Lützhøst & Saeed (2011), Skov (2010), Grunert & Strand (2010), Storgaard (2009), and Andersen (2008). Other business studies focus on organizational behavior, for instance studying the distinct characteristics of restaurants as organizations e.g. Jessen (2011) and Fine (1996).

Furthermore, food has been approached from the humanities perspective; concentrating on food history and culture, for instance Boyhus & Meyer (2011) have researched in Danish food culture from a historical perspective and also Ulrich (2007, 2012) have focused on food culture in his research. Moreover, in the work of Ulrich (2010, 2012) articles are found, which approach the food topic from a more philosophical perspective. In one article, Ulrich (2012) argues that the meal, understood as the joint action of eating together, has the potential of saving otherwise eroding communities.

According to Ulrich (2012; Interview no. 1) eroding communities are the result of technological development that in many instances have decreased the need for face-to-face interaction in the traditional communities in which people traditionally take part e.g. clubs and societies or on the job. Furthermore, the tendency to praise individualism in modern Western societies has added to the development, he argues. However, despite the fact that traditional communities erode and people hence becomes insecure and unfamiliar with engaging in social communities, people still possess a basic need of being part of communities, which is not satisfied following the current development (Ulrich, 2012). Ulrich suggests that the meal can be a solution to the problem of eroding communities, in fact a solution which is in line with the way modern people like to think of communities. On the one hand, they have a need to participate but at the same time it is important to stay individual (Ulrich, 2010). The meal offers a unique opportunity to unite community and individualism. The two apparent extremes can be united in the way that the experience of eating a meal is individual since two people cannot eat exactly the same. However, at the same time, people share the experience of eating together and can thus build communities around the shared experience of a joint meal (Ulrich, 2012).

In another article, Ulrich (2010) considers how children can benefit from engaging in the cooking process. In line with the argumentation above, Ulrich (2010) claims that all people have a need for social recognition. According to Ulrich (2010), who is inspired by sociologist Axel Honneth and his conception of recognition (interview no. 1), an individual obtains social recognition when he or she is being recognized by other members of a community for contributing positively and valuably to the community. Therefore, social recognition is something one must deserve. In the case of children, Ulrich (2010) argues that in modern society the opportunity for children to obtain social recognition has declined, as most children do not have any chores either in their families or in their childcare institutions. A good platform, which provides the opportunity for children to make valuable contributions to a community, is the kitchen according to Ulrich (2010). By including children in food preparation, whether it is in the family or on in institutions, the children experience in concrete, physical terms to contribute to a community (serving a physical meal to someone) and in return reap the social recognition (Ulrich, 2010).

Finally, some interesting research has been found in the field of neurosciences about food and suggested motivational potentials. Kringelbach (2004) argues that hedonic processes in the human brain caused by primary reinforcers such as taste, smell or touch or secondary reinforcers such as visual stimuli or audiotorial stimuli influence behavior.

Research show that hedonic stimuli as different as music, visual attractiveness, drug stimuli, monetary reward and taste and smell stimuli in relation to food intake all cause activity in a large structure in the human brain known as Orbitofrontal Cortex (O.C). It is argued that activity in the O.C influence human behavior. Studies of lesions in the O.C area of the brain have shown that damage causes massive changes in motivation, emotion, personality and social conduct (Kringelbach, 2004).

According to Kringelbach (2004) the subjective hedonic experience in relation to e.g. food intake is essential for the understanding of human behavior and motivation. However, Kringelbach (2004) argues that the study of food intake *"has been sidelined from cognitive neurosciences"* (p. 815) due to the overabundance of food in the developed world but that it *"should be re-integrated in the mainstream of the cognitive neurosciences"* (p. 815) for obvious reasons. A model proposed by Kringelbach (2004) of the interaction of sensory and hedonic processes in the brain can be found in appendix 10.

4.2 Experiences

The experience of collaborative food preparation is essential in this thesis but in order to understand the characteristics of the collaborative cooking experience, it is necessary to understand the broader concept of 'experience'.

The word experience can be used in many contexts. Experience in an artistic context is largely self-explanatory (Pine & Gilmore, 1998), in a design- and technology context, understanding of the user-experience and user-innovation are buzzwords (Battarbee, 2003; Forlizzi & Ford, 2000), and in business, the experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) or at least a trend of 'experiencification' of products and services (Normann, 2001) has been acknowledged.

In all contexts there is a common acknowledgement of the fact that an experience emerges in the interaction between an individual and the surroundings. This interaction between 'the living creature' and 'the environing conditions' is the point of departure in Dewey's (1934) thoughts about 'having an experience'. However, since encounters between the living creature and environing conditions take place continuously as a "*very process of living*" (Dewey, 1934, p. 35), Dewey (1934) distinguish between the notion of 'experience' and of '*an* experience'. According to Dewey (1934) '*an* experience' has a clear beginning and end and it is something that the living creature is undergoing; that is it involves reconstruction which may as well be painful as pleasurable.

Other academics have adopted the notion put forward by Dewey in their proposals for classifications of experiences, Pine and Gilmore (1998) classify experiences according to the degree of person involvement and participation, Normann & Ramìrez (1989) work with three dimensions of the offering: 'Depth', 'Range' and 'Choice'. A very comprehensive framework of experiences is proposed by Forlizzi & Ford (2000). They present four categories that an experience can take resulting from the interaction between the individual and the environment. *Sub-conscious* experiences are similar to Dewey's (1934) extreme interpretation of experience, they are thoughtless routine encounters, *Cognitive* experiences on the other hand exist when the encounter requires attention and deliberate thinking from the person; it is a learning experience. Once a cognitive experience is learned it can either become a sub-conscious or a *Narrative* experience. When a cognitive experience becomes narrative it has become formalized, thus Dewey's requirement of reconstruction has been fulfilled. Finally, an experience can be *Storytelling* once personal emotions give subjective meaning to the situation (Forlizzi & Ford, 2000).

Thus, an experience is created in the encounter between a person and environing conditions including the context of interaction, social and cultural factors, and artifacts. Some person elements such as personal values, emotions and prior experience also affect the encounter and thus the experience. Depending on the interaction the experience can resemble different categories and prior experiences might change and fall under a new category following influence from environing conditions.

Figure 4 attempts to illustrate the rather complex theoretical conception of an experience as described above.

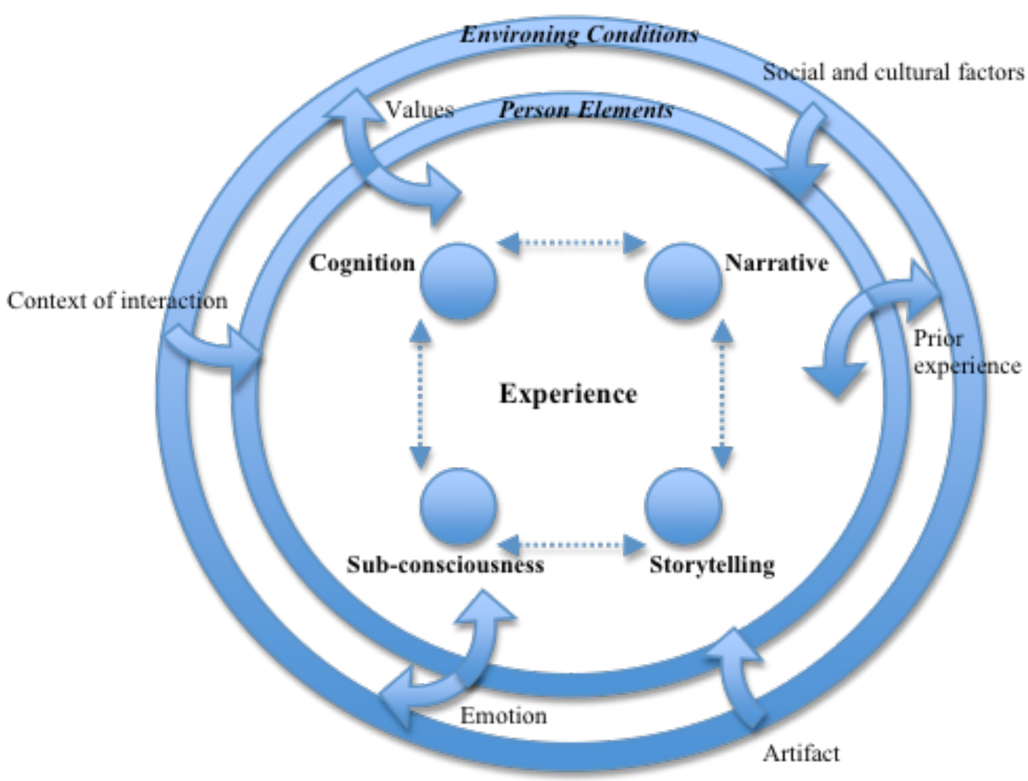


Fig. 4 – The Theoretical Conception of an Experience. Source: Forlizzi & Ford, 2000; Dewey, 1934

4.3 Problem Solving, Innovation and Creativity

'Problem solving', 'innovation' and 'creativity' are all concepts that can be interpreted widely and their interrelation can be discussed (Sternberg & Lubart, 2008). For instance, it can be argued that creativity does not necessarily require a problem that needs to be solved, as indicated by the term 'problem solving' (Runco & Chand, 1995). Similarly, creativity can be interpreted as having no economic importance e.g. focusing on artistic self-expression (Runco & Chand, 1995) contrary to innovation, which is traditionally defined as having a commercial purpose (Ateljevic & Li, 2009). However, considering the above concepts in a strict organizational context, there is broad consensus in academia that the concepts are financially significant. Consensus exists that the operating framework for organizations have changed due to technological advancements, globalized competition and a constant need for change and adaption. Therefore, organizations need to find ways to foster creativity and innovativeness to obtain competitive advantages (e.g. Sternberg & Lubart, 2008; Christensen, 2007; Florida & Goodnight, 2005; Drucker, 1998).

When looking into existing definitions of creativity and innovation the two concepts share the defining characteristics of *originality* and *usefulness* (Mayer, 2008; OECD/Oslo Manual, 2005). Definitions of both concepts often focus on products or services (e.g. OECD/Oslo Manual, 2005) which might imply that in an organizational context, creativity and innovation is something that takes place only in the R&D departments. However, creative solutions to problems, and the ability to define the core problem in a complex situation are also mentioned in academic literature and as will become clear, 'knowledge' and 'motivation' are key characteristics defining all three concepts (Sternberg & Lubart, 2008, Florida & Goodnight, 2005; Amabile 2002). Hence, in this thesis it is considered justifiable to treat the three concepts as interrelated.

As mentioned in section 2.1 in the methodology chapter there have been two traditional approaches to creativity and problem solving, one approach have focused heavily on the individual and his or her personal traits, the other approach have focused more on the cognitive processes involved in creative thinking and in time also social processes that promote or hinder creativity and problem solving (Sternberg & Lubart, 2008). The same extremes can be found in literature about innovation and entrepreneurship where e.g. Chell (2009) and Corner & Ho (2010) argue for two extremes of a continuum. At one extreme focus is completely person-orientated interested in the specific traits of the 'great entrepreneurial hero', implying that the ability to discover opportunities and exploit them creatively is something for the gifted few (Chell, 2009). At the opposite end of the continuum is the 'situation-extreme' where the individual and entrepreneurial traits are completely omitted from the process of innovation and where opportunities are rather created than discovered (Corner & Ho, 2010; Chell, 2009). In between the two extremes lies what Chell (2009) calls the 'interactional orientation', which is acknowledged among many scholars; from this point of view the interaction between the person and the situation is in focus.

Amabile (1982) was one of the first to argue for the need of including social and environmental factors in creativity research and her '*componential framework*' (Amabile, 1983) has been the foundation for a lot of her work afterwards on how to manage for creativity (e.g. Amabile, Hadley & Kramer, 2002; Amabile, 1998; Amabile, 1996) and an inspiration for other scholars (e.g. Taggar, 2002; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993). With the componential framework Amabile (1983) argues that an individual level of creativity depends on three factors: *Domain-Relevant Skills*, which include knowledge of the specific domain and eventually specific technical skills; these skills depend on both innate talent and formal education. *Creativity-Relevant Skills*, which include appropriate cognitive skills, knowledge of idea-generating techniques and appropriate work processes. These skills depend on training, experience and personality traits. The final factor is *Task Motivation*, which is a combination of the individual's attitude towards the task and his or her own motivation for undertaking the task. It depends largely on intrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1983). In her work about managing for creativity Amabile is very preoccupied about how to foster and organize for intrinsic motivation (e.g. Amabile, Hadley & Kramer, 2002; Amabile, 1998; Amabile, 1996).

4.3.1 Problem Solving and Creativity in Teams

In acknowledgement of the fact that a lot of work in organizations is performed in permanent or temporary groups or teams (Jones & George, 2009; Taggar, 2002; Gersick, 1988) some academics have found it relevant to add to Amabile's work by researching in group creativity and organizational creativity (e.g. Hsu, Wu & Yeh, 2011; Taggar, 2002; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993). Woodman et.al. (1993) suggest that an organization's overall level of creativity is a function of some external contextual influences imposed by the broader environment and of intra-organizational group creativity, which is influenced by social influences. Group creativity is a function of the individual creativity of team members (acknowledging Amabile's componential framework) and of the *group composition*, *group characteristics* and finally, *group processes* (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993). It is important to emphasize that group creativity is not just the sum of the creative abilities of the individuals (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993) in fact, Taggar (2002) argues that without proper team processes *"the benefits of putting together a group of highly creative individuals are neutralized"* (p. 326).

The goal with group composition is to create synergy between the individual members. The group should preferably be composited in a way that the individual members complement each other in terms of both personality types and skills (Jones & George, 2009). To a large extent group composition refer to Amabile's idea of domain- and creativity-related skills (1983). In order to be more specific with relation to personality types, a number of academics have utilized McCrae and Costa's '*five-factor model of personality'* (1992) in relation to team dynamics (Hsu, Wu & Yeh, 2011; Taggar, 2002; Haskins, Liedka & Rosenblum, 1998). The five personality factors: *Extraversion*, *Agreeableness*, *Conscientiousness*, *Neuroticism* (or Emotional stability), and *Openness to experience* (McCrae & Costa, 1992) are recognized for being a robust and comprehensive model, which applies to personality studies in different cultures (Hsu, Wu & Yeh, 2011; Taggar, 2002; McCrae & Costa, 1992). Briefly described, conscientious persons are reliable and scrupulous; agreeable persons are altruistic and caring, persons that are open to experiences are curious by nature and eager to hear about new ideas; extroverts are sociable and talkative; and finally, emotionally stable persons are calm, even-tempered and relaxed (Hsu, Wu & Yeh, 2011; McCrae & Costa, 1992).

Haskins, Liedka & Rosenblum (1998) distinguish between two types of teamwork: *Transactional Collaboration* and *Relational Collaboration*. In transactional collaboration focus is only on the task and on coordination of roles in the group, however, the authors argue that the key to creation, preservation, and enhancement of the potential for excellence lays in the 'Collaborative Community' or the relationship between the team members. Like Woodman et.al. (1993) Haskins et.al. (1998) suggest that the collaborative community is influenced by and at the same time influences some firm-level elements and some person centered elements inspired by the five-factor model: *Caring Attitude*, *Creative Energy*, *Calling*, *Conscientious Stewardship*. Hsu, Wu & Yeh (2011) have studied the effect of personality types on knowledge sharing in a group context based on the five-factor model and found that a high degree of the five factors in a group resulted in increased knowledge sharing in the team.

Group processes refer to the way the group approaches problems and the processes involved in solving them (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993). In terms of the stages involved in problem solving, Tuckman's model of group development is often referred to (Jones & George, 2009; Gersick, 1988). According to the model most groups go through 5 stages in the problem-solving process: *Forming*, where the members get to know each other a little and behave politely, *Storming*, where conflict and disputes typically arise, *Norming*, where friendships start to develop and consensus arises about how to go about the problem, *Performing*, where action is taken and finally, *Adjourning*, where the group is eventually disbanded (Jones & George, 2009). Gersick (1988) on the other hand, in a range of case studies found no evidence of either a forming or storming phase. On the opposite she found that groups seemed almost at their first meeting to agree on some norms and a way to approach the problem. After the first meeting followed a period of myopia, where no one questions the selected approach until halfway through the project where the groups went through a 'midway transition' where they suddenly changed their paths radically (Gersick, 1988).

Alternative approaches to group processes avoid looking at stage models but rather concentrate on intra-group processes. Taggar (2002) suggests adding what he calls *team creativity-relevant processes* to Amabile's componential model (1983). Like Woodman et.al. (1993), his argument is that the final outcome of both individuals and the group depend on the intra-group processes. He advocates for 3 factors: *Inspirational Motivation*, which like Amabile's task-motivation factor has to do with the attitude towards solving a task, in his context however, it is about how other team members attitude affect the entire group's motivation; *Organization and Coordination*, and *Individualized Consideration*, where Taggar emphasizes the importance of the group being able to elicit and appreciate different ideas, need and viewpoints (Taggar, 2002). Similarly, Hsu, Wu & Yeh (2011) argue that intra-group interactions are defining for team processes and inspired by network theory (e.g. Sørensen, 2010), and they found that a high degree of *affective ties* contrary to *instrumental ties* have a positive effect on knowledge sharing in a group.

In summary, organizations' framework conditions call for an understanding of how creativity and problem-solving capabilities can be improved. Theory suggests that group creativity and problem-solving ability is a function of domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills and task motivation related to the individual team member of the group, moreover, intra-group relations and processes are of crucial importance for the synergy created in the group, and finally, environmental and organizational elements also influence the performance of the team. Thus, given the existence of relevant knowledge and skills and provision of relevant organizational frameworks, a team's problem-solving capabilities depend on its intra-group relations. Cohesiveness, shared values, tolerance and openness to ideas are drivers of affective ties, which according to theory improve the intra-group relations. However, the risk of myopia and group thinking, which actually is a barrier to creativity, should be recognized following too high degrees of cohesiveness (Hsu, Wu & Yeh, 2011; Jones & George, 2009; Taggar, 2002).

4.4 Arts in Business

In 2004 Daniel Pink stated in Breakthrough Ideas of Harvard Business Review that: "*The MFA is the new MBA*" (p. 21) and in 2006 Nancy J. Adler argued: "*Time is right for the cross-fertilization of the arts and leadership*" (Adler, 2006). Adler's article from 2006 has been widely recognized and inspired what Austin & Devin have called the *Arts-in-Business Movement* (2010). Behind the argumentation of the Arts-in-Business Movement are some structural and economic drivers, some of which were approached briefly already in the previous section.

Structurally, a rapid increase in global interconnectedness has made the business environment more turbulent and complex. It requires businesses to be able to adjust quickly and managers must be able to make decisions fast to remain competitive. Businesses can no longer count on "*strategies of yesterday*" (Adler, 2006, p. 490) and lead time for planning and analysis has decreased radically (Austin & Kirkeby, 2010; Adler, 2006). Moreover, traditional hierarchies in organizations and the market are breaking down and are replaced by networks; and collaborative skills seem to be more important than individual skills (Adler, 2006).

Economically, globalization and constant advancement in technology mean that competitive advantage due to cost- leadership strategies are becoming harder to sustain in the long run. Austin & Devin (2010) argue that managers and engineers in low cost regions like China and India can, and already do, absorb knowledge and technologies from companies from so-called developed economies that used to create competitive advantage through off shoring to low cost regions. With this knowledge, entrepreneurs from developing low cost regions can start up indigenous companies and exploit home-field advantages and limitless access to low-cost labor, and thus, in the long run, beat the companies that broad in the knowledge to the regions (Austin & Devin, 2010).

Moreover, on the demand side, there are significant trends, which Adler (2006) calls "*Yearning for Significance*" (p. 492) and "*Increasing Domination of Market Forces*" (p. 489). These refer to an increased demand for meaning from both consumers and employees (Austin & Devin, 2010; Drucker, 1989) and the fact that organizations increasingly have the opportunity to play a crucial role in society (Porter & Kramer, 2011; Drucker, 1989). Taylor & Hansen (2005) suggest that organizations can be viewed from different spheres. The traditional sphere, with which most research has usually been preoccupied, is the *instrumental sphere* where efficiency and effectiveness are in focus. They argue that during the 1980s and 1990s a new sphere, which they call the *moral sphere*, became part of mainstream business research focusing on business ethics. The most recent sphere entering the field of organizational theory is the *aesthetic sphere* that:

> *"... offers a new look into organizations, and a look at alternative ways of expressing and making meanings that deeply influence organizational interactions, behaviors, and understandings"* (Taylor & Hansen, 2005, p. 1227)

Organizational aesthetics resembles what can also be called intangible assets or simply *intangibles*. Austin & Devin (2010) consider it as beyond-function qualities of products and services, which very well will become the competitive battlefield in the future for organization (p. 62). Thus, due to these trends which have changed the business environment radically; organizations will have to build strategies around differentiation in the long run. However, it is not traditional, functional product differentiation they should count on, rather:

> *"Companies will need to figure out how to convincingly sell beauty, meaning, and experience, and that's going to require that they think about aesthetics with a certain degree of expertise and coherence."* (Austin & Devin, 2010, p. 62)

Opponents of the arts-in business movement are likely to argue that notions of organizational aesthetics and entrance of an aesthetic sphere in business academia are only viable in times of economic prosperity. The title alone of Adler's article from 2006: *"Now That We Can Do Anything, What Will We Do?"* is in today's reality evidence of a different time. Austin & Devin (2010) acknowledge the impact of the financial crisis. They argue that the shift towards increased focus on business aesthetics in some aspects has been slowed but they believe that the tendency remains valid. In fact Austin (Austin & Kirkeby, 2010) argues that one clear thing that has been learned from the crisis is that the old ways will not take us forward. Supportive of the argument that the time is still right for cross-fertilization of arts and business are numbers stemming from Eurostat and UNCTAD showing that creative businesses despite the crisis have experienced growth (Mandag Morgen, 2012) and the fact, that the field is still getting both public and political attention.

Following the review of the background for the arts-in-business movement, the logical question emerging is how the cross-fertilization of arts and business can take place in practical terms. From literature and discussions it appears that art-based methods can be useful on two levels: A *practical level* and a *meta-level*. On a practical level, art-based methods can be used as a means of skill transfer (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Examples of concrete skill-transfer activities include e.g. a study showing that medical students, who during their education received an introductory seminar in arts history, improved their diagnostic skills because they had been trained to look for significant details in a piece of art. The study showed that after one year the art-trained students' diagnostic skills were 25% better than students who had not received art training (Adler, 2006). Another example is how organizational leaders can benefit from theatrical courses where they for instance learn to communicate authentically (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Artistic processes can also be used as metaphors for processes that are crucial in an organization e.g. communication or collaboration (Radio broadcast, Kulturkontoret, 2012, Taylor & Ladkin, 2009).

On the meta-level the argumentation is more abstract; evolving around the notion that artistic creation holds a range of attributes crucial in modern societies e.g. imagination, creativity, and empathy (Radio broadcast, Kulturkontoret, 2012). Artwork is characteristic by to the ability transcend time, having universal appeal and being holistic in nature (Tung, 2006). Indeed, historically, art has existed longer than the monetary economy; yet, it has always had value in terms of human well-being and life quality. It has played an important societal function by being able to challenge the existing and providing images of how things could be different and gives hope that change is possible (Radio broadcast, Kulturkontoret, 2012). Hence, on the meta-level, art-based methods can provide organizations with new perspectives and understanding of reality based on processes of projection, reflection and illustration of essence (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Recalling from section 4.3, it was argued that innovation and creativity emerge in the interaction between human and situation. Thus, the ability to challenge the existing and imagine the future is a crucial quality that organizations can use to discover new opportunities (Radio broadcast, Kulturkontoret, 2012; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Adler, 2006). Furthermore, Cooperrider (2001) with his notion of the heliotropic principle has studied how organizations can work with imagination in relation to organizational change and development.

Upon the presentation of the argued potentials in the cross-fertilization of arts and business there are of cause also some implications. First of all, it should be emphasized that in using art-based methods in organizations, leaders and employees should neither pretend to be or try to become artists (Radio broadcast, Kulturkontoret, 2012). Art emerges because artists are driven by artistic necessity that is an insistent interest in experimenting and investigating a certain idea without profit as a necessary goal. Thus, artists are professionals in working thoroughly, professionally, insistently, and consequently with an idea (Radio broadcast, Kulturkontoret, 2012). It is crucial to be able to distinguish between art in liberty, which arises from artistic necessity, and artistic processes and principles that can actually benefit organizations. Otherwise, artists risk being reduced to fill-in comic figures and organizational participants risk experiencing deep-seated resistance to engage, which will eventually ruin any possible benefits from using art-based methods (Kulturkontoret, Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). In order to benefit from art-based methods there must be a facilitator with profound understanding of organizations as well as the artistic processes (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009).

Another important issue, which is not easily solved, is the problem of transferring learning from high impact one-off experiences into day-to-day organizational life. This issue is not exclusive for art-based methods but for every one-off efforts. However, Taylor & Ladkin (2009) argue that art-based methods tend to be farther away from organizational day-to-day reality than more conventional methods and thus the one-off problem can be greater.

5.0 Empirical Findings

This chapter summarizes the findings that emerged from the collected data in the study. Recalling from the introduction and the methodology chapters, the research question of the thesis project has three guiding sub-questions, each addressed with different methods. In this chapter, empirical findings to each sub-question are presented and in the next chapter the results are brought together and analyzed with the support of relevant existing theory as presented in the previous chapter.

5.1 The Five Dimensions Framework

As described in the methodology chapter, a number of interviews were conducted with different persons with particular experience with collaborative food preparation in various contexts. Through the narratives of the different interviewees the purpose of the interviews was to obtain a more precise and concrete understanding of the characteristics related to the cooking experience and the kitchen as platform for experiences.

An analysis of the interviewees' independent statements about the kitchen reveals a clear pattern of some common perceived characteristics of the experience. These characteristics constitute what can be called *Five characterizing dimensions of the collaborative cooking experience*. During the analysis of the narratives it became clear that the dimensions not only serve the purpose of clarification, the framework can actually be used in practice when working with experience design.

In the following each of the five dimensions is described in detail followed by an elaboration of their interplay and practical use.

Fig. 5 provides a graphical presentation of the dimensions.

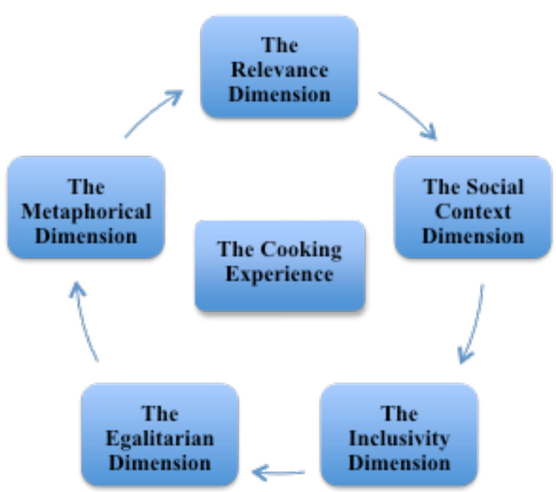


Fig. 5 – The Five Dimensions of Collaborative Food Preparation. Source: Own creation

5.1.1 The Relevance Dimension

> *"Today food is a popular topic ... and it is probably something where the employees actually think you are doing them a favor by pulling them into the kitchen. A lot of people in fact have food and cooking as an interest or at least a point of orientation compared to previous times. There are some research that shows that the Danes' new hobby is cooking" ... "No matter if you are in prison or in a castle we all have to eat; there is something fundamental about it." (CD-rom)*

The statements are selected quotes concerning the relevance dimension of the kitchen experience from the interviews. A complete list of statements related to this dimension can be found in appendix 11.

The relevance dimension of the kitchen experience has two sides to it illustrated by the introducing quotations. Firstly, food and gastronomy are topical today as elaborated on in the introduction chapter of the thesis. However, it is acknowledged that under normal circumstances a topical trend should not be included in a review of generic dimensions of a phenomenon since anything topical by definition is not generic.

The reason the current existing trend is included in the relevance dimension of the kitchen experience is that it should be considered an enforcing element of the other crucial element presented in the introducing quotations, which is the notion of food being universal.

Food is universal in the sense that all people can relate to it and have had experiences with food through cooking or simply by having a meal. People can be more or less skilled, have more less interest in the craft of cooking, and people can have had both good and bad experiences with food, which affect their relation to the topic. Nevertheless, given the basic human need for nutrition food will always be something that all people – at least in Western societies where hunger is not a common problem – can relate to. Therefore, the relevance dimension is included in the 5 characterizing dimensions of the kitchen experience.

5.1.2 The Social Context Dimension

> *"The effect is just really good because you get close to each other in the kitchen – really close to each other" ... "People really get together" ... "[People] get to talk about things they might not have talked about before" ... "Food becomes a kind of binding agent. It becomes the subject of conversation more than anything else" ... "The companies get an opportunity to have a good time together under different settings than normally"* (CD-rom)

The statements are selected quotes concerning the social context dimension of the kitchen experience from the interviews.

The core of the social context dimension is the experience of a stronger sense of community with people, with whom an experience is shared. When the shared experience take place in a setting that is unknown territory to everyone, people are more likely to engage in conversations. Additionally, the unknown territory can create a notion of mutual dependency in turn increasing the sense of community.

This point was strongly emphasized in all the narratives in relation to the collaborative kitchen experience. However, it would be wrong to characterize that experience as something exclusively related to the kitchen platform. Many of the interviewees expressed other experiences from other activities, with the same perception of improved interpersonal relations as result, but which had had nothing to do with collaborative food preparation.

The reason why the social context dimension is still so highlighted in relation to the kitchen experience is that a platform-specific attribute of the kitchen and the kitchen experience emerged from the narratives, which was corroborating in relation to the social context dimension.

That attribute is best described as *intimacy*. In a kitchen context intimacy is to be understood in both a physical sense; the kitchen as a physical setting and in a process context; the specific activities involved in the cooking process.

As a physical platform the kitchen is clearly defined in terms of physical boundaries within which the activities take place. This generates the physical intimacy. First of all, people cannot leave the platform and even if they are not doing anything actively, they are involved in the process simply by being present in the myriads of activities that characterize a kitchen in action.

Secondly, the kitchen is typically designed with work stations where people are forced to stand together in small groups, which also in physical terms add to the intimate and intense atmosphere.

Besides the physical intimacy the activity of preparing food together involves many small tasks leading to the final result. From the persons involved in the cooking process that requires coordination and dialogue and hence the food becomes a natural topic of conversation.

Moreover, it was emphasized as a crucial element, the fact that conversation is actually possible simultaneously with the execution of tasks in the kitchen. Combined with the often time long duration of the activity from beginning to end-result and the before mentioned physical intimacy, this fact is also seen as having a positive impact on social interaction in the kitchen setting.

Finally, to many people the kitchen experience is not related to anxiety not even for the inexperienced. Therefore, the atmosphere tends to be relaxed and positive which also have a positive impact on the social context. This is closely related to the inclusivity dimension.

5.1.3 The Inclusivity Dimension

> *"The kitchen process has everything. It has the brutal, and the macho, and the technical, but then also something about the creative, feminine and artistic" … "It is not like you have to pretend to be someone that you are not. You are not supposed to pretend to be a gastronome. Those who are not skilled – me for instance – can take part anyway and receive help without being explored. Therefore, there is a comfortable and nice atmosphere that makes you want to jump into it"* (CD-rom)

Two main arguments related to what have been called the inclusivity dimension were present in all of the narratives and are exemplified in the introductory quotations. One is related to the broadness of tasks involved in the cooking process the other has to do with the individual's perception of own abilities and perceived requirements related to the tasks.

The focal point in the inclusivity dimension of the kitchen experience is that most people can take part in the activity and feel comfortable and hence most people get a good and successful experience.

As mentioned in the previous section the cooking process consists of numerous small tasks and as indicated in the quotation the tasks are very diverse. Therefore, the kitchen process presents tasks that suit a broad range of personality types. Hence, it is very likely that most people are able to find at least one or few elements in the process that they feel comfortable about. The diversity of tasks also creates a degree of flexibility where people get the opportunity to try out new sides of them selves.

The fact that anybody can participate in the kitchen experience and especially the fact that you can take part in the experience on equal terms with others without being active was a crucial element in all the narratives. Most often the argument was presented in comparison to other activities from the interviewees' experience where limitations had existed. Limitations in terms of physical constraints in relation to e.g. sports or in terms of mental constraints where some people find some activities one-sided and uncomfortable in relation to e.g. outdoor teambuilding.

Confidence, security and the perception of being part of the activity was emphasized as very important elements of a successful experience and the inclusivity dimension of the kitchen support exactly these elements.

5.1.4 The Egalitarian Dimension

> *"[The kitchen] brings people together from the bottom to the top" ... "[Cooking] is an interest and a skill that cut across education, titles and daily responsibility" ... "[People] tend to forget...their levels of competencies, their levels of experience, the hierarchical levels, their titles...when they enter the kitchen and that you can say creates an opportunity to develop something together in a new and different way"* (CD-rom)

A crucial shared notion expressed in the narratives was the notion of a breakdown of existing hierarchies with the result of a perceived equal status in the group during the kitchen experience. People tend to perceive the kitchen as an 'even playing field'.

The egalitarian dimension is closely related to the before described social context and inclusivity dimensions but throughout the narratives, it was emphasized to an extent that justify it being viewed as an individual dimension.

Food preparation skills are not determined by academic education, titles or other social constructs which normally shape hierarchies in e.g. an organizational context as expressed in the quotation above or illustrated in another statement from one of the interviews: *"The CEO can be just as good or as bad a chef as the secretary"* (app. 11).

In this sense the kitchen experience makes room for changes in the group roles. However, as also discussed in relation to the social context dimension any other platform serving as unknown territory could have the same effect.

Despite the above-mentioned argument, the reason the egalitarian dimension stands out strongly as a clear dimension of the kitchen experience has to do with the synergistic impact of the social context and inclusivity dimensions. It can be argued that they are some of the prerequisites for the creation of a notion of equality. Therefore, the intimacy as a specific attribute of the kitchen experience related to the social context dimension and the attributes mentioned in relation to the inclusivity dimension act as the enforcement of the egalitarian dimension, which subsequently becomes a dimension of the kitchen experience.

5.1.5 The Metaphorical Dimension

> *"We considered the food preparation like this: You have a meal ready at 19:30 - that was the deadline. Then we thought whether you are talking about a project lasting for 1.5 years or a project that runs until 19:30 tonight, then you can actually use the same principles" ... "In all possible processes where you are to learn something or are to think different then the kitchen can be a good platform to stage it in"* (CD-rom)

As explained in a previous section, the food preparation process is by nature interplay of many small tasks leading to one or more final results. However, the tasks and thus the process can be arranged in various ways. Therefore, the kitchen experience is flexible to a large extent, which many of the interviewees indeed emphasized. Many found it easy to draw parallels between the kitchen experience and their daily routines and tasks.

The narratives identified two extremes of the metaphorical spectrum. At the one end, the expressed parallels were very practical and task specific as exemplified in the introducing quote, where the participants were to work with a specific planning tool, with which they usually work in their daily long-term project planning. In the specific example they were to adapt the same principles to the cooking process, which were perceived very illustrative.

The other extreme is more philosophical in its approach and the kitchen is viewed as a specific arena for human interaction and learning. The specific quality of the cooking experience in this view is the kitchen's ability to bring individuality and community into play simultaneously. In the collaborative food preparation process, it is possible to work individually or to make an individual decision about the level of participation, but at the same time each individual is part of the community, as described in the sections about the social- and inclusivity dimensions. From the philosophical view, the kitchen experience has potential of approaching a well-known tension between individuality and community which exists on many levels ranging from an organizational level to a general societal context. The following quote about the meal, made by social scientist and Ph.D. Jens Ulrich is an illustration of the philosophical extreme of the metaphorical dimension:

> *"[In an organizational context] the challenge becomes how to get individualized employees to work together in the obligatory relations that a team structure is. That is one of the challenges you work with when you are working with team development and teambuilding, where you try to get those ends to reach each other. In that relation the meal can make that connection at the table"* (Interview no.1).

In combination with especially the inclusivity dimension, the previously mentioned flexibility feature of the kitchen experience creates the foundation for the metaphorical dimension between the two extremes. Awareness about the broadness of the food-preparation process gives opportunity to design the flexible process in a desired direction whether the goal is change between roles in terms of tasks, communication or leadership or something else. The kitchen experience is flexible and can be designed according to specific wishes.

5.2 Student Experiment – Team Dynamics

As explained in the methodology chapter the experiment conducted at Meyer's Madhus with a group of students from CBS was created to address the second and third sub-questions of the research question regarding the influence of the collaborativecooking experience on team dynamics and team problemsolving processes. The experiment setup is described in detail in section 2.4.2. Focus in this section is particularly on the data providing insights on team dynamics. The data include observations made during the experiment using observation sheets, video from the experiment watched afterwards by the researcher, and the participants' own perceptions during the experiment expressed in questionnaires.

5.2.1 Questionnaires and Observation Sheets

The second sub-question of the research question reads: "*How does the experience of collaborative food preparation influence team dynamics*". To answer that question requires an assessment of a given team's dynamics both prior to and after the collaborative food preparation experience and additionally an assessment of the dynamics of a control team that does not experience the collaborative food preparation. Therefore, as explained in section 2.4.2, the experiment was divided into sessions and by the end of each session participants were given questionnaires and observers filled out observation sheets. In order to address the topic of team dynamics, the questionnaires and observation sheets circled around topics such as *group characteristics*, *social atmosphere*, *intra-group conversations*, *intra-group attitudes*, *roles*, and finally *perceived effect of the cooking session*.

As explained in the methodology, the questionnaires presented to the participants consisted of statements related to the before mentioned topics, and participants were asked to rank each statement according to how they agreed to the presented statement on a scale ranging from 1-5, 1 being to a very low degree, 3 being to a moderate degree and 5 being to a very high degree. Copies of the questionnaires and observation sheets are available in appendices 4 and 5. Additionally, a spreadsheet encompassing all the data collected and tables are available on the enclosed CD-rom. In the following the data will be summarized.

In terms of *group characteristics* the teams consisted of 3-4 undergraduate students from different lines of studies. Prior to the experiment the teams had received training for 2 weeks in methods related to business case solving and presentation skills. In the questionnaire for the first session the participants were among other things asked to describe their own approach to problem solving, which also presents an indication of personality types.

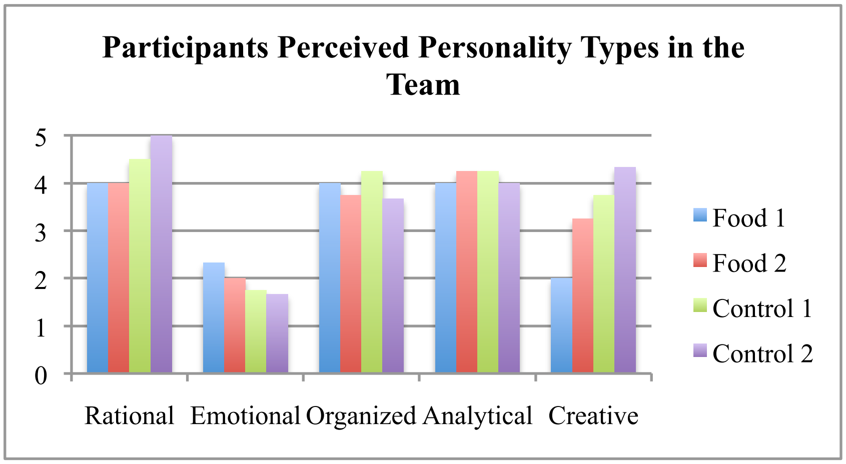


Fig. 6 – Personality types. Source: Own creation

As can be seen from fig. 6, all teams perceived themselves rational, analytical, and organized to a high degree. Similarly, all teams considered themselves emotional to a low degree. Contrary to these characteristics where the teams' perceptions were to a large extent similar, the teams' conception of creativity varied significantly. The two food teams considered themselves creative to a low to moderate degree whereas the control teams considered themselves creative to a high degree. The observers' perceptions of the personality types represented in each team were in alignment with the teams' perceptions (app. 7.1).

The perceived and displayed *social atmosphere* in the teams is considered part of the overall team dynamics. As mentioned in the methodology section 2.4.2-b, individual interpretation of the meaning of words and individual interpretation of 'low', 'moderate' and 'high' degree is a weakness when comparing first of all the results of the different teams' assessments and afterwards to the observers'

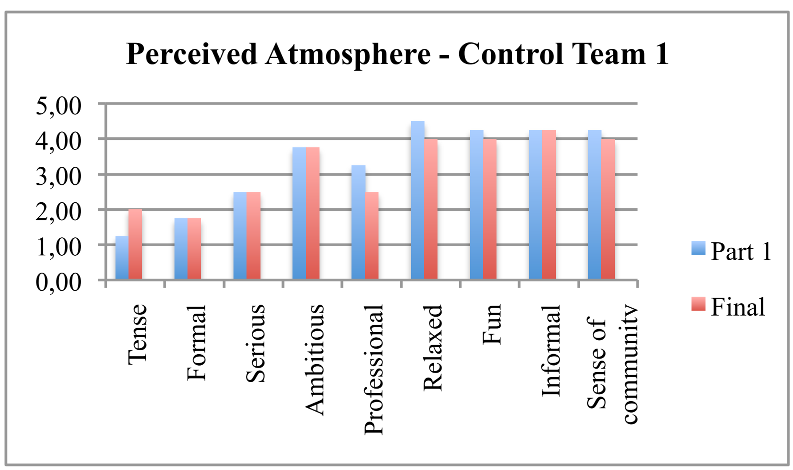


Fig. 7 – Perceived Atmosphere CT1. Source: Own creation

assessments. However, the emerging trends in the results about the team dynamics have been compared after all.

Figure 7 and 8 illustrate the perceived atmosphere of the two control teams. In general, the control teams did not perceive significant changes in the atmosphere in the first and the final session.

However, a common trend for both teams was that they perceived the final session considerably tenser and less relaxed compared to the first session. Moreover, they perceived a small decrease in 'sense of community' and considered the final session less fun.

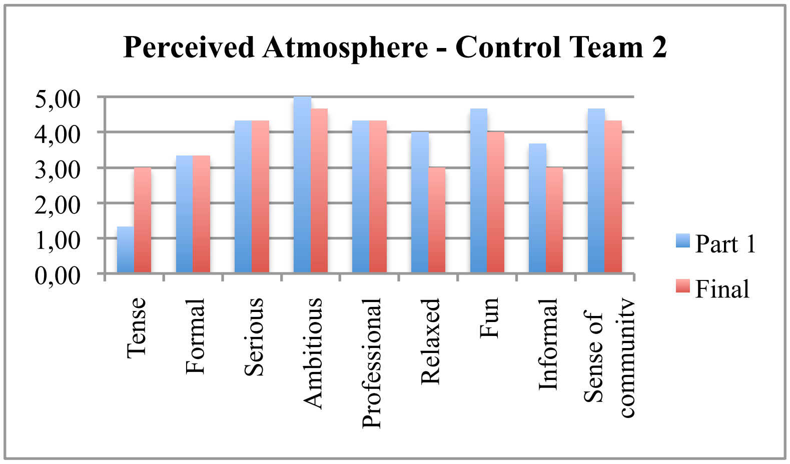


Fig. 8 – Perceived Atmosphere CT2. Source: Own creation

The observed trend is to some extent different from the participants' own perceptions (app. 7.2 – 7.4). The observers experienced a decrease in almost all areas for CT1, whereas there was an observed increase in the ranking of 'relaxed', 'fun', and 'sense of community' of CT2.

The trend for the perceptions of the two food teams was less similar than the control teams. FT1 perceived a considerably more relaxed atmosphere in the final session and no change in their sense of community, which in both sessions was considered high (Fig 9).

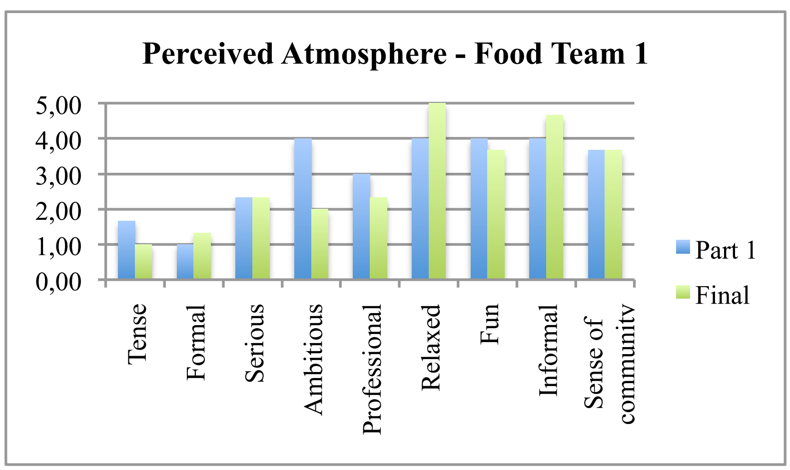


Fig. 9 – Perceived Atmosphere FT1. Source: Own creation

The observers perceived the same trends, however more pronounced, and moreover, observed a higher degree of displayed sense of community (app. 7.2).

FT2 perceived no significant changes in the social atmosphere besides a considerably higher degree of sense of community in the final session (Fig. 10). Observers on the other hand observed a notable increase in the last four characteristics and decrease in the first four (app. 7.3).

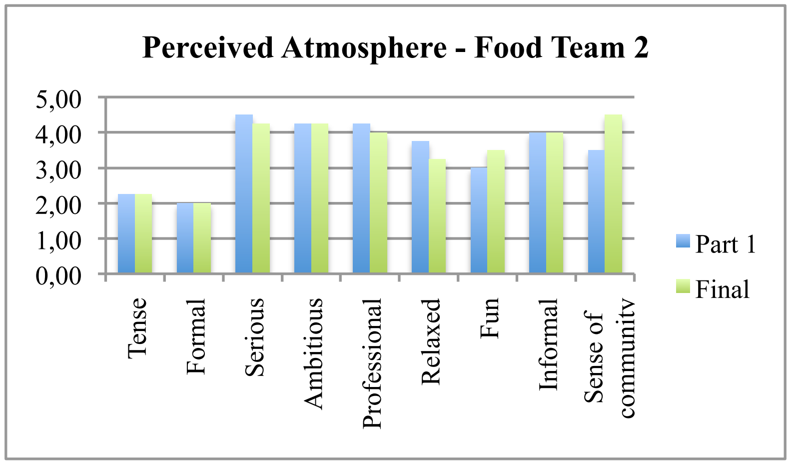


Fig. 10 – Perceived Atmosphere FT2. Source: Own creation

Another indicator of social atmosphere is the *type of conversations* in each team. As can be seen in appendices 4 and 5 the teams and observers were asked to assess to which degree conversations were case-related, non-case related, personal, and funny. For obvious reasons the degree of case-related conversations was high for all the teams in all sessions except the cooking session. However, for both food teams there was found an increase in the perceived degree of personal and funny conversations in the final session after the cooking session. On the contrary, the control teams perceived almost no change in the types of conversations in the first and the final session, except a small decrease in personal conversations.

In terms of *intra-group attitudes* the participants were asked to evaluate their own attitude towards the rest of their team and the displayed attitude from the other team members. The observers also took notes of the displayed atmosphere in the observation sheet. When looking at the results graphically in appendices 7.10 – 7.13 it is complicated to see a clear pattern. At some points the 3 perspectives deviate considerably. In general there was a tendency for the participants to perceive their own attitude as slightly more positive compared to the other team members and sometimes the observers perceived an opposite effect than the participants.

Table 2 shows the accumulated changes in the attitude-related parameters from the first to the final session. The numbers are based on the average change perceived by the participants in regards of their own attitude and the attitude of other team members as well as the observers' conception of the team attitudes; thus, the table captures an overall trend. Negative numbers in red represents a decrease, black positive numbers an increase, and the number zero represents no change.

	FT1	FT2	CT1	CT2
Encouraging	2	-0,25	-0,75	0,33
Tolerant	0	1,75	-0,5	-1,67
Competitive	-2,34	-2,75	-0,5	0,33
Helpful	1	3,25	-0,25	-0,33
Irritable	0,67	-3,5	0,25	1,65
Energizing	-0,68	1,75	-1	-0,33

Table 2 – Accumulated Changes in Attitude-related Parameters. Source: Own creation

As indicated in the table, the control teams experienced a small to moderate decrease in tolerance, whereas the food teams experienced no change and a moderate increase respectively. In terms of competitiveness the food teams experienced a pronounced decrease compared to the control teams even though one of the control teams also experienced a decrease. Also in terms of helpfulness the food teams experienced an increase while the control teams experienced a decrease in the final session. The experience of the parameters 'encouraging', 'irritable' and 'energizing' seemed individual to each team. Compared to all the other teams, FT1 experienced a moderate increase in encouragement and FT2 experienced a significant decrease in irritableness compared to the other three teams.

In order to assess the different *roles* and possible *hierarchies* in the teams, the participants were asked a range of questions concerning their perception of their own and other team members' roles in the teams. In appendices 7.14 – 7.17 the specific evaluations of each team are presented graphically. However, scrutiny of the results revealed that the tendency is equal in all teams' evaluations and in the observers' evaluation. Table 3 describes the trends.

Participants Evaluation of Their Own Role	**Degree**
My inputs were being heard	High
I felt ignored	Very low
I had to take the initiative	Moderate
I was good a summung up	Moderate
I brought energy and humor to the team	High
I worried to feel stupid	Very low
I felt comfortable putting forward ideas	Very high

Participants Evaluation of the Other Team Members Role	
Others appeared eager to put forward ideas	Moderate
Others took most of the initiative	Low-Moderate
Others did not contribute	Low
Others appeared reluctant to put forward ideas	Low
Others seemed to worry to feel stupid	Very low
Others were not comfortable putting forward ideas	Very low
Others were quick on dismissing other's ideas	Low-Moderate
Roles changed during progress in the work	Moderate
Observers' Evaluation	
Dominant	Moderate
Determinative	Moderate
Reserved	Moderate
Ignored	Low
Recapitulative	Moderate
Energizing	Moderate
Safe	High

Table 3 – Role Evaluations. Source Own creation

Based on the results in table 3, all the teams appear to have experienced a flat hierarchy where all members participated and felt comfortable and safe in their teams. However, as indicated in fig. 11, when asked directly how they perceived equality in the team, FT1 experienced an increased degree of equality in the final session and CT1 experienced a decreased degree of equality in the final session compared to the first.

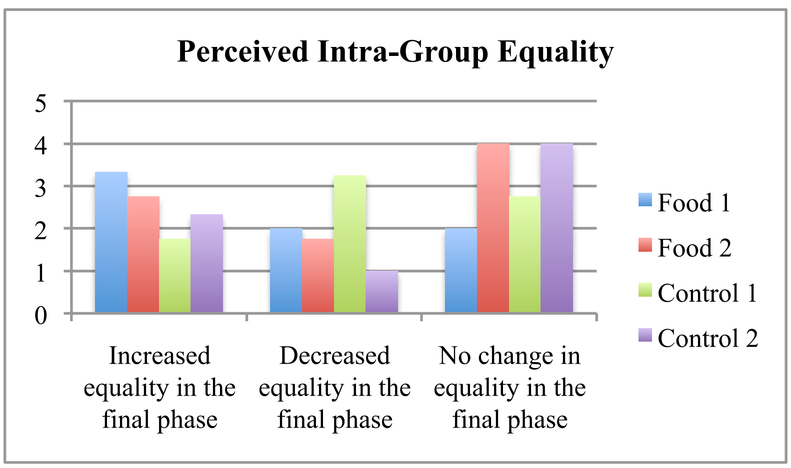


Fig. 11 – Intra-group Equality. Source: Own creation

Finally, the food teams were asked directly about their perception of the cooking session in their questionnaires. Figures based on the results can be found in appendix 7.19. All the participants were moreover asked about their general attitude towards food and cooking, to which all expressed great interest.

Participants and observers express common interpretation of the atmosphere during the cooking session. As indicated in figure 12, the atmosphere was conceived highly relaxed, fun, informal and with a high degree of community although the degree of sense of community was interpreted higher by FT2. The atmosphere was serious, ambitious, and professional only to a moderate degree while it was perceived tense and formal to a very little degree.

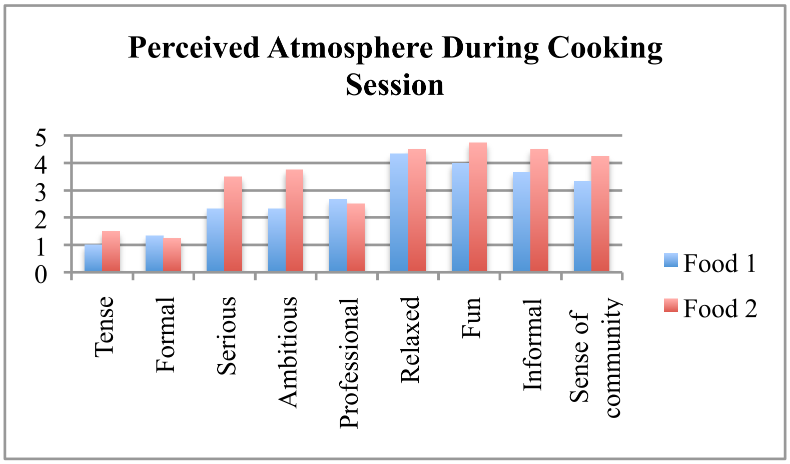
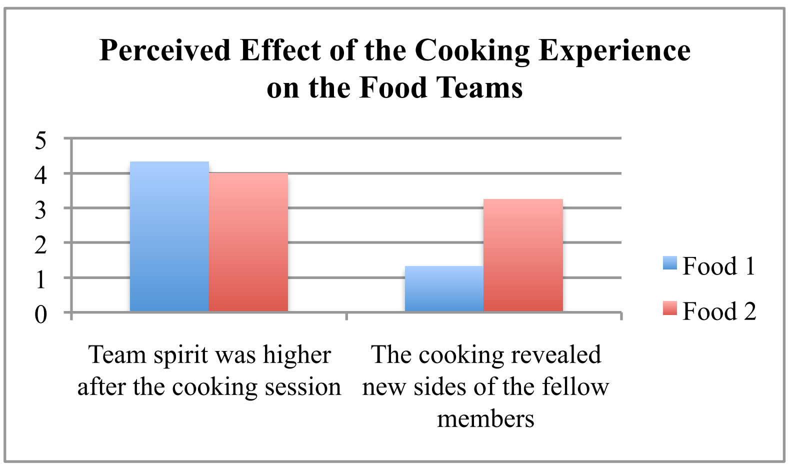


Fig. 12 – Atmosphere During Cooking. Source: Own creation

In terms of attitude in the teams, the results in appendices 7.10 and 7.11 show a high degree of encouragement, tolerance, and energy in both teams as well as a low degree of competitiveness and irritableness. However, while FT2 perceived a high degree of helpfulness, FT1 only finds the degree of helpfulness moderate.



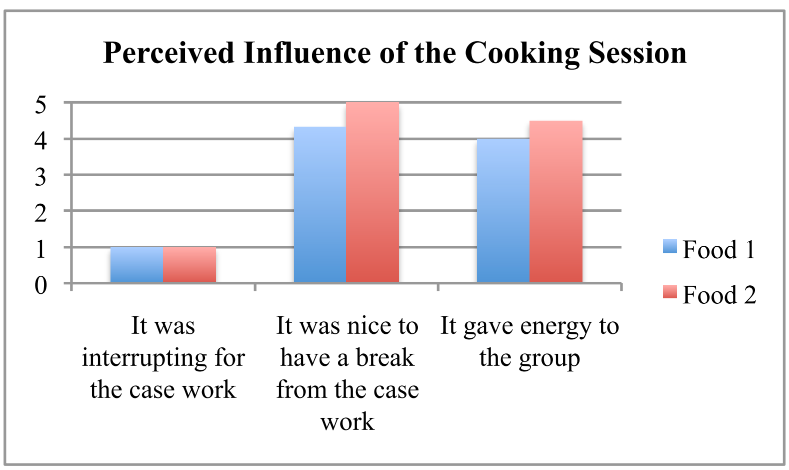


Fig. 13 – Influence of Cooking Session. Source: Own creation

As can be seen in fig 13, in terms of the direct perceived effect of the cooking experience, the food teams agreed that the team experienced increased energy and a higher degree of team spirit after the cooking session.

However, FT2, contrary to FT1, also experienced to a moderate degree that the cooking experience revealed new sides of fellow team members. In terms of equality, both teams found that the degree of equality in the kitchen was high, however, the overall egalitarian effect was perceived as moderate. FT1 found the degree of equality higher in the kitchen compared to the first session whereas FT2 experienced no change (app. 7.19).

5.2.2 Observation Summaries

Sections 5.2.2-A, -B, -C, and -D provide brief descriptive summaries of the accumulated observations of each participating team based on the observers' notes and video.

5.2.2-A Food Team 1 – "FT1"

FT1 consists of three team members. It is characteristic for the team that they find casework interesting and fun and that they like "the sport" of discussion. They argue loudly and sometimes frame their arguments squarely apparently to provoke each other; however, the atmosphere appears genuinely friendly at the same time. Two of the team members argue for one idea while the last member argues for an alternative idea. They spend a long time discussing back and forward and challenge each other by encouraging each other to keep bringing arguments to the table for one of the two ideas in play. One of the members finally takes on the role as mediator, reminding the team that they have to pick an idea and move forward. After some more discussion, friendly teasing and laughter they move on with the solution which the majority was in favor of from the beginning. They appear very self-confidant even though they spend the entire first session discussing the main issue to address in their solution.

As they enter the cooking session it becomes clear that the team members find themselves off known territory with no natural role division and no obvious tools to count on, as when they for instance use brainstorming as a method in their casework. They listen carefully to the instructions from the chef and approach the task humbly but with humor. The teams are to make many dishes, which calls for communication and coordination which at first is a challenge to FT1 who experiences some misunderstandings. As the work progresses, the atmosphere gets much more relaxed and the two food teams start working together as one big team helping each other, daring to taste different things, and making "joint ventures" as they call it when preparing one portion of something instead of making two separate portions. During the session personal conversations occur between the members, which was not observed during the case session.

FT1 starts the final session by reconsidering if the main issue agreed upon in the first session is really the main issue of the case. They end up sticking to the initial problem, though somewhat revised. There is good energy in the team and they handle their disagreements with laughter and self-irony. After having revised their initial starting point, they continue the work with concentration. They have divided the work and every team member is active even though energy decreases by the end of the session.

5.2.1-B Food Team 2 – "FT2"

4 team members constitute FT2 of whom one member has not worked with the other team members before. The team is very structured in their approach and the atmosphere appears very professional but not warm. All the team members participate actively without interrupting each other. They agree to brainstorm about the main issue while one of the members writes notes. They quickly reach an agreement about what they consider the main issue of the case and then talk through each part of their solution. They talk only about the case and thus appear very effective wasting no time. For instance, one of the team members points out as they come to discuss the order of their arguments in their executive summary: "*We'll never get any work done if we are to discuss layout already at this point in time*".

The professional atmosphere disappears in the cooking session and most of the team members express excitement and anticipation about what is going to happen. They look at a table with different raw materials and talk about what dishes they know of, which can be made from the different produce. Like FT1 the team is humble towards the task and start out rather hesitating but as they get started and the two teams become one, the atmosphere is friendly and fun. As described before, personal conversations and joking occur, which was not experienced at all during the first case session.

In the beginning of the final case session, FT2 seems to have brought the atmosphere from the cooking session to the table. They talk about things not related to the case and laugh of jokes the first 5 minutes until someone asks: "*Weren't we actually supposed to have started by now?*" "*Oh yeah, we were*!" the rest reply and laugh. The atmosphere becomes serious as they start working but the energy is up. They agree to split the tasks and work together in pairs while still talking in plenum about central questions. Every team member continues to participate during the entire session even though they get tired as they approach time of delivery.

5.2.1-C Control Team 1 – "CT1"

Of the four team-members of CT1, there is a clear indication of a team leader. The leader seems aware of his position and the other team members acknowledge his role. It becomes clear in the beginning of session 1 after they have finished reading the case. There is a hesitant atmosphere among the members until the team leader rhetorically asks: *"Should I start?"* where after he systematically runs through the case emphasizing the issues and suggesting how the team is to go about it: *"I think we should agree on a structure like we have done it before"*.

The role division is not experienced as a negative attribute of the team. Rather all team members seem comfortable about it as it appears to have a relaxing effect on the team. They are even able to joke kindly about the leadership role. E.g. one of the other team members agree to write notes on a laptop and is joking by saying: *"I think it is good decision for the group to allow me to do the writing if he [the leader] was to do it, the rest of us would soon have a copy of the final result in our mailbox without any participation...haha. I would be nice for you [addressing the leader] but for the entire group, this is better"*, they all laugh about it including the leader. In general no one in the team seems anxious to put forward any ideas, but it is clear that the team leader decides which ideas to work with.

The atmosphere is most serious in the beginning of session one until they have decided on the structure of their work. Then they make a lot of jokes and have fun together but the team leader and one other team member make sure that the team gets the work done. The other two members become less participating during the day; especially one member almost completely resigns from participating by the end of the day. He is walking around checking his cell phone and does not seem very interested.

Especially in part 2 of the case work, the team seems to have lost a lot of energy. They barely talk and they do not make fun as they did in part 1. The leader and the other member who were also the driving forces in part 1, are now doing the work on the computer in turn while the other members sit by passively.

5.2.1-D Control Team 2 – "CT2"

CT2 consists of three team members. The team spends a relatively long time reading the case with a very scrupulous approach. For instance, they use several highlighting pens of different colors during reading, but afterwards all members are very hesitant.

There is not much conversation and they do not seem to know where to start or end and overall they appear de-motivated for casework. After a while they get started and try to organize a timeframe for their progress and one of the team members starts writing notes for the executive summary. Their discussion is primarily focused on specific details and numbers in the case, but the team has not managed to agree on a structure and the main issue to solve before the lunch break. Therefore, the teamwork appears unstructured and halting. There is no sign of conflict in the team but rather a common lack of initiative.

After the lunch break the team appears more enthusiastic and energetic. Just after the break especially two of the team members make jokes with the other control team, but fairly quickly the team get back to work. Two members suddenly begin to take initiative and the work becomes more fluent, still however very detail-oriented without a defined structure. The last team member does not mind making comments when asked; on the contrary he does not contribute with own thoughts. In general the team's energy is up compared to the session prior to the lunch break, sometimes the atmosphere becomes too giddy for one team member, who tries to stay more focused.

In the last hour before delivery, the team becomes more serious and find themselves under time pressure. All three members take part at this moment and then the members seem to complement each other well. However, the team is still unclear about their main issue, which is also indicated by one of the members during discussion about the outlay of the executive summary: "*We need to be more clear about the solution".*

5.3 Expert Review – Problem Solving

In order to assess the problem-solving process and capabilities of each team, their solution to the business case presented in an executive summary was reviewed by a group of independent assessors. The review group consisted of 3 persons with expertise within the field: Firstly, a very experienced, former case competitor running a business advising companies in Denmark and

China about how to run case competitions to strengthen teambuilding, enhance business analysis, and improve business presentation. Secondly, a professor at CBS with expertise within innovation and strategy as well as research management. And finally, a research manager with international experience in commercializing technology and a long track record of publishing and reviewing work of other researchers.

The review group was asked to rank the executive summaries on 3 criteria: Originality, Realizability, and Impact. They were asked to rank the criteria on a seven-point scale with 1 being the lowest grade and 7 being the highest. Each assessor's individual rankings as well as an average and total score is illustrated in table. 4.

Team	Assessor 1	Assessor 2	Assessor 3	Total	Average
Food 2					
Originality	4	5	5	14	4.7
Realizability	7	5	6	18	6.0
Impact	6	7	6	19	6.3
Total				***51***	
Food 1					
Originality	4	6	4	14	4.7
Realizability	7	6	4	17	5.7
Impact	6	6	5	17	5.7
Total				***48***	
Control 1					
Originality	4	6	5	15	5.0
Realizability	6	7	5	18	6.0
Impact	3	6.5	5	14,5	4.8
Total				***47.5***	
Control 2					
Originality	4	4	3	11	3.7
Realizability	5	3	7	15	5.0
Impact	3	3	6	12	4.0
Total				***38***	

Table 4 – Expert Review. Source: Own creation

According to the assessments, Food Team 2 clearly provided the best solution. On average the team scored highest on two out of three criteria and the total score is significantly higher than the other teams. Similarly, results are clear about Control Team 2 delivering the poorest results, even though it should be emphasized that all scores are around average. The results are less clear in terms of second and third best performance. Food Team 1 and Control Team 1 score almost the same, however, Food Team 1 on average scored considerably higher on the Impact criteria with 5.7 compared to Control Team 1 with an average Impact-score of 4.8.

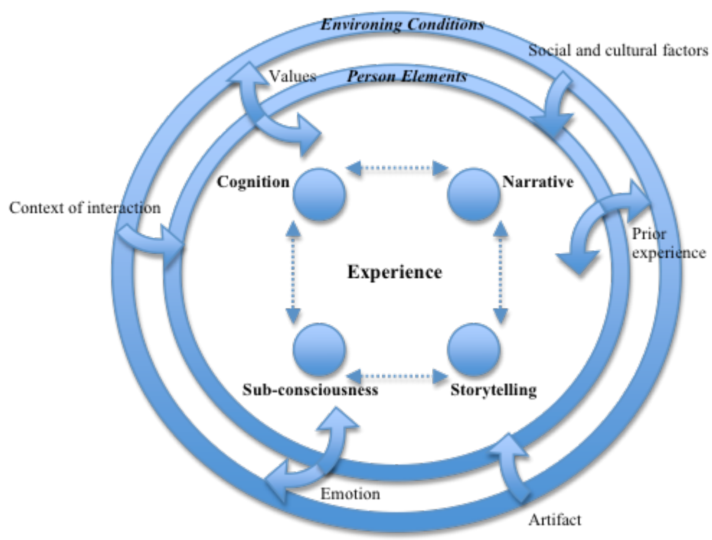
Thesis experiment at Meyers Madhus – February 11th 2012

6.0 Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to consider the empirical findings in connection and in relation to the reviewed theory and bring it into a further analysis which can lead to a conclusion to the overall research question.

6.1 The 5 Dimensions Framework

By defining the 5 characterizing dimensions of the collaborativefood preparation experience, this study has contributed to defining the context of interaction for the cooking experience, which, recalling from section 4.2 of the thesis and figure 4 is part of the environing conditions that influence experiences. Prior to the research the notion of the collaborative cooking experience was based mostly on clichés, which had not been systematically addressed. The characterizing dimensions emerged through narratives in the interviews. But the interviews also captured the person elements of each interviewee, which are also defining for the experience, bearing in mind that an experience emerges in the interaction between an individual and the environing conditions (e.g. Dewey, 1934). Thus, the interviews have contributed to a formalization of the collaborative cooking experience. In the context of the framework in figure 4, the experience has shifted in characteristic from a cognitive experience of the individual interviewees to a narrative experience.



The empirical findings that concerned the cooking experience specifically (app. 7.19) were found to support the legitimacy of the 5 dimensions in the dimension framework.

In relation to the relevance dimension, all participants including those on the control teams, expressed interest and positive anticipation for the cooking session (after ending their casework, the control team had a cooking session that was not a part of the study, while the food teams finished their casework).

The empirical results on social atmosphere and conversations supported the notion of the social context dimension and the characteristic intimacy attribute. As described in sections 5.2.2A and –B both teams felt they were on unknown territory in the kitchen but in the questionnaires they expressed that they experienced that the cooking session gave energy and team spirit.

In relation to the inclusivity dimension, the food teams were evaluated in terms of roles in the team. During the cooking session, both observers and participants experienced a high degree of encouragement, tolerance, helpfulness and energy which are characteristics that support the notion of inclusivity.

The egalitarian dimension was also supported by the data provided in the questionnaires and the observation sheets. Observers found no sign of dominating, decisive or for that matter reserved behavior from any of the participants and the two food teams both expressed an experience of high degree of equality in the cooking session.

The cooking session at the experiment was not designed to stage specific processes as described about the practical elements of the metaphorical dimension. Therefore, the participants were not evaluated in that regard. However, it was observed, that the participants at some points brought in business terms in the food-preparation process, for instance: "*let's make a joint venture on the salad*". The philosophical element of the metaphorical dimension was also difficult to capture in a questionnaire that would support the narratives.

Hence, data obtained from a combination of interviews, questionnaires and observations provide strong evidence for the 5 Dimension Framework of the collaborativefood preparation experience. The framework provides a foundation for an in-depth understanding of the experience, which is useful both in order to communicate precisely about the experience and in order to design future collaborativefood preparation experiences.

A strong interdependency and dynamic nature in the 5 dimensions emerged during the analysis, which means that desired experiences can be designed by manipulating the different dimensions. However, to be able to design specific experiences according to specific wishes and desires it is of crucial importance to have thorough understanding of the specific elements characterizing each dimension and their interplay. The 5 Dimension Framework can contribute as a practical tool in that regard.

6.2 Team Problem Solving Abilities

Establishing a framework to understand the collaborativefood preparation experience in progress was not the sole purpose of the thesis. Rather, that was a prerequisite for the further analysis. The further purpose of this thesis was to explore whether the experience would have an effect afterwards on the dynamics and the teams' problem-solving abilities. In experience theoretical terms, the purpose was to investigate to what extent participants underwent an experience involving meaningful reconstruction (Dewey, 1934). Evidence from the collected data r was not as strong as in the case of the 5 Dimension Framework; however, it is still possible to infer some interesting results.

Before embarking on further analysis of the empirical data, the theoretical reviewon group problem-solving ability and creativity revealed that team creativity is the result of the individual team member's individual creativity, group characteristics (norms, cohesiveness, diversity, roles and problem solving approach), and finally contextual influences. Given the controlled environment in the experiment, the contextual influences in the experiment were not pronounced except for the time pressure and the interruption when the participants were asked to fill out the questionnaires.

Amabile's componential framework (1983) suggested that individual creativity and problem-solving ability is influenced by dominant-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills, and task motivation. All the participants were third-year undergraduates from Copenhagen Business School and the business case was chosen to match their academic level and therefore, all participants had appropriate domain-relevant skills. As mentioned in previous sections, all participants had had specific training in solving business cases and improving presentation skills for two weeks prior to the experiment. Hence, they also possessed creativity-relevant skills. Finally, all participants had volunteered and spend their spear time on participating in the case competition in general and in the experiment related to this study. Therefore, it was fair to claim that all participants possessed a high level of task motivation.

The teams were diverse in terms of lines of studies including for instance International Business, Business Administration and Management Science, and Business Administration and Philosophy.

However, in terms of gender most participants were male and in terms of age the participants were of the same age.

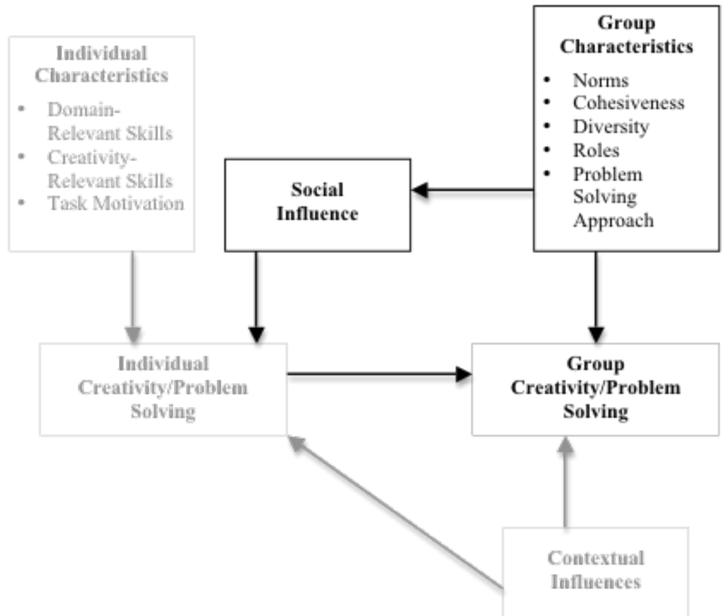


Fig. 14 – Group Creativity Variables. Source: Woodman et.al., 1993

Given that the contextual and individual factors, which were acknowledged to influence team problem-solving abilities, were considered to remain unchanged during the experiment, the dependent variables in the experiment in terms of team dynamics and problem solving were group characteristics and social influences (Fig. 14).

In terms of group characteristics, studies by Hsu, Wu & Yeh (2011) have shown a positive effect on knowledge sharing from a high degree of affective ties in a group and from a high degree of the factors in the five-factor model of personality types (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience). Knowledge sharing or diffusion of knowledge is also related to group innovation and problem solving (Sternberg & Lubart, 2008; OECD/Oslo Manual, 2005). Other scholars (Taggar, 2002; Haskins, Liedka & Rosenblum, 1998; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993) also argue that social and relational characteristics of a group affect problem-solving abilities and creativity significantly.

The empirical data from the experiment addressed the team characteristics and intra-group relations of the teams in the first and the final session of the experiment. Recalling from the previous chapter, the data consistently indicated that flat hierarchies characterized all of the teams in general and that the participants expressed and displayed confidence in participating. Only in the case of CT1 did the observers find articulated roles in terms of a distinct team leader, but as indicated in section 5.2.2-C, the role division did not seem a negative attribute but rather an attribute having a relaxing effect on the team.

Despite the appearing general cohesion in the teams, the data also indicated differences in the group characteristics between the food teams and the control teams. In terms of social atmosphere both control teams expressed small decreases in the attributes ‘relaxed’, ‘fun’, and ‘sense of community’ and a considerably increase in ‘tension’ in the final session compared to the first. The food teams on the other hand experienced no change in ‘tension’ and instead small increases in the attributes ‘relaxed’ and ‘fun’, and FT2 also expressed a considerable increase in ‘sense of community’. Even though the perceived changes in the atmosphere are not pronounced, the data is consistent about the trends (app. 7.2 – 7.6). Consistent data about the types of intra-team conversations showed that while the control teams expressed no change in types of conversations or in fact small decreases in personal and fun conversations, the food teams both experienced striking increases in those types of conversations (app. 7.6 – 7.9). After the final session both food teams replied that they felt to a high degree a higher team spirit after the collaborative food preparation (app. 7.19).

Hence, from these findings in can be inferred that the collaborativefood preparation had, albeit not massive, a positive influence on the social atmosphere in the teams. The increases in personal conversations in the teams and the improved social atmosphere indicate stronger affective tights and personal relations among the members of the food teams.

To further investigate the dynamics of relations in the teams, the intra-team attitudes and the perceived equality in the teams were assessed by data from the experiment. However, in this regard data was not consistent. As explained in the previous chapter, the three sources of data regarding the intra-team attitudes: Participants’ evaluation of their own attitude, participants’ evaluation of other team members’ attitudes, and the observers’ interpretations of team attitudes did not align at all points. But despite the inconsistency, the accumulated average changes from all three sources provided the trends presented in table 2.

	FT1	FT2	CT1	CT2
Encouraging	2	-0,25	-0,75	0,33
Tolerant	0	1,75	-0,5	-1,67
Competitive	-2,34	-2,75	-0,5	0,33
Helpful	1	3,25	-0,25	-0,33
Irritable	0,67	-3,5	0,25	1,65
Energizing	-0,68	1,75	-1	-0,33

The most positive and convincing results were found in the case of FT2 with considerable changes in most parameters. The results for FT1 were less convincing with small or no changes in most parameters except 'encouragement' and 'competitiveness' and the decreasing result in energy contradicts with the result referred to above, where the team replied that the cooking session provided increased energy to the team. The results concerning the control teams showed generally small changes in the parameters and mostly in negative direction.

Given the trend that the control teams seemed to experience a negative development in the intra-team attitudes whereas the food teams experienced neither change nor positive effects, the results indicate that the cooking session did have a positive effect on the intra-group attitudes despite some degree of inconsistency.

The data regarding change in intra-team equality provided most evidence towards the notion of no change in intra-team equality. However, the data is inconsistent as can be seen in fig. 15. FT2 and CT2 both reply that they perceived no change in equality, CT1 seemed split on the issue as 'no change' and 'decrease in equality' have almost equal scores. Finally, data from FT1 showed a perceived increase in equality. Put in relation to the data on the perceived equality during the collaborativefood preparation experience, where both food teams found a very high degree of equality, the evidence suggested that the cooking session did not have an impact on the sense of equality in the casework sessions. This finding should also be considered in relation to the fact that flat hierarchies characterized all the teams from the beginning.

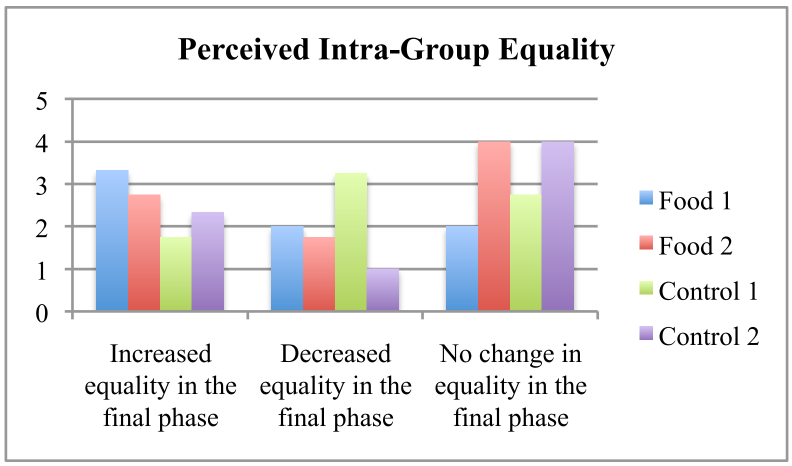


Fig. 15 – Intra-group Equality. Source: Own creation

Overall, the empirical findings suggest that the experience of collaborativefood preparation did have a positive effect on the food teams in terms of intra-team atmosphere and attitudes compared to the control teams, who experienced a slightly negative change from the first to the final casework session. Positive changes in intra-team social atmosphere and attitudes relate to the intra-team relations and affective ties and should according to theory influence team problem solving abilities positively.

To evaluate the teams' problem-solving abilities an expert review group reviewed the teams' solutions to the business case issue which were presented in one-page executive summaries. Recalling table 4 from the previous chapter, FT2 scored significantly higher than the remaining teams and CT2 significantly lower. FT1 and CT1 were almost equal in scores, with FT1 scoring just above CT1.

Compared to the other teams, FT2 with the highest review score experienced both the highest degree of sense of community in the final session and an internal increase compared to the first session (app. 7.3). The team also experienced significant, positive changes in attitudes compared to the remaining teams (Table 7.11). CT2, who scored lowest among the teams, seemed according to the summary in sections 5.2.2-D to have difficulties in terms of a common problem-solving approach, roles and initiatives relating to the intra-team relations. These results support the theory suggesting that social relations and affective ties have a positive effect on team problem-solving abilities.

The influence of the collaborativefood preparation experience however, is not clear considering the close run between FT1 and CT1 as well as the results from the effect on intra-team attitudes in FT1 which were not profound. Interestingly the resultssay that FT2 appeared to have experienced noteworthy more positive effects of the collaborativefood preparation experience compared to FT1 in terms of both intra-team atmosphere and attitudes and yet scored significantly highest of all teams in terms of problem-solving abilities.

As mentioned already in sections 2.4.2-b in the methodology chapter, an additional food team as well as one more control team would have made interpretation and generalizations stronger. However, despite some weaknesses addressed through the analysis, the data indicate that the experience of collaborativefood preparation did in fact have a positive effect on social relations in the food teams. Moreover, theory supported by the empirical findings regarding especially FT2 and CT2 suggest that relational ties do influence team problem-solving capabilities. Hence, it can be inferred that the collaborativefood preparation experience can have positive effect on team problem- solving capabilities.

A closer look on the data concerning the collaborative food preparation (app. 7.19) shows that FT2 generally evaluated the collaborativefood preparation experience more positively than FT1. As mentioned previously in this section, FT1 also evaluated the collaborativefood preparation experience positively, but FT2 consistently ranked the parameters higher. Moreover, as described in sections 5.2.2A and –B, FT2 expressed more enthusiasm and anticipation in the beginning of the cooking session. These trends in relation to the above mentioned paradox with almost equal scores between FT1 and CT1 indicate that a team's motivation and enthusiasm towards the collaborativefood preparation influence the subsequent effects. This indication has not been scrutinized further in this thesis but could be a very interesting issue to follow up on.

Thesis experiment at Meyers Madhus – February 11th 2012

7.0 Conclusion

Food and gastronomy are popular topics today. TV-broadcasts about food have radically increased and sales of cookbooks seem unaffected despite the financial crisis. The New Nordic Cuisine Movement has placed the Scandinavian countries with Denmark and restaurant Noma in front on the gastronomic world map along with reputable cuisines like the French and Italian. Moreover, the movement has succeeded in attracting not only media interest but also politicians and academia.

While business school academics have been mostly interested in the commercial brand value of the New Nordic Cuisine and related topics such as consumer behaviour and national and regional branding, other studies and private business activities have focused on the processes involved in food preparation and on possible effects of food and savour on human beings. This kind of thinking can be interesting in an organizational context on level with the emerging interest in organizational aesthetics and integration of arts and business. Organizations today are faced with radical changes in framework conditions that challenge traditional strategies to competitive advantages; organizations and business leaders are forced to think alternatively in terms of strategies to improve innovativeness and competitiveness.

The Meyer Group has been a frontrunner in food-based initiatives, among others the prison restaurant in Vridsløselille with the purpose of the re-socialization of inmates and the development project in Bolivia. Among other activities, Meyer's Madhus under the Meyer Group is engaged in gastronomic teambuilding for organizations and experience great demand. Indeed, there are many suppliers of such events. However, the alleged effect of collaborativefood preparation has never been systematically explored and the notion remains based on undocumented clichés. That is what this study aims to change by addressing the following research question:

How does collaborativefood preparation influence team dynamics in terms of problem solving capabilities?

9 interviews have been conducted with persons with different experiences with collaborativefood preparation. From the interview narratives emerged the Five Dimension Framework defining the characterizing interacting context of the collaborativefood preparation experience. *The Relevance Dimension* encompasses the topical and universal nature of food. The *Social Context Dimension*

is defined by the specific attribute of intimacy in the kitchen which provides a unique platform for improvement of relational ties. The *Inclusivity Dimension* relates to the broadness of tasks involved in the food- preparing process, which makes room for a broad range of personality types to engage. The *Egalitarian Dimension* refers to a notion of equality that dominates the experience of collaborativefood preparation. Finally, the *Metaphorical Dimension* represents the flexibility in the food- preparation processes which makes it possible to draw practical or philosophical parallels to and from the food- preparation processes to other processes. The framework provides a foundation for an in-depth understanding of the experience which is useful both in order to communicate precisely about the experience and in order to design future experiences.

Additional to the interviews, an experiment was conducted at Meyers Madhus with four teams of CBS undergraduate students. The teams were presented to a Havard Brief Case about global innovation and were to present a solution in a one-page executive summary; the presented solutions were assessed by an expert- review group. The experiment was divided in sessions. All teams had two casework sessions and two food teams also had a third session of collaborativefood preparation in between the two casework sessions. During the experiment the participants were filmed and evaluated by present observers according to team characteristics and intra-team dynamics. Additionally, the participants filled out questionnaires focusing on the same issues after each session.

The empirical data from the experiment supported the Five Dimension Framework of the collaborativefood preparation experience and hence provide an answer to the first sub-question of the thesis:

"What are the characteristics of collaborativefood preparation experience?"

Moreover, data provided evidence that the food teams experienced a positive effect from the collaborativefood preparation experience in terms of intra-team atmosphere and attitudes compared to the control teams who experienced a slightly negative change in those attributes in the final case session compared to the first. The collaborativefood preparation had a positive effect on the social relations and affective ties among the members of the food teams, however, more profound in one of the teams. Thus, an answer was provided to the second sub- question:

"How does the experience of collaborativefood preparation influence team dynamics?"

Finally, it was found that the team experiencing the most positive effect in terms of changes in team dynamics also scored a considerably better result in the expert assessments. Therefore, the empirical data supported theory arguing that personal relations and affective ties in the teams had a positive effect on the teams' problem-solving capabilities. Hence, an answer to the third sub-question:

"How do team dynamics influence a team's process of solving a complex business case?"

In relation to the overall research question it is argued that empirical data provided solid evidence that the collaborativefood preparation experience is characterized by five distinct dimensions being: Relevance, Social Context, Inclusivity, Egalitarian, and Metaphorical. The collaborativefood preparation experience can influence team dynamics in terms of intra-team social atmosphere and intra-team attitudes which are correlated with relational affective ties. Stronger affective ties and personal relations among team members have a positive effect on problem solving capabilities.

Thesis experiment at Meyers Madhus – February 11th 2012

8.0 Implications and Opportunities for Further Research

Given the exploratory nature of the study with limited prior research of the specific experience of collaborativefood preparation, this thesis should be regarded a pilot study focusing on a corner of an extensive area and would as already forecasted in the methodology benefit from concanation.

The strongest evidence was found regarding the Five Dimension Framework. The framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the collaborativefood preparation experience, and it gives it an attribute of generalizability. Further research might contribute to sophistication and cutting-edge results but at this point, it is already argued, that the framework can be utilized in other contexts involving the experience of collaborative food preparation which was not included in this thesis.

The results regarding team dynamics and problem-solving capabilities emerging from the experiment were interesting and the systematic approach provided legitimacy. However, a larger sample size would have made the indications stronger. Despite inconsistency at some points in the data, the results are interesting and thus worth further investigation. An unexpected finding emerging from the analysis was the possible influence of participant enthusiasm in the kitchen on subsequent activities. This is regarded as an opportunity for special attention in further research.

The data in this study was obtained immediately before and after the collaborative food preparation experience, hence, the emerging effects are immediate. As with other one-off efforts, long-term subsequent effects are more interesting than immediate effects but also harder to capture. Especially in an organizational context would documented long-term effects provide legitimacy to the effort. This study did not capture the long-term effect of the collaborative food preparation.

In an organizational and academic context, the study is considered a contribution to the notion of organizational aesthetics and the arts-in-business movement. It is argued that the collaborative food preparation process is on level with art-based methods considered previously. The discussion is very relevant, not only does it exist in academia as described in previous chapters, it also draws public attention for instance in radio broadcasts like "*The Arts Gain Growth in Business Life*" and "*The Culture Lives in Organizations*" (Translated from Danish, Radio broadcast, Kulturkontoret, 2012).

According to the arts-in-business proponents, arts-based methods can influence organizations on a practical and metalevel. Arguably, collaborative food preparation is definitely on level with art-based methods on the practical level. Given the many processes involved, skill transfer is obvious. In fact, this was mentioned in several of the dimensions and emphasized in the metaphorical dimension. The collaborative food preparation experience could even be argued to have an advantage compared to other methods considering the issue of participant resistance that was mentioned in relation to art-based methods, and which was also mentioned in some of the interviews. As described in the relevance dimension and the inclusivity dimension of the collaborative food preparation experience, participants might regard food-related activities less distant compared to alternative methods.

On the metalevel, the art-based methods were claimed to possess attributes such as creativity and ability to transcend time, to challenge the existing and imagine the future; qualities organizations and leaders envy in the race for innovation. But the same characteristics can be found in the world of gastronomy.

The New Nordic Cuisine is a perfect example of challenging the existing and was ridiculed by many in the beginning (Frank, 2012). Newspaper interviews with master chefs reveal that drivers of gastronomic development are similar to what was called artistic necessity in previous chapters. In case of Restaurant NOMA the head chef explains that the sense of time and place is the foundation of his menus. During the start-up phase he got a lot of advice but explains that the majority was of no use because it "*pulled in a direction of something already existing*" (Frank, 2012). He also gives examples of concrete methods he uses to challenge himself and keep renewing the guests' gastronomic experience. For instance: "*14 dishes, all ingredients more than three years old*", "*21 dishes, all ingredients less than three weeks old*" or "*maximum 3 ingredients in each dish*" (Frank, 2012).

Another well-recognized Danish chef, Henrik Boserup, works under a specific dogma. As a reaction to the snobbery he found in the French cuisine in which he was trained, Henrik Boserup wanted to pay tribute to the sensuousness of cooking and take away the notion of cooking as a science. He works to remove the superfluous layers of cooking focusing on the basics of ingredients (Eriksen, 2009).

Thus, the argument is that gastronomy can have the same inspirational effect on organizations at the metalevel as other art-based methods.

Moreover, the food topic as already argued has a distinct relevance today. The trends such as "Yearning for significance" and the notion of shared value and the aesthetic sphere of business that were mentioned alongside the economic and structural conditions influencing organizations today are natural in a food context. Sociologists claim that food has become one of current time's greatest battlefields forvalue politics. Hence, food like art, has a significant societal relevance because it reflects contemporary values in society. And it may be that food plays a publicly more popularized role than art due to the universal nature of food.

Therefore, it seems fair to propose that food and food preparation is included in further research within art-based methods used in organizations as a means to improve organizational aesthetics and subsequent innovation. This thesis has provided an overview of empirical evidence of aesthetic effects from a food-based method; but more research and empirical evidence is needed to legitimize and understand the field that Austin & Devin (2010) call aesthetic innovation.

Furthermore, additional research within the topic of potentials of food- and meal related activities in a broad context are welcome. Kringelbach (2004) found evidence of motivational effects from savor on the individual and Ulrich (2012, 2010) and this thesis project suggest profound social impact on a group from collaborative food preparation and collective eating. These potentials are interesting and gives food for thought for the possible role food and gastronomy could possibly play in the future in a range of contexts for instance in hospitals, schools, and organizations.

> *"If you succeed to open the gate way to a person's soul or sensuousness through savor, then it is my allegation and belief that the person will remain open to many things – not just in relation to the food – but many things"*
>
> - Claus Meyer (Radio broadcast, Besøgstid på P1, 2011)

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