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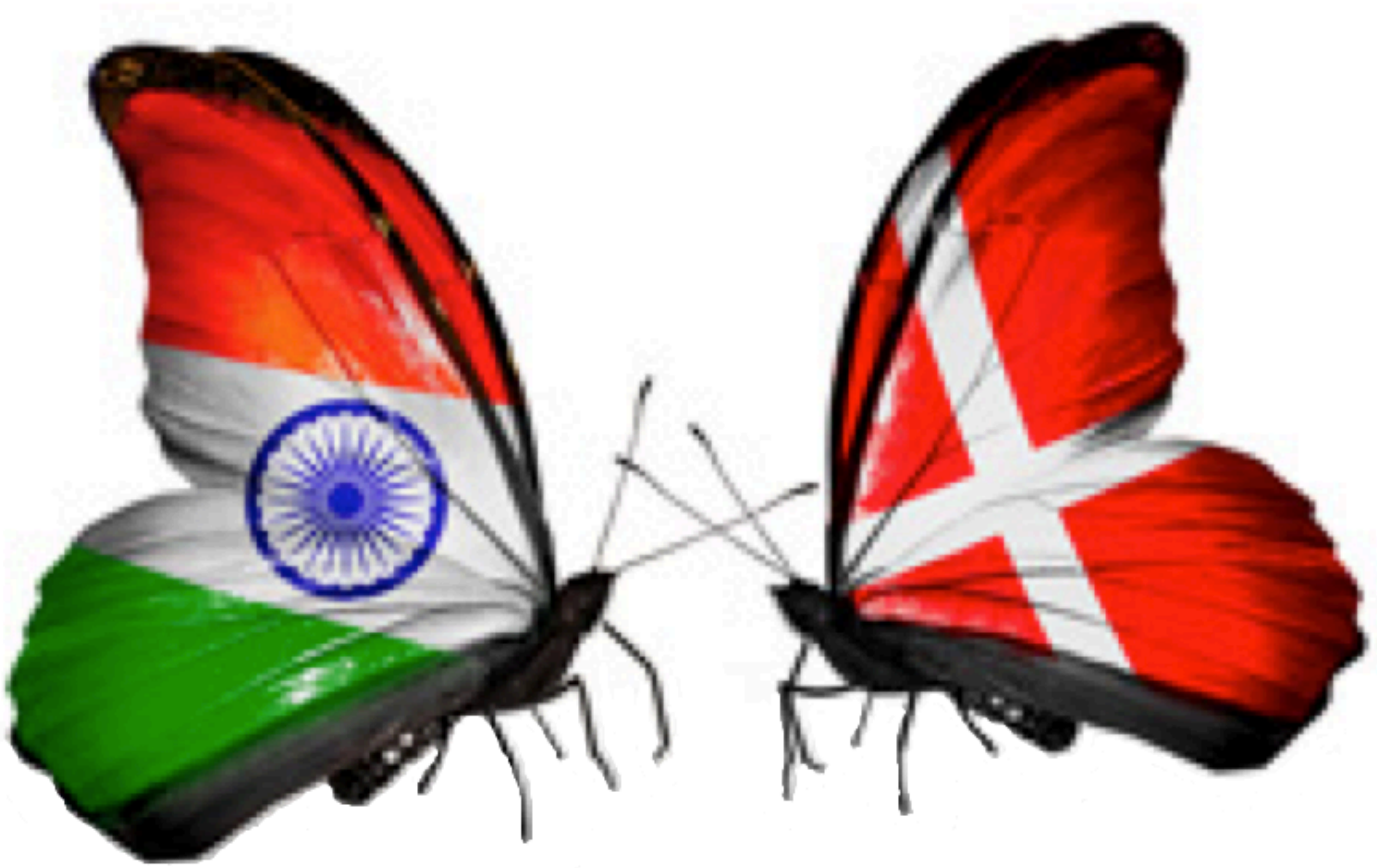
Master Thesis

Constructive criticism across borders

A study of an evaluation process in a distributed team



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1.0 Abstract

In today's globalized world one of the topics, which is currently debated within global organizations, is related to distributed teams and their challenges. The purpose of this thesis is to examine how geographical distance challenges such teams and in particular the evaluations of their tasks. The case study is based on ITSS, a department in Novo Nordisk, which is divided between Denmark and India with a mix of employees and management team on both locations. ITSS is facing many challenges which distributed teams all over the world deal with on a daily basis; these challenges include communication and cultural differences. Even though this thesis focuses solely on ITSS, the results can be broadened to become useful in other studies of distributed teams, and perhaps other organisations can learn from the findings.

The Danish manager in ITSS noticed that there was a significant difference between the written evaluations that the team received and the opinions that he was able to gather from the task requesters. Therefore the management team decided to implement evaluation meetings in an effort to increase the validation of the evaluations. Due to the problems with the differences between the written evaluations and the statements from the task requesters I became curios as to why. Put together with the fact that this is a distributed team constituted to the research question; does the geographical distance challenge the evaluations in ITSS?

Throughout the data collection process for this thesis, three main types of empirical data were collected. The data consists of a semi-structured interview, observations including casual conversations, and documents. The data was validated through the process of data triangulation. The empirical data was analysed through the use of the hermeneutical approach as a theory of science method. The analysis section is divided into two parts, where the first part examines the technical part of communication and the medias used during the evaluation process. These medias are rated according to the media richness theory in an effort to figure out, if the medias used were rich enough for the intended use. The analysis showed that the written evaluations were not rich enough to stand alone in the evaluation process. The evaluation meetings did improve the problems, however it did not solve it completely.

The second part of the analysis examines the motivation behind the interactions and communication. In this section the mutual positive distinctiveness model was used to determine the motivation towards cross-national learning within the team. This part of the analysis showed that several factors influence the motivation, and there were some of these where ITSS could up their efforts. Overall it showed that ITSS could benefit from a better understand of each other's culture, norms, values, and ways of working. This would increase motivation to engage across their differences and in the end it would lead to improved cross-national learning.

The conclusion to the research question is that the geographical distance does not challenge the specific evaluation process, however the distance challenges the communication during the evaluation process, the outcome of the evaluations, and what is expected from the evaluations. I therefore recommend that ITSS should invest more time and effort their cross-national learning and therefore reap the benefits from their differences. Additionally ITSS should modify the written evaluation to include a clearer definition of the factors that determines the score. This would create a stronger basis for the evaluation meetings, which would lead to a more constructive use of the meetings and thereby give ITSS a fairer image of the actual service satisfaction.

Keywords: Distributed teams, communication, culture, mutual positive distinctiveness, constructive criticism, evaluations.

2.0 Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Thomas Tøth. Throughout the process of this thesis he has allowed me to find my own path while guiding me in the right direction. Thomas always had an answer to all of my questions and was ready with counter questions to evoke my curiosity. I would also like to thank Novo Nordisk and the employees who helped me in my quest for data that would answer my research question. Without their participation this research could not have been successfully completed.

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3.0 Introduction

With the increase in globalisation and the easy communication flow across borders companies are constantly evolving and gradually becoming global companies. Companies are globally expanding, not only where they sell their products, but where they operate, research and develop new products. "*Knowledge is the foundation for progress*" (Christensen, 2010, p. 11). Christensen (2010) argue how knowledge is an essential part of organisational development and in order to evolve the communication processes related to knowledge sharing is essential (Christensen, 2010). Within global organisations it is essential that communication work effectively across the geographical borders, taking into account issues such as language barriers and cultural difference. In order for companies to achieve effective communication they need to create a common ground, which can be established through open communication related to these differences (Cramton & Hinds, 2005). The question is; does companies have the tools and the knowledge that can help them in order to establish effective communication in these settings.

Many global organisations are struggling with their cross-national communication flow, but what about the communication that is not just a transfer of data? What happens when we have to evaluate people, or give constructive criticism across borders? McKenna (2006) argues that; "*hearing is not the same as listening*" (McKenna, 2006, p. 184). Communication is a two-way street where it is important for both parties to actively engage and participate, meaning that they have to actively listen to communication and not just hear the words; this also applies to the written communication. McKenna (2006) suggests that the receiver of what is being communicated needs to be invested in the communication process for it to be successful; this also applies when giving constructive criticism (McKenna, 2006).

Feedback and constructive criticism is one of the ways in which organisations can learn and grow. It is therefore an important part of the everyday life of the organisation, however, in order for the organisation to learn from the feedback they receive, the first step is for them to not just hear but listen and understand. In Novo Nordisk the management team has put an effort into letting the employees know that feedback is a healthy and appreciated part of their operation. The employees are encouraged to listen to feedback and handle it as a positive helping hand in an effort to improve their work, rather than seeing it as a negative critique. In theory this sounds like a beneficial approach towards feedback in evaluations, however, the question is if it is just as beneficial in practice especially if cross-national factors are involved?

3.1 The background of Novo Nordisk

Novo Nordisk was chosen as the case business for several reasons. The main reason was that ITSS is a distributed team that are experiencing some of the challenges with communicating across borders. ITSS is a department that I have been a part of for some years now and I therefore have some knowledge about how the department functions. This has been an advantage to this thesis due to the fact that I through my experience with the department have achieved a deeper understanding of the unspoken rules and way of doing things. Additionally Novo Nordisk is a large company that operates is many countries and I would therefor be interesting to investigate if it was possible to extend the results of this thesis to other companies.

Novo Nordisk is a Danish pharmaceutical company in constant development. The company roots back to the early 1920s, and is one of the leading companies within the field of diabetes treatment worldwide and their products are sold in more than 180 countries. Nordisk Insulinlaboratorium was founded in 1923 and Novo Terapeutisk Laboratorium in 1925. In 1989 the two companies were merged and formed Novo Nordisk. The company's main focus is on production, development and research within products for diabetes patients. Additionally, Novo Nordisk fabricates products for haemophilia, growth hormones and oestrogenic hormones. They have a large range of products, which according to themselves, constitutes to a big part of their success (Novo Nordisk, 2015). Novo Nordisk is a large Danish based company with an estimated value of 2,3 trillion Danish kroner (estimated by Citi bank in 2015) and in 2014 they had revenue of 88,8 billion Danish kroner. Within the insulin industry, Novo Nordisk is a market leader with a market share of approximately 47% of the global market (Seerup, 2015).

Novo Nordisk employs approximately 40.300 people in 75 countries, and 42% of the employees are located in Denmark (Novo Nordisk, 2015). Novo Nordisk headquarters are located in Bagsværd, Denmark, and this is also the place where a large part of their Corporate IT division is located. The department this thesis will be concentrated around is the Information Technology Shared Services

(ITSS) department, which is part of Corporate IT; the department is located in both Bagsværd, Denmark and in Bangalore, India. A more detail description of the department follows in section 6.1. The department's main focus is on compliance, and even though the tasks are somewhat divided between the Danish and the Indian employees the team need to work coherently across borders. As with many other large global companies Novo Nordisk needs to have a solid and advantageous bond between teams, in order to create a strong basis for national and international teamwork. In chapter 6, the issues related to the creation of a strong and beneficial teamwork will be further analysed.

This thesis will focus on distributed teams between India and Denmark, and attempts to narrow down the challenges of service evaluations in the Danish/Indian co-operation within Novo Nordisk. More specifically it will analyse the evaluations and the challenges concerning these. Distributed teams are defined as "*groups of geographically, organizationally and/or time dispersed workers brought together by information and telecommunication technologies to accomplish one or more organizational tasks*" (Powell, Piccoli, & Ives, 2004, p. 7). As previously mentioned this thesis will focus on the ITSS department, and the department is divided between Denmark (DK) and India (IN) with a manager in each of the countries. ITSS act as a service centre, and their main customer is the unit that they work within which is Corporate IT. For each service delivered the task requester is asked to evaluate the service. A more in-debt description of the process will follow in analysis section 6.1. According to the Danish manager the service evaluations are not 'true' to what is actually delivered and the satisfaction with the service. Additionally, he stated that he gets a richer picture of the service satisfaction during his informal conversations with the service receiver (Appendix 4).

There is always a reason behind people's actions, therefore the focus of this thesis will be to research why there is a difference between the verbal and the written evaluations. ITSS is far from the only distributed team that are challenged with the communication within the team. Other studies have examined the distributed team and how they function but this thesis will take a different angel to the problem and examine the communication associated with the evaluations. The management team have introduced evaluation meetings where the services are discussed in an effort to raise the value of the evaluations. Therefore I will also be investigating the evaluation meetings in order to analyse whether or not the meetings have helped solve the problem or if ITSS needs a completely new way of doing their evaluations. The ITSS department recognise that there is an issue with the evaluations, however they have not tried to examine why thee is a problem, but rather just implemented the evaluation meetings in order to fix the problem.

In the near future ITSS is planning to expand their customer range within Novo Nordisk. This would mean that a larger portion of their customers would be geographically separate from the Danish manager and the ITSS team. Therefore it is important for the team that the evaluations are honest and gives a 'true' overview of the service satisfactions before expanding their customer range. ITSS is currently standing on the edge of a new era for them, but the question whether or not they are ready for it. This thesis will examine how the evaluations could be customised to give a more accurate image of the service satisfaction, which could make the department ready for new customers.

3.2 Research question

The area of interest in the ITSS department and the focus on if there is the difference between the written and verbal evaluations and why there might be a difference, which relates closely to the geographical location of ITSS. Therefore, the research question guiding this thesis, is as followed;

- Does the geographical distance challenge the evaluations in ITSS?

In order for ITSS to learn from the constructive criticism and thereby further develop and improve their services the evaluations need to provide an accurate assessment of the tasks performed. This entails that the positive recognition of a job well done as well as the constructive criticism should be able to be translated across the geographical borders within the team. With the geographical borders it is not only the physical distance that plays an important role. So does the language, the way of communicating, the culture and much more.

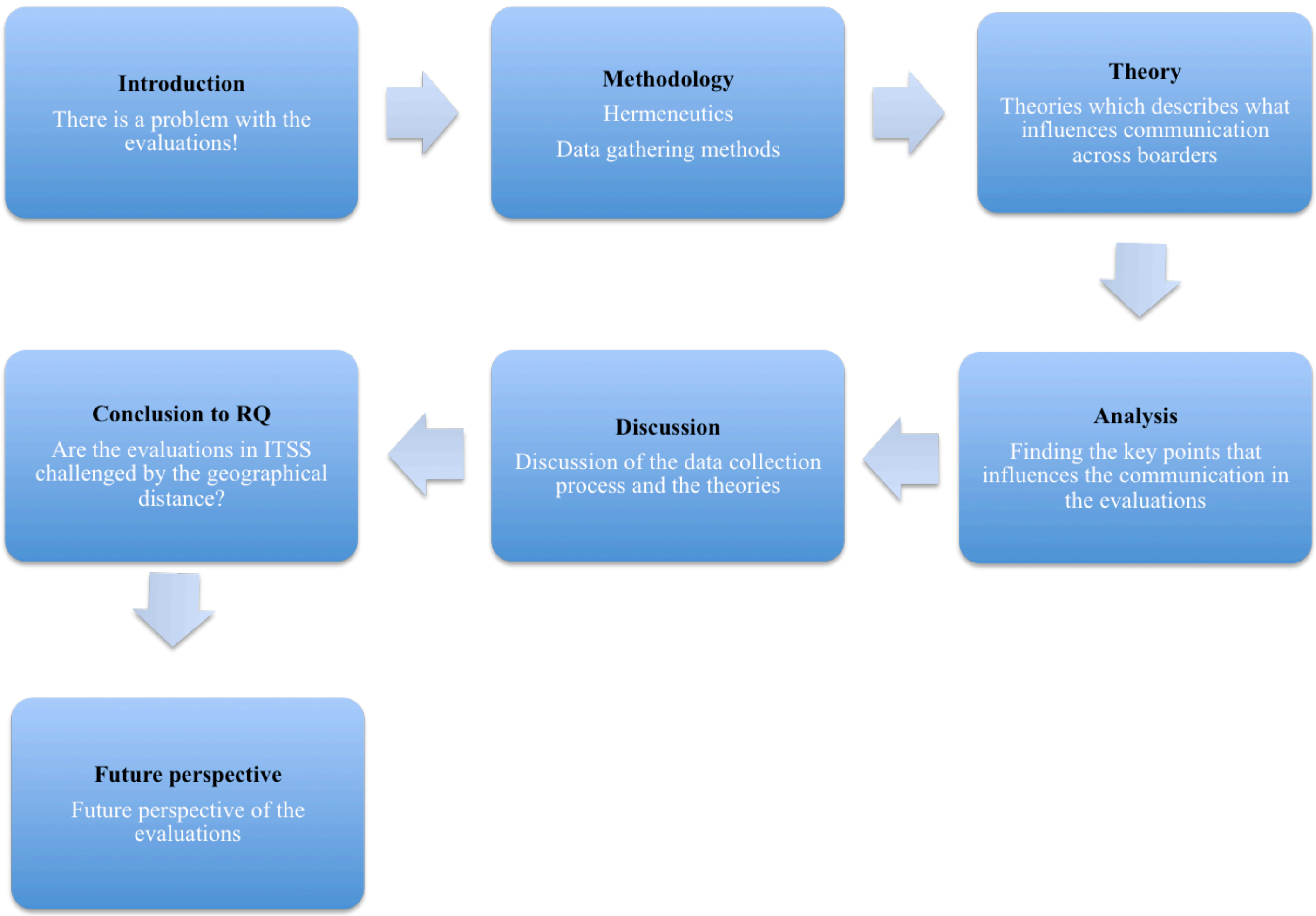
3.3 Thesis structure

The structural model below shows the design of this thesis; this is done in order to provide the reader with a comprehensive visualisation of how the investigation was conducted in order to answer the research question.

The first part is the introduction (*chapter 3*), which contains an introduction to the field, a short description of the background of Novo Nordisk and the research question. The following section is the methodology section (*chapter 4*). This includes the research methods, the theory of scientific method and a short presentation of the empirical data used throughout the research process. This presents the framework for the data collection, and roughly describes the data collected. All data can be found in the appendix with the exception of the audio file from the interview with the Danish manager; this is further discussed in the methodology section.

The third section is the theory (*chapter 5*), which further adds to the framework, which the data is analysed within. The methodology and the theory section combined will provide the framework for the understanding of the research question. Hereafter follows the analysis section (*chapter 6*). Throughout this chapter the empirical data is analysed based on the theoretical framework presented in chapters 4 and 5. The analysis will focus on which communicational factors are impacting the evaluations. Based on the findings of the analysis the following chapter will provide a discussion (*chapter 7)* of the results of the analysis. This will include a discussion of the evaluation meetings and their effect. Additionally it will try to determine whether it is possible to create standards in relation to what makes a good and fair evaluation, this will include an analysis of the feedback skills. Finally there will be a short discussion on whether it is possible to stay objective during an evaluation and only evaluate on the service delivered and not the person delivering the service. The final chapter is the conclusion (*chapter 8*), where the findings from the analysis and the discussion will be concluded. This will lead to the future perspective section (*section 8.3*), which will present any recommendations for ITSS and their future evaluations.

1. Thesis overview model



4.0 Methodology

Throughout this chapter the theory of scientific method and the methodology applied throughout the data collection and analysis process is presented. The data collection process was primarily based on qualitative interviews and observations. Furthermore the data consists of minutes and slides from meetings. Throughout this chapter, the applied methods are described and it is argued how these methods contribute to the analysis. It will also entail the methods validity and limitations along with any assumptions made.

4.1 Hermeneutics

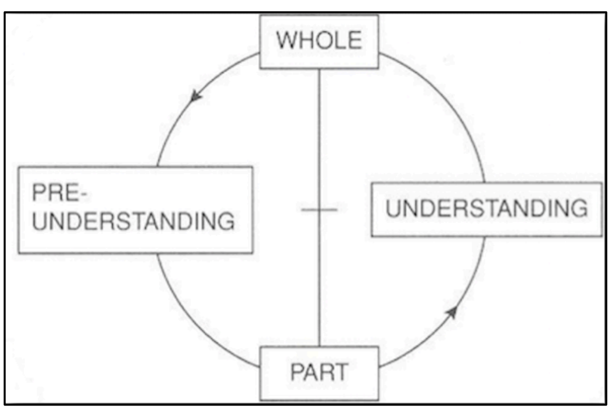
This thesis uses the hermeneutical approach as a theory of scientific method. Martin and McIntyre (1994) describes that the hermeneutical approach "*is an attempt to make clear, to make sense of an object of study*" (Martin & McIntyre , 1994, p. 181). Martin and McIntyre (1994) describe that the reason for studying an object must according to the hermeneutic be that the object of study is *"confused, incomplete, cloudy, seemingly contradictory - in one way or another, unclear*" (Martin & McIntyre , 1994, p. 181). The evaluation process in this study has been a subject of interest to me since I started working with Novo Nordisk. The processing of the evaluation data were part of my tasks when I started working within the department and they have from the beginning been a subject of talk in the department. Additionally the hermeneutical approach offers an inter-relationship between the understanding of the parts and the whole, which offers the researcher the opportunity to keep investigating for additional answers.

Hermeneutics means interpretation and it consists of the three parts understanding, descriptive and application. "*Understanding is what we as humans are*" (Fuglsang, 2005, p. 320). Fuglsang (2005) argues how we as humans constantly are trying to understand the world around us, and that interpretation and understanding is part of the basic human nature. In the understanding of things, this includes both other humans and material things; we are part of an enormous social interaction network. According to hermeneutics, basic communication is the foundation for social interactions and therefore one of the pillars on which we base our understanding of the world (Fuglsang, 2005).

Anything and everything consists of parts that make a whole. The hermeneutic circle (Figure 2) is an essential part of understanding the interactions and dependencies between the parts and the whole. We are not able to understand either of them without an understanding of the other. "*The part can only be understood from the whole, and the whole only from the parts*" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 92). According to the hermeneutic circle we keep searching for answers. The answer to one question will pose a new question and so forth (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009).

Kvale (1997) describes that the hermeneutic circle is a sense interpretation mechanism within the hermeneutics. According to Kvale (1997) the hermeneutic circle is a process for understanding, and this requires an understanding of both the whole and the parts. The parts can only be understood in their global context and vice versa. The understanding of parts will change the whole and this will again change the parts (Kvale, 1997). Alvesson & Sköldberg (2009) describe this as obtaining a "*progressively deeper understanding of both*" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 92). Kvale (1997) argues that in theory the hermeneutic circle is never ending, but in reality it will end with a meaningful understanding without any contradictions (Kvale, 1997). "*In principle, such a hermeneutic interpretation of the text is a never-ending process, but in practice it will stop once you have reached a sensible meaning without internal contradictions*" (Kvale, 1997, p. 57).

2. Hermeneutic circle



(Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, s. 104)

The above figure from Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) illustrates the basics of the hermeneutic circle. Even though it is depicted as a circle they describe that it should be understood as a spiral (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Throughout this thesis the hermeneutic circle is used to create a synergy between an understanding of the parts and the whole. This will lead to a concrete and adequate answer to the research question.

Pre-interpretations are an essential part of being a human and according to Fuglsang (2005) we are never free of these. This means that we are biased into any research we might conduct and these pre-interpretations will affect our work even before we begin. They can determine what we research, how we research it, what motivates us to this specific research area etc. Our pre-interpretations will undeniably affect our research; however, Fuglsang (2005) argues that this does not mean that we should try to undermine it. We need to confront it and make sure that we are aware of our biases and challenge them throughout the research process. "*The researchers prejudice and understanding is therefore not a bias that should be eliminated or minimized, but it should be an active part of the knowledge that is produced during the research project*" (Fuglsang, 2005, p. 342). In subsection 4.6 '*Limitations and assumptions*' I will describe my pre-interpretations and how they might bias me in relation to the research conducted for this thesis. Fuglsang also argues that our pre-interpretation of things are what motivates us to keep asking questions. The researcher has a basic need for understanding the research area and which provides a good foundation for motivation (Fuglsang 2005).

Our pre-understanding and prejudice are according to Fuglsang (2005) what constitutes our 'horizon of understanding'. In order to get a deeper understanding of things, we need to challenge this horizon and it is during our social interactions that we push and change our horizon. When we challenge our prejudice we are able to our expand horizon, Fuglsang (2005) refers to this a hermeneutic experience. Fuglsang (2005) describes that understanding each other does not mean that we accept what is presented to us as being true, but it is in these understandings that we create a 'fusion of horizons'. These fusions make you question your own beliefs and understandings of things. When the fusions are successful and accomplished effortless we are able to establish a solid foundation for good and constructive communication. Through the problems experienced in a fusion, we understand how communication can be challenging and difficult. "*It is in the conversation that enables horizon fusion,* *from which we are able to form a new and different understanding about things*" (Fuglsang, 2005, p. 331). Fuglsang (2005) argues how this is what creates change (Fuglsang, 2005).

According to Fuglsang (2005), Gadamer argued how we are incapable of looking past methodology, however, at the same time, it is not the determining factor in our research. We need to be aware of the fact that being methodologically correct does not mean that our research results will be any closer to the true (Fuglsang, 2005). Fuglsang (2005) argues that a hermeneutic analysis will always involve the researchers own interpretation of the subject investigated. Therefore it is argued that the hermeneutic analysis should consist of interviews and interpretations of relevant texts. Since it is in the interview that a communication is established, Fuglsang (2005) argues that this is the ideal opportunity to expand ones horizon (Fuglsang, 2005).

4.2 Hermeneutics interpretation

Kvale (1997) describes that "*the purpose with hermeneutics interpretation is to achieve a valid and general understanding of the meaning of a text*" (Kvale, 1997, p. 56). Additionally, Kvale (1997) argues how the interview as a research method in accordance with hermeneutics, is twofold. The first part is the interview itself and secondly the transcribed interview text. Both the dialogue within the interview and the following interview text should, according to the hermeneutics, be perceived as a text, which is opon for interpretation and analyse. Furthermore Kvale (1997) argues how interviews are different from the classic hermeneutic interpretation since the interview text is interpreted as it is created. In classic hermeneutics the text is to be interpreted outside of the context in which it is created within (Kvale, 1997).

Kvale (1997) describes how the interview, as a valid research method, has been subject to criticism. The transcribed interview does not give a full picture of the data collected since it does not take into account facts such as body language, hand gestures etc. Additionally, the text can be interpreted in numerous ways, which means that information that the interviewer finds relevant might not be to someone else. Hermeneutics however accepts that there is not only one true answer to the meaning of a text and that we should embrace our biases instead of trying to be fully objective (Kvale, 1997). According to Kvale (1997) it is possible to find more than one interpretation of an interview, which will lead to more than one answer to a problem. This indicates that it would not make sense to search for the commonly accepted result. Instead the researcher should make sure that the interpretation reached should be well documented, allowing other researchers to test the hypothesis. *"Then it is about formulating the evidence and arguments contained in an interpretation, I an way so that the interpretation can be checked by other readers*" (Kvale, 1997, p. 56).

4.3 Qualitative interviews

Kvale (1997) created a guideline consisting of seven steps, which can be applied when using interviews as a research method. The *first step* is to define the themes, meaning that the topics and the reason for conducting interviews should be clear beforehand. Throughout this thesis, the themes and topics for the interview were based on the information needed to answer the research question, and these are described in the interview guide. The *second step* pertains to the design of the interview itself, which for this thesis was through the creation of the interview guide (Appendix 7). The *third step* is the actual conduction of the interview, this will be further elaborated throughout this subsection. The *fourth step* is the transcription of the conducted interview, throughout this this thesis the transcription was based on the sound recording from the interview. The *fifth step* is the content analysis of the interview, followed by the *sixth* and *seventh step* of verifying and reporting the interview (Kvale, 1997).

The interview conducted for this thesis was a semi-structured interview, based on the definition of qualitative research interviews presented by Kvale (1997). According to Kvale (1997) the researcher must be able to see the world through the eyes of the interviewed, which should enable the interviewer to see things with a new perspective. This requires a degree of objectivity from the interviewer, which however does not fully correspond with the hermeneutic point of view, which acknowledges the fact that it is nearly impossible to be entirely objective. Kvale (1997) describes how the purpose of an interview is to generate new information. This is achieved only in the meeting between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale, 1997). This would according to the hermeneutic point of view be referred to as the 'fusion of horizons' (Fuglsang, 2005).

According to Kvale (1997) an interview can be both theoretical and dynamic at the same time. The theoretical part of the interview creates structure and provides a base line, while the dynamic dimension creates a level of liberty to open up the interview for any unforeseen topics (Kvale, 1997). For the data collection process of this thesis I designed an interview guide (Appendix 7). During the interview the questions were used as a guideline to keep the conversation on track, but at the same time it allowed for new topics and follow-up questions which were not included from the start. This would allow for the interviewee to include topics that the interviewee would find relevant or interesting. For example, in the interview with the Danish manager the conversation was led to one very specific personal relation that had made a difference for him as a manager. This was not part of the interview guide but the Danish manager saw it as relevant in connection to the interview and it was therefore brought up.

4.3.1 Interview with Danish Manager

Prior to the interview an informal conversation with the Danish manager was conducted in order to create a foundation for the interview guide. The notes from this conversation can be found in appendix 4. The Danish manager was told that it was an informal conversation about the teamwork between Denmark and Indian. He should therefore fell free to talk about anything in this relation but it was made clear to him that anything discussed during this might be used in the thesis. After the interview was conducted it was clear that the notes from the first conversation needed to be part of the appendix to support the topics discussed during the interview.

The interview was conducted at the workplace in an effort to create a comfortable environment for both the interviewer and interviewee. The interview with the Danish manager was a face-to-face interview, which took place in a standard meeting room. The interview was recorded which helped improve the hermeneutic horizon fusion between the interviewer and interviewee. If the interviewer were only to take notes it might leave out information that might not have seemed relevant at the time. In addition, the transcript of the interview allows for a recapture of any interesting topics that could have been overlooked. The transcription is written without alteration from what is being said and will therefore contain some spoken language. The transcription was time stamped several places in an effort to create an overview of when what was said. The transcribed interview can be viewed in appendix 5, however, as described in subsection 4.6 '*Limitations and assumptions*' it was not possible to include the audio file as part of the appendix.

The transcription of the interview generated a large portion of unstructured data. To structure it for the analysis I colour coded the data. Specifically this means that I, based on the theory, created seven topics for the analysis. These were given an individual colour and these colours were then used to give all the collected data colours. The colours were then used to select quotes for the analysis section. These quotes were selected based on their ability to sum up the statements from the manager on the specific topics. Each of the quotes was translated from Danish to English and the quotes that applied throughout the analysis are presented in the table of quotes (Appendix 1).

I currently work for Novo Nordisk, and might therefore be biased by this. I however worked hard not let this affect the outcome of this thesis. More specifically meaning that I will not let my relationship with the organisation stop me from being critical or stop asking questions. The fact that I work within the company also means that I know it from the inside and I am therefore closer to any information relevant for this thesis. It was a definite advantage that I know the Danish manager since this made the interview more relaxed. The Danish manager and the VP were helpful in retrieving information regarding Novo Nordisk.

4.3.2 Interview with Indian Manager

An interview guide for the interview with the Indian manager was created and this can be found in the appendix. The interview with the Indian manager was however not conducted. My first instinct was to send an email to the Indian manager inquiring if he would be willing to participate in an interview for this thesis. I explained to him that the interview could be set up via Skype and that it would be possible for him to read and approve the transcript afterwards. After several emails with no response, it was assumed that he was not interested in participating. However there were several solutions I could have tried in an effort to get the Indian manager to talk. This would involve asking a Danish employee with the same rank and the Indian manager to talk to him and ask if he would participate. However, it is important to state that the lack of response to my emails could be explained with a number of different reasons; it might be that the emails never reached the Indian manager or he could have brushed it of as spam due to the fact that he did not know the sender.

Conducting the interview with the Indian manager might have added another perspective to the data. On the other hand it might have proven difficult to get an honest answer to the questions. Even though the Indian employees have part of the responsibility for the problems in the team they might not want to own up to their part of it. Meaning that the interview could have shed light on the Indian side of the problems or could have proven to be nothing but organisational/political correct answers. Instead the Indian perspective of the problems will be added through the observations and the slides. These will be presented in the following sections.

4.4 Qualitative Observations

According to Damsgaard (2005) any observation must be based on a solid foundation of information about the observed. It is therefore essential for the observation that the observer start out with researching the object that is to be observed (Damsgaard, 2005). "*To carry out qualitatively good observation work, it is necessary to have insight into the phenomenon that is to be observed and awareness of the observation tool's possibilities and limitations*" (Damsgaard, 2005, p. 95). In this case, Novo Nordisk is the object that is being observed, and in particular the department ITSS. I had been working in the ITSS department nearly three years at the time of the observations; this created a solid foundation and information background for the observations. Furthermore I have conducted objective research about Novo Nordisk as a company and their values.

However, Damsgaard (2005) argues that it is not possible for the observer to stay objective during an observation, and that the data outcome of the observation will always be affected by this (Damsgaard, 2005). I, as the observer, am biased by the fact that I have been working for the company for almost three years. This means that I have substantial background information and insights into the company and the ITSS departments and their values and employees, and this will to some extend have an impact on the data collected. According to the hermeneutics this is a part of who we as humans are, and we should therefore embrace it rather than trying to compensate for it (Fuglsang, 2005). The information that I have collected as an employee will help understand both the whole and the parts of my research. As argued earlier the hermeneutics describe that one should embrace its biases, and in this thesis I will use my bias to draw on my personal relations with the employees. This means that I am able to decode if there is any unusual behaviour from the Danish employees, or if anything ‘sticks out’ from the normal that I know.

The observations are divided into two parts; an unstructured log of observation of a Monday meeting and a structured log for some daily interactions observed. This is put together with the material I got access to from the evaluation meeting. The evaluation meetings are held with the presence of the task requester and the management team from both Denmark and India. According to the Danish manager the employees performing the task are not invited to attend the meetings as the evaluations are supposed to evaluate the service delivered and not the specific employee delivering the service, therefore I was unable to participate in the evaluation meetings. Therefore the observations put together with the written material from the evaluation meeting will be used to describe the interactions between Denmark and India, especially the interactions that occur via IT. The following subsections will describe how the observations were conducted, what was observed, how it was observed and what my role was during these interactions.

4.4.1 Observation of Monday meeting

In the unstructured log of the Monday meeting everything is written down without any reservation for what might seem relevant. The advantage of this is that the data is not filtered by what I found interesting during the observation. This will give way for any information that could be relevant later in the data analysis process. The disadvantage is that it can generate a large amount of unstructured information. The observations are time stamped to provide a better overview for the later process. After the observations they were structured by colour coding the information according to the seven topics, just as with the interview. In an effort to diverse the data I observed a Monday meeting and compared the interactions between the Danish and the Indian employees with the interactions observed during the everyday observations. This was done to make sure that the interactions observed were not a single standing incident but that they were closest to their natural way of interacting.

The Monday meetings are held in a conference room where the employees are sitting at one long table with a camera and a screen at the end. The screen and the camera are used to live feed to and from India. During the meeting all employees are able to see one another and everyone should be able to speak and be heard by their colleagues. As I am working within the team I participated in the observed meeting. However since I work as a student assistant my role in the meetings is limited. This means that during the first part of the meeting, before the Indian colleagues join, the Danish employees takes turns to describe their tasks at hand etc. and in this part of the meeting I was present and presented my tasks, challenges etc. After India joined I was present in the room observing the meeting, but I was sitting at a chair away from the participants and not actively participating in the meeting. When India joins the meeting it is normal for the student assistants to either leave the meeting room or act as silent participants.

4.4.2 Observation of everyday interactions

The structured log presents a couple of daily interactions, which are observed during a normal workday. These observations are to represent the everyday interactions between the Danish and the Indians colleagues. The structure of the log gives the observer an opportunity to create a clear overview of the observed. The structured log is based on the two questions; what happened and who interacted. The structured log can be seen in appendix 3.

During the observation of the Monday meeting I acted as a silent participant in the meeting, however, during the everyday observations my role as an observer was in many of the observations as an active participant. Since I work at Novo Nordisk it were my colleagues whom I interact with on a daily basis that I observed. For the result of the observations this could prove to be both an advantage and a disadvantage. I have chosen to take as an advantage based on the fact that I know my Danish colleagues. The employees were aware that I was writing about them and their interactions but they were not told when I was conducting the observations. This made it easier for me to spot the signals that the employees are sending and understanding them in accordance to their normal behaviour. This means that I was able to spot when they might have acted out of character, which could have been forced by the knowledge of being observed. Therefore I would argue that the data became even more valid. Even though I do not know my Indian colleagues as well as I know the Danish employees it still proved to be an advantage since I know how they normally correspond and interact over email etc. However, it proved to be a challenge to stay completely objective during the observations. Additionally, it was difficult to interact as usual and still trying to observe every detail. Despite the dual role of being at work while making academic observations I believe that I succeeded in staying objective while being aware of my biases for the data not to be compromised. I therefore argue that the data collection has only benefitted from me knowing the employees who were being observed.

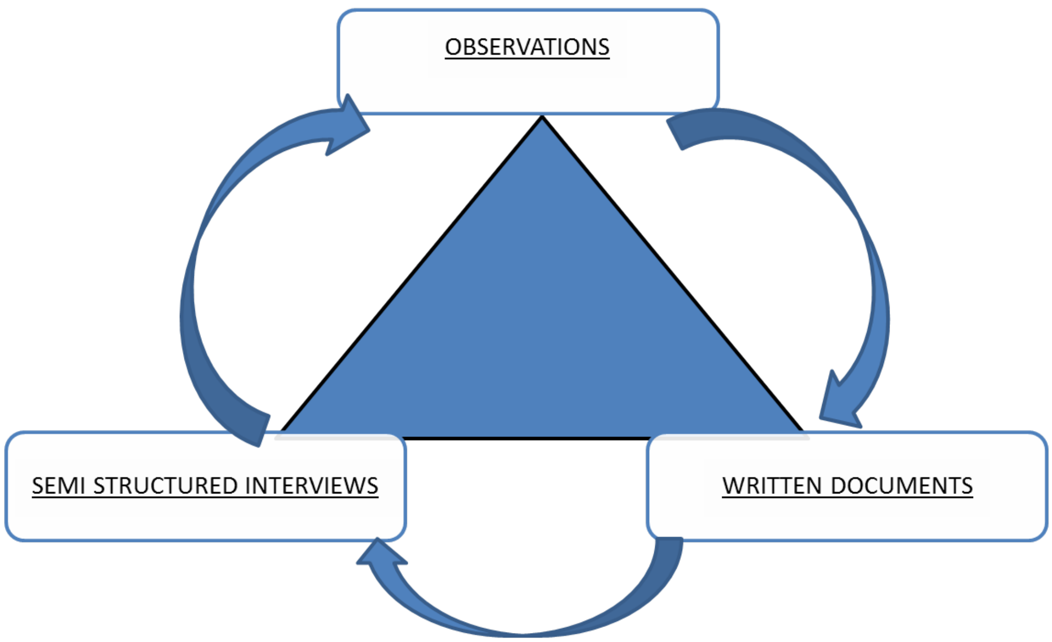
4.5 Other data

To support the data mentioned the in previous sections additional written data pertaining to the evaluations was collected. The written data was collected in collaboration with the Danish management team. The data collection process in collaboration with the Danish management team was done in order to ensure that any data used would not be compromising for Novo Nordisk as a whole. Furthermore it was essential for the management team that I did not use any data that might show names of any employees or other sensitive information. The written data collected includes, slides from the evaluation meetings, the online evaluation form and KPIs showing the satisfaction of the services based on the evaluation form.

The online evaluation form was used to show the evaluation process and depict what and how the service evaluator was asked to evaluate the service. The evaluation form is shown in section 6.1. The KPIs were to support the image that the evaluations were doing well according to the online evaluations. The slides from the evaluation meeting were to support the new part of the evaluation process and to show what impact these meeting might have on the evaluation. All the material has been cleared from names of employees. Even though this is a change to the original data it has not compromised the data in such a degree that it can be seen as altering for the analysis results.

All the empirical data collected throughout the collection process for this thesis is of a qualitative nature. In all academic writing there is always a question of the validity of the empirical data. Silverman (1997) describes how the question of validation when working with qualitative data can be addresses through the use of comparative methods (Silverman, 1997). One of the comparative methods that can be used to validate data is called data triangulation. "*Triangulation refers to the use of different data collecting methods within one study to ensure the data is telling you what you think it's telling you*" (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012, p. 146). Throughout the analysis process data triangulation was used to analyse how the three different types of empirical data collected overlapped and indicated commen connections and points of concern. After the semi-structured interview was conducted the recording and trancription was content analysed and compared with the observations and the written data. Figure 3 below is a visual model showing the three types of empirical data used in the triangulation process.

3. Data triangulation



4.6 Limitations and assumptions

When observing we use all five sense, but it is not all the senses that translate well through technology which raises the question if it is possible to complete valid observations over the distance (Bjørndal, 2014). Throughout the data collection process for this thesis some of the observations were conducted via the use of communication technology and this was done for several reasons. Firstly the main focus during the observations was the interactions between the Indian and the Danish employees. These interactions primarily takes place via an online media, which means that for the observations to give a rightful picture they needed to be conducted while the employees were using the communications technology. Even though some of the senses are lost online I argue that this should not be seen as a limitation for this project, but rather an embrace of the actual conditions.

Due to the confidentiality of the company I am not allowed to mention business related information, which is discussed during an observation or an interview. I am allowed to write about the company and the interactions that happen between the employees but I must leave out any information that is directly concerned with the business. I am furthermore not allowed to use any names of employees. This means that any names on employees have been deleted but the data stays true to the observed/interviewed even though it has been edited. According to Kvale (1997) the interpretation of the interview starts with the transcription of the interview. Kvale (1997) argues that when transcribing an interview it is not possible to capture the body language (Kvale, 1997). The interview conducted with the manager was transcribed based on the audio file and any names are replaced with fictional names. Because of the sensitivity of the information in the interview the audio file is not part of the appendix.

5.0 Communication in organisations

In modern organisations communication is a central part of the business. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) define communication as; "… *a continuous process where members maintain and change the organisation by communicating with individuals and groups of people both internally and externally*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 240). Information can be transferred and understood in numerous ways (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). This chapter will present the theories applied throughout this thesis. The main focus is on the communication theories, which form the foundation of the analysis chapter.

5.1 Effective communication

""*Effective communication" is commonly defined as the recipient understanding and interpreting the received message in a way that responds well to the sender's intentions*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 243). Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that for communication of information to be successful both sender and receiver needs to have the same basic understanding of the content within the message. This goes for every message within the information, meaning that information between the lines needs to be explicit enough for a mutual understanding (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). Information is defined as the part of a person's knowledge that can be communicated and understood by others, whereas knowledge is gathered through understanding, interpreting, analysing what others have communicated. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) further explain how communication can be divided according to the media used and its effectiveness. They describe that within direct face-to-face communication it is only 7% of the conversation that is understood by the words used. 38% is understood through formulation and the remaining 55% is understood via the body language (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). The fact that approximately 55% of face-to-face interaction is understood through the use of body language means that people must be aware of one's own and the recipient's body language in order to gain the full understanding of what is being communicated.

5.1.1 Verbal and non-verbal communication

With the introduction of the IT based communication, information gained several new ways of being distributed in an organisation. In 1986 Daft and Lengel introduced the '*Media Richness Theory*' (Daft & Lengel, 1986). As the name suggest, the theory is designed to determine the richness of the information that a certain media is able to carry. Daft and Lengel define media richness as "[…] *the ability of information to change understanding within a time interval*" (Daft & Lengel, 1986, p. 560). The theory was originally developed before the introduction of the Internet, and tools such as email and social media, therefore Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) suggested that an analysis of a communication media should include the following five points:

- *Speed*, meaning the amount of time it will take for a reply. The response is faster on the phone than via traditional mail.
- *Richness*, meaning the richness of the media. Would it be possible to send and receive body language in an email or in a phone call?
- *Parallelism*, meaning if it is possible to carry out several conversations at the same time.
- *Preparation*, meaning how much time the sender has to prepare before sending out information.
- *Storage*, meaning if it is possible to store the information, which is sent/received.

(Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008)

In the figure below Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) have shown how the five points influence three different medias. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) argue that technology-based medias such as emails, chat and videoconferencing are, if measured in richness of the media, ranked in between traditional written information and face-to-face conversations (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

4. Media richness

	Speed	**Richness**	**Parallelism**	**Preparation**	**Storage**
Face-to-face	High	High	Low	Low	Low
Web conference/chat	High	Low	High	High	High
E-mail	Low	Low	High	High	High

(Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 263)

According to Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) people choose the media in accordance with the content of the message they are sending (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). Arnold and Randall (2010) explains in short what is relevant; "C*omplex tasks that require a high level of information exchange, coordinated effort, consensus, negotiation, ambiguity or emotion are not suitable for 'leaner' technologies*" (Arnold

& Randall, 2010, p. 391). Meaning that complex tasks are not suitable for e-mail but will benefit from face-to-face, while less complex tasks, such as tasks with a precise task list, can be performed by using a less richer technology e.g. e-mail (Arnold & Randall, 2010). Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) argue that management would, in most cases, prefer written communication instead of oral. This is due to the face that they value parallelism, preparation and storage over speed (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

Technology-based communications has opened up for what Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) define as '*time and space independent communication*' (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 262). This independency means that people communicating do not necessarily have to be located at the same place and they are therefore able to communicate across geographically differences and time zones. Based on this Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) categorise communication as being either synchronous or asynchronous (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). "*The new thing is that people are able to work together without being located at the same physical location at the same time*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 262). This independency from time and space also means that there, according to Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008), occurs a '*virtual organisation*'. This means that the people working together, does not necessarily know one another, which can create a distance. They argue that in the 'virtual organisation' members are afraid of conflict and will rather flee then confront it (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

Cramton and Hinds (2005) argue how "*a defining characteristic of geographically distributed teams is their reliance on communication technologies to mediate interactions among distant members*" (Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 257). Companies, such as Novo Nordisk, are dependent on technology-based communications in order to share information across geographical borders. According to the media richness theory not all information is suitable for being shared through all types of media; this poses the question of how organisations determine how and what information should be shared and through which media? ITSS, evaluations are mainly completed in written format but this might not be a media that is rich enough, and if so, it might be that it is a combination of several media that would provide the richness necessary. It is an interesting dilemma because Novo Nordisk, as well as other international companies, is struggling with the communication within distributed teams. This will be further investigated in chapter 6.

5.1.2 Formal and informal communication

Communication can be classified as either formal or informal communication. "*Formal communication refers to all systems and initiatives to communicate information related to the organization's hierarchical management systems and established mechanisms of cooperation and coordination between the different employees or groups of employees within the organization*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 249). According to Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) any other information shared in the organisation is informal communication. They argue that informal communication is the quickest way for information to travel within the organisation, and that the employees generally have a greater level of trust to the information shared through the use of informal communication channels (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that there are nine main functions of informal communication. Social relations and social groups are created through informal communication (*1*). Trust and distrust is formed on the basis of the informal communication (*2*). New social interactions based on informal communication (*3*). Informal information can determine who should be part of a specific social group (*4*). A common social identity can be formed based on informal communication (*5*). Formal communication cannot stand-alone but must be supported by informal communication (*6*). Informal communication can develop the employees and their skills (*7*). It is not until formal information reaches the informal stage that the information is interpreted (*8*). Informal communication will determine the employees' trust in their management team (*9*). The management team's action is subject for discussion in the informal communication (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) argue that two of the main reasons for people to engage in informal communication are insecurity and fear. This can be traced to "*formal communication being inadequate or ambiguous in regards to the matters which the employees feel is important to them*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 257). Additionally Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe how employees are more likely to accept information that is relevant for them, and they are especially inclined to listen if they get their information via the informal communication.

Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that the information flow through informal communication channels can affect the way employees perceive the management, either positively or negatively. The information flow through informal communication can either develop to become employees respecting the management team and thereby supporting their decisions or they employees will fell discontent and try to resist any changes suggest by the management team. Instead of rejecting the informal communication, Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) argue that the management does not stand to benefit from rejecting the informal communication channels. Instead they should embrace it as a supplement for the formal communication. This way the management team are able to form "*commitment and motivation amongst the employees*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 254).

Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that the informal communication is a great part of the social life and interactions in any organisation and it should therefore be nourished rather than suppressed. This social context is also part of the creation of cultural connections, and Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that these cultural connections is an essential part of building a strong team that appreciates the same values for the organisation (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

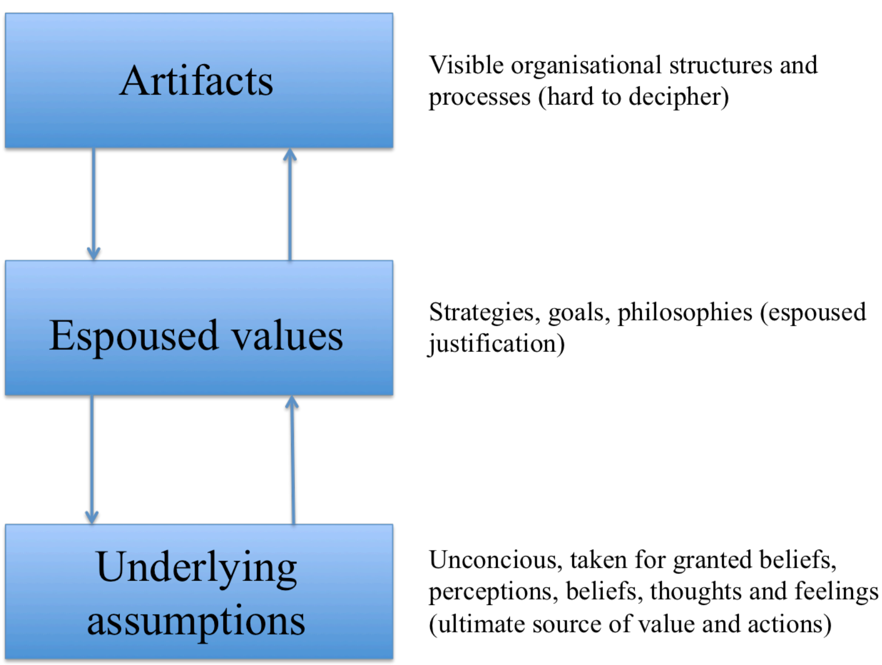
"*The importance of informal communication is much greater in modern organizations*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 254). This also goes for Novo Nordisk and it is essential for them to understand the importance of both the formal and the informal information, and to make sure that both are nourished and communicated via the most effective media. As previously mentioned, the informal information is an important part of the information the employees receive and use in their work, and this correlates with the view of Cramton and Hinds' (2005) on the information sharing in internationally distributed teams. Cramton and Hinds (2005) argue that informal information can be held back for several reasons, which can be both intentionally and unintentionally (Cramton & Hinds, 2005).

5.2 Communicating cultural differences

Schein (2009) argues that culture is important for both individuals and the organisation. "*Culture matters because it is a powerful, tacit, and often unconscious set of forces that determine both our individual and collective behaviour, ways of perceiving, thought patterns, and values. Organizational culture in particular matters because cultural elements determine strategy, goals, and modes of* *operating*" (Schein, 2009, p. 19). The organisation must therefore not overlook their culture and it is important that it is a natural topic that is discussed within the organisation. Culture must be communicated and understood and should not be tabooed or become something that is hidden away (Schein, 2009).

According to Arnold & Randall (2010) culture is defined as; "*The human-generated part of the environment that is transmitted across time and generations and leads to people within that culture developing shared meanings; culture gives people 'standard operating procedures' or ways of doing things*" (Arnold & Randall, 2010, p. 698). Schein (1984) further describes that culture is a set of 'basic assumptions, these values are tested by the group when facing problems and if they prove to work they are accepted as being true. This will lead to the values and norms being transferred on to the next generation and so forth (Schein, 1984). Schein (2009) described that there are three levels of analysis when it comes to understanding culture; artifacts, espoused values and underlying assumptions. To understand the artifacts the espoused values must be understood first and this requires and understanding of the basic underlying assumptions (Schein, 2009).

5. The three levels of culture



(Schein, 2009, p. 21)

The artifacts are the things that can be seen, heard and felt. On this level Schein (2009) describes that the culture is very clear but there is no understanding of why people behave like they do. The espoused values are related to the basic values that help the organisation to create a certain image of them, this could include information, put in various documents. The basic values are the shared basic assumptions. These are underlying and typically something that the members of the group is unaware of, for the members it is just the way things are (Schein, 2009). Schein (1984) describes that culture is; "*ultimately embodied as an interrelated, patterned set of basic assumptions that deal with ultimate issues, such as the nature of humanity, human relationships, time, space and the nature of reality and truth itself*" (Schein, 1984, p. 14).

Schein (1984) argues that in order to analyse people's behaviour we need to look at the underlying basic assumptions and this includes their culture. According to Schein (1984) the culture of a group is strengthened based on the solidity of the group and the experiences shared within the group. This means that a culture in a group is affected by both internal and external problems and when the group overcomes a problem the group and its culture will grow stronger. Schein (1984) therefore describes that in order to understand a group dynamic and analyse the member's behaviour it is important to; "*examine the individual's pattern of perception, thoughts, and feelings*" (Schein, 1984, p. 12). This is the deepest level of the above model 5 and according to Schein (1984) it is at this level that we are able to understand the basic assumptions. Schein (1984) also argues how cultures continuously affect the members of the groups as long as they are members. Therefore our perceptions, thoughts and feelings will in time be more and more linked to the cultures values, and will affect the way in which we act and behave (Schein, 1984).

Schein (1984) developed a table that shows the problems of internal integration. Table 5, which is shown below, describes the problem areas of; language, boundaries, power & status, intimacy, rewards & punishments and ideology. For each of the problem areas a group needs to create a common understanding or agreement. This does not mean that each of the members within a group should have the exact same mother tongue or religion it means that they need to have a common understand of how things work within the group. For instance this could mean that the group members agree that English is the common language that is used when communicating (Schein, 1984). Throughout this thesis table

5 will be used to analyse if there are any of Schein's (1984) problem areas that are not dealt with within ITSS.

6. Problems of internal integration

Language:	**Common language and conceptual categories. If members cannot communicate with and understand each other, a group is impossible by definition.**
Boundaries:	Consensus on group boundaries and criteria for inclusion and exclusion. One of the most important areas of culture is the shared consensus on who is in, who is out, and by what criteria one determines membership.
Power & Status	Consensus on criteria for the allocation of power and status. Every organisation must work out its pecking order and its rules for how one gets, maintains, and loses power. This area of consensus is crucial in helping members manage their own feelings of aggression.
Intimacy:	Consensus on criteria for intimacy, friendship, and love. Every organisation must work out its rules of the game for peer relationships, for relationships between the sexes, and for the manner in which openness and intimacy are to be handled in the context of managing the organisation's tasks.
Rewards & Punishments:	Consensus on criteria for allocation of rewards and punishments. Every group must know what its heroic and sinful behaviours are; what gets rewarded with property, status, and power; and what gets punished through the withdrawal of rewards and, ultimately, excommunication.
Ideology:	Consensus on ideology and "religion". Every organisation, like every society, faces unexplainable events that must be given meaning so that members can respond to them and avoid the anxiety of dealing with the unexplainable and uncontrollable.

(Schein, 1984, p. 11)

Communicating culture is difficult because of the underlying basic assumptions. Schein (2009) therefore argues that it is important to communicate openly about the culture within a team. An open line of communication about culture might help overcome any cultural differences within a group (Schein, 2009). The following subsection will present Cramton and Hinds' (2005) framework of communication differences (Cramton & Hinds, 2005). This could lead the group to benefit from their difference, including culture, instead of seeing it as a limitation.

5.3 Communicating differences

Arnold and Randall (2010) describe that people working in distributed teams should have 'contextual awareness'. This means that they need to know their colleagues and understand their point of view. The pitfall here is that with the development of technology-based communication, the 'contextual awareness' is minimized to the little social information given via e.g. email or conference calls. This means that employees can only base their knowledge about their remote colleagues based on the limited amount of social information available via the technology-based communications. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) support this by stating that 'virtual groups' are more likely to be discontent due to the lack of social interactions (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

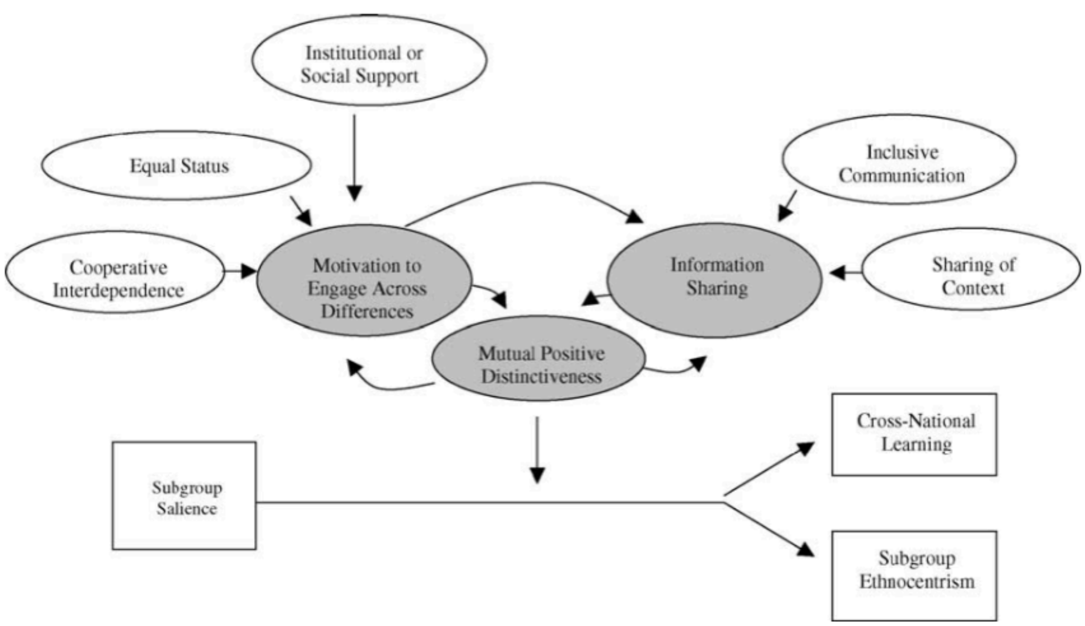
Cramton and Hinds (2005) agree with Arnold and Randal (2010), and state that the groups within a distributed team are more likely to have a negative attitude towards one another. The mindset becomes an "us against them". Cramton and Hinds (2005) describe that all workgroups contains subgroups but they are not always salient. They also argue that if subgroups become prominent by the activation of a faultline, the most likely consequence is ethnocentrism. Here ethnocentrism is defined as "*a bias towards one's own subgroup and against other subgroups*" and that this can be hurtful to efficiency of the team (Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 234). Cramton and Hinds (2005) argue how lower levels of team efficiency can be attributed to the unwillingness to share important information in a constructive way (Cramton & Hinds, 2005).

However Cramton and Hinds (2005) also argue how there is a positive alternative to subgroups salience leading to ethnocentrism. The positive alternative is ethnorelativistic learning which is defined as "*taking the perspective of the other group and understanding the world, including one's own group, through the other group's eyes*" (Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 238). For distributed teams the positive alternative is ethnorelativistic cross-national learning, which also means to take on cultural learning about the distant colleagues to gain a better understanding and thereby minimizing the ethnocentrism. (Cramton & Hinds, 2005).

Furthermore they describe that a 'mutual positive distinctiveness' can uphold respect between remote colleagues. The employees need to have an understanding of their differences across subgroups and embrace them. They can uphold the subgroups but they should see the advantages of the differences with the team as a whole. The 'mutual positive distinctiveness' will also result in a decrease in ethnocentrism. Cramton and Hinds (2005) define mutual positive distinctiveness as "*respect differences among members*" (Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 245).

Cramton & Hinds (2005) have depicted the 'mutual positive distinctiveness' in model 7 below. The model shows how mutual positive distinctiveness affects subgroup salience to either result in cross-national learning or subgroup ethnocentrism. Mutual positive distinctiveness is affected by and affects information sharing and motivation to engage across differences and these are then affected by the white bubbles farthest (Cramton & Hinds, 2005).

7. Mutual positive distinctiveness



(Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 246)

Model 7 will in this thesis be applied in order to analyse the specific contributing factors within the ITSS team that affects the mutual positive distinctiveness. To get the team towards cross-national learning instead of subgroup ethnocentrism it is essential to know the determining factors and their mutual dependencies. Each of the outer white bobbles will be defined in the analysis chapter 6 according to the team and these will be used to create a deeper understanding of the interrelation that will lead to subgroup ethnocentrism or cross-national learning.

Cramton and Hinds (2005) ends with a concluding recommendation. "*Overall, we encourage leaders and team members to be aware of potential faultline, sensitive to the emergence of salient subgroups, and particularly, to provide the environment, practices, and tools that enable teams to transcend ethnocentrism and learn about and leverage their differences for the benefit of the team and the organization*" (Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 258). In short they describe that leaders and team members should embrace the contributing factors. This will be used in the analysis section, where model 7 will be explained on a more detailed level in order to analyse what factors are affecting the ITSS team and how they should embrace them.

5.4 Communicating trust

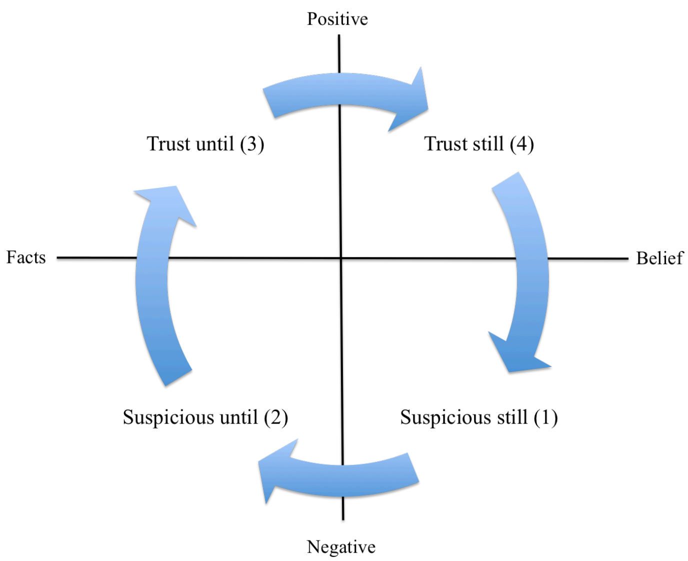
Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that information can travel around an organisation across hierarchies. Information that travels this way is subject to filtration and the further the information travels the more it has been filtered. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) argue that information will be filtered by the receiver and can for instance be filtered because the receiver finds some information irrelevant or the receiver filters away any negative information (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). Furthermore Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that trust is an important factor that can determine the filtration of a message. "*Research shows that trust is essential for the communicating parties to successfully understand each other*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 247). A certain level of trust between the communicating parties is required for them to receive and understand messages as intended by the sender (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

Defining trust is difficult and Flores and Solomon (2003) describe that it is impossible to make a clear-cut definition. Organisations talk about trust and they create team building exercises in order for the trust to grow but Flores and Solomon (2003) argue that when the team/organization becomes too embedded in routines, team building and the creation of trust becomes a lesser priority and in some cases forgotten. Flores and Solomon (2003) describe that trust is something that we (herby also organisations) need to talk about. The more we talk about trust the deeper the trust is. "*We should distinguish what we explicit say and what is conversationally and situationally implied*" (Flores & Solomon, 2003, p. 55). Trust is always conditional but in order to build trust we need to be honest about it. Additionally they argue that trust is not something that can stand-alone but rather it should be viewed as a building block for the organisation to function as a whole (Flores & Solomon, 2003).

Flores and Solomon (2003) argue that we as individuals have become more 'pessimistic'. They describe that it has become more acceptable and normal to engage in contracts due to this pessimism. This is done both in a working and in personal environment (e.g. prenuptial agreements). These contracts should describe the commitment and the expectations from the involved parties. However, Flores and Solomon (2003) argue that "*to wonder is to worry, which is not to trust*" (Flores & Solomon, 2003, p. 54). They therefore argue that contracts can challenge the trust in any form of relationship or collaboration. Flores and Solomon (2003) also describe that trust should be honest. We might pretend to trust one another to make it easier but in the long run this will only ruin the teamwork (Flores & Solomon, 2003).

Flores and Solomon (2003) argue that trust can change according to the situation or over time. The different stages of trust are presented in model 8 below. Each of the stages will be described below and it is important to remember that the state of trust can change not only according to the person but also according to the specific situation (Flores & Solomon, 2003).

8. Trust communication [1]



In the top right corner (4) is the 'optimist'. This is a person that has an almost unlimited amount of trust for anything or anyone. Flores and Solomon (2003) describe that this could for instance be a child. In the lower right corner (4) is the 'suspicious still'. Flores and Solomon (2003) describe that this is a person who is always suspicious. To understand why someone can have this lack of trust Flores and Solomon (2003) describe that a child that have been subject to child abuse might be 'suspicious still' and here it is difficult to establish trust and move to the 'suspicious until'. Being 'suspicious still' will affect the social relations and the ability to establish trust. The left side of the model is the 'suspicious until' and 'trust until'. "*Authentic trust is articulated in such a way that it must recognise the possibilities for betrayal and disappointment*" (Flores & Solomon, 2003, p. 92). Here the trust is establish but is not dismissive to the fact that a breach might occur (Flores & Solomon, 2003).

As previously mentioned Flores and Solomon (2003) argue that trust is an important building block in the organisation. Therefore it is important for this particular case to establish what the level of trust is within ITSS in the analysis section. Flores and Solomon (2003) describe it as an important factor to talk about the trust. Flores and Solomon (2003) describe that if the trust is unequal and based on calculated advantages it will hurt the team, which ultimately can result in mistrust. Being honest about the trust is

[1] Inspired by Paul English at http://paulenglish.com/trust.html

also important to the communication (Flores & Solomon, 2003). "*When we pretend that we trust even if we believe we are trusting and trustworthy, we withhold critical information and shut down communication*" (Flores & Solomon, 2003, p. 59). In the analysis section it will therefore also be investigated if there is an unequal distribution of trust. Model 8 above will be applied in order to establish whether or not there is trust within the team and if it is maintained.

5.5 Communication issues

Communication is challenging and there are several ways that communication can turn into miscommunication. For modern organisations communication is essential and it is therefore important to be aware of and avoid the pitfalls. A pitfall within communication is the language. In this sense language refers to the terminology that is used in the particular work area. This language can differ across education, background and different work areas. Meaning that the terminology does not necessarily have to be the same in two departments with the same work tasks as local abbreviations, slang and jargon is developed. The terminology can vary a great deal and is therefore subject to misunderstandings and miscommunication (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). This means that distributed teams are further challenged in the communication area. In many cases members of distributed teams will not be speaking the same language and will most likely have to communicate in different languages than their own and therefore, try to establish common terminology and shared understandings of what things mean.

Information sent out to employees needs a certain filter since there is a fine line between receiving too much information or not enough. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) argue that too much information will cause stress as well as lack of control and overview. "*Well functioning communication in organizations is not just a question of quantity, but also on the recipient's opportunities to benefit from the information*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 248). This however can also create asymmetry in the information stream, meaning that information can be distributed unequally. According to Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) the information asymmetry can cause information to be hidden, which then will cause a difference in how well informed people are. Furthermore they argue that the asymmetry can lead to actions that are unfavourable (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). Cramton and Hinds (2005) supports this by stating that the asymmetry in information flow can lead to dissociative attitude towards other team members, which can lead to task inefficiency (Cramton & Hinds, 2005).

Since well-functioning communication in distributed teams are essential for efficiency and success, the team is also at risk of encountering some of the communication issues. It is therefore important to make sure that the communication does not end in misunderstandings or miscommunication. Making sure that the participating parties have the same understanding of communication as well as the language and terminology used is a step in the right way. Furthermore it is important that all parties are well informed but not overloaded with information. The information must be 'filtered' without leaving out any important details.

6.0 Analysis

As described in the methodology section Kvale's (1997) fifth step is the analysis (Kvale, 1997). According to the hermeneutical approach it is not possible to stay fully objective when researching. The researcher's horizon of understanding will impact the researched and according to Fuglsang (2005) the analysis start the minute the researcher starts researching (Fuglsang, 2005). This means that a presentation of the case could not be done without starting the analysis. This is due to the fact that a presentation of the case can be defined as a staging of the information. This means that it is not everything that is presented, the information has been sorted and this is part of the analysis step of the process. Therefore the presentation of the case and a more in debt description of the problem has not been presented until now.

The follow section contains the analysis, which begins with a description of the evaluation problems for ITSS. Following the case description are the sections, which will analyse the data in accordance to the theories. The analysis takes its starting point in the communicational problems with the evaluations. The communicational challenges can be divided into the technical difficulties and the motivational challenges.

First the technical difficulties will be analysed with a basis in the formal/informal communication and the theory of media richness. Here the richness of the medias used during the evaluations will be analysed in an effort to determine the media that yields the best outcome. The media effectiveness will lead to an analysis of the formal and informal communication, which has had an impact on how the evaluations are performed.

The next section of the analysis will examine the motivational challenges, which will be based on Cramton and Hinds (2005) theory on how to benefit from communicating differences (Cramton & Hinds, 2005). Schein's (1984) problem areas will be merged with the motivation and it will be examined if any of the problem areas are not fully developed within the group (Schein, 1984). It will be examined if any of the developed problem areas are openly discussed or tacit. Furthermore the analysis will contain an examination of the trust, and how it is build and maintained between the employees, the management team, and with the customers. Moreover the analysis will look at the issues concerning communication and will present issues that ITSS is faced with. Lastly is a section with the analysis findings, which will lead to the next chapter containing the discussion.

6.1 ITSS's communication issues

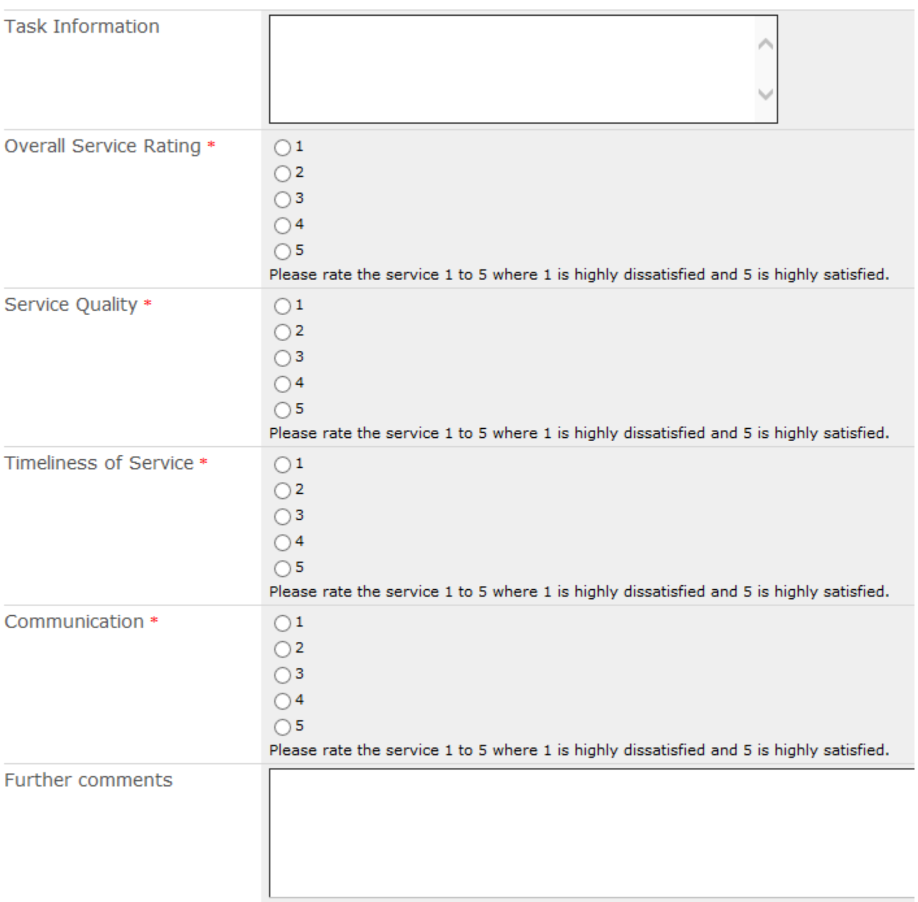
ITSS is a team within the IT division with around 30 employees divided between Denmark and India. ITSS provides services with compliance, test and administrative tasks. The compliance tasks are primarily compliance reports, such as remarks and non-conformity reports, and support for internal audits. The main test tasks are development of test cases and the execution of these. Within the administrative area ITSS supports functions such as archiving of business critical information, economic support, training of employees, tracking and updating employee data, intranet support etc.

The employees in Denmark are located in open office structures whereas the employees in India are sitting in cubicles, and there are therefore a lot of opportunities for both the Danish and the Indian employees to interact with their local colleagues. For instance there are open kitchens where the employees can get coffee, snacks etc. and chitchat with each other. On an everyday basis the communication between DK and IN is based on emails and instant messages or phone calls. The everyday interactions that a DK employee has with an IN colleague is limited to interactions via IT, whereas the face-to-face interactions are limited to each of the countries (Appendix 2). Moreover the Danish and the Indian side of the team hold a monthly online meeting. This monthly meeting is used to discuss the progress of the combined team, and to plan for future tasks. Moreover the Indian and Danish teams each have their own teambuilding days. In an effort to make a socially and work-related connection with the Danish employees, the new Indian colleagues visit Denmark.

Every time a task is delivered from ITSS the evaluation process is set in motion, and this provides to some extend information on how the team is performing and what might need to be changed. The process of the evaluation will be described in more detail in the next paragraph. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that "a*ny kind of management, coordination and control requires the existence of information about what is going on in the organisation*" (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008, p. 265). Therefore the information about the service performance is valuable information for the management team and it is essential that the information is accurate. The Danish manager describes that the Indian part of the team is supposed to take full control and responsibility of their tasks within 2016. Combined with the fact that any changes to the services are mainly based on the evaluations, it is important that the evaluations give an accurate picture of the service satisfaction (Appendix 4).

The Danish and the Indian team work in collaboration across the borders to deliver a range of services. Once a service is delivered the task requester will receive an evaluation form. When a task request is created it is placed in a task list on ITSS's website. As the task is completed the task requester receives an email with a link to the evaluation form.

9. Evaluation form



Task Information

Overall Service Rating *
1
2
3
4
5
Please rate the service 1 to 5 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 5 is highly satisfied.

Service Quality *
1
2
3
4
5
Please rate the service 1 to 5 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 5 is highly satisfied.

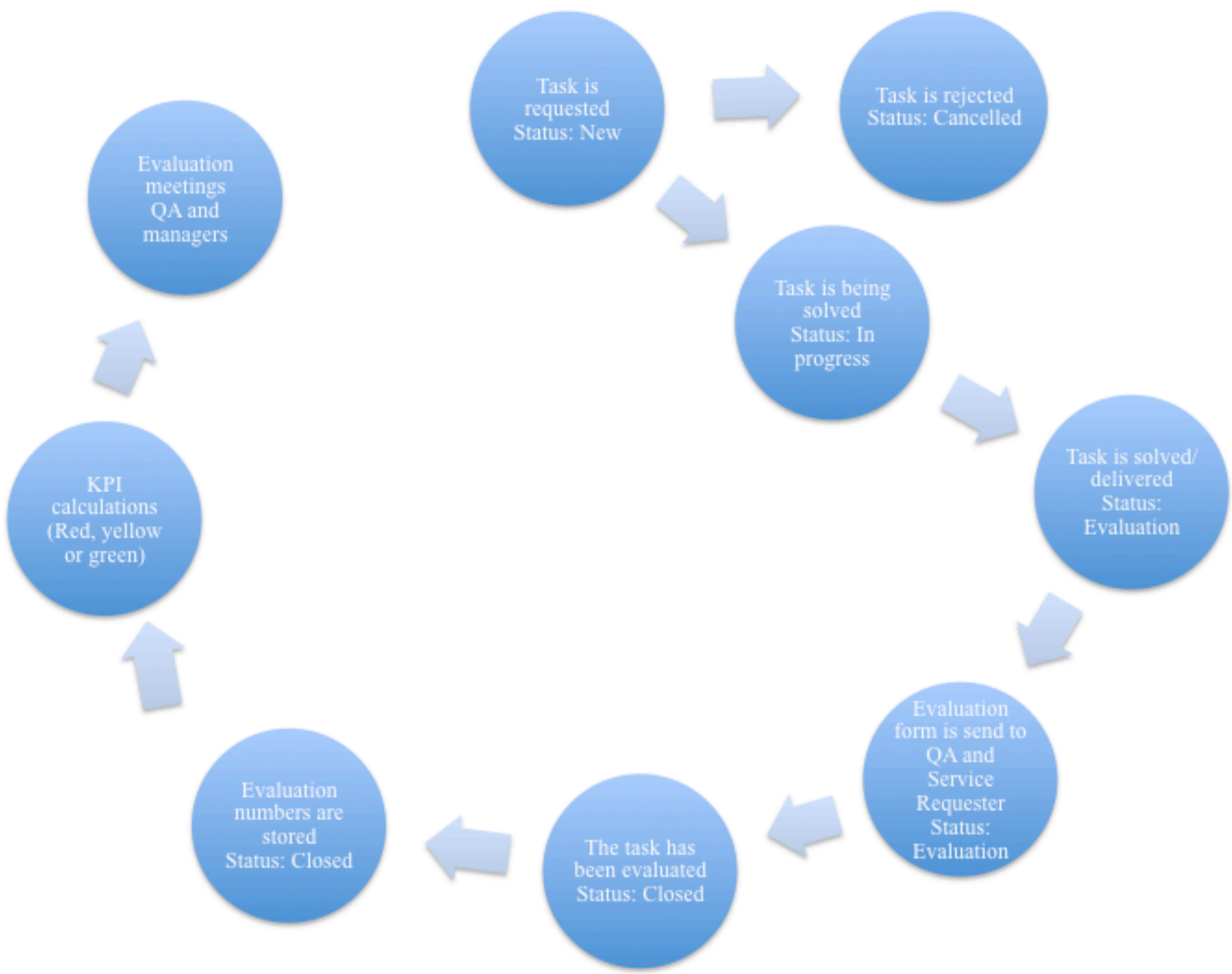
Timeliness of Service *
1
2
3
4
5
Please rate the service 1 to 5 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 5 is highly satisfied.

Communication *
1
2
3
4
5
Please rate the service 1 to 5 where 1 is highly dissatisfied and 5 is highly satisfied.

Further comments

Here the task requester is asked a series of questions regarding the task and is asked to evaluate it on a scale from 1-5. These are primarily based on questions regarding the quality, speed and satisfaction of the services. For each question the evaluator has the option to leave an explanatory comment. This questionnaire has been a part of the evaluation process for several years. Once a month the scores are put into an excel sheet to calculate the past months average score for each of the services. The process of the evaluations are depict in the model below.

10. Evaluation process



However the Danish manager noticed that the scores presented did not correspond with the verbal evaluations he received when making his usual round on the floor. The manager explains that he sees it as a problem that the Indian employees never receive the full picture of the evaluations (Appendix 4) "*On one hand is how the evaluations are being portrayed in the evaluation forms and on the other hand is the perception of the service. It is problematic that Indian does not receive the real perception of the service that has been delivered*" (Appendix 1). The Danish manager receives informal feedback from the task requesters when he walks the hallways. This informal feedback is not directly transferred to India from the Danish task requester. The Danish manager explains that the Danish task requesters have a better relation to the Danish employees than the Indian employees. The Danish manager describes that this missing relation to the Indian employees makes it easier for the Danish task requester to approach a Danish employee with a problem. For the Danish task requester to make an Indian employee aware of a problem or dissatisfaction with the service, they need to formulate a formal email to India (Appendix 4).

The management team has made an effort to tell the evaluators that it is better to give constructive criticism than to give a false evaluation. According to the Danish manager it is difficult for people to give a low score in the evaluation and he explains this with the fact that it is difficult for the evaluators to evaluate a service and not the person delivering the service. "*We try to tell them that they are to assess a service and not a colleague. They need to evaluate depending on the service that were delivered to them and not depending on the employee that delivered the service to them*" (Appendix 1). Since the formal written evaluations are different from the informal talk that the manager had with the task requesters, the management team decided that a new approach was necessary. This was done to get a richer picture of the service evaluations and they therefore implemented the quarterly evaluation meetings. Here the evaluators have the opportunity to give their input to the service and any suggestions for improvements are discussed. This meeting is held online in order for both Danish and Indian employees/managers to participate.

Several of the services provided by ITSS is a collaboration between the DK and the IN employees, but the Danish manager express that there unfortunately is a lack of teamwork across the units. Based on the information retrieved during the observations this however is not an expression for lack of willingness to work in collaboration with each other. The Danish and the Indian employees are all engaging in both the Monday meetings etc. observed. The Danish employees know each other and the same goes for the Indian employees, but there is a lack of a strong united community. The Danish manager explains that the team has grown to a size where it is difficult to get to know all the employees on a more personal level. It has therefore become a regional responsibility for the managers to know their employees and their strengths. The employees from both countries need to know more about each other than their name and area of expertise. According to the Danish manager it is hard to work together in a team if there is no personal connection. "*If we do not have that personal impression of each other it is really difficult*" (Appendix 1). This should entail a deeper understanding of how each employee acts and think within the work environment. According to the manager, this understanding of each other would also yield a better and more open communication about the services delivered and the evaluations (Appendix 5).

Based on this, it is indicated that the evaluations are challenged by the communication between Denmark and India. To find the root(s) of the problem the analysis section is roughly divided into two parts; the technological side of the communication and the motivation to engage in communication. The first part is the technological side, which will look at the formal/informal communication and the medias used when communicating.

6.2 Technical communication

In the theory section it is described that effective communication is essential and that there is a need for a sound understanding of both the verbal and the non-verbal communication. In order to analyse the communication, it is essential to understand how the communication is conducted and which tools are being used. The next paragraph will therefore go through the medias used to communicate during the evaluation process, and based on the theory introduced earlier, I will analyse these. Hereafter the media richness will be connected to the formal/informal communication and it will present the challenges which the medias used create in relation to the formal/informal communication.

6.2.1 Media richness

In the theory section the media richness theory was introduced and it was argued that even though the theory has its disadvantages because of its age, the theory is still relevant. Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008) describe that for the framework to cope with the technological development it needs the following factors; speed, richness, parallelism, preparation and storage (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). In the following each of the five points will be used to analyse the medias used in the evaluation process in ITSS.

The medias used during the evaluation process in ITSS are; written evaluation forms, slides during the meetings, evaluation meetings, and face-to-face communication. However the evaluations meetings are limited to online meetings and not direct face-to-face, which will presumably affect the richness. The conference calls and the slides are the medias used during the evaluation meetings. The written evaluation forms are, as described earlier, subject to monthly calculations and these are therefore also analysed. In the following table the medias are rated high, medium or low within the five factors from Jacobsen and Thorsvik (2008).

11. Evaluations media richness

	Speed	Richness	Parallelism	Preparation	Storage
Face-to-face	High	High	Low	Low	Low
Conference calls	High	Medium	Low	High	Low
Slides	Low	Low	High	High	High
Written evaluation forms	Low	Low	High	High	High

The face-to-face conversation is high on speed and richness and this also goes for the conference calls. However the conference calls have been rated medium in the above table, and this is due to the lack of some of the five senses. As mentioned in the methodology section we use all five senses during a conversation, but unfortunately it is not all the five senses that translate through the online medias. For ITSS this means that their evaluation meetings will always lack some of the senses. The face-to-face conversation is rated low in preparation and storage. The reason for the conference calls to be rated high in the preparation is that these are usually scheduled opposite the face-to-face conversation that can occur spontaneously. The storage however could be improved by recording conversation even though this would create a massive load of information. Perhaps this would be an overload and would therefore be a disadvantage rather than a gain.

The conference calls have been rated low on parallelism and storage but high on preparation. As with the face-to-face conversation, the conference calls could be recorded which would enhance the storage, but perhaps it is too high a cost considering the overload. The Danish manager explained that the division, which ITSS is part of, have installed a new screen in their kitchen. The idea with these screens was to let the employees have coffee and a more casual conversation with other employees that were not geographically located in the same place as them. This would decrease the preparation in comparison to the conference call, however the Danish manager noticed that the screens were not being used (Appendix 5). The face-to-face and the conference calls are both rated low in the parallelism since it is hard to actively participate in more than one conversation of this kind at the same time, opposed from a chat where it is possible to switch from chat to chat and therefore be in more than one conversation at the time.

The slides from the evaluation meeting and the evaluation forms are both rated low in speed and richness. The speed is rated low based on the actual time from sender to receiver. The richness is rated low on both due to the lack of senses and in particular body language. As mentioned in the theory section, body language is 55% of the communication (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). The slides and the evaluation forms are both written communication medias and are therefore rated high on parallelism, preparation, and storage.

The question then is if the medias used in the evaluation process are rich enough, or if the combination of several medias is a good way to overcome some of the challenges. If the medias are combined one might compensate for the lack of one or more of the others. Hales (1986) argues that "*patterns of communication vary in terms of what the communication is about and with whom the communication is made*" (Hales, 1986, p. 104). It is therefore important to understand what is communicated and to whom, before the media is chosen. As for the evaluations they are used to measure the performance of the services delivered and in some form to evaluate if any changes to the tasks are desirable. Since the conference call allows for most the senses to be part of the conversation and it has a quick response time it is optimal for a more in depth clarification of the evaluation. However the written material lays a good foundation for the conversation. Moreover the written material gives the employees something they can return to on a later point. By this I mean that the employees are able to look up solutions to already solved problems and they are able to use them in the future. They are also able to look over the material even after the meeting that might spike a new learning that can be useful for any future tasks.

However Arnold and Randall (2010) argue that is not possible to isolate the technical issues in communication. "*Ignoring the human and social aspects and just focusing on the technical issues is bound to lead to failure*" (Arnold & Randall, 2010, p. 369). It is essential to look at the human and social aspects as well, which is why the next paragraph will look further into the formal and informal communication.

6.2.2 Unofficial evaluations

In the theory section it is described that the informal communication is an important part of the overall communication. This informal communication gives way for the employees to obtain more information on both their co-workers and the organisation. For ITSS this informal communication is a challenge, and the Danish manager describes that the Indian colleagues are prone to be silence when given a chance to communicate informal. "*It has to be very necessary and they have to be under pressure to talk to the Danish employees*" (Appendix 1). Here the Danish manager is talking about the Indian employees and their willingness to share informal or personal information during the Monday meetings. The Danish manager states that part of these monthly Monday meetings are intended for an informal and more personalised conversation (Appendix 5).

In ITSS part of the evaluation process is to hold quarterly meetings. These meetings are set up to promote the communication line between Indian and Denmark, and to make sure that any input, ideas, improvement suggestions etc. to the services are aired. According to the theory the employees need to know one another on an informal level in order to communicate optimal. In this case the Danish employees need to know the Indian employees well enough in order for them to be able to give constructive criticism. The Danish Manager argues that the personal meeting between employees cannot be replaced by any kind technology. "*Once we have met in real life, and gotten to know one another, then this forms a basis for the conversation that we can then later use in conference calls, mails etc. If we did not have that real life personal impression then it would be really hard*" (Appendix 1).

One of the issues with the evaluations might be that the employees rate the service higher because they do not know the Indian employees, whom they are evaluating, on a personal level. The evaluators do not want to offend the evaluated with a poor evaluation. It might be that it is easier to deliver constructive criticism to people that we know on a personal level. The Danish manager however argues that it is not the employee that should be evaluated but the services that were delivered. "*They have to base their evaluation on the service and not the employee delivering the service*" (Appendix 1). The Danish manager argues that for the evaluations to be honest and true, they have to be based on the service and not the employee. He further explains that this is hard to get people to fully understand. The evaluators still fell as if they are evaluating an employee (Appendix 4).

6.3 Motivation

Even though it might be difficult to talk openly about the cultural differences between Indian and Denmark as well as the common culture within the group, it is essential that this communication is functional. In the next paragraph I will go through the mutual positive distinctiveness model from Cramton and Hinds (2005) and analyse how differences are communicated within ITSS (Cramton & Hinds, 2005). This will be combined with the trust theory and Schein's (1984) internal integration theory (Schein, 1984).

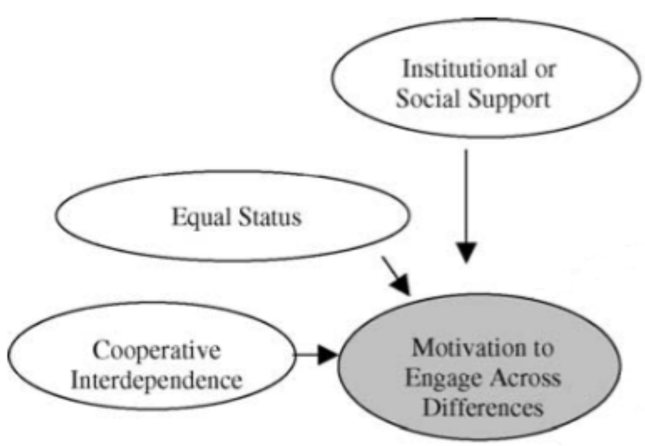
Cramton and Hinds (2005) model of mutual positive distinctiveness were introduced in the theory section and it will now be used to point out any of the contributing factors that can determine if the team has 'subgroup salience' or 'ethnorelativistic cross-national learning'. The model consists of five contributing factors, which leads to 'motivation to engage across differences' and 'information sharing'. These are then affected by and affect the mutual positive distinctiveness, which can lead to a positive outcome in the form of cross-national learning or the negative of subgroup ethnocentrism (Cramton & Hinds, 2005).

For the team to achieve cross-national learning it is important to have a strong culture. Schein (1984) introduces his table with problems regarding internal integration, which includes language, boundaries, power and status, intimacy, rewards and punishments, and ideology as the main problem areas (Schein, 1984). These are all areas that have an influence on the culture in ITSS and it is important to the common understanding of the culture that all the areas are commonly understood and agreed upon.

6.3.1 Motivation to engage across differences

In the left part of the model is the 'institutional or social support', which can lower the ethnocentrism. This could be an event that supports the motivation to engage across the differences. If these events are supported by either the organisation or have social support they are more likely to result in a reduction in ethnocentrism. As mentioned above, the Danish manager explained that the Indian employees usually travel to Denmark to meet their Danish colleagues. This is done in an effort to engage across borders and let the new employees be introduced to their Danish colleagues. Observation number three from the everyday observations show one of these encounters (Appendix 2). Here the Indian employees are visiting Denmark and with both institutional and social support they are engaging with the Danish employees over a non-work related lunch (Appendix 3).

12. Motivation to engage across differences



(Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 246)

During an observation of the everyday interactions a Danish colleague sent an email with an invitation to a celebratory dinner. The email was sent to the Danish employees and two of the Indian colleagues who were visiting Denmark during the celebration. In the email it was stated that all the employees were invited to a balls celebration, which is a dinner that celebrates that the team has collected a certain amount of ping-pong balls based on their productivity. Inviting the Indian employees to the event allowed for both the Danish and the Indian employees to engage with an institutional and social support. However Schein's (1984) fourth problem area is the intimacy, where the boundaries of openness and intimacy should be clear to the members of the group. It contains both spoken/written and implicit rules about how to behave in the group (Schein, 1984). Most of the Danish employees understood the email as an internal joke about the balls, however someone not involved into the joke could misunderstand it. To avoid any misunderstandings the Danish manager sent a second email to the Indian colleagues explaining the balls celebration (Appendix 3). This shows that there are different ways of behaving in the group and that it could prove beneficial to have a set of commonly understood guidelines on how to interact and behave.

Normally it is only the Danish employees participating in these events and by inviting the Indian employees they broke down the boundaries around the event. According to Schein's (1984) table of internal integration the second problem area is the boundaries. A group needs to have clear rules of who is part of the group and who is not (Schein, 1984). Overall for ITSS the boundaries are the hierarchy, which shows who is part of the specific department. The same goes for the boundaries of their customers. Each of the customers is bound by a contract that states what services ITSS are to provide for them and how payment is performed. However it is not only the formal written agreements, which determine the members of the group. For ITSS it is also important to nurture the relations with colleagues in other departments and vendors outside the organisation. The Danish manager explains that it is important to nurture especially the relationships with the task requesters. This is done in an effort to improve the communication with them. The Danish manager describes that it is positive for them to keep an open mind towards their customers needs (Appendix 5).

The second bubble on the left in model 7 is 'equal status'. An unequal status between groups will increase the ethnocentrism and decrease the motivation to engage. This should also be the case for

ITSS, however the Danish manager describes that the Indian employees have a certain respect for the organisational hierarchy and that they see the Danish employees as being higher than themselves in the hierarchy (Appendix 4). Looking at the organisational chart of ITSS there is a manager in India and a manager in Denmark and these are at the same level in the hierarchy. Under these are the employees, who are ranked the same in the organisational chart. However there is a status difference between the employees according to their job description. According to the Danish manager there is also a hierarchical differences experienced by the Indian employees. "*The Indian employees has a certain respect for the organisational hierarchy, and they see the Danish employees as being above them in the hierarchy*" (Appendix 1). Even though the employees are of the same hierarchical status there might still be a perceived difference. This will, according to Schein (1984), cause for a drift between the employees, due to the fact that they do not agree on the pecking order. Schein (1984) describes that the group needs a consensus on the pecking order for them to be able to manage any aggressions (Schein, 1984).

These different views of the hierarchy are a challenge for the motivation to engage, since it can create invisible and tacit walls between the employees. Moreover the Danish manager explains that there is a big difference between how the Danish and the Indian employees view work status, social standing, experience, and gender. The Danish manager explains that in his experience the Indian employees tend to attribute these things more value than the Danish employees (Appendix 5). The hierarchy has an influence on the communication. The Indian employees are more likely to be concerned about an employee's ranking in the organisational hierarchy, meaning that they are more likely to communicate with someone of the same organisational hierarchical status as them self. On the other hand, the Danish employees do not give the hierarchical status the same importance in regards to who to contact. This results in the Indian employees being more hesitantly than the Danish employees towards contacting someone who is of a higher hierarchical status (Appendix 4).

The third bubble farthest to the left is 'cooperative interdependence'. This means that the group members are more likely to be motivated to overcome the differences within the group if they have a common goal to aim for. The upper management team in Denmark has set goals for the teams as to how successful they need to be. This is for instance measured in the feedback received through the evaluations. The Danish manager explains that ITSS is using the Monday meetings to discuss the common goals for the department. These common goals could inspire the motivation to overcome the difference within the team. However the Danish manager expresses a concern about the difference between what is perceived as being achieved and what reality shows, when the evaluations show a better picture of the service satisfaction than actually is the case (Appendix 4). 'Institutional or social support', 'equal status' and 'cooperative interdependence' contributes to 'motivation to engage across differences'. As the Danish manager puts it, we are all motivated by different things (Appendix 4). It is essential to promote the motivation to engage despite the differences.

According to the Danish manager there is a difference in what the employees see as heroic or undesired behaviour and what should be rewarded and punished. Moreover there is a difference in what the rewards and the punishment are. The Danish manager describes in the interview that when a mistake happens, it is in the interest of the organisation to figure out why it happened to avoid it in the future. It is standard procedure to make this investigation and document all the steps that were taken to improve the specific process. However the Danish manager explains that the Danish employees are better at taking responsibility for their mistakes than the Indian colleagues. The Danish employees take responsibility of their mistakes and are interested in finding a solution to avoid the same mistake in the future, whereas the Indian employees are more reluctant and tries to direct the problem towards someone else. The Danish manager describes that it has been difficult to describe to the Indian employees that it is okay to fail sometimes. According to him they are afraid of failing and the consequences for their reputation. However the Danish management team keep trying to teach the Indian employees that it is more beneficial to learn from your mistakes instead of running from them (Appendix 5).

A high level of cooperative interdependence yields a high level of trust. Talking and being honest about trust builds trust, however this is easier said than done. For ITSS trust is an important factor in achieving success with their service deliveries. There has to be trust between the employees, between the employees and the management, and between the team and their customers. For the management team it is important that the evaluations can be trusted to show a correct overview of the service satisfaction. Moreover it is important to let the evaluations speak and not be afraid of the result.

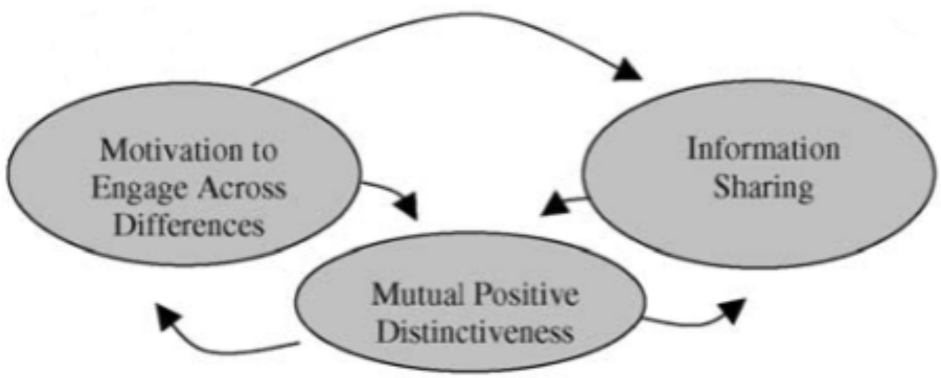
Feedback requires trust. The Danish manager described that the Indian employees have some concerns about constructive criticism and that they, in his experience, are afraid that it will reach someone higher than them in the hierarchy (Appendix 4). In Flores and Solomon's (2003) model of trust the Indian employees are either 'suspicious until' or 'trust until' depending on the level of trust establish. The Danish manager argues that the trust towards the Indian colleagues has been established but that this might only be clear to the management in India and not the employees. This means that the Indian employees are 'suspicious until', which can affect their relationship with both their colleagues and the customers.

A large portion of the evaluations are done by Danish task requesters, which means that the Indian manager is located far away from the problems with the inconsistencies of the evaluations. The Danish manager expresses a concern that the Indian manager is not able to have a hands-on understanding with these problems. The Danish manager is able to take a walk down the halls of the office and have a face-to-face informal conversation with the Danish task requesters, whereas the Indian manager is forced to have a more formal conversation with them (Appendix 4). The Indian manager is an 'optimist' according to the trust model since he does not have any reason not to trust the information that he receives from the evaluations. However now that it has become evident that there is an inconsistency between the written evaluations and the actual service satisfaction, the Indian manager has reason to doubt the information which he receives. The Indian manager has therefore moved to the 'suspicious until'.

The Danish management team have up until now acted as an older brother for the Indian team, but according to the Danish manager, it is time for them to grow into their role and be more independent. The Danish manager explains that the employees are more likely to succeed if they are given the best preconditions. "*Therefore it must be my job to make sure that the employees has the optimal leeway to succeed*" (Appendix 1). Since the Danish manager has a personal contact with the Danish employees, he is more likely to succeed with this. Therefore it should be up to the Indian manager to plan for the Indian employees and their task load. However this requires that there is a high level of trust between the Danish and the Indian part of the team. The Danish manager explains that it is important to be able to trust your colleagues and to do so is it important to have a personal connection (Appendix 5). "*The* *reassurance that we are able to share some of the challenges is very difficult to establish*" (Appendix 1). Here the Danish manager is referring to the geographical distance between the employees, and according to him it is extremely difficult to establish this connection via e.g. Skype.

'Motivation to engage across differences' affects 'information sharing'. The next paragraph will analyse the right hand side of the model, which affect the information sharing. The paragraph will end with an analysis of the information sharing and how it is affected by the motivation to engage across differences.

13. Mutual positive Distinctiveness



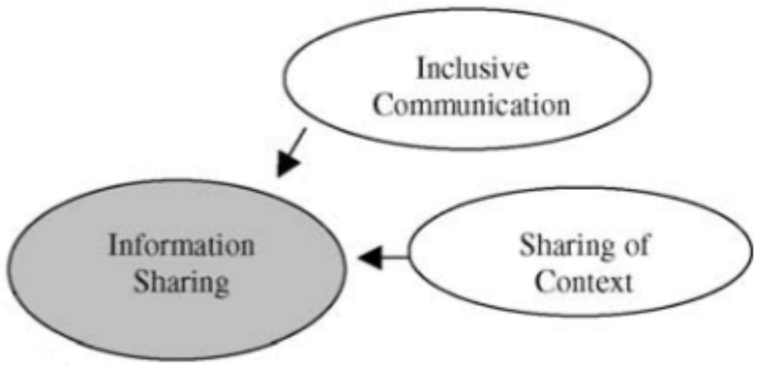
(Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 246)

6.3.2 Information sharing

In the top right corner of Cramton and Hinds' (2005) model is the 'inclusive communication', which should give the employees the opportunity to know each other and to share important information without overloading (Cramton & Hinds, 2005). According to the Danish manager, the Monday meetings should also be used to share information which is not work related. The employees should be able to talk about anything and this should enable them to get a better understanding of each other (Appendix 4). By "*transferring team members between sites*", the team could boost their sharing of inclusive information (Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 256). In the interview, the Danish manager explains that it is normal for new employees to travel to the other site and visit their colleagues there. This is done in an effort to let the new employees interact with each other and get to know their colleagues.

Moreover it is done so that the colleagues are given a chance to get to know the new employee (Appendix 5).

14. Information sharing



(Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 246)

Inclusive information about the tasks is according to the Danish manager important for the employees. They need to know how their tasks fit into the bigger picture and more importantly that they know the importance of the tasks that they are performing. Especially the importance of the tasks has not been communicated clearly enough to the Indian employees. According to the Danish manager, the Indian employees would feel a greater ownership of the tasks, which would yield a greater success feeling for them if they understood the bigger picture (Appendix 4). However it seems as is if it difficult to fully describe the larger setting of a task. Moreover it is important that there is a level of trust between the management team and the employees. The management team needs to trust that their employees are fully capable of succeeding with the task they are presented to. For the Danish manager it is extremely difficult to spot if the Indian employees are very busy or it is a bit more blunt in regards to the task level. This must therefore be a task for the Indian manager, which means that the trust between the managers has to be high (Appendix 5). When communicating, and especially when giving constructive criticism, the content of the message is important. It is therefore essential that both the sender and the receiver understand the language, that the terminology used are understood by both parties, and that there is no information asymmetry.

It is important that there is a commonly agreed upon language and jargon when communicating inclusively. Schein's (1984) first area of internal integration is language and at Novo Nordisk English is the standard language. All new employees are introduced to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), which are documents that describe how things work within Novo Nordisk. In one of the SOPs it is described that employees are to use English when communicating both internally and externally. The SOP also includes a small dictionary for some of the common abbreviations used within Novo Nordisk as well as a short list of how certain words are to be used and spelled. There are therefore clear rules as to which language to use when communicating. To ensure that all employees are trained in the SOPs, they are assigned to them in a system where they are to electronically sign for having read and understood it. In the material from the evaluation meetings it can be seen that English is used in both Denmark and India to communicate.

The second bubble on the right hand side is the 'sharing of context', which means that members in a group should share information that will make it easier for other members to understand their behaviour. During the observations it became clear that the Danish and the Indian employees work differently, and the Danish manager supports this by stating that there is a difference in how work is completed, depending on where the employee is located. In India they are keen on working with checklists and they are more likely to succeed if the task has a specific written goal, whereas the Danish employees fells restrained by checklists and are more comfortable with tasks were they have to be creative in figuring out the solution (Appendix 4). "*In Denmark, we try to establish such list for the task that India is supposed to solve. This yields a better result from India*" (Appendix 1). This understanding of their working habits makes it easier for the Danish employees to understand how the Indian employees work the best and how they behave in work situations (Appendix 4).

Sharing of context also entails information regarding ideology and religion. In ITSS there are several ideologies or religions, meaning that there are several regional religions and a Novo Nordisk ideology. The regional religions such as Christianity, Hinduism or Atheists provide a personal religion or ideology for the employees. These religions are individual and since there are several within the team it could cause for clashes, however based on the observations this is not the case. Novo Nordisk as organisation has an ideology which is not tied to a specific religion. This ideology is to serve as a common understanding of the organisation and its operation. The employees are therefore able to have their own regional religion but they are taught to follow the organisations ideology. The Novo Nordisk ideology also serves as a common understanding of the organisation, which adds to the inclusive information.

Moreover there is a difference in how negative information or constructive criticism is perceived. Sharing these differences would expand the teams sharing of context information. According to the Danish manager there is a difference between how the Danish and the Indian employees respond to the evaluations. If a Danish employee gets a low score in an evaluation, the Danish employee is likely to call the evaluator to get a detailed explanation, while the Indian employee calls the evaluator asking for a better rating. The Danish manager explains that this might be because the Indian employees have better success when they are given checklists to follow and when they follow them, they expect to get a high rating (Appendix 4). However, as described earlier, it could also be linked to the fact that the Indian employees are afraid to look bad in the light of someone who is higher ranked in the hierarchy than them. Moreover it has been argued that the Indian employees see their Danish colleagues as superior and they could be nervous not to get the recognition from the Danish employees.

'Inclusive communication' and 'sharing of context' leads to and affect 'information sharing'. It is important for a group to obtain knowledge about the differences and similarities within the group since it could strengthen the teamwork. The amount of employees has, according to the Danish manager, become too large to make teambuilding across the sites. However he explains that, in his opinion, it is beneficial to get to know the employees face-to-face before making work related interactions via e.g. Skype (Appendix 4).

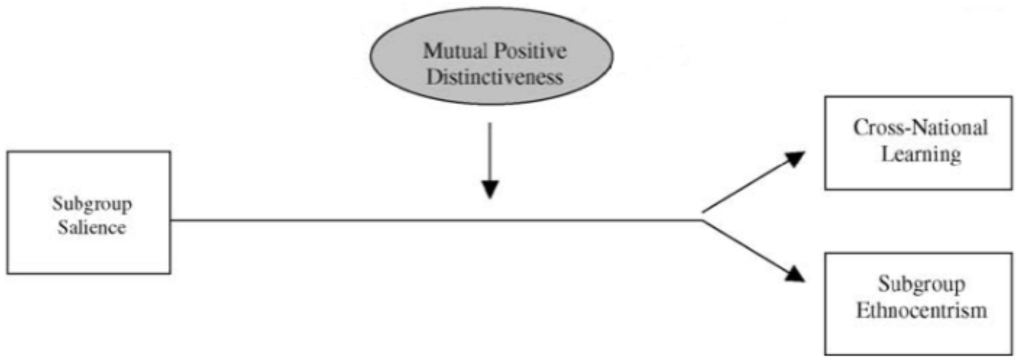
Moreover Schein (1984) describes that shifting employees can weaken a culture (Schein, 1984). "*If a group has had constantly shifting memberships or has been together only for a short time and has not faced any difficult issues, it will, by definition, have a weak culture*" (Schein, 1984, p. 7). The Danish manager describes that the Indian culture yields a different perspective on changing jobs during your career. "*There is an expectation about the mobility*" (Appendix 1). According to the Danish manager it is a part of the Indian work culture that an employee should either be promoted or switch job every second year, whereas the Danish employees tends to stay for a lot longer. There is therefore a higher turnover in employees in India than in Denmark (Appendix 5). This can weaken the team culture and it is therefore essential for ITTS to communicate openly about their group culture and let it keep evolving.

According to the Danish manager there is a higher turnover of employees in India than in Denmark, which creates a higher demand for a well-implemented knowledge transfer system. In other words, it is important to transfer the knowledge accumulated while working at Novo Nordisk to the new employees. This higher turnover is also shown in appendix 6, where a Danish employee explains that the reason for them to rate the service low was due to the lack of experience by the employees. It is further described that this could be improved by upping the knowledge management. In Denmark the employees are used to the fact that they will always have colleagues who are more experienced and whom they can ask questions when in doubt, whereas the Indian employees are a bit more challenged. The Danish manager explains that the Indian organisation is relatively new compared to the Danish and the organisation does therefore not have the same number of experienced employees. If the Indian employees are in doubt, they are able to ask their Danish colleagues, but according to the Danish manager they should be more independent. This means that they should be able to transfer and develop on their knowledge in an effort to be able to help each other when solving tasks (Appendix 4).

6.3.3 Mutual positive distinctiveness

In the middle of the model is ‘mutual positive distinctiveness’ which can be described as a respect for the differences among members of a group. This is affected by all of the above-mentioned factors and can contribute to the outcome of subgroup salience. Cramton and Hinds (2005) describe that the group members need to be able to see the positive in the differences within the group and use these as an advantage instead of a pitfall. For ITSS this means that they should look at their differences and take advantage of them in an effort to reach their common goal. The Danish manager argues that the difference in how the employees’ work is an advantage that benefits them. He states that it is through experience that they have discovered which tasks should be placed where in the team. There is a clear benefit from having people complete the tasks which they feel comfortable with and are experienced enough to complete with success (Appendix 4).

15. Cross-national learning or subgroup ethnocentrism



(Cramton & Hinds, 2005, p. 246)

6.3.4 Cross-national learning

In the theory section it is described how Schein (1984) argues that the culture within a group becomes stronger over time and that shared experiences helps to improve the shared culture (Schein, 1984). ITSS is a relatively new team and they have therefore not had the time to develop their culture. The Danish manager describes that especially the Indian part of the team is relatively new, they started about five years ago (Appendix 4). Schein (1984) further describes that it is important for the culture to be tested against both internal and external problems, and since ITSS has not existed for many years, they have not had the opportunity to adequately test their culture. ITSS's culture is relatively new but they have the option to let it mature and develop. The Danish manager describes that the organisation is ever growing and that they should learn from each other (Appendix 5). Letting the culture grow is according to Schein (1984) part of what makes a culture stronger (Schein, 1984).

On the button left hand of the model is the 'subgroup salience', which means that the subgroups are prominent and are likely to be obvious for the group members. These can be affected by the 'mutual positive distinctiveness' and this can be either negative for the group in the form of 'subgroup ethnocentrism' or positive in the form of 'cross-national learning'. The subgroup ethnocentrism would entail that the group resent the other group, which could be based on ignorance or lack of communication. Cross-national learning means that the group is able to understand the world and its own group through the other group's perspective. Based on the examination of the areas of the model put together with the data collected, it shows that there are some initiatives towards cross-national learning but that the communication between the groups could improve, which could lead to improvements in the conditions for the cross-national learning to flourish. The next section of the analysis will look at effective communication and what could be done to optimise it across borders.

6.4 Analysis findings

This section summaries the analysis findings from the previous section and describes the findings that have caused for further deliberations. These will be further discussed in the discussion section. Due to the Danish manager's informal conversations with the task requesters, it had become clear to ITSS that there is an inconsistency between the results of the evaluations and the actual service satisfaction. The first part examines the technological side of the communication by looking at the richness of the medias used during the evaluations and the effectiveness of the formal and the informal communication. The second part examines the motivation behind the communication and the evaluations by using Cramton and Hinds (2005) model as a main guideline. This was interwoven with Schein's (1984) 'problem with internal integration' along with theories on trust.

In the first part of the analysis it was indicated that the evaluation process were challenged by the technical limits of having the employees separated geographically. Even though ITSS has access to some of the more advanced technical equipment, there might be more for them to learn in regards to exploiting the medias. This goes both for the evaluation process and the personal contact that the manager indicates is needed. The Danish manager explains that they have installed screens in the coffee rooms with live feed to India but these are not being utilized. There might be something that could be done to improve the positive effect of having these screens. It could yield a better and more casual contact with the Indian employees. Additionally the Danish manager point out that the Indian employees are somewhat cautious about contacting their Danish colleagues to get advice on a task. This indicates that there is a tacit wall that prevents the Indian employees to reach out to colleagues sitting in a different geographical location than them, and a more personal contact might make this less outing.

Cramton and Hinds' (2005) 'mutual positive distinctiveness' model is put into ITSS' perspective. Through the experiences of working together, both the Danish and the Indian employees have made an effort to share information about their context of behaving. Together with the institutional and social support it forms the information sharing which are the differences and similarities that can strengthen the teamwork. Getting to know each other is according to the Danish manager beneficial for the future teamwork; however this is challenged by the growing size of the department. The institutional support is given through events that are encouraging the employees to engage with each other. It is clear that there are teambuilding events in the department however it is not evident that any of these are crossing the geographical border. It could be interesting to examine if it was possible to create an event that would engage both the Danish and the Indian employees and investigate the outcome of it. This will be further discussed in the next chapter.

According to the Danish manager there is a challenge in the different view of the employees' status. The Indian employees tend to see their Danish colleagues as being higher in the organizational hierarchy than themselves. The boundaries of the team are reflected in the organisational hierarchy and the contracts with the external vendors. The same goes for the power and status, meaning that especially the Indian employees attach great importance to the organisational hierarchy. The rule for behaviour and intimacy are both explicit written rules and tacit rules which makes it a minefield to navigate in. This is especially a challenge due to the different religions and norms in the team. When it comes to rewards and punishments the team has put a lot of effort into displaying that success is rewarded and failing is a natural part of the learning process. Through the common goals of the services, ITSS is able to create corporative interdependence and they are therefore more likely to engage with and overcome their differences. However it seems as if there is an inconsistency between the goal for the tasks and the importance. This will be further elaborated in the discussion.

Cooperative interdependence builds trust and vice versa. It is a mutual dependency that is constantly increasing each other. The Danish manager explained that there is a level of trust towards to Indian employees, however it might not have been communicated clearly enough. This affects the trust relationship between the Danish and the Indian employees. The dependency between the cooperative interdependence and trust will along with the improvement of the communication of the trust be discussed on the next chapter.

ITSS tries to create inclusive information through events or meetings such as their Monday meetings. With the inclusive information comes the language, which showed earlier there are written rules for the language, professional terms and abbreviations, but these might not be able to cover all the needs for communication within the team. The evaluations or the constructive criticism can be worded differently and the Danish manager point out that there is also a difference in how the constructive criticism is received. In the next chapter, this will lead to a discussion on how to handle constructive criticism and what might lighten any anxiety surrounding it.

The employees in ITSS have a variety of religions and they are kept as a part of their private life, except for the religious holidays. Novo Nordisk has its own ideology that the employees are to follow, but the Danish manager described that it is difficult to explain an ideology that is based on Danish values and norms. By sharing their context they employees are more likely to understand their differences in how they work. It is up for discussion in the next chapter if there is a better way to share the context of the employees, and if this would improve the Indian employees understanding of the Novo Nordisk ideology.

Information sharing and motivation to engage across differences affects and are impacted by mutual positive distinctiveness. Through joint experiences and "trial and error" they have discovered their differences in how they work, act, behave etc. and should be able to use them as an advantage. This should lead to subgroup salience or cross-national learning, however the analysis showed that ITSS still has subgroups. They are, though, making an effort to get to know and understand each other, which would yield cross-national learning. However there might be effort that would yield an even better result for them. The above described findings and the corresponding foundations will be discussed in the next chapter.

7.0 Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the analysis, whether or not these are valid and what the potential outcome might be. Additionally this chapter will discuss if the research findings could be applied to other organisations and in other settings. This chapter will lead the conclusion of the thesis. The conclusion will be based on the analytical findings and the outcomes of this discussion.

Throughout the analysis it became evident that there is a clear inconsistency within ITSS between the written evaluations and the actual perception of the service satisfaction. In the analysis section the written evaluations were presented and it was shown that the evaluator had to rate four factors on a scale from one to five. However it is not clearly stated what should be rewarded with a good score and what should result in a lover score. The evaluator is, for instance, asked to rate the timeliness of the service but how does this translate to the scale? The services have a timeline as to when they should be completed but does that mean that a delay of one day should be rated four or one? There should be a clear guideline informing both the evaluator and the receiver which actions result in which scores and how the score is affected. This could for instance be in the form of a written guide that indicated exactly what was required to receive the score of one and what was required to receive the score of five. Much the Danish grading scale has a clear guidance as to what is required to receive a certain grade.

The Danish manager describes that is they have made an effort to explain to the evaluators that it is important that they are honest in their evaluations and that they should remember that they are evaluating a service and not an employee (Appendix 4). An interesting aspect would be to investigate what the results of the evaluations would be if the evaluators did not know which employee they were evaluating. They would then be forced to evaluate the service and not the specific employee. However, the Danish manager explains that due to the content of the service it is not possible to keep the employees anonymous. If the service allowed for the evaluation to be related to the specific service delivery and not the employee, would it even be possible to just evaluate a service? If the employees performing the services were not evaluated they might still be affected or perceive it as being personal if the service that they are working with receives a bad evaluation.

Giving and receiving constructive criticism is a form of art, but what are the consequences of having the evaluations in writing? The written evaluations including comments are stored in the internal database. Writing praises can be stored and used later, which can have a positive effect. The negative comments however might seem harsh on writing, and could be interpreted as a written warning. This however is also a question of the language and the words used when giving and receiving constructive criticism. It can be argued that stating that a task is insufficient or stating that it is well on its way is more or less the same. However it is very likely that the receiver of the message will interpret the two things in quite different ways. The first way of presenting it might have a negative effect on the receiver, whereas the second option is more likely to promote motivation to keep going.

Throughout the analysis it was indicated that the Indian employees are somewhat afraid of making mistakes. The Danish manager explained that the fear of making mistakes could hinder the Indian team members from achieving an even greater success because they are hesitant to ask for help. However, the research did not provide a clear answer as to why they might be afraid of making a mistake. The Danish management team have made an effort in letting the Indian employees know that it is human to make a mistake, and that the important thing is to learn from it and then use this knowledge to improve oneself and the service. However there is no indication that the Indian employees embrace this way of thinking. It could be interesting to plan for a teambuilding event that included all the Danish and all the Indian employees and see if they achieved a better understanding of each other. This could also ensure a higher consistency between the goals within the department and the understanding of how important these are.

It became clear to the management team that the communication in the evaluation process was not sufficient enough to display the actual satisfaction with the service delivery. Therefore the evaluation process changed to include the evaluation meetings, but one of the major questions is; if it really improved anything? To get to the bottom of this it would have been beneficial to create a study that would investigate the process before the evaluation meetings and after they were implemented. Based on the findings in the analysis it is indicated that the management team is interested in finding a solution to the problem with the evaluation. However, the analysis did not indicate that the motivation was high enough to do a deeper investigation in an effort to find the optimal solution for the evaluations. Additionally it would be interesting to examine if either time or money also played an important factor for the motivation. This could be explained by the fact that the evaluations are not the main goal for the department it is a secondary process for maintaining and updating the services. So why would it be in the interest of ITSS to find a better solution for the evaluations? Would they not just let it be? To find the optimal solution for the evaluation process it is important that they start looking forward and figure out their common goal for the evaluations.

This thesis has focused on the challenges with the evaluations in regard to ITSS being a distributed team, but would the problems be the same if the team was part of a locally based company? In the analysis it became evident that the evaluations are challenged by the fact that they do not portray an accurate picture of the service satisfaction. I would argue that a locally based company would be likely to encounter the same problems if the evaluations did not have a commonly agreed upon basis or standard of reference. It is important that both the evaluator and the person receiving the evaluations agree upon the content of the evaluations and the factors that determine the score in the evaluation. Throughout the analysis it became evident that the evaluations are challenged by the fact that the evaluators have a tendency to evaluate the person delivering the task rather than evaluating the specific service that was delivered. If the company was locally based it might have been a different problem since we all do tacit things that are part of our norms and basic assumptions. A locally based company might therefore not be challenged by the differences within the team.

8.0 Conclusion

This chapter will conclude on the analytical findings and the discussion. Based on the findings I will make some recommendations for ITSS in relation to how they could improve the evaluation process. To conclude this thesis, there is a section on future research, which includes options as to how this study could be broadened or could be conducted in other organisations.

The research question for this thesis is as followed; does the geographical distance challenge the evaluations in ITSS? Throughout the analysis section the research question was analysed based on the theoretical framework introduced in the theory section. Here it became evident that the evaluations are challenged and for several reasons. The written evaluation form is an online evaluation and the distance does therefore not challenge the actual process of completing the evaluation. However, especially the outcomes of the evaluations are challenged by the fact that the task requester and the task performer are located in different countries. Based on the findings of the analysis and the empirical data it is concluded that one of the biggest challenge is that the written evaluations do not give ITSS an accurate and fair image of the actual service satisfaction. Therefor ITSS are kept in the dark from the fact that they are not reaching they goal for the service satisfaction.

Throughout the analysis it became evident that it is important to have an effective communication process, which allows for building trust and can increase the mutual positive distinctiveness. Fuglsang (2005) describes that it is important for the manager to set an example for the employees, this goes for both physical actions and communication (Fuglsang, 2005). For ITSS this means that the management team must and should set an example when it comes to the evaluations. In the analysis it was indicated there are differences in how the evaluations are received by the employees. Meaning that the content of the evaluations can be interpreted in different ways according to the employee reading the evaluation. The management team have made an effort to give clear explanations to the employees that evaluations are not meant as personal criticism but should be understood as constructive criticism for the service. As A.P.J Abdul Kalam puts it; "*if you fail, never give up because fail means "First Attempt in Learning"*" (PTI, 2015). It is therefore important that the management team uses the evaluations in their updates of the services; this should be done in an effort to show the employees that a lower score in an evaluation can lead to an improvement in the service process.

Based on the analysis I conclude that the use of media when communicating is important to the effectiveness of the communication. According to one of the slides from the evaluation meeting it is clear that the service requesters are asking for a more personal contact with the service provider. Therefore, the management team have communicated that when the employees are responding to an inquiry from the task requester they should always try to make a conference call rather than sending emails e.g. in order to reduce the chances of misunderstandings. The evaluation meetings were set up to minimise the informal conversations that the manager had with the task requesters, but did it solve the problem? According to the Danish manager it minimised the amount of informal conversations regarding the service satisfaction but it might not be the optimal solution. An investigation into the best solution for the evaluations might be, was not conducted prior to the evaluation meetings being implemented as part of the evaluation process.

In a follow-up conversation with the Danish manager it is described that the Indian part of the team is constantly evolving. During the process of this research the Indian part of the team has evolved and are becoming better at delivering a service that receives a high level of satisfaction from the task requesters. Additional the Danish manager explains that the improvement in the evaluations should be contributed to the fact that the task requesters are getting a better feeling for the service that is being delivered. Meaning that they know what they can expect from the services and are therefore more likely to set the bar for their satisfaction according to what can be expected from the services.

To round off the conclusion I argue that the geographical distance does challenge the evaluations in ITSS, but not the actual completion of the evaluation form. However the communication during the evaluation process and the outcome of the evaluations as well as what is expected from the evaluations is challenged by the distance.

8.1 Recommendations

Every action has consequences and not doing anything has even bigger consequences. Therefore it is essential that the evaluations are either updated or changed. The evaluations need to be functional and be a reflection of the actual service satisfaction, or it will have a real consequence for the common goal

of the team. The improvement of the evaluations and thereby also the services is an on-going process, where there are new things to learn at every step of the process.
My recommendation to ITSS is to keep the written evaluation forms, however, an update is essential. It needs to be very clear which factors that are being evaluated and on which ground. What does for instance make the difference between the scores? The evaluation forms should therefore be updated with a clear description of the factors that are being evaluated and the factors that should determine the score. Currently the online written evaluations form a basis from which the evaluation meetings are held. With a clearer standard of what the evaluations should entail and what factors are being judged by, the content of the evaluation meetings would therefore also be improved. The improvement of the effectiveness of both the evaluation and evaluation meetings should therefore affect the services, and ensure continuous learning through the use of previous evaluations.

Additionally it could be beneficial to move part of the Danish management team to Indian. As shown in the analysis the Danish manager describes that this scenario has been discussed but never carried out. Moving part of the Danish management team to India for a longer period of time would be likely to create a better foundation for personal interactions and therefore a better understanding of each other. This could lead to a better understanding of cultural differences and form a basis of mutual trust, which should lead to better teamwork and therefore result in cross-national learning.

8.2 Further research

The data collection process for this thesis took place in Denmark and interactions with India were observed during online meeting and gatherings were some of the Indian employees were visiting the office in Denmark. To broaden the perspective of this study it could have been interesting to travel to India and conduct some of the data collection, such as observations and interviews with the Indian employees. This could have resulted in a better and deeper understanding of the Indian employees and their cultural norms in their work environment and their understanding of the evaluations. Perhaps this understanding of the Indian employees and their ways of working and understanding the evaluations could have lead to a more profound understanding of what they see as necessary parts of the evaluation process, and how and what they would like to improve the evaluation methods.

This thesis focused on the evaluation process in ITSS, however, throughout the analysis and the discussion it became clear that the study could be broadened to find and test a new way of doing the evaluations. To develop and test a new version of the evaluation would require that the organisation would dedicate their time and resources to the project. For ITSS it could be of high value for them to invest in such a project since it could give them a new and improved evaluation process. Additionally it would require that the study were expanded over a longer period of time. This would allow for the evaluation process to reflect a fair image of how it is working compared to the old process. However the time and perhaps money spend could be well spend if the study ended up with a more efficient, effective and beneficial evaluation process.

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10.0 Appendix

Appendix 1 – Table of quotes

Danish quote	English translation
En ting er, hvordan evalueringerne ser ud, en anden ting er, hvordan opfattelsen af servicen er på gangen. Det er problematisk at Indien ikke får den reelle opfattelse af den service, der er blevet leveret.	On one hand is how the evaluations are being portrayed in the evaluation forms and on the other hand is the perception of the service. It is problematic that Indian does not receive the real perception of the service that has been delivered.
Det skal være meget nødvendigt og de skal være godt presset for at de siger noget til de danske medarbejdere.	It has to be very necessary and they have to be under pressure to talk to the Danish employees.
Det gængse her er jo at når vi har mødtes i virkeligheden, og lærer hinanden lidt at kende i virkeligheden så er det det der danner basis for at vi senere hen kan bevæge os over på Skype med videokonference og til mail og sådanne ting. Hvis vi ikke havde det der personlige i virkelighedens indtryk så er det rigtig svært.	Once we have meet in real life, and gotten to know one another then this forms a basis for the conversation that we can then later use in conference calls, mails etc. If we did not have that real life personal impression then it would be really hard.
De er nødt til at evaluere efter den service de får og ikke efter hvilken medarbejder der har leveret servicen til dem.	They have to base their evaluation on the service and not the employee delivering the service.
Vi forsøger at fortælle dem at de vurderer en service og ikke en kollega. De er nødt til at evaluere efter den service de får og ikke efter hvilken medarbejder der har leveret servicen til dem.	We try to tell them that they are to assess a service and not a colleague. De need to evaluation depending on the service that were delivered to them and not depending on the employee that delivered the service to them.
Hvis vi ikke havde det der personlige i virkelighedens indtryk så er det rigtig svært.	If we do not have that personal real impression of each other it is really difficult.
De indiske medarbejdere har en vis respekt for hierarki, og de ser de danske medarbejdere som værende over dem i hierarkiet.	The Indian employees has a certain respect for the organisational hierarchy, and they see the Danish employees as being above them in the hierarchy.
Der er en forventning til mobiliteten.	There is an expectation about the mobility.
Derfor må det være min opgave bare at sørge for, at de andre har et optimale spillerum for at lykkes	Therefore it must be my job just to make sure that the employees has the optimal leeway to succeed

Hele den der tryghed om at vi kan være fælles om nogle udfordringer den er rigtig svær at etablere.	The reassurance that we are able to share some of the challenges is very difficult to establish.
I Danmark prøver man at etablere sådanne lister til de opgaver, som Indien skal løse. Det giver bedre resultater fra Indien.	In Denmark, we try to establish such list for the task that Indian is supposed to solve. This yields a better result from Indian.

The following Appendix' can be found in Dropbox via the links.

To access to main appendix folder go to bit.ly/DBAppendix

Appendix 2 – Observations of everyday interactions

Link to the Dropbox file with appendix 2: bit.ly/Appendix2

Appendix 3 – Observation of Monday meeting

Link to the Dropbox file with appendix 3: bit.ly/Appendix3

Appendix 4 – Preliminary conversation with the Danish manager

Link to the Dropbox file with appendix 4: bit.ly/Appendix4

Appendix 5 – Interview with Danish manager

Link to the Dropbox file with appendix 5: bit.ly/Appendix5

Appendix 6 – Other data

Link to the Dropbox file with appendix 6: bit.ly/Appendix6

Appendix 7 – Interview guide

Link to the Dropbox file with appendix 7: bit.ly/Appendix7