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Organizational characteristics influencing superleadership in multinational companies

Master's Thesis research

Supervisor: Dr. E. Poutsma

2nd Supervisor: Dr. I. Gremmen

Student: T.C.W. Doetjes

Student number: s4152395

Mail address: tim.doetjes@student.ru.nl

Nijmegen School of Management

Radboud University Nijmegen

P.O. Box 9108

6500 HK Nijmegen

The Netherlands

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“The best of all leaders is the one who helps people so that eventually they don’t need him or her”

(Manz & Sims, 2001, p. 8)

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1. Introduction

Over the last decades, the Brazilian organization Semco has been an iconic case for empowering leadership. The CEO of Semco – Ricardo Semler – created a highly democratic environment within his organization. Employees were provided with autonomy in the decision on working hours, location, organizational strategic decisions, and even the amount of salary they received. By trusting the employees on their professional knowledge and behavior, a democratic organization was created in which employees could fill in their own activities per what they believed would be best for the organization. Ricardo Semler has been praised for his radical vision on empowering leadership multiple times through awards; has been invited as lecturer at the most influential business universities in the world; and his case is subjected to many master theses and PhD research (Herr, 2009). Large multinational enterprises (MNEs) such as IBM, General Motors, Ford, Nestlé, Siemens, and Dow Chemical have pursued to implement an organizational structure in line with the vision of Semler (Semler, 2001). However, these MNEs have not been able to achieve the full potential of empowering leadership to the extent the organization of Semco reached. The empowering leadership style exemplified by Semler has been disputed in management books and articles for its ideological character.

The concept of employee empowerment in the organizational workspace has received increasing interest over the past decades, and is aligned with the current tendency of organizations moving away from hierarchical management (Fong & Snape, 2015). In current organizational environments, organizations are less concerned with directing subordinates, but instead emphasize on supporting and empowering employees to perform (Arnold, Arad, Rhoades & Drasgow, 2000). This transformation to a less hierarchical management structure requires employees to lead themselves more, and requires organizations to exercise a strategy of empowerment amongst their employees (Arnold et al., 2000). The empowerment debate closely relates to the debate on the concept of self-leadership, since empowered employees should be able to lead themselves, and vice versa: self-leading employees should be empowered in their activities. Both concepts reinforce each other and thus are interdependent conditions for one another, and although they are extensively intertwined in ongoing debates, they are not the same. Self-leadership involves the influence people exert over themselves in order to achieve self-motivation and self-direction needed to behave in desirable ways (Manz, 1992b; Manz & Neck, 2010), while empowerment is a process exercised by a party with overarching power, such as a leader or organization, to provide a worker or a team of workers with the ability to take on roles and responsibilities that formerly were with the leader (Arnold et al., 2000).

In the leadership debate, more transactional perspectives – in which commonly known keywords are *domination, power* and *influence* – gradually made place for more relational perspectives – in which *autonomy/empowerment, learning* and *shared leadership* are keywords – (Bass, 1990; Drath, 1993; Houghton & Yoho, 2005; Parry & Bryman, 2006). These trends are characterized by a shift of responsibility towards the individual. The individual is included in leadership; is expected to continuously develop itself; and received more freedom in coping with these responsibilities. Since this trend in general requires a change of organizational structure, and a shift in organizational culture, puts great pressure on traditional responsibility and power distributions (e.g. Eylon & Au, 1999). For changing organizational structure and the adequate mindset for coping with this change, the role of leadership is of key importance (Stewart, Courtright & Manz, 2011). In the case of employee empowerment, this leads to a somewhat contrasting role for leaders in organizations. On the one hand, leaders are expected to take responsibility and initiate a change in organizational structure and culture, and simultaneously this change comprises a shift of responsibility towards the employees themselves (Arnold et al., 2000). Amongst others, these developments in organizational environments called for new and innovative leadership styles (Parry & Bryman, 2006).

In the current tendency of organizations stepping away from hierarchical management and pursue a structure in which responsibilities are shifted towards the employees, leadership is assumed to be one of the key mechanisms in fostering these structure and mindset developments (Stewart et al., 2011). Additionally, contextual developments – such as the emerging of high-tech information sharing technologies, rapid change in market developments, and increased focus on human resource capabilities – have changed the leadership focus in organizational workforce (Manz & Sims, 2001). Therefore, it is stated that the need for new and innovative styles of leadership is urgent, and in current theory this has led to the combination of the concepts of leadership, empowerment, and self-leadership in an overarching concept called superleadership (Manz & Sims, 1984a; 1984b; 1990; 2001). This concept entails a leadership style in which leaders promote self-leadership amongst their followers, and in which leaders empower their followers to cope with additional responsibilities that will shift towards them (2001). Organizational relevant knowledge is stored in the minds of the employees, rather than solely in the mind of the leader, and since empowerment tends to enhance creativity, flexibility, and efficiency, empowerment improves this exercise of knowledge (Arnold et al., 2000; Manz & Sims, 2001). Empowerment is therefore also described as the “oil that lubricates the exercise of knowledge” (Welch, in: Manz & Sims, 2001, p.20).

Based on this theoretical reasoning, the concept of superleadership is potentially beneficial for organizational practices, but not many organizations have been able to successfully integrate the concept in their approach to organizational leadership (Semler, 2001). A common explanation is that leadership in theory significantly differs from leadership in practice, due to the high context-specificity of leadership (Middlehurst, 2008). This context specificity is caused by leadership's dependence on historical and cultural frameworks; and its dependence on personalities and individual power of the organizational leaders (Middlehurst, 2008). The context-specificity complicates the practical application of leadership theories. The current body of research calls for more testing of existing leadership theories and models in practice, in order to enhance the applicability of leadership theories in organizational practice (Middlehurst, 2008; Shepard, Farmer and Counts, 1997).

Leadership is often adapted and adjusted to certain organizational settings, what is not specifically addressed by much of the literature (Middlehurst, 2008, p. 325). For example, in the superleadership theory it is assumed that superleadership is applicable to all knowledge organizations, since every individual would perform better if (s)he would be granted with more autonomy and responsibility, following psychological logic (Manz & Sims, 2001). Despite the given that the influences of task-specific conditions are subjected in an extensive body of research (e.g. Fiedler, 1964; Yukl, 1981) organizational characteristics of any kind are not included as influential factors for leadership behavior (Manz & Sims, 2001). In the case description of Semco, many MNEs have tried to achieve the success ascribed to Semler in his organization, but failed. Although the company of Semco is a Brazil-based, domestically scoped company, and the other organizations operate on a global scale, it is assumed that all knowledge organizations would perform better by enhancing a superleadership type of leadership style, without noticing deviating organizational structures and cultures (Manz & Sims, 1984a; 2001). Thus, organizational characteristics that specify and highly diversify companies are left out of consideration. There is a lack of significant empirical evidence for the influence of organizational factors, what could lead to the ideological thinking that leadership behavior would act out in the same way, regardless of the characteristics of organizations.

Especially in MNEs, the influence of organizational characteristics creates an interesting force field between global management, and local business systems (Ferner, 1997), what influences organizational leadership in practice. Organizational characteristics that are standardized for the whole organization may be implemented differently throughout the organization, due to differences in national approaches of organizing business (Edwards, Ferner & Sisson, 1996; Janssens, Brett & Smith, 1995). Comparative research in the field of

international human resource management has paid much attention to the influence of national differences in the structuring and co-ordination of work (Ferner, 1997). Where national organizational are mainly shaped by domestic business models, the influence of global corporate control systems is more complex and asks for more research (Ferner, 1997; Pudelko & Harzing, 2007). The challenges that leaders in MNEs face, are discussed in current leadership theories, but there is no universal answer on what makes a successful global leader (Dickson, Den Hartog & Mitchelson, 2003; Northouse, 2013; Rothacker & Hauer, 2014). The influence of cultural factors on leadership behavior has been examined to a relative great extent (Hostede, 1980), but the multinationalism of the organization creates a highly complex environment for leaders to operate in, leaving organizational leaders struggling with their place in the multicultural environment they operate in (Dickson et al., 2003). In the light of the increasing globalizing world, the knowledge for organizational leaders how to become successful leaders in multinational contexts will be of increasing importance.

Based on this body of literature and trends, there is a call for new leadership styles in which leadership, employee self-leadership, and employee empowerment are subjected. These topics are combined in the concept of superleadership (Manz & Sims, 2001). However, this relatively new leadership style is not working out in all sorts of organizations. There are organization-specific characteristics influencing leadership behavior within organizations, but the current body of literature lacks significant empirical evidence for disclosing the relationships of these organizational characteristics. For understanding how the concept of superleadership can be beneficial for organizations in practice, it is essential to understand these relationships. Research is needed to examine current situations in practice, and identify existing influential relationships between organizational characteristics and the concept of superleadership in MNEs.

1.1. Research objective

This research aims to contribute to the debates on leadership; empowering leadership; and self-leadership, and focuses in particular on the intersection of these debates: superleadership. The main objective of this research is to provide empirical evidence for the influence of organizational characteristics of multinational companies on superleadership. Superleadership is perceived here as a leadership style that fosters self-leadership amongst followers, and simultaneously fosters the empowering of employees. Superleadership is assumed to be successful in knowledge organizations in general (Manz & Sims, 1984b; 1990), but

organizational factors are not considered in the current state of relevant literature. This research elaborates the literature on superleadership by providing empirical research on the influences of organizational characteristics for superleadership. This research particularly focuses on multinational organizations, since they have had more trouble achieving success through empowering leadership styles, and current literature requests for research in which the complexity of these environments is incorporated (Arnold et al., 2000; Semler, 2001). The main questioning that yet to date cannot be answered is how leaders in multinational organizations could cope with the contextual influences in their organizations, with specific regards to the multinational aspects. This question cannot easily be answered, but with research that enriches our understanding on the influences of the organizational characteristics, organizations and their leaders could be more efficient in the shaping and steering of leadership behavior, which is key in changing an organization's structure and culture.

1.2. Research question

In order to achieve the research objective, the main research question is formulated as follows. *How do the organizational characteristics of multinational companies influence superleadership?*

1.3. Scientific and societal relevance

Since self-leadership has received great attention and has been praised extensively in the past decades, it is essential to know how superleadership implementation can be successful, because multiple attempts have failed to successfully implement a superleadership enhancing organizational context.

It is unclear how organizational characteristics influence superleadership. In the current body of literature is discussed what leaders can do to pursue superleadership, but these efforts would be useless if contextual or situational factors that obstruct the possibility for superleadership are not identified. The current body of literature fails to deliver this essential information, substantiated with empirical evidence. The given fact that the concept of self-leadership has received growing attention, together with the importance of leadership as a necessary component for facilitating self-leadership and empowerment, and the current body of literature failing to clearly address the influence of organizational characteristics for this leadership style, indicate the scientific relevance for empirical evidence for these influences on superleadership. Furthermore, recent research explicitly called for future studies on leadership

in which the focal point of examination is the role of organizational characteristics in shaping and constraining leader behavior (Arnold et al., 2000, p. 266).

For leaders in practice, it is considerably relevant to know how contextual and situational factors influence their leadership style. In pursuing a superleadership style, any influences stimulating or hindering the potential success of superleadership are of great importance, since they influence the success of the efforts in pursuing a superleadership style within the organization. The results of this research potentially improve organizational potency of fostering the concept of superleadership in their leaders' leadership style, by creating a better understanding of the influence of organizational characteristics on superleadership. Organizations can use this empirically founded information to better implement and/or enhance superleadership, by creating an organizational environment in which the organizational characteristics that enhance the implementation of superleadership are clearly present. By focusing on multinational organizational contexts, the outcomes of this research may be of particular interest to leaders operating in organizations comparable to the multinational and complex organization that is subjected in this research, but country – or culture specific influences may be of interest for a broader scope of organizations as well.

2. Theoretical framework

Developments in the past have shaped the context of leadership in today's organizations. To understand the nature of the current debate on leadership in scientific literature, different schools of thought that emerged in the recent history of this concept are discussed. After discussing the developments in approaches towards leadership, the concept of superleadership is discussed. In the then following sub-paragraphs, the underlying elements of the superleadership concept is examined. The final paragraph in this chapter will elaborate on the current body of research on the influence of organizational characteristics on leadership.

2.1. *Development in leadership approaches*

The overview of developments in leadership literature is structured along five approaches in literary developments, (1) the Trait approach, (2) the Style approach, (3), the Contingency approach, (4) the New Leadership approach, and (5) the Post-charismatic and Post-transformational approach (Parry and Bryman, 2006).

In the (1) trait approach, the main assumption is that a leader is born with traits that enhance their leadership qualities. The general assumption within this approach – also known as the Great Man theory – is that leaders are born rather than taught to lead. The characteristics of leaders are divided in “physical characteristics, social background, intelligence & ability, personality, task-related characteristics, and social characteristics” (Bass, 1990, p. 80). In the (2) style approach, the focus of leadership shifted from the leaders' traits towards the leaders' behavior. In this school of thought, successful leadership is perceived to be evoked by the leader's functions, roles and behavior (Bass, 1990). Because of the underlying assumption that leadership can be developed, the focus shifted from the selection and recognition of people with leadership traits, towards the training and development of potential leaders. After the shift towards a more behavioral focus, situational factors were recognized as important contextual influences, which led to the uprising of the (3) contingency approach in the 1960s. Within this approach, contextual or situational factors are considered main determinants of leadership. So not the characteristics or behavior of a leader determine the effectiveness of their leadership style, but the fit with the leader's situation. From the 1980s, several approaches to leadership emerged in which the most important leadership concepts were transformational -, visionary -, and charismatic leadership (Bass, 1985; House, 1977; Sashkin, 1988). These approaches are bundled into the (4) New Leadership approach. Finally, the latest development in leadership literature was evoked by critique on the New Leadership approach, which was criticized for the individualistic view and presentation of leaders as heroic figures who perform by themselves.

A more team based perspective emerged and resulted in the (5) Post-charismatic and Post-transformational approach, in which leadership is seen as a learning process by a group, rather than by a person. Shared and distributed leadership are central concepts in this school. These are not new concepts, since they were already brought up in earlier literature (e.g. Bass, 1990; Wren, 1995) but have only received greater attention in the last decade, with the emerging of the latter approach to leadership.

The body of literature in this last approach to leadership has brought forward assumptions that collide with ancient assumptions on leadership. The idea of leaders being powerful and influential motivators of their followers has evolved into more dynamic team-based assumptions in which reciprocal relations between the participants are focal point of orientation (Bergquist, 1993; Drath, 1993; Rost, 1991). Additionally, leaders are expected to model appropriate behaviors, provide social and emotional encouragement, build trust and openness, encourage self-reinforcement, provide information and resources to complete tasks, encourage self-goal setting, and provide and communicate a vision (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Lawler, 1986; Liden and Tewksbury, 1995; Manz and Sims, 1987).

2.2. *Superleadership*

The call for innovative change in leaders' behavior, and the increasing focus on the 'self' have led to the uprising of the concept of superleadership. In this concept, the main assumption is that a leader's main task is to provide a self-leadership promoting environment for the leader's followers. This concept of a superleader has been extensively discussed, and classified a superleader as "*one who leads others to lead themselves*" (Manz & Sims, 2001, p. 22). In this approach to leadership, leaders enhance the possibilities of others to independently manage, develop, and lead themselves (Manz & Sims, 2001). By providing an environment for followers to lead themselves, they are expected to reach a higher performance level within their potential. The contradiction with former approaches to leadership are most visible in the question whom provoked this enhanced performance. In former approaches to leadership, a leader might be praised for his strong management skills, or his charismatic style that enhanced employee performance. In the concept of superleadership, the individuals are likely to claim a greater share in the success, since they perceive a greater sense of freedom and value of their own abilities (Manz & Sims, 2001).

In superleadership theory, three concepts have an integrated role in the superleadership framework. The first and most evident concept that is integrated in the framework is self-

leadership, both at the level of the leader's self-leadership, as well as on the level of the leader's self-leadership promotion amongst others. In this research, only the leadership style that enhances self-leadership in the follower's behavior is considered, in order to contribute to the current debate on organizational leadership. The concept of self-leadership is discussed in paragraph 2.2.1. The leadership style in which leadership is enhanced amongst followers is based on the concept of distributed leadership, which forms the second concept in the superleadership theory, and which will be discussed in paragraph 2.2.2. The role of leadership in enhancing self-leadership amongst followers is of high importance, since it empowers the followers in their work activities, allows the followers to exercise influence over their work processes, and eventually reach full potential (Stewart et al., 2011). Empowerment is herewith the third concept that is integrated in the superleadership framework. This element is discussed in paragraph 2.2.3.

In superleadership theory, another distinction is made in types of conducted research: on the one hand including team dynamics into leading to self-leadership (e.g. Manz, 1992a; Stewart & Manz, 1995; Bligh, Pearce & Kohles, 2006; Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen & Rosen, 2007); and on the other hand, research that focuses on interpersonal relationships in leading individuals to self-leadership (e.g. Prussia, Anderson & Manz, 1998; Yun, Cox & Sims, 2006). The relationship between superleadership and the individual is fundamental for the relationship of superleadership on a team-level (Manz & Sims, 2001), but both relationships are not the same and cannot be intertwined. Superleadership at a team-level deals with many factors of group dynamics, where superleadership at an individual level focuses solely on the relationship between leader and the follower.

Employees operating in teams within MNEs could be working closely together, be separated for thousands of kilometers, or may just be a group of individual experts that not work together at all. In all cases, the fundamental leadership lies within the relationship between the leader and the follower (Manz & Sims, 2001). Since a team based organizational setup is an example of an organizational structure, the presence of teams in organization could be discussed in this report, but the influence of any group dynamics is out of scope, because the main focus is on the overall leadership style of leaders regardless of the team they lead. That is why this research limits itself to superleadership based on a leader-follower relationship, excluding team dynamics.

2.2.1. *Self-leadership*

Self-leadership is a self-influence process through which people achieve the self-direction and self-motivation necessary to perform (Manz, 1986; Manz and Neck, 2010). Self-leadership strategies are used by organizations to “facilitate the perception of control and responsibility amongst employees, which positively affects performance outcomes” (Prussia et al., 1998, p. 524, based on Manz, 1983; 1992b). These strategies initially enhance the three dimensions of self-leadership: self-influence, self-motivation, and self-direction (Manz & Neck, 2010). These dimensions touch upon: (1) people’s ability to influence their behavior; (2) people’s discipline to lead themselves; and (3) people’s ability to steer themselves in the desirable way (Manz & Neck, 2010). By using self-leadership strategies, organizations improve the employees’ sense of self-efficacy, what eventually increases employees’ performance (Prussia et al., 1998). This sense of control has been conceptualized in social psychology theory, and defines as the extent to which people sense that they have control over events and behavior affecting their person (Rotter, 1954). This locus of control is generally described to be either internal, in which people sense they have influence over what happens to them, or external in which people sense that external factors determine what happens to them (Rotter, 1954).

2.2.2. *Distributed leadership*

The concept of superleadership, in which a leader promotes self-leadership amongst his/her followers, could be interpreted as an example of distributing leadership. In the field of leadership literature, distributed and shared leadership are often intertwined or used interchangeably. However, there is a slight but essential difference between both leadership styles. In more in-depth literature on both styles, *distributed leadership* is defined as the vertical dispersal of leadership by giving followers autonomy and responsibility, and here the difference with *shared leadership* is visible, since *shared leadership* refers to the horizontal dispersal of distributing autonomy and responsibility (Spillane, 2006). In an example of team-based working structures, distributed leadership would imply a decentralization of leadership from leaders to team members, by giving them autonomy and responsibility over work activities. In the same example, shared leadership would mean that the leadership is divided over the members of the teams (Spillane, 2006). In this research, the focus lies on a shift of leadership from the leader towards the individuals following him, and not on a shift of leadership towards the team, and thus the focus in this research lies on distributing leadership.

2.2.3. Empowerment

Within the growing body of theories and research on distributed leadership, the concept of empowerment has been a recurring topic that is closely related to distributed leadership, and an important process in order to enhance employees' ability to cope with the consequences of distributed leadership. In current research, the importance of leaders empowering their followers, to enhance organizational performance is emphasized extensively (Gronn, 2000). This correlates with the shift organizations are currently undergoing of stepping away from their traditional hierarchical structure, centralized decision-making process, and top down philosophy of control (Arnold et al., 2000; Manz and Sims, 1987). Managers would typically make decisions, control their employees, and "tell them what to do" (Lawler, 1986, Manz and Sims, 1987). This philosophy is outdated, and the empowerment of employees is currently perceived as vital for organizational effectiveness (e.g. Bartram & Casimir, 2007).

Empowerment of employees "refers to a process whereby an individual's belief in his or her self-efficacy is enhanced" (Conger & Kanungo, 1988, p. 474). In order to enhance the feelings of self-efficacy, organizations have to remove the conditions that foster the sense of powerlessness by use of organizational practices and informal techniques (Conger & Kanungo, 1988, p. 474), which is essential in achieving employee self-leadership (Prussia et al., 1998). These conditions play a majorly important role in empowerment of employees, since they potentially foster the feeling of lower self-efficacy, depending on their influence in practice. These conditions are categorized in organizational factors, supervisory style, reward systems, and job design (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Spreitzer, 1996; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). For changing these factors in order to make them more employee empowerment fostering, empowerment strategies and tactics are used by leaders in organizations (Arnold et al., 2000; Conger & Kanungo, 1988). The tactics and strategies that are used in empowering leadership behavior are categorized in (1) coaching; (2) informing; (3) leading by example; (4) showing concern/interacting with the team; and (5) participative decision-making (Arnold et al., 2000). These leadership behaviors provide informal techniques for organizational leaders to remove the conditions that potentially lower the self-efficacy belief, and therefore foster employee empowerment.

2.3. Organizational characteristics influencing leadership

In the contingency approach is disclosed that every leader's style is influenced by its context. There are different levels of context, both internal contexts within the organization and

multiple contextual environments outside of the organization, such as country- or market specific contextual environments (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002; Hofstede & Hofstede, 1991; House, Wright & Aditya, 1997). Since this research focuses on the set of organizational characteristics that is providing a contextual environment for employees and leaders within the company, only the internal context with influential factors is considered. This set of organizational influences is the holistic framework of an organization's operational setup, an organization's culture and the overall view on the ways of work, that influence employees' behavior on a daily basis (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002). Through the setting of organizational characteristics, the organization is able to influence and steer employee behavior in a desired direction. Next to the influence on employee behavior in general, these organizational characteristics also influence and steer the leadership throughout the organization, by affecting and steering the behavior of organizational leaders operating within the company. This gives the organizational management the instruments to control the organizational way of doing business and accordingly align their employees' behavior, and their leaders' leadership behavior to this envisioned organizational behavior. This set of organizational instruments that can be used to steer this behavior is called the organizational control system (Manz, 1986). This set entails the (1) organization's formalization, the (2) reward & punishment system, the (3) organizational structure, the (4) appraisal system, and the (5) organizational culture, visions, & corporate beliefs, throughout the organization (Manz, 1986).

The formalization of an organization refers to the extent to which organizations tend to use standards, policies, and rules to standardize employee behavior (Mintzberg, 1993). Organizations can prescribe desired employee behavior in guidelines and rules, and reward employees for showing desired behavior, but also punish them if they break the defined rules (Podsakoff, Todor, Grover & Huber, 1984). By standardizing employee and leader behavior, the formalization of an organization influences the way leaders interact with their teams, since it provides a bounding framework in which not all behavior is accepted (Mintzberg, 1993). On the other hand, a strict formalization within an organization defines the rules of engagement between people in an organization and provides a clear expectation of where people can exert freedom in their behavior. Another essential organizational characteristic is its structure, also defined as the configuration of people by allocating tasks, responsibility, and authority within an organization (Lorch, 1987; Mintzberg, 1993). The link with the beforementioned concept of distributed leadership is that it potentially changes the organizational structure, since it changes the organizational allocation of responsibility within the organization. Furthermore, organizations are characterized by their appraisal system,

through which organizations recognize employee performance and foster employees' trust and motivation (Mayer & Davis, 1999). Such appraisal systems define performance and tend to steer employee behavior in a desired direction, by aligning individual priorities with the overall company priorities. A leader's behavior is therefore influenced and guided into the direction of the company goals and strategy, and stimulates behavior that is in line with achieving these goals (Mayer & Davis, 1999). Finally, what characterizes organizations is the organizational culture with shared vision and beliefs throughout the company. This is often combined into the concept of corporate culture, the extent to which employees are subjected to a widespread and embedded set of norms, values, and beliefs influences their behavior (Schein, 1985; Yukl, 1981). With providing a framework of values, norms, and beliefs the organization tends to influence their employees' and leaders' behavior into the by the organization desired direction (Schein, 1985). MNEs are typically perceived as relatively formalized, due to the organization's management commonly known desire to control the organization's way of doing business throughout the worldwide locations (Morgan, Kristensen & Whitley, 2001). This formalization is visible not only in the extent to which MNEs have standards, policies and procedures in place, but also in standardization of the organizational systems for providing rewards and punishment, and employee appraisal (Mayer & Davis, 1999; Morgan et al., 2001; Yukl, 1981). MNEs are also generally perceived as highly structured in a corporate managerial hierarchy (Yukl, 1981), but current tendencies show that also MNEs steadily strive for stepping away from hierarchical management (Fong & Snape, 2015).

2.4. *Theory overview*

The theoretical background in this report so far, has shown us the historical developments in leadership literature, which led to a lot of attention and a call for post-charismatic and post-transformational approaches. After that, the concept of superleadership was introduced and explained, and it showed that superleadership includes the concepts of both self-leadership, and distributed leadership. First, the concept of self-leadership is briefly discussed, and the current literature appointed three major dimensions of self-leadership (1) self-influence, (2) self-motivation, and (3) self-direction. Then the literature review showed that the concept of distributed leadership consists of two elementary dimensions: (1) the dispersion of autonomy and responsibilities, and (2) the empowerment of followers that is needed to cope with the increased degree of both autonomy and responsibilities. Both processes are being divided in sub-dimensions, what led to the defining of indicators that help recognizing relevant

information on these sub-dimensions in the gathered data. For the concept of empowerment, this resulted in five indicators, (1) coaching; (2) informing; (3) leading by example; (4) showing concern/interacting with the team; and (5) participative decision-making to recognize traits of an empowering leadership style in the gathered data (Arnold et al.,2000). The indicators are used in the operationalization scheme to structure the analysis, and help recognize information on the different concepts and dimensions throughout the gathered data. Finally, this chapter discussed the presence of a set of organizational instruments that can be used by the organization to steer employee and leader behavior in a desired direction. This set of instruments is called the organizational control system and contains the (1) organization's formalization, the (2) reward & punishment system, the (3) organizational structure, the (4) appraisal system, and the (5) organizational culture, visions, & corporate beliefs, throughout the organization (Manz, 1986).

The relationships of concepts in this report have been clarified, and are visualized in the operationalization scheme. To sum up, this research examines the influence of organizational characteristics on superleadership. Superleadership is described as the holistic process of a leader to decentralize his leadership to his followers, empower his followers to cope with this leadership, with follower self-leadership as a goal.

3. Methods

There have been numerous approaches to leadership, and even more attempts to define leadership throughout the past century (Bass, 1981). One perception has always been part of the definitions of leadership, and that is the influential interaction between multiple persons (Stogdill, 1950; Nahavandi, 2016). These interactions between multiple persons make that leadership is subjected to the perceptions of all involved parties, what eliminates the possibility of appointing one single truth on this subject (Bass, 1990). Instead, leadership is a perception of behavior and interactions that is constructed in the experience of human beings (Nahavandi, 2016).

3.1. Research framework

Since leadership is a social phenomenon that includes stakeholders with different perceptions of the same situation (Bass, 1990; Nahavandi, 2016), it is the combination of the meanings people give to leadership what constructs the common reality. This social constructing of a reality "takes the view that people living in the world of daily life are able to ascribe meaning to a situation and then make judgements" (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 81). This means

that every individual has its own view on reality, and the combined meanings people give to reality is the social construct of reality. Because leadership is a social construct, leadership must be examined in the lifeworld of the stakeholders to understand the way these stakeholders perceive the social situation (Boeije, 2005). A qualitative approach is needed to provide the opportunity for respondents to comprehensively express their perspective on reality (Boeije, 2005). Within qualitative approaches, there are two main variants of conducting research: (1) the structural variant, in which the researcher focuses on the communication process, and particularly on the influence of language herein; and (2) the interpretative variant, in which the researcher focuses on understanding the subject in the perception of the socially constructed reality by the people that are included in the research (Boeije, 2005). Since leadership a social construct of the perceptions of stakeholders, and includes not only communication but also behavior, an interpretative variant of qualitative research is used in this research. Within this interpretative approach of qualitative research, three methodologies are commonly used, knowing (1) an ethnographical study in which the researcher attempts to portray a cultural group, (2) a case study in which the researcher examines a case in its natural context, or (3) a grounded theory approach, in which the goal is to develop existing theory through the gathering and analysis of data (Boeije, 2005; Flick, 2013). In this research, the researcher attempts to understand a social construct in its natural context, and simultaneously develop existing theory. Therefore, a combination of both a case study approach and elements ascribed to the grounded theory approach are intertwined in a hybrid approach.

The hybrid approach allows for a simultaneous deductive – literature driven – and an inductive – emerged data driven – approach. This hybrid approach “integrates a deductive thematic analysis while allowing for themes to emerge direct from the data using inductive coding” (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p.83). This comes to practice by using a predefined scheme of codes to structure the direction of the research, and to provide a foundation for the questioned subject, but simultaneously verify the gathered data for perspectives emerged outside of the predefined scheme of codes (Crabtree & Miller, 1999; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). By using a deductive approach, the current body of literature provides a foundation to build upon, as described in the grounded theory approach (Flick, 2013). By using an inductive approach, the “how?”-aspect in the main research question can be touched upon, without being narrowed by the current body of literature, which fails to deliver empirical evidence for the mechanisms in the subjected influential relationship between organizational characteristics and superleadership. Paragraph 3.5 describes the application of this hybrid approach in the data collection of this research.

3.2. *Research strategy*

Because of the focus on the social phenomenon of superleadership and the influences of organizational characteristics, the data collection in this research is solely qualitative. The perception of people throughout the organization who are occupied with leadership responsibilities, is essential in identifying the influence of organizational characteristics. A qualitative approach is used to include the possibility for the respondents to elaborate on their perception of reality. In order to create an in-depth view on the perceptions of people in MNEs, this research zooms in on the current situation in a particular organization, in the form of a case study. In this case study, qualitative interviews are conducted with respondents who are occupied with organizational leadership in practice. By having respondents occupied with leadership in practice, the situation is understood in the context of the social phenomenon of perspectives by different relevant stakeholders. It could be interesting to perform a multi-case research, so organization-specificity will less influence the outcomes, but since this research is conducted within the framework and time limits of a Master's thesis, these limiting conditions do not allow for a multi-case research.

3.3. *Data collection*

In this research, a hybrid approach of both deductive and inductive approaches is applied. In order to provide the respondents with the ability to clarify their interpretation of reality, and simultaneously sticking to the predefined structured guidance, the interviews for data collection are semi-structured with open questions. For the structuring of the interviews, an operationalization scheme is used as guidance for the topics included in the interviews. The code tree follows the logic and structure of the literature review provided in the theoretical chapter. After the structure of the interviews is determined, the questions will not include indicators on the variable – organizational characteristics – and are open ended, to prevent the respondents from being steered into a certain direction by the questions.

The case study is conducted at a multinational organization, targeting a population at the Dutch office of the organization. To ensure that the respondents and interviewer fully understand each other during the interviews, the interviews are held in the respondents' native language. The interviews are therefore translated to Dutch, using a back-and-forth translation process in which the interviews are translated from English to Dutch, and back to English to make sure the questions in Dutch are the closest possible translation to the initial question in

English. In case there was no literal understandable translation available, the closest possible phrasing is used to make sure the subjects correspond.

To create consistency in the research, the operationalization scheme used for structuring the data collection will also be the foundation for structuring the data analysis, discussed in paragraph 3.6. The interviews are recorded and transcribed to be able to adequately include the information in this report.

3.4. Data sources

The sample of information providers for this research consists of actual leaders in practice, and the people involved in leadership development within a multinational operating organization. In order to contribute to the debate on superleadership, the same requirements for the research sample initially provided by earlier superleadership theory (Manz & Sims, 1984b) are followed: the people in the sample therefore all operate in a knowledge based organization. In order to gain insights from different perspectives and get an integrated view on reality, people across different functionalities throughout the organization are subjected in the research sample.

First, leaders are subjected as source of information, since they are expected to reflect best on their own leadership style. The group of leaders cooperating in this research consists of two hierarchical types of leaders: (1) Managers Managing Employees (MME), and (2) Managers Managing Managers (MMM)¹. The leaders in this research who are directly leading employees (MMEs) are perceived as relevant sources of information, because they influence their followers on a daily basis. The leaders are assumed to have proper insight in their leadership style and organizational characteristics influencing this leadership. Leaders in this research who are leading other managers (MMMs) are perceived as relevant sources of information, because of their guidance of other leaders, and their knowledge of tendencies in organizational leadership within their company. Additional stakeholders within an organization who are expected to be occupied with organizational leadership are the Human Resource professionals, or as called in practice: Human Resource Business Partners (HRBPs). The HRBPs are perceived as relevant sources of information, because of their responsibility in organizational leadership development.

¹ Although the definitions of the concepts ‘managers’ and ‘leaders’ point out significant differences, the expression ‘manager’ shall be intertwined with the expression of ‘leader’ throughout this report, since the expression manager is most commonly used in organizational context. Nevertheless, the focus in this research will primarily be the managers’ leadership behavior and will not further address the differences between managers and leaders.

The total group of potential people included in the population is grouped along the organizational lines of business the managers are operating in. These lines of business represent the functional grouping of the work the managers are responsible for, such as staff functions, sales functions, product development, etcetera. To make sure different perspectives are incorporated in the sample, every line of business is represented at least by one manager. The actual managers and HRBPs are randomly chosen from the groups.

Due to the limited timeframe of this research, only nine interviews can be conducted. The number of interviews are divided accordingly along the distribution in the number of people operating in the different functionalities. Therefore, pursuing a representative sample, and to ensure a mixture of perspectives, every respondent type group is represented by at least two respondents.

Summarizing, the number of respondents who are subjected as sources of information are presented in the following schemes.

<i>Respondent type groups</i>	<i>Number of interviews</i>
Managers Managing Employees (MME)	5
Managers Managing Managers (MMM)	2
Human Resource Business Partners (HRBP)	2

<i>Respondent personal details</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Tenure</i>	<i>Age group</i>
MME1	Female	20	40 – 45
MME2	Female	5	50 – 55
MME3	Female	10	35 – 40
MME4	Male	3	45 – 50
MME5	Male	13	50 – 55
MMM1	Male	19	45 – 50
MMM2	Female	5	45 – 50
HRBP1	Female	12	35 - 40
HRBP2	Female	14	60 – 65

<i>Respondent line of business</i>	<i>Corporate functions</i>	<i>Product Development functions</i>	<i>Sales functions</i>	<i>Consulting functions</i>	<i>Other</i>
% of total population	21,7 %	1,5 %	48,1 %	22,5 %	6,2 %
# of managers	15	0	56	6	0
MME in scope	2	-	3	-	-
MMM in scope	-	-	1	1	-
HRBP	2	-	-	-	-

3.5. *Operationalization of concepts*

In order to clarify the concepts used in this research, the main concepts are conceptualized in an operationalization scheme, in which these conceptualizations are translated into more specific variables and items that can be addressed in the interviews. These operationalized concepts altogether form the predefined scheme of codes. For the concept of superleadership, the dimensions and indicators are visualized in the operationalization. Since this concept is an overarching name of multiple broadly interpretable concepts, the concept of superleadership is broken down into its subdimensions, and subsequent indicators. This operationalization is needed to make the concept concrete and measurable in the data collection. For the organizational characteristics, the predefined scheme of codes is divided into subdimensions of the concept only. Since the current body of literature fails to deliver an empirical substantiation for the influence of organizational characteristics, an inductive approach is used to understand how these factors influence leadership. By excluding indicators from the scheme of codes, respondents are free to bring up organizational characteristics that have a relevant influence from their point of view, without being steered by the researcher's question, which is essential for the inductive approach regarding the influence of organizational characteristics

The operationalization of concepts for superleadership can be found in table 1, and the operationalization for organizational characteristics can be found in table 2. The relationship of the variables is visualized in the operationalization scheme in figure 2 for superleadership, and in figure 3 for organizational characteristics.

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Theoretical operationalization</i>	<i>Used operationalization</i>	<i>Dimensions/indicators</i>
Superleadership	Concept in which leaders enhance others to lead themselves (Manz & Sims, 2001)	Leadership style in which leaders enhance self-leadership amongst followers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-leadership • Distributed leadership
Self-leadership	Self-leadership involves the influence people exert over themselves to achieve the self-motivation and self-direction needed to behave in desirable ways (Manz & Neck, 2010).	Behavior people act out in which they exert influence over themselves to achieve the self-motivation and self-direction needed to behave in desirable ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-influence • Self-motivation • Self-direction
Distributed leadership	Distributed leadership is defined as the vertical dispersal of autonomy and responsibility (Spillane, 2006), in which the empowerment of followers is essential (Bartram & Casimir, 2007).	The vertical dispersal of autonomy and responsibility, and the empowerment of followers to cope with this autonomy and responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralization of leadership • Empowerment
Empowerment	Empowerment of employees enhance the feelings of self-efficacy through the “identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by organizational practices and informal techniques” (Conger & Kanungo, 1988, p. 474).	The leadership behavior that enhance feelings of self-efficacy through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by organizational practices and informal techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching • Informing • Leading by Example • Showing concern/Interaction with the team • Participative decision-making
Decentralization of leadership	Distributed leadership is defined as the vertical dispersal of leadership by giving followers autonomy and responsibility (Spillane, 2006)	The leadership behavior in which leadership is vertically dispersed by giving followers autonomy and responsibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertical dispersion of autonomy • Vertical dispersion of responsibility

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Theoretical operationalization</i>	<i>Used operationalization</i>	• <i>Dimensions</i>
Organizational characteristics	An organizational structure, set of standards, policies, and procedures, reward and punishment systems, corporate beliefs, visions, and cultures, and appraisal, that characterize organizational influence on operating business (based on: Manz, 1986)	An organizational structure, formalization, reward and punishment systems, corporate beliefs, visions, and cultures, and appraisal system, that characterize organizational influence on operating business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure • Standards, policies, and procedures • Reward and punishment system • Corporate beliefs, visions, and cultures • Appraisal system

Table 2: Operationalization of organizational characteristics

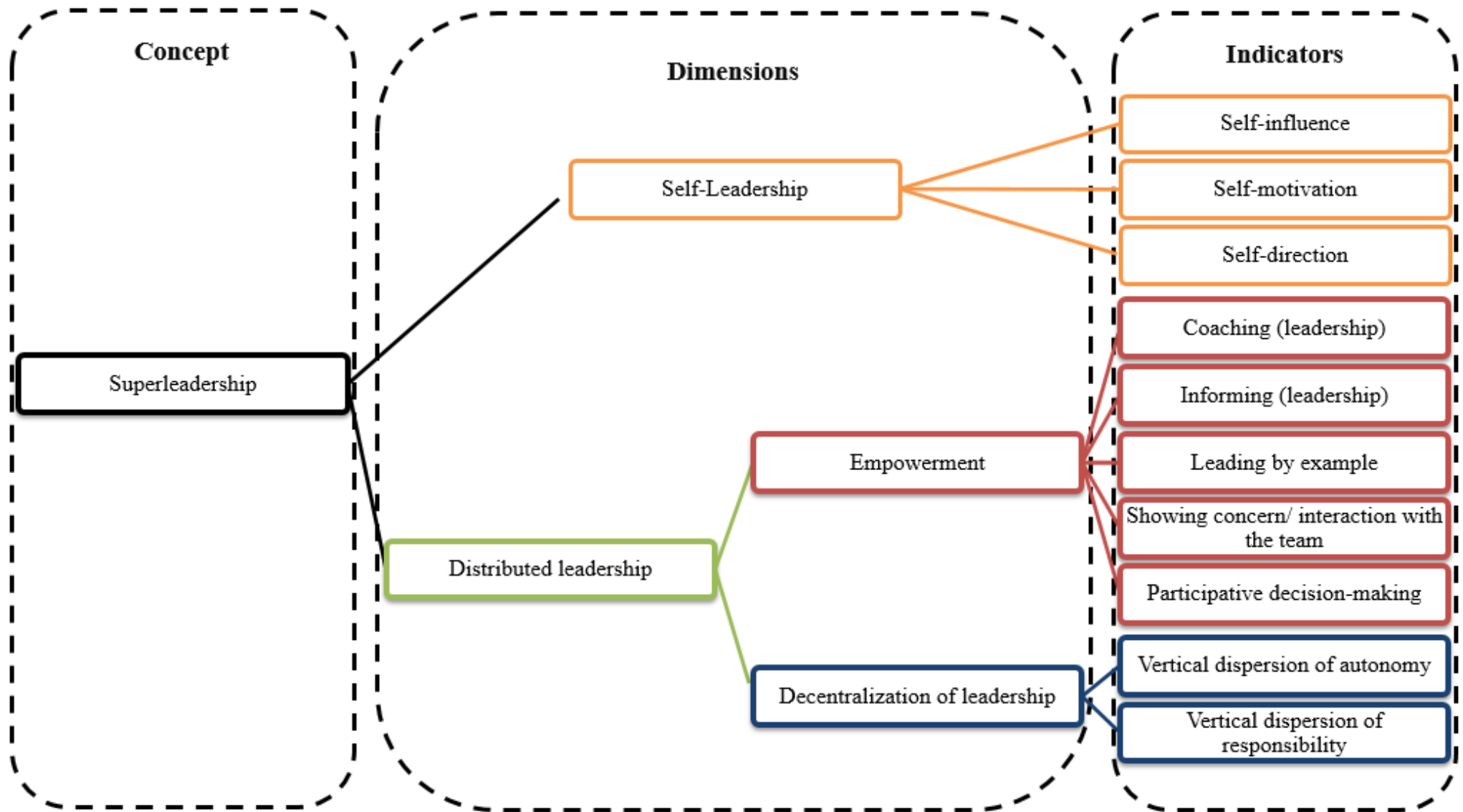


Figure 2: Operationalization scheme of superleadership

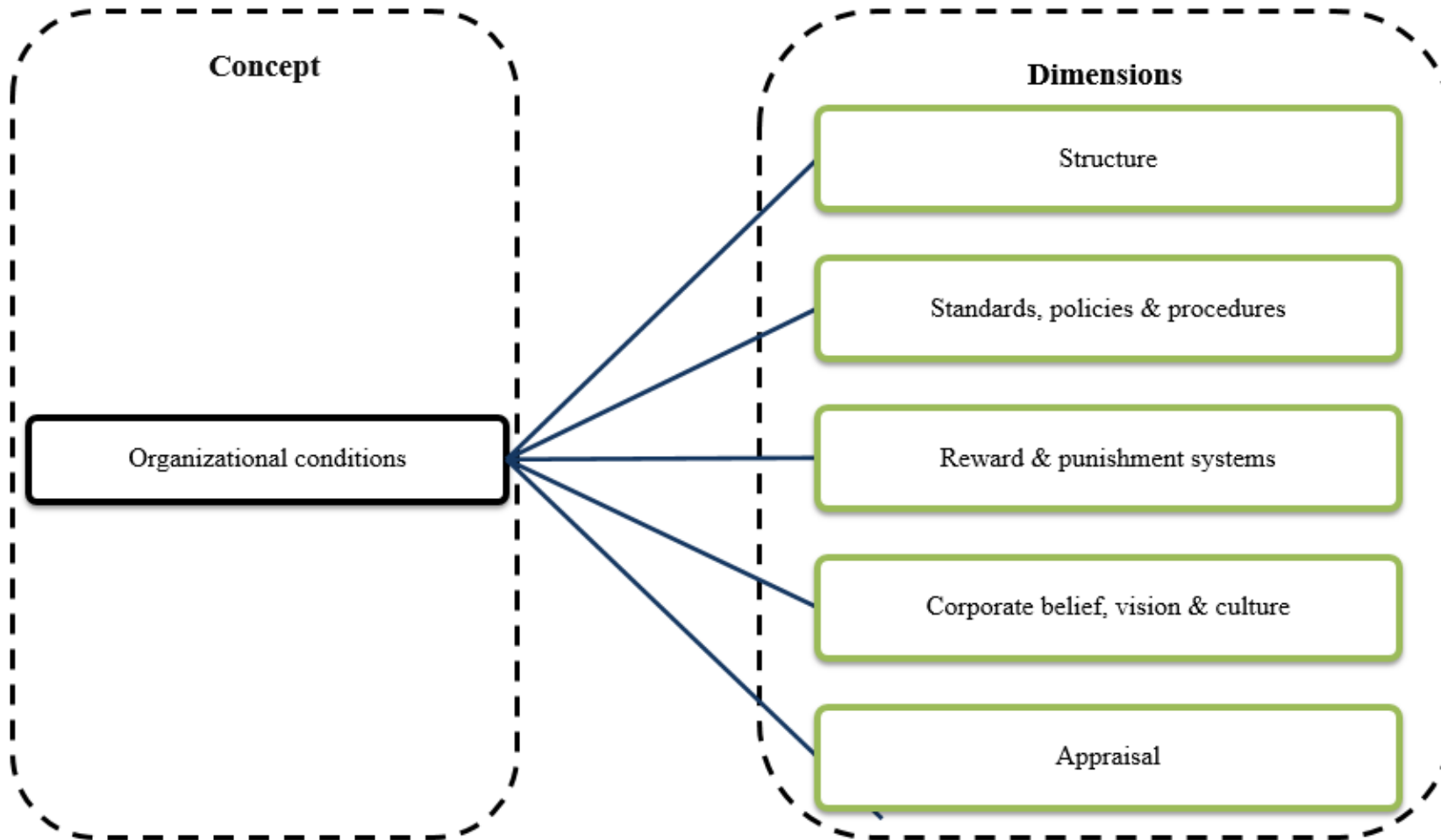


Figure 3: Operationalization scheme of organizational characteristics

3.6. *Data analysis*

The outcome of the data collection process takes form of a literal transcript of the interviews, hereinafter referred to as *raw data*. The data analysis process in qualitative research consists of unraveling the raw data in categories, appointing these categories to concepts, and applying relationships between the designated categories in the light of the problem statement (Boeije, 2005). In order to unravel the raw data and restructure it in such a way that it will contribute to answering the problem statement, the predefined codes are used to categorize the text in the raw data, and create fragments of text that belong to the same code.

The analysis is conducted in three steps: (1) coding information in the collected raw data, according to the predefined scheme of codes, (2) congregate coded information along the predefined structure, extended with new codes that emerged from the gathered data, (3) identify influence mechanisms by recognizing patterns in the underlying reasoning. To ensure transparency in the data analysis process, and to provide clear and understandable results, the result of the data analysis is visualized in three parts:

- I. A document of raw data in which codes have been applied to assign fragments of text to different categories;
- II. An overview of the congregated fragments of text, assigned per category;
- III. A schematic overview of all empirically found influence mechanisms between the categories.

3.7. *Validity and reliability*

In this research, great effort has been taken into warranting the internal validity of the research steps. Complete internal validity cannot be guaranteed, but it is the researcher's duty to ensure the highest degree of internal validity possible. Multiple measures, such as the random selection of respondents, the substantial examination of the current body of relevant literature, and the transparency and substantiating in the process description, make sure that the foundation and logic of the research' design are as justified as possible. On the other hand, this specification of the theoretical foundation excludes relationships that may have an influential relationship, but are not incorporated in this research. Furthermore, the voluntary participation of the respondents creates the risk that only the managers who are deliberately committed to improving their leadership, want to answer questions. When questioning their leadership, there is a risk that the respondents want to brighten up their behavior, which would lead to a more positive representation of the truth.

Measures have also been taken for warranting the external validity of the research, such as integrating perspectives throughout different disciplines in the organization. However, this research only subjects one organization, and a relatively small sample size of the population in the organization. By focusing on one organization only, the ability to generalize the results to similar organizations are limited. Since every organization had its own culture, history, mindset etc., and therefore the results of this research are only generalizable – to a certain extent – to knowledge based organizations operating in a multinational context. As mentioned in the research strategy (paragraph 3.3), a multi-case study would exclude organizational specificity to a greater extent, but this is not possible within the timeframe of this research. This limitation should be taken into serious account to understand the context of the results.

Regarding the reliability of this research, much effort has been put in the clarification of the research strategy and execution. However, the input of the researcher – and the possible influence that has on the results – cannot be totally diminished. All interview guides are validated according to guidelines regarding question formulation and interview structure, provided by i.e. Verschuren & Doorewaard (2010) and Vennix (2010), but they are still influenced by the interpretation of both interviewee and interviewer. The research entails multiple concepts that may be interpreted differently by every stakeholder. Where necessary, the interviewer provides an explanation of what definition of concepts is used in this research, but the possibility that there is a misunderstanding regarding the definition of the concepts in the interviews limits the reliability of the research.

3.8. *Case description*

This research is conducted at a multinational IT-organization, hereinafter referred to as *the organization*. This organization is a market leader in application software for enterprises and operational in more than 130 countries². Due to the immense size of this organization and the international activities, the employees operate in a matrix structure³. This matrix structure increases the complexity of the organization since the direct leader of an employee, to whom he/she reports, can be located anywhere in the world. It is common that a direct manager of an employee operates in a different country from the employees themselves. This geographical distance between leaders and their followers emphasizes the importance of self-leadership

² Company's website

³ Company's Human Resources Handbook 2017

amongst employees. Due to practical implications, this research will only focus on leaders that physically operate primarily in the Netherlands.

Due to the complexity of the organization and the geographical distance between leaders and their followers, together with recent trends in leadership development in the sector the organization operates in, the organization is defining multiple leadership transformation and development programs⁴. One of the main pillars of these leadership programs is the movement away from periodical, target-centered performance measurement, towards a more continuous performance improvement system, in which the leader takes on a more coaching role. This program touches upon several topics in which there are common grounds with the concept of superleadership, such as: coaching leadership style; employees' autonomy; and personal responsibility of the employee. The results of this research could be used in identifying influential organizational characteristics for a change of leadership style, which the organization is pursuing with their leadership development program.

The case of this organization is particularly interesting for this research, because the organization's situation consists of a highly professional work environment, in which people are always connected even though their geographical distance could be of extreme proportion. This distance creates an environment in which people are forced to lead themselves, since direct monitoring is not (always) feasible.

3.9. *Research ethics*

In this research, the gathering of data, contact with respondents, and final reporting are conducted along certain research ethics. These ethics guide the researcher's behavior to ensure transparency, anonymity and a voluntary participation for the respondents. For the validity of the research, it is essential that everything within the researcher's power is done to reflect the truthful situation. Respondent freedom is essential for an ethically conducted research, since it minimizes the possibility for the researcher to edit the gathered data in a way that it would turn out beneficial for the research. Respondents are provided with the opportunity to read and review the information they conveyed in the interviews. Simultaneously, it is essential for the respondents to sense that they convey information that is treated confidentially, and anonymously, in order to encourage them to tell the truthful situation without nuancing in fear of reprisals for the participants. Therefore, respondents are also free at any stage to withdraw

⁴ Company's Development Plan 2017

from the research. To ensure this respondent freedom, the following strict rules apply for the researcher during all stages of this research:

- I. Respondents are asked to participate, not forced in any way;
- II. Respondents are informed upfront, and reminded afterwards, that they are free to withdraw from the research up until the moment the research is finalized;
- III. Respondents are informed that their information will be treated confidentially, and anonymously;
- IV. Respondents are reflected in the report with their functional categorization, not with information that can reveal their identity;
- V. Every type of information that can potentially reveal the identity of the respondent will be anonymized;
- VI. The name list that is used to communicate the data transcripts to the respective respondents, is destroyed after finalization of the research.

4. Results

4.1. Results

The data collection has been conducted at the organization mentioned in the case description (paragraph 3.6). All employees are operating in a highly complex, fast-facing and competitive environment, and are thus expected to have a background in at least a higher education institute, or as called in the Netherlands “hbo” (HRBP1). The work is typically described as challenging, complex, and requires an analytical and highly professional approach (HRBP1). All of the subjected respondents are subjected to the requirement of having at least a higher educational degree. The employees are therefore the most valuable assets of the company, since their skills and expertise make them irreplaceable and competitive in the market (HRBP1).

As described in the data analysis method description in paragraph 3.6, the data analysis consists of three steps: (1) coding information in the collected raw data, according to the predefined scheme of codes, (2) congregate coded information along the predefined structure, extended with new codes that emerged from the gathered data, (3) identify influence mechanisms by recognizing patterns in the underlying reasoning.

In the first step, the raw data is coded with the predefined codes. All text that provides information on a topic subjected in one of the codes, are marked with the name of the code. The result of this exercise is a document of raw data with fragments of text assigned to the predefined codes. The result of this exercise can be found in appendix 8.2.

In the second step, the collected raw data has been categorized. The result of this exercise is an overview of raw textual data, but now assigned to the categories, as can be found in appendix 8.3. In paragraphs 4.1.1 to 4.1.4, the raw data is summarized along the categories.

The third step discusses the identification of influence mechanisms, discussed and summarized in paragraph 4.1.5.

4.1.1. Self-leadership

Based upon the current body of literature, self-leadership is defined as the influence people exert over themselves to achieve the self-motivation and self-direction needed to behave in desirable ways (Manz & Neck, 2010). The respondents have been questioned by using the three dimensions of this definition: self-influence, self-motivation, and self-direction. The respondents in general revert that employees in the company have a greater ability to exert influence over their work activities.

[...] Een professional meet ik op output, wat je oplevert [...] dus zij bepalen zelf hoe ze het gaan doen, En hoe ze daar komen, dat maakt me eigenlijk niet zo heel veel uit. (MMM1)

[...] Ja ze kunnen zelf de agenda bepalen, ze kunnen zelf aangeven wanneer ze naar welke klant gaan, wat de strategie wordt, met welke mensen ze intern gesprekken hebben om de volgende stap bij de klant te bereiken, dus ze hebben een vrijheid in aanpak en approach. (MEMME4)

However, respondents also reverted that employee self-influence is limited due to the organization's structure and respective decision-making process.

[...] doordat we steeds meer activiteiten centraliseren dus er wordt heel veel op global en EMEA (Europe, Middle East, Africa, rev.) en MEE (Middle & Eastern Europe, rev.) level bepaald en waar je dan op een gegeven moment lokaal weinig meer mee kan... [...] vanuit global wordt al bepaald dat deze en deze campagnes gaan komen [...] dan is er eigenlijk niet meer de ruimte om te denken: "nou ik had eigenlijk een andere tactic in gedachten, of ik zou daar nog twee keer zo veel activiteiten op willen programmeren", maar dat dan kan niet. (MME3)

Next to the organization's structure, the set of standards, policies and procedures is mentioned as framework employees have to operate in, putting boundaries to their self-influence.

[...] Ik denk heel veel invloed, alleen het is maar heel erg hoe je ernaar kijkt. Je kunt enerzijds zeggen goh ik mag niet die korting geven ik mag het contract niet aanpassen ik moet door die hoepeltjes springen, nou dan kijk je alleen naar wat niet kan, maar er blijven nog een hele hoop andere dingen over, je kunt ook zeggen nou het geeft ook een soort kader wat je focus geeft op de dingen waar je wel invloed op hebt. (MME5)

With regards to self-motivation, the respondents in general state that employee motivation is a result of an intrinsic motivation to perform interesting work activities and assignments.

[...] Ik denk bij de meeste mensen dat het een soort intrinsieke motivatie is. (HR1)

Although the respondents mention the reward system of the company as a motivational instrument, the respondents in general state that intrinsic motivation is the most influential motivational factor.

[...] Ik denk dat mensen met name vanuit zichzelf gemotiveerd zouden moeten zijn, dus mensen die hun werk echt leuk en interessant vinden en daar blij van worden. En daarnaast proberen we natuurlijk ook een hele mooie beloning te geven, dus een mooi salaris en in heel veel gevallen nog additionele andere dingen. (MME3)

[...] Maar ik geloof niet dat de mensen die hier zitten met name getriggerd worden door het geld en de beloning die ze krijgen, maar meer op de inhoud, het kunnen doen van leuke innovatieve projecten en opdrachten. Dat is denk ik voor mensen die hier zitten de grootste motivatie. (MMM2)

The employees within the company have the opportunity to determine the direction of their working activities themselves.

[...] doe je ding, ik geef je ruimte. Er zijn allerlei side-topics, je mag die allemaal op je nemen, je mag allemaal komen met “ik wil me daar extra in ontplooiën” en dan creëer ik wel de mogelijkheid dat je daar komt. (MME2)

But the employees are being guided by the top-down assigned goals.

[...] ze zijn vrij om hun strategie te bepalen bij klanten. Uiteraard moet de doelstelling daar zijn zoals die is beschreven, maar ze zijn vrij om mee te denken wat de best mogelijke manier is om de doelstelling te behalen. Dus er zit een zekere vrijheid in die rol, absoluut. (MME4)

[...] we hebben begin van het jaar goals, die goals worden een op een doorgezet vanuit management tot aan het team omdat we willen dat die goals voor iedereen hetzelfde zijn. (MME4)

In general, employees in the organization have the opportunity to lead themselves, within a framework of organizational standards, policies and procedures, and a top-down hierarchical structure.

4.1.2. Empowering leadership

With regards to empowerment, the results focus on the empowering leadership behaviors of the respondents. This leadership behavior enhances feelings of self-efficacy through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by organizational practices and informal techniques. These informal techniques are divided in coaching leadership, informing leadership, leading by example, showing concern/interaction with the team, and participative decision-making.

The respondents provide the feedback that in general they are able to enact a coaching leadership style. No influences by the organizational characteristics have been mentioned for conducting a coaching leadership style. Only the personal characteristics of the follower are mentioned as influencing factor.

[...] ik zal zeker coachend zijn, maar ik ben ook mentorend soms, bij jonge medewerkers zal ik ook af en toe eens vertellen hoe ik iets gedaan heb, bij senior medewerkers zal ik de vraag stellen van hoe zou jij dit aanpakken? Maar altijd faciliterend naar eigenlijk de situatie waarin de professional is. (MMM1)

[...] het zijn over het algemeen senior mensen die een track record hebben en hun sporen hebben verdiend in de industrie, dus het is niet zo dat je hoeft uit te leggen hoe het gaat bij klanten over het algemeen. Dus het is echt gewoon coachen. (MME4)

When discussing an informative leadership style, the respondents reverted that they strive for an informative role within the team. No organizational influences are mentioned.

[...] dat is voor mij heel belangrijk als leider die alle vrijheid geeft, dat mensen mij juist de vragen stellen als ze ook de hulp nodig hebben. (MMM1)

[...] managers zijn vraagbaken omdat ze vaak meer weten dan het team. (HR2)

The respondents are divided in their judgement whether they provide exemplary behavior.

[...] ik weet niet echt of ik een voorbeeld ben voor hen. (MMM2)

[...] Een voorbeeld vind ik een heel groot woord want ik denk dat elke manager een eigen stijl heeft en mijn stijl is anders dan bijvoorbeeld de stijl van de manager. Voor mij wil niet zeggen dat de een beter is dan de ander en dat het gewoon heel persoonlijk is. (MME1)

But the respondents in general agree on the chance their behavior can be perceived as an example for the employee.

[...] ik dat probeer op een manier te doen zoals ik dat zelf het meest ideaal vind en dat zou dan de voorbeeldstelling kunnen zijn. (MME3)

[...] Ik denk dat je als leider heel nadrukkelijk een voorbeeld bent door hoe je reageert, hoe je afspraken wel of niet nakomt, of je op tijd op meetings bent, dat soort dingen. Of je voorspelbaar bent. (MME5)

When asked to what degree the respondents show concern and/or interact with the team, the general feedback from the respondents is that they show concerns and interact to a highly personal level, with regards to both business and private matters. The organization's influence is not mentioned as influential factor here.

[...] een persoonlijke relatie en een balans tussen werk en privé vind ik heel belangrijk, dus zal een-op-een met de medewerker altijd ook een deel over de thuissituatie gaan, hoe het thuis gaat, of ze dingen willen delen. Want ik geloof er niet in dat je perfect zakelijk kunt functioneren als je thuissituatie niet in balans hebt. (MMM1)

[...] ik heb het wel met mijn teamleden allemaal over hun persoonlijke situaties, want hun persoonlijke situaties maken een groot gedeelte uit van wie ze zijn en wat hen bezig houdt en hoe gelukkig ze zijn en hoeveel werk ze aan kunnen op een bepaald moment. (MME1)

The respondents revert that they attempt to involve employees in the decision making process, but overall are not able to influence all relevant decision making processes themselves, due to the decision making power hierarchy.

Dat doe ik zeker. En dat lukt de ene keer beter dan de andere keer, omdat ik soms ook wel te maken heb met bepaalde keuzes die vanuit global worden gemaakt of vanuit het managementteam worden gemaakt. (MME3)

Nou, ik vraag veel input en ideeën over een heleboel dingen heb je niet een kant en klare mening en maak je gebruik van de ideeën en de ervaring die het team heeft over hoe we dingen gaan organiseren, waar we aandacht aan geven... Een heleboel dingen aan de andere kant worden centraal op ons neergelegd, van bovenaf neergelegd. (MME5)

Ja, de vraag is in hoeverre ik zelf betrokken word in besluitvormingsprocessen. (MMM2)

Overall, the respondents state that they are able to enact an empowering leadership style. The only organizational influence mentioned is the organizational structure, with respective decision making hierarchy. The allocation of authority within the organization's structured management layers fosters a feeling of powerlessness amongst both managers and employees.

4.1.3. Decentralization of leadership

The leadership behavior in which leadership is decentralized is defined along two dimensions, known as vertical dispersion of autonomy, and vertical dispersion of responsibility. The respondents reverted that they provide employees with a relative great level of autonomy.

[...] Ik denk tot op zekere hoogte, we zijn natuurlijk best wel een professionele organisatie waar over het algemeen intelligente mensen werken die hun taken autonoom kunnen doen. (HR1)

[...] We hebben binnen het team daar heel veel vrijheid in, dus teamleden krijgen heel heldere en meetbare KPIs aan het begin van het jaar en zijn vrij in de manier waarop ze die gaan behalen. (MME3)

[...] Volledige autonomie. Dus mijn team daar zitten ook een heel aantal [...] echte experts in, die over bepaalde domeinen of in bepaalde programma's veel meer expertise hebben dan ik zelf heb [...] ik faciliteer dat team members hun doelstellingen kunnen halen en

bepaalde dingen moeten bereiken. Maar ze hebben zelf hun hele vrijheid in de manier waarop ze dat doen. (MME3)

The respondents also provide influential factors such as personal characteristics, and seniority of the employee. However, no organizational influence is mentioned by the respondents.

[...] Mensen zijn qua persoonlijke stijl soms enorme control freaks en willen alles controleren, inclusief het hele proces, wat leidt tot het eindresultaat. (HR2)

[...] voor een groot deel alleen voor de echt senior mensen die al langere tijd doen wat ze doen, die hebben volledige autonomie [...] maar wanneer ik weet dat iemand voor het eerst een bepaald project gaat doen stem ik ook met de persoon af [...]. Dus daar kan je zeggen dat er niet alleen maar autonomie maar ook een stukje van mij als mentor zeg maar in het spel is. (MME1)

With regards to decentralization of responsibility, the respondents explained that they can disperse responsibility to the employees but are influenced by personal and situational characteristics.

[...] mensen hebben heel erg de vrijheid om die verantwoordelijkheid te pakken en SAP wil dat ook. Echter, er zijn omstandigheden waardoor dat niet kan, c.q. iemand is nieuw in de functie, de rol... heeft net een nieuwe rol aanvaard en zal meer begeleiding moeten hebben [...]. (HR2)

[...] maar nog niet in deze rol, dus in zo een geval merk ik wel dat zo iemand veel meer sturing nodig heeft, dus ja, is iemand nog steeds verantwoordelijk voor eigen doelstellingen alleen daar zal ik zelf een veel grotere rol spelen in het begeleiden van iemand naar een goed resultaat, maar uiteindelijk de verantwoordelijkheid voor de doelen dat zijn de medewerkers zelf. (MME1)

The organizational characteristic that is mentioned as influential factor is the organization's structure, with the border-crossing setup of people. This setup forces and fosters the managers to vertically disperse responsibility to the team members.

[...] ik denk dat dat een directe consequentie is van het feit dat je mensen verspreid hebt zitten over EMEA. [...] mijn grootste zoektocht was ook om te zorgen dat ik mensen kreeg die en senior zijn, zelf verantwoordelijkheid kunnen nemen, maar eigenlijk ook een beetje ondernemer zijn, omdat ze binnen in hun eigen regio dit vak hen eigen moesten maken en uitdragen. (MME2)

[...] ik werk in een virtual team, omdat ik een regio bestier. Daardoor is het natuurlijk een zelfverantwoordelijke rol die ze hebben, dus daar hoort met name zelfredzaamheid en dat soort zaken wordt wel verwacht in het profiel van de mensen. (MME4)

Overall, the respondents point out that they are able to provide the employees with a greater level of autonomy and responsibility. The influential organizational factors that are mentioned by the respondents influencing their decentralization of leadership, mainly regards the organization's structure.

4.1.4. Organizational characteristics

The organizational characteristics that the organization uses to influence its operating business is divided in five categories, defined as the organization's structure; standards, policies, and procedures; reward and punishment system; corporate beliefs, visions, and cultures; and appraisal system.

With regards to the organization's structure, the matrix setup of the organization is mentioned as influential characteristic for their leadership behavior.

[...] Wat het moeilijk maakt is de balans te vinden in de matrix, dus medewerkers hebben vaak meerdere bazen, een functionele en een... een directe manager [...]. (HR2)

[...] Ik denk wat een heel belangrijk thema voor managers is, is ook om leiding te geven terwijl je niet de directe lijn heb, omdat er heel veel dotted lines zijn. En hoe dat ook weleens wordt genoemd is to lead without authority [...]. (HR1)

[...] En dat is een complexe organisatie. Een matrixorganisatie, waarin verantwoordelijkheden opgesplitst en verdeeld zijn. (MMM1)

This complexity of the organization's structure, with complex allocation in responsibilities and authority, making managers to take on a more guiding role for the employees.

[...] Ja en mensen die nieuw binnen zijn die moet je daar nog wel echt mee helpen omdat het anders overweldigend en veel is. En je kunt ook niet alles doen, daar zijn we veel te groot dus we moeten ook echt keuzes maken en prioriteiten stellen van wat doen we wel en wat doen we niet. (MME3)

The multinational setup of the organization also has an influence on the leader's behavior, changing the way of interacting with the employees.

[...] Dus het is niet zo dat ik manager ben die naar een kantoor gaat en dat daar een team van twaalf mensen zitten, ze zijn verspreid over Noord-Europa, dus er is geen fysiek contact, maar met name virtual contact wat ik heb met mijn team [...]. (MME4)

[...] En daar zie je ook weer dat doordat we zo opgedeeld zijn in die matrix dat we ook vaak onderdeel uitmaken van EMEA-organisatie daar is nog veel minder tijd voor want je ziet je manager helemaal niet, misschien een of twee keer per jaar [...]. (MME5)

The organization is regulated through standards, policies, and procedures. The respondents revert that the organization is highly formalized. This high degree of organizational formalization influences the self-influence of employees, since it provides a framework of rules employees and managers are bounded by in their behavior.

[...] een heel groot corporate bedrijf en dat hangt met regels en procedures aan elkaar. Dus als je bijvoorbeeld ergens een deal wil closen [...] dan heb je daar heel veel approvals nodig, veel formuliertjes en veel mensen die je moet informeren, dus heel erg politiek. Je hebt veel autorisaties nodig voordat je iets geregeld krijgt. (HR1)

[...] het is haast onmogelijk dat er een bepaalde procedure niet geregeld is [...]. (MME4)

[...] Ik zou als manager eigenlijk willen dat we meer naar buiten gaan, ik snap dat die interne processen gelopen moeten worden maar die kunnen efficiënter en die kunnen ook efficiënter [...]. (MME5)

But the respondents see the benefits of having such a formalized framework of standards, policies, and procedures, and its influence it has on their leadership behavior is also seen as neutral or even positive. The standardization of processes creates room for influence.

[...] Een corporate organisation waarin dus strenge regels gelden rondom hoe doe ik zaken met onze klanten. En het mooie is, als je die regels kent, dan kun je er maximaal ondernemer zijn [...]. (MMM1)

[...] Nou, het heeft het wel makkelijker gemaakt. Als bijvoorbeeld een manager van de ene plek naar de andere gaat hoeft ie niet een heel nieuw systeem te leren bij wijze van spreken om dingen te doen. (HR2)

[...] Dus die informatievoorziening is makkelijker geworden, de routine in een aantal standaard people management processen is makkelijker geworden. Maar het begeleiden van mensen is veel complexer geworden, dus waar de manager vroeger door afgeleid werd en waar hij minder mee bezig was, het begeleiden van potentieel, het eruit halen wat erin zit [...]. (HR2)

[...] Ik denk dat dat mijn leiderschap niet beïnvloedt. Dat zijn gewoon dingen waar mensen aan moeten voldoen, daar heb je mee te dealen in een grote organisatie als dit. Ik denk niet dat mijn manier van werken daardoor verandert. (MMM2)

The organization's reward and punishment system is typified as one with relative great rewards on the one hand, and relatively rigorous means in terms of punishment. However, no influence on the respondents' leadership has been identified.

[...] En aan de andere kant kan het ook wel hard zijn. Dus mensen die gewoon eigenlijk meteen ontslagen worden. Dus het is een organisatie waar van alles kan, en van alles mogelijk is en mensen rijkelijk beloond worden voor van alles en nog wat, maar het is ook keihard op het moment dat er iets mis gaat [...]. (MMM2)

The organization's multinational setup makes the corporate culture including more and diverse people cultures and perspectives. It is mentioned by the respondents that this integration of

multiple cultures and perspectives influences the leaders' behavior, but not to a significant extent.

Ondertussen is de cultuur heel wat meer divers en denk ik dat we daar ook de vruchten van plukken door heel wat meer diverse views op uitdagingen die we hebben en op hoe we kunnen werken het beste, hoe we onze klant het beste kunnen bedienen. Ja, is toch heel anders als je ineens iemand vanuit Zuid-Afrika in je organisatie hebt en die kijkt vanuit zijn cultuur naar Nederlandse klanten en komt met zijn en haar gewoontes en ideeën of we hebben in een keer mensen met een heel andere religieuze achtergrond in de organisatie. Dat betekent ook dat je als leider daar oog voor moet hebben, flexibel moet zijn. (MME1)

The way the organization has setup its appraisal system is described by the respondents as extremely performance-driven. The organization has a strong focus on goal setting and reviewing the performance of the employees.

[...] Ja, hoe wordt succes gemeten... natuurlijk cijfers, KPI-tjes, iedereen praat over zijn KPI-tjes. (MMM2)

[...] we zijn een verkoopkantoor dus succes wordt sowieso gemeten aan wie doet de grootste deal, dat is heel belangrijk. Wie haalt zijn target? Heel belangrijk binnen deze organisatie. (MME1)

This top-down target setting influences the leadership, as it shifts the focus of the leader to the realization of the targets.

[...] die krijgen een target op hun bord en moeten naar beneden drukken, dus dit is waar de medewerker aan moet voldoen [...]. (HR1)

[...] En dat zie je bijvoorbeeld nu aan het einde van het kwartaal, dan is er eigenlijk nog maar een KPI noodzakelijk en dat is omzet binnen halen [...] want je hebt nu een korte termijn binnen een bepaalde pilaar de verplichting om te leveren volgens doelstelling. (MMM1)

The influence of this appraisal system on the leaders' behavior is mentioned as narrowing the focus on the targets, but not on the work activities themselves.

[...] dat zit absoluut in de "hoe doe je dat dan", daar zit heel veel speelruimte. (MME3)

[...] Alleen die zijn vanuit leiderschap weer heel makkelijk te vertalen naar "de meeste impact maak je samen en bij de klant". Dus als je dat aangeeft [...] dan hoef ik mij niet druk te maken over KPIs, want dan zijn mensen utilized, en dan zijn ze met de klanten bezig, en zijn customer facing, want ze zijn met de klant bezig. Dus op die manier kun je KPIs eigenlijk gewoon omzetten naar leadership principles, personal leadership principles (MMM1)

4.1.5. Influence mechanisms

In the previous paragraphs, the influence of the organizational characteristics on the elements of superleadership have been discussed, per what the respondents reverted. In this paragraph, the influence mechanisms are identified through which these organizational characteristics influence the elements of superleadership.

The first identified influence mechanism is locus of control. The concept locus of control refers to the degree to which people have the sense they control outcomes of events or behavior (Rotter, 1954). This influence mechanism is visible in the relationship between multiple organizational characteristics and multiple elements of superleadership. The most significant relationships are found between the organization's structure and its degree of formalization, on elements *self-influence*, and *decision making process*. The respondents reverted that the allocation of people and responsibilities throughout the organization influences the general sense of power and influence ability. The respondents hereby refer to the stress field of power between global and local power to influence and decide. The same reasoning applies to the organization's formalization, in which people sense a degree of powerlessness because of the organization's high degree of formalization in which there is no to little local influence.

The second identified influence mechanism is geographical distance. The multinational setup of the organization creates country border crossing teams and collaboration. This influences leaders to have a multinational approach in their leadership as well. Where leaders lead employees in a country border crossing setup, they are not able to fully control and monitor their employees' behavior and activities. This stimulates them to disperse authority and autonomy. Some of the respondents provided the feedback that they allocated responsibility over a certain activity or geographical region to their employees.

The influences of the organizational characteristics, and respective influence mechanisms, are visualized in below scheme.

<i>Organizational characteristic</i>	<i>Element of superleadership</i>	<i>Influence mechanism</i>	<i>Influential relationship</i>
Structure	Self-influence	Locus of control	The organizational setup in a functional matrix allocates the responsibility and people internationally. This limits the degree to which people on a local level sense to have influence on their work activities.
	Decision making process	Locus of control	The hierarchical setup of the organization in multiple management layers, allocates decision making authority on a higher management level. Due to this allocation of authority on a higher management level, the degree to which people on a local level sense to have influence on the decision making process is limited.
	Vertical dispersion of autonomy	Geographical distance	The multinational setup of the organization creates the possibility that a team consists of team members across different countries. Due to this geographical distance, managers are influenced to vertically disperse autonomy to the employees, since direct control is not a feasible option.
	Showing interaction/concern with the team	Geographical distance	The multinational setup of the organization creates the possibility that a team consists of team members across different countries. Due to this geographical distance, managers are influenced to change their way of interacting with the employees in the team, since face-to-face communication is only virtually a feasible option.

<i>Organizational characteristic</i>	<i>Element of superleadership</i>	<i>Influence mechanism</i>	<i>Influential relationship</i>
Formalization	Self-influence	Locus of control	The organization's degree of formalization provides the employees with very strict process descriptions, and procedures regulations. This set of rules and procedures limits the ability of employees to fully exert influence over themselves and their work activities.
	Self-influence	Locus of control	The organization's degree of formalization is mentioned to set a framework, employees are expected to operate in. This is identified as not solely limiting their self-influence, but also enables employees to exert more influence over their work activities, by providing them guidance and letting employees influence themselves to a higher extent, due to the existence of the framework.
Appraisal system	Self-direction	Locus of control	The organization's goal setting strategy and focus on performance indicators, provides the employees with top-down cascaded goals, which limits the employees' ability to determine the general direction of their work activities. These are aligned on an organization wide level, and do not allow for significant employee deviation.
	Self-influence	Locus of control	The organization's goal setting strategy and focus on performance indicators, guide the employees in organizational priorities, which are defined along performance indicators. This enables the leaders to provide employees with more freedom to exert influence in work activities, since the goals and performance indicators are clear upfront.
	Vertical dispersion of responsibility		The respondents mentioned that the existence of this organizational appraisal system, and the clear focus on performance indicators, provides the leaders with the ability to disperse responsibilities to their employees, since the employees already know the priorities of their work activities.

5. Discussion and conclusion

5.1. Discussion

The main objective of this research is to provide empirical evidence for the influence of characteristics of MNEs on superleadership. This empirically substantiated knowledge lacks in the current debates on leadership; empowerment; and self-leadership, and in particular on the intersection of these debates: superleadership. In more recent approaches, leadership is perceived more as a complex social phenomenon, in which the focus does not solely subject the leader, but also includes the group of people the leader is working with. Globalization has enabled organization to optimize the efficiency of work processes across country borders, creating MNEs. Simultaneously, empowering leadership and self-leadership theories received growing attention, under the umbrella of the shifted focus in leadership debates towards the relationship, instead of the leader. Amongst others, these trends have put great pressure on traditional responsibility and power distributions, which led to a call for more research on the complex environment leaders are positioned in, working in MNEs.

In this research, a social phenomenon of interpersonal influences, and influences on behaviors is subjected, which led to the usage of an interpretative variant of qualitative research strategy. In this research strategy, a hybrid approach was used consisting of both deductive – theory driven – and inductive – emerged data driven – elements. This led to a semi structured interview guide, while allowing the respondents to come up with openly formulated answers. This research has been conducted as a case-study in an MNE, in which both business leaders and Human Resource Business Partners in practice have been randomly selected to share their perception of reality.

Where current research focuses on the shift towards the individual, organizations in practice show a struggle with this shift. One example is the statement in recent literature that organizations tend to step away from hierarchical management, in order to provide employees in general more authority and autonomy in their work activities. Organizations in practice are occupied with this dispersal of authority and autonomy to provide employees the freedom to reach their full potential, but mention signals of traditional hierarchical power distributions along management layers. The identification of organizational influences on this dispersing processes, and the leadership behavior during this process, is essential. This research elaborated on the organizational influences on this leadership behavior, which enriches the debate and provides organizations more insights on how their characteristics influence leadership in practice.

By having respondents throughout different organizational disciplines, a more holistic and integrated view of perspectives on reality is provided. However, since this research is conducted within the time frame and with limited resources of a Master's thesis, the number of subjected respondents is relatively small. Additionally, the subjection of solely one organization allows the research to have a more in-depth approach, but limits the generalizability to other organizational environments. Especially since organizational environments may be characterized by different setups and with different visions of work. A broader, multiple cases study is needed to be able to compare different organizational characteristics and their influence on leadership behavior. The hybrid approach in this research is broadly elaborated upon, but it would be interesting for further research to use a less theory driven approach. Especially in the interviews, some respondents struggled with the definition of the concepts and the differences between them. Finally, the inclusion of different approaches, such as a more quantitative approach would be beneficial for the generation of knowledge, since qualitative research relies on the leader's perception and its ability to put it in words. Quantitative research also incorporates the leader's perception, but uses a different method of identifying causal relationships.

5.2. Conclusion

The research question of this research is formulated as follows:

How do the organizational characteristics of multinational companies influence superleadership?

In a single case study, a qualitative research has been conducted to provide empirical results in order to provide an answer to the research question. The results of this research show organizational characteristics influence the elements of superleadership through two different mechanisms.

On the one hand, the locus of control plays a mediating role in the sense people have to what extent they can influence events and behavior. This locus of control mechanism aligns to the allocation of people and power in hierarchical layers, influencing superleadership by fostering a sense of powerlessness at employee and first line management level. In earlier research, this forcefield has been identified as *global vs. local* control systems. The organizational structure plays a big part, resulting in employee statements that they cannot influence top-down made decisions, and have little influence in companywide approaches and processes. This same locus of control mechanism is visible in the organization's influence

through its level of formalization and appraisal system. It is a common understanding that the organization's rules and goal setting steer employee behavior in such a way that this is aligned to company strategy. This enhances the feeling of powerlessness, but simultaneously provides a framework in which people perceive more responsibility and autonomy, since they are aware of the playing field they are expected to operate in.

Another identified influence mechanism is the geographical distance between people. Respondents reverted that the multinational setup of the organization influences leadership behavior, since they are forced to disperse responsibility and autonomy to the employees. In more traditional management approaches, managers are expected to tell people what to do, and closely monitor their activities. This geographical distance significantly influences the leader's behavior, stimulating the leader to take on a more coaching style, and prioritizing in their interaction with the employees. This leads to a dispersion of responsibility, in which regionally based teams are allocated with responsibilities for a certain functional area, or geographical area.

The way organizational characteristics influence superleadership in practice, is useful for companies to take into account by defining and implementing an organizational leadership strategy. Locus of control plays a significant role as influence mechanism, by having a major impact on the sense of powerlessness amongst employees. While the influence mechanism of geographical distance shows less direct relevance in defining an organizational leadership strategy, because geographical distance is not commonly seen as a driver for a certain leadership behavior, its influence on superleadership is essential to take into account while developing and implementing an organizational leadership strategy.

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8. Appendices

8.1. Interview guides

Interview guide Master's thesis

Superleadership at [ORG] Nederland B.V.

Introduction checklist

- Welcome
- Introduce myself
- Introduce the interview
- Ask for permission to record
- Guarantee all information will be treated anonymously
- Start the recording

#	Algemeen deel	Indicatoren
1.1	Welke functie bekleedt u op dit moment binnen [ORG]? Op welke afdeling bent u werkzaam? Is dit een leidinggevende functie? <i>In geval van leidinggevende: → vervolg leidinggevende</i> <i>In geval van HRBP → vervolg HRBP</i>	Functiegegevens

	Vervolg leidinggevende	Indicatoren
2.1	<p>Aan hoeveel mensen geeft u momenteel leiding? (direct & indirect)</p> <p>Hoe ziet die hiërarchie eruit? Geeft u deze mensen direct leiding of indirect?</p> <p>Worden zij door u beoordeeld?</p> <p>Worden zij door u gecontroleerd/gemonitord?</p>	Functiegegevens
2.2	<p>In hoeverre geeft u uw werknemers volledig de verantwoordelijkheid over hun taken?</p> <p>→ <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit?</p> <p>→ <i>Negatief</i>. Waarom kunt u niet de volledige verantwoordelijkheid bij de werknemers neer te leggen?</p> <p>In hoeverre geeft u uw werknemers volledig de autonomie over hun taken?</p> <p>→ <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit?</p> <p>→ <i>Negatief</i>. Waarom kunt u geen volledige autonomie te geven aan uw werknemers?</p>	<p>Vertical dispersion of responsibility</p> <p>Vertical dispersion of autonomy</p>
2.3	<p>In hoeverre zou u uw manier van leiderschap beschrijven als coachend?</p> <p>→ <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit?</p> <p>→ <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt u ervan om een meer coachende vorm van leidinggeven in te nemen?</p> <p>En in hoeverre fungeert u als een vraagbaken voor uw werknemers?</p> <p>→ <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit?</p> <p>→ <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt u ervan om meer als vraagbaken te fungeren?</p> <p>In hoeverre kunt u zeggen dat u een voorbeeld stelt als leider voor uw werknemers?</p> <p>→ <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit?</p> <p>→ <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt u ervan om meer een voorbeeldfunctie in te nemen in uw functie?</p>	<p>Coaching (leadership style)</p> <p>Informing (leadership style)</p> <p>Leading by example</p>

	<p>Hoe ziet de interactie tussen u en uw werknemers eruit? Is dit een puur zakelijke of meer persoonlijke relatie?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Persoonlijk</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? → <i>Zakelijk</i>. Wat weerhoudt u ervan om u meer te verdiepen in de werknemer? <p>In hoeverre worden uw werknemers betrokken in besluitvormingsprocessen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Betrokken</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? → <i>Niet betrokken</i>. Zou u uw werknemers meer medezeggenschap willen geven? Zo ja, waarom kan dat niet? 	<p>Showing concern/interacting with the employee</p> <p>Participative decision-making</p>
2.4	<p>In hoeverre kunnen werknemers zelf invloed uitoefenen op de manier waarop ze hun werk doen?</p> <p>Hoe worden werknemers gemotiveerd om hun werk te doen?</p> <p>In hoeverre kunt u zeggen dat uw werknemers de vrijheid hebben om zichzelf te sturen in hun werk?</p>	<p>Self-influence</p> <p>Self-motivation</p> <p>Self-direction</p>
2.5	<p>Kunt u kort uitleggen hoe de organisatie gestructureerd is?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Hoe beïnvloedt deze organisatiestructuur uw manier van leidinggeven? <p>Kunt u kort vertellen in hoeverre er gedeelde regels, standaarden en procedures gelden binnen de organisatie?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Hoe beïnvloeden deze regels, standaarden en procedures uw manier van leidinggeven? <p>Kunt u kort vertellen hoe de medewerkers beloond en bestraft worden binnen de organisatie?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Hoe beïnvloedt deze manier waarop de medewerkers worden beloond en bestraft uw manier van leidinggeven? <p>Kunt u kort vertellen in hoeverre er een gedeelde overtuiging, visie en cultuur heerst binnen de organisatie?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Hoe beïnvloeden deze overtuigingen, visie en cultuur uw manier van leidinggeven? <p>Kunt u kort vertellen hoe succes binnen de organisatie wordt gemeten onder medewerkers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Hoe beïnvloedt deze wijze waarop succes wordt gemeten uw manier van leidinggeven? 	<p>Org characteristic: Structure</p> <p>Org characteristic: Standards, policies, and procedures</p> <p>Org characteristic: Reward and punishment systems</p> <p>Org characteristic: Corporate beliefs, visions, and cultures</p> <p>Org characteristic: Appraisal</p>

	Vervolg HRBP	Indicatoren
3.1	Hoe ziet uw huidige functie eruit? Wat zijn uw verantwoordelijkheden? In hoeverre houdt u zich in uw functie ook bezig met leiderschapsontwikkeling binnen de organisatie?	Funcatiegegevens
3.3	In hoeverre denkt u dat werknemers volledig de verantwoordelijkheid over hun taken krijgen? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? → <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt de managers ervan om de volledige verantwoordelijkheid bij de werknemers neer te leggen? In hoeverre denkt u dat werknemers volledig de autonomie over hun taken krijgen? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? → <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt de managers ervan om volledige autonomie te geven aan uw werknemers? 	Vertical dispersion of responsibility Vertical dispersion of autonomy
3.4	In hoeverre denkt u dat de algemene manier van leidinggeven binnen deze organisatie te beschrijven is als coachend? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? → <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt de managers ervan om een meer coachende vorm van leidinggeven in te nemen? In hoeverre denkt u dat de managers fungeren als een vraagbaken voor werknemers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? → <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt de managers ervan om meer als vraagbaken te fungeren? In hoeverre denkt u dat managers een voorbeeld stellen voor werknemers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Positief</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? → <i>Negatief</i>. Wat weerhoudt managers ervan om meer een voorbeeldfunctie in te nemen in hun functie? Hoe ziet de interactie tussen managers en de werknemers eruit? Is dit een puur zakelijke of meer persoonlijke relatie? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → <i>Persoonlijk</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit? 	Coaching (leadership style) Informing (leadership style) Leading by example Showing concern/interacting with the employee

	<p>→ <i>Zakelijk</i>. Wat weerhoudt de manager ervan om zich meer te verdiepen in de werknemer?</p> <p>In hoeverre denkt u dat werknemers worden betrokken in besluitvormingsprocessen die betrekking hebben op hun werkzaamheden?</p> <p>→ <i>Betrokken</i>. Kunt u omschrijven hoe zich dat uit?</p> <p>→ <i>Niet betrokken</i>. Wat weerhoudt werknemers van het krijgen van meer medezeggenschap in besluitvorming?</p>	Participative decision-making
3.5	<p>Hoe worden werknemers beïnvloed in de manier waarop ze hun werk doen?</p> <p>Hoe worden werknemers gemotiveerd om hun werk te doen?</p> <p>In hoeverre kunt u zeggen dat werknemers de vrijheid hebben om zichzelf te sturen in hun werk?</p>	<p>Self-influence</p> <p>Self-motivation</p> <p>Self-direction</p>
3.6	<p>Kunt u kort uitleggen hoe de organisatie gestructureerd is?</p> <p>→ Hoe beïnvloedt deze organisatiestructuur de manier van leidinggeven?</p> <p>Kunt u kort vertellen in hoeverre er gedeelde regels, standaarden en procedures gelden binnen de organisatie?</p> <p>→ Hoe beïnvloeden deze regels, standaarden en procedures de manier van leidinggeven?</p> <p>Kunt u kort vertellen hoe de medewerkers beloond en bestraft worden binnen de organisatie?</p> <p>→ Hoe beïnvloedt deze manier waarop de medewerkers worden beloond en bestraft de manier van leidinggeven?</p> <p>Kunt u kort vertellen in hoeverre er een gedeelde overtuiging, visie en cultuur heerst binnen de organisatie?</p> <p>→ Hoe beïnvloeden deze overtuigingen, visie en cultuur de manier van leidinggeven?</p> <p>Kunt u kort vertellen hoe succes binnen de organisatie wordt gemeten onder medewerkers?</p> <p>→ Hoe beïnvloedt deze wijze waarop succes wordt gemeten de manier van leidinggeven?</p>	<p>Org characteristic: Structure</p> <p>Org characteristic: Standards, policies, and procedures</p> <p>Org characteristic: Reward and punishment systems</p> <p>Org characteristic: Corporate beliefs, visions, and cultures</p> <p>Org characteristic: Appraisal</p>

Note: the usage of the words “positief” (= positive) and “negatief” (= negative) are not meant to provide a value judgment. They are solely meant to categorize the responses from the interviewees, and select a follow-up question if needed. A ‘positive’ answer is characterized by positive wordings that indicate that the questioned applies in any way. A ‘negative’ answer is characterized by negative wordings that indicate that the questioned does not apply in any way.

Finalizing checklist

- Ask if the interviewee wants to add anything, that was not covered in the questions
- Thank the interviewee for their responses and their openness
- Ensure the interviewee that the data will be transcribed, and after that the data will be anonymized first. That means that every information that could possibly lead to the recognition of the interviewee, will be anonymized
- Guarantee all information will be treated confidential, and no one other than the researcher and the researcher’s supervisor will have access to the raw data
- Thank the interviewee for their time, and provide your contact details in case interviewees have questions or remarks afterwards.

8.2. *Raw data including codes*

8.3. *Raw data congregated per category*