

# Global Leadership – An Underdeveloped Concept?

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A case study within a Nepali telecom company on if the *global leadership* concept is satisfactory in practice

## Abstract

In today's increasingly international business society, there is a growing trend in teaching and developing global leaders. The *global leadership* research is in its cradle and a common definition of the concept does not yet exist. The scholars have so far focused on (1) The scope of global leadership tasks; (2) Global leader competencies; (3) Assessment instrumentation; (4) Training and development; and (5) The difference between global and domestic leadership. Few studies have explored the practical implementation of the work that the global leaders engage in daily. Furthermore, theories on global leadership are separated from theories on global management. By using a qualitative method, with an exploratory focus, the aim of the thesis is to scrutinize whether or not global leadership, as defined today, is satisfactory enough when it is applied in practice. The study is carried out in a telecom company in Nepal, through a combination of semi structured interviews as well as observations. The exploratory theories used are on global leadership as well as *leader versus manager*. Explanatory theories in the areas of *cross-culture* and *situational leadership* are thereafter utilized to analyze and explain the empirical findings in depth. The analysis commences by identifying some Nepal-specific conclusions about the perceived local leadership style, as existing research within this particular cluster is lacking. Secondly, when examining the interviewed leaders in the light of how a global leader is defined, they all fit the description. Within the explanatory analysis, the results indicate that the global leaders adapt their practical work to their surroundings. This is exemplified by the more hands-on and detailed leadership style respondents feel required in Nepal. Hence, the absence of examples of actual work tasks in today's definition of global leadership undermines the importance of management as a prerequisite for good leadership. The conclusion is that the definition of global leadership, as of today, is not satisfactory when applied in practice in a global setting. The lack of applicability can partly be explained by that the concept is predominantly developed from a North American and Western European perspective, underestimating cultural differences in the perceived effective leadership. Future research and companies should have this in mind and focus on creating and developing the *adaptive manager* instead of the global leader.

Keywords: adaptation, cross-culture, global leadership, Nepal, practical implementation

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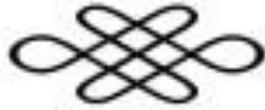
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The endless knot is a Buddhist symbol, illustrating Buddha's never-ending care and wisdom. Although of varying design, the symbol is recognized by not having a beginning or an end. In this thesis, the ornament serves two meanings. Firstly, the knot's practical function is to signal to the reader that there is a new section or a sub-conclusion. Furthermore, the symbolic meaning is that it represents a main take-away, being that the concepts of leader and manager should coexist also when the global dimension is added to the concepts.

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## 1. Introduction

Today, many companies are present in markets far different from their home countries. With free-trade unions such as NAFTA and the EU, multinationals are becoming important contributors to countries' GDP (McKinsey & Company, 2010). Due to this, there is a growing need to understand and being trained in cross-cultural leadership (Browaey's Browaey's & Price, 2011). In the early 1990's, the initial works on *global leadership* was published, as an attempt to develop and teach leaders to expand their skills in taking their business to the global market (Mendenhall et al., 2008). Compared to other leadership research, global leadership is still in the early phases of development (Osland et al., 2013). Given the complexities and uncertainty associated with international presence, there is a need to further understand and advance within the field (Caligiuri, 2006). In this thesis, the concept of global leadership will be scrutinized and analyzed from a cross-cultural perspective, with the aim to contribute to a more nuanced illustration of what the global leader really does and how the concept differs between theory and practice.

### 1.1 Background

Culture is a multifaceted topic, which is defined differently depending on the perspective one chooses (Bodley, 1994, in Browaey's & Price, 2011). Cultures differ across nations, between areas, among communities, and within organizations. Browaey's and Price (2011) exemplify this by illustrating culture in five layers that represents the different viewpoints from which one can observe the field.

Figure 1: Levels of culture (Browaey's & Price, 2011)



In this explanation, the topic of culture and management refers to how one explains, compares, and interacts with various nationalities within a company (Browaey's & Price,

2011).<sup>1</sup> This is also what serves the ground to cross-cultural leadership research, where two of the earliest scholars are Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck (1961, in Nardon & Steers 2006). Their research shows that there are sets of universal questions or problems, to which different cultures will use different solutions. Influenced by this work, Hofstede (1980) conducted a world known study within cross-cultural research. His study is based on national cultural differences across subsidiaries at IBM, summarized in five dimensions: *power distance*, *uncertainty avoidance*, *individualism/collectivism*, *masculinity/femininity*, and *long-term/short-term orientation* (Nardon & Steers, 2006). Between the five dimensions, one can make comparisons and distinctions across cultures (Browaeys & Price, 2011). Another researcher within the field, Trompenaars (1993), concludes that “*there is not one ‘best-way’ of doing business*” and he “*advocates a better understanding of the cultural dilemmas faced by international companies*” (Browaeys & Price, 2011). These earlier studies within cross-culture lay the foundation for a substantial research study named GLOBE (Browaeys & Price 2011).<sup>2</sup> GLOBE is a collection of dimensions of culture, which ranking differs depending on where you are in the world (House et al, 2001). The dimensions have important effects on the perception of effective leadership in a specific societal culture (Javidan et al., 2006).

From the research of GLOBE and the attributes connected to being an effective leader, one touches upon a long debated topic: the differences between a *leader* and a *manager* (Zaleznik, 1977; Yukl 1989). Today, the two concepts are separated also in the global research, as global management and global leadership are treated as two different topics (Mendenhall et al., 2003).

Global leadership originates from the combination of cross-cultural and leadership research (Mendenhall et al. 2008). It was initially developed in the 1990’s due to an increasing need from companies to strengthen their international presence (Stahl & Björkman, 2006). One definition of global leaders is: “*high level professionals such as executives, vice presidents, directors, and managers who are in jobs with some global responsibility activities such as global integration responsibilities*” (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009). They should, amongst other things, be vigorous and persistent in achieving goals, venturesome and original in problem solving, and have the willingness to influence other people’s behavior (Bass, 1990, in Mendenhall et al. 2013). According to Mendenhall et al. (2013), the aim of the global leadership research is so far focused at answering what capabilities global leaders need to acquire to be effective and/or how these can be developed in the most effective way. Little or

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<sup>1</sup> For more information regarding culture, see appendix 9.1

<sup>2</sup> GLOBE is an abbreviation of Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness

no research is dedicated to understand how global leaders behave and interact with others in practice, neither on how the situation influences their behavior (Osland et al., 2013).

This study aims investigate global leadership when implemented in practice, an area that is highly underdeveloped within the field. As a result, the research sheds light on the actual definition of the concept. Today, global leadership is built upon previous leadership– and cross-cultural research, hence, excluding research within the field of management and global management. While investigating the practical implementation, the current definition presents potential gaps. There are reasons to believe that more practical theories, which often are developed within the field of management rather than leadership, needs to be included to not belittle the importance of managerial work.

## **1.2 Aim and Research Question**

By using a case study on a Nepalese telecom company, the aim of this thesis is to test if the definition of global leadership is applicable in practice. Further, the research desires to highlight any gaps and potential additions to the concept, where and if of value.

The thesis aspires to answer the following research question with subsequent sub questions:

### ***How satisfactory is the definition of global leadership in practice?***

- *Is there a need for additions/alterations/exclusions to the definition of global leadership as defined today?*

## **1.3 Demarcation**

Firstly, this thesis is about leadership and not organization. This is of significance as the aim is not to evaluate which leadership style is most effective depending on structure, vision and mission. Moreover, the aim is neither to evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership styles in the research company, but rather to evaluate a concept of leadership with help from empirical findings within the research company.

Secondly, it is important to distinguish from leadership in organizations and leadership per se. Hence, the work done has its foundation in management literature and scholars, and is not connected to leadership in for example religion or spirituality.

Furthermore, although expatriation potentially is an important research field on its own in connection to the topic of global leadership, it is not developed upon further in this thesis. This is due to that much of current global leadership research is based upon empirical samples of expatriation. Including expats in the empirical sample without separating these employees from the other leaders is thus argued to be a justified.

When discussing culture and clusters of social trends, it is easy to generalize. Under section 5.4 “Cultural Adaptation” there are instances where there are other plausible explanations for certain tendencies such as age, gender, knowledge infrastructure, and personal traits. Yet, as the empirics and theory indicate, cultural factors are indeed relevant explanatory variables and thus, this is where the focus of this thesis will be.

#### **1.4 Clarifications**

As all respondents in the study are anonymous, fictive names are used. These names are randomly selected and not connected to the respondent.

Foreign leaders are split into geographical clusters according to their origin. The clusters coincide with the clusters used in the theory of GLOBE.<sup>3</sup> Clustering the leaders are necessary to ensure their anonymity in the study, as occasionally there instances where only one country is represented.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information regarding GLOBE, see appendix 9.2

## 1.5 Structure of the Paper

Table 1: Structure of the thesis

<i>Section 2: Theoretical Framework</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Theories on Global Leadership</u>: developing around the concept</li><li>• <u>Theories on Leaders and Managers</u>: differentiating the two</li><li>• <u>Theory on GLOBE</u>: introduction to the Scandinavian, Eastern European and Nepalese cluster</li><li>• <u>Theories in Situational Leadership</u>: the LEFI-model and Managerial Leadership</li></ul>
<i>Section 3: Method</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Methodical fit</u>: the basic research approach</li><li>• <u>Methodical Fit of a Holistic Single Based Case Study</u></li><li>• <u>Data Collection</u>: interviews and observations</li><li>• <u>Approach to Analysis</u></li><li>• <u>Alternative Methods, Limitations and Implications</u></li><li>• <u>Reliability and Validity of the Results</u></li></ul>
<i>Section 4: Empirics</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Introduction to Nepal</u>: short facts about the country</li><li>• <u>Introduction to TeliaSonera AB and Ncell Pvt. Ltd.</u>: short facts about the case company</li><li>• <u>Perceptions of Leaders and Managers</u></li><li>• <u>Perceptions of Nepalese Working Style and Leadership</u></li><li>• <u>Perception of Leadership at Ncell</u>: employees and leaders views separated</li></ul>
<i>Section 5: Analysis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>The Perceived Stereotypical Nepalese Leadership</u>: a supplement to the lack of research on this cluster</li><li>• <u>The Global Leaders at Ncell</u>: evaluating if the leaders at Ncell are global according to today's definition</li><li>• <u>Global Leadership in Practice</u>: analyzing the lack of practical work in today's definition of global leadership</li><li>• <u>Cultural Adaptation</u>: alternative way of looking at cross-cultural development of leaders</li><li>• <u>Main-take away</u></li></ul>
<i>Section 6: Conclusion</i>
<i>Section 7: Reflections</i>
<i>Section 8: References</i>
<i>Section 9: Appendix</i>

## 2. Theoretical Framework



*This section presents the theoretical framework used in the research and it is divided into two main parts. The first two theories presented are used for exploratory purpose and includes the sections “Theories on Global Leadership” as well as ”Theories on Leaders and Managers”. The second part introduces the explanatory theories for the analysis, including “Theory on GLOBE” and “Theories on Situational Leadership”.*



### 2.1 Theories on Global Leadership

The geographical presence of companies has widely shifted during the last decades and today many companies are born global rather than domestic (Evans et al., 2002). This change does not only effect on the competitive landscape of business, but also the way in which leaders within the business have to conduct their work (Caligiuri, 2006; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009). The leaders in the international arena are in the literature referred to as global leaders and their role is defined as “*executives who are in jobs with some international scope*” (Spreitzer et al., 1997). The concept of global leadership is still in a relatively early phase and therefore, no common definition of the concept has to date been set (Osland et al., 2013). The variation in definitions of the concept and the various empirical samples (e.g., expatriates, global managers, HR managers etc.) prevent definite findings and comparisons of the concept of global leadership (Osland et al., 2013). One definition suggested by Bird (in Osland et al., 2013 p. 3) is:

*“Global leaders are individuals who effect significant positive change in organizations by building communities through the development of trust and the arrangement of organization structures and processes in a context involving multiple cross-boundary stakeholders, multiple sources of external cross-boundary authority, and multiple cultures under conditions of temporal, geographical and cultural complexity”.*

Another definition used by Caligiuri and Tarique (2009 p. 1) is:

*“(…) high level professionals such as executives, vice presidents, directors, and managers who are in jobs with some global leadership activities such as global integration responsibilities”.*

Bartlett and Ghoshal (2003) have a broad approach in their research and they state that:

*“In fact, in the volatile world of transnational corporations, there is no such thing as a universal global manager. Rather, there are three groups of specialists: business managers, country managers, and functional managers. And there are the top executives at corporate headquarters, the leaders who manage the complex interactions between the three (...)”*

Suutari (2002) explains that within global companies there are few roles that by nature are globally integrative. She further clarify that the key idea in the global leader literature is that *“the competency requirements of this key managerial group have changed due to the globalization of business”*.

In 2013, there were about 20 printed empirical studies of global leadership and they can roughly be divided into 5 different categories (Osland et al., 2013); (1) *The scope of global leadership tasks*, (2) *Global leader competencies*, (3) *Assessment instrumentation*, (4) *Training and development* and (5) *The difference between global and domestic leadership*. Common to all categories of global leadership research is that most scholars focus on finding and develop the competencies of global leaders (Osland et al., 2013; Caligiuri, 2006).

Global leaders are of high strategic importance for multinational firms and it has been found that developing leaders with cross-cultural competencies are among the top five most important tasks for multinationals (Stroh and Caligiuri, 1998a, in Caligiuri, 2006). Research shows that having a global mindset and having transnational competencies are important attributes in order to achieve an effective global leadership (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009; Mendenhall et al., 2013). This means that global leaders have to think globally and obtain knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personality traits that are cross-cultural (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009; Mendenhall et al. 2013). These *competencies* are well researched, yet little focus is on seeing how these affect the work in practice (Osland et al., 2013). Caligiuri (2004, in Caligiuri, 2006) defines ten general activities that are common to global leaders:

1. They work with colleagues from other countries
2. They interact with external clients from other countries
3. They interact with internal clients from other countries
4. They may need to speak in a language other than their mother tongue at work
5. They supervise employees who are of different nationalities
6. They develop a strategic business plan on a worldwide basis for their unit
7. They manage a budget on a worldwide basis for their unit
8. They negotiate in other countries or with people from other countries
9. They manage foreign suppliers or vendors
10. They manage risk on a worldwide basis for their unit

Worth underscoring is that these actions have little to do with the global leaders' everyday work, but should rather be viewed as overall generalizations of their role in the company (Osland et al., 2013). The ten activities were obtained from focus groups as well as handing out surveys to leaders within European and North American firms (Caligiuri, 2004, in Caligiuri, 2006). Later research made by Osland et al. (2013) identifies four common themes within work content of global leaders: (1) they are managing multiplicities; (2) they face huge challenges; (3) their work involves precariousness; and (4) their work involve ambiguity.<sup>4</sup> The four themes show a challenging work content that is characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and risk due to the multiple stakeholders, functions, and levels that global leaders deal with. Osland et al. (2013) further observe three steps that global leaders go about to reduce the uncertainty in their work. They establish good processes, they choose the right people for their teams, and they trust the people that they work with. In their daily job, global leaders are then found to adopt certain approaches towards the practical work within the areas of, problem solving, strategic thinking, boundary spanning and stakeholders, influencing, and global skills (Osland et al., 2013).

### **Problem solving**

Osland et al. (2013) found that global leaders take decisions based on deep domain knowledge of their field, their organization, their job, the international business, their culture-general, and their intercultural competencies. Further, they state that global leaders develop general knowledge about cultures, such as knowledge about sensitive topics to avoid, awareness of different styles of working, leading and communicating, and general intercultural competencies. When taking a decision they want to understand the whole picture before taking action and they mentally imagine different action scenarios in advance (Osland

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<sup>4</sup> For more information regarding Osland's four common themes, see appendix 9.3

et al., 2013). After taking actions, global leaders are open to change their plan if they see that something else would be better (Osland et al., 2013).

### **Strategic thinking**

Global leaders are good at seeing the bigger global picture when they set strategies and they are often one step ahead, with well thought back-up plans in case their strategy would fail (Osland et al., 2013). They are considering the long-term viability of their strategies, by balancing the human side of the decisions with the business side (Osland et al., 2013).

### **Boundary spanning and stakeholders**

Spanning boundaries and dedicating a great amount of time to maintaining and developing good relationship with stakeholders are activities central to global leaders (Osland et al., 2013). It is important for them to constantly expand their network and educate their stakeholders to keep well informed (Osland et al., 2013). Global leaders aim to treat their stakeholders equally and they want to find solutions that benefit both them and the business (Osland et al., 2013). At times, they challenge stakeholders to ensure that the best for the business is achieved (Osland et al., 2013).

### **Influencing**

Influencing is mostly done to persuade others to change their mental models (Osland et al., 2013). Furthermore, Osland et al. (2013) argues that the leaders keep the team up to date in terms of where they are heading and how the work is progressing. Some *global skills* which these leaders tend to use are: being able to read people, engaging in conversations, taking on multiple perspectives, engaging in “code switching” depending on the circumstance, and leveraging appropriately on culture when needed (Osland et al., 2013).

#### **2.1.1 Global Management**

A global manager has been defined as “*someone who is assigned a position with a cross-border responsibility, who needs to understand business from a worldwide rather than a countrywide perspective, needs to balance potentially contradictory demands in the global environment and who must be able to work with multiple cultures simultaneously rather than with one culture at a time*” (Cappellen & Janssens, 2005). According to Mendenhall et al. (2013), there are overlaps between the concept of global management and global leadership, with the difference being that the latter entails being a change agent. A change agent is based on Kotter’s eight steps of leading successful transformations in organizations (Kotter, 1995).<sup>5</sup> Also, Mendenhall et al. (2013) claim that a global manager can be a global leader but it is not unquestionably so, indicating that a specific title does not imply one is a leader. Most research

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<sup>5</sup> For more information regarding Kotter’s eight steps, see appendix 9.4

within this field has so far concerned the variances between domestic and global managers, where the two differs in “*how they perform their roles and the findings on characteristics related to perceived effectiveness*” (Mendenhall et al., 2013).

Management research is highly argued being a product of primarily North American and to some extent Western European scholars (Tsui, 2004). Understanding management on an international basis and across cultures has so far been a slow process, with a primary focus on management in general, and not specifically on international studies (Tsui, 2004). The explanations are two: lack of interest by editors of the importance of international examples, and the poorer quality of the research conducted abroad (Tsui, 2004). These obstacles are, however, decreasing (Li & Tsui, 2002, in Tsui, 2004).

Previous research on the topic claims that there is something called universal knowledge which refers to “*research findings that can be applied cross-nationally to explain or predict variation in a given dependent phenomenon using the same predictor variable(s)*”, meaning that some knowledge is context-free (Cheng, 1994, in Tsui, 2004). However, other scholars argue that there is little support for this idea (Bhagat & McQuaid, 1982; Doktor et al., 1991; Roberts & Boyacigiller, 1984; in Tsui, 2004). Instead, Tsui (2004) considers the importance of context- and culture- specific indigenous research, when focusing on management in an international context.

## **2.2 Theories on Leaders and Managers**

The concept of leader versus manager has been a hot topic throughout the years and the difference in meaning between both is well researched (Zaleznik, 1977).

While the concept of a manager is perceived as including more practical and result oriented work, the leader is perceived to be visionary and entrepreneurial (Zaleznik, 1977). One of the first scholars to propose a difference was Henri Fayol (1916, in Mintzberg, 1971) stating that managers “*plan, organize, coordinate, and control*”. Levitt’s (1976, in Zaleznik 1977) definition of management is that it is about systematic planning and control. Leaders, on the other hand, should motivate and influence people, groups, or units, in order to enthusiastically strive towards a common goal (Alvesson, 2001). Zaleznik (1977) differentiates between leaders and managers in four dimensions:

Table 2: Manager versus leader (Zaleznik, 1977)

Dimensions	Managers' attitudes	Leaders' attitudes
<i>Attitudes toward goals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reactive to changes</li> <li>• Impersonal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active</li> <li>• Shaping ideas</li> <li>• Evoking images, altering moods</li> </ul>
<i>Conceptions of work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing strategies and making decisions</li> <li>• Skills: timing, reducing tensions, tackle interests of different opinions</li> <li>• Bargaining and negotiating</li> <li>• Using rewards and punishments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops new solutions to old problems</li> <li>• Seek out private risk and danger</li> </ul>
<i>Relations to others</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids solidarity</li> <li>• Relates the role people play in the sequence of events or in the organization</li> <li>• Concerned with <i>how</i> decisions are made</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More empathic towards others – creates relationships</li> <li>• Concerned with <i>what</i> decisions are made</li> </ul>
<i>Sense of self</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See them selves as conservators and regulators of existing orders of affairs</li> <li>• Perform a role which people know</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May work in a company but never belongs to it</li> </ul>



*Summary section 2.1 and 2.2:* In this section, theories that will be used for an exploratory purpose are presented. The topic of *global leadership* is introduced, which according to the scholars tend to focus on the characteristics and competencies of the leader. Furthermore, some scholars indicate that there might be a difference between leaders and managers, specifically in their *attitudes towards goals*, *conception of goals*, *relations to others*, and *their sense of self*. In the next two sections, the explanatory theories are introduced.



### 2.3 Theory on GLOBE

The GLOBE study is one of the world's most ambitious research programs on cross-level integrated theory on cross-cultural organizational and leadership effectiveness (House et al., 2002, in Nardon & Steers, 2006; Morrison, 2000, in Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). The program aims to “*conceptualize, operationalize, test and validate cross-level integrated theory of the relationship between culture and societal, organizational leadership effectiveness*” (Browaeys & Price, 2011). Amongst other things, the scholars have found that there are some universal attributes for effective leadership such as being charismatic (Punnett & Shenkar, 2007). During the first phase of the GLOBE study, nine dimensions of culture of leadership were developed (House et al., 2002). The theories conceptualize and provide aid in

differentiating between cultures, and also between differences in leadership (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009).

### 2.3.1 The nine dimensions of culture

The term “*culture*” is in GLOBE defined as:

“*Shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that results from common experiences of members of collective and are transmitted across generations*” (House et al., 2001).

The study has its standpoint in that culture is “*societal*”, as supposed to “*national*” (Punnett & Shenkar, 2007). Also worth emphasizing is that GLOBE is concerned with organizational leadership, in contrast to leadership in general (House et al, 2001).

This first phase of the project conceptualize the finding that effective leadership is embedded in its context, indicating that the norms and values an individual is subjected to has an influence in how that individual leads (House et.al., 2004). The research presents this in nine clusters of culture: *power distance, uncertainty avoidance, humane orientation, individual collectivism, in-group collectivism, assertiveness, gender egalitarianism, future orientation, and performance orientation* (Browaey & Price, 2011; Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009).<sup>6</sup>

### 2.3.2 The Scandinavian cluster

A characteristic aspect of the Scandinavian (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland) cluster, which can be traced back to the Vikings, is the absence of a predominant hierarchy (Browaey & Price, 2011). Scandinavians are characterized by “*self-sufficiency, fairness, egalitarianism and democracy*”, indicating that employees are encouraged to express their views freely and expects being listened to by managers (Browaey & Price, 2011).

Furthermore, *institutional collectivism*, meaning the degree to which organizations and societies rewards distribution of resources for the collective good, is ranked high in the Scandinavian cluster, whilst *in-group collectivism*, where loyalty to organizations and family are valued, is ranked low relative to the other clusters (Javidan et al., 2006). Another high-ranked dimension is *future orientation* (Javidan et al., 2006).

Within the Scandinavian cluster, there is a lack distance between the leader and the followers (Browaey & Price 2011). Empirically, Denmark has the lowest score of all countries under the dimension *power distance*, hence indicating that the position in a hierarchy is not of importance per se, but rather, the emphasis lies on the job being done (Chhokar et al., 2008, in

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<sup>6</sup> For more information regarding GLOBE’s nine clusters of culture, see appendix 9.5

Browaeys & Price, 2011). This is further exemplified in that one of the most important roles of a leader in Scandinavia is being able to delegate to subordinates (Browaeys & Price, 2011). Furthermore, harmony in groups is seen as positive and thus, this cluster scores low on assertiveness (Javidan et al., 2006).

### 2.3.3 The Eastern European cluster

The rise and fall of the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union is of importance to the development of the East European leadership (Browaeys & Price, 2011). According to Grachev and Bobina, (2004) societal culture in Russia is determined by “*a) traditional features, historically developed through centuries; b) influence of the 20<sup>th</sup> century totalitarianism; and c) radical revolution in values, beliefs, and behaviors through the transitional 1990s and early 2000s*”. Although Western political and economical systems were somewhat introduced after the fall of the Iron Curtain, this progress has been slow and is still permeated by high level of bureaucracy and centralized governing associated with their autocratic legacy (Browaeys & Price, 2011). After the fall of the wall, 15 new states emerged (Britannica 2014).<sup>7</sup> According to GLOBE, the countries geographically located in Europe, as well as Greece, Hungary, Albania, Slovenia and Poland, are included in the Eastern European cluster (House et al., 2004).

The Eastern European cluster scores high in the dimensions *assertiveness* (Albania highest) and *gender egalitarianism* (Hungary highest) (Chokkar et al., 2004.). The cluster is predominantly built on emphasizing hierarchies (Bakacsi et al., 2002). Moreover, although the trend is to focus on being less male-dominated and more future- and performance oriented, the cluster still scores relatively low in these aspects (Javidan et al., 2006). Another dimension in which this cluster stands out is *uncertainty avoidance*, where Russia is the lowest of all GLOBE countries (Chokkar et al., 2008, in Browaeys & Price, 2011). Russia is, on the other hand, high in *in-group collectivism*, which indicates great loyalty to organizations or family (Javidan et al., 2006).

### 2.3.4 The Nepalese cluster

The GLOBE study divides Asia into China, India, and Thailand with surrounding countries (Browaeys & Price, 2011). Few aspects deal with Nepal specifically, yet what is stated is that intellectual autonomy is considered very unimportant (Terlutter et al., 2006).

In Dipesh Upadhyay’s article on “*Leadership Effectiveness in Nepalese Service Organizations*” (2007), the author argues there are some Nepalese leadership characteristics worth emphasizing. Firstly, decisions are most likely taken from the top level, with little or no

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<sup>7</sup> For more information regarding the Soviet Empire, see appendix 9.6

formalized rules or procedures. This indicates a lack of using specialized staff (Upadhyay, 2007). Further, Nepalese companies, public more so than private, fail to motivate their employees (Bajracharya, 1978, in Upadhyay, 2007). In the same article, a study by Suwal (1998, in Upadhyay, 2007) shows that 59% of the Nepalese CEOs in the private sector are introverted and 87% of the CEOs tend to do the same thing repeatedly, hence not being flexible or creative. Due to a focus on authoritative or paternalistic leadership style, in contrast to supportive, Nepalese CEOs are according to Suwal (1998, in Upadhyay, 2007) conservative in terms of their leadership style – one leads as one always has.

In his study, Upadhyay (2007) tests leadership effectiveness in Nepalese firms by using five sets of dimensions, i.e. setting vision, empowering, communication, task or relationship orientation, and locus of control. From 75 answers, he found that very few Nepalese managers used written vision statements, leading to less effective governance. Further, there was a very strong indication that Nepalese managers did not understand the need “*of having good interpersonal relationships with employees*” (Upadhyay, 2007).

## 2.4 Theories on Situational Leadership

There are four major streams within the field leadership research (Mendenhall et al., 2013): *power-influence approach*, the *behavioral approach*, the *trait*, and the *situational approach*.

Being adaptive and aware of changes are increasingly important qualities for leaders due to “*increased globalization and international commerce, rapid technological change, changing cultural values, a more diverse workforce, more use of outsourcing, new forms of social networking, increased use of virtual interaction, more visibility of leader actions, and concerns for outcomes besides profits*” (Burke & Cooper, 2004). Within the *situational approach*, the attention is shed on the surrounding circumstances affecting the leader (Mendenhall et al, 2013). The research within the situational approach falls into one of two categories (Yukl, 1989). In the first, the leader acts as the dependent variable, meaning that the research aims to see “*how the situation influences behavior and how much variation occurs in managerial behavior across different types of managerial positions*” (Yukl, 1989). The second focuses on how the situation balances the connection between the leader effectiveness and attributes/behaviors of the leader (Yukl, 1989). Yukl (1989) presents nine situational leadership theories, where the situational aspects of importance for the leader effectiveness differ.<sup>8</sup>

The *Leader-Environment-Follower Interaction Theory* (LEFI) by Wofford (1982; Wofford & Srinivasan 1983) conceptualizes around the effect leader activities can have on four different

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<sup>8</sup> For more information regarding all nine situational leadership theories, see appendix 9.7

dimensions: follower ability, motivation, role perception, as well as environmental constraints. The leader behavior and usage of these dimensions will affect the followers' performance (Wofford, 1982). In order for the leader behavior to be functioning to the best extent possible, it is dependent on continuous feedback on follower performance variables, follower performance, the environment, the leader's traits, sources of power and influence, and leader-follower interaction relationships (Wofford, 1982).<sup>9</sup>

Although being similar to some of the other situational leadership models mentioned, the LEFI-model is the only one that includes the macro environment as an explanatory factor.

According to Yukl (1989) there is much confusion within the leadership research field, limiting the creation of an overarching theory connecting the different fields. Further, the field of traditional leadership research has not been connected to a global setting in an extensive way, as it is argued that the "*skill level and deployment demands render the phenomenon to be so different*" (Mendenhall et al., 2013).

#### 2.4.1 Managerial leadership

Scholars like Gosling and Mintzberg (2003) underscores the danger in separating the concepts of leaders and managers; "*just as management without leadership encourages an uninspired style (...) leadership without management encourages a disconnected style, which promotes hubris*". Yukl (1989) agrees with this view and he argues that since there is an overlap between the concepts, it is not "*feasible nor desirable at this point in the development*" to not treat them interchangeably.

In Knights and Willmotts' (1992) article on leadership, they argue that there is too much accentuating on the leader as the nave of an organization, instead of understanding the context and situations in which they act. Holmberg and Tyrstrup (2010) concludes these findings in their article on everyday leadership, by stating that there is a "*common notion of fragmentation in managerial work, as well as (...) lack of understanding of how managerial work and leadership practices relate to the overall work process of the organization*". In this research, an investigation of 62 managers' perception of the characteristics of their everyday leadership is described (Holmberg & Tyrstrup, 2010). The conclusions are that sense making reveals itself in three activities: *interpretation, constant adjustments, and formulation of temporary solutions* (Holmberg & Tyrstrup, 2010). Thus, instead of observing leadership from the traditional view of goal-, strategy-, and guideline- setting (Yukl, 1989), Holmber and Tyrstrup (2010) emphasize the need of viewing the concept in the light of processes and dependent on events and context.

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<sup>9</sup> For more information regarding the LEFI-model, see appendix 9.8



*Summary of section 2.3 and 2.4:* The explanatory theories introduced are the well-known GLOBE-study as well as adaptive leadership, where also the notion of *managerial leadership* is presented. These function as aids in the analysis section to scrutinize the topic at hand.



### 3. Method



*This section elaborates on the understanding of the research area, chosen methods, research company, as well as the implications these may have on the study. Methods have been chosen to minimize possible limitations. Plenty of time and effort have been devoted to the methodological choices, since these have a great impact on the outcome and the dependability of the work at hand. In the end of this section, alternative methods as well as the reliability and validity of the results are discussed.*



#### 3.1 Methodical Fit

Based on the research area and research question, methods are chosen to not only be apt together and reinforce each other, but also to ensure that the aim of the thesis is reached to the best extent possible.

##### 3.1.1 Basic research approach

In the empirical data collection of the study, a qualitative research approach is applied. The qualitative approach is considered appropriate for studies where the research phenomena is socially constructed and requires a deeper understanding of the social interaction between humans (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). As this research aims to examine a leadership- and a cultural phenomenon, which both are considered as socially constructed, a qualitative approach suits well. In combination with the qualitative method, an abductive design is used. This is considered appropriate when performing qualitative research and it is described as a combination of the deductive- and the inductive practices (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). A deductive approach indicates that the researcher aims to test and develop a theory, while the inductive means that the researcher takes empirical data as a primary standpoint (Saunders et al., 2009). The starting point for this study are theories on leadership and culture, which were carefully read and understood by both researchers before starting any of the empirical data collection. Findings from the empirical data are later compared with the theories. This is done to create an understanding of the phenomena as well as to see if any complementary theories are needed to create a complete and cohesive analysis. Alvesson and Sköldberg (2008) describe the abductive research approach as taking a stand in existing theories and research, which later are compared with empirical data to find patterns and to create an understanding.

##### 3.1.2 Exploratory, descriptive and explanatory approach

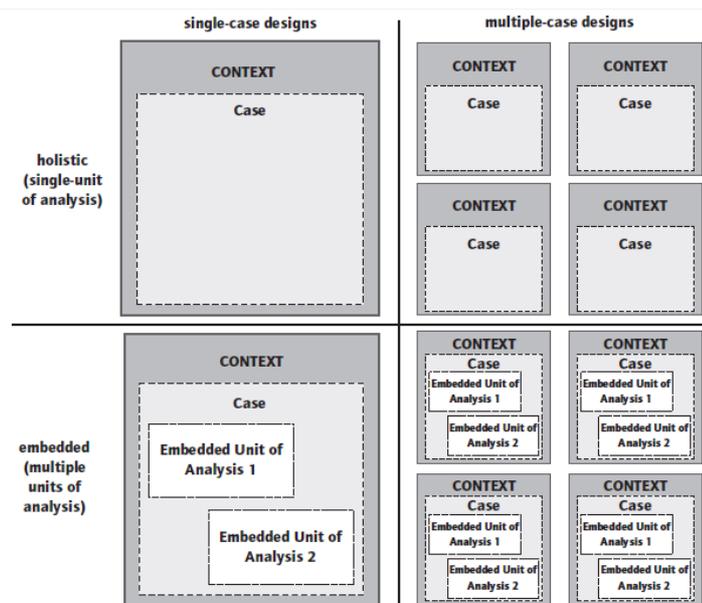
Saunders et al. (2009) state that research like the one at hand can be carried out in an exploratory-, descriptive-, or explanatory way. Firstly, they describe the exploratory approach

as a method where the researcher examines a phenomenon out from new perspectives. Secondly, the descriptive approach is used to explain and portray phenomena, and lastly, the explanatory approach aims to disclose the relationship between variables. This study mainly has influences from the explanatory- and the exploratory approaches. It aims to look at a phenomenon in a new cultural setting and out from that, explain the observed effects between the leadership and cultural phenomena. Parts of description are included when phenomena are described to enable for further analysis.

### 3.2 Methodical Fit of a Holistic Single Based Case Study

A single based case study is chosen for the main empirical data collection. As this thesis focus on themes that are socially constructed and the researchers intends to study them in their real-life context, the case study is an appropriate method (Yin, 2009). Performing a case study is further apt when applying an abductive approach (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2008). Yin (2012) explains two basic dimensions to choose from when applying a case study method: single- or multiple case studies. These two dimensions are then combined with either a holistic- or an embedded approach (Yin, 2012). A single based case study means that the researcher aims to study only one case (e.g. firm, event, person etc.) that is considered to be representative for the researched phenomenon (Yin, 2012). A multiple case study instead means that more than one case is studied. Regarding the holistic- or embedded approach, Yin (2012) explains that the holistic approach is when the researcher analyses the studied case object as one part and in one level, while the embedded approach is applied when the analysis is made in several levels within the one part of the object. In this study only one case company is studied and it is done with a holistic approach. This choice is made as the research company is considered representative for the research area and during the analysis a division of the company into different levels is not considered to add value to the results. It is suggested that the case study is applied with a triangulation method, meaning that several sources are used to obtain empirical data (Yin, 2012). Hence, to ensure a high level on the collected empirical data and to give depth to the findings, semi-

Figure 2: Designs of Studies (Yin, 2012)



2012). A multiple case study instead means that more than one case is studied. Regarding the holistic- or embedded approach, Yin (2012) explains that the holistic approach is when the researcher analyses the studied case object as one part and in one level, while the embedded approach is applied when the analysis is made in several levels within the one part of the object. In this study only one case company is studied and it is done with a holistic approach. This choice is made as the research company is considered representative for the research area and during the analysis a division of the company into different levels is not considered to add value to the results. It is suggested that the case study is applied with a triangulation method, meaning that several sources are used to obtain empirical data (Yin, 2012). Hence, to ensure a high level on the collected empirical data and to give depth to the findings, semi-

structured interviews are applied together with observation and collection of internal documents from the research company.

### **3.2.1 Selection of case company**

The case company for the research is Ncell, a Nepali subsidiary to the telecom company TeliaSonera AB. Ncell is chosen due to it being a part of a multinational; there is a cultural mix in the top management team; and the geographical position in a developing country. These factors make Ncell well suited to reach the aim of the research in the study. Further, the fact that a Swedish company owns Ncell eased the process; even though the headquarters is situated in Kathmandu, Nepal. Performing the study outside of Sweden is chosen partly because it enables a diverse cultural setting, but also to make sure that the influence the authors' origin may have on the research results is somewhat minimized.

## **3.3 Data Collection**

Data included in this study is chosen with care to ensure a high reliability of the final results. For this reason, primary data is preferred. Secondary data is used as a compliment to the primary data and sources are critically considered to ensure their reliability.

### **3.3.1 Primary and secondary data sources**

The main data for the study is based upon primary data in the form of semi-structured interviews and field observations. All collected data is based upon the research question and is considered from different angles, in order to gain a good and thorough understanding of the research area. To gain a diverse and truthful view of the leadership phenomenon that is studied, employees from various levels in the hierarchy within the research company are interviewed. Moreover, as the research company has two office sites in Kathmandu, both are included in the interviews and observations. The perceived need to include both offices is there, as the office sites have different set-ups regarding the positions of the employees. During the collection of the primary data, both researchers are present. The interviews are carried out with one respondent at the time and with one researcher questioning and the other taking notes. The duration of the interviews are between 40 to 90 minutes. Further, all interviews are performed at the interviewees' office, or at another place suggested by the interviewee, all to ensure that the interviewee is as comfortable as possible. In total, 29 interviews are performed.

Observations are made during office hours while the researchers are both present in the office facilities. Further, additional observations are done outside of the research company to complement the findings. In total, 8.5 hours are spent on observing events in the workplace.<sup>10</sup>

Secondary data is referred to as data that has previously been collected for another purpose (Saunders et. al., 2009). There are three different types of secondary data: documentary-, survey based-, and multiple data (Saunders et. al., 2009). This study contains the two firstly mentioned. Methods used for obtaining this data cannot be fully controlled in this study and therefore, the sources have been carefully considered. For secondary data concerning the research company, sources are documents provided by the company, as well as information from the company's webpage. Other secondary data sources are online databases and libraries. Articles and some of the books used are obtained from the following online databases: Business Source Premiere, Google Scholar, Google Books, JSTORE, SAGE, ScienceDirect, Scopus, and Wiley Online Library. Searching for literature online, the following words are used and combined in different ways: cross-culture, culture, leadership, global leadership, management, manager, and multinational firm. Books that are not available online are borrowed from the libraries at Borås University, Stockholm University, and The Stockholm School of Economics.

### **3.3.2 Interview design**

The interviews within this study are of semi-structured form, a design where the researchers have a range of questions and subjects to cover, but the respondent is allowed to answer freely out from these (Saunders et al., 2009). Semi-structured interviews are well suited when the researchers aims to get the respondents to answer questions within a complex and somewhat sensitive area (Saunders et al., 2009). The study of leadership connected to culture include interview questions that are both complex and for some, potentially also sensitive. The semi-structured design is therefore considered as highly suitable for this study. Using the semi-structured design further makes it possible to change the questioning order between different interviews, something that is preferable to enable a logic flow during all the interviews (Sunders et al., 2009).

All interviews started off with easy questions such as "*Name*", "*Age*", "*How long have you worked in Ncell?*" and "*What has your role in Ncell been during your time here?*". These questions are posed to make the interviewee feel relaxed and comfortable in the interview setting. Questions are then posed in varying order depending on what felt natural in the current interview. Some examples of the questions are: "*How do different people work in Ncell?*", "*Can you describe the leadership in Ncell?*", "*How would you describe a normal day*

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<sup>10</sup> For more information regarding the observations, see appendix 9.9

*at work for you?”*, and *“What does global leadership mean to you?”*. These questions were then followed by questions such as *“Can you give an example?”* and *“Why do you think it is like that?”*. The follow-up questions make the respondents elaborate on the subject to find deeper meanings to their answers and to continue the discussion within the subject. The semi-structured form of the interviews is well suited as the flow of the questions differed between interviews and to ensure a natural flow it is important to be able to change the questioning order with regard to the setting.

### *3.3.2.1 Selection of interviewees*

To ensure a high reliability and nuanced results, both leaders and their subordinates are selected for interviews. The selection is based on the interviewees' positions according to the organizational scheme and observed informal patterns. In total, 26 interviews are conducted within the case company, whereof seven are with the leaders within the top management team. The leaders in the top management team are in the interview list referred to as “EMT Managers” and other interviewees are referred to as “Managers”.<sup>11</sup> Positions of the interviewees referred to as Managers are Section Managers, Unit Heads, Team Heads and Managers, positions that represent the hierarchical levels in the company.<sup>12</sup> One respondent, referred to as “Manager outside”, is part of the management team at the TeliaSonera subsidiary in Turkey. This respondent collaborates with the research company and she is included in the study to include a third dimension. The third dimension is twofold as she is both an internal foreign client to the research company and she is perceived to be a global leader but in another country than Nepal.

To give further depth to the results and to ensure that country specific findings are portrayed in a nuanced way, interviewees with local inhabitants of Nepal are performed. These interviewees are randomly selected after encounters at private events not connected to Ncell. In total, three interviews are conducted with people outside the research company.

All interviewees are further divided into clusters according to their country of origin. The clusters are based on the cultural clustering from the GLOBE research, a theory that will be further introduced in the theoretical framework (Chhokar et al., 2008, in Browaeys & Price, 2011).<sup>13</sup> The categorization into clusters is chosen prior to mentioning the exact country of origin, in order to ensure that a high level of anonymity is maintained. However, all respondents originating from the same country have been given names that start with the

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<sup>11</sup> EMT is short for Executive Management Team

<sup>12</sup> For more information regarding the organizational scheme, see the section 4 “Empiricis”

<sup>13</sup> For more information regarding which countries that make up each cluster, see appendix 9.5

same letter. Below you find lists of all 29 interviewees who participated in the study.<sup>14</sup>

*Table 3: Interviewees in the case company Ncell*

	Name	Position	Gender	Cluster	Interview	Time
1	Navnit	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	28.01.2014
2	Natraj	EMT Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	17.02.2014
3	Nayan	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	17.02.2014
4	Nripesh	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	17.02.2014
5	Naresh	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	17.02.2014
6	Navrang	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	17.02.2014
7	Netra	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	18.02.2014
8	Nibodh	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	18.02.2014
9	Nirmala	Manager	Woman	Nepal	Ncell office	18.02.2014
10	Nagina	Manager	Woman	Nepal	Ncell office	19.02.2014
11	Nikash	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	19.02.2014
12	Nikunja	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	19.02.2014
13	Nirmal	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	19.02.2014
14	Nishok	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	20.02.2014
15	Miklos	EMT Manager	Man	Eastern Cluster	Ncell office	20.02.2014
16	Narendra	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	20.02.2014
17	Narottam	Manager	Man	Nepal	Ncell office	21.02.2014
18	Neha	Manager	Woman	Nepal	Ncell office	21.02.2014
19	Deniz	EMT Manager	Man	Middle East	Restaurant	24.02.2014
20	Nanda	EMT Manager	Woman	Asia	Ncell office	28.02.2014
21	Karl	EMT Manager	Man	Nordic Europe	Restaurant	03.03.2014
22	Nisha	Manager	Woman	Nepal	Ncell office	06.03.2014
23	Tieva	EMT Manager	Woman	Eastern Europe	Ncell office	12.03.2014
24	Sattar	EMT Manager	Man	Eastern Europe	Ncell office	12.03.2014
25	Kristian	Manager	Man	Nordic Europe	Ncell office	14.03.2014
26	Lisa	Manager	Woman	Nordic Europe	Skype	17.03.2014

*Table 4: Interviewees outside of Ncell*

	Name	Profession	Gender	Cluster	Interview	Time
27	Namnita	Medical Doctor	Woman	Nepal	Hotel	14.02.2014
28	Nihar	Restaurant	Man	Nepal	Restaurant	23.02.2014
29	Nanak	Entrepreneur	Man	Nepal	Hotel	27.02.2014

<sup>14</sup> Note that all names in the lists are fictitious

### **3.3.3 Observation design and reflexivity**

As a supplement to performed interviews, observations are applied. The observation method is a qualitative approach to research, but it is often considered as more difficult to carry out for the novice researchers (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Although using observations may be more difficult and time consuming, it is powerful, as people sometimes do not practice what they preach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Corbin & Strauss (2008) state that observation might have drawbacks if the researcher gives meaning to observed events without checking with the participants, and they state that it is preferable for the researcher to combine observation with interviews to confirm and leave room for the participants to explain their actions. Patton (2002) further confirms that nonverbal behavior is easily misinterpreted, especially cross-culturally, which is why observation in this study is always used in combination with interviews or informal discussions with the observation participants. The observation is carried out by observing different scenes (in this study, mainly how employees behave in the workplace and during lunch) and taking notes of the observed events (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). To ease the work during observation, as it often is many events the researcher would like to document, Schatsman and Strauss (1973, in Corbin & Strauss, 2008) suggest keeping observational notes to describe actual events, theoretical notes to denote thoughts about the events, and finally methodological notes to remind of procedural aspects of the research. Within this framework, it is the observational notes that are made while out on the field or in the observation setting, whilst the others are made when the researcher is in a less stressful environment.

Observational notes are made throughout the research and then evaluated and considered out from a critical standpoint. In this process, as well as throughout the whole study, the concept of reflexivity is taken into consideration. This is to ensure that a truthful view is maintained. Reflexivity is the concept used to describe the relationship between the researchers and the studied object and the way in which this can influence the quality of the outcome (Saunders et al., 2009). This is especially important in this study as both researchers are Swedish, which in cultural research brings along a risk that the analysis is tilted towards a Scandinavian view of leadership and culture. To ensure that this risk is minimized, the researchers have throughout the process critically reflected upon the drawn conclusions. In case of any suspicion of bias, the findings are discussed once more, also with external parts of various nationalities. Moreover, the choice to perform the study far away from Sweden and Scandinavia is made to minimize the direct influence from surroundings and people who could also increase the risk of bias. All choices regarding reflexivity are made to ensure that the results are objective with a minimized influence from the researchers themselves and their cultural background.

### **3.4 Approach to Analysis**

When analyzing qualitative data three main methods are suggested: (1) *summarizing*, (2) *categorization*, and (3) *structuring* (Saunders et al., 2009). Within this study, the categorization approach is applied. This approach suggests that the researchers firstly develop different categories from the collected empirical material and out from that further attach the categories to big chunks of meaningful data. This approach is considered appropriate as different categories within the data were found naturally after the first conducted interviews and observations. Categories are chosen both from the topics given by chosen theory and by common themes apparent from the interviews and observations. Categorization out from theory and interview patterns are both stated as appropriate when applying the categorization approach (Saunders et al., 2009).

The arranged categories are in the second step narrowed down into a more manageable data amount, as suggested by Saunders et al. (2009). Categories are written down in a matrix form to enable to rewrite similar categories into one and exclude data that is not connected to the research topic. Data that has been excluded is data where the respondents have diverged from the topic, something that could happen as the interviews were semi-structured.

### **3.5 Alternative Methods, Limitations and Implications**

All methods and approaches in this study are chosen carefully to ensure a high quality of the outcome and the results. However, in the selection process it is clear that other ways to go about the research could have been applied. Some alternative methods might have been preferable in addition to the ones used, but are for different reasons not possible to employ within the scope of this study.

When performing qualitative research in the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews, it is desirable to record the interviews. This method would have been a secure way for the researchers to go back and re-listen to the answers if any uncertainty of meaning would occur once the interview was finalized. In this study, recording the interviews was not an option as the HR department specifically requested the researchers not to do it.<sup>15</sup> HR made this request due to the comfortableness of the respondents, something that is also of highest importance for the researchers. The choice to not record any of the interviews limited backtracking of the answers without the involvement of the respondents. However, as the quality of the answers is considered to be higher once the respondent is comfortable, the method chosen is arguably the best given the circumstances. To ensure that no answers were lost or misinterpreted, all interviews were carefully written down by either of the researchers. Further, all respondents

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<sup>15</sup> HR department is short for Human Resource department

were asked to answer clarifying emails if any uncertainties would arise. The limitations of the study are therefore seen as minimized and the possible negative implications should be small.

Included in the qualitative sample, there are eight women and 21 men. The unequal gender distribution is something that could have been adjusted by either changing the current division or interviewing additional women to the already 29 performed interviews. An uneven gender division might limit the quality of the results, assuming that women and men interpret the research topic differently and that there is a relevance to distinguish between the both to obtain the correct results. However, after analyzing the data and comparing answers, no clear distinction connected to gender could be found. Due to this reason, no additional interviews with female respondents were considered necessary or relevant to get higher reliability to the results. All interviewed people are in the age category of 25-50.

### **3.6 Reliability and Validity of the Results**

The concept of validity is about whether the research phenomenon is the phenomenon that is actually observed and measured in the study (Bryman, 2011). Bryman (2011) explains that qualitative research includes a risk of lower validity in the results due to the nature of how the qualitative data is obtained and analyzed. Qualitative data analysis is built on the researchers individual interpretations and thereof the higher risk of lowered validity (Bryman, 2011). Reliability is about whether the results are consequent and can be generalized (Bryman, 2011). Preferable when performing research as the one at hand, is to get stable results that can be generalized (Bryman, 2011).

Even though there is a higher risk of bias when performing a qualitative research, the chosen method is, as explained earlier in this section, the preferable and most suitable one. The study has its foundation in a thorough understanding of existing literature within the research areas of leadership, managerial, cultural and cross-cultural theories. Literature reviews were made in all relevant areas, including scholars both pro and con the different concepts, before starting any of the empirical data collection. This enables the researchers a deep understanding of the topics and lowers the risk of bias as all aspects of the topics are in mind during the collection of empirical data. This is moreover the standpoint when performing the analysis, where all aspects are considered and the theories and empirical material are analyzed from different angles to ensure that the studied phenomena are viewed within a truthful manner to ensure a high validity.

The reliability of the study is considered high as the results can be generalized and the findings are consequent. The case company and its country of origin are described in the presentation of the empirical data to enable for future researchers to gain an understanding of

the circumstances under which the study is performed. Moreover, the method is described in detail to further enable how the methodological approach is connected and impacts the results of the study. Due to this, the results are considered to be transferable and able to be generalized.

Throughout the study, the researchers have been carefully considering the cultural values and conclusions that are found. An approach to be neutral to the findings is kept in mind throughout the study, and special considerations of the results are therefore applied when uncertainty has occurred. This choice is appropriate to ensure a high reliability of the results in the study.

## 4. Empirics



*Under this section, the empirical findings from the interviews are introduced. Firstly, general information about Nepal, the international structure of TeliaSonera, and the research company Ncell are presented. From this, the findings regarding leadership in general and from the research company specifically, follows.*



### 4.1 Introduction to Nepal

The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal is situated in the Himalayas, between China and India (Landguiden, 2013). The capital is Kathmandu, and 17% of the population lives in urban areas (CIA World Factbook, 2014). According to recent figures, the population is recorded to be almost 27 million, with circa 101 ethnic groups and over 92 spoken languages (Welcome Nepal, 2014). A majority of the population are Hindu or Buddhists (Landguiden, 2013).

The country is primarily dependent on agriculture and tourism (CIA World Factbook, 2014). Eight out of the world's 14 mountains over 8000-meters are located in Nepal, including Mount Everest (Welcome Nepal, 2014). 22-25 per cent of the country's GDP is, however, dependent on remittances from other countries (CIA World Factbook, 2014).

In 2012, 97.4 percent of the children in Nepal started school (Landguiden Utbildning, 2012). Many of them are needed at home and do not finish their studies (Landguiden Utbildning, 2012).

After the civil war that ended in 2006, the monarchy was abolished (Welcome Nepal, 2014). Today, the country is democratic republic, governed by the Communist Party of Nepal, with President Ram Baran Yadav and Prime Minister Sushil Koirala (CIA World Factbook, 2014).

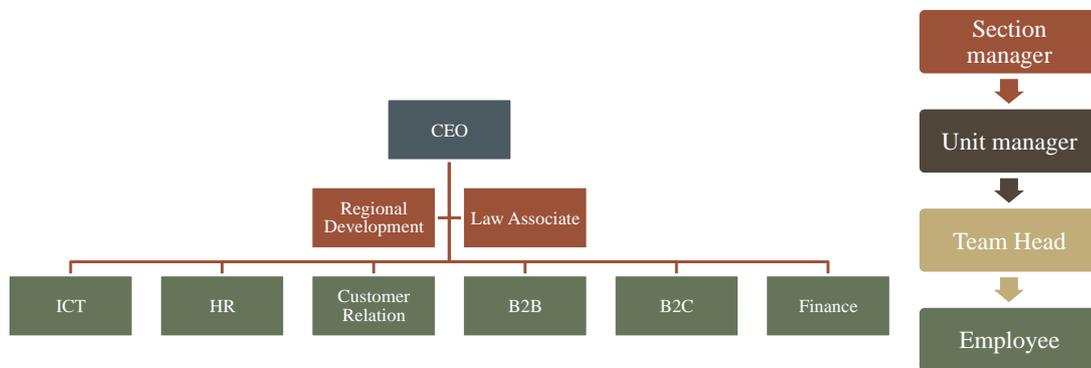
### 4.2 Introduction to TeliaSonera AB and Ncell Pvt. Ltd.

In 2002, the Swedish Telia and the Finish Sonera merged into TeliaSonera; one of the largest telecom companies in Europe (TeliaSonera History, 2014). With 26,013 employees in 2013, TeliaSonera serves three main business areas: mobile services, broadband, and Eurasia (TeliaSonera in Brief, 2014). By using a common brand on the international scene, the aim is to illustrate TeliaSonera's "*unique combination of global broadness and local anchoring*" (TeliaSonera About Us, 2014).

Ncell is a private Nepalese telephone operator that has been active in Nepal since 2004 (About Us, 2014). In October 2008, the Swedish telecommunication company TeliaSonera bought Ncell and since then it is a part of the TeliaSonera group that operates in the Nordic, Baltic, Spanish and Eurasian markets (About Us, 2014). TeliaSonera is the majority shareholder in Ncell, with 60.4 percent of the shares (About Us, 2014). Before becoming a part of the TeliaSonera group, Ncell was known as Mero Mobile and had a Russian management (Naresh; Narendra).

The organizational structure of Ncell's top layer is illustrated below, as well as the cascading order.

Figure 3: Organizational Structure and Cascading Order of Ncell



### 4.3 Perceptions of Leaders and Managers

All respondents argue that there is a difference between the definition of a leader and a manager. All managers are not leaders (Nishok). Higher up in the hierarchy it is more being a leader than a manager but there are influences from both everywhere (Nagina). Nagina explains that it is hard to see the difference between the two concepts and she gives an example when teaching a child to brush their teeth:

*“When teaching your son to brush his teeth: are you then leading him or managing him when telling and showing him how to do it?”*

Lower down in the hierarchy you need to be more manager than leader (Nagina). The respondent argues that this is because the people at the lower levels might not know their style of working yet and therefore needs more direction (Nagina).

#### 4.3.1 Differences between a leader and a manager

A leader is described as the person who leads you forward (Navrang; Nanda). The leader guides the people towards the company goals (Nayan; Nisha). Netra explains that in his view, leadership is not about one individual's thinking; it is about following a vision, and having a culture that enables a way of thinking that supports that vision. He further states that the main components of leadership are power and respect. Tieva underscores the importance of having charisma, whilst others emphasize that it is important that the leader should lead with example (Navrang; Nanda; Nripesh; Nisha).

The manager is the one who manage you (Navrang; Nanda; Kristian). The managerial tasks are referred to as motivating the employees and providing them with the right tools to perform their jobs (Nagina). A manager is also described as a title gained by the structure and hierarchy in a company (Nikunja; Tieva).

*“Because you have gotten the authority to have people who reports to you it doesn't mean that they have to follow you, it is just set by a structure (...) Mandela led people, no one had said to them to follow him but they still did it”* (Karl)

Many say that a good leader also needs the characteristics of a good manager (Karl; Deniz; Navrang; Nripesh; Nanda; Tieva). Sattar claims that has seen many examples of CEOs now understanding the business. He concludes these findings in a rhetorical question:

*“How can you lead a company if you don't know anything about the operational stuff?”* (Sattar)

A CEO needs to do both the leader and the managerial tasks, so that the people are lead in the right direction where the goals are known, and they are managed if they divert from what they are supposed to do (Nagina).

*“A company can have many leaders as long as they communicate and all have the same vision and goal”* (Miklos)

#### 4.4 Perceptions of Global Leaders and Global Managers

Global leadership is described as general leadership adapted to local governance (Narottam). A leader who does not adapt will most likely not be successful (Nanda; Navrang; Tieva; Lisa). Being a global leader might be possible, but the person needs to understand many different cultures and especially the country that he or she comes to (Nikunja). Nisha claims that a global leader is someone who can *“easily accustom to a new environment and a new set*

*or people and dynamics” and that “leaders change when they are coming here (i.e. Nepal)”. Sattar compares with Darwin:*

*“It is not the biggest or strongest animals that survives; it is the most adaptive” (Sattar)*

Karl explains that the Eurasia CEO and the CEO for whole TeliaSonera are global leaders per definition such as he knows it. In that definition he says that there are many global leaders, but if you look at if they fit in everywhere in the world there are not. He says that *“these persons have a culture and a way of doing things and people in the company adjust to that, however this would not work in all parts of the world”*.

*“A Nepalese manager going to Sweden could not have the same leadership style because Sweden is far above in technology so then it would not work. We have to adapt to culture and the knowledge level in the country” (Nanda)*

Some things need to be understood on a general global level, but as a global leader you also need experience from managing in the country you are in (Nikunja; Nikash; Tieva; Lisa). Miklos state that he knows leaders that can work in any country but they go with their own way of working.

*“(…) if you talk about how much you can adapt your personal leadership style then that is what global leadership would be” (Deniz)*

Nanda refers to global leadership as bringing the best practice to the country you come to lead in. A global leader should bring knowledge about challenges of a developed country when coming to a developing country and vice versa (Nanda). Global leadership is about balancing the global picture (Nanda; Sattar). The different parts of the world cannot forget what is going on in the other parts (Nanda).

*“Nothing has a boundary of geography, it should be international always. A leader does not have a boundary of geography or knowledge. It is about influencing and motivating, about how to make people into your ideas” (Nanda)*

Some respondents give Steve Jobs as a good example of a global leader, yet perhaps not a good boss to his employees (Netra; Nagina). In Netra’s view of a global leader, it is important with clarity passion. Other examples in this category are Nelson Mandela, Gupta<sup>16</sup>, and Mother Theresa (Nagina; Nirmala; Nanda).

*“It’s funny: all the leaders I mention are dead!” (Nagina)*

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<sup>16</sup> Great empire in the ancient India, circa 321-185 BCE (Britannica, 2013)

A global manager is the subset of a global leader and therefore both of the roles should exist (Neha; Kristian). Nagina explain that most people are talking about a global leader and not a global manager, and this is the first time she hear about the concept of a global manager. When she reflects over the concept she thinks that it is harder to be a global manager than a global leader. Some think that only global leaders exist and that there are no global managers (Nirmala). An explanation to that is that managers must be down to more details and global leaders cannot be that because of time issues (Nirmala). Others explain the concepts of a global leader as dependent on global manager and that the best is to be both (Neha; Nirmala; Sattar). A global manager is not necessarily a global leader, but a global leader must have the characteristics of a global manager (Neha; Deniz). Neha gives practical knowledge in decision-making, analytical skills and problem solving as some examples of these characteristics of a global leader and global manager. She explains that these are tasks that all managers have to deal with, also the ones who fit well into the description of a leader.

*“There is no such thing as a global leader when it comes to business”* (Nishok)

*“Yes there is something that is called a global leader, but if there actually are people like that I don't know, I haven't met anyone. If you take a person and throw him into a new surrounding and his leadership still works then that is by definition a global leader, I haven't seen this yet”* (Karl)

In some way a global leader is the CEO in a company and the managers below are the global managers (Nagina). The managers below the CEO must know the domestic way of working to a greater extent since they have to work with domestic employees (Nagina).

*“You cannot change the people and their way of working to your cultural style because they will work in their Nepalese way”* (Nagina)

*“Global leadership exist, but culture is never global, it is so specific (...) You cannot expect the same mentality everywhere you go and only if you can adapt to the new culture you will be a global leader, no matter of what personal cultural background you have”* (Neha)

#### **4.5 Perceptions of Nepalese Working Style and Leadership**

Navrang describes that leadership differs between Ncell and Nepal. He says that in Nepal as a whole, leadership is problematic and seen as a big question. For Nepalese there is a great distinction between being a political leader and being a corporate leader (Namita; Nishok).<sup>17</sup> Further, Nepalese put a strong emphasis on the importance of family, a place where the older

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<sup>17</sup> In this empirical study we focus solely on the corporate leadership

people tend to have an important role in decision making (Nanak; Nagina; Nihar). Namita gives an example of the decisions around marriages, something that the older people within the family has a strong say in.

#### 4.5.1 Nepalese working culture

In Nepal and Asia in general, people are afraid of losing face (Mikols; Karl; Sattar; Kristian). There is a strong “Yes-culture” in the country, where people tend to say yes to everything you ask them to do, regardless if they can or not (Nanak; Karl; Kristian; Deniz; Observation, 05.02.2014). Sattar also says that people tend to “pass the bucket” instead of finding solutions on their own (Observation, 17.02.2014):

*“People tend to blame each other and delegate. If it cannot be done, they stop trying instead of finding new ways” (Sattar)*

Nihar, a restaurant owner in Kathmandu, underscores that there is a problem with brain drain:

*“When people become good at something, like working in a restaurant, they want to move abroad” (Nihar)*

#### 4.5.2 Characteristics of the Nepalese corporate leadership style

A Nepalese manager expects a lot of respect from their employees and position in the company is very important (Nagina; Observation, 26.01.2014). Nagina describes that she always address a Nepali leader with “Sir”, something that she does not see as necessity with all leaders. The stereotypical view is that the top leaders are more bossy and dominant over their subordinates (Nirmala; Tieva; Observation, 30.03.2014). To become a leader in Nepal it is important with seniority and sometimes the number of years of employment is more important than the actual competence for the position (Nanak; Neha; Karl; Miklos; Nishok; Narendra). Lisa, working towards Ncell but not in Ncell, emphasize that it is more hierarchical and authoritarian working towards the countries in Eurasia than back home in Scandinavia.

*“Nepalese leadership cannot be compared to the rest of the world, because compared to the rest of the world leaders might be at a low level of quality but compared to others in Nepal they might have a very good leadership” (Nishok)*

One of the most important things that a Nepalese leader should be good at is to talk in front of a mass and by that drive the mass (Neha; Narendra). Most Nepalese are not task oriented; they are focused on personal relationships (Natraj; Karl; Nirmal). Having good relationships

makes you follow the leader (Nirmal). Trust is also important for people in charge and employees should commit to them (Nirmal).

*“To become good leaders, Nepalese people needs to change the way in which they perceive leadership”* (Nishok)

#### **4.6 Perceptions of Leadership at Ncell**

Ncell follow the principles of leadership set by TeliaSonera, but with some localization and local essence to it (Natraj). The top management team consists of eight leaders including the CEO, and it is a mix between local and foreign leaders (Navnit; Nibodh). In total, the top management team consists of seven different nationalities (Navnit). The official communication language in the company is English, a language that is not the mother tongue of any of the leaders in top management (Navnit). All eight leaders in the top management team are responsible of different divisions and each division includes other nationalities than Nepalese employees (Miklos; Karl; Deniz). Leaders have changed much throughout the recent years and with that so has the leadership style (Nibodh; Neha; Miklos; Nanda).

The expertise of the foreign managers is said to be highly important as the Nepali level of knowledge is not yet sufficient in all areas (Neha; Nanda; Sattar; Tieva). Further, according to Nishok, the foreign leaders can come with insight on how to build up a successful country and make good decisions. However, the negative parts of having a multicultural management team are for example difficulties in understanding the different cultures, as well as communication barriers (Nikunja). People analyze body language in different ways and they also tend to see things from their own perspective (Nikash).

*“A hand has two sides, and depending on which side you are sitting, you will either see the front or the back. Both are correct as both are part of the hand”* (Nikash)

Some foreign leaders are said to lead in a different way than the TeliaSonera values and Ncell way (Natraj). One of the most important actions of a foreign leader is referred to as understanding the Nepali culture and the way of acting and thinking in Nepal (Nikunja; Nikash; Kristian). If leaders do not understand the culture and the differences in working and communicating that it brings, it will be hard to get any work done (Karl; Narottam). Foreign leaders have to study the Nepalese culture to see that the things they might not think are harsh to say might be harsh for a Nepalese employee (Narottam).

Employees at Ncell are overall very young and because of that the company does not have the mature level of leadership yet (Nagina; Karl). Nagina, who since two years is a Unit Head at

Ncell, explains that she sometimes face situations where she feels she lacks the experience to be sure of exactly what to do.

#### **4.6.1 Employees' perceptions of the practical work of the leaders at Ncell**

One perception is that it is a 50/50 split of working with leadership versus managerial assignments throughout all levels of leaders in the company (Nikunja). Leaders at the lower levels are described as working in a way that is expected from top management and if the company goals are not clear and understood it will be hard for them to understand what they are doing and why (Nanda). Leaders have to demonstrate good leadership through examples so that the employees can see which practices are good and in line with the values of the company (Nripesh; Observation, 05.03.2014). Leaders can have difficulties with being enough authoritative at times because of the strict rules from the union (Nanda). A leader that is too authoritative is not preferred in the company either, thus, a mix of nurturing and authority is valued (Nanda; Observation, 07.02.2014).

*“There are always differences between reality and visions of leadership. There is a difference between what they say and what they do, also in Ncell. They have the core values of TeliaSonera but to put those values into practice, the role of HR is especially important and they have to make sure and train people in how to bring this into practice”* (Nripesh)

Nikunja states that the most important task for the leaders is to understand their employees and their needs. When having done that he says that the leaders' task is to delegate the correct responsibilities to the employees.

#### **4.6.2 Leaders' perceptions of the practical work of the leaders at Ncell**

Miklos describes a normal day for him as *“looking after to see if delegated tasks are performed or not”*. He goes through the office and has small talks with the employees. Further, he explains that this is his way of working in Nepal would not necessarily work as a leadership style in Sweden. In Nepal, he already from the beginning made sure to demonstrate leadership in firm decision-making:

*“You have to start making decisions the first day so people see the strong hand”* (Miklos)

He claims that the current style of working, keeping track of employees and what they are doing, has been successful everywhere he has been so far (Asia, Eastern Europe). Apart from this daily task, Miklos also has strategic meetings with various people in the company. He brings in his own knowledge into everything he does.

Miklos underscores the importance of having cross-cultural intersections in a company; something, which he thinks Ncell, is improving in:

*“Now they have cross-cultural training between many different point of the company. This is because you need to see the whole picture and communicate across all functions of the organization, not only finance-to-finance etc. people learn about each other’s work.”*  
(Miklos)

He also thinks that this intersection is important due to that the experience and technical knowledge of the expats can be of greater usage if these connections are made.

Nanda describes her daily work as mainly focused on cross-functional activities (Observation, 11.03.2014). For her own development, she emphasizes the importance of involving in cross-functional work to increase the width of her knowledge. Further, her days consist to a great extent of meetings, both one to ones and bigger meetings. According to Nanda, it is important for her not to miss any interaction and she discuss both work related and personal topics with her employees.

*“The country basically relies on relationships, not on emails or phone calls. I go out of the office sometimes to create relationships and make sure that the goals are understood in all levels in the company, also the engineers out in the field”* (Nanda)

For Nanda it is important that her employees will manage the work also when she is not there, and due to this she focus on being transparent in her communication. The consequence is that decisions can be made without her interference, also because she trusts her employees a lot. Nanda only interfere in her employees work when she knows that their knowledge is limited. Much of this interference is made by ad-hoc meetings, something that she also has when she understand that something has gone wrong. The regular meetings concern follow-ups with her employees. Further, a great deal of Nanda’s work includes international communication. From being a part of TeliaSoneras’ expert team and having foreign suppliers, parts of her daily work includes meetings with people outside Nepal. Regarding the TeliaSonera network her meetings are regular, but for the suppliers they are more ad-hoc and come up mainly when there is a problem or some of the suppliers visit Nepal. The regular communication with suppliers is something that Nanda’s employees deal with (Nanda).

For the foreign leaders, 70 percent is about building up something that can be handed over to the local people or the new leaders when the leave (Karl).

*“In TeliaSonera in Sweden it is like taking away a piece of jelly when someone leaves the company, it floats back together quite quickly. Here in Ncell it is more dependent on certain individuals’ knowledge than on that the whole organization is well working”* (Karl)

Karl explains that he has no “normal days”; every day is different. The biggest parts of his work are meetings, both across and within his function.

Karl states that he does not have the same way of working in Nepal as he would have had in his home country. He explains that back home, he normally can depend on that an employee does a task, and due to their education and experience they know what is expected from them. In Nepal, he has to check up so that things are being done (Observation, 25.03.2014).

*“There is a strong yes-mentality here and I have to build something when I am here, but to do that it doesn’t help to hear yes, I must make sure that things are being done”* (Karl)

*“You have to start finding logics and national things to make people understand what it is that you want them to do”* (Karl)

Karl says that generally, it is okay to be harsh face to face, but in front of other people it is one of the worst things you can do.

*“It means so much here to lose face and it is not worth to do something like that because it takes so long to build up the trust again”* (Karl)

Karl explains that in Nepal it is the relationship that matters and by creating strong relationships, people will notice on your actions if you are satisfied or not with their work.

*“In some countries you are one person at work and another person private, here, people are people (...) People come here and they are in with their whole heart, that is what you can use as a leader here (...) Emotions and relations are king here, but send me to Australia and I would have no clue what works there”* (Karl)

Sattar explains that when he arrived in Nepal, the first six months were used to establish frameworks in order to get the business functioning. This included everything from analytical tools, reporting strategies, and hierarchical structures. One of the hardest things for him to get used to was the slower tempo, which was a bit stressful in the beginning. He is responsible for the overall team performance, which he supervise by talking a lot to the subordinates:

*“When I got here (remark: Nepal), I got the advice from HR to speak a lot. I spend a lot of time speaking, and in fact, I need to do that more. It is more about the relationship with the people than anything else” (Sattar)*

Sattar says that initially coming to Nepal, he did a lot of listening. However, after some months, he got the feedback to speak-up:

*“I was given advice from HR that you have to speak a lot with the people. Now, I am spending a lot of time speaking: explain, slowly, slowly, lead them and their thoughts in a way that they reach the conclusion themselves. It is more about the relationship with the people.” (Sattar)*

He continues by saying that where he is from, the leadership style is a bit more directive whilst in Nepal he uses more interpersonal ways. Sattar also underscores the importance of being in contact with external people at TeliaSonera abroad, something which he is on a regular basis via email or over the phone.

Tieva, who has been at Ncell for some years, claims that the business climate in Nepal is generally so that in meetings, you generally just see the directors. At Ncell, this is quite different with a more open and communicative setting. Furthermore, she says that the leadership style in Nepal is more liberal compared to where she is from.

Tieva says that she has weekly meetings with her subordinates in order to discuss updates and see how she can support them in any way.

*“The organization here is so young. The employees need direction and to be taught best practice. I have to go much further into detail and be a part of the team as well as managing. (...) Here, you have to tell people what to do because they are scared” (Tieva)*

Part of her daily work also consists of coordinating with international partners such as the head office in Istanbul, external vendors, and suppliers (Observation, 27.02.2014). She also makes sure that all the decisions she makes follow the overarching pillars of TeliaSonera. Further, she has budget responsibilities for the whole of her function on a national basis.

Tieva says that one has to respect culture and that it is not something that can be changed overnight:

*“Culture here is very big and it is hard to change people. People like to be directed here and they want that more than leaders. The directive style is therefore more popular. Organization is really young so the directive style is more needed. It would not be possible to be totally free here. Different people like different leader styles. It should be a good mix of both styles here in Nepal.”* (Tieva)

Lisa claims that her working days ranges from brainstorming sessions with subordinates, workshops in various countries, HR, and administrative tasks. Although working towards, what she perceives, more hierarchical cultures, she has kept her *“Scandinavian style of management”* which she thinks works.

Lisa underscores that when she is working towards Eurasia, people tend to be very result oriented, not focusing on *how* to get to the goal. Thus, she describes that she has gone from planning a lot, to not documenting as much anymore.

Lisa has contact with foreign vendors, market research, brand identity- and advertising agencies. Further, on her team, there are four different nationalities including hers (Observation, 27.02.2014).

Deniz has long experience in working in an international context, both within TeliaSonera, but also at other multinationals. He feels like one of the most important jobs of being a leader is to listen, and this is something he especially adjusted to when coming to Nepal. He emphasizes the importance of creating a sense of belongingness in the teams. He does this by engaging in conversations and making sure he is up to date with what is happening around him. Deniz says that the job at hand in Nepal is a bit more managerial than he was previously used to.

*“You also need to build some kind of bond, a mutual understanding bond. And keep the respect towards other, which is very much related to the culture and ethical standards”* (Deniz)

#### **4.6.3 Perceptions of differences in the implementation of leadership**

One of the biggest differences in leadership at Ncell can be observed when comparing the previous Russian ownership to the current Swedish one (Nikunja; Nagina; Nirmala; Nikash; Neha). During the Russian ownership, the leadership is described as authoritative, action oriented, and bureaucratic (Nagina; Nikash; Nirmala; Neha; Nanda

*“It seems that for them it is hard to adjust to the Nepalese culture”<sup>18</sup> (Narottam)*

In 2008 when TeliaSonera took over the ownership of Ncell, a Swedish woman came to evaluate the leadership and its impact of the company (Nikash). After this, the leadership in the company changed and it became more people oriented and free for the employees (Nirmala; Nagina). Employees are free to perform their tasks as they see fit and everyone became aware of the goals and status of the company (Nagina). With today’s leadership, employees are to a greater extent involved in the work and their opinion matters (Neha).

*“In one way you can say that the leadership is now liberal” (Nirmala)*

#### **4.6.4 Explanatory reasons for differences in the implementation of leadership**

Differences across cultures are one explanation to why leaders act in different ways (Nagina; Neha; Navrang; Nripesh; Tieva). Nagina explains that she observes differences in leadership across cultures, but she does not know if it only depends on cultural differences or also something else. Another given explanation is differences in experience and background of the leader (Neha; Nripesh; Sattar). Peoples’ previous environments regarding, work, culture, family, religion and so forth will impact the way in which they act (Neha). The personality of the leader also plays a part to the leadership style (Nripesh; Sattar; Kristian).

*“You will do assignments differently depending on how you are as a person. If you are hasty then you will do things hasty (...) you are stuck with your way of working and that in itself depends on your personality” (Nripesh)*

*“Some foreign leaders have come here because they wanted their own targets fulfilled, which is not good. They had a personal agenda rather than working for the company” (Nanda)*

Miklos, who also have experience from being a foreign leader in Japan, explains that he adjust his leadership wherever he goes. He says that for example Japan and Europe have very different logics, ways of thinking and different methods, and so has Nepal. Miklos way of adjusting to the culture is not done by sitting and listening, he emphasize the importance of making decisions right away so that people see a strong hand that they can rely on and take help from.

Karl argues that the biggest mistake you can do, as a foreign leader, is to come to Ncell and not understand what land it is that you have come to. He states that before you can do your job properly you have to understand the differences and how to work with that to get things done.

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<sup>18</sup> Them refers to the Russian leaders described in the section above

*“Give it three months and then you can start making the bigger decisions because it is first then that you know where you are. You cannot come here and start bossing around because it will not work, at least not in the same way as you do at home. You have to understand each other, according to me someone might not do a good job, but according to them they are doing a great job” (Karl)*

## 5. Analysis



*This section presents the correlations made between the empirical findings and the theories described under section two. Firstly, the perceived stereotypical Nepalese leadership is analyzed. Secondly, the leaders included in the study are evaluated from the definition of global leadership. Following, the concept of global leadership is analyzed and critically viewed.*



### 5.1 The Perceived Stereotypical Nepalese Leadership

As explained under the theory section, there is only limited research available on Nepalese working culture and Nepali perception of effective leadership. Most existing theory is based on data from larger and more developed countries in Asia (Browaeys & Price, 2011). Consequently, the analysis will commence by deriving the Nepali specific data concerning the found working culture and leadership. Combined with existing theory, the empirical findings and observations enables for Nepal specific conclusions. The topic is included in this initial stage of the analysis, as it serves an important element for the coming analysis.

Firstly, the recognized duality of the so-called “Yes-culture” and a fear of loosing face in front of other employees, are two aspects attributed to the Nepali culture (Karl; Kristian; Deniz; Observation, 05.02.2014; Miklos; Sattar). These factors seem to have implications on the practiced leadership in at least two ways: expectation management and the under-utilization of formal structures.

In terms of expectation management, it becomes hard for the manager to criticize an employee when he or she cannot deliver. Sattar confirms this by not being able to set expectations as high as in other countries and, when giving feedback, he cannot be as direct as he might want to. Upadhyay’s (2007) research underscores this finding, claiming that not having formal structures makes it hard to work with expectations and thus, the leaders’ expectations are lower in Nepal compared to other countries.

Moreover, due to the apparent problems with expectation management, there are evident under-utilization of existing formal working structures, such as schemes and arrangements. This is exemplified by some leaders, who claim that it is hard for leaders to change the “Yes-culture” and start implementing more designed work models (Karl; Deniz; Miklos). Sattar further underscores this when using most of his first months establishing non-existing structures. Karl claims that in the long run, this may make it difficult to set good examples.

Secondly, the stereotypical perception of how Nepalese leaders lead is that they are dominant, hierarchical and authoritative (Nagina; Nirmala; Tievea; Nishok). Suwal (1998, in Upadhyay, 2007) uses the word paternalistic. Nagina and Namita depict the latter in that the oldest person in the family has a significant and important role in the decision-making. An example is that arranged marriages are still quite common, something which the elderly in the families tends to decide (Namita). Furthermore, Terlutter et al. (2006), as well as respondents, describe that seniority is more important than knowledge for Nepalese leaders (Neha; Karl; Miklos; Nishok; Narendra; Observation, 26.01.2014; Observation, 07.02.2014). A plausible explanation for this is that today, Nepal has relatively few educated professionals and people who have acquired knowledge tend to move abroad for work (Landguiden Utbildning, 2012; Nihar). Hence, there are reasons to believe that their view of the effective leader is derived from other competences than the ones gained from education. However, as one respondent put it:

*“Nepalese leadership cannot be compared to the rest of the world, because compared to the rest of the world, leaders might be at a low level of quality but compared to others in Nepal, they might have a very good leadership”* (Nishok)

These examples illustrate some significant differences in how the effective stereotypical Nepalese leadership is perceived and how global leadership is described.<sup>19</sup>

Lastly, having good relationships is highlighted to be a key success factor in being an effective leader in Nepal (Natraj; Karl; Nirmal; Kristian). Respondents speak of the importance of establishing trust (Nirmal; Nikash). Opposing these findings, Upadhyay (2007) found that the Nepalese CEOs included in his study did not understand the importance of having interpersonal communication. From this divergence, there seems to be a gap between what Nepalese employees want and what they perceive their local leaders to provide. Also, it is important to address Nepali leaders with “Sir”, something that indicates that it is of significance to uphold the hierarchical levels (Nagina; Observation, 07.02.2014). The indication that Nepali leaders are described as bossier and more dominant could aggravate the process of establishing good relationships (Nirmala; Tieva). This duality hardens the task to become an effective Nepali leader in terms of what is seen as stereotypical for the country.



**Conclusion section 5.1:** A strong “Yes-culture” and a fear of losing face are two characteristics for the Nepalese working culture. The working culture creates a duality that, taken together with cultural values, are the main determinants of the stereotypical Nepalese

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<sup>19</sup> This topic will be further analyzed under section 5.4 “Cultural Adaptation”

leadership style. Nepalese leaders tend to be authoritative and obtain their position based on seniority rather than knowledge. In the following section, the analysis will move on to focus on whether or not the leaders at Ncell are global leaders according to today's definition.

## 5.2 The Global Leaders at Ncell

When examining research within the field of global leadership, it becomes clear that not one common definition of the concept exists. This is partly due to scholars having used different empirical samples (Osland et al., 2013; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009; Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2003; Suutari, 2002). The level at which global leaders act is the denominator that scholars seem to disagree on the most. Some say that global leaders are solely the top executives within companies, while others also include lower level leaders, such as country and business managers (Bird, in Osland et al., 2013; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009; Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2003). The leaders in focus of this study are all part of the top management team, meaning that they inhabit the highest positions within the research company in Nepal. Yet, the unclear definition of level in the hierarchy aggravates the work of plotting the leaders in the empirical sample as global or non-global only due to their formal position.

On the other hand, there are aspects of the definition that most researchers agree upon. All scholars argue that global leaders have a work content that is changing due to globalization (Spreitzer et al., 1997; Suutari, 2002; Bird, in Osland, 2013; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009). Further, the same scholars claim that the global leaders, to various extents, are involved in international and cross-cultural activities.

The list over global leader activities introduced by Caligiuri (2004, in Caligiuri 2006) provides guidance to whether the work of leaders can be seen as global leader activities. Caligiuri's (2004, in Caligiuri 2006) first point that global leaders "*work with colleagues from other countries*" coincides with the example when the leaders at Ncell travelled to TeliaSoneras' office in Istanbul for meetings with colleagues (Observation, 05.03.2014). This is further strengthened by the fact that there are seven different nationalities within the management team in Nepal and all these leaders manage divisions with other nationalities than only Nepalese (Navnit; Miklos; Deniz; Observation, 11.03.2014). Hence, the leaders interact with colleagues from other countries on a daily basis. Caligiuri's (2004, in Caligiuri, 2006) point that global leaders "*supervise employees who are of different nationalities*" is also confirmed by the multi-cultural teams in the company. Moreover, none of the leaders have English as their mother tongue, whilst the official corporate language is English (Navnit). According to Caligiuri (2004, in Caligiuri, 2006), the global leaders "*may need to speak in a language other than their mother tongue at work*", something that is the case for the leaders in the research company.

Caligiuri's (2004, in Caligiuri, 2006) points that global leaders "*interact with external clients from other countries*", they "*interact with internal clients from other countries*", they "*negotiate in other countries or with people from other countries*", and they "*manage foreign suppliers or vendors*" corresponds well with examples given from the respondents and observations. The leaders state that their work includes meetings with foreign suppliers and internal clients at other geographical locations of TeliaSonera (Nanda; Tieva). Further, the leaders are observed to meet external foreign clients in Nepal and they travel to Istanbul for internal business meetings (Observation 27.02.2014; Observation 05.03.2014).

Caligiuri's (2004, in Caligiuri, 2006) three remaining points are that global leaders "*develop a strategic business plan on a worldwide basis for their unit*", they "*manage a budget on a worldwide basis for their unit*", and they "*manage risk on a worldwide basis for their unit*". These points cover the global responsibilities of a global leader and for the leaders in the research company their work includes all three. The leaders in the research company are responsible for their own department at the Nepali subsidiary of TeliaSonera, and although their actions are domestic, the consequences influence TeliaSonera at a global level (Navnit). Actions taken by the leaders in Nepal are parts of the global TeliaSonera strategy and what happens in Nepal is important for the subsidiaries in the rest of the world due to the shared leadership principles and TeliaSonera values, visions and goals (Nripesh; Tieva).



**Conclusion section 5.2:** The above analysis shows that the leaders in the empirical sample can be labeled as global leaders according to the nature of the activities that they engage in. However, the activities introduced by Caligiuri are at a general level and are mainly useful for labeling the leaders as global. To examine the global leadership concept at a practical level, one needs to examine their daily work more in depth.

### 5.3 Global Leadership in Practice



*This part of the analysis aims to firstly critically view if and in that case how the scholars today describe the practical work of the global leader. Secondly, it makes use of the empirics and Zaleznik's definition of leader/manager, to further scrutinize the definition of global leadership.*



### 5.3.1 The practical work of global leaders according to the definition

Most existing research within the global leadership area focus on how to develop global leaders and what competencies these should have (Osland et al., 2013; Caligiuri, 2006; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009; Mendenhall et al., 2013). Yet, little research focuses on the actual work of these persons (Osland et al., 2013). Global leaders have to understand what competencies are required of them, but when performing the daily work it is arguably of equal importance to understand the actual work at hand. It is within these work tasks that the competencies are set into practice and the success or failure of the global leader is proven. The underdevelopment within this branch proves that global leadership still is an area in its cradle. Furthermore, with little practical and implementation knowledge, it is hard to gain a full understanding of the concept. Also respondents accentuate this complexity by their somewhat confused and vague descriptions of the global leader (Nanda; Navrang; Tieva; Lisa; Nikunja; Sattar).

Scholars find that having a *global mindset* and *cross-cultural perspective* are highly important competencies in order to be a successful global leader (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2009; Mendenhall et al., 2013). When comparing this with Caligiuri's global leadership activities analyzed in 5.2, it is easy to visualize that these competencies are helpful in order to carry out the daily work as a global leader. From the empirics, the leaders all agree to that the activities they perform are cross-cultural, indicating that they indeed are to be defined as global leaders (Karl; Nanda; Tieva; Navnit; Miklos; Deniz). Worth noting, however, is that when asked to describe the daily work, all of the respondents go into more depth and details than Caligiuri's activities give away. While many scholars define global leadership at a general level, the findings from this study prove that global leadership is more practical and hands-on.

The global leaders in the empirical sample describe their daily work as consisting mainly of meetings with the employees and leaders in the company (Miklos; Nanda; Karl; Tieva). They further state that many of the meetings are initiated spontaneously (Nanda; Karl). Osland et al. (2013) found that global leaders have a work content that is characterized by *complexity*, *uncertainty*, and a *risk taking*, mainly due to the multiple stakeholders, functions, and levels that they come in contact with. From the analysis in section 5.2, one can see that this is indeed the case also for the global leaders in the research company. They explain that their work include relations and meetings with multiple stakeholders and responsibilities that all goes cross-boundary (Tieva; Nripesh). These responsibilities and relations prove the complex and uncertain environment of the global leaders, which brings along risks that goes beyond country boundaries. Having meetings, and especially spontaneous ones, can be seen as natural to coordinate and navigate amongst these multiplicities.

Osland et al. (2013) explain that global leaders should *establish good processes*, should *choose the right people* for their teams, and they should *trust the people* that they work with to overcome some of the complexity and uncertainty in their work. The empirical findings show that global leaders in the research company feel that it can be hard to establish good processes and set high expectations for all employees. However, they think it is highly important for the success of their work and the future success of the company (Karl; Sattar; Deniz; Miklos). This is yet another proof on the complexity that surrounds the global leaders and it brings another dimension to their work: the difference between what they would like to do and what they are doing.

Although the global leaders to a great extent engage in meetings to follow-up and coordinate the work of their employees, many of these meetings demand their involvement on a more practical level. Respondents explain that leaders have to lead by example, something that proves that their work cannot be only about delegating and setting visions (Nripesh; Observation, 05.03.2014). Further, the leaders state that they often have follow-ups to make sure that the work gets done in the right way, indicating that they are involved in the hands-on practical work that can include many detailed tasks (Karl; Nanda; Tieva).

Osland et al. (2013) discuss the practical work of global leaders within the areas of problem solving, strategic thinking, boundary spanning and stakeholders and influencing. In all four areas described by Osland et al. (2013), the global leaders tend to have general knowledge and they focus on the bigger picture to make all stakeholders satisfied. However, the global leaders in the research company state that their work is much about engaging in detailed tasks of the daily work of their employees (Karl; Nanda; Tieva). This can be seen as a strategy they apply to make sure that things are moving in the right direction. Further, it can be connected to what Osland et al. (2013) discuss as a strategic plan of the global leaders, namely that they focus on the long-term viability of their plans. To make sure that their strategies are viable in a long-term perspective, they also have to make sure that the processes are reasonable and run smoothly. One can argue that being a global leader in a developing country as Nepal further strengthens this view. To make sure that the strategies of the company are viable in the long run, the leaders might also have to engage in more practical work to educate and teach their employees how to get there.



**Conclusion section 5.3.1:** It is clear that the practical work described in connection to global leadership takes a macro perspective, indicating that long-term vision and strategy is of most

importance. However, the respondents go into further depth, underscoring the importance of detailed, managerial work. This idea is developed upon further in 5.3.2.

### 5.3.2 A global perspective on leader versus manager

The lack of theories regarding practical work in the definition of global leadership is obvious, which raises a relevant question: could the lack of hands-on tasks be due to that the concept is indeed focused on leadership rather than management?

Under the category *attitudes towards goals* in Zaleznik's model (1977), managers are attributed to be impersonal in relation to others. This is also exemplified in the empirics, by the respondents' emphasis on that a manager is a role, connected to a formal position in the hierarchy (Nripesh; Deniz; Nanda). On the other hand, the attitudes of a leader should, according to the respondents, be visionary, and guiding people towards a common goal by establishing trust (Nayan; Netra; Nishok; Nikunja; Neha). "*Leaders are solving things for the first time*", Narendra aptly summarizes and reinforces Zaleznik's (1977) division in the leader/manager dimension.

In the dimension *conceptions of work*, some of the attitudes presented under the section manager can be found in the empirical material of this study. Nagina argues that managers should be supplying tools to subordinates. Others focus on delegation of tasks and being a firm decision-maker (Deniz; Nikash; Nirmal; Miklos). Karl and Neha think that a manager always has to find the stick and carrot for their employees. However, under the attitudes of the leader, no one of the respondent discussed personal risk as a significant aspect. Some argue that leaders indeed work with new and creative solutions, yet that this is not possible to the same extent for a leader in Nepal due to the immature infrastructure and business climate (Deniz; Karl; Neha; Nanda).

The answers for a manager's *relations to others* further support Zaleznik's separation of a manager and a leader (1977). All respondents mention the importance for a manager of attending meetings. Furthermore, as the manager is placed in a hierarchical setting in a different manner than a leader might be, examples of work include sequencing and using cascading methods to spread messages (Nripesh; Sattar; Deniz; Nanda). Yet, although respondents agree on that leaders should establish relationships, this is also something some respondents argue a manager should do (Nishok; Neha; Karl; Nanda).

Lastly, *sense of self* for a manager includes having a formal role, which is given, and not something one really questions (Nikunja; Miklos; Nanda). Moreover, Deniz, Neha, Nisha, and Miklos all think that to some extent, certain people are more equipped to be good leaders, regardless of organization or goal.

The results from the interviews seem to correlate well with Zaleznik's model from 1977: the concepts leader and manager can be divided. It hence also approves with how global leadership is defined today (Osland et al., 2013; Caligiuri, 2006). However, there is an important addition to the discussion: *all* respondents claim that if you are to be a good business leader, you also have to be a good manager. Yet, being good managers do not automatically translate into good leadership (Neha; Deniz). Mendenhall et al. (2013) develops on this idea when stating that hierarchical position does not imply good leadership, or leadership at all for that matter. From this, there are arguably overlaps between the concepts manager and leader, which has made scholars question the desirability of dividing the two (Mendenhall et al. 2013; Gosling & Mintzberg, 2003; Yukl, 1989).

The empirical findings support the view presented by Holmberg & Tyrstrup (2010) that there are reasons to believe that managerial aspects influence the everyday leadership. *Interpretation, constant adjustment, and formulation of temporary solutions* are all examples of the practical work presented in the previous section, underscoring the importance of viewing leadership not as a central role in an organization, but rather as a set of action based on processes and events (Holmberg & Tyrstrup, 2010). Thusly, considering this finding in the light of global leadership and its definition, it arguably lacks some of the practical implication of any leadership role. This, in turn, leads to a plausible conclusion that additions to the concept of global leadership are necessary.

Similarly to the concepts of leaders and managers, the global leaders are seen as more visionary and involved in greater and more all-embracing tasks than a global manager. Comparing this to the findings, one can argue that the leaders in the empirical sample are global managers rather than global leaders. However, as analyzed in section 5.2 and 5.3.1, the leaders are by definition global. This creates confusion around the concept of global leadership. From the empirics and analysis, a successful global leader cannot solely involve in all-embracing leadership activities. Rather, he/she needs to engage in the more managerial, hands-on tasks, which implies that a successful global leader has to have the qualities and knowledge of a global manager. Concluding this, it becomes unclear why existing research within the concept of global leadership contains so little of the theories from global management.



**Conclusion section 5.3.2:** All respondents separate between the concepts of leaders and managers, yet agree to that one has to be a good manager in order to be a good leader. This is in-line with the research indicating that there is such a thing as everyday leadership, where

managerial aspects permeate leadership. There thus seems to be a need from the scholars to distinguish between the two, even though this might not be relevant in practice. The same logic seems to apply for global leadership and global management. The next section aims to elaborate on why this separation exists.

#### 5.4 Cultural Adaptation

When comparing the findings under section 4 “Empirics” with the analyses above, there are reasons to question the lack of practical work in the definition of global leadership. The respondents claim that they all have to change their way of working when coming to a new place, where the work entails actual hands-on activities in the everyday work (Karl; Deniz; Tieva; Sattar; Narottam; Nanda; Nisha; Nikunja). Consequently, what is missing in the definition is the adjustment one does when entering a work in a new environment: cultural adaptation to the practical work.

Under the situational leadership theory LEFI (Wofford, 1982; Wofford & Srinivasan 1983), the importance of the environment to the leadership behavior is underscored. Although arguably most situational leadership theories could be of value as explanatory models connected to culture, it is only the LEFI that brings up the environmental aspects from a more macro-perspective.

All categories with their sub-dimensions in the model will most likely be influenced by the person’s background and socio-cultural context. Yet, due to the findings’ correlation with the GLOBE-study, this analysis will focus solely on four dimensions: under *motivation* it is *goal commitment*, under *role perception* it is *accurate role perception*, and under *environment* it is *establishing social support* as well as *establishing structures* (Wofford 1982). Each will be analyzed in turn.

##### **Motivation**

One of the nine dimensions in GLOBE is *future orientation*. Although no Nepal-specific results are available in GLOBE, observation indicate that Nepalese tend to be more opportunistic and take the day as it comes, exemplified by that they do not read weather forecasts or their estimation of time (Observation, 17.02.2014). The Scandinavian cluster scores high in this aspect, illustrating the perception that one should plan and invest in the future (Javidan et al., 2006). The Eastern cluster is, similarly to the Nepalese, more focused on being right now rather than the future (Javidan et al., 2006).

Given these factors, the dimensions of *goal commitment* might become altered depending on where you are. Wofford (1982) argues that there is a number of ways one can measure *goal*

*commitment*: expectations of success, values (Mento et al., 1980, in Wofford, 1982) and challenge and meaningfulness of the task (Oldham, 1975, in Wofford, 1982) are just some examples. Regardless, if the leader coming to Nepal or any other country, that person has to make sure he/she understands the frame of reference in which they act.

Karl, Tieva, Miklos, Sattar and Deniz all describe how they have to go into detail and have much more regular meetings to make sure people are up to date. This could be an indication that all of them tries to decrease the horizons in which they tend to do business in their home countries.

### **Role perception**

In Nepal, the perception of leadership is, as mentioned earlier, paternal and based on seniority (Upadhyay, 2007; Observation, 07.02.2014). In the Scandinavian cluster, *power distance* is scored the lowest compared to all other clusters, and hierarchies are of little importance (Chhokar et al., 2008, in Browaeys & Price, 2011; Browaeys & Price, 2011). To make the contrast to Nepal even more evident, the Scandinavian cluster is democratic and *egalitarian* (Browaeys & Price, 2011), whilst in Nepal, such notions as caste systems are still evident (Landguiden, 2011; Neha). The Eastern European cluster scores high in *assertiveness* and medium in *power distance* (Javidan et al., 2006).

This would suggest that both the Scandinavian and the Eastern European leaders would, if they were to adapt, move towards using their formal positions and making decisions, rather than using consensus, as is evident especially in the Scandinavian cluster (Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Miklos, being a representative from the Eastern European cluster, mentions that he already from the first day made sure everyone knew who was the leader. Karl and Tieva both argue that they are forced to use “carrot-and-stick” to motivate employees.

A contrasting example is the previous Russian leadership, which was perceived as authoritative, aggressive, action oriented and bureaucratic (Nagina; Nikash; Nirmala; Neha; Nanda), whilst the leadership today is viewed as more liberal and democratic (Nikunja; Nagina; Nirmala; Nikash; Neha). There are at least two plausible explanations for this perception. Firstly, it may be so that the Russians indeed tried to adjust their leadership, yet as the problem of losing face is looked upon with such fear in Nepal, the *assertiveness* in the Eastern European cluster did not quite work in Nepal. Another explanation could be that the Russians did not adjust at all, indicating that either, they were not global leaders, or that the

global leadership is indeed defined from how effective leadership is perceived in the western world.<sup>20</sup>

### **Environment**

*Establishing social support and structures* may also be looked upon differently depending on the culture from which one is originating. In Nepal, family plays a significant role in everyday decisions (Nagina; Nihar) Thus, one could argue that Nepal would probably score high in the *in-group collectivism* dimension, taking pride and being loyal to the family (Javidan et al., 2006). If true, they are similar to the Eastern Cluster in the perception of this dimension. The Scandinavian cluster, on the other hand, ranks *institutional collectivism* high, showing belief in organization and the societal institutions. *In-group collectivism* is not seen as important at all relative to other countries.

Karl underscored the importance of creating relationship and establishing bonds with his subordinates, something that was not as crucial back in Scandinavia. He argues that in Scandinavia, people are one person at work, one person at home, one person at the gym etc.

Further, not Miklos, Tieva, Sattar, nor Nanda underscores this role of relationships to the same extent as Karl. They all mention the importance of talking and interaction, yet no one of them goes as far as saying “*emotions are king here*” (Karl). Hence, this could be an example where Nepal and the Eastern cluster is in fact quite close and where the Scandinavian cluster has to adapt to become heard and understood. Examples of Scandinavians being perceived as shy, reserved, and cold hearted (Holmberg & Åkerblom 1998, in Chokkar et al. 2004) crops up in cross-cultural studies, and hence, this is what Karl indeed has to alter to do his job to the best extent possible.



**Conclusion section 5.6:** The need to adapt is evident from the interviews. This section presents the importance of cultural adaptation in the practical work of the global leader, underscoring the importance of including the topic into the definition.

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<sup>20</sup> Western culture is “*the modern culture of western Europe and North America*” (Dictionary, 2006)

## 6. Conclusion



*In this section, the main findings from the analysis are presented and tied back to the research question to clearly display the final results of the study.*



### ***How satisfactory is the definition of global leadership in practice?***

By firstly analyzing the perceived Nepalese leadership style, there are some important conclusions which in the end partly challenge the concept of global leadership. Due to culture specific perceptions, a leader coming to Nepal has to be highly involved in the hands-on work. Further, when analyzing whether or not the leaders in the research company are global, the conclusion is that they are. However, the global leadership theories exclude the more managerial activities, which are highly emphasized as important for leaders in the research company. In sum, the definition of global leadership generally holds. Yet, as the analysis shows that scholars undermine the importance of practical aspects, the concept is not inclusive enough.

### ***Is there a need for additions/alterations/exclusions to the definition of global leadership as defined today?***

The exclusion of actual work tasks in the topic of global leadership has implications not only on the practicality of the definition, but also the very nature of the concept. The analysis indicates that there is a need to see the manager not as a completely separate theme in the global research, but rather as a prerequisite for its existence. Furthermore, the results show that it is primarily the hands-on tasks that the respondents alter and adjust when being in a new, unfamiliar context. Hence, by ignoring managerial aspects in the definition, the element of adaptation is lost and the cross-cultural flexibility limited. Summarizing, the main critique of how global leadership is defined today is that the theory implies that there is a constant model to be used in all settings. Instead, in this analysis, the concept of global leadership becomes superfluous, and the main development should lie in how to develop leaders in adapting the practical work and managerial skills. A further justification for this conclusion is that most previous research has been done in North America and Western Europe. Using the word “global” is thus arguably an exaggeration and perhaps even misleading, exemplified by this case study in Nepal.

## **7. Reflections**

From the theoretical findings, there are differences between how good leadership is perceived not only between Eastern European and Scandinavian leadership, but also in Nepal (Browaeys & Price, 2011; Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Based on this, there are arguably reasons to question the use of “global” in the theory on global leadership, as little research has been done on for example South American, African, and Middle-Eastern companies.

The aspect of cultural bias presents three important caveats. Firstly, there are reasons to believe that when companies develop and train their leaders into becoming “global leaders” as of today’s definition, they miss out on what is actually global. The leaders will become global from a Westernized perspective. Secondly, it may have more concrete effects on the actual business results. If companies are developing leaders with a more Westernized perspective on what effective global leadership is, they may miss valuable opportunities and local experience. Thirdly, there is a need to question the assumptions onto which the topic of global leadership is based. The underlying patterns of the Westernized focus are easily recognizable from the literature: some taken for granted topics such as setting strategies, long-term focus, and business infrastructure indicates that the description for global leadership may work well for a developed firm in an industrial country (Osland et al., 2013).

These three caveats are troublesome as today’s definition of global leadership relies on delegation being feasible. Yet, this is only possible if one acts in an environment where the subordinates and colleagues know how to handle that responsibility. If they cannot, and the leader actually has to do some of the tasks themselves, does that mean that he/she is not a global leader?

Further, the global leaders described by Osland (2013), Calgiuri (2006) and other scholars are quite abstract. On this topic, many of the interviewees described good leadership as almost something godlike (Nagina; Nirmala; Nanda). Although scholars make sure to separate between organizational leaders and leaders in general, it is relevant to highlight how various cultures tend to see the role of the company. There are most certainly societies and cultures in which the family and religion plays a far bigger role in peoples’ life than work and a company. Hence, there are indications that a more nuanced and realistic version of who the global leader really is could benefit the concept and its potential within the corporate world. As a suggestion, future research should test the concepts not only in non-Western societies, but also let scholars from these areas have a larger influence. The bias one brings is always present, and with a more heterogeneous research team, there is a larger chance of mitigating this.

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## 9. Appendix

### 9.1 Explaining the Levels of Culture

Firstly, within **the national culture** layer, scholars emphasize the need to acknowledge the difference between “culture” and “nation” (Browaeyns & Price, 2011). It is exemplified by a comparison between Kurds in Turkey, Iraq and Iran: one can be a Kurd yet belong to any of the three countries (Tayeb 2012, in Browaeyns & Price, 2011). Secondly, according to Schein (1990), “*organizational culture is the acceptance – in a tacit or formal way – of norms of specific behavior by the members of the organization*”. He explains that with this definition, the culture influences the setting of goals and the operation of the business. Thirdly, the **corporate culture** is a concept most used with multinational or joint ventures and it differs from the organizational culture in that it has its foundation in the initial culture of the organization and/or national culture (Meschi & Rogers, 1994, in Browaeyns & Price, 2011). Fourthly, depending on the field of work, different employee groups will share certain norms and values among them, a cultural layer referred to as the **professional culture** (Browaeyns & Price, 2011). Lastly, all individuals bring with them their own values and norms, and this culture is a mixture of their personal background as well as their professional.

## 9.2 The GLOBE Country Clusters

From Chokkar et al., 2008, in Browaeys & Price, 2011

<b>Anglo</b>	<b>Latin Europe</b>	<b>Nordic Europe</b>	<b>Germanic Europe</b>
Australia Canada England Ireland New Zealand South Africa (White sample) United States	France Israel Italy Portugal Spain Switzerland (French-speaking)	Denmark Finland Sweden	Austria Germany (Former east) Germany (Former west) Netherlands Switzerland (German-speaking)
<b>Eastern Europe</b>	<b>Latin America</b>	<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>Middle East</b>
Albania Georgia Greece Hungary Kazakhstan Poland Russia Slovenia	Argentina Bolivia Brazil Colombia Costa Rica Ecuador El Salvador Guatemala Mexico Venezuela	Namibia Nigeria South Africa (Black sample) Zambia Zimbabwe	Egypt Kuwait Morocco Qatar Turkey

Note: Added to this clustering, India is mentioned as the Asian cluster.

## 9.3 Osland's Four Common Themes

### **Managing Multiplies**

The work of global leaders is complex due to the fact that they have multiple stakeholders, functions and levels to take into account. Issues that they face cross multiple countries, cultures and government entities which makes their work challenging.

### **Huge Challenges**

Due to the high complexity of the work global leaders face great challenges in their work. Even if their suggested plan is accepted by the great majority of the company, they also have to convince external stakeholders in various countries. The result is that decisions made by global leaders often are time consuming and crisis-driven.

### **Precariousness**

Global leaders have a work that can contain great risks. Due to the political situation in some countries they can face situations where they both professionally and personally experience high risk. Responsibilities and reputational consequences make it harder for global leaders to walk away from situations like this and they have to solve the issue before moving on.

### **Ambiguity**

Many global leaders carry out a role that has not existed for long or been carried out by another leader before them. This makes their role filled with uncertainty and they have to adapt to this by creating their way as they go along.

## **9.4 Kotter's Eight Steps**

### **1. Not establishing a great enough sense of urgency**

This first step of establishing urgency is essential because it requires the aggressive cooperation of many individuals. Without motivation, people will not help. Over 50% of the companies studied fail this first phase. Why?

- Executive underestimates how hard it can be to drive people out of their comfort zones
- Grossly overestimation of how successful they have already been in establishing a sense of urgency.
- Lack of patience
- Becomes paralyzed due to the severity of the situation

### **2. Not establishing a powerful enough guiding coalition**

Whenever some minimum mass is not achieved early in the effort, nothing much worthwhile happens. In big companies, the coalitions need to involve 20 to 50 ranges before much progress can be made in phase three and beyond. Someone needs to get these people together, help them develop a shared assessment of their company's problems and opportunities, and create a minimum level of trust and communication. No matter how capable or dedicated the staff head, groups without strong line leadership never achieve the power that is required.

### **3. Lack of vision**

A vision always goes beyond the numbers that are typically found in five-year plans. A vision says something that helps clarify the direction in which an organization needs to move. Without a vision, a transformation effort can easily dissolve into a list of confusing and incompatible projects that can take the organization in the wrong direction or nowhere at all. A useful rule of thumb is that if you cannot communicate the vision to someone in five

minutes or less and get a reaction that signifies both understanding and interest, you are not yet done with this phase of the transformation process.

**4. Undercommunicating the vision by a factor of ten**

Transformation is impossible unless hundreds or thousands of people are willing to help, often to the point of making short-term sacrifices. Without credible communication, the hearts and minds of the troops are never captured. In more successful transformation efforts, executives use all existing communication channels to broadcast their vision. Many good leaders also use “walk the talk”.

**5. Not removing obstacles to the new vision**

To some degree, a guiding coalition empowers others to take action simply by successfully communicating the new direction. But communication is never sufficient by itself. Renewal also requires the removal of obstacles. This can be the organizational structure, peoples’ minds, or other habits.

**6. Not systematically planning for and creating short-term wins**

In a successful transformation, managers actively look for ways to obtain clear performance improvements; establish goals in the yearly planning systems. Achieve the objectives, and reward the people involved with recognition, promotions or even money.

**7. Declaring victory too soon**

Until changes sink deeply into a company’s culture, a process that can take five to ten years, new approaches are fragile and subject to regression. The premature victory celebration kills momentum. Ironically, it is often a combination of change initiators and change resisters that creates the premature victory celebration.

**8. Not anchoring changes in the corporation’s culture**

Until new behaviors are rooted in social norms and shared values, they are subject to degradation as soon as the pressure for change is removed. Two factors that is particularly important in institutionalizing change in corporate culture. The first is a conscious attempt to show people how the new approaches, behaviors, and attitudes have helped improved performance. The second factor is taking sufficient time to make sure that the next generation of top management really does personify the new approach.

## 9.5 The Nine Clusters of GLOBE

From Nardon & Steers (2006)

Cultural Dimensions	Scale Anchors	
Power Distance: Degree to which people expect power to be distributed equally.	High: Society divided into classes; power bases are stable and scarce; power is seen as providing social order; limited upward mobility.	Low: Society has large middle class; power bases are transient and sharable; power often seen as a source of corruption, coercion, and dominance; high upward mobility.
Uncertainty Avoidance: Extent to which people rely on norms, rules, and procedures to reduce the unpredictability of future events.	High: Tendency to formalize social interactions; document agreements in legal contracts; be orderly and maintain meticulous records; rely on rules and formal policies.	Low: Tendency to be more informal in social interactions; reliance on word of people they trust; less concerned with orderliness and record-keeping; rely on informal norms of behavior.
Humane Orientation: Extent to which people reward fairness, altruism, and generosity.	High: Interests of others important; values altruism, benevolence, kindness, and generosity; high need for belonging and affiliation; fewer psychological and pathological problems.	Low: Self-interest important; values pleasure, comfort, and self-enjoyment; high need for power and possessions; more psychological and pathological problems.
Institutional Collectivism: Extent to which society encourages collective distribution of resources and collective action.	High: Individuals integrated into strong cohesive groups; self viewed as interdependent with groups; societal goals often take precedence over individual goals.	Low: Individuals largely responsible for themselves; self viewed as autonomous; individual goals often take precedence over societal or group goals.
In-Group Collectivism: Extent to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations and families.	High: Members assume they are highly interdependent and seek to make important personal contributions to group or organization; long-term employer-employee relationships; organizations assume major responsibility of employee welfare; important decisions made in groups.	Low: Members assume they are independent of the organization and seek to stand out by making individual contributions; short-term employer-employee relationships; organizations primarily interested in the work performed by employees over their personal welfare.
Assertiveness: Degree to which people are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in relationships with others.	High: Value assertiveness, dominance, and tough behavior for all members of society; sympathy for the strong; value competition; belief in success through hard work; values direct and unambiguous communication.	Low: Prefers modesty and tenderness to assertiveness; sympathy for the weak; values cooperation; often associates competition with defeat and punishment; values face-saving in communication and action.
Gender Egalitarianism: Degree to which gender differences are minimized.	High: High participation of women in the workforce; more women in positions of authority; women accorded equal status in society.	Low: Low participation of women in the workforce; fewer women in positions of authority; women not accorded equal status in society.
Future Orientation: Extent to which people engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing, and delayed gratification.	High: Greater emphasis on economic success; propensity to save for the future; values intrinsic motivation; organizations tend to be flexible and adaptive.	Low: Less emphasis on economic success; propensity for instant gratification; values extrinsic motivation; organizations tend to be bureaucratic and inflexible.
Performance Orientation: Degree to which high performance is encouraged and rewarded.	High: Belief that individuals are in control of their destiny; values assertiveness, competitiveness, and materialism; emphasizes performance over people.	Low: Values harmony with environment over control; emphasizes seniority, loyalty, social relationships, and belongingness; values who people are more than what they do.

GLOBE's nine clusters of culture with ranking (Javidan et al., 2009)

**Table 1**  
**Cultural Clusters Classified on Societal Culture Practices (As Is) Scores**

Cultural Dimension	High-Score Clusters	Mid-Score Clusters	Low-Score Clusters	Cluster-Average Range
Performance Orientation	<b>Confucian Asia</b>	Southern Asia	<b>Latin America</b>	3.73–4.58
	Germanic Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	Eastern Europe	
	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>Latin Europe</b>		
		Nordic Europe		
Assertiveness	Germanic Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa	Nordic Europe	3.66–4.55
	Eastern Europe	<b>Latin America</b>		
		<b>Anglo</b>		
		<b>Middle East</b>		
		<b>Confucian Asia</b>		
		<b>Latin Europe</b>		
Future Orientation	Germanic Europe	<b>Confucian Asia</b>	<b>Middle East</b>	3.38–4.40
	Nordic Europe	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>Latin America</b>	
		Southern Asia	Eastern Europe	
		Sub-Saharan Africa		
Humane Orientation	Southern Asia	<b>Middle East</b>	<b>Latin Europe</b>	3.55–4.71
	Sub-Saharan Africa	<b>Anglo</b>	Germanic Europe	
		Nordic Europe		
		<b>Latin America</b>		
		<b>Confucian Asia</b>		
		Eastern Europe		
Institutional Collectivism	Nordic Europe	<b>Anglo</b>	Germanic Europe	3.86–4.88
	<b>Confucian Asia</b>	Southern Asia	<b>Latin Europe</b>	
		Sub-Saharan Africa	<b>Latin America</b>	
		<b>Middle East</b>		
In-Group Collectivism	Southern Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa	<b>Anglo</b>	3.75–5.87
	<b>Middle East</b>	<b>Latin Europe</b>	Germanic Europe	
	Eastern Europe		Nordic Europe	
	<b>Latin America</b>			
Gender Egalitarianism	Eastern Europe	<b>Latin America</b>	<b>Middle East</b>	2.95–3.84
	Nordic Europe	<b>Anglo</b>		
		<b>Latin Europe</b>		
		Sub-Saharan Africa		
		Southern Asia		
		<b>Confucian Asia</b>		
Power Distance		Southern Asia	Nordic Europe	4.54–5.39
		<b>Latin America</b>		
		Eastern Europe		
		Sub-Saharan Africa		
		<b>Middle East</b>		
		<b>Latin Europe</b>		
Uncertainty Avoidance	Nordic Europe	<b>Confucian Asia</b>	<b>Middle East</b>	3.56–5.19
	Germanic Europe	<b>Anglo</b>	<b>Latin America</b>	
		Sub-Saharan Africa	Eastern Europe	
		<b>Latin Europe</b>		
		<b>Latin Europe</b>		
		Southern Asia		

NOTE: Means of high-score clusters are significantly higher ( $p < 0.05$ ) than the rest, means of low-score clusters are significantly lower ( $p < 0.05$ ) than the rest, and means of mid-score clusters are not significantly different from the rest ( $p > 0.05$ ).

## 9.6 Countries Included in the former Soviet Union

- Russia
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Georgia

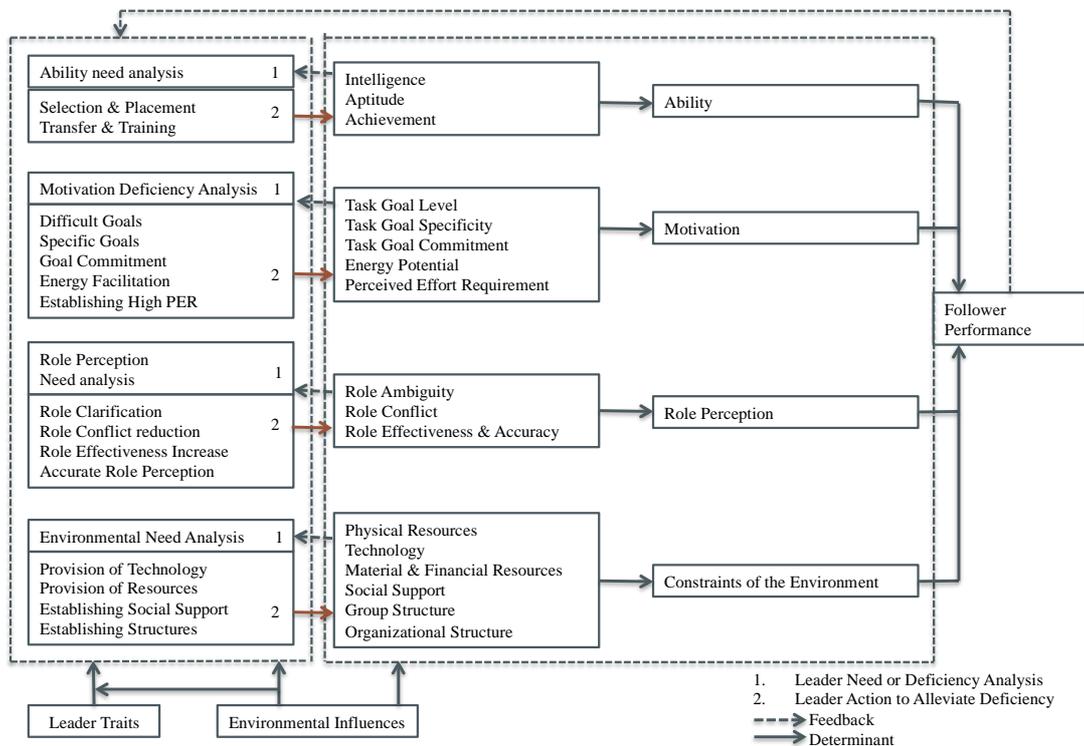
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Moldova
- Tajikistan
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan
- Estonia
- Latvia
- Lithuania

### **9.7 Yukl's Nine Situational Leadership Theories**

- Path-Goal Theory (Evans, 1970; House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974 in Yukl 1989)
- Situational Leadership Theory (Hersey et al. 1969)
- Leader Substitutes Theory (Kerr & Jermier, 1978, in Yukl, 1989)
- Normative Decision Theory (Vroom & Yetton, 1973)
- LPC Contingency Theory (1967, in Yukl, 1989)
- LMX Theory (Dansereau et al., 1975, in Yukl 1989)
- Cognitive Resource Theory (Fieldler, 1986, in Yukl, 1989)
- Multiple Linkage Model (Yukl, 1981, in Yukl, 1989)
- Leader-Environment-Follower-Interaction Theory (Wofford, 1982, in Yukl, 1989)

## 9.8 The LEFI-Model

Picture 3: The LEFI-model (Wofford, 1982)



## 9.9 Observations

Date & Time	Place	Setting	People	Action	Theoretical Notes	Methodical notes
<b>26.01.2014</b> <b>11:45 AM</b>	Kathmandu Tribhuvan International Airport	Immigration area, lines with foreign, native, and diplomatic people.  Observing in the line for approximately 45 min	Managers Subordinates in the counters Traveling people  Approximate 100 people in total	Managers wearing suits, supervising by walking between the desks and not interacting with incoming travellers. Subordinate wearing everyday- clothes, doing the checking and administration regarding the visas	- GLOBE: Hierarchical, directive structure - GLOBE: Seniority matters - Leader versus manager	- GLOBE: Swedish people generally scores low in power- hierarchy, hence observers may react more strongly to this - First impression of Nepal
<b>05.02.2014</b> <b>7:20 PM</b>	Roadhouse Restaurant, Lalitpur, Kathmandu	Restaurant with approximately 7 guests.  Observing off and on from a dinner table for approximately	Waiters Guests	Waiters saying yes to certain orders which they did not have or that they misunderstood. Example: a person ordered rice instead of	- Expectation management - "Yes- culture"	

		1 hour 20 minutes		potatoes. G. Waiter says this is OK. Got rice		
<b>07.02.2014</b> <b>9:45 AM</b>	Ncell Head office, Krishna Towers, Kathmandu	Third floor, HR-department.  Observing from an office table for approximately 30 minutes	HR-employees HR Manager	When saying hello to a more senior colleague, subordinates tend to use "sir" or "madam". Also in writing. Example: "Natraj Sir can meet you at 15:00" (Navnit)	- GLOBE: Hierarchical structure - GLOBE: Respect seniority	- GLOBE: Swedes generally low in hierarchical remarks hence observers may react more strongly to this - GLOBE: Equality scores high in Sweden
<b>17.02.2014</b> <b>3:30</b>	Kasara Resport, Chitwan National Part	Reception area  Observing for approximately 10 minutes	Receptionist Hotel Manager Hotel Event Manager Other guests	When asking about the weather the following day, the answer was "Only the Gods knows". When asking about a direction on a map, receptionists did not want to use the map but rather referred to land marks as direction	- GLOBE: A "being" culture - Trust in interpersonal and environmental aspects rather than man-made tools	- GLOBE: Swedes being future oriented may influence observers perspective on time
<b>27.02.2014</b> <b>2:00 PM</b>	Ncell Technical Office, Lalitpur, Kathmandu	Sixth floor, ITC department  Observing for approximately 3 hours	IT-employees TeliaSonera Employees Clients	Different employees from TeliaSonera Eurasia as well as clients from Russia, Finland and Turkey present. These were either in meetings or sitting in groups with their different nationalities	- Global leadership	
<b>05.03.2014</b> <b>9:00 AM</b>	Ncell Head office, Krishna Towers, Kathmandu	Third Floor, HR-Department  Observing from an office table for approximately 10 minutes	HR-employees	Employees were planning and discussing leadership development courses for the top management team in Turkey, which they were going to the next day	- Global leadership	

<b>11.03.2014 8:00 AM</b>	Chinese Restaurant, downtown Kathmandu	A round table with all but two people from the top management team  Observing off and on for approximately 2 hours	Top management team Two other expats	Discussing everyday things, telling informal and personal stories. Example: Karl telling a story of how he got lost in Kathmandu during his first week Example: Tieva talking about the food in her home country	- Global leadership	
<b>14.03.2014 11:30 AM</b>	Trekking in Himalayas, Pokhara	Mountain trail  Observing off and on for 3 days	Guide Trekking Sherpas	Guide measures time and length of trek in terms of how fast one can walk it, and does not give answers in hours or km	- GLOBE: A "being" culture	- GLOBE: Swedes being future oriented may influence observers perspective on time
<b>30.03.2014 7:45 PM</b>	Vesper Café and Restaurant, Lalitpur, Kathmandu	Restaurant with approximately 30 guests.  Observing off and on from a dinner table for approximately 1 hour	Restaurant manager Restaurant manager's girlfriend Waiters Guests	Restaurant manager directs a waiter for a mis-order in front of the guests. Restaurant manager gives directions to waiters in front of guests	- GLOBE: assertiveness and seniority matters - Leader versus manager	- GLOBE: Sweden scores low in assertiveness and high in equality hence may influence the observation