The challenges of leading ethically in a frame of a multicultural organization

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Abstract
This Master thesis aimed to describe the challenges involved to lead ethically in a multicultural organization. There is a need to take into account these challenges as work environments are becoming more and more culturally diverse due to globalization. Multicultural organizations, from the perspective of this thesis, include having different moral frameworks within the organization, emphasizing the need to study the challenges on how to lead ethically.

The research was conducted using the Grounded Theory method. The research was executed by conducting six interviews with leaders, leading culturally diverse teams in different countries, in combination with literature studies on national culture, the GLOBE project and ethical leadership. By analysing the obtained data the challenges of leading ethically in a multicultural organization are many. Challenges are due to miscommunication, both verbal- and non-verbal, cultural differences and, work pressure. However, it is believed by the interviewees that these challenges can be overcome by always being respectful and provide explanations that emphasize why certain decisions or changes are made and, to explain why things are communicated in a certain way.

Keywords
Culture, Multicultural Organization, Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Management, Diversity, Leaders, Leading Ethically, Multicultural Teams, Ethics in Business
Thanks

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1 Introduction
1.1 Background
The topic of this thesis is the challenges of leading ethically in a multicultural environment. To explain the relevance and importance of this topic, the background will be described step by step.

1.1.1 **Globalization and the culturally diverse work environment**
Over the past years the world has become more and more globalized. This globalization has led to a melting pot of different cultures throughout countries and organizations. Globalization affects many workplaces significantly by making it more multicultural and international. Globalization is a concept that has been defined in many different ways, Mead and Andrews (2009, p.230) state that there is no need for agreement on a single definition as long as researchers define what they mean with globalization. Globalization can be defined as ‘the blurring of a country’s boundaries in business activities’ (Lepak and Gowan 2009, p.17). Other definitional concepts of globalization are the increasing dependencies in national and international bodies in politics and, how far there can be said to be a global culture from a sociological point of interest (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.230-235). In general researchers agree that globalization is a concept that is applying to the whole earth (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.230). To work and capitalize this increasing international labor market, requires understanding of how differences in cultural values and beliefs, influence working relationships among employees (Lepak and Gowan 2009, p.17).

The term *culture* has many meanings, however, it includes an interrelated system of dimensions, different ways to perceive, think, feel, behave and evaluate, frames of reference for action and decisions, and, it is more or less shared at a group level and learned through socialization (Schneider, Barsoux, and Stahl 2014, p.4). Culture is said to vary over time, to vary between countries and other geographic regions and, to vary among groups and organizations.
Whereas the term culture is often used to describe different national cultures, it also includes other variations of culture such as the group influences of organizations, politics, generation, religion, socio-economic, and many other aspects could be defined (Schneider, Barsoux, and Stahl 2014, p.4). Cultures can be explained using different tools and concepts that will be more thoroughly defined in the literature review.

When talking about globalization in combination with culture the concept multicultural arises. As the concept of multicultural is a relatively broad subject, it is narrowed down in this thesis, in order to make it more comprehensive and, in this context, multicultural will mainly focus on having different national cultures within organizations and, to a smaller extent, generational differences.

Culture is reflecting the moral and ethical beliefs. Norms and values, which are closely related to ethics are defined as the middle layer of culture by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, pp 28-32). The other layers of culture are basic assumptions as the inner layer and, the outer layer consists of the first things we notice when entering a new culture, these layers will be more thoroughly discussed in section 2.1. Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) refer to the moral circle as a group of people who consider themselves to be one group. They state that the moral circle does not only affect symbols, rituals, and heroes, but also our values (p.13).

1.1.2 Problems that arise related to ethics in leading a culturally diverse work environment

‘In our globalizing world there is a growing need to make the underpinning ethics explicitly visible in the workplace, not because the world is more ethical than before, but because in a globalized world, and certainly in societies that have seen large inflows of migrant workers from other cultures, a shared religious or ethical basis cannot be taken for granted’ (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.422).
Ethics can be defined as ‘the conduct of behavior according to a set of moral principles and, the evaluation of behavior according to moral principles’ (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.421). Ethics deal with issues such as right and wrong and, good and bad. Morals also deal with right and wrong, and, good and bad, however, they are the individual’s own principles and understanding. Ethics derive from an external source, for example religion or profession, influencing the individual (Lakshmi 2014).

Most of all, ethics can be found all around us. Ethics can be found in politics, in sports, in the medical world, in business, and therefore also in leadership. However, not a lot of journals, articles or theses have been found when doing secondary research on the topic of ethical challenges when leading in a multicultural organization.

There are a few studies for example. ‘Leadership Ethics in Today’s World: Key Issues and Perspectives.’ (Lakshmi 2014), and ‘Ethical leadership: A review and future directions.’ (Brown and Treviño 2006). Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015) analyze moralized leadership from a follower perspective, when leadership is moralized and, when it is perceived ethical by followers. Their analysis is not from a leadership perspective on how to lead within a company where followers moralize different actions. These articles describe what ethical leadership and, leadership based on ethics is, and which factors are included in ethical leadership and their importance, however, they do not state the precise challenges in multicultural environments.

‘Ethical principles do differ around the globe because of influences such as historical traditions, religious beliefs, and social and political factors.’ (Robbins, Judge and Campbell 2010, p.129). Therefore, in an increasing globalized world, where environments and societies have to deal with the complexity and multiple cultures, ethics are becoming more relevant and will be more likely to conflict. Not only ethics in general, but especially the different moral beliefs of employees coming from different
backgrounds within organizations. Ethics touch upon leadership at a number of junctures (Robbins, Judge and Campbell 2010, p.349).

Ethics and our own moral beliefs play an important role in decision-making processes. Ethics play a role both consciously and unconsciously. In this thesis, the focus will be on ethics related to leadership behavior and interaction within the multicultural teams.

Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015) describe ethical leadership as a different leadership style, providing a model with its foundations and, how ethical leadership can be measured. Multiple articles also have a different focus, describing ethics in leadership in terms of current scandals and unethical practices in strategic decision-making. Therefore, there is a need for more research on ethical leadership and, leadership based on ethics, from the perspective of leaders of teams and departments in multicultural organizations.

Moreover, even though I do personally believe that ethics are important when dealing with multiple cultures, I do recognize that ethics and leadership do not necessarily always go together. It might be of importance to partly neglect ethics to make decisions as a leader and to be effective (Lakshmi 2014). Thereby, saying that everyone’s values are important and do matter, but for leaders it might be hard to please everyone and, in the end of the day, decisions do have to be taken. Putting too much emphasis on ethics could potentially be a time-consuming process.

The importance of the topic of “the challenges of leading ethically in a multicultural organization” can be proven by the fact that the world is becoming more and more connected and intertwined. In a workplace where multiple cultures come together, different moral frameworks can be found, and therefore also different ethical beliefs. On top of that, Tiwary (2015) stated that hostile work environments do not arise in companies that respect their own code of ethics. This even strengthens
the argument that ethics in leadership is crucial. However, I think that there is a difference in having a Code of Ethics high on the agenda, and really respecting it. Incorporating a Code of Ethics does not necessarily imply that all employees will respect this Code.

Schminke, Ambrose and Neubaum (2005, p.135) described how in the study of behavioral ethics it is an important question at the micro level to investigate whether moral differences between leaders and followers are ‘benign’ or, whether they create a tension in the workplace that influences the attitudes of the employees. However, even though they state the importance of this question, and that no empirical research has been focused on this aspect, they also do not do so themselves in their article. Instead they have focused upon the influence from leaders on the ethical climate in the organization and, value congruence between the overall leaders of the organization (not the immediate supervisors) and the employees (p.149).

Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015, p.184) also state that there have been different constructions of morality across different cultural backgrounds (Schwartz et al. 2012) which leads, together with other factors, to the issue to clarify the mechanisms of ethical leadership and allowing a variation in the types of behaviors that followers perceive to be morally relevant and, align these perceptions with follower behavior (Fehr, Yam and Dang 2015, p.184). Moralization is defined as the process through which followers view their leaders as ethical (Fehr, Yam and Dang 2015, p.184). This means that followers have different ideas of what is moral and ethical, and what leadership is and, how leaders should behave. Saying that, it is an important empirical question how a leader can deal with this given situation in the workplace. When investigating how leaders of multicultural teams can deal with different moral foundations of their followers, another question arises. Is the role of leadership to align morals? Or is the role of leadership to override the different morals within the teams and focus upon company goals.
One of the research problems within the research topic is; how do the moral foundations of leaders and followers clash? This is an important question to ask. As stated before, multiple cultures come together in the workplace where different moral frameworks thus also come together. To understand how leadership can be ethical and how ethics influence the workplace, it is analyzed if moral frameworks clash and if so, how moral frameworks clash.

The very word clash is a very strong word and has an underlying assumption that not everyone shares the same values. Within the moral philosophy there are different streams on whether this is the case or not. There is an ongoing debate about whether morality is universalist/absolutist or whether it is relative to culture (Cook 1999). The absolutist argues that there are moral principles that apply to all people everywhere, ‘even to those that do not acknowledge these particular principles but conduct themselves, instead, according to other false principles’ (Cook 1999, p.7).

The relativist view on morality claims that morality differs per culture, and values are relative. When moral relativism is interpreted moralistically, there is the criticism that the view is inconsistent. As the view would claim that all values are relative, except for tolerance this is a universal value (Cook 1999, p.25). However, relativist do not claim tolerance to misconduct according to our own reasoning, tolerance only applies if we can find a moral justification for what was alien to us before (Cook 1999, p.28).

In this thesis I do not wish to solve the debate on whether values are universal or relative, however the research question has been formulated from a relativist standpoint. I would like to add that the relativist standpoint is indispensable for anthropologists (Cook 1999, p.29) and as this thesis is also partly studying different cultures, it will be used as a basis as well. As mentioned before Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015, p.184) also stated that there have been different constructions of
morality across different cultural backgrounds, which is also a relativist approach.

1.1.3 Possible clashes in moral foundations

Dorfman et al. (2012, pp.505-506) discovered the Culturally endorsed Theory of Leadership (CLT), in which they have found that certain primary dimensions that they describe are culturally contingent (p.508). This means that if certain dimensions are desired in one culture, while being rejected in another, it could mean that moral foundations do clash.

Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015, p.200) mention that it is an important empirical question to determine how frequent the moral foundations of leaders, followers and, their organizations collide. However, as this is a qualitative study, and exact numbers are extremely difficult to determine in such a complex concept, the frequency will not be investigated. Instead, it will be investigated how these clashes occur. Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015, p.186) suggest that a leaders’ actions may be different from the moral foundations of its followers and organizational culture, as they stated that the frequency of clashes between followers, leaders and the organization is an important empirical question. Personally I think that an organization does not have a moral foundation by itself, as I see this as a human attribute. However, Fehr, Yam and Dang based this on the explanation that organizational culture is a set of shared assumptions, including shared assumptions about the moral domain, learned by the members of their culture through socialization and communication (Fehr, Yam and Dang 2015, p.186). Additionally, they state that the benefits of leading morally could depend on aligning leaders’ actions and the moral foundations of its followers and the organization. Research is needed on this theme to know how clashes between moral frameworks of leaders, followers and the organizational culture occur, and why this happens.
Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015, p.200) state that leaders cannot depend on a series of best practices when leading ethically. If this is the case, in which ways can employees of a multicultural organization deal with different moral perspectives within their organization?

Leading from the previous questions, the research will aim at determining what the possible options are to lead others in an ethical way within a multicultural context.

1.2 Research issue
The research issue is ‘what are the challenges of leading ethically in a frame of a multicultural organization?’. This issue will deal with aspects such as:
- What are the clashes that occur between the moral frameworks of leaders and followers?
- Which ways can be suggested to deal with different moral perspectives within an organization?
- What are the possible options to lead others in an ethical way within a multicultural context?

1.3 Objective and purpose of the study
As the research will be conducted around the theme; challenges of leading ethically in a frame of a multicultural organization, I am striving to make ethics in leadership and its challenges more visible. Not only do I want to make the challenges more visible, I am also aiming at finding out the meaning of ethics on leadership behavior and, define the importance of ethics in leadership behavior further.

In the research objective it is important to take note of the fact that this study is open in the sense that ethics and, leadership are not by definition defined as good (or bad). However, leadership, more specifically, ethical leadership could very well be perceived as ‘bad’ or ‘wrong’. Whether leadership is experienced as something positive depends strongly on the morals and character of the leader and the way
he or she is true to these values. Additionally, the morals and character
of his or her followers also play an important role when the followers
evaluate and judge the leadership style of their leader.

1.4 Limitations
One of the limitations of this study is the amount of interview
candidates, the findings are based upon six interview candidates. I have
tried to find leaders from different cultural backgrounds, working within
different cultures and working with different cultures in their teams.
More information on the backgrounds of the interview candidates can
be found in section 3.4. However, I am aware of the fact that six leaders
is not a lot and findings might be subjective and biased, which is also
the nature of the research. Grounded Theory is strongly influenced by
the interpretations and sensitivity of the researcher (Corbin and Strauss
2008).

Additionally, the research is based upon literature and interviews. I
would have liked to add observations to this research, to verify
statements made by the leaders, but due to geographic distances and
limitations in form of budget and time this has not been possible. I
believe observations could be very important because it could happen
that leaders say they are doing one thing, but in reality they are not
behaving accordingly. The only way to know is through observation
(Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.29).

As this thesis is written about the challenges of leading ethically in a
multicultural organization, it is based upon leaders only. Statements
made by the leaders of the way they lead and whether this has been
successful, whether there have been clashes or not, have not been
verified with the followers of these leaders. Therefore, leaders could
potentially have the wrong impression of the way they lead and the
effectiveness and moralization of their leadership styles.
2 Literature review
When talking about the research issue ‘the challenges of leading ethically in a multicultural organization’, it is of particular importance to first define the concepts involved in this issue. Concepts involved are the ethical perspectives of both employees and leaders, in which culture plays an important role as it partly determines people’s values which will be further explained in section 2.1. Norms are described by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, p.30) as the definition of a culture of what is right and wrong. Whereas values are described as determining the definitions of good and bad, which are closely related to ideals shared by the group (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.30). This literature review will give an overview of the concepts of culture and the different ways of defining it by different prominent researchers in the field. After defining culture the concept will be further explained by defining the different ways to analyze this phenomenon. The literature review ends with defining ethics and ethical leadership.

2.1 Studies on cultural differences
Culture has been defined in many different ways and, in very different ways. It is a concept of which the complexity is hard to grasp within words. However, Schneider and Barsoux, (2014, p.4) state that there are certain characteristics of culture that have been widely agreed upon:

‘Culture is an interrelated system of dimensions that is more or less shared at a group level and learned through socialization. It sets ways to perceive, think, feel and behave and, evaluate which provides the members of the culture with a reference frame for decisions and actions.’

Schneider and Barsoux (2014, p.4) mention the importance of studying culture in present times, which comes with new dimensions that have to be taken into account. A lot of studies on culture have been on national culture, which does not take into account other influences on culture such as; religion, organization, gender, socio-economic and social aspects. Moreover, studies on culture make the assumption that
these cultures are monolithic. This means that there is an emphasis on the distinction between cultural groups, and does take subcultures (pluralistic culture) less into account. Additionally, it is argued by scholars that cultures are stable and change slowly. However, Schneider and Barsoux (2014, p.4) state that cultures are ‘only stable as long as there are no drastic changes in the economic, political or societal environment.’

Culture can be hard to recognize which is something the following quote indicates as well:

‘A fish discovers its need for water only when it is no longer in it. Our own culture is like water to a fish. It sustains us. We live and breathe through it.’ (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.27).

Personally, I find it a beautiful metaphor to cultural diversity, we only realize how we have lived our lives and have moralized certain actions until we see what happens outside our culture, outside our water.

According to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) a culture has three different layers. The inner layer is basic assumptions, which is implicit. The middle layer consists of norms and values and, the outer layer consists of artifacts and products, which are explicit. The outer layer is the first thing we notice when entering a new culture, however it is based on deeper notions of culture that are not directly observed. An example is given by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, pp.28-32) by describing that when entering Japan we might observe business men bowing for each other, however, we do not yet understand why they do so.

The middle layer of culture; norms and values, is closely related to ethics which will still be described later in this chapter. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012 p.30) describe norms as the mutual sense of what is right and wrong, these can be written rules but also includes
social control within cultures. Values are described as the definition of a culture of what is good and bad.

The inner layer of culture is described as our fundamentals; it holds deep assumptions and is not being questioned within the culture. These can be cases of equality in the West e.g. ‘why is everyone equal?’, or respect for authority e.g. ‘why do you respect authority?’ in Asia (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.31).

2.1.1 **Culture as described by Hofstede**

Hofstede’s research (1980) is based on work-related values that were tested in multiple countries and with a wide variety of nationalities. He distinguished six different dimensions, of which the fifth one (long versus short-term orientation) was only added in 1987. The last one (indulgence versus restraint) was added in 2010.

The theory is of relevance because it describes differences in cultures around the world, which is also part of multicultural teams. Even though Hofstede’s research might be slightly outdated as it has been over thirty years since the research was conducted, and work environments have changes considerably since, it is still important to include his theory because, Hofstede’s research on culture was also used as a starting point for the GLOBE study (Ahlstrom and Bruton 2009, p.58) which is discussed in section 2.2.1 However, the GLOBE project has made several changes and has done empirical research themselves to back up their findings.

Trompenaars also build upon Hofstede’s work when developing his own cultural dimensions (Ahlstrom and Bruton 2009, p. 58).

Hofstede’s work has become an important reference when discussing cultural differences during the last years. However he has also been criticized. A point of critique is that whereas Hofstede claims that national culture and its subsequent have a large impact on behavior of actors in organizations and markets, many researches have criticized
this statement stating that other cultural and non-cultural influencers are neglected, as well as sub-national differences and changes (McSweeney, Brown and Iliopoulou 2016). Another point of critique is that Hofstede does not provide proof for his statement that his cultural dimensions are of significant influence, or even the influence on human behavior. McSweeney, Brown and Iliopoulou (2016) mention that cultural dimensions might be an influence, but not the most significant influence, at least not on industrial relations which they have studied. Nevertheless, as this thesis aimed at discovering challenges of leading ethically in a multicultural environment, it is worth mentioning the dimensions of Hofstede as they describe possible cultural differences that could potentially lead to differences in moral frameworks.

Moreover, as Trompenaars and GLOBE are described in this thesis as well, it also serves as a background for these dimensions explained in sections 2.1.2 and 2.2.1 sequentially.

**Power distance**

This dimension is based on the given hierarchy in organizations. Low power distance means weak hierarchical relationships and are trying to avoid inequality. Employees are expecting to be included in decisions, and participative managers with whom they can easily disagree without being afraid of consequences, managers see themselves as practical and admit the need of support (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.35-37). High power distance cultures are more hierarchical, managers are expected to make autocratic decisions. Members of the culture accept hierarchy and may encourage it. Employees do the work how the manager wants it and in general members of the culture find the social inequality easy to accept (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.38).

**Uncertainty avoidance**

The dimension measures to what extent cultures socialize its members into tolerating uncertainty about the future and ambiguous situations. In cultures with high needs to avoid uncertainty, members are afraid of the unknown. Long-term stability is highly valued within these cultures
and, stability is tried to be ensured as much as possible. Organizations have clear rules and expectations and are resistant to conflict and competition.

Members of cultures with lesser needs to avoid uncertainty are said to have less stress and fears. Members are more willing to take risks and accept change. Additionally managers have a lower average age and loyalty is less valued than in high uncertainty avoidance cultures. Rules can be broken or by-passed by managers and, foreigners are accepted with relative ease to become manager. On top of that, competition and forms of conflict are seen as desirable and healthy (Mead and Andrews 2009, p. 39).

**Individualism versus collectivism**

This dimension of culture describes how much a person has to depend on the group to achieve a good life, or if he/she should depend on their own resources to achieve a good life. In individualist cultures persons are expected to achieve their own goals and satisfy their own needs. Individual needs are valued above group needs, and the individual has the right to different thoughts than the thoughts and opinions shared by the majority (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.40).

In collectivist cultures the group needs are valued above individual needs. Social identity is derived from the group he or she is a member of. Loyalty is very important in collectivist culture, sometimes even more important than efficiency (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.41).

Additionally, in group-oriented cultures there is usually less need for explicit low-context communication because members know each other well (Verluyten 2010, p.153).

**Masculinity versus femininity**

This dimension of culture defines to what extent sex roles are differentiated. In masculine cultures some jobs are typically designed for men while others are designed for women. Men are expected to be competitive and assertive while women are expected to be caring and
taking care of relationships. In more feminine cultures, sex roles are less sharply distinguished and differentiated. Men and women have more equal access to the same jobs. Moreover, women are not expected to take care of the children, it is the person with the highest salary that is expected to work and the other to take care of the children, independent of the fact whether this is the father or mother. Achievement is measured in personal contacts instead of power and/or property (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.42).

**Long- versus short-term orientation**

In 1987 this fifth dimension was added to the cultural dimensions model, after research from Michael Bond in the Chinese Value Survey (CVS), presented in 1985. According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) this new dimension correlated with the economic growth at the time and has also predicted future economic growth (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010, p.236).

This dimension distinguishes the connection of the past with current and future actions and decisions. The short-term orientation is more focused on Western concerns with truth, the long-term orientation deals with the Confucian search for virtue (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.43). According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010, p.239) long-term orientation stands for the fostering of virtues oriented towards future rewards, particularly thrift and perseverance, whereas the short-term orientation on the other hand stands for the fostering of virtues related to past and present, particularly respect for tradition, preservation of face and, fulfilling social obligations (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010, p.239). The short-term orientation shows similarities with the teachings of Confucius (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010, p.237) which are lessons in practical ethics without a relation to religion (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010, p.237). However, it is not solely Confucianism as some core Confusian values are not represented in this dimension (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010, p.238).
Indulgence versus restraint

This dimension measures to what extent people restrain from their desires. This dimension has only been added in 2010 and has not been discussed as much, and also deserves more time to be studied (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov 2010, p.281).

According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, this dimension can be defined as that indulgence stands for a tendency to allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun. On the other hand restraint is defined as a conviction that such gratification needs to be curbed and regulated by strict social norms (2010, p.281).

2.1.2 Culture as described by Trompenaars

The dimensions discussed will demonstrate two extreme forms of handling situations and judging them. However, in many cultures, they are not either one extreme or the other. The dimensions complement each other and cultures might very well be in the middle between two extremes.

In the first pages of his book Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner describe that the book is about cultural differences and how they affect the process of doing business and managing. They both believe that one can never fully understand other cultures, therefore the book is not about how to understand people from different nationalities (2012, p.1). They state that different cultural orientations are the result of twenty-five years of studying the effects of culture on management with both academic and field research (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.1).

The dimensions as described by Trompenaars are relevant for this thesis mainly because out of his seven dimensions, characteristics of five of these have been mentioned by the interviewees as causing challenges in leading a multicultural team. These challenges range from
communication wise, as to whether individual bonuses are accepted or lead to confrontations. Other issues mentioned were the role of the leader and the presence of so called ‘informal leaders’. These empirical findings will be discussed in chapter 4.

Universalism versus particularism
This dimension describes how others judge other’s behavior. In universalist cultures there is a strong focus on rules such as ‘do not lie’ ‘do not steal’ ‘do not cross the street with a red light’. These rules are to be followed no matter the situation. In particularism cultures relationships are more important when deciding and judging behavior. Family members and friends are protected no matter what the rules say (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.11 and pp.41-43).

Individualism versus communitarianism
This dimension describes whether the orientation of people is on the group or on themselves. It is suggested that individualism is a characteristic of modern cultures and communitarianism of more traditional cultures (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.11 and pp.65-71). Moreover, the importance of the individual is shown in the English language by writing the very word I, with a capital letter (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.67). It is also suggested that Catholic cultures are more focused on the community than do protestant cultures, deriving from their different ways of practicing religion (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.68). It is important to note that in communitarianism cultures people do not identify communities. Depending on the country it can be the company, family, political parties and also a religious institution (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.71).

Neutral versus affective
This dimension describes to what extent people show their emotions and feelings. In affective cultures emotions and feelings are freely expressed, smiles, laughs, tears and gestures can all be noticed on a
daily basis. In neutral cultures these feelings are also present, but not showed to the same extent. Feelings and emotions are controlled and repressed, people keep emotions and feelings to themselves. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, p.87) suggest that in extreme situations such as death or childbirth, affective cultures might run out of words to express their joy or grief, because feelings and emotions are used so frequently, there are no words left to express their true extreme emotions. It is also suggested that emotions have to be expressed in extreme ways to even be noticed at all. In neutral cultures this is not the case (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.87).

The difference between neutral and affectionate cultures is also shown in intercultural communication. The way we use verbal communication, whether we tolerate silence and/or interruption or not, tone of voice and, non-verbal communication (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, pp.93-97).

**Diffuse versus specific**
This dimension describes how far we get involved when dealing with other subordinates. In specific cultures the way we interact depends on the situation, a director might interact with his/her employees in a very informal way on the football field. In that specific situation there is no power relation and therefore no reason to address each other in a very formal way. However, in diffuse cultures these power relations are always present, someone who is your boss, it still your boss outside of work. There are two types distinguished; the U-type and the G-type of relationships (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, pp.102-103) Within the U-type there is a private life and several public lives (work, football, golf club, etc.) these public lives are highly separated, having access to one of these does not mean you also receive entrance to the other parts of this persons’ life. Whereas in the G-type there is private life and a diffuse public life, knowing someone from the football club also grants access to work contacts. However, entering the private circle
is more difficult in diffuse cultures (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, pp.101-107).

**Achievement versus ascription**

This dimension describes how different cultures accord status. There is achieved status and ascribed status. The first refers to doing, the things you do that give you a certain status. The second refers to being, who you are and what you are that gives you status (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.12 and p.125).

**How we manage time**

This deals whether the concept of time is sequential or synchronic in different cultures and, whether a culture is focused on past, present or, future. Sequential time means that tasks are performed one after another, while in cultures using synchronic time tasks can be carried out at the same time (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, pp.147-154).

**How we relate to nature**

This dimension describes how humans of a certain culture assign to their natural environment. Do we try to control nature? Or do we let it run its own course. This also reflects in the way people conduct business, do they have an internal locus of control, or an external locus of control. In the first type an organization is a machine and the way it is operating depends on the operators and their qualities. In the second type an organization is more like nature, dependent upon external factors. This has a lot of consequences such as the idea of Asians stealing Westerner’s ideas. From a western point of view an idea that was created by a person here, belongs to them, it is theirs. However, for Asians it is part of the external environment, and can be plucked just like fruit from a garden and incorporated into daily business (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.173).
2.1.3 **Culture as described by Hall**

Hall (1976) came from the field of anthropology, his model is based on underlying assumptions that people interpret and create messages in reference to shared information including; values in the culture. These values connect members of the culture group and influences how members refer to their contexts when maintaining relationships. This means that communication is based on experiences with contexts and therefore, different cultural groups respond differently to different context due to their different experiences (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.30).

This approach and assumption makes it an interesting theory because, if people interpret and create messages based on shared values in a culture, it could mean that if these shared values differ significantly from culture to culture, a leader could have difficulties leading employees in a multicultural team due to their different ways of interpretation, creating messages and, connecting to members of their cultural group.

Hall distinguished several dimensions of which two are described below. In his book ‘the hidden dimension’ he describes proximity, both in spatial aspects in city and office planning, and space as a system for communication, both social and personal (Hall 1982, p.1). However, this dimension will not be described here as it is not seen as relevant for this thesis. Not keeping enough space between each other could lead to discomfort and maybe even conflict, but not to a clash in moral frameworks.

*High-context versus low-context*

Hall differentiates between high-context and low-context cultures. High-context cultures are characterized with long lasting relationships, communication through a shared code, non-verbal communication, spoken rather than written agreements, clear distinction between insiders and outsiders, people in authority are personally responsible
for actions of their employees and, cultural patterns are deeply rooted (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.33-34). Furthermore, high-context cultures have a higher importance for preserving harmony and face-saving (Verluyten 2010, p.91).

Low-context cultures are said to be almost the opposite. Low-context cultures are characterized by short relationships, explicit messages, less dependence on non-verbal communication, written agreements, authority is spread out, cultural patterns are faster to change and outsiders can more easily adjust to the culture as outsiders are less distinguished (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.34).

In the model of Hall it is important to mention that no country is purely high-context or low-context, cultures can also be a mix or have certain characteristics to a lesser extent. The model is said to be useful when understanding why cultures are different, why communication is different, and why e.g. family business in Asia differ from family businesses in Scandinavia.

**Polychrony versus monochrony**

Hall also defined the way we deal with time and tasks in 1983. He distinguished between monochromic and polychromic time. In a culture based on monochromic time activities are carried out one at a time and only when the first activity is finished, people move on to the next one. In a culture based on polychromic time tasks are carried out simultaneously, spreading out their attention over different tasks, moving back and forward successfully (Verluyten 2010, p.57).

2.2 Study on global leadership

2.2.1 **GLOBE Study**

The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project is leaded by Robert House as the main investigator, but the project is a collaboration of over two hundred researchers from
different work fields. The project was started in the early 1990’s but research still continues.

It is interesting that this GLOBE project has been influenced by Hofstede his research; however Hofstede has criticized the GLOBE project in different ways. Parts of critique were that the GLOBE project measures of values are too abstract and, that organizational culture and national culture are different types of phenomena. Javidan et al. (2006, p.904) refuted this critique. Hofstede has said that national cultures are measured through sets of values, whereas organizational cultures are valued though sets of practices. However, statistical analysis by Javidan et al. (2006) show that both claims are false and that there is no justification for the claim that the GLOBE project cannot use similar measures of values and practices to measure national and organizational culture (Javidan et al. 2006, p.904).

Another point of critique is that GLOBE would be US-focused (Javidan et al. 2006, p.897). The researchers working on the GLOBE project have in turn refuted this critique. The GLOBE project was carried out with over one-hundred sixty scholars from sixty-two different cultures who conducted research with focus groups and individual interviews in their own cultures (Javidan et al. 2006, p.898).

This study is of particular relevance because it is focusing on leadership, culture and, organizational effectiveness. The project investigates the effects of culture on leadership and organizational effectiveness.

One of the major findings of the GLOBE research is the ‘culturally endorsed theory of leadership (CLT). CLT consists of six global dimensions, including twenty-one primary dimensions (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.505-506). A very important aspect of the GLOBE research is also that some dimensions are culturally contingent, and others are
universally desired. This can be related to having different moral foundations in multicultural teams.

The six global dimensions are as follows (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.505-506);

1. **Charismatic/value-based leadership**
   This dimension of leadership is reflecting the ability to inspire, motivate, to expect high performance outcomes from others based on firmly held core values. It includes six of the primary leadership dimensions 1. Visionary, 2. Inspirational, 3. Self-sacrifice, 4. Integrity, 5. Decisive and 6. Performance oriented.

2. **Team-oriented leadership**
   This dimension is focused upon effective team building and implantation of a common goal. It includes five of the primary leadership dimensions. 7. Collaborative team orientation, 8. Team integrator, 9. Diplomatic, 10. Malevolent (reverse scored) and 11. Administratively competent.

3. **Participative leadership**
   This dimension is a reflection of to what degree managers involve others in decision making and implementing decisions. It includes the following two of the primary leadership dimensions; 12. Non-participative and 13. Autocratic (both reverse scored).

4. **Humane-oriented leadership**
   This dimension of global leadership is a reflection of supportive and considerate leadership which includes generosity and compassion. The corresponding primary leadership dimensions are; 14. Modesty and 15. Humane orientation.

5. **Autonomous leadership**
   This dimension reflects independent and individualistic leadership attributes. It includes solely one primary dimension which is also autonomous leadership.

6. **Self-protective leadership**
   This dimensions has its focus on ensuring the safety and security of the individual and group through status enhancement and face

Seven of the primary dimensions are culturally contingent (desired in one country, rejected in another) these are; status conscious, bureaucratic, autonomous, face saving, humane, self-sacrificial/risk taking, internally competitive (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.508).

The finding of culturally contingent primary dimensions is very interesting because it argues in favor of having different sets of moral foundations in different cultures. Something that is perceived as ‘right’ or ‘good’ in one country, is according to this finding rejected in another culture. It is important to note that these are the primary dimensions that were found to be culturally contingent, not the global leadership dimensions. Since it concerns the primary dimension to be culturally contingent and not the global leadership dimension, it could be said that there are different leadership expectations and, not solely different sets of preferred leadership styles, that could in turn lead to what we think is good or bad, and right or wrong. However, as the primary dimensions are part of the global dimensions (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.505), it is a thin line, but these culturally contingent primary dimensions could potentially cause clashes between the employees that have different preferred and expected leadership dimensions.

Additionally, out of the 112 attributes of their survey, 22 were rated as universally desirable. This led to the conclusion that out of the primary dimensions identified, five scored very high on universal desirability (Dorfman et al. 201, p.507).

The study also shows that national culture does not directly predict leadership behavior, instead the CLT theory predicts leadership behavior. This means that the idealized leadership in a culture needs to
be understood to understand leadership styles and behavior in certain cultures. However, there are a few exceptions to this finding. Thus, leaders are most likely to believe a certain leadership style is effective in the culture in which they are operational and then are likely to act in accordance with these beliefs (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.510-511).

This is of particular interest to this study because I am studying leaders who are leading a multicultural team. However, whereas Hofstede, Trompenaars and Hall described the differences in national cultures, the GLOBE project found that leaders do adapt their leadership style and behavior to the culture in which they are leading.

Another finding is that if the leader’s behavior is in accordance with the CLT, the perceived effectiveness is also higher. This leads to the distinction of three types of leaders; those who fall short of expectations, those who meet the expectations and, those who exceed the expectations (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.511).

This specific finding could mean in my own research that leading ethically is more likely to be efficient when leaders enact upon the desired and idealized leadership style of the country in which they are active. When having a multicultural team this makes a big difference when being compared to trying to adapt to all the cultures present in the team of the leader.

Charismatic and team oriented leadership are of particular importance to separate the inferior from the superior CEO’s. Inferior CEO’s fall short in the society’s expectations of charismatic/team-oriented leadership behavior. It was found that charismatic/value based and team oriented leadership are important for the firm’s performance and, for commitment, effort and team solidarity (TMT dedication variable) (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.512).
The GLOBE project interprets that charismatic/value-based leadership behavior is found across countries demonstrating the behaviors such as vision, integrity, inspiration and self-sacrifice. Bass (1997) stated that these behaviors are universally desired. ‘Successful leaders enact core universally desired behaviors that comprise charismatic value based leadership.’ (Bass 1997 as cited in Dorfman et al. 2012, p.514).

2.3 Ethical Concepts
The way we define right and wrong are our morals and ethical beliefs. Ethics are rules regarding what is right and wrong coming from external sources in our environment. Morals are an individual’s own assessment of what is right and wrong (Lakshmi 2014). Ethical beliefs come from our culture, but also from our generation. The way we define right and wrong changes over time, and changes per culture. Think of opening times of stores on Sundays, slavery, but also bribery (e.g. is a simple present a bribe or not? Some cultures will say so, others say it is politeness to bring a gift). ‘The study of how people reach ethical decisions is called positive ethics. Proposing a preferred method of how people ought to make decisions is called normative ethics.’ (Wight 2015).

In my opinion, ethics do not necessarily explain how we should behave, as there are multiple ways that can determine how we should behave, they are more giving us a guideline to understand why others behave in a certain way. However, the way we behave, so how we behave, is influenced by our underlying ethical beliefs. On the other hand, depending on whether a culture is more universalist or more a particularism culture, behavior is determined more on rules or relationships, independent of our own values. Depending on the culture and the situation, people could be forced by unwritten rules to act different from their own moral beliefs of what is right and wrong.

When discussing challenges of leading ethically in a multicultural context, it is of importance to know there are different ways of judging actions. In case members of different cultures, or even individuals from
the same culture, use different ethical frameworks, this could lead to a clash in what is right and what is wrong. These ethical streams have not been analyzed in depth in the interviews, as it is difficult to assess what type of ethical framework leaders use. They might also say one thing and idealize this framework, and act upon another. This cannot be verified with solely interviews.

2.4 Ethics in leadership versus ethical leadership
Within the literature there are different streams on ethics in leadership. Some authors describe the importance of ethics in leadership (e.g. Lakshmi 2014) but other scholars argue for the existence of a new form of leadership style which is called ‘ethical leadership’ (e.g. Brown, Treviño and Harrison 2005). Both views on ethics and leadership will be evaluated in this literature review and a personal standpoint from the researcher will be given that will guide the research.

2.4.1 Ethical leadership
Brown, Treviño and Harrison (2005, p.120) defined ethical leadership as ‘the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and, the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and, decision making.’ Another way to define ethical leadership is; the demonstration and promotion of behavior that is positively moralized (Fehr, Yam and Dang 2015, p.184).

Research on ethical leadership has mostly focused on the consequences of ethical leadership, instead of what ethical leadership actually is. Consequences of ethical leadership seem to be mostly motivation related, whether there is hostile and unethical behavior or not, and whether there are ethical conflicts (Fehr, Yam and Dang 2015).

Brown and Treviño (2006) offer an outline of characteristics that are part of ethical leadership, however it is unclear why these factors define ethical leadership, and why other factors do not (Fehr, Yam and Dang,
Therefore, Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015, p.185) describe a Moral Foundation Theory (MFT) that defines six characteristics and the importance of each moral perspective might be different for each follower and/or organization. Therefore, a leader faces a big challenge in understanding the importance of each moral perspective for his/her followers to get to his/her best leadership practices that are ethical and morally right for all of his/her followers (Fehr, Yam and Dang 2015).

2.4.2 Leadership based on ethics

Ethical leadership is a new leadership style that has been recently discussed by scholars. However, it can be argued that ethics are present in any leadership style. Some sources argue ethics is part of other leadership styles such as transactional-, transformational-, charismatic-, paternalistic-, servant-, authentic- and, spiritual leadership, whereas, other authors define it as a leadership style by itself (Fehr, Yam and Dang 2015).

Recently scholars tried to define socialized charismatic leadership by integrating ethical and charismatic leadership, leadership that conveys values that are other-centered versus values that are self-centered by leaders who model ethical conduct (Robbins, Judge and Campbell 2010, p.349).

Lakshmi (2014, p.68) states that ‘effective leadership’ may not be the same as leadership based on ethical principles. In other words, goal-directed leadership may be different from a framework of leadership based on ethics. Efficiency may also not (always) be achieved by ethical means.

Additionally, the growing importance of corporate social responsibility needs to be acknowledged. Moreover, inner governance is crucial in ethical leadership. It is defined as ‘the heart of leadership’ (Lakshmi 2014, p.70). Even though Lakshmi also discusses ethical leadership, she defines it as using responsible and transformational leadership to
make social changes, to apply theoretical ethical practices in practice (Lakshmi 2014, p.68). Ethical behavior in an organization is said to largely depend on the leader. A leader cannot influence him- or herself without fully understanding oneself (Lakshmi 2014, p.70). I find it worth noticing that this is in line with the message of my Master program; ‘the art of leading others goes through the art of leading oneself.’ (Daudi 2016). Through the process of self-knowledge, individuals can become more used to the demands of ethical leadership and begin to influence others (Lakshmi 2014, p.70). Self-knowledge and self-control are the most important factors in leadership development and open the way for the ‘inner compass’ to point in an ethical direction (Mihelic et al. 2010, p.5).

The importance of ethics in leadership is stated by Tiwary (2015). Tiwary (2015) states that hostile work environments do not arise in companies that have their code of ethics high on their agenda. However, it becomes more difficult to set up a corporate culture based on morals and ethics because of high turnover rates. Therefore, ethical culture should start at top management but also includes having ‘ethical employees’ that respect the value of others (Tiwary 2015).

2.4.3 **Standpoint of the author**

I do believe ethical leadership is a separate leadership style, however I am skeptical about the actual usability of this leadership style. It seems to be a very time-consuming process and the more diverse the team is, the harder it gets to keep behaving in a way that is positively moralized by every single team member. Therefore, I wonder whether ethical leadership is not an idealistic way of leading multicultural teams and perhaps an utopia, or whether it could be achieved in reality.

Dorfman et al. (2012) said that some leadership behavior is universally effective such as charismatic/value-based leadership. Other leadership styles (e.g. participative leadership) are much more culturally sensitive. Lakshmi (2014) has also stated that leaders need to shift to a value based climate in organizations, in order to avoid scandals and unethical
practices. This statement seems to be in line with value-based leadership being an effective leadership style around the globe, a style that is effective for all cultures is more likely to avoid unethical practices globally than a culturally sensitive leadership style that might not be effective in a certain culture, which could then potentially lead up to unethical behavior.

However, after conducting the interviews with the different professional leaders in the business world, my view of ethical leadership being a potential utopia is strengthened even more. To me it seems to be the perfect way to lead teams in theory, however not being practically possible. Additionally, I do think that coming from a culture in which efficiency is valued, I could be slightly biased, as a general idea could be that making decisions and changes ‘being positively moralized for everyone’ is a potential waste of time.

3 Methodology
3.1 Qualitative study
The opted approach for this research is a qualitative study. Qualitative research allows researchers to get an inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed, through and in culture, and to discover, rather than test variables (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.12). As qualitative studies are often explorative, the research issue had to be framed in a way that provides enough freedom and flexibility to allow the researcher to explore the topic in some depth (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.25).

The study of leadership is particularly well suited for qualitative analysis because of the the multidisciplinary nature of the field which has to be more open about paradigmatic assumptions, methodological preferences and, ideological commitments than many single disciplines (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, p.4). Additionally it is said that the study of leadership is context-dependent, and therefore qualitative data
can provide this contextual information (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, p.4).

3.2 Grounded Theory
The methodology I use is the Grounded Theory Approach. I have chosen this approach because personal experience and reflection are, in my opinion, key factors in doing research on a subject like ethics and leadership. In grounded theory, self-reflection is of importance to what reality is, and to our role in knowing it. Action and interaction are crucial to our own conceptions of the world and knowledge (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.5).

Grounded theory can be described as a systematic methodology which involves the construction of theory, through the analysis of data (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, p.180) instead of developing a theoretical framework before starting the empirical research, grounded theory only seeks for theoretical relevant issues before, during and after the collection of primary data. However, this is when the grounded theory method from Corbin and Straus is applied, at the approach from Glaser to grounded theory differs in certain aspects (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, pp180-182). According to Corbin and Strauss (2008, p.38) the technical literature can also be used to increase sensitivity of the research and to provide questions in the initial stages and stimulate questions during the data collection.

Additionally, leadership, culture and, ethics are complex concepts that have multiple factors interacting and influencing the outcome, so in my opinion, the methodology explaining this complex situation should also be complex to capture as much of the complexity as possible (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.5).

The Grounded Theory was originally developed by Glaser and Straus in 1967. However, for this thesis the approach from Corbin and Strauss (2008) is used. It is based on the earlier definition of Glaser and Straus,
mainly Straus his approach to doing analysis (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.9), but has several amendments from Corbin. The most important changes are that ‘there is no one reality to be discovered, however there are external events happening’ (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.10). It is not the event that is interesting, but the meaning given to it by persons based upon biography, gender, experiences, time and place and, different backgrounds. Corbin also describes how constructed knowledge should be practical; the aim is to develop knowledge that will guide practice (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.11).

Techniques and procedures are seen as tools, not directives. According to Corbin researchers should not be so obsessed in following a set of coding procedures, because the fluid and dynamic nature of qualitative analysis is lost (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.12).

3.3 Primary and secondary data collection
My data was collected through both secondary and primary research. I used the data collection method of conducting interviews, and to use documents as secondary data collection while using theoretical sampling during the research. One of the advantages of qualitative studies is that research methods can be used by itself, or in combination with each other. When combining multiple methods and achieving the same outcome, triangulation is achieved within the research (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.27).

When the interviews were being prepared and carried out, a semi-structured format was used. The questions were based around themes derived from concepts within the literature and the research questions. Due to the semi-structured format, questions were added during the interviews and some were taken out. After interviewing the first interviewee, I started to reflect upon this interview and used theoretical sampling to continue my research process. Some questions were rephrased to make them more clearly to the interviewees.
At the beginning of the interviews, I first started to establish rapport with the interviewees. I explained the nature of the research, the duration of the interview and asked if they had any questions beforehand, these are aspects that help establishing trust and rapport (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, p.126).

According to Klenke, Martin and Wallace (2016, p.126), establishing rapport with the interviewee not only makes the interview an easier process, but also opens the door to more informed research. When establishing rapport, mutual trust is an important component. Mutual trust is facilitated by empathetic listening and egalitarian relationships between interviewer and interviewee (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, p.126).

As I used a semi-structured format, I was able to use an interview protocol around a set of topics and themes, but without fixed wording or a fixed order (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, p.131). It is therefore a mix of structured and unstructured interview formats, using the interview protocol from structured formats but the mode of asking followed the unstructured interviewing process. This also gave me the possibility to rephrase questions, add questions and use different orders (Klenke, Martin and Wallace 2016, p.131).

Theoretical sampling includes the collection of data -both primary and secondary- during the research based on previously collected primary and secondary data, in order to form a theory and answer the research questions as the research is in progress. Theoretical sampling was used because it enabled me to keep collecting data based on previous findings, this sampling method derives from the data and therefore the research can be adapted, to truly catch the complexity of the phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.35).
3.4 The different interviewees
The research is based on six different interviewees that have agreed upon being interviewed by me for my research. Two of them have asked to be mentioned anonymous within my report. All of the interviews were very extensive. Two interviews were approximately 35 minutes, three interviews were 60 minutes and one interview was 75 minutes. After all the interviews were conducted, the first interviewee was questioned again to ask unanswered questions that came up later during the interview process.

The different interviewees were chosen for different reasons. Before looking for people to interview I set some criteria that the candidates would have to meet. For my research it was important that they were leading a team consisting of multiple nationalities. I did specify on leading a multicultural team because I think it lies at the core of my research objective. Therefore, I did not talk to leaders or managers who had only worked with different nationalities abroad, while leading a team consisting of people from their own nationality. Another criteria is that they had experience is a leadership position. I wanted to interview candidates who did not only have experience working within a multicultural team, but also have experience leading this type of team. I decided to mostly interview candidates with more than twenty years of working experience, as I believe they have more examples to share with me and, a perspective based on more experiences. However, I also interviewed one candidate with less working experience who was also younger than the other candidates to also have an impression of the younger generation.

In addition to the criteria set, I have looked for candidates with experience with different cultures and who also had different nationalities themselves. I have interviewed Dutch, Belgian (Flemish and German parts) and Spanish candidates. Three of the candidates are based in the country of their own origin, working for multinational companies, the other three are working in a country that is different
from their own nationality. On top of the different nationalities of the interview candidates, I found it of importance to also look for candidates who have experience with different cultures. They led teams consisting of different nationalities, but also worked with a lot of different nationalities outside of their own local team. An overview of the interviewees can be seen in table 1 below.

**Table 1: overview of interviewees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Job position</th>
<th>Working experience in years</th>
<th>Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person A</td>
<td>Marketing Manager</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>Biotechnology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person B</td>
<td>Different management positions of multinational teams</td>
<td>20+ (11 in the company)</td>
<td>IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person C</td>
<td>Learning Lead Marketing at the Marketing Excellence Academy, part of internal university which is a part of HR</td>
<td>20+ (5 in the company)</td>
<td>Hospital and Health care (technology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person D</td>
<td>Corporate coach &amp; integration leader/consultant</td>
<td>30+ (15 in current role)</td>
<td>Chemical Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person E</td>
<td>Senior manager</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>Oil and Gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person F</td>
<td>Director Global Supply Chain Project Management</td>
<td>35+</td>
<td>Medical Devices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Candidate A**
This leader has been working for three years leading a multicultural team abroad. He has also studied abroad before and has experience working within multicultural teams as well. In his position as a manager he has been working as a marketing manager, leading a group of interns coming from China, Romania and Spain. In this position he was responsible for opening new markets, reviewing distribution channels and he has also visited various trade fairs abroad. Within the company, he worked with colleagues from France, Romania, China, Mexico and Spain. It is a fairly small company of around twenty employees.

**Candidate B**
This leader has been working as a manager for a team consisting of nationalities coming from all continents. Currently he is working as a program manager, without direct reports. However, he also has experience in the hotel industry and, has now been working abroad in a multinational company for the last eleven years. This company consists of over fifty different nationalities.

**Candidate C**
This leader is working as a ‘Senior Learning Lead Digital Marketing Transformation’ at the Marketing Excellence Academy which is part of the internal university of the program. This is in turn part of the HR department. The company is active in 121 different countries. Within the headquarters were he is based, there are around fifty percent expats. Therefore, the working language is English, which is not the native language for most employees. In his role he travels to different locations of the company to lead project teams there and, visit fairs.

**Candidate D**
This leader is working as a corporate coach, he works as a coach and consultant within the company in different locations. He has expertise in both project execution and, team dynamics of project teams. In his role he works as a consultant to coach and bring teams together to
strive for excellence. The people whom he is coaching are coming from different countries, and are active in another country together to set up a new manufacturing plant with local people. He has over fifteen years of experience in this role and works together with thirty-five different nationalities within the company. These nationalities are mainly from Europe, Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa. In this role he is based in his own country to work on project execution, but travels often to coach and lead project teams.

**Candidate E**
This leader has over thirty years of working experience working in different positions in different countries in Europe, the Middle East and the USA. Currently he is working in the Middle East where he is leading a team of around one hundred employees in the office, coming from thirty to forty different nationalities. Additionally, he travels around fifty percent of his time to different locations.

**Candidate F**
This leader has been working as ‘Director Global Supply Chain Management’, before being in this role, she has had a lot of different positions within the field of supply chain within the same company. She has been working within this company for the last thirty-five years and has only recently resigned from her job to focus on other interests. In her local team she was leading followers from Belgium, Portugal and the USA. However, she has also been a lot in contact with Colombians, Mexicans, Americans and Japanese colleagues.

### 3.5 Coding the interview transcripts
While the research was still in progress the data has been categorized into different codes. The first step in the coding process was to reorganize the data into categories, which is called open coding (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012, p.185). The codes of this process can be seen in section 4.1.
Coding was used to create concepts, which were later turned into context. These codes were established by making constant comparisons. Data is compared with each other in order to classify conceptually similar data under a concept name. This has been an essential phase in the analysis because it has allowed me to differentiate categories from each other and, identify unique dimensions of each category (Corbin and Straus 2008, p.72).

The use of sensitivity also has been important, it means that I as a researcher had to immerse in the data to have insight and present the view of the interviewees. It is not forcing yourself onto the data, but using my background and own experiences to respond to, and understand what is in the data (Corbin and Straus 2008, pp.32-33).

The analysis is based on writing memos and diagrams. I especially used memos, as this is some sort of diary, letting me as a researcher use my interpretations and sensitivity about the research, and using this as a reference when creating the context of the research.

For the open coding I have reread all memos and compared the primary data obtained, I have discovered several codes that have been mentioned multiple times around certain themes. After this step, a process followed that aimed at recognizing the different relationships between the categories, which is called axial coding (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012, p.186).

The relationships identified after the axial coding can be found in section 4.2. In this step I have looked in detail at all the codes and used my sensitivity and interpretations to discover the possible relations between codes. This often involved interviewees also referring to certain aspects being related to each other, or repeating parts of their answers. The third and last step was to integrate the categories in order to produce a theory, this is called selective coding (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012, p.186). This last step is described in section 4.3.
3.6 Ethical issues in the research process
Ethical issues were that interviewees were unwilling to talk about unethical behavior in their office. Therefore, a neutral environment was chosen and these potential issues should be kept confidentially. Another issue is that candidates do not want to discuss unethical behavior of some of their employees or their company. Nor have their name and company mentioned in a publicly published research due to confidentiality issues of the company and the privacy of certain situations that could be discussed. Therefore, I as a researcher, have chosen to delete names and company names in order to avoid potential problems for the candidates participating in my research project. This also leads to candidates being more open and willing to discuss a wider variety of issues when they know their privacy is ensured.

4 Empirical results
4.1 Open coding
The open coding procedure has led to a number of different codes that will be presented below. At first an overview of the research themes is provided, this was set up only after the interviews, to group concepts together. These themes guided the coding process. Different codes have been established. Some of the research themes themselves are codes, as they indicate the existence for e.g. ‘challenges of diversity’, other themes are not codes by themselves but led to certain codes derived from the answers I collected regarding this theme.

In addition to codes derived from specific interview themes, additional codes have been distinguished that were mentioned various times, around multiple themes. These are key codes that really emerged from the complete data set. These codes are presented in the next pages and will be more thoroughly explained and, put into context in section 4.2.
4.1.1 Research themes
Below are the research themes that provided structure to grouping answer together. The tables in the next pages are also set up regarding this structure.

In the tables in the next pages the themes are shown in more details. The dark blue color represents the main theme, while the lighter blue color represents the sub-themes.

In the tables on the next pages (pp 41-48) the sentences and words marked in bold, mean that these have been mentioned various times, where others have been mentioned by a single person. These concepts in bold are important codes that were used for the next steps of the coding process which is explained and, put into context in section 4.2.

Overview of research themes
1. Challenges
   a. Ethical challenges
   b. Communication challenges
   c. Challenges of diversity
2. Leadership
   a. Leadership styles of the leaders
   b. How do you lead a multicultural team / where do you rely on
   c. Is leadership style adapted to different teams
   d. Advice to future leaders
   e. Best leadership in a project team
   f. Best practices of the leaders
3. How did you learn to lead a multicultural team
4. What are the different working styles within the teams
5. Ethical leadership
   a. Influence of ethics on leadership behavior
   b. Corporate versus private self
   c. Ethical leadership: thoughts and opinions
6. Clashes within multicultural teams due to different moral foundations and de-escalation
7. How do you communicate changes/decisions/messages that are morally correct
8. Cultural differences within the teams

Table 2: Challenges of leading a multicultural team ethically

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges of leading a multicultural team ethically</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethical challenges</strong></td>
<td>Showing respect/ being respectful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>To align everyone to one objective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different mentalities within the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Golden Rule is false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different cultural customs (e.g. paid by performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different regulations in different countries (e.g. regulations to fire employees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To avoid discussion around politics and/or beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication challenges</strong></td>
<td><strong>English is working language, but not native language</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Misunderstandings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Double agendas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>People do not share the same definitions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geographical distances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, proverbs and expressions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges of diversity</strong></td>
<td>English as a working language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal issues outside of work are more important because expats do not have a backup/support system from friends and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individuals are a combination of education, personality and culture, when of aspects differs it makes it more difficult to lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More time needed to get to know each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition and clarification of instructions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Managing of a balance between showing your respect and interest to differences and accepting differences from others. The right to be different yourself and keeping your own identity

When a new person enters to learn all the norms and values, and for the existing team members to learn about the new employee as well

### Table 3: Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership styles of the leaders</th>
<th>Leadership styles of the leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laissez-faire</strong></td>
<td>Balance of laissez-faire and command control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborative leadership style</strong></td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depending on the situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct and open leadership style</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How leaders lead a multicultural team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Based on best practices</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Golden Rule</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being respectful</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accepting and respecting differences</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaption of leadership style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership style is not adapted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not adapting the leadership style but, adapting to cultural differences in the form of lunch times, communication, hierarchy and, other cultural needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership style should not be adapted, it is better to find the right person for the right project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes leadership style is adapted due to big cultural differences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yes, Depending on the situation, your experiences, the information you have about the group each person need to consider what and how much to adapt the leadership style. One worldwide concept to apply is Situational Leadership

**Advice to future leaders**

- **Showing interest and respect while maintaining identity**
- **Accepting and respecting diversity**
- **Company goals are always first priority**
- Listen carefully and **showing respect**
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Be positive / be internally motivated
- Showing empathy
- Having a good cultural understanding
- Good communication
- **Reflecting and summarizing (360 degree feedback)**
- Asking questions

**Best leadership experience of a multicultural project team**

- **Emphasized and used different skills of team members**
- **Active engagement**
- **Personal connection outside of work**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Face-to-face meetings</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience in leading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structured meetings / processes / communication plan</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity within the team</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported each other and having no competition within the team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working on a set of common goals to improve own way of working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Located in the same building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A set of agreed and aligned team norms and the motivation and discipline to maintain these</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of new team members and also having farewell celebrations when a team member is leaving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>‘Best practices’ of the leaders</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People have to stay in their value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People should be able to reach their full potential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Rule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not falling back into old practices when being in a very different culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being aware of cultural</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 4: how did leaders learn to lead a multicultural team**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did leaders learn to lead a multicultural team</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study/training/courses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upbringing/childhood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empathy</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally and emotionally smart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing interest, asking questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5: different working styles within the teams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different working styles within team</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Only personal differences</strong>, no cultural ones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a focus on objectives, not on working styles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulated norms &amp; values → only personal differences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team members share the same values, but behave differently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only personal differences, cultural ones only visible outside of work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6: cultural differences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural differences</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal leaders – ascribed status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losing face</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Different educational backgrounds</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Influence of ethics on leadership behavior** | **Clear influence**  
Personal norms and values always play a role however, these are less strict than laws, regulations and Code of Conduct  
It is all the level of awareness of ethics and the intention and motivation of a person to lead and demonstrate by example. Also the open minded and acceptance for feedback will influence persons on how the will demonstrate the leadership behavior we want to see. Create opportunities where people can be influenced by great persons, great training programs, workshops, speeches or teams. Then these persons can develop a higher awareness and discipline to demonstrate great leadership behavior based on ethics and values. |
| **Corporate versus private self** | **Important to speak up about moral conflicts**  
**Accepting or leaving**  
Ethical surveys  
Ethical department within company  
No problems occurred with corporate versus private self  
Keep corporate and private self separate  
Work-life balance can be difficult |
| Ethical leadership: thoughts and opinions | **Balance is important between ethical leadership and efficiency**  
**Not workable**, norms & values are regulated in a code of conduct and ethics are more on a personal level  
Ethical leadership is not a style by itself, it is part of any leadership style  
Personally I believe in being positive, it is about the way you bring a message, when communicated with respect and explanations, it tends to be accepted whether it was morally correct for everyone or not  
To be ethical it is important to apologize and give explanations  
Not workable, better to rely on common sense as there will always be aspects on which we have different moral frameworks  
Yes, leadership should be based on human rights and respect |

### Table 8: How do leaders make moral decisions and communicate messages that are ethically correct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you make moral decisions and communicate messages that are ethically correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decisions are made by myself or higher management and have to be accepted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to find consensus if possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analyzing colleagues and designing a strategy on how to communicate the message based on: importance of message, which platform, and the mood of the colleagues</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check for criteria regarding: respect for rights of other, respect around timing, principles of implementing change, opportunity for questions to provide clarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check if you are using the appropriate language, if it should be provided in multiple languages, have someone review and check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider other communication needs (e.g. website with Q&amp;A or a listening session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Interactive communication, gather information for any feedback to understand how things are perceived and received by your audience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 9: Moral clashes within the multicultural team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moral clashes within the multicultural team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No clashes at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clashes due to work pressure + related to work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscommunication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts are seen as a positive mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior versus junior positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences (e.g. losing face)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest and respect towards cultural differences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.2 **Concepts in bold:**
The concepts that have been marked in bold are the answers that have been given by multiple interviewees, therefore these led to be important codes for the research process, and these codes will be put into context in section 4.2.

1. Laissez-faire leadership style
2. Collaborative leadership style
3. Mostly personal/individual differences within the teams (not cultural)
4. Aligning everyone to one common goal is one of the biggest challenges
5. Leading a multicultural team involves a lot of communication challenges such as; English as the lingua franca, non-verbal communication and ‘not sharing the same definitions’
6. Cultural conflicts can be solved by apologizing and explaining the situation and perspective
7. Personal conflicts within the team could be solved using a mediator
8. Active engagement, personal connection outside of the office, structured meetings/processes, emphasized and used different skills of team members, face-to-face meetings and, diversity within the team are characteristics that describe the best team management according to the leaders
9. Leaders learned how to lead a multicultural team mostly by experience, empathy and study/training/courses also have played a role in two cases
10. Advices given to the future generation on how to lead a multicultural team are; show interest and respect, accepting and respecting diversity, common company goals are the first priority, reflect and summarize practices regularly
11. Leaders tend to lead on a series of ‘best practices’ that they have developed with experience, there are two exceptions
12. Decisions tend to be made by the managers themselves or by higher management, and they should be accepted
13. Messages are communicated morally by analyzing colleagues and ‘designing a strategy’ on how to bring the message.

14. Leaders do not change their leadership styles themselves, however they do adapt to cultural needs.

15. Ethical leadership is important, however the concept itself seems not workable and feasible and, balance needs to be found with efficiency.

16. When involved in corporate versus ethical self – conflicts, it is often a matter of accepting or leaving. In these cases leaders evaluate the importance of the conflict and whether they can live with it.

17. Ethics is believed to have a strong influence on leadership behavior.

18. Leading and working within a multicultural environment is emphasized by the leaders as being an enriching experience.

4.1.3 **Key codes emerging from the data**
The codes below have been extracted from the data. These are codes that are mentioned regarding a number of different themes and became key codes that helped the further coding steps explained in the section 4.2 and 4.3.

1. Functional hierarchy
2. Need for structure
3. Best practices based on experience
4. One common goal / purpose
5. Respect
6. Consensus
7. Trust
8. Inner motivation
9. Explain decisions, it will lead to acceptance
10. People do not have to agree, but should serve a common goal
11. Cultural awareness training
12. Leadership adapting to situation and country
4.2 Axial coding
In this section the different relationships, identified by the researcher, between the aforementioned codes are explained.

Relation 1: motivation + respect + common goal + giving explanations + ethical leadership + functional hierarchy + trust = ‘The balance between being ethically correct and being efficient’

There seems to be a relationship between leaders stating that they find ethical leadership not always possible, yet they find being ‘ethically correct’ important. Most leaders stated that it was more important to give explanations for decisions/changes/messages and communicate them in a respectful manner, and communicate why this decision/message serves the common goal. In that way, leaders assume that every employee wants to work towards the same common goal and might have done so in a different way, or have different visions, but with reasonable explanations employees/followers would tend to accept them. Ethical leadership is also described as that it is important to find the balance between being ethical and being efficient. As one leader put it ‘a leaders first goal should be to bring value to the company, which is also the common goal, a leaders main priority is not to align values with each other, it is to align everyone towards the common goal. However, while working towards the common goal it is important to try to do this as ethical as possible.’

If possible, all leaders prefer to make decisions and communicate in a way that is ethically correct, and would be positively moralized by every follower. Yet, as this is not being possible, they prefer to be respectful to everyone, in order to also not lose respect themselves. It is interesting that two leaders mentioned that their organizational culture involves a hierarchical structure. Decisions are made by themselves or higher management, meaning that there is not a lot of input from followers. Even though there is a level of hierarchy, they both mentioned that on the work floor there is informal communication
and normal chit-chatting. However, decisions are made using formalities, and messages are also communicated that way. One of these leaders explained that he is always in function, also outside the office. The other leader explained that the hierarchy disappears outside of the office.

Two other leaders discussed what was called ‘functional hierarchy’. Meaning that, there is hierarchy involved, however only what is required. In the end, decisions were taken by managers, but employees have more input: Only when there is no agreement, will the managers make hard decisions. This functional hierarchy is based on trust, necessary orders and instructions are given, but employees are not controlled whether it is followed. Also one of the leaders who described his organization as hierarchal stated that the best team he ever led was based on trust, the fact that he did not have to check their work before forwarding it to others.

Relation 2: cultural awareness training + cultural differences + communication challenges + common practices + reflecting and summarizing + adapting leadership to situations = ‘Cultural awareness training shows its importance when the Golden Rule becomes false’

Following cultural awareness training seems to be related to the sensitivity of the industry and business activities, and the importance of not making mistakes that could lead to big consequences. Only two leaders stated that they have followed cultural awareness training. However, there seems to be a relation to their industries, both being more sensitive. They also both deal with cultures that are very different than their own, almost opposites.

Cultural awareness training sessions also seem to be related to the fact that the cultural differences between the countries are so big that the leaders cannot rely on their best practices anymore, the Golden Rule, which is defined as ‘do unto others as you would have them do unto you’ (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 2012, p.42) becomes false in
certain cases and therefore training is needed to learn how to deal with situations. Where other leaders rely on a set of best practices that they have learned through experience, these leaders cannot rely on those. One of them stated ‘one of the biggest challenges is that I should not fall back into old patterns, especially when I am tired, because these patterns could be misinterpreted here.’ In these cultures the Golden Rule is still a guideline in terms of e.g. ‘treat others with respect, because you also want to be respected, and treated with respect.’ But, the Golden Rule does not apply anymore in every case, since the assumptions that others wanted to be treated like you, does not apply in those cultures. One leader used 360 degrees training to understand how others perceive him, which lead to the fact that using best practices is impossible. Both leaders mention reflection and summarizing as very important on how to deal with new situations. Each new situation is analyzed and ‘strategies’ are made using their training sessions and even books.

What is interesting is that the other four leaders interviewed relied solely on their experiences which they turned into best practices. These four leaders also rely on the Golden Rule and have also stated to use ‘common sense’.

Relation 3: ethical leadership + influence of ethics + cultural differences + communication challenges + regulated norms and values + focus on common goal + different working styles within the teams =
‘Difficulty to describe how ethics influences leadership behavior’

It is interesting how all interviewees agree on the fact that ethics influences leadership behavior but seem to find it difficult to describe it into words, how it actually influences. Aspects mentioned are related to culture and communication ‘not having the same definitions’, non-verbal communication. One leader described that ‘it is all about the level of awareness of ethics and, the intention and motivation of a person to lead and demonstrate by example. Also the open mindedness
and acceptance for feedback by the leader will influence persons on how they will demonstrate the leadership behavior we want to see’. On the other hand it was said that all people share the same core values, but they behave to them differently, partly due to norms set by society.

Another aspect mentioned was that norms and values influence ethical behavior of both leaders and followers, however Code of Conduct and laws and regulations were stronger than personal norms and values, as laws and Code of Conduct could not be changed easily. Another aspect is that when norms and values are regulated, there seems to be less emphasis on norms and values by the leaders. ‘There are regulated norms and values, ethics are more outside of work. Focus on good intentions and common goal’ another statement is that ‘norms and values are regulated, and a leaders’ goal is to align everyone to meet the common objective, not to align values.’ This would again emphasize the importance of the common objectives within an organization. When I asked the leaders what they mainly see as difference in working styles within their multicultural teams, also in terms of whether there are a lot of different moral frameworks, the majority answered that there are mostly personal individual differences, cultural differences were observed every now and then, but different moral frameworks were mostly found outside the office. Leaders also did not seem to put a lot of emphasis on being ‘ethically correct’ or deeply analyzing the moral frameworks of the others. One leader stated that he did notice some cultural differences but instead of emphasizing the differences and trying to find different communication techniques, he used ‘common sense’ which was more neutral and applicable to all.
Relation 4: leadership style + organizational culture + best leadership experience of a multicultural group + advices to future leaders + the way leaders lead their multicultural teams + adaption of leadership style + ‘best practices’ of leaders + cultural awareness training = ‘Best leadership style and leaders best practices and advices to lead a multicultural team ethically’

The leadership styles used the most by the leaders are laissez-faire and collaborative leadership style. These styles are somewhat related to the organizational cultures. The one leader, who describes his own leadership style as open and direct, also describes the organizational culture as open and informal.

Collaborative leadership style is mentioned in connection with a culture in which all values and norms are regulated and, an ‘informal but professional’ culture (also referred to as functional hierarchy). Laissez-faire leadership style is mentioned in relation with a transparent, open and social culture, as well as with a culture of empowerment. When the laissez-faire was mentioned in combination with the transparent, open and social culture, the interviewee stated later during the interview that his best experience with leading a multicultural team also involved his own active engagement, which I have interpreted as a collaborative leadership style as well.

It is worth noticing that the one interviewee who discussed a culture of empowerment also mentioned that it is a combination of laissez-faire and command-control. However, when the empowerment culture was incorporated, the focus was more on a laissez-faire leadership style, but when the economic crisis started there was a shift towards command-control. But even now, it is important to balance the two. The interviewee who works within a hierarchical organization stated that he changes his leadership style, depending upon the situation and (organizational) culture.
Clearly, laissez-faire and collaborative leadership styles have been the most preferred. When continuing the discussion not only about their leadership style, but also the characteristics related to their best leadership experience regarding a multicultural team so far, the leaders mentioned their active engagement, face-to-face meetings, having a personal connection outside of work, emphasizing and using the different skills of team members, structured meetings/processes and, the diversity itself. Active engagement and providing structure go well with a collaborative leadership style. Having a personal connection outside of the office, as well as face-to-face meetings have also been linked to respecting each other and having better communication, because people know each other better.

When the leaders were being asked where they rely on and the way they lead a multinational team, five of them answered they rely on a series of best practices. Other aspects mentioned were respect, accepting differences and understanding differences, as well as the Golden Rule. When the leaders were asked for their advices to future leaders that were going to lead a multicultural team, many aspects and characteristics were mentioned. Answers that were mentioned the most are; showing interest and respect while maintaining your own identity, accepting and respecting diversity, company goals and the common goal are always the first priority and, reflecting and summarizing regularly upon own practices. These answers are closely related to the ‘best practices’ the leaders rely on themselves. The leader that does not focus on a series of ‘best practices’ states that his advices are to be respectful, listen carefully, understanding that different perspectives come from different cultural and educational background, and to reflect regularly (e.g. using 360 degree feedback) to understand the other’s perspectives on the way you are perceived yourself.

The leaders were also asked whether they adapt their leadership style to the group that they are managing, where the majority answered that they do not adapt their leadership style. The reason they do not adapt is
mainly due to the fact that it would be unnatural and, that they do adapt to cultural needs, but not the way that they actually lead. One leader mentioned that ‘it would be better to find the right person for the right project, instead of having a leader adopting his style.’ One of the interviewees that does adapt his style is dealing with bigger cultural differences in which he needs to be careful to not harm others norms and values, to stick to the organizational culture and the culture in which he lives. The other leader, explains that leadership style can be adapted based on experiences, information that you have about the team and the situation. In these cases, cultural awareness training shows its importance significantly to give guidelines to leaders on the behavior desired by the society in which they are working.

*Relation 5: ‘dealing with different moral perspectives’ + solving conflicts + communication + explaining perspectives/decisions/messages + ethical leadership =
‘How to avoid and solve escalation of (moral) conflicts’*

Conflicts that were mentioned by the interviewees did not directly include terms like ‘ethical conflict’ or ‘different moral framework’. Clashes within the teams that were mentioned were mostly related to work, miscommunication, or were between senior and junior positions. However, there were clashes mentioned that included cultural differences (e.g. ‘losing face’), a lack of interest and respect towards cultural differences. One leader mentioned that it was necessary to avoid talks and discussions about anything concerning politics or beliefs. There was however an example that was a combination of cultural difference, lack of knowledge and a clash in the different moral frameworks of what would be right and wrong. It included a European partner giving a gift to a colleague, who was also Western of one of the leaders. The gift was a bottle of alcohol to celebrate the success of a project/cooperation. However, the gift was highly inappropriate because the colleague was working in an office in a predominantly Muslim country, where alcohol consumption is not widely accepted or tolerated.
This shows that cultural differences and a lack of knowledge can lead to big clashes between moral frameworks, even without yourself getting involved. In this kind of cultural conflicts, two leaders stated that it would be of extreme importance to apologize, and to explain the situation and perspectives.

In more personal conflicts, two leaders stated that it would be appropriate to work with a mediator and hear both sides of the conflict. Other suggested techniques are to deescalate a conflict were; to ‘reset’ the team, to ask questions of what occurred, which would again be to hear all sides of the conflict and, to focus on the common goal instead of on the disagreement or clash.

In both avoiding and deescalating conflicts, communication is of extreme importance. Non-verbal communication could already lead to clashes due to different moral framework of what would be accepted and what would not be accepted. Explaining decisions, changes or messages could also avoid conflicts, as it can help to clarify what is exactly meant, as the leaders stated that one of the biggest challenges is that people do not have the same definitions and, that English is used as the lingua franca, but it is not the native language for most of the employees in the company, which increases the chances of misunderstandings.

This leads to the fact that ethical leadership is difficult in the circumstances of leading a multicultural team, as both verbal and non-verbal communication can easily be misunderstood. This means that both leaders and followers should keep giving explanations and clarifications to avoid escalations of moral clashes.
Relation 6: ethical challenges + communication challenges + challenges of diversity =

‘Challenges when leading a culturally diverse team ethically’

Challenges that were mentioned the most by the leaders interviewed are; to align everyone to one common objective, English as the lingua franca, people do not share the same definitions and, differences in non-verbal communication. However, many more challenges have been mentioned. What becomes obvious is that there are a lot of challenges, some of them similar, some of them more unique to the leader and his/her working environment. This means that leaders need to rely on both their experience and best practices, as on training and learning how to cope with new unfamiliar situations.

4.3 Selective Coding
What becomes clear from the interviews, memos and previous coding steps is that there are a lot of similarities and relationships between the codes. The leaders described that always being ethically correct is not workable and that a balance needs to be found in being ethical and being efficient. There seems to be the idea that being ethically correct and being efficient is like a trade-off and, that this cannot be achieved at the same time. However the leaders did state that they are aiming at achieving both at the same time. I do want to specify that when touching upon the concept of ethical leadership, and providing clarifications and explanations of the concept, I stuck to the definition from Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015, p.184) about ethical leadership which is to show ‘the demonstration and promotion of behavior that is positively moralized‘ and that this should be positively moralized by all employees that are part of the team they are leading. This could have influenced the answers of leaders and the way they seek to find a balance. It is interesting to discover that even though leaders have the impression that they have to find a balance, they also try to achieve both being efficient and, being ethical at the same time. This is somehow a paradox because, if they state that there is a balance to be
found, they acknowledge that they can never be fully efficient and fully ethical at the same time, but they are aiming for exactly this. This would mean that they aim for a goal that they do not believe is fully possible. My personal impression is that they try to be as efficient as possible without becoming very unethical and, to be as ethical as possible while continue being efficient. What they refer to as a balance could be that in reality they cannot achieve both at the same time, or at least this is their personal impression, even though they wish that it would be possible.

The leaders found this balance by always providing explanations of their messages, changes and decisions, the leaders agreed that this has to be done in a respectful manner and, it needs to be explained why it serves the common goal. Aligning every team member to the common goal is described as being the main focus of a leader, as this brings value to the company. Aligning the values of team members is not one of the main tasks of a leader, however, if decisions, changes and messages are perceived as ethical, and being positively moralized by followers, it is better than when this is not the case.

The way ethics influence leadership behavior is difficult to put into words but it is believed by the interviewees that ethics do influence the leadership behavior. Described influences are related to cultural differences and differences in non-verbal and verbal communication. The majority of the leaders described that norms and values are regulated in their companies in forms of Code of Conduct or Code of Ethics. As the norms and values are regulated, there did not seem to be a focus on it by the leaders to align values of the team members. However, personally I do not think that a Code of Conduct leads to different values of the employees, it perhaps influences them in the workplace, but not fully change their personal values and moral foundation. Additionally, it is not seen as the main task of the leader to do align values. Moreover, leaders mentioned that they notice mostly personal and individual differences in the office and, differences in
moral frameworks can be observed outside the office. One leader also stated that he believed every person has the same core values, but behaves differently due to different norms set by society.

Challenges that are mentioned in relation to leading a multicultural team ethically are; that it is difficult to align everyone towards the common goal, but that a lot of challenges were rather unique and related to solely one leader. The clashes that have occurred were mostly work related, related to miscommunication or even between senior and junior positions. Clashes of cultural differences have been reported and also clashes that were due to a lack of interest and respect. One of the biggest challenges is said to be that people do not share the same definitions, which can lead easily to misinterpretations, together with the fact that English is often used as lingua franca, but is not the native language of most of the employees. These reasons make it of particular importance to explain and clarify decisions, messages and changes to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts. Conflicts can also be deescalated by focusing on the common goal when it concerns a personal conflict, or apologizing and explaining, when it concerns a conflict related to cultural differences or a difference in moral frameworks.

Differences in verbal and non-verbal communication between cultures also lead to the fact that more explanations and clarifications need to be given to avoid misunderstandings that could lead to a conflict. As there is a wide variety of challenges and events that could cause clashes within the teams, leaders need to rely on their experiences, best practices as well as on training sessions that have taught them how to cope with new and unfamiliar situations.

Cultural awareness training especially shows its importance in cases and cultures, in which the Golden Rule becomes false and leaders cannot rely on their best practices anymore. From the interviewees being questioned, only two have received this cultural awareness
training, these leaders deal with cultures very different from their own, and work within sensitive industries. In these alien cultures it is of extreme importance for a leader to reflect and summarize regularly upon his or her own practices.

The leadership styles used by the leaders are mostly a laissez-faire leadership style and collaborative styles. The best leadership experiences are based upon active engagement of the leaders themselves, having a personal connection outside of work, face-to-face meetings, emphasizing and using different skills of the team members, structured meetings and processes, and the cultural diversity itself. The leadership aspects that work best when leading ethically according to the leaders are to have a personal connection outside of work because it can lead to more respectful relationships and better communication, lead based on best practices, use respect, accept and respect the differences within the teams. The golden rule is also applied by many leaders as part of their best practices, but as stated before the rule becomes false in certain cases.

Advices given to future leaders on how to lead a multicultural team ethically are showing interest and respect while maintaining your own identity, accepting and respecting diversity, realize that company goals are the first priority of the leader, reflect and summarize regularly upon own practices, listen carefully, and understand where different perspectives come from. Usually leadership styles are not adapted to different teams, with the exception of two leaders dealing with very different cultures; in these cases the importance of cultural awareness training is shown to provide guidelines in how to lead and the desired leadership behavior in a culture.

4.4 Comparison with the literature
After I have completed the coding of my primary data collection, I would like to compare it to the data I have found in my secondary data collection, which was presented in the literature review in chapter 2.
According to Corbin and Straus (2008, p.37) the technical literature and the concepts derived from it, ‘can provide a source for making comparisons with data as long as the comparisons are made at the property and dimensional level, and are not used as data per se.’ This is one of the reasons I only include the comparison of my data from the empirical research with the literature review in this section. I believe that if technical literature should not be used as data by itself, it should by no means be integrated in the chapters about the coding processes and theory building. Therefore, I have decided to keep a clear distinction by using different chapters and sections.

Additionally, ‘when the researcher has finished his or her data collection and analysis, the literature can be used to confirm findings, and just the reverse, findings can be used to illustrate where the literature is incorrect, simplistic, or only partially explains phenomena (Corbin and Straus 2008, p.38). Therefore, I will now begin to discuss both differences and similarities between my primary data and the technical literature discussed in chapter 2.

First I would like to start with the differences which were the following; Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015) stated that leaders cannot easily rely on a series of best practices in ethical leadership. Yet, five of the six interviewees have said to do so. Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015) described how it is difficult to align the moral foundations of the followers and organizations with the leaders’ own actions. However, it could be due to the fact that the leaders interviewed, did not see major differences in the moral foundations of their followers on the work floor, that they do choose to lead based on best practices.

Another difference is that whereas most leaders have said to not notice different values or moral frameworks on the work floor, the literature suggests that these different values are present. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, p.30) described values as the definition of a culture of what is good and bad, this implies that in a multicultural
team, different values could be present. As this study was conducted under a relativist view (Cook 1999, p.7) the assumption that values are relative was present at the start of the data collection. This assumption is also supported by Fehr, Yam and Dang (2015) that made the suggestion that moral foundations clash, which holds the underlying assumption that they are different between cultures, or perhaps individuals. Hall had also based his model on the assumption that people interpret and create messages based on their shared knowledge, including values (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.50). Which would also mean that values could differ per culture. It is worth noticing that Hall was coming from the field of anthropology, which according to Cook (1999) uses the relativist perspective as the basis of their studies. On the other hand, the empirical data did not show that different values between team members of different cultures are not present, only that leaders have not noticed them.

Moreover, as leaders described that they focus on aligning everyone towards the same common objective, and not on aligning values, I think this could be due to two different reasons. The first explanation could be that because it is difficult to align values, they do not try to do so and instead focus on something that they can align, however this would be in conflict with the fact that they did not see major differences. It would somehow explain the reference to Code of Conduct when it concerns values in the workplace. On the other hand, if leaders do not see major differences in moral foundation or values, there will not be a focus on it as the differences do not exist, or there is a lack of awareness for these differences.

*I have also noticed a set of similarities;* 
The interviewees stated that they are looking for a balance between being ethical and being efficient. This is in line with Lakshmi (2014) who said that effective leadership may be different from leadership based on ethical principles, and therefore efficiency may not (always) be achieved by ethical means.
Schneider and Barsoux (2014, p.4) stated that cultures are stable as long as there are no drastic changes in the economic, political or societal environment. Within one of the interviews, this statement was confirmed. The interviewee said that within the company culture of empowerment, a laissez-faire leadership style was used, however when the economic crisis came, this organizational culture shifted more towards using a command-control leadership style, balancing it with a laissez-faire style.

From Hofstede his framework, two aspects related to his dimensions were mentioned by one interviewee. The interviewee stated that he is always in his role as a manager, also outside of the office. Personally I relate this to the power distance dimension from Hofstede which describes that ‘members of a culture accept hierarchy and, may encourage it’ (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.38). Additionally, this also corresponds to the dimension from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, p.102) which is called diffuse versus specific, in which power relations are said to be always present, even outside of work, in diffuse cultures.

Another comparison can be drawn from the example given by the same interviewee, that individual rewards such as an individual bonus were not accepted. This is in relation with the individualism versus collectivism framework of Hofstede in which he specifies that in collectivist cultures, the group needs are above individual needs (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.41). Additionally, this same statement also corresponds to Trompenaars his dimension individualism versus communitarianism (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2012).

Moreover it was said that, employees could also come to your office to chit-chat about your family and private life, and only when leaving your office ask you where they actually came for, instead of asking it directly. As a researcher I see a connection with loyalty which is also an aspect of collectivist culture (Mead and Andrews 2009, p.41).
Within the interviews some candidates explained that they had a lot of rules regulating norms and values, Code of Conduct and, Code of Ethics. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, pp.41-43) described how universalist cultures have a strong focus on rules, whereas particularism cultures put more emphasis on relationships, when deciding and judging behavior.

Another comparison can be made between the dimensions from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) which are individual versus communitarianism and, achievement versus ascription. There was a leader who describes that within his organization there are certain informal leaders, who have no high status within the company hierarchy, but do so coming from the society. I have interpreted this as being a communitarianism culture, whereas this informal leader has a high position in a religious, or political community, and therefore enjoys ascribed status within the company, as this informal leader does not have achieved status within the company, but because of whom he/she is outside of it, still enjoys a certain hierarchy.

Other aspects that were mentioned by interviewees were the importance of tone of voice and non-verbal communication, this is described by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012, pp.93-97) as the difference between neutral and affective cultures.

The results from the GLOBE study also show similarities with data gained through primary data collection. For example, the CLT theory is said to predict leadership behavior, instead of national culture (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.510-511). This is in correspondence with the leaders who said to adapt their leadership style based on the situation and the culture that they are in. Additionally, the GLOBE project described that 'successful leaders enact core universally desired behaviors that comprise charismatic/ value-based leadership’ (Dorfman et al. 2015, p.514) and that charismatic/value based- and team-oriented leadership are important for the firm’s performance and for the
commitment, effort and team solidarity (Dorfman et al. 2015, p.512) which corresponds partly to the statements made by the leaders about their characteristics when leading a multicultural team. Especially the team-oriented leadership style matches characteristics from the leaders, as this leadership style focuses upon the implantation of a common goal and a collaborative leadership style. Charismatic/value-based leadership style is based on a set of core values, which corresponds to the leaders describing that they have regulated norms and values, and other key aspects are to motivate and inspire the team.

5 Results and Conclusion
5.1 Results of this study in relation to the research questions
After the primary data collection was presented and, compared with the literature in chapter 4. I would now like to write my final results by answering the research questions that I had formulated in section 1.2 of this thesis. After that, a conclusion will be drawn and some additional insights emerged from the data will be given.

The research issue was ‘what are the challenges of leading ethically in a frame of a multicultural organization?’ This issue dealt with the following aspects;

- What are the clashes that occur between the moral frameworks of leaders and followers?

This sub-question can be answered by saying that most of the clashes in the work teams have been reported to be due to personal and individual differences, work pressure, miscommunication, seniority levels and, not being related to different moral frameworks. There have been some examples of cultural differences and, there has been an example mentioned that explained the clash about a gift that was perceived to be bad and wrong, according to the culture in which the person receiving the gift was working. This perception of ‘wrong’ and
‘bad’ was due to the dominant religion in the country. Clashes between different moral frameworks are said to be able to occur when there is a lack of interest and respect towards cultural differences. Tiwary (2015) said that the respect of the value of others is an overriding moral value. If this is overriding, it could indeed mean that respect of each others’ value is key in avoiding clashes between moral frameworks.

- Which ways can be suggested to deal with different moral perspectives within an organization?

The most important advice from the leaders that could be extracted from the data is to treat others with respect and to show interest. It is also important to be aware of the fact that there are cultural differences and, to accept these. When there are different mentalities or opinions within the team it is important to always provide explanations of why certain decisions are made, why certain changes are implemented, and why a message is communicated in a certain way. Leaders have also said to not emphasize the differences, but emphasize what they have in common, which is the common objective.

- What are the possible options to lead others in an ethical way within a multicultural context?

The suggested ways to lead a culturally diverse team ethically are based upon a number of different things. Most of the leaders have said to lead based on best practices that they have learned through experience. It is important to be aware of cultural differences, to accept and respect these differences, to show respect and treat others with respect, and to trust your followers, and to trust their good intentions. Additionally, the Golden Rule is often applied, but one must be aware of the fact that this rule can become false in certain cases. Moreover, the majority of the leaders stated that it is very important to provide explanations and give clarifications to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings. Leaders should keep in mind that the most important aspect is to bring value to the company, thus they should focus on the common goal and align their
followers towards this same common objective. Therefore, if decisions and changes are made, leaders must explain why they serve the common goal because in that way it is believed that most of the followers will accept this decision and/or change. Advices that are given on how to lead a culturally diverse team ethically are to show respect, accept and respect diversity, focus on the common goal and to reflect and summarize regularly upon own practices. Most of all it is important to find a balance between being ethical and, being efficient.

The main research question; ‘what are the challenges of leading ethically in a frame of a multicultural organization?’ can be answered by saying that the main challenges are related to communication - both verbal and non-verbal-, cultural differences, having different definitions, using English as the lingua franca and, to align everyone towards the same common objectives. Other significant challenges are that in certain cases leaders cannot rely on their best practices anymore because the Golden Rule has become false, in these cases cultural awareness training is of importance. Another challenge is to find the balance in being ethically correct and, being efficient. As the first task of a leader is to meet the common objective they tend to focus on aligning everyone towards this objective and, not on aligning values. However, leading ethically is more likely to be perceived as efficient when leaders enact upon the desired and idealized leadership style of the country in which they are active (Dorfman et al. 2012, p.511). When having a multicultural team this makes a big difference when being compared to trying to adapt to all the cultures present in the team of the leader.

Concluding it can be said that there are many challenges of leading ethically in a multicultural organization. However, it is believed by the interviewees that these challenges can be overcome and, clashes can be avoided, by always being respectful and provide explanations that emphasize why certain decisions or changes are made and, to explain why things are communicated in a certain way.
Personally, I have had the impression that both culture and, moral foundations are topics and attributes of individuals that are hard to grasp. My own idea is that if leaders are not aware of their own morals and culture, they might not recognize the differences and similarities with others.

The following quotes describes the importance of looking at culture and taking it into account to fully seize opportunities, also to lead ethically and recognize different moral foundations. ‘Like the tides of the ocean, culture can drag you into a sea of lost opportunities.’ The problem of recognizing the presence and force of culture, often make it a neglected influence on management (Schneider and Barsoux, 2014, p.3). From my interpretation this might also apply to having difficulties to recognize the force of moral foundation systems, and the influences on multicultural teams and leading ethically.

As many leaders use a series of best practices, they do so because they have had the experience that this has worked in a good way so far, or at least the impression that it did so. However, the leaders that said to not lead solely on best practices are the ones that have had the experience that the Golden Rule became false. The Golden Rule works in many cases, which is why it is most likely called ‘golden’, however it does not work in all cases. The same goes for best practices. Many leaders said that morals do not differ, at least not in the workplace, it was also said that the Code of Conduct in place included shared company values. I am still wondering whether moral foundation in the workplace really do not differ significantly, or whether leaders are not yet aware of the fact that they do, and that perhaps Code of Conduct has no influence on individual values.

It has been interesting to discover that there are certain differences with the technical literature that I had found during the research process. Based upon the literature of the relativist view on morality that morality, including values differ per culture, I had expected to hear
more clashes in the moral foundations and, more challenges on aligning values within a team. Moreover, the literature had also indicated that leaders cannot lead on a series of best practices and, that it is difficult to align moral foundations of leaders, followers and the organizational culture (Fehr, Yam, Dang 2015). My empirical research has shown different results, however, it might be that these difficulties and inability only arise when working with very different types of cultural background, while also being active in a very different culture than your own. As I have indicated before, it could be that some leaders have not yet encountered very different moral foundations within their working teams and therefore do not identify with the indicated difficulties.

5.2 Implications of this study for multicultural organizations
This study has some important implications for multicultural organizations. First of all, it should be examined by the organization how big the differences are between the cultures within the organization and, whether there are major differences in cultural backgrounds between leaders and the employees. Previous theory suggested that leaders cannot lead on a series of best practices, yet interviewees of this research have said to do so. It might be up to the organization to provide cultural awareness training sessions, not only to provide awareness about the own culture, but also about others, so leaders can decide whether they should or should not adapt their leadership style.

Additionally, this research did not identify major differences between moral frameworks, but this does not mean that they are not existing, only that in the workplace they have not been noticed so far by the interviewees questioned. However, cultural differences remain, just as other challenges mentioned previously related to the lingua franca, work pressure and seniority.

As a researcher I do not wish to make any recommendations myself to future or current leaders who wish to lead ethically in a multicultural
organization as I believe it is more suitable for these leaders to draw their own conclusions based on the presented data. It is left without saying that respect towards the value of others, respect towards cultural differences and respect to different opinions, values or interpretations should be applied in any case.

5.3 Suggestion for further studies
More research is still needed on the theme of leading ethically in a multicultural organization. As previously mentioned, one of the limitations of this study has been that it is analyzed from a leaders perspective. Therefore, I would like to suggest to do a study from the follower perspective as well. Leaders could have a wrong impression of what is perceived as ethical behavior. The fact that the majority of the interviewees believe that leading based upon best practices, providing explanations, aligning towards the common objective and not aligning values are enough for followers to positively moralize their behavior in most cases, has not been verified with these same followers. Additionally, it would be interesting to ask employees of multicultural organizations whether Code of Conduct really influences their values in the workplace.

Additionally, I believe it would be helpful to do research including observations, as it is possible for leaders to say one thing, but act differently, the only way to know this is through observation (Corbin and Strauss 2008, p.29). These differences between a leaders words and the events happening at the workfloor can be due to many reasons, it can be that leaders do not want to say there have been moral clashes, or that leaders have simply not recognized clashes as being due to moral frameworks. For all those reasons, observations might help in providing more context.

Other interesting additions to this study could be to further study the differences between the empirical data from my research and the literature. Moreover, I would be interested to read whether CLT
influences the fact that leaders lead based on values present in the country in which they are operative and, expect their followers to use these same values, which is how they lead based on best practices.
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