One tree in a forest will never survive when the wind comes
Leading across cultures and its impact

Authors: Marielle Johansson, 920512
Ellen Nordkvist, 921017
Tutor: Kjell Arvidsson
Examiner: Mikael Lundgren
Course: 2FE78E
City: Shanghai/Kalmar
Date: 2016-05-31

mj222wg@student.lnu.se
en222js@student.lnu.se
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Marielle Johansson

Ellen Nordkvist
Abstract

Research questions: What are the biggest differences between the Swedish culture and the Chinese culture? How does leadership from one culture affect followers in a different culture? What strategies and tools does the management apply in order to manage cultural differences?

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to understand the biggest differences between Swedish and Chinese culture. Furthermore, the purpose is to understand if and how cultural differences affect the employees within a foreign company. Our ambition is therefore to provide information on how leadership from another culture is having an impact on the followers. Additionally, we aim to present what strategies and tools that management can take into account when dealing with cultural differences.

Method: This research has an inductive approach. Further, we have used a qualitative research strategy where we have conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with leaders and followers from Atlas Copco, IKEA and Tetra Pak.

Conclusion: The conclusions demonstrate that the biggest differences between the Swedish and the Chinese culture are equality versus hierarchy, different ways of communicating and relationship building. Additionally, the conclusion shows that followers get affected by having a leader from a different culture. They get affected in how they communicate, the way relationships are built and how they create trust. Meeting, teamwork and empowerment are also factors that changes when having a leader from a different culture. Further, strategies and tools for the management have also been concluded. Examples of strategies and tools are to create an understanding of the other culture, emerge the cultures together, be transparent and open, be flexible and also do not label a person with a different culture.

Keywords: Culture, Cultural differences, Leadership, Followership, China, Sweden.
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1 Introduction

Presented in the following chapter is a background in cross-cultural leadership and why the subject is relevant to study. After the background a problem discussion follows that includes the main aspects essential for this study. The problem discussion leads to a purpose of the study and finally the thesis research questions are presented.

1.1 Background

Through globalization the world is getting smaller and smaller. Marquardt, Berger and Loan (2004) explain that people over the past twenty years have become more interconnected worldwide through technology, travel and trade. More people are moving abroad to foreign countries, which make the world more diverse (Zakaria, 2000). This has resulted in shared values and practices amongst human beings. Globalization has also resulted in people working for global companies (Marquardt, Berger & Loan, 2004). Despite this, the world is still a culturally diverse arena (Zakaria, 2000; Rowntree, Lewis, Price & Wyckoff, 2004). Different cultures are nevertheless a factor and can be a reason why conflicts and tension occur between people from different cultural backgrounds (Jehn & Mannix, 2001). According to Reeves-Ellington and Yammarino (2010) the concept of culture is difficult to explain. Hofstede (1980/2007, p. 224) defines culture as “the collective mental programming of people in an environment”. The “programming” that a group of people has in common and what separates them from another group is what creates culture. Further, Dessler (2013) says that cultural differences is demonstrated in how people from different nations act, think and how one is expecting others to act and think.

\[1^{1}\] In this thesis organization and company will have the same meaning. In order for us to not solely use one word we will use both organization and company.
Diversity is the variety of demographic appearances that divides a group into at least two different parts and that defines a workforce in terms of different cultural, racial, sexual orientation, gender or religious backgrounds etc. (Dessler, 2013; Guillaume, Dawson, Woods, Sacramento & West, 2013). According to Cox (1994, p. 6) “cultural diversity means the representation, in one social system, of people with distinctly different group relationships of cultural significance”. The organizational behavior will be affected by the cultural diversity in a complex and influential way (Aghazadeh, 2004). In this thesis, cultural diversity and cultural differences have the same meaning. When talking about cultural diversity, cross-cultural leadership or cultural differences we always refer to the leader having a different culture than the followers\(^2\).

According to Dessler (2013) the international integration that is caused by globalization helps employers to discover the opportunity in establishing their companies abroad. Many aspects of life and especially work life are affected by diversity. Operating in numerous countries creates a greater diversity in the workplace (Florkowski, in Kossek & Lobel, 1996). Worldwide integration and the increasing multinational collaborations among global organizations create a need for better understanding within the field of cultural differences. Hays-Thomas (in Stockdale & Crosby, 2004) emphasizes that the importance of understanding culture, history and language, increases due to globalization. The globalization also creates a higher need for effective communication across national boundaries.

According to Agars and Kottke (2002) every organization is impacted in one-way or another by globalization and as a result global managers\(^3\) may have to consider how to best adapt to diversity management. Since countries are more diverse and globalized, cultural differences are proving to be a greater challenge for business managers to deal with (Cooper & Stoflet, 2004). It is also argued that globalization will result in a higher demand of qualified managers who can deal with cultural differences (Aghazadeh, 2004; Hechanova, Behr & Christansen, 2003).

\(^2\) When talking about followers we mean employees who are subordinates to the leader/manager.

\(^3\) We will use the term management but also leadership and we will always indicate the manager as a leader and vice versa.
1.2 Problem discussion

During the latest century Asia (and especially China) has grown rapidly and is today seen as an important trading partner and country for foreign operations. According to Fang (2005), trading between China and Sweden is continuously increasing and is currently larger than ever before. Since the beginning of the 21st century China has evolved to become Sweden's biggest trading partner in Asia. As of 2015 there are more than 500 Swedish companies established in China (Business Sweden, 2016). The ever-growing trade has created a need for a deeper understanding in cultural differences and how managers deal with and acknowledge these.

A massive economic change is happening and China has now become the world's biggest economy (Business Sweden, 2016; Lundgren, 2016). Due to this many companies worldwide are expanding their businesses there (Marro, 2015). When expanding an organization abroad problems can arise if cultural differences are not observed. Pot (2000) concludes that challenges in organizations across nations are quite similar, but national differences have been observed in management styles, especially how managers handle the differences. If a company and its managers do not take into account that there are cultural disparities in the workplace conflicts, tensions and misunderstandings can be created in the organization (Hanges, Aiken, Park & Su, 2016). Due to, for example, lack of trust and communication, managers need to build up strategies and skills to handle different challenges (Marquardt, Berger & Loan, 2004). If the cultural differences are not considered, it may not only affect the people that have a conflict, but also other employees within the organization. This can result in an infected and non-creative working-environment where employees decrease their work performance (Frost, 2003). In order for a manager to be successful in a different culture, he or she does not only have to understand the language and policies within the foreign country, but also be able to build good relationships and adapt to new situations (Kealey & Protheroe, 1996). Small cultural conflicts may cause big problems that are hard for the leader to repair. Therefore it is essential to consider cultural differences, in order for the leader to not make mistakes when having followers from another culture.
Knowing how to deal with cultural differences as a manager can not only help the organization when expanding abroad, but also help it succeed on the new market. Therefore, it is of high importance to consider cultural distinctions as an important phenomenon. According to Peretz, Levi and Fried (2015) there are several studies made in the field of cultural diversity, for example in the USA, England, Canada and Australia. Although there are a lot of studies made within the English speaking countries, we can see a lack of studies in the exchange between the Swedish and Chinese market. The previous studies are therefore not necessary applicable in the relationship between Sweden and China.

Some decades ago, when doing business abroad the advice was to say “when in Rome, do as the Romans do” (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). Although one could read about the culture before going abroad and then adapt to it, it is essential to know that authors from other cultures may put a label on the culture. Therefore, one should understand that the books are not always accurate with reality. Furthermore, literature about cultures does not cover which strategies and tools to use in order to handle cultural differences. In due to this, we argue that our research is of high magnitude. By reading about a culture one can get a sense about the culture, but that might not be enough to understand and respect the culture. Culture cannot be experienced only through reading, instead one need to be physically exposed by it.

Dessler (2006) suggest that firms expanding to China should acknowledge the fact that Human Resource Management in Western cultures is different from the ones in China. Hofstede (1993) and Tsui (2006) argue that most of the existing management theories are developed in Western cultures and may therefore not be applicable in a global context. Because of this, there is an importance of providing empirical material from a non-Western country. A lot of studies have been made the last decade in order to enhance the understanding of cross-cultural leadership and its effectiveness (Hofstede, 2001; Dickson, Den Hartog & Mitchelson, 2003; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorffman & Gupta, 2004). According to Hanges et al. (2016) the largest study of cross-cultural leadership is GLOBE, Global Leadership and Organizational Behavioral Effectiveness project. Although the effectiveness of a cross-cultural leadership has been studied, we can see a lack of research in how the followers get affected by having a leader from a different culture. Knowing how
followers get affected by having a foreign leader would contribute to an understanding about cultural differences. It would also contribute to an understanding if and how the foreign culture matters, both within the organization but also in private life. Furthermore, it is important to understand the relationship between culture, organizational culture and leadership. If a connection can be made with culture, organizational culture and leadership we can see how followers get affected. That would contribute to an understanding that has not been seen in previous research.

We have found that there are studies made in how transformational leadership affects followers' psychologically (Nielsen & Munir, 2009), but not in a cross-cultural perspective, hence we believe that our study is relevant. Due to these circumstances there is a need to study how managers manage employees from a different culture. Furthermore, we also aim to investigate how having a leader from a different culture may impact the followers. To do this we are going to research how Swedish companies in Shanghai have managed cultural differences.

Fang (2005) describes that in China everybody is aware of the fact that people are born with a different status. It is also known that age, hierarchy and status have an immense impact in China. In Sweden hierarchy exist in the workplace, even though it is quite invisible. Equal rights are of great importance in Sweden and the country aims for the fact that everybody should be treated the same (Lindahl, 2012). From this we can see that there is a big difference in the Chinese and the Swedish cultures. China is Sweden's largest trading partner in Asia and the expansion of Swedish companies in China is believed to increase in the future (Business Sweden, 2013) and due to the differences in the cultures it is important to study how leaders from a Swedish culture are having an impact on the Chinese followers.

The trade between Sweden and China will not decrease; rather the opposite, it is believed that trade between those countries will develop and grow over time. Henceforth, we believe that our study will be significant and applicable in various situations in the future. Because of the increased level of diversity worldwide, this study may also be applicable for every leader in every country who has to deal with cultural differences.
1.3 Research questions

- What are the biggest differences between the Swedish culture and the Chinese culture?
- How does leadership from one culture affect followers in a different culture?
- What strategies and tools can the management apply in order to manage cultural differences?

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this thesis is to understand the biggest differences between Swedish and Chinese culture. Furthermore, the purpose is to understand if and how cultural differences affect the employees within a foreign company. Our ambition is therefore to provide information on how leadership from another culture is having an impact on the followers. Additionally, we aim to present what strategies and tools that management can take into account when dealing with cultural differences.
2 Methodology

In this chapter we present the methodology that our study is based on. This chapter describes the method we have chosen in order for us to be able to answer our research questions and fulfill the purpose of this study. Throughout the chapter we argue and are critical to the choices we have made. We explain the research approach and the research process followed by analysis and interpretation of the study. Last we present the research quality and our own reflections and criticism.

2.1 Research Approach

In order to relate the theory with the empirical findings, there are different approaches to use, such as deduction and induction (Patel & Davidsson, 2011; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) a deductive approach is based on the theory being the first source of knowledge. Through the deductive approach the study begins with relevant theories and concepts instead of them emerging during the study (Yin, 2013). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) an inductive approach is instead when the empirical material is the core of the theoretical findings. In the inductive approach, the research object is studied without being connected to existing theories and based on the collected empirical data the theory will be formulated (Patel & Davidsson, 2011). Bryman and Bell (2013) state that within the inductive approach, conclusions can derive from empirical experiences. The inductive approach is therefore contradictory to the deductive approach (Yin, 2013).

In this thesis, we have chosen to use an inductive research approach, hence the study is based on the empirical findings (Bryman & Bell, 2013). We have a mutual interest in both cultural differences and leadership. When studying abroad we met people from a lot of different cultures. A curiosity arose in how to be a leader for people from a different culture than your own. We started to gather information about the subject in order for us to create an understanding within the area. When writing interview questions we used our pre-understanding of the subject as a foundation. See appendix 1 and 2 for the interview questions. Since we investigated
a specific area, *how leadership from one culture affect followers in a different culture*, we believed that we needed to understand and have knowledge within the subject in order to create interview questions.

### 2.1.1 Qualitative versus quantitative research strategy

When structuring research one first has to decide if a qualitative or a quantitative strategy should be applied (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). According to Widerberg (2002) a qualitative research is about the nature or characteristics of someone or something, while a quantitative research is more about the amount that applies to these characteristics. A qualitative research method and a quantitative research method are different because of the contrasting goals of the methods (Graziano & Raulin, 2013; Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). Furthermore, a qualitative research method aims to understand what people say and do whereas a quantitative research method is characterized by the amount of something (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011).

Researchers who are using a quantitative research strategy are usually having little or no contact with the research object (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Results from a quantitative research are based on a macro-perspective with several participants (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). According to those statements a quantitative strategy will not be applicable in this study.

The quantitative research method is relevant when answering what questions, in comparison to the qualitative research method that aims to answer how and why questions (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Further, a qualitative research method is characterized by a close and intimate relationship between the researcher and the study object (Olsson & Sörensen, 2011). The participants' opinions are highlighted and therefore qualitative research is subjective. Furthermore, it primarily aims to find the phenomenon significance or context (Widerberg, 2002). According to Bryman and Bell (2013) the focus is on gathering empirical material, analyzing and interpretation of the data. In this research, a qualitative research strategy has been applied, because of the research questions that are based on how/why questions; "What are the biggest differences between the Swedish culture and the Chinese culture?", "How does a leadership from one culture affect followers in a different culture?" and "What strategies and tools can the management apply in order to..."
manage cultural differences?” In order to get a deeper understanding in the area of cultural differences and leadership a qualitative research method was the most appropriate, which is based on Bryman and Bell (2013) who argue that a qualitative research strategy is applicable in those contents. The subject is quite complex and includes people's feelings and experiences. With a qualitative research method we could reflect and analyze what the interviewees said and did. We could also create an intimate relationship with them. Therefore a qualitative research method was applicable and it also helped us to understand and connect with the interviewees. This align with Yin (2013) who describe qualitative research as a strategy to use when the researchers wants to describe a complex phenomena with help from participants.

2.2 Case Study

In order to address the research question in the best possible way a case study approach has been used. A case study is a study of one or several cases that describes and explains them. It can be based on both qualitative and quantitative data but also data from a field (Yin, 2013). According to Myers (2009) a case study is the most commonly used method in a qualitative research method in business studies. When doing a case study the researcher is studying a case, for example on a workplace or in an organization (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Myers (2009) states that a case study is used when asking “why” and “how” questions. It can also be used to test or compare theories. In a case study research the researcher can examine the theories within the framework of real life situations. According to Yin (2013) a case study approach is relevant the more there is to explain. Our research problem is, as mentioned before, quite complex. A case study method is relevant if the research question itself is complex in nature and requires a deeper and more comprehend explanation (Yin, 2013). Therefore, a case study was a perfect match for our study. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) a case study research became popular since the research method has an ability to solve complex organizational, administrative and other business issues.

We have chosen to study Swedish companies operating in China. The relation between Sweden and China has been studied in order for us to understand how different cultures impact each other. Therefore, these countries have been used as a
tool. For us to understand and answer our research questions we visited Swedish companies in China and met their leaders and followers. The companies studied in this thesis therefore helped us reach a deeper understanding and finally answering our research questions.

The thesis is based on cases at Swedish companies operating in China. In order to get a broad knowledge about the subject, three different companies have been studied. We had three different criteria's that we wanted the companies to meet:

- A Swedish company operating in China.
- A Swedish leader with experience both from Sweden and China.
- Followers with a Chinese background.

We got in contact with Atlas Copco, who matched all the criteria's we had on the company we wanted to research. A Swedish leader at Atlas Copco in Shanghai passed along contact information to two Swedish leaders operating in Shanghai. Furthermore, we contacted IKEA, who also matched all of our criteria and was able to meet with us. Last but not least we got in contact with our third research company, Tetra Pak, who could help us with our study. At Atlas Copco we interviewed two different leaders and two of their followers, but only one leader and two followers at the other companies. Interviewing two leaders and four followers from the same company might have impacted our findings.

2.3 Information gathering

According to Myers (2009) the empirical material can be divided into two different sectors - primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to data collected by the researcher in order to fulfill the study with new material. Therefore, primary data in this study is based on conducted interviews. Secondary data on the other hand is data collected from external sources in order to support primary data (Myers, 2009). This study is based on secondary data from the companies' websites, in order to maintain a broader knowledge of the organization itself.

2.3.1 Interviews

There are several different methods that can be used to collect data for a qualitative study, however, the most common method to use is interviews (Myers, 2009).
Bryman and Bell (2013) stress three different interview techniques: structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. The structured interviews are based on a specific script that the interviewer stays with (Yin, 2013). Unstructured interviews use few pre-formulated questions, which give the interviewee a chance to speak and analyze freely (Myers, 2009). A questionnaire and no script on the other hand characterize semi-structured interviews. According to Bryman and Bell (2013) semi-structured interviews are partly prepared. Sometimes a semi-structured interview can deviate from the prepared interview questions and new questions might emerge (Bryman & Bell, 2013; Myers, 2009). According to Bryman and Bell (2013) semi-structured interviews are open-ended, which allows the interviewees to explicate their answers more open than for instance structured interviews.

The empirical findings have been collected through semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview method provides discussion and enables a relaxed atmosphere for the interviewee (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Yin, 2013), which is why we have selected this method. Unnecessary information might arise while using this technique, which means it can also provide a detailed and specific picture of reality (Ryen, 2004). According to Myers (2009) one of the advantages with using semi-structured interviews is the consistency that emerged across interviews. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because of the partly structured way of asking questions. But also because it gave us an opportunity to ask questions that arose during the interviews. The reason why we wanted to have an opportunity to ask further questions was because we wanted to gain a deeper understanding and not miss out of relevant information. Additionally, it also was chosen to create an environment where the interviewee could speak more freely than a structured interview.
2.4 Research process

Our own explanation of the research process (2016-04-06).

2.4.1 Selection of interviewees

Four interviews with Swedish managers in Swedish companies operating in China have been conducted. To further understand the leader-follower relationship the interviews also targeted two of the interviewed leaders subordinates. In total we have completed 12 interviews. Four interviews were conducted with Swedish leaders and eight interviews were held with Chinese followers. We have chosen to interview 12 people in order for us to gain a holistic perception and also to compare the different answers with each other. The reason why we have chosen four leaders and eight followers is because we wanted to have two followers of each leader, and also to understand if and how the Swedish leadership is having an impact on Chinese followers.
### 2.4.2 Interview environment

Every interview was held at each company's office. The companies' provided us with a private room where we could conduct the interviews. The environment at each company was very quiet and calm and all of the interviewees were used to the environment, which in line with Trost (2010) created a comfortable and relaxed feeling for the interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Followers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tetra Pak</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlas Copco</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IKEA</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Our own model of interviewees in each company (2016-05-04).*

Before leaving Sweden we booked interviews with the leaders who also helped us book interviews with their followers. We did not choose the leaders by ourselves, we got in contact with them through other employees within their organizations. Neither did we choose the followers by ourselves. The leaders booked the interviews with the followers for us. This may have affected the answers we got from the followers, hence the leaders may have chosen followers that they know will talk good about them and the company. We have decided for all of the interviewees to be anonymous. The interviewees will therefore be presented as "one leader" and "one follower". When having quotes from the leaders, we will call them by Leader 1, 2, 3 and 4. The Chinese followers will be quoted as Follower 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

All of the interviews were recorded. According to Yin (2009) a recorded interview provide a better rendition of the conducted interviews. We were able to listen to the recorded interviews several times, in order for us to deepen our understanding. If interviews are not recorded it is hard to remember everything. Instead the interviewers have to write down everything at once. That would contribute in less involvement from the interviewer (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad, 2010).
Each interview started out with us presenting ourselves and our purpose interviewing them, followed by introducing questions concerning the interviewees and their past experiences. According to Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad (2010) those kinds of introducing questions creates a friendly and warm atmosphere. Further, we asked questions about leadership/followership and cultural differences. The interviews did not have any time limit, which created more developed and considerate answers. We aimed to have a natural and informal conversation style through all of the interviews.

2.5 Research ethics

All of the interviewees accepted to participate in our study. To improve the research ethics we have chosen for all the interviewees to be anonymous, which is in line with Oliver (2010) who argues that anonymity increases the objectivity of the research. This was done in order for the interviewees to feel that they could say what they wanted to, without being punished for it later on (Oliver, 2010). In our study we have asked questions to the followers about their managers, which can be sensitive information that the follower do not want the manager to know about. According to this, we did not want anyone to feel uncomfortable, which is another reason to why all of the interviewees are anonymous.

Furthermore, we have asked the leaders if we can use the company's names in our study, which was permitted by all of the leaders. In order for us to be able to listen to the interviews later, we asked all of the interviewees if we could record the interviews. We informed that the recorded material only was for our own use.

The fact that we as researchers are Swedes might also have impacted the answers from the followers. It is a possibility that the followers have excluded negative information about the Swedish culture because they did not want to offend us. Because of the study taking part in a different culture than that culture we are used to, some cultural ethics has also been considered. Therefore, the Chinese culture has been studied before conducting the interviews. In order for the Chinese followers to feel comfortable speaking with us, we wanted to show a cultural understanding. One example of this is when giving and receiving a business card in China, you are doing it with both of your hands. According to Bryman and Bell (2013) and Oliver
researchers should acknowledge to not harm the participants in a physical or psychological way. We have not caused any physical harm to the participants, however, we tried not to intrude on the interviewees' integrity by asking too personal questions and therefore no psychological harm has been caused.

2.6 Interpretation and Analysis through Pattern-matching

After the empirical findings were conducted we started out by listening to every recorded interview and put together the relevant data. When this was done, we complied all the answers to each other in different categories - culture, organizational culture and leadership. That was done in order to be able to compare and create patterns between the empirical findings and the theoretical framework in an analysis.

In order to analyze and compare the empirical findings against the theoretical framework a technique called pattern-matching has been used. Pattern-matching is commonly used in a case study analysis (Yin, 2014). According to Yin (2002) the technique pattern-matching involves finding a pattern between the empirical findings and the existing theories. Yin (2014) also states that a good connection between the theoretical framework and empirical findings provides a higher validity and quality, which further increases the quality of the research. The empirical data generated from interviews has been analyzed against the existing theories, in order to discover relationships and patterns between them (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

The interpretation and the analysis of the interviews have been made separately and then connected to each other. According to Fejes and Thornberg (2015) it is important to separate the essential parts from the redundant information when interpreting the material. In order to make a connection between the theoretical framework and the empirical material codes has been created with different colors. Through the colors the empirical material was compared with the existing theories in order to find different patterns and relations in an analysis.
2.7 Research Quality

In order for the research to be as trustworthy as possible, we have examined the trustworthiness of this study by using four different criteria's: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

2.7.1 Credibility

To create trustworthiness the credibility of the study should be observed. Credibility refers to the result being as congruent with reality as possible (Shenton, 2004). In order to gain a high credibility the researchers should questioning the purpose of the study (Yin, 2009). To increase the credibility we used existing theories to get inspiration to the questions that was asked while conducting data. Before conducting the first interview, we examined the relevance of the questions in relation to the collected theory. To additionally increase the credibility we discussed the questions with our tutor. This was done in order to ensure that the material requested from the interview would be applicable in this study.

2.7.2 Transferability

According to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2008) transferability relates to the degree of which the results from a study can be applicable in other situations. We use four leaders with one culture and eight followers with another culture in order to see how the leaders may impact the followers. We are conscious about the fact that it is hard to generalize a result based on only 12 interviews and due to the fact that cultures are complex. The followers we have interviewed have all chosen to work for a Swedish company. They have all made a choice to come across a foreign culture and therefore we think that they have a curiosity for other cultures than their own. This might have affected our result and because of this our study may not be applicable in other situations.

2.7.3 Dependability

To gain a high dependability when making research, the same result should occur even if the research is made at different times (Olsson and Sörensen, 2011; Shenton, 2009). A study that has been made several times should therefore achieve the same result. If the outcomes between different results are too disparate, the dependability is considered low (Olsson and Sörensen, 2011). Every interviewed employee and organization is unique which for instance have affected the outcome of this study. If
the study had been made with different interviewees and different companies, exactly the same result would probably not emerge. Thus, the dependability of this study can be perceived as relatively low. On the other hand, we have got similar answers from the interviewees, which increase the dependability of this study.

Bryman and Bell (2013) state that the research should be stable in a long-term perspective and it should not substantially change even though it has been a long time between the studies. Trost (2010) argues that this can only be measured in a stable environment. In due to the fast development context in China, this study might not get the same result in the future. Studies may look different depending on when in time they are performed since it is a constant development in society. Therefore, the stability in this research is quite vague. For instance, Trost (2010) argues that with a proactive study like this, different results will emerge at different times.

However, one thing that increases the dependability of our study is that we have explained our research process, both in how we have selected interviewees but also how we have interpreted the theoretical framework with the empirical findings. This makes it possible to repeat the study again, but with likelihood of a different result than ours.

2.7.4 Confirmability
The concept confirmability includes that the researchers should exclude personal preferences and presumptions in order to be objective (Shenton, 2009). We have tried to not affect the interviewees, although the interviewer always have some impact on the interviewee. A type of impact on the interviewee could be how the questions are presented and how the questions unconscious might turn one way. We might also have been asking some leading questions that might have affected the result, even though we have tried not to. Although this may decrease the confirmability, the recording of our interviews can be one way to increase it. This has enabled us to listen to the interviews multiple times during the process.

A research study should aim to not be affected by external circumstances. If there are many observers in the study, and they have the same interpretations, that
increase the trustworthiness of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The two of us share the same interpretations, which gives this thesis a high confirmability.

2.8 Reflections and method criticism

Throughout the process different people and circumstances have affected us. We have got feedback both from our tutor, but also from opponents and the examiner. We have been given constructively feedback, which may have affected this study. Considered our knowledge and experiences we have chosen this specific method, however it may not be the best method to use. The study could probably be made in a different way but still get a comparable result to ours.

The interviewees did not know the questions before the interview. If we would have sent the questions to the interviewees beforehand we might have been given answers that would have been more thought trough than the answers we have got. On the other hand, not sending questions beforehand gives a possibility of spontaneous and spot-on answers.

The interviews with the leaders were conducted in Swedish, hence the empirical material had to be translated into English in order to be applicable in this thesis. The interviews with the followers were held in English and therefore they did not have to be translated. Some language misunderstandings might have arisen during the interviews with the followers, because English is not a mother language for none of us, neither the interviewees nor the interviewers (Oliver, 2010). Therefore some words might have been interpreted incorrectly, which could have affected the results in this thesis.

Furthermore, two of the leaders and four followers are from the same company, which might have affected the empirical findings, because they are exposed by the same organizational culture. Another thing that may have affected the empirical findings is that all of the followers have managing positions themselves, although they all have a Swedish leader above them.
3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework consists of two different parts - culture and leadership. Within the culture part we present theories regarding Swedish and Chinese culture and also about organizational culture. To further create a connection to leadership, we present theories regarding leadership, followership and different leadership styles within Swedish and Chinese culture.

3.1 Cultural differences

There are plenty of relevant and developed theories within doing business globally and in contrasting cultures. In order for us to answer the research questions we need to understand the ranging cultures in each country. To get a deeper understanding of different cultures, we will present Hofstede's cultural dimensions, which aims to explain culture through five separate dimensions (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). His theory can be used to describe how national cultural values influence different values in the workplace and in organizations. Finally, a brief summary of the varying cultures will be presented.

3.1.1 Hofstede's cultural dimensions

According to Hofstede (1993, p. 93) culture is "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group or category of people from another". In our research we have chosen to apply professor Hofstede's study about dimensions of international cultural differences, a model in which variations in national cultures are categorized into independent dimensions (Hofstede, 1993). This theory describes how national culture and the cultural values that come with it influence different values in the workplace and in organizations (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). Geert Hofstede's study is based on questionnaires answered by people in more than 50 countries, thus we will only focus on the results of China and Sweden.

According to Dessler (2013) Hofstede's study consists of five different cultural dimensions - power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus
feminism, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation versus short-term orientation. According to Blanton and Barbuto (2005) the different dimensions have different definitions. Power distance is defined as low versus high power where people with less power accept and expect an unequal distribution of power. Inequality is something that exists in all societies where power differs between people (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) the power distance in Sweden is very small in relation to the power distance in China. In cultures with low power distance people expect the power relations to be more consultative, inclusive and democratic while in cultures with high power distance the people with less influence accept the power relations to be more authoritarian and paternalistic. Therefore, in Sweden people talk to each other no matter what position they possess. There is an openness and transparency between managers and subordinates. In China on the other hand, it is more common for managers to not talk to subordinates. According to Lee, Scandura and Sharif (2014) employees in a high power distance culture tend to keep a social distance from their managers, whilst employees in a low power distance culture often have a shorter social distance to their managers, which can create a better communication quality.

Individualism is defined in which degree the individual needs is valued over the needs of the collective (Blanton & Barbuto, 2005). According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) collectivism means that the group's needs and interests comes before the individual. Individualism is therefore characterized by weak ties between the individuals of the society in which people are expected to take care of themselves. Individualism is the contrary to collectivism. Hofstede's study shows that Sweden is more individualistic compared to China. Furthermore Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) state that there is a negative relation between the power distance index and individualism/collectivism. Countries with a high power distance, China for example, are often more collectivistic. In cultures where people tend to be more dependent on each other there is often a paternalistic father figure (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). Individualistic employees tend to be more concerned about the personal relationships they have with their manager and also about the benefits they might obtain from the relationship. They also prefer more direct feedback, appreciation as well as constructive criticism (Triandis & Gelfand,
According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) there will always be differences in cultural values when it comes to individualism and collectivism.

The third cultural dimension in Hofstede's study is masculinity versus feminism. Masculinity is emphasized by tough values such as competition and achievement, while feminism is described as soft values as caring (Blanton & Barbuto, 2005). Masculinity is characterized by the possibility of having a high income, receiving recognition when you have done something good and the possibility to develop. The opposite side is feminism and is characterized by cooperation, having a good relationship with the manager and obtaining a safe and secure employment (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). Furthermore Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) state that China is quite a masculine country whilst Sweden is the most feminine country in Hofstede's study. China's masculinity is exemplified by a high level of education and a lot of focus on the career. In Sweden people want to have a good working-life balance and Swedes tend to work to make a good living.

The fourth dimension is called uncertainty avoidance and is the degree of which people feel uncomfortable with uncertain and unfamiliar situations (Blanton & Barbuto, 2005). According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) can the feeling of uncertainty be expressed in stress and anxiety and therefore a need for control will occur in order to handle these uncertain situations. In all organizations, in all countries, people need to manage uncertainty as a part of the work. The future is uncertain and that is something we all have to deal with and live with. All countries handle this uncertainty in different ways. The feeling of uncertainty might be personal, but it can also be shared by people in the same society (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). According to Hofstede's study, both Sweden and China got low points in the uncertainty avoidance, Sweden with 29 points and China with 30 points and they are therefore some of the countries with the lowest uncertainty avoidance. Even though these countries are different when it comes to the three first dimensions, they are similar in this dimension. In countries where the uncertainty avoidance is low, the stress and anxiety also tends to be lower and employees in a country with low uncertainty avoidance tend to see new tasks as exciting (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011).
The last dimension is the long-term versus short-term orientation. This dimension focuses on the importance of time in a society and how people look at it. Countries that have a long-term orientation focus on the future and future plans and savings (Blanton & Barbuto, 2005). The contrary to the long-term orientation is called the short-term orientation and it focuses on the past and the present. Countries with short-term orientation focus on traditions and norms (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). Blanton and Barbuto (2005) also state that people in the short-term orientation want gratification immediately. China is a long-term oriented country, whilst Sweden is somewhere in between long- and short-term orientation, according to Hofstede's study (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011).

3.1.1.1 Criticism of Hofstede's study
Although Hofstede's study has had a great impact it has also got a lot of criticism. For example, it can be seen as obsolete since the study was made in the 1970's. Signorini, Wiesemes and Murphy (2009) argue that Hofstede's study is a distortion and simplification of cultural disparities. They also argue for Hofstede's study to have an inconsistency between the different categories and an absence of empirical findings from educational settings. In addition to this, the authors stress that Hofstede's findings and model of culture is static rather than dynamic. Orr and Hauser (2008) have made a study to test Hofstede's reliability and validity in today's society. The result of their study shows that the globalization has changed the cross-cultural relationships. The relationships have changed in a political, economical and business perspective. Therefore, they recommend further research to build on to Hofstede's study so that the research is more adapted to today's society.

3.1.2 Swedish culture
According to Lundgren (2016) Swedish culture is focused on the society. The Swedish culture is based on people trusting each other. Lindahl (2012) argues that Sweden is a relatively equal country where people in the society aim to treat everybody the same. According to Svensson (2009) Swedish people tend to work efficiently during the workday and have a tendency to go home on time. There is a balance between work and spare time in the Swedish culture. Work is important for most of the Swedish people in order for them to create a good living. Swedish people are also very punctual and are almost always on time. Letting a Swede wait
makes them think that you are rude (Svensson, 2009). According to Daun (in Svensson, 2009) are Swedish people very shy. Swedes are taught to be “lagom” – not too little and not too much, somewhere in the middle and they do not want to make anyone uncomfortable. Furthermore, Svensson (2009) states that the Swedish people are very direct and open. Swedes also prefer to be straightforward and therefore are not good at small talk.

3.1.3 Chinese culture
In the Chinese culture there are 55 different minority groups, each group has its own norms, traditions and culture (Johannesson, 2014). It is beyond our effort to include all of these cultures in this thesis, hence, in this research the concept of culture is equivalent to national culture.

The Chinese culture is characterized by a collectivistic approach where people tend to act as a group instead of as an individual. In Chinese culture families tend to look after each other. The Chinese culture is therefore family oriented (Burns, 2013; Lundgren, 2016). A consequence of this is that Chinese people can have a hard time trusting people outside their own family/group (Lundgren, 2016). According to Fang (2005) Chinese culture has a significant hierarchy, which exist both in the workplace, in families and in society. Gabrenya and Hwang (1996) state that Chinese people want to protect their "face" or are afraid of losing their face. This phenomena entails that Chinese people may avoid giving and taking feedback.

To understand the Chinese culture it is significant to know about guanxi. Chen and Chen (2004, p. 306) define guanxi as "an informal, particularistic personal connection between two individuals who are bounded by an implicit psychological contract to follow the social norm of guanxi such as maintaining a long-term relationship, mutual commitment, loyalty, and obligation". According to Tsui and Farh (1997) guanxi refers to either general relationships or special relationships. The general relationships are relationships in the workplace such as a supervisor and subordinate relationship, and the special relationships are private relationships with family and friends. Wang (2001) stresses that it is of great importance to create guanxi for Chinese people. Relationships in China are built on trust. It takes time to create trust in China, but that also means that relationships are seen as something that should last a long time (Wang, 2001).
3.2 Organizational culture

A company in one country may be affected by that country's culture, but it may primarily be affected by the organizational culture. Therefore, we will present theories about organizational culture as well.

According to Barney (1986, p. 657) organizational culture is "a complex set of values, beliefs, assumptions, and symbols that define the way in which a firm conducts its business". Alvesson (2002) argues that organizational culture is in what way people interpret and relate to actions. According to Eaton (2015) culture is the human glue that creates the uniqueness in a company. Furthermore, Eaton (2015) states that there are five different dimensions of the organizational culture. The first dimension is if the company is result-oriented or people-oriented. The second dimension is if the company is flexible or stable. A flexible organization is open for change, has easy to adapt to new situations and takes risks. A stable organization on the other hand is more cautious and more structured. The third dimension is if the company has an internal or external focus. The internal focus emphasizes internal satisfaction and independency, whilst the external focus emphasizes valuable external relationships and market awareness. The fourth dimension focuses on short-term versus long-term orientation. If the organization is hierarchal (centralized) or participative (decentralized) characterizes the fifth dimension (Eaton, 2015).

An author that is known for describing organizational culture is Schein. Schein (2010) explains that three different layers - artifacts, espoused believes and values, and basic underlying assumptions, affect the organizational culture.

When Schein (2010) talks about artifacts he explains it as the first thing that a new member in an organization with an unfamiliar culture sees. Artifacts can be observed behavior, printed organizational values, dress codes and languages. Artifacts are in other words what one can hear, feel and see. This level is easy to observe, but quite hard to interpret. The longer a person stays in a group, the easier it become to understand artifacts. In order for a new member to get a deeper understanding of the artifacts, the member need to understand the organizational culture's shared values (Schein, 2010).
Espoused believes and values may at first be a person's own believes that later on get shared by others. If it is shared by a group it can become an espoused believe and value. Example of such believes are the ideology and the goals of an organization (Schein, 2010).

According to Schein (2010) one need to understand an organization's basic underlying assumptions in order to understand the organization itself. This is because of the underlying assumptions that people in an organization take for granted and sees as nonnegotiable. Members of the organization may see people that do not follow the underlying assumptions as strangers or lunatics (Schein, 2010).

3.3 Leadership and followership

According to Blomquist and Röding (2010) there is a difference between leadership and management. Management on the one hand refers to organize and create a solid structure and also to create a feeling of predictability. Leadership on the other hand refers to creating change and is seen as a process of change and innovation (Kotter 1990). In this thesis, we will not refer to management and leadership as two different concepts, because it is beyond our effort.

Leadership as a concept is difficult to define, for this reason there are several different definitions of leadership. One definition refers to the leader as a person that listens to the follower's norms, behaviors and expectation (McLean, 2005). According to Stogdill (1974) leadership can be seen as a process or an action that is made to direct a team to achieve a specific goal. Another explanation of leadership refers to leadership as a relation between the leader and the follower. The follower is following because he or she wants to, not because he or she is forced to do so. Leadership is an interaction between a leader and the people that the leader is leading. The people that are led by a leader are called followers (Merton, 1969). Carste and Lapierre (2014) state that leadership would not exist without its followers.

To achieve different organizational goals and to create team motivation, satisfaction, commitment and morale, it is important to have a good leadership (Hanges et al., 2016). If what the leader wants to accomplish does not collide with
the followers' goals, there may cause failings in the leadership (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2010).

How a leader manages to inspire, influence and direct followers has been a major part in former research (Yukl & Van Fleer, 1992; Yukl, 2010). What former research has not cover is who the followers are and how they experience the leader (Malakyan, 2014). Hence, we believe that it is of great importance to acknowledge the followers in a leadership.

According to Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe and Carsten (2014) one has to understand followership in order for the leadership to be complete. Latour and Rast (2004) stress that followers has turned to have an important role in today's society because of a competitive and fast pace working environment. Sveningsson and Alvesson (2010) argue that followers create a meaning from what the leader tries to present. Further, to create meaning the follower uses his or her own frame of reference. This phenomenon is based on a cognitive approach and it is an active process, even though it can be done unconsciously (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2010).

3.3.1 Different leadership styles

In order to get a deeper understanding of different leadership styles characterized by different nationalities, Swedish and Chinese leadership will be explained. The reason why Chinese leadership is explained is because we want to understand how the Chinese followers get affected by having a Swedish leader and therefore we also need to understand the Chinese leadership.

3.3.1.1 Swedish leadership

Hofstede first defined Scandinavian leadership in 1982. Hofstede (1993) explains that people with a Scandinavian origin obtain a behavior, which is shown by institutional structures. From this, a special leadership has been developed. According to Sjöborg (1986) the Scandinavian leadership is characterized by efficiency and an ambition of achieving high productivity. Furthermore, decisions taken by a Scandinavian leader seems to be rational and are usually decentralized in order to let all the employees be a part of it. Scandinavian leadership is also characterized by a vivid desire to resolve conflicts when such appears (Sjöborg, 1986). Lundgren (2016) argues that Swedish management style includes the
followers. A Swedish leader asks kindly if he/she can get any help and the followers are aloud to question what the leader says. A culture like this creates an open environment with learning and responsibility. According to Hamrin, Johansson and Jahn (2016) Swedish leadership is known for an involving leadership where the follower and the leader have a dialogue. Furthermore, they argue that Swedish leadership is based on relational accomplishment rather than individual performance.

3.3.1.2 Chinese leadership
Chinese leadership is known for its great market competition, high uncertainty and in addition to that it is known for government regulation and policies that are constantly changing (Zhang, Chen, Chen & Ang, 2014). The Chinese leadership style is characteristic by paternalism and authority. An authoritarian leadership might lead to negative responses from the employees. It may also reduce the uncertainty an employee feels (Wu & Liao, 2013; Chen & Kao, 2009). Wu and Wang (2012) state that Confucianism has affected the Chinese leadership. Confucianism is an immutable hierarchy where the employees do not question the obedience.

Furthermore, Chinese leadership can be described as a parent-child relationship between the leader and the follower (Kong, 2009). Kong (2009) describes three different reasons why this might have been manifested in China. He says that people are cautious in interpersonal relations, that there is a hierarchical order and that people are self-seeking due to the unpredictable environment. People that are self-seeking put their own individualistic interests in the first room. Furthermore, Kong (2009) argues that a parent-child leadership may decrease an employee's motivation and willingness to improve.

3.3.2 Leadership across cultures
According to Hoppe (2004) the historical and political situation in a culture reflects how leadership is valued and/or defined in that specific country. Hoppe (2004) gives an example of this by looking at old China where they used the term chun-tzu. Chun-tzu refers to a highly educated person who through broad knowledge within his or her area earned the opportunity or obligation to help run the country. The
term is not used in today's China, but fragments of the concept is still existing in the language (Hoppe, 2004).

Some decades ago the advice given on doing businesses abroad was to adapt to the new culture (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). The implicit advice was to say “when in Rome, do as the Romans do”. But, that saying does not feel modern and applicable in today's global society. There are interactions between cultures in yet another country, which provide people with new cultures without even visiting different countries (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003). Thus, the extent of cultural familiarity is narrow. According to Hofstede (1980) and Bass (1990) one may be careful when applying Western leadership theory to a society that is not characterized by a Western culture. According to Weiss (1994) different strategies can be implemented depending on how much knowledge one has about the other culture. If the leader has a lot of knowledge about the culture, he or she can avoid cultural differences through embracing how the other culture is doing things. If the leader has little or no knowledge about the culture he or she rather induce a third part to help with the culture barriers (Weiss, 1994).

Hanges et al. (2016) state that a greater interest has been created to understand what happens when a leader's followers come from a different culture. According to the GLOBE, the majority of different leadership attributes and behaviors are related to the culture (Dorfman, Javidan, Hanges, Dastmalchian & House, 2012). Because of the globalization and the demands regarding deadlines, technology and competition the interest of a global leadership is increasing. Leaders therefore work more with followers from a different culture, which has created different expectations than before on leadership. These global leaders do usually switch between the native and global mindset (Hanges et al., 2016).

According to Schneider and Barsoux (2003) knowledge about other cultures can be increased by making cultural profiles. The profiles should be created not only by the familiar culture but also by the foreign one. This will provide the organization with similarities that can be used as bridges to communicate more easily. Through this the organization also can identify potential conflicts that can be caused by differences in the different profiles (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003).
Leaders who operate in foreign countries need to develop an environment where it is accepted to have different values. Furthermore, a cross-cultural leader also has to create a flexible and understanding atmosphere. That will improve teamwork and decrease conflicts within the organization (Castaneda, Bateh & Heyliger, 2013).

Furthermore, Schneider and Barsoux (2003) argue that the increased global experience contributes to an uncertainty for the leader. The leader cannot assume that a person from one nation has the same cultural preferences as another person from the same nation. If a leader assume that a person has one nationality based on name, accent or physical appearance that would be quite misleading (Schneider & Barsoux, 2003).
4 Empirical findings

The empirical material has been conducted through 12 interviews, four interviews with leaders and eight interviews with followers. An introduction to this chapter includes a brief presentation of the studied companies. The empirical findings are divided into three different sections: Culture, organizational culture and leadership/followership.

4.1 Presentations of the companies

In order for the reader to understand what kind of companies that has been studied, a short presentation of each company will follow below.

4.1.1 Tetra Pak

Tetra Pak was founded in 1951 by Dr. Ruben Rausing in Sweden. Tetra Pak is today one of three companies in the Tetra Laval Group (Tetra Pak, 2016). Tetra Pak has developed an assortment of packages for liquid food products. They do also offer a variety of processing and packaging technologies for use with a broad selection of products, for example ice cream, cheese, fruit, vegetables and pet food. Tetra Pak delivers systems for processing, packaging and delivery, designed to enhance the use of resources. The different systems are developed to protect the products and to handle them gently, but also to decrease the levels of raw material and energy during the manufacturing to contribute to a better environment. Tetra Pak has more than 23 000 employees worldwide (Tetra Pak, 2016).

4.1.2 Atlas Copco

Atlas Copco was founded in 1873 in Stockholm, Sweden. Atlas Copco provides sustainable productivity solutions by offering the customers innovative vacuum solutions, compressors, air treatment systems, power tools, assembly systems and construction and mining equipment (Atlas Copco, 2016). The company is world leading as an industry benchmark. They are doing business with more than 180 countries. Further, the company has more than 44 000 employees all around the world (Atlas Copco, 2016).
4.1.3 IKEA
IKEA's vision is to "create a better everyday life for the many people" with their business idea "to offer a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at prices so low that as many people as possible will be able to afford them". IKEA was founded 1943 by Ingvar Kamprad in Småland, Sweden. Today IKEA has 328 warehouses and 155,000 employees worldwide (IKEA, 2016).

4.2 Cultural differences
All of the leaders got an opportunity to transfer abroad within their company. They all felt that they could contribute with something and that they would develop as people. Why the Chinese followers chose to work for a Swedish company was in due to the different culture compared to the strict Chinese culture. There are big differences, but also some similarities between the Chinese and Swedish culture. Those differences and similarities are presented below.

4.2.1 Swedish culture
According to two of the leaders and one follower, the culture in Sweden is very open. The Swedish people have a good social-welfare. One of the followers says that Swedish people have a high living standard. Another follower says that the gap between rich and poor is very small in Sweden compared to China. A leader states that Swedish people are quite good at adapting to new places and situations. Sweden is also an international country and the Swedish people have a good ability to co-operate with others. Additionally, Swedes are also quite innovative. According to two followers, Swedes are structured and like to show up on time. A big difference between Swedish culture and Chinese culture, according to one of the leaders, is that in Sweden the organizations have a labor union that underpins them. Another leader and a follower say that in Swedish culture there is a clear job description with more focus on the process and not the result.

When two of the leaders and one follower describe Swedish culture they describe it as a country where the people are equal and were people do not make any differences because of a job title or position. One leader and one follower mention that in Sweden you do not build social relationships at work in the same way as Chinese people do. A follower thinks that people with Swedish culture easier work
with people that they do not know. A common answer from the followers is that they think that Swedish people separate work life with private life and that there is a good balance between them.

One leader and two followers argue that Swedish people do not want to distinguish themselves from others, they want to be like everybody else. Swedish people are also very aware of things and they want others to like them. Swedes do not like conflicts and they want to please everyone, according to a leader and a follower. Another leader says that in Sweden people also talks about everything, both good and bad things in order to learn from their mistakes and therefore to develop. This is agreed by two of the followers. According to the majority of the followers there are a lot of discussions in the Swedish culture and a lot of meetings. They want to discuss everything and therefore it takes a long time to make decisions, thus the Swedish culture is more long-term focused. One of the followers states that Swedish people are very direct when communicating. A leader says that the Swedish culture is characterized by trust, people tend to trust each other after a very short time.

4.2.2 Chinese culture

When it comes to Chinese culture, two of the leaders describe it as a culture that is characterized by a big family responsibility. What is seen from all of the interviews is that family is really important. The family puts a huge pressure on the child and also decides whom to marry. It is the husband's family that raises the children. Family is the most important factor in life and people have a huge loyalty to their family. A common answer is that Chinese culture is characterized by a lot of hierarchy. One leader and one follower think that the Chinese people tend to make a difference on people depending on which position they have.

A common response from the leaders is that they think that China as a country is really strict, autarchic and closed. They also argue for China being affected by a strong leader. Two of the followers say that China is a really bureaucratic country. One leader and two followers think that a big difference in the Chinese and the Swedish culture is that it takes a really long time to create trust in China. It is big focus on relationship buildings in Chinese culture. According to one of the leaders you need to build a good social relationship instead of only a work related
relationship to get trust. Several followers state that Chinese people like to combine private life and work life to get more involvement with the family in the company.

One leader thinks that the Chinese people are more collectivistic when it comes to family and their family responsibility, but when it comes to work Chinese people are more individualistic and do not like to work in teams. Most of the interviewees agree with this, but one follower thinks that it depends on one's personality. According to both leaders and followers Chinese people do not like to share what he or she has accomplished with others in a group. They prefer taking all the good credits by themselves and to blame the less good things on the group. The majority of the followers say that they prefer working in teams, but when it comes to Chinese people overall they are more individualistic.

“One tree in a forest will never survive when the wind comes. Teamwork is everything.”
(Follower 6)

One leader and one follower say that in China people do not want to talk about the bad things they have experienced. They always talk about good things and tries to hide bad things. Another follower says that Chinese people do not want to express their feelings. Chinese people communicate indirect and they tend to go around things. The Chinese people also make fast decisions, according to most of the followers. One of the leaders agrees, she thinks that the first part in the decision-making is really fast in China, but that the second part is slower and vice versa in Sweden. Two of the followers argue that Chinese people are not that structure and do not plan everything ahead like Swedes do. One of the leaders and one of the followers say that in China people are more result-oriented. Chinese people tend to follow but how they reach the result is up to the individual.

A difference between the Swedish and the Chinese culture is that in China there is a lot of focus on education. According to two of the interviewees Chinese people tend to work fewer years at the same workplace than Swedish people do. What can be seen from the interviews with Chinese followers is that they have stayed within the company for a longer time than an average Chinese employee. A leader states that
Chinese people are very ambitious, which is agreed by a follower who mentions that Chinese people work really hard. Everybody that we have interviewed thinks that they are quite open to new situations, except from one follower that says that she first may refuse and get nervous. She likes to plan things ahead. Even though this is true for her, she thinks that the answers are different for different people. According to one of the leaders life gets complicated when you are not flexible. It is important to “go with the flow” and to have a reasonable level of ambition. The laws in China tend to change regularly, which makes Chinese people flexible. One follower says that unpredictable situations are a part of life that people need to accept and adapt to. Another follower believes that both Swedish and Chinese people thinks the same about unpredictable situations. They want to take chances and sometimes they may fail, but he would say that Chinese are not as accepting as Swedes when failing.

According to one follower there is a big gap between rich and poor. Therefore it is a lot of focus on money in the Chinese culture. The majority of the interviewees mention that Chinese people do not have the same ability to adapt to new situations like Swedish people have, for example when traveling and meeting new people. One of the followers says that Chinese people are a bit defensive in new environments. Chinese people tend to distinguish themselves, because they are not that familiar with how to act socially. Two of the leaders think it depends on their big focus on themselves, Chinese people always put themselves in the first room.

“What is in it for me?”
(Leader 3)

Two leaders state that the social-welfare in China is not as developed as in Sweden. When Chinese people get sick it becomes a big economical loss due to their family responsibility. According to one of the leaders there are no labor unions in China, which means that the manager can decide which salary he or she wants without any negotiations. Another leader mentions that in Chinese culture there is a double morale. China as a country is characterized by many laws, but the government does not review these laws and therefore people do not follow them. One of the followers says that Chinese people do not respect the laws, because they want to reach the result as quick as possible. A leader gives a lot of examples of this. Many Chinese
people tend to go before you in line without any reason for it. When you ask them why, they often go back again and do not become upset. He thinks it is because of the time when hunger was a huge problem and when you had to be first in order to get food. A follower agrees with Chinese being eager, both in private life but also in work life.

One of the followers thinks that the new generation in China is different because of the new environment they live in. They live in a more social environment where they get affected by social medias. Work for them is not so important, it is just a way to achieve the goal.

4.3 Organizational culture

Chinese employees are dominated in all of the Swedish companies, but in some of the organizations there are employees from other nations as well. Every company uses English as a common language to communicate with each other internally. The reason why Swedish employees and leaders are presented in China is because the organizations want to implement the Swedish culture abroad as well. What is in common for all of the followers is that they all like the organizational culture in Swedish companies. The management is more supportive and open compared to the Chinese management style. Another similarity between the different studied companies organizational culture is that it is based on a combination between Chinese and Swedish culture. A follower thinks that in a macro level it is affected by Swedish culture, but since the company is established in China it also has a Chinese influence.

One leader thinks that communication and cooperation within her organization is based on Swedish culture, whilst achieving result and fulfill goals are more Chinese. The organization is more hierarchical then a pure Swedish organization and less hierarchical then a pure Chinese organization. Two of the followers stress that the organizational culture is more affected by the management than of a specific countries culture. In this case the manager is Swedish and therefore it is indirect affected by the Swedish culture.
Further, the organizational culture is based on communication and teamwork. That is something the company works a lot with in order for the employees to communicate more and work together as a group. One leader states that she tries to communicate with everyone in the organization in order to understand the entire organization. A common answer for the interviewees is that the organizational culture is transparent and decentralized, where everybody can talk to everybody. In one company the interviewees argue that the positions are a bit hierarchal, but that does not mean that they cannot talk to each other. They also say that the Swedish culture makes it very open. A follower compare the organization with Facebook, everybody connects to everybody. But he argues that this creates an environment where everyone gets too much information, and you have to choose which information is the most relevant and important for you and the company.

“It is like Facebook, everybody connects with everybody.”

(Follower 1)

One leader says that he tries to push down the decisions as close to the problem as possible, whereas many followers argue that their organizational culture creates empowerment for the employees. One of the leaders agrees with this and says that it is simplicity in the organization where the employees are free to act within the established rules of the organization. One follower thinks that the organizational culture is based on family values, it is a people oriented organization. The company works a lot with values and the common principles in order for all employees to share the same values.

4.4 Leadership and followership

What characterize the Swedish leaders view on leadership is that it is all about the people within the organizations. They like to empower and motivating employees in order to create long-term results. In order to understand the correlation between a leader and a follower we have chosen to ask the leaders to state their pros and cons and for the followers to state their leaders pros and cons. What can be seen from the result is that what a leader think of him/herself is true from what the followers think about them. Therefore, we argue that the leadership at all of the interviewed companies is an agreed relation between the leader and the follower.
4.4.1 Swedish leadership

All of the interviewees have mentioned that Swedish leadership is long-term focused, hence decisions within Swedish companies tend to take long time. One of the followers thinks that meetings take a lot of time because Swedish people want everybody to say what they think. According to all interviewees the Swedish leadership is known for its transparency and openness. It is also known for their direct way of communicating. One follower's impression of the Swedish leadership style is that everybody is open to say what he or she has on his or her mind. Two of the followers describe that Swedish leaders have an ability to talk to everybody, not only managers. What is true for all the followers is that they believe that their Swedish leaders are able to motivate and empower them. One of the followers says that her boss is very people oriented and supports development. One of the leaders thinks that Swedish leadership is characterized by decentralized style where everybody is treated the same.

Not only do the leaders themselves think that they are good to empower the followers. The majority of the followers argue that their Swedish leader is qualified at giving them responsibility in order for them to develop. One of the leaders says that he wants to be a coach for his employees. Another leader describes this in a good way. She does not need to be the one that is walking first. She rather makes good presumptions for the employees so that someone else instead takes the lead. Another common characteristic for the leaders is that they excel at communicating. According to many followers their leader has an ability of talking to everybody, not only other managers. What is also a common statement from the followers is that they believe that their manager gives direct information, which reduce guessing. One of the followers says that her leader challenge her, but also makes you believe in yourself. One of the leader mentions that he wants to make as few decisions as possible in order for the problems to be solved as close to the problems as possible.

Another follower also believes that her leader is a typical Swedish boss. She says that he is very people oriented and supports development. He trusts the employees and gives constructive feedback. One of the followers mentions that one of his leaders advantages is that he is a good listener, involves people and that he is very open, which is approved by the leader who also see himself as open. One leader
says that he is good at listening to his employees, which is agreed by his followers who describe their leader as supportive and helpful.

4.4.2 Chinese leadership
Both leaders and followers state that the Chinese leadership is based on hierarchy. According to one of the leaders Chinese managers do not speak to blue-collar workers. The majority of the followers say that a common saying in China is that “boss is always right” in the Chinese culture. Two of the followers describe that if one has a managing position in China everybody thinks that what that person says is right. All of the interviewees say that when a Chinese manager tells you to do something, you should just do it. One of the followers mentions that it is rare for people with a Chinese manager to speak out loudly what they think, because a Chinese manager does not like to be questioned.

"Go right! There is no other way!"
(Leader 3)

According to two of the followers the leadership in China is quite indirect, you sometimes have to guess what the manager means. A leader mentions that this has affected Chinese employees. She argues that the hardest part for her when talking to a Chinese employee is to figure out what they do not say, because that is usually the problem.

One of the leaders argues that numbers rather than people characterize the Chinese leadership. One follower agrees and says that Chinese leadership is result oriented. Another follower states that Chinese managers have a tendency to change their mind in the last minute. According to many of the interviewees you become a manager in China if you have a lot of knowledge about something. One of the followers says that Chinese companies sometimes choose employees according to your family background and not because of your education or how you fit in to the company.

A follower says that a Chinese manager becomes angry if problem arises. Therefore, people with a Chinese manager try to solve problem by themselves and
they do not tell anyone else about it. The followers argue that Chinese leaders are really demanding and one of the followers also says that they can be quite aggressive. One of the leaders gives a good example of this. When she was new in China two employees came to her and told her that the inventory did not match with the result. The leader thought that she had to tell the manager, because that is what she was taught to do in Sweden. If something did not match the result you had to tell the manager in order to make it right. If it is not right in the storage, it will create problems in the future. So the leader went to the manager and told him about it, but she did not mention any names. The manager did not say anything to her. After a while the two employees came to her and asked her why she told the manager. The manager had become furious. The two employees said to the leader “maybe we should have told you earlier how we communicate here”. The leader thought that everyone wanted it to be right, but the Chinese manager only wanted the right result. The Chinese managers do not say that the employees should write in the wrong number, but he or she wants it to be fixed no matter how you fix it.

4.4.3 Leadership across cultures

Before moving abroad to work in China the leaders had little or no knowledge about the Chinese culture. They all think that being a leader in China is different from being a leader in Sweden. All of the leaders agree that it is easier to use gut feeling in Sweden. In China on the other hand they have to start at zero. In the beginning of their time in China they had no intuition, they have had to develop it throughout the time. Many of the leaders mention that Chinese employees do not ask questions and therefore it is hard to know what they think. Chinese organizations tend to be characterized by a hierarchy. According to one of the leaders there are more formalities and the way you greet people in China is different to how Swedes do. The employees are used to having a big and demanding leader, which can sometimes cause problems in a decentralized, Swedish organization. Furthermore, a common statement from the leaders is that they have learned not to generalize. A Chinese do not have to react in a certain way just because he or she is from China. People react differently because of their different personalities. One of the leaders argues that those who like to have clear directions may not like the climate a Swedish organization has, but others may like it better and therefore stay a longer time.
"Some things are very simple in China while other things are a little bit harder."

(Leader 4)

One of the leaders argues that employees in China are hard working and ambitious. All of the leaders describe how Chinese people tend to work better individualistic than in team, which has been a challenge for the Swedish leaders who all believe that teamwork is the key to success. One leader thinks that Swedish people are better team players than Chinese people are. Another leader describe that Chinese people may be more individualistic, and that it could be because of the past in China where people had to be first in line in order to get food. One of the followers mentions that one cause also could be the "one child politics". A child who has two parents and four grand parents that only care about that child can cause a very bad situation for the child who gets spoiled and only thinks about him or herself.

According to one of the leaders Chinese people do not like to make fools out of themselves and rather not make mistakes. Because of this, you may not get the true answer or a climate in which everyone is open to say what he or she wants. Another leader believes that the closed environment in China has contributed to this. In China you believe that you get the information you need, and you do not question that information. In Sweden on the other hand people tend to criticize more. A common opinion from the leaders is that you not only get more feedback, but also more constructive criticism in Sweden than in China. One of the leaders believes that it is hard to trust people here in China. Before she moved to China she was quite naive and thought good about everybody, but now she feels that there are few people that she really can trust. Another leader agrees and mentions that it is hard to know if people tell the truth or if they say something just because you have a management position. Therefore he has to give himself more constructive feedback in China than in Sweden.

The leaders have different strategies and tools in order to handle cultural differences. All of them are trying to be as transparent as possible. They want to be role models for their employees. One of the leaders strategies is to empower his subordinates so that they can influence the employees in a certain way. He wants a
decentralized organization, and therefore he give them leadership training. Two of the leaders engage employees in order for them to develop and make changes by themselves. Another leader uses communication in order to avoid misunderstandings. He talks a lot about both good and bad things. Furthermore, he creates small teams so that the employees feel comfortable when speaking. Another leader also uses communication as his way of avoiding cultural discrepancies. He is structured and uses symbols as a tool to make it understandable for everybody. What is true for the leaders is that they use technical tools, as video cameras, in order to see the body language and not only hear one's voice when communicating from abroad. One of the leaders uses a transparent and open climate to avoid cultural confusion. An example is that people tend to look up to her and always call her boss. She has told her employees to call her by name and to sit down, instead of stand, when they talk to her. Additionally, all of the leaders have created an environment where it is okay to make mistakes. One of the followers agrees with this, she thinks that Swedish companies have a transparency where it is okay to fail.

"Fail is the platform for people to improve and develop."

(Follower 4)

4.4.3.1 Adjust leadership and followership

What is true for all the interviewees are that they think it takes time to understand each other's cultures. Even though it takes time, the leaders have adjusted their leadership style to the new culture as well as the followers who have adjusted to their leaders culture. Followers that have been within the company for a long time, or have experience from another foreign company, tend to adapt easier and in a faster way than followers that has not.

All of the leaders believe that they have adjusted their leadership style to the Chinese followers. Three of the leaders do not believe that they have changed their leadership style, the forth leader thinks that she is being harder and more direct in China than in Sweden. One of the leaders states that he knows his pros and cons and therefore he adjust his leadership to different personalities. From being a leader in China he thinks that he has become more open and structured. One of the followers states that his Swedish manager has adjusted his leadership to the different culture
but the leader is still the same person. A follower argues that his leader has merged the different cultures together. His leader is curious and asks why things are in a certain way. After a year of working in Shanghai two of the leaders started to take Chinese classes, in order to adapt to the culture. One of the followers states that studying the Chinese language also includes studying the Chinese culture, which is one way of adapting to a different country. In some areas, like security, one leader thinks that she needs to secure that everything is according to Swedish norms. She adjusts her leadership to different areas, but also to different people. Her followers agree with her and believe that she is good at adjusting her leadership style.

A common answer from the followers is that they have been affected by having a Swedish leader. One of the followers feels that he is empowered to do things and if he has some good ideas he is able to implement them. One of the followers mentions that she has changed a lot, she now likes to listen to others and she also wants to understand people's difficulties. Furthermore, she has become more flexible which has contributed to an easier private- and work life. Another follower thinks that he has become a better listener and he has also become more analytical when making decisions. He also says that he has approved his ability to share things with others in order to get a deeper understanding of problems. Working with a Swedish leader has not only affected another followers work life, but also his private life. One of the followers describe how he feels touched when his leader cares about how he is feeling and that has influenced his way of living life, which also has affected his family. He gives an example where his wife has adapting the Swedish way of leading people. This is agreed by many of the followers, who say that they have been affected both at work but also as a person. One follower believe that for the better, Western companies has changed China as a country, at least in Shanghai. It has created a more open-minded mindset and changed the way Chinese people do things. Furthermore, he argues that with diversity people can learn both good and bad things from each other.
5 Analysis

Followed an interpretation of the theory and the empirical findings is presented. A pattern-matching system is used in order for us to find different patterns and be able to see differences but also similarities. First of all we present an analysis of the Swedish culture followed by the Chinese culture. Secondly the organizational culture is analyzed. Last of all we present the analysis of leadership and followership.

5.1 Swedish culture

From the findings we can see that Sweden has a well-developed social-welfare. Lundgren (2016) supports this when he says that there is focus on the society in Sweden. One follower states that there is a small gap between rich and poor in Sweden and another follower says that the living standard for the average person in Sweden is quite high, which can be connected to good social-welfare. What is not supported by the theory is that there are labor unions in Sweden that underpins the employees and the employers. One of the leaders thinks that this is a great difference from the Chinese society, where there are no negotiations with a third part.

Lindahl (2012) states that Sweden is an egalitarian country where people treat everybody the same. This aligns with three of the interviewees who also state that Sweden is a country where the people are equal. Furthermore they say that in Sweden people do not make any differences because of their job title or position. A connection to Hofstede's first cultural dimension – power distance can therefore also be seen. Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) state that the power distance in Sweden is very small and that people talk to everybody no matter what position or status they have. There is also an openness and transparency between managers and employees. According to Lee, Scandura and Sharif (2014) that creates a shorter distance between employees and their managers and therefore it also creates a better quality of the communication. This can be found in the empirical findings. One
leader and two followers argue that Swedish people talk about both good and bad things with everyone and the majority of the followers say that there are a lot of meetings in the Swedish culture. There is therefore an openness in the Swedish culture and Swedish people are willing to share and learn from each other. This is supported by Svensson (2009), who says that Swedes are open and direct when communicating, which also another of the followers agrees with.

According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) Sweden is somewhere in between long- and short-term oriented. The majority of the interviewees say that Swedes want to discuss everything and therefore it takes a long time to make decisions. Thus, from the empirical findings we can see a connection to long-term orientation. One connection that can be made to the short-term orientation is that Swedes want to talk about both good and bad things that has happened in the past, and from that they can develop in the present. Therefore, a pattern can be seen between Hofstede's study and the empirical findings, that both shows that Sweden is somewhere in between short- and long-term orientation.

Sweden as an equal country can also be seen in Hofstede's third dimension, masculinity versus feminism. According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) Sweden is the most feminine country in Hofstede's study. One of the leaders thinks that Swedish people have a good ability to co-operate with other people and this aligns with Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov (2011) that state that feminism is emphasized by cooperation and having a good relationship with the manager (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). Lundgren (2016) states that in Sweden, people tend to develop trust to others after a very short time. A connection can be made to the empirical material. One leader and one follower agree and say that Swedish people tend to work easily with people they do not know. We think that the fast-developed trust in Sweden has a connection to the ability of cooperating with others even if the people do not know each other. If you trust people around you, it creates a better opportunity to cooperate. Another thing that makes the cooperation in Sweden easier is if you show up on time. According to two of the followers it is important for Swedes to be structured and punctual, which also is highlighted by Svensson (2009).
The second dimension in Hofstede's study argues for Sweden being a more individualistic than a collectivistic country (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2011). Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) stress that Swedish people therefore are concerned about having a good relationship with his or her manager. According to Daun (in Svensson, 2009) Swedes would like to please everyone and they want to be as neutral as possible, which can be a reason why Swedes want to create a good relationship with colleagues. Another reason that can be seen in our empirical findings is that, as two of the interviewees say, Swedish people avoid conflicts. An assumption can therefore be seen in why Swedish people want to create good relationships, they want to be liked by everybody and therefore they avoid conflicts. Although Swedes like to create good relationships at work, one leader and one follower say that Swedish people do not build social relationships at work. A pattern can be created to Svensson (2009) that says that Swedish people like to separate work and private life. That can be one reason why Swedes do not like to build social relationships at work. Another connection can be made to the dimension of masculinity versus feminism by Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) who state that people with a high level of feminism, as Sweden, work in order to create a good living and has an ability to balance work and private life. This is something that can be seen in the empirical findings, which three of the followers agree with.

According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) Sweden is a country with relatively low uncertainty avoidance. One leader says that you have to be flexible in order for life to not be complicated. All of the leaders are flexible and open to new circumstances, which can be seen in them working abroad.

5.2 Chinese culture
A similarity between the theory and the empirical findings is that a hierarchy characterizes China. This is shown in Fang (2005), but also in Hofstede's first dimension – power distance. According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) China have a high power distance where people treat each other differently regarding which status they have in society. This aligns with what one leader and one follower say. Furthermore Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) state that the


power distance creates an authoritarian and paternalistic relationship within the hierarchy. Two of the leaders support this and say that a strong leader affects China.

A great power distance can create a strict environment with a lot of laws. One of the leaders says that China is a closed and strict country, whereas two of the followers say that China is a bureaucratic country. Some of the other interviewees approve this but they also say that it is a double morale in the Chinese society. They argue that there are a lot of rules but people do not follow them. This is something that we have experienced during our time in China. We agree with one follower, who says that Chinese people wants to reach the result as quickly as possible. This can be seen in the traffic, but also when buying a train ticket or entering the metro. A connection can also be made to the third dimension in Hofstede's findings, masculinity versus feminism. China is a masculine country, which means that they are emphasized by achievement and competition (Blanton & Barbuto, 2005). The masculinity can be one cause to why Chinese always wants to be first. Furthermore, the tough environment might have caused that Chinese people do not want to share good credits, instead they prefer getting the recognition themselves. This is seen in two of the interviews, but also in Hofstede's study (2011). Another connection that can be made to masculinity is that Chinese people are career oriented and have a high level of education, which is seen in both the theoretical framework and in our empirical findings. One of the followers argues for the new generation being different from the old generation. The new generation live in a more social environment where travelling and connecting to other people is becoming more important. The follower states that work is only a method to achieve the goal. When people become more aware of the surroundings they also become more aware of different behaviors and cultures. Since the world is getting more diverse it will probably look different in the future.

According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) countries that have a high power distance are also more collectivistic. This is true for China. A common answer from the interviewees' is that family is an important factor in the Chinese culture, which also is endorsed by Burns (2013) and Lundgren (2016). Although we can see a pattern in the theory and the empirical findings of China being collectivistic, we can also see a difference. One leader thinks that Chinese people
are individualistic when it comes to work, which is approved by the majority of the interviewees. They say that Chinese people overall are more individualistic at work, which can be connected to the tendency of wanting to take all of the good credits by themselves, as we mentioned above. Therefore, one can say that Chinese people are collectivistic when it comes to family life, but they have a more individualistic focus when it comes to work-life. Hence, a disagreement with Hofstede's study can be seen.

As seen from the theory and the empirical findings relationships are really important in the Chinese culture. According to one leader and two followers it takes a long time to create trust in China. This can be connected to guanxi, which says that relationships are built upon trust between each other (Wang, 2001). In China relationships are seen as something that should last a long time, which can be connected to why Chinese likes to combine work life and private life. A common answer from the interviewees is that it is important to build social relationships in order to create trust and involve family. This can also be connected to China being a collectivistic country (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011).

Another thing that can be associated to building trust through relationships is that Chinese people do not want to lose their face, which is agreed by Gabrenya and Hwang (1996). One of the leaders and one follower give an indication about this when they say that Chinese people only talk about good things. Another follower also mentions this when he says that Chinese tend to go around things when communicating.

According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) China has a long-term focus. We would say that this is true when it comes to future savings and focus on money, as one of the follower mentions. What differs is that in the workplace, Chinese people tend to act in a short-term oriented way. A common answer from the followers is that Chinese people are fast at making decisions. One leader agrees but says that the second part of the decision-making is slower. Another thing that differs from Hofstede's findings of China being long-term oriented is that two of the followers argue that Chinese people are not structured and do not plan things ahead.
According to Hofstede's study China also has low uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). A pattern can be created with the empirical findings where we found that the majority of the followers are open to new situations. As Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) say the feeling of uncertainty do not need to be shared by everyone in a society. This aligns with one of the followers that say that the reaction depends on which personality one has. Although the Chinese followers may be good at adapting to new situations, two leaders argue that they are not as good as Swedes to adapt.

5.3 Organizational culture
According Schein (2010) an organizational culture in based on artifacts. One common artifact in every company is that they all use English to communicate. Other artifacts that can be seen from the empirical material is that the climate is open and decentralized. All of the interviewees say that the organizational culture is based on both Swedish and Chinese values. One of them thinks that the communication and cooperation is Swedish whereas the way of achieving result and goals is more Chinese. Eaton (2015) states that an organizational culture is either result-oriented or people-oriented. But, what can be seen when it is a mixture between different cultures is that it can be both result-oriented and people-oriented. Although we can see that the organizational culture is a combination between the different cultures, we can also see that it is very affected by teamwork and communication. Teamwork and communication may be a way to reach result, but it is more likely a way of being people-oriented. This is approved by one of the followers who think that the organizational culture is based on family values and therefore is a people-oriented organization.

The organizations are more hierarchical than a pure Swedish organization, but less than a pure Chinese organization. This can be combined with Eaton (2015) who says that the organizational culture is hierarchal or decentralized. The interviewees argue that the organizational culture is transparent and decentralized, but one of the leaders says that the positions still are hierarchal in his company. This makes one believe that the organizational culture is in some way hierarchal but also decentralized. Therefore we would say that it is a mixture between the different cultures in this dimension as well.
The reason why Swedish employees and leaders are working in the Swedish organizations abroad is because they want to increase knowledge about the organizational values. All of the companies work a lot with values and to have common principals because they want all of the employees to share the same values. According to Schein (2010) a group's shared values like this are seen as espoused believes and values. We can see that the organizational cultures are based on values such as teamwork and communication. Additionally, all of the companies want to create an environment where it is okay to fail.

Schein (2010) argue that the organizational culture is affected by basic underlying assumptions. The interviewees say that the organizational culture is open and transparent. This can be seen as a basic underlying assumption within the organizations. One follower compares his organization with Facebook, he says that everybody connects with everybody. Although the openness can be seen as an artifact, we argue that it is also an underlying assumption because it is the core in all of the organizations.

As seen above, all of the organizations focus on teamwork, communication and transparency. They try to put down decisions as close to the problem as possible in order to create empowerment for the employees. Because of this we can see that the organizations have an internal focus, which according to Eaton (2015) is characterized by internal satisfaction and independency.

Although the Swedish and the Chinese culture affect all of the companies, we can see that each company is unique. We think, in accordance with Eaton (2015) that it is the people within the organization that creates the culture.

5.4 Leadership and followership
As mentioned in the empirical findings, we argue that the leadership at all of the companies is an agreed relation between the leader and the follower. This aligns with Sveningsson and Alvesson (2010) who say that the leader's goals have to collide with the follower's goals in order to create a good leadership. Furthermore, Sveningsson and Alvesson (2010) state that a follower is following because he or she wants to. When conducting the interviews with the followers, we could tell that
they wanted to follow, even though they have a position that force them to do so. This can be seen from Follower 1, who says that he is lucky to have such a good manager.

5.4.1 Swedish leadership
All of the followers' think that the Swedish leadership enables them to make their own decisions. One of the leaders argues that Swedish leadership is decentralized. This aligns with Sjöborg (1986) who says that decisions are made together with the employees and the decisions are usually decentralized. This also relates to Lundgren (2016) who stresses that Swedish leadership includes the followers. One of the followers thinks that her leader is helpful and supportive and another follower says that the Swedish way of leading is people-oriented, which is related to Hamrin, Johansson and Jahn (2016), who also state that the Swedish leadership involves the followers. The majority of the interviewees think that teamwork is important, from this we can create a pattern to Hamrin, Johansson and Jahn (2016) who say that the Swedish leadership is built on teamwork. Another pattern can be seen when talking about development potential. The followers claim that they are giving good development potential from their Swedish leader and Lundgren (2016) argues that the Swedish leadership generates learning and responsibility. This can also be seen in how one of the leaders wants to coach the followers and create possibilities for them to take more responsibility and make own decisions.

Sjöborg (1986) stresses that efficiency and high productivity characterizes the Swedish leadership. The followers on the other hand do not think that Swedish leaders are being efficient when having meetings for hours. According to Sjöborg (1986) Swedish leaders want to solve conflicts efficiently. This correlates with one of the leaders' who says that he tries to push down the decisions as close to the problems as possible, which might be one way of handling conflicts efficiently. The long meetings may be another way for the leaders to avoid conflicts and can therefore be seen as efficient anyway. During the meetings the leaders enable the followers to say what they want and think, which moreover can be a way of avoiding conflicts. That can also be connected to Lundgren (2016) who state that Swedish leaders allow their followers to question what he or she says.
Transparency and openness are two factors that all of the interviewees have mentioned when speaking about Swedish leadership. This can be connected to Hofstede's study and his first dimension, power distance. Sweden and its leadership with a lower power distance are characterized by an openness and transparency (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2011). A connection can also be made to the followers who all think that the Swedish leaders are emphasized by a good way of communicating and an ability to listen to what others have to say. The good way of communicating is shown in how the leaders give direct information, which one of the followers says reduces guessing.

5.4.2 Chinese leadership
According to Zhang, Chen, Chen and Ang (2014) there is a high uncertainty in the Chinese leadership in due to changes in the legislation, which is supported by a follower who says that it is common for Chinese managers to change their decisions quite often. From our finding we can see that hierarchy characterizes the Chinese leadership where managers do not talk to subordinates, which aligns with Kong (2009) and Wu and Wang (2012). Wu and Wang (2012) state that the hierarchy disallows followers to question their manager. A pattern can be made with the empirical findings, where the majority of the interviewees say that the Chinese leadership style does not allow followers to question the manager. A common saying in China is that “boss is always right”. Even though the hierarchy appears as strict, it might reduce the uncertainty amongst some employees (Wu & Liao, 2013; Chen & Kao, 2009).

According to Kong (2009) the hierarchical order and people being egotistic in due to the unpredictable environment can be a reason to why the Chinese leadership is defined as a parent-child relationship. Kong (2009) also argues that these people put their own interest first. This can be seen in the example where the Chinese manager only wanted the right result and did not care how the employees achieved the result. Therefore, he put his own personal interest before others. This can also be connected to two of the interviewees that say that the Chinese leaders are result oriented. Additionally, we can also see that the leaders are egoistical since they may become angry when problem arises. Some of the followers think that the Chinese leadership style is demanding and sometimes aggressive. This can be seen as
something negative and might decrease the employees' motivation, which can be connected to Kong (2009) that says that the parent-child leadership in China can diminish motivation amongst employees. Kong (2009) also states that the parent-child leadership might be caused by Chinese people being careful in social relations. This can relate to the indirect communication that some of the followers state is common for Chinese managers. Not being direct when communication can be one way of being cautious and not expose oneself in interpersonal relations.

Another finding is that in China you become a manager if you are proficient within your area. This is supported by Wu and Liao (2013) and Chen and Kao (2009), that argue for the Chinese leadership being affected by authority. Having authority can incorporate with having power and a lot of knowledge. Although knowledge is of great importance for becoming a manager, one of the followers states that Chinese employers sometimes hire because of a person's family background.

### 5.4.3 Leadership across cultures

The leaders think that it is different to be a leader in China compared to Sweden. According to Hoppe (2004) it is the history and the political situation in one culture that reflects how leadership is valued. This may be the case why a leader in the Chinese culture is viewed different from in Sweden. All of the leaders say that it is easier to use your intuition in Sweden, because you are familiar with that culture. In China they all have had to start at zero and develop their gut feeling. Another thing that one of the leaders thinks is different in China compared to Sweden is that there are greater formalities in China. The way you greet people is also different. Another thing that the leaders mentions as big differences, is that Chinese employees are used to have a big demanding leader, which is the opposite to how the leaders want to work, in a more decentralized way.

Dorfman et al. (2012) stress that leadership is characterized by culture. This can be seen from both followers and leaders. One of the leaders states that Chinese people do not want to lose their face, which is a part of their culture. One difference from the Swedish and the Chinese culture is that the leaders get more negative and positive feedback in Sweden than in China. This may be because of the more open climate in Sweden. The majority of the leaders believe that it is quite hard to trust
Chinese, because they do not know if the followers say something just because the leaders have a managing position or because they really mean it. This can be connected to Hofstede's power distance. China has a great power distance where people with leading positions have authority (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2011). Because of this, one of the leaders states that he has to give himself constrictive feedback. Another thing that can be connected to culture is that the followers are hardworking. From this we can see a pattern with Hofstede's third dimension, masculinity versus feminism. The leaders believe that teamwork is the best way to achieve goals. Teamwork has not always been the natural way of reaching goals for the followers, hence the leaders say that Chinese people tend to work better individual. This can also be connected to culture and to the past in China. According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2011) China is a collectivistic country, which is true when it comes to the family. But from our findings we can see that Chinese people that are not affected by Swedish culture prefer working more individualistic.

The leaders had little or no knowledge about the Chinese culture before moving abroad. Weiss (1994) argues that a leader can use different strategies depending on how much knowledge the leader has about the culture. If the leader does have a lot of knowledge he argues that it is easier to embrace how the culture works. If not having knowledge about the culture, Weiss (1994) claims that the leader should include a third part. From our empirical findings we cannot see that the leaders have taken help from a third part, although they had little knowledge about the culture. Instead they all use as much transparency as possible. Successful strategies that the leaders practice are that they want to be role models for the employees. They all have in common that they are aiming to empower the employees. Furthermore, two of the leaders way of empowering the employees is to create an environment where the employees get development potential and where they feel free to make decisions by themselves. To manage cultural differences all of the leaders are using communication in one way or another. One of them uses symbols while another set up small teams in order for the employees to feel more comfortable speaking about both good and bad things. Another method that is shared by the leaders is that they do not only want the employees to talk about good and bad things, they also want them to feel that it is allowed to make mistakes. Castaneda, Bateh and Heyliger (2013) argue that leaders should ought to create a climate where different values are
welcome. From this we can see a pattern with the transparent and open atmosphere that the leaders want to create. Furthermore, this can also align with the leaders wanting their followers to talk about everything and allow them to make mistakes. Castaneda, Bateh and Heyliger (2013) also stress that a cross-cultural leader should be understanding and flexible, which moreover aligns with the empirical findings.

Schneider and Barsoux (2003) argue that one way to avoid cultural misunderstandings can be by creating cultural profiles, both from the native and the foreign culture. This is also a strategy to create a better communication between cultures. None of the interviewees have mentioned that they create cultural profiles in order to avoid cultural misunderstandings, which is dissimilar with our theoretical framework. Although they do not do it today, it can be an effective way to understand cultural differences.

The majority of the leaders state that they have learned that you cannot generalize people. Just because a person is from a specific country that does not have to mean that he or she will act in a certain way. This aligns with Schneider and Barsoux (2003) who argue that a person from one nation does not have to have the same cultural preferences as another person from the same nation. Therefore, one could say that people tend to act differently because of their personalities, not which nation they are from.

5.4.3.1 Adjust leadership and followership

Both leaders and followers have adjusted their way of doing things to each other's cultures. This aligns with Schneider and Barsoux (2003) who argue that when coming to a foreign country, you should not just do as they do. Even though the leaders and followers think it takes time to understand each other, they have found a common way. Hofstede (1980) and Bass (1990) argue that leaders from a Western culture have to be cautious when implementing their leadership in a non-Western culture. The leaders have collided the cultures instead of just doing it the Western way. All of the leaders have in different ways integrated the Swedish culture with the Chinese. What can be seen is that followers who are familiar with a foreign company's culture or have worked for the company for a long time adapt faster to the different culture and leadership style.
According to Hanges et al. (2016) global leaders tend to switch their mindset from their national culture to a more global approach. This is somewhat true for the leaders, who believe that they have adjusted their leadership style to the Chinese culture, but not changed it. Although one of the leaders thinks that she has changed her way of leading in China. From this we can see that the leaders have somehow switched to a Chinese approach rather than a global. The leaders have all mentioned that they adjust their leadership style to which situation they are in and also to the different personalities. One of the leaders argues that she has to be more observant in some situations while in other situations it is easier to let go.

Further, Hanges et al. (2016) say that it is significant to be aware of what happens when followers have a leader from a different culture. Therefore we will present in what way the followers have been impacted by having a Swedish leader. The greatest impact that the leaders have had on the followers is that the followers feel more empowered, flexible and open to new things. They feel that they have improved their way of listening to others and also to share both good and bad things. One thing that is true for all of the followers is that although they are Chinese, they prefer working in teams, which may have been a great impact from having a Swedish leader. The majority of the followers say that having a Swedish leader has had a positive impact in both their work life but also their private life.
### 5.5 Summary of the Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish culture</th>
<th>Chinese culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• An equal country where people treat everybody the same, a feminine country with low power distance.</td>
<td>• Hierarchy with a high power distance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It is an openness and transparency in the Swedish culture and Swedish people are direct when communicating.</td>
<td>• Collectivistic when it comes to family and individualistic when it comes to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Swedes want to discuss everything in order to learn.</td>
<td>• Relationships are important and it takes long time to create trust – guanxi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Swedish people balance work life and private life.</td>
<td>• Chinese people do not want to lose their face, they do not want to talk about difficulties and they tend to go around things when communicating.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational culture</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A mix between Swedish and Chinese culture, people-oriented and result-oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Open and decentralized climate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teamwork and communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Swedish leadership</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Decentralized, transparent, supportive and empowering.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Includes the followers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• It takes long time to make decisions, a lot of meetings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Hierarchy, high power distance, result-oriented and they put their own interest first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indirect communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Boss is always right”.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership across cultures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Leadership is characterized by culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More feedback in Sweden than in China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chinese employees are used to have a big demanding leader, which is the opposite of how the Swedish leaders want to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create an environment where different values are welcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communicate about both good and bad things.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjust leadership and followership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Both leaders and followers have adjusted to each other’s cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Together they have created a common way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The followers feel more empowered, flexible and open to new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Although the followers are Chinese, they prefer working in teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Swedish leadership has had a positive impact in the followers’ work life and also in their private life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Summary of the Analysis – own model (2016-04-29).*
6 Conclusions

In this last chapter we answer our research questions. We also present recommendations for future research within culture and leadership. Finally, a personal reflection about the conclusion is given.

6.1 Answers to the research questions

The empirical findings, together with the theoretical framework, have helped us to understand how leaders from one culture can affect people in another culture. Furthermore, the empirical findings have also helped us to gain knowledge in what strategies and tools leaders can use to manage cultural differences. Our first research question was:

**What are the biggest differences between the Swedish culture and the Chinese culture?**

From our theory, empirical findings and analysis we have presented the differences between the two different cultures are that Swedish culture appears as feminine and equal whereas Chinese culture is masculine and has a greater hierarchy. Swedish culture has low power distance and Chinese culture has high power distance. In the Swedish culture people balance work life with private life. Further, Swedish culture includes an open and transparent climate where discussions are commonly. People in the Chinese culture on the other hand do not want to lose their face and tend to go around things when communicating. In the Chinese culture relationships are important but it takes a long time to create trust. In addition to that, China is a collectivistic country, but Chinese people tend to be individualistic at work. Our second research questions was:

**How does a leadership from one culture affect followers in a different culture?**

From our findings we can conclude that culture affects organizational culture and leadership. This is approved by Dorfman et al. (2012), who say that leadership is
characterized by culture. We can see that the organizational culture and leadership have an affect on the followers. Accordingly, from our findings we can see that leadership from one culture does impact people in a different culture. Therefore, it also influences the foreign culture.

Leadership from one culture alters followers in many different ways. The communication is made differently and the followers are affected in the way they communicate. The way relationships are built at work, both between co-workers but also with managers, affect the followers of a different cultures leadership. As a follower you also get affected in how trust is created at the workplace. Furthermore, the different way of communicating, relationship building and how to create trust also have an impact on how conflicts are handled and decisions are made. The way meetings are held have an additional impact on the followers.

A leader from a different culture can inspire the followers' way of being motivated and the level of empowerment they get. It affects whether the employees feel free to make their own decisions or not. Therefore, the decisions and decision making is one way of how the followers get affected. Followers are influenced in how they work with others. The way you work together as a group is different in different cultures, which affect the way of doing things and achieving result within the company.

From our findings we can see that having a leader from a contrasting culture affect the followers both in work life but also private life. Followers get affected in different ways depending on their earlier experiences with foreign companies and cultures. What also is seen from our findings is that people react differently because of their personality and therefore the followers get affected in different ways.

According to Marquardt, Berger and Loan (2004) globalization has resulted in shared values and practices amongst human beings. Marquardt, Berger and Loan (2004) also explain that from increased globalization over the past twenty years people have become more interconnected worldwide through technology, travel and trade. The new generation will be affected in a different way because they are more interconnected and socially active. Because of globalization and a heightened sense of diversity, the future will probably look different. Our third research question was:
What strategies and tools can management apply in order to manage cultural differences?

Different strategies that management can apply are to learn about and create an understanding of the new culture. It is important for managers to not only do as he or she is used to, but also embrace the new culture and try to emerge them together as one. In order to create legitimacy, it is also of importance to show an interest in the new culture. Another strategy that the managers can use in order to manage cultural differences is to use a lot of communication and to be transparent. They can use symbols, technology or other efficient tools to create a good communication.

According to Castaneda, Bateh and Heyliger (2013) managers should create an environment where different values are welcome, which is important to acknowledge when cultures collide. Failing is the platform to improve, therefore managers ought to have an open environment where it is acceptable to make mistakes. Furthermore, a strategy that the management should apply is to be flexible, both in how they work but also how they handle different situations and people.

Another strategy that the management can apply in order to manage cultural differences is in line with Schneider's and Barsoux's (2003) idea about creating cultural profiles, both from the native and the foreign culture. Furthermore, Schneider and Barsoux (2003) argue that a person from one nation does not have to have the same cultural preferences as another person from the same nation. Therefore, one important strategy that the management needs to consider is that a person will not necessarily be a certain way just because he or she comes from a different culture.

According to previous statements, the tools and strategies that can be applied are:

- Create an understanding of the new/other culture.
- Embrace the new culture and emerge the cultures together.
- Communication: use symbols and technology.
- Be transparent and open.
- Welcome different values.
• Create an environment where it is okay to make mistakes.
• Be flexible.
• Create cultural profiles.
• Do not label a person with the different culture.

If the management applies those strategies when leading a different culture, we argue that fewer mistakes and misunderstandings will appear. Furthermore, it will also result in a more efficient organization that can focus on results and development instead of conflicts.

6.2 Future research
The followers in this research have had a Swedish leader for a long time, which may have impacted our conclusions. Therefore, we recommend future research on followers' who have had a Swedish leader for a shorter period of time, and consequently how that affects those followers. As mentioned in our conclusion, different people are motivated in different ways depending on earlier experiences with foreign companies. It would be interesting to see the answers that would occur when having no or little experiences from foreign cultures.

All of the followers we have interviewed have a leading position, which also may have shaped the answers given to our questions. It would be interesting to see how blue-collar workers are affected by having a Swedish leader, although it may not be his or her closest manager. We argue that it would be motivating to see how different levels of employees are altered.

To strengthen our result and to get a broader knowledge about the subject, we recommend conducting research with even more leaders and followers and also with leaders and followers from other cultures than Swedish and Chinese.

6.3 Final reflections
From our findings we can see that people can learn from different cultures. We believe that an array of eclectic values and beliefs can improve the way of working. Cultural differences can also help people to think in new and alternative ways.
Therefore we believe that other cultures have an impact on people and that diversity and/or cultural differences enrich an individual's life.

Before the Chinese followers got in contact with the Swedish culture they were used to doing things in a certain way. From having a Swedish leader they have changed and all of them have been affected by the Swedish leadership. All of the Chinese interviewees told us that they like the way Swedish leaders work. As mentioned in the analysis, the greatest impact the Swedish leaders have had on the followers is their better way of communicating, that the Swedish leaders empower the followers and the transparency within the organization where the followers feel free to say what is on their minds. We believe that open communication, empowerment and transparency are three essential and good characteristics of the Swedish leadership. As Human Resource Management students we encourage communication, transparency and empowerment in order to create a people-oriented organization where everybody is appreciated.

One thing that we believe Swedish organizations can learn from the Chinese way of working is to shorten the time when having meetings. We are aware that long meetings where everybody gets to say what they want might be a way to avoid conflicts. Although it might reduce conflicts, it can also be very time consuming. If implementing a more organized system that shortens the meetings it may result in more efficiency and extra time for other things.

As the name of our thesis suggests, "one tree in a forest will never survive when the wind comes", the followers have been impacted by the Swedish way of working in teams. We believe that this is one of the greatest characteristics of Swedish leadership. Working together in a group, with the contribution of diverse thoughts and ideas, better outcomes will occur. This is due to the overwhelming fact that because both good and bad experiences can be shared, people of different cultures can help each other. If there are many different trees in the forest, they will protect and support each other when the wind comes.
References


Appendix 1 – Leaders Questionnaire

Background

1) Tell us about yourself.
   a. What education do you have?
   b. What is your position?
   c. How many years have you been within the company?
   d. When did you move to China? Why?
   e. What previous work experiences do you have?
   f. For how many years have you had a leading position?

2) Please describe the company that you work for. Why did the company choose to establish in China?

Leadership

1) How would you describe yourself as a leader?
   a. What are your pros and cons?

2) How do you adjust your leadership style to your followers?

3) Have you ever been a leader for a group with the same culture as you? Please describe how that was.

4) How do you feel about being a leader in China?

5) Are there any difficulties in leading a group with a different culture than your own?

6) Do you have any specific strategies that you use in order to avoid cultural misunderstandings?

7) How is the communication between you and your followers?

8) Has it affected you to have Chinese followers? In what way?

Cultural differences

1) How would you describe Swedish culture versus Chinese culture?

2) Did you know anything about the Chinese culture before you came here?

3) Can you please describe a situation where the differences between the Swedish and the Chinese culture clearly have been shown? How did you handle that situation?
4) How would you describe the organizational culture at your workplace?
   a. Is it in any way affected by a specific country's culture/leadership style?
   b. If it is not based on Chinese culture, how did the organization implement the non-familiar style?
5) How is your organization in China structured? Do Chinese employees or foreign employees dominate it?
6) Do your employees prefer working in a group or alone?
7) How do you react in unpredictable situations? Would you say that there is a difference how Swedes react and how Chinese reacts?
Appendix 2 – Followers Questionnaire

Background
1) Tell us about yourself.
   a. What education do you have?
   b. What is your position?
   c. For how many years have you had this position?
   d. How many years have you been within the company?
   e. What previous work experiences do you have?
   f. Why did you choose to work here?

Followership
1) How would you describe your leader?
   a. What are your leaders pros and cons?
2) Do you feel that your leader has adjust his/her leadership style to you? In what way?
3) Have you adjusted to your leaders leadership style?
4) Have you worked for a Chinese leader?
   a. Please describe how that was.
5) Describe how it is to work for a Swedish leader.
   a. Are there any difficulties?
6) What are the biggest differences in having a Swedish leader compared to a Chinese leader?
7) Have you experienced any cultural misunderstandings with your leader? How did you manage that?
8) Have you been affected by having a Swedish leader? In what way?

Cultural differences
1) How would you describe Chinese culture versus Swedish culture?
2) Can you please describe a situation where the difference between the Chinese and the Swedish culture clearly has been shown? How did you handle that situation?
3) How would you describe the organizational culture at your workplace?
a. Is it in any way affected by a specific country's culture/leadership style?

b. How do you feel about working for a company that is affected by another culture than your own?

4) Do you prefer working in a group or alone?

5) How do you react in unpredictable situations? Would you say that there is a difference how Swedes react and how Chinese reacts?