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UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS:

A study of organizational adjustments and challenges in firms in
Sweden with Japanese manager

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ABSTRACT

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Title UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS: A study of organizational adjustments and challenges in firms in Sweden with Japanese manager

Background When different cultures interact challenges and frictions occur and in the case of Japanese managers in organizations in Sweden is no exception. Cultural and organizational heritage affect us as individuals but also as a group and is closely knit with the psychological aspects of human interaction.

Aim There is extensive work done on the expatriate management but the focus of our research is the relationship between the manager and employees. Rather than focusing on the expatriate manager as a foreigner in a new setting, we want to look at the dual side of the relationship. We need to include the Swedes and their adjustments towards the manager. We want to find what kind of challenges and frictions that occur, how the two parts adjust to each other and what causes there might be.

Method Through eight different interviews in four Japanese subsidiaries in Sweden we have gathered information and analyzed the answers according to theories concerning national and organizational culture, expatriate management, stereotyping, projection and decoupling.

Findings Several challenges and frictions were found in our interviews. Swedes sometimes feel that the freedom usually enjoyed in Swedish companies is hindered by Japanese managers who focus more on details. Managers on the other hand find the Swedish labor laws and institutions hard to adjust to such as maternity leave and work hours. Consensus seem to be a very similar point but differs in the final decision making.

Not having focus on aggressively changing the subsidiary, together with the strong institutionalized preconditions in Sweden, makes adjustments by the manager more common than adjustments among the Swedes.

Minimizing conflicts and frictions requires an understanding of underlying assumptions of other cultures and creating a better understanding of your own. A key is to realize your own culture might not always be the most enlightened one.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

When it comes to management literature and publications it seems to us that a lot is focused on the manager herself or himself. The manager is an important key in the organization, the great leader or the great mediator. Expatriate management is all about the managers abilities. Is she or he a gifted leader, skilled to lead anywhere no matter what place in the world, or perhaps the manager is the cultural chameleon who can adjust and melt into the different cultures encountered. Either way, it is all about the manager. We find the lack of focus on the people in the organizations, led by the expatriates, an interesting aspect of expatriate management. The ability to adjust and change must lie both with the expatriate as well as the organization.

Japan is famous for their large multinational companies, exporting goods for decades to the rest of the world. The Scandinavian market, as well as perhaps the closeness to the Baltic countries might make Sweden an interesting place to settle a subsidiary for these companies, and as we have found out these regional offices in Sweden are in most cases headed by a Japanese expatriate manager.

Japanese culture has a very good reputation in Sweden, just like Swedish culture has in Japan. The question is if the stereotypical image we carry with us of Japanese culture and Japanese leaders really correlates to reality. Expatriate management often deals with the manager coming to Sweden and how well she or he can adjust, work and live in the foreign country. However, how does the local workforce, the Swedes, adjust and work with a foreign manager?

1.2 PURPOSE

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relations and adjustments in organizations in Sweden having a Japanese top manager. We want to understand the behavior in the company from the perspective of both the foreign managers, employees and any dissonance between them. To be able to understand the relation between these two, we look at theories in expatriate management, national and organizational culture as well as psychology.

1.3 PROBLEMATIZATION

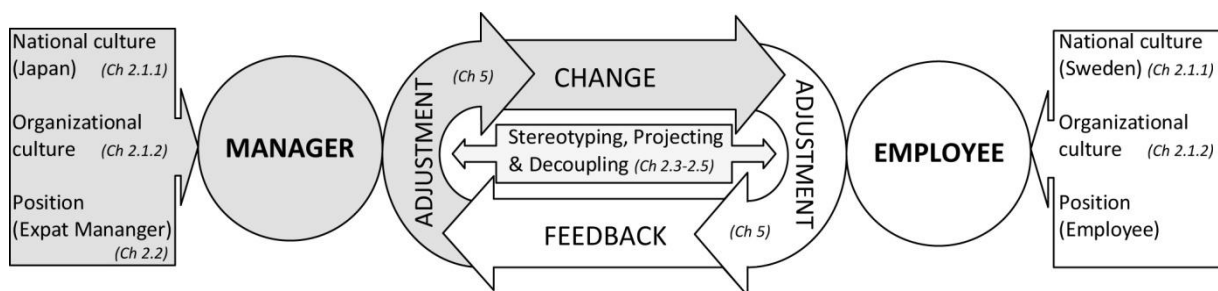
All people carry with them a cultural heritage, national as well as organizational (Hofstede, 1984). When different cultures meet, in this case in subsidiaries with a Japanese manager and a Swedish workforce, challenges are bound to arise due to the fact that we are all different. For this relationship to prosper, the challenges and adjustments must be recognized. This thesis focus on these issues through three questions:

- (1) *Which challenges and frictions can be derived from Japanese leadership in organizations in Sweden with Japanese management?*
- (2) *Which adjustments occur in organizations in Sweden when specifically having a Japanese instead of a Swedish manager?*
- (3) *What is the cause of these challenges and adjustments?*

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As explained in the last chapter, the main focus in this thesis is the adjustments and changes in the Swedish organizations. We have created a model to illustrate what aspects are necessary to include in the theoretical framework chapter to be able to analyze and understand the discussion we conduct throughout this thesis. In this figure we have also included chapter references for easier navigation in the thesis.

Figure 2-1: Theoretical Framework Model



The figure can be seen as an illustration of the process of mutual adjustment and implementation of change in organizations. The manager will in this thesis always represent a Japanese expatriate manager. The implemented change will be received by the Swedish employees, and with their background of national and organizational culture as well as their position, interpret these changes and adjust to some degree either by resisting or fully adjusting to the original thought of the change. The level of adjustment results in a feedback to the manager, whom interprets this with her or his background. The feedback might be expressed by the employees or only perceived by the manager. Through this feedback the manager most likely adjust like the employees adjusted to the change from the manager. In the centre of the model, stereotyping, projecting and decoupling are included, as these are mental functions affecting the relationship between the two parts. The rest of chapter 2 will explain the theories behind the different components included in this model and create the framework we need.

2.1 CULTURE

To be able to understand the situation that occurs with a foreign manager coming from a different country, with a different background and with different experiences to a Swedish organization, we need to understand what culture is. The word culture is defined in many ways and have several meanings in different contexts but Hofstede (1984) defines it very well

and shows how very important it is for our understanding of the complexities that are involved in trying to understand people in organizations with different cultures. He (ibid, p.21) writes in his book *“Culture determines the identity of a human group in the same way as personality determines the identity of an individual”* and it is very similar to the definition used in Project GLOBE: *“..shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives that are transmitted across generations”* (House, et al., 2004). Since these definitions are very similar and derive from two well-known cultural studies, we will be using this view of culture when conducting our study. Even though culture might mostly be thought of as something people in a specific country or ethnic group have in common, organizations are groups where culture is equally present. Thus in this essay we will look at two different cultures: national and organizational culture. These two does not exist disconnected from each other but rather shape individuals as well as organizations, creating unique blends of culture in every individual or organization. The following quote describes a Japanese manager in a joint venture company, and explains well how cultures are carried with us and created over time.

“The interesting aspect of this Japanese manager is that he has become a multicultural from the experience of living in another national culture, working in a specific organizational culture such as IBM’s, while retaining the unique qualities of his own culture.”(Swiercek & Hirsch, 1994, p.202)

So when we analyze managers and organizations in this thesis, we must have an understanding of what cultural mix that is present, with the manager, with the organization and with the employees.

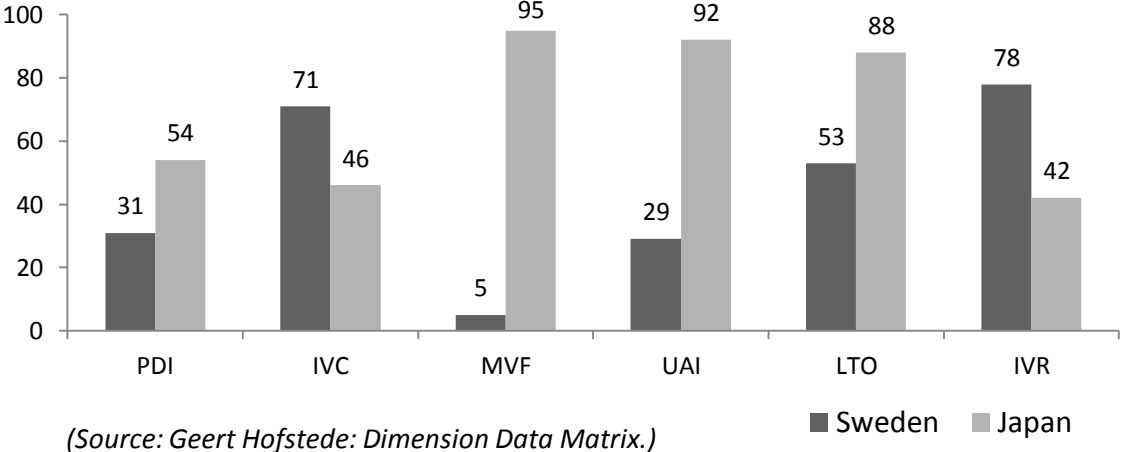
2.1.1 NATIONAL CULTURE

When talking about national culture Geert Hofstede will be our main source. His original works date back 30 years, but the ideas are still in development and are often used when talking about national cultural differences. His research and studies have among other things mapped mental programming. Humans are different but we do not behave in a random way all the time, we have patterns and ways that can be predicted and these behaviors are shared with other groups of people; this is mental programming. Hofstede (1984) divides this mental programming into three different layers of sharing: Individual, Collective and Universal. Universal mental programming concerns the basic biological and social aspects of human life that we share with most humans. The collective level is the things we share with some people

of a certain groups, societies, ethnicities or categories. The last level, the individual, is the uniqueness of us as individuals which we do not share with anyone else.

Through the idea of mental programming, Hofstede has used his findings in extensive research and formed different dimensions to explain cultural behavior. These dimensions highlight the very nature of cultural mental programming and despite the obvious generalization of individuals that happen to live in the same nation, the score of the dimensions in his research gives a good overview of the cultural aspects of nationalities. (Hofstede, 1984) The following diagram shows the scores in these indexes for Japan and Sweden, followed by a description of each dimension.

Figure 2-2: Hofstede Dimensions - Sweden and Japan



2.1.1.1 Power distance (PDI)

The power distance measures how accepted uneven power distribution is in a country. In a country with a large PDI the people with little power, status or income are willing to accept the inequality in the distribution and that everyone have their role in the hierarchy (Hofstede, 1984). In Sweden, that scores low in PDI (31), people strive to get equal rights, independence, and hierarchies are used only for reasons of convenience. To have a lot of power is almost something slightly shameful. (Hofstede, 1984) The managers turn to the employees for advice and rely on their expertise, in other words spread the power and responsibilities down in the organization (Itim International A, n.d.). Foreigners sometimes see Japan like a hierarchic society in part because of their slow decision making where the decision needs to go through all hierarchic levels before it is made. At the same time Japan is a meritocratic society where everybody is born equal and can become anything through hard work. Japan is hence a mildly hierarchic society scoring 54 in PDI. (Itim International B, n.d.)

2.1.1.2 Individualism Versus collectivism (IVC)

Some societies in the world value individual choices while other societies always put the interests of the group ahead of the individual. This is the IVC scale. A society with a high score like most western countries has, including Sweden, indicates a high degree of individualism which means that norms and values are rooted in the concern for the individual, personal time, goals and responsibilities. When it comes to organizational IVC, it shows differences in how the employees are taken care of and how much the organization is involved in the life of the employee. In a society with a higher collectivist thinking, individual values might seem alienating among its members while individualistic societies value the personal freedom and goals. High collectivism appraise group decisions, duty and security while the contrast is individual decisions, enjoyment and autonomy for individualism. (Hofstede 1984; Hofstede & Hofstede 2005)

When it comes to Sweden and Japan, the score in Hofstede's model rates 71 for Sweden and 46 for Japan. The difference is not extreme, however it is big enough to make the two countries belong to two different clusters. Sweden, together with the other Scandinavian countries, scores around the same rather high IVC level. This means like explained above, a focus on taking care of your immediate family, achieving your own goals and merit is considered the base for a career. (Itim International A, n.d.) Japan on the other hand with a lower IVC level, but still an average score, is in comparison to west a collectivistic society but not to other Asian countries. For example company loyalty and duty is a lot higher in Japan than in Sweden but there is still some focus on personal achievement through merit and work. (Itim International B, n.d.)

2.1.1.3 Masculinity Versus femininity (MVF)

Based on the generalizations and assumptions of how females and males traditionally behave and what norms and values they carry, this index measures how masculine or feminine the society is. Hofstede (1984) shows that traditional gender roles is not the definite explanation to MVF, but rather the underlying base values that still exist among human groups.

The feminine aspect is seen as having soft and nurturing values that Hofstede (1984) sums up as “social”. A feminine group values working environment and relationships when it comes to employment, as well as not trying to prove oneself better than others, a belief in group decisions and appreciation of life outside work.

A masculine society is harder and more assertive. Hofstede (1984) puts it as “ego” or “macho”. Ego does not necessarily mean that you think only of yourself as an individual, but also that you think higher of and put more importance on your own group than others. When it comes to work and employment, there is a predominance of putting value on earnings, status, decisiveness, and living to work and prove oneself.

This is the dimension that differs the most between Sweden and Japan. Sweden is on the far end of femininity, with a score of 5, and Japan is far on the masculine side, with a score of 95. Swedes value a good balance of work and free time and base their life on the idea that no one should be more important than someone else. When conflicts occur they are resolved through negotiations and end in compromises. Sometimes making decisions this way is rather slow, but it is important to reach consensus. (Itim International A, n.d.)

In masculine society of Japan women have a hard time climbing corporate ladders and a great deal of the workforce can be described as workaholics. The masculinity is sometimes overshadowed by the countries collectivism that takes away the individualistic competitiveness. Because of the strong group identity the competitiveness lies between groups and not individuals. (Itim International B, n.d.)

2.1.1.4 Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)

Uncertainty avoidance relates to the uncertainty of the future. This uncertainty exist everywhere but different cultures cope with this fact in different ways, forcing control or just letting it come. All societies as well as organizations have systems to try and avoid this uncertainty. Laws, religion and technology in nations try and regulate and create an environment where we can avoid as much as possible of this uncertainty. Organizations on the other hand have formal procedures like budgeting, reports, accounting and work descriptions. (Hofstede, 1984)

There is a fairly big gap between the scores between Sweden (29) and Japan (92). Japan is in fact one of the highest scoring countries in the world. Everything is very ritualized in Japan with a lot of predictability in life, creating a society where change is hard to implement since this goes against the need for certainty, rules and the safety of prediction. (Itim International B, n.d.) Sweden on the contrary, with a rather low score is a country with more flexibility, rules are considered only necessary when really needed and innovation and change are more welcome. (Itim International A, n.d.)

2.1.1.5 Long-term Versus short-term orientation (LTO)

LTO shows the preferences on long and short term thinking in the society. The key aspects of this dimension is what virtues are considered important in the different nations. In short term societies people try and save their face, accomplish fast results, great respect for traditions and there is pressure to spend money. In nations with a culture of long term orientation, thrift, perseverance and feeling of being a part of a higher purpose are key virtues. (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005)

Sweden is just like most of Western Europe a low scoring nation with 20 and thus short term orientated. Short term goals and profits as well as a relatively small saving ratio are strong characteristics (Itim International A, n.d.). Japan on the contrary scores high with 80 and have a nature of doing long term investments in R&D despite recessions and aiming for an even growth and profit over time. (Itim International B, n.d.).

2.1.1.6 Indulgence Versus restraint (IVR)

This dimension consist of three measures that highly correlate according to the findings of Minkov (2009): Perception of happiness, Life control and Importance of leisure. The result and interpretation of this dimension is basically how acceptable it is in a culture to allow oneself to have fun, spend one's own money and time as pleased and put priority in leisure and general well being. The opposite would be to feel restrained against self gratification through social norms or culture. There are some factors that correlates to high IVR such as high nation wealth, lower societal cynicism and lower moral discipline. Higher restraint would mean lower importance of leisure, a tighter society, more pessimism and importance on thrift. (Minkov, 2009; Hofstede, et al., 2010)

When it comes to Sweden and Japan there is a definite difference with Sweden scoring 78, highest of all western countries, and in total the 8th highest in the world. Japan on the other hand scores in the middle with 42. This would mean that Sweden is a nation where people value time spent on leisure and themselves in much greater extent than in Japan. Life and self-fulfillment are prioritized while Japanese would put greater value on more restrained behavior. (Hofstede, et al., 2010)

2.1.2 ORGANIZATION CULTURE

National culture is a natural thing and perhaps many of us take it for granted that when going abroad we will meet cultures and behavior that we are not familiar with. But the same goes for organizations since there can be differences between those as well, just like nations. There

are obvious and formal differences such as dress code, accounting principles and economic policies. However there are informal differences as well like social codes and like Schein (2010) put it: *"how things should work"*. National culture plays a part in organizational culture since the employees and managers have their nationalities and the organization naturally gets influenced by the nation and greater context it is situated in. (Schneider & Barsoux, 1997)

Schein (2010) points out that when it comes to organizational ideology, the ideology itself might not always correlate with the actual behavior of the organization. The main point he writes, is to understand the underlying assumptions which we all carry with us and that makes it possible to assume how people in the organization will behave and how things should be handled, both personally and as a group. If a manager can understand these underlying assumption it is possible to grasp how the organization work and if properly understood, then she or he also knows how to *"deal with the anxiety that is unleashed when those assumptions are challenged"* (Schein, 2010, p. 33). Also important is to have enough knowledge about one's own culture to be able to see and recognize where cultures might clash due to incompatibilities. (Schein, 2010)

There is organizational culture represented in the formalized structures in organizations like office layout, organizational philosophies and work procedures. However the managers can actively shape the organization they lead in several ways and summarized in six points by Schein (2010):

- (1) What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on regular basis
- (2) How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises
- (3) How leaders allocate resources
- (4) Deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching
- (5) How leaders allocate rewards and status
- (6) How leaders recruit, select, promote, and excommunicate

This means that the manager will through his work shape the environment around herself or himself. Through fulfilling her or his responsibilities, the manger will affect the behavior and culture of the organization, either planned or unconsciously. But Schein (2010) points out that the longer an organization can mature and exist, the less powerful these six factors and the manager's actions get when it comes to changing the culture and values.

Key factors to change anything is to be able to have deeper involvement and participation to be able to succeed in any changes proposed. The natural effect when leaving a culture you are familiar with, is to feel a certain anxiety and discomfort. If the manager is trying to impose change, efforts needs to be made addressing these anxieties to either avoid or solve them. This demands, like explained before, a deeper knowledge and ability to learn and understand your own culture as well as the culture that is the target for the change; a cultural sensitivity. (Schein, 2010)

2.2 EXPATRIATE MANAGEMENT

Each multinational company (MNC) have their own policy when it comes to who, when and where to send Parent Country Nationals (PCN) to subsidiaries abroad. However studies have found some common reasons such as lack of skills among the Host Country Workforce (HCW), control over the subsidiary, representation purposes and building trust that the parent company believes in the subsidiary (Suutari & Brewster, 2001). Studies have also found that the confidence in promoting managers from the HCW or Third Country Nationals (TCN) to higher positions varies substantially, especially when it comes to higher positions in the parent company (Oddou, et al., 1995). The following table shows how Japanese MNCs usually do not find HCW or TCN managers qualified for top positions in their companies compared to how European corporations think. Together with the idea that the Japanese style of management and way of doing business is very different compared to other nations (ibid), we expect to find Japanese managers in subsidiaries in Sweden.

Table 2-1: Differences in percentages of foreign-born perceived to be qualified to hold top National, Regional, and Corporate Posts inside European and Japanese corporations

	European	Japanese
Top National Posts	49%	24%
Top Regional Posts	38%	5%
Top Corporate Posts	14%	0,2%

(Source: Oddou, et al., 1995, p. 11)

2.2.1 EXPATRIATE FACTORS

Each individual expatriate manager is different, and in their research, Selmer & Luk (1995) used seven variables to conduct the survey they used to examine management succession in foreign subsidiaries. These variables summaries the different aspects of an expatriate manager that affect the success, adjustment and style. We the authors have chosen to only include and use the first five of the total seven of Selmer & Luk's (1995) variables to analyze expatriate

managers in the context of this thesis, together with other literature. These will be used when creating the part of the interview questions, explained in chapter 3.

- (1) **Local Knowledge:** Knowledge and familiarity of the place or nation the manager is going to, before arriving.
- (2) **Period of Service:** Years employed at the current company.
- (3) **International Experience:** Years abroad and number of international transfers in the past.
- (4) **Responsibility:** Employed as a Manager or Specialist.
- (5) **Administrative Standardization:** If the parent company utilize a standard system across its subsidiaries.

To be able to adjust and work in a foreign culture, it will help to in advance have a certain familiarity of the place or nation the manager is going to (Selmer & Luk, 1995). This knowledge can of course be acquired in different ways such as a personal connection to the culture, training or previous expatriate experiences. Despite previous experiences training is often considered very important and encouraging by managers going abroad, often shortening the initial period of acclimatization and decreasing the long term chances of managerial failures (Brewster, 1995).

Language skills are also important, but not a necessity. Nevertheless, ability to have small informal discussions and simple courtesies or conversations are often appreciated, reducing exclusion from the locals and HCW, and sometimes improve success rates of expatriate ventures (Teagarden & Gordon, 1995; Brewster, 1995; Walters, 1990).

These are not all the factors found in the extensive expatriate management literature but the ones that are relevant to this thesis and problematization.

2.2.2 ADJUSTMENT

According to McEvoy & Parker (1995) the adjustment for a life as an expatriate consist of three facets. These three adjustments are necessary to work out to be able to function well as an expatriate manager and needs to function well in the new environment.

- (1) **General living adjustment.:** The general aspect of living in a different culture, like for example housing, food, health and living costs.
- (2) **Work adjustment:** The adjustment to responsibilities at work and of the position the manager is having at her or his company. It also deals with the

demanded performance and expectations of both the parent company and the other managers in the subsidiary.

(3) Interaction adjustment: Interaction means the socializing with HCW and locals, as well as the language barrier.

Adjustment goes further than just being able to live in a foreign culture though. Expatriates might adjust or change themselves and their behavior to fit into the new position, or they might try and change the position and job to suit their style of management. What Brewster (1995) calls "*The paradox of expatriate adjustment*" is the key to understand the complexity and function of adjustment and change in the subsidiaries. He writes:

"The paradox is that expatriates have to do both in order to be effective: to learn new ways of doing things in the host culture and to bring the host culture the ways of the home base in order to fulfill the requirements of control and knowledge transfer." (Brewster, 1995, p.118)

The research done by Brewster (1995) shows that managers often seem to adjust to the host country's environment. Despite cultural differences and supposed management styles, the most striking in his research is that when the managers go abroad, they become more like a host country manager. The reasons could be many such as different legislation or HCW's reactions and feedback, or different socially allowed autocracy levels (see chapter 2.1.1.1). According to Brewster (1995), whether the host adjust to the parent or the other way around varies between different expatriates and often the expatriate is just as much adopting in his style as the subsidiary try to copy the parent company. However, the adjustment needs to take place to avoid any major conflicts that could risk the success of the expatriate mission. (Brewster, 1995)

2.3 STEREOTYPING, PROJECTION AND DECOUPLING

Three different aspects of Psychology are needed to be explained to better understand the interaction between the manager and employees. Stereotyping creates "us and them" looking at another nationality with a certain amount of prejudice. Projection means people transfer feelings and anxieties upon other people or groups, perhaps blaming them for things they are not responsible for. Decoupling creates legitimatization through following rules and regulations on the surface while hiding the true behavior and underlying goal.

2.3.1 STEREOTYPING

Stereotypes shows the common characteristics of a certain group of people. The process that stereotypes originate from is stereotyping. This means that a person evaluate and make assumptions about people according to predetermined notions and preconditions. Stereotypes are the most strong and inflexible when it is something permanent and inherited such as gender, skin color or race. Stereotyping often finds its roots in dissatisfaction and anger and is used to create an "us and them" situation. (Pickering, 2011)

2.3.2 PROJECTION

Projecting is one of the human psychological defense systems and can be defined as when an individual transmit her or his own feelings and wishes on to somebody else. In groups this is done to identify oneself with other members or with the leader to create a security and avoid anxiety. Furthermore a projection on to a leader in a group can change your sense of morale and thus also behavior. For example if you see the leader as someone who stands for something negative, you might counter act in ways you would not normally do or allow yourself. The fact that it is a projection might also mean it is not entirely objective and that you are the one creating the image of a bad leader. (Kjellqvist, 1997)

In organizations projecting is not uncommon but can on the contrary be very normal. In the relation between managers and employees it is actually always occurring. Boalt Boëthius (2003) describes three situations when projecting is easily stimulated:

- (1) One person is the only one of her or his kind. For example. the only one of a nationality or professional group.
- (2) One person is behaving in a different way compared to the rest of the group, which means this person will stick out.
- (3) One person has a specific role in the group which is not shared with anyone else, such as a general manager.

A good leader is supposed to be able to act as a target for some projections to satisfy the need in the organization. This could be to be praised and to be the messiah or it could be the scapegoat. Yet, there are projections that could be harmful as well, and to be able to understand one's own and other's role in the bigger picture you can keep a dialog about the issues. This demands a certain level of maturity among the members. But if this maturity exist, then if a problem in the organization occur a dialog can help solving what is the real

problem and what might be the projections and thereby be able to clear the negative projections away from the individual or organization. (Boalt Boëthius, 2003)

2.3.3 DECOUPLING

For organizations there are different demands and sometimes they collide. High efficiency and profit on one side but a demand for social benefit and care for the environment on the other. When a connection is expected between two processes, and this connection in reality does not exist or is very weak the term decoupling is used. In an organization this could be going through a whole recruiting procedure and interviewing candidates for a position while there in fact is already a chosen one. This to avoid being blamed for playing favorites or making a rash decision. The organization creates a layer of legitimacy through these actions despite perhaps still working as always. Through creating HR or environmental departments the organization might give an impression of caring for the personnel and nature. (Brunsson, 2002; Meyer & Rowan, 1977)

The isomorphic adaption of organizations creates the legitimization needed to function in the context it exist in. If this does not exist, the organization will suffer from lower chances of survivability. Organizations grow and change with the help of institutionalized rules and structures and thus conform to each other. (Meyer & Rowan, 1977)

3 RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

The purpose of this thesis is to explore and create an understanding of the changes and adjustments in an organization. To better explain the logic behind our thesis and our thoughts, we created a simplified model (Figure 2-1, p.2). From this figure we derive the theories we need to go into depth in order to understand our empirical data. The theory includes parts from organizational and management research fields, but also chapters closer to sociology and psychology, everything to create a deeper understanding of the different parts in our model.

The goal of understanding the complex relations in the organizations can only be achieved if we can get the opinions of the people themselves in the organizations and thus we have conducted a qualitative study, arranging interviews with Japanese managers and Swedish HR staff. The empirical part of this study is purely based on the results of these interviews. Instead of sorting our findings company by company in different cases, we have chosen a generalization approach, creating one group of all the answers from the managers and another group from the Swedes, making the specific answers anonymous. The individual companies are all different and each individual is unique, but to be able to create a greater generalized picture of the relationships we have chosen to use this approach.

Based on Figure 2-1, we later link together the empirical results with the theory to form our analysis and conclusion of the study with the help from Figure 6-1.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

The data collection in this thesis is purely based on individual interviews, trying to let people speak their opinions and thoughts. However when dealing with this kind of subject, perhaps a sensitive topic, it's important to know that we can only scratch the surface. Schein wrote:

" For purposes of academic research or theory building, it is important to learn what is really going on, which requires real entry into and involvement with the organization beyond what questionnaires, surveys, or even individual interviews can provide." (Schein, 2010, p. 192)

However, with the limited amount of time and resources in a bachelor thesis, the most realistic way we can get any reasonable empirical data is through individual interviews.

3.2.1 CHOICE OF ORGANIZATIONS

Finding organizations in Sweden with Japanese managers to interview started with the conclusion that to find Japanese managers we needed to contact a wide range of Japanese subsidiaries all across Sweden, utilizing homepages and different Japan-Sweden organizations and personal contacts. Many smaller subsidiaries lacked any kind of Japanese management, however we found a couple that had and despite a few declines due to lack of time and lack of experience in Sweden, we were lucky to secure three companies that were willing to be interviewed. We also managed to arrange one more company through the very important help of Mr. Naohiko Nishio at Mitsubishi Corporation in Sweden and the current head of Japan Businessmen's Club in Sweden.

In the end we conducted interviews in four different companies and a total of eight people. At Mitsubishi Corporation we interviewed Naohiko Nishio, General Manager, and Anna Rambäck, Assistant Manager but also responsible for HR questions. Mitsubishi Corporation in Stockholm is a small office with only eight employees, one for each sector and most of the work is similar to consultant work.

At Honda Nordic AB we interviewed Takanobu Ochiai, President, Helena Truedsson, Human Resources Manager, and Fredric Heidenberg, Senior Associate. The core activity in this subsidiary of Honda is sales in the Nordic region and employs roughly 60 people.

We got contact with Pioneer Scandinavia AB through Mr. Nishio, and at this company we interviewed Masaki Takahashi, Managing Director, and Linus Jönsson, Head of Finance but also responsible for HR. The Pioneer office employs roughly 30 and is also a sales office.

Last we interviewed Shunsuke Takagi at Fujitsu Sweden AB, Outsourcing Coordination Manager. Sadly we could not get access to the HR department. Fujitsu office is far bigger compared to the other ones with more than 200 employees. Takagi is not the top manager but act as a manager in IT services as well as a link to the Japanese headquarter.

3.2.2 INTERVIEW DESIGN

The cultural impressions and frictions at one's own workplace is of course somewhat of a sensitive topic. The interviews were conducted in semi-constructed way to let the interviewees talk freely but still able to cover the topics we found most important. The conversational interviews usually turned out very interesting but also rewarding in our research.

The questionnaires we used as a guideline in our interviews, although never followed in perfection but rather as a reminder of the important issues, are all attached as Appendix 1, 2 and 3.

To create an understanding of the interviewed managers we asked some initial questions based on expatriate variables by Selmer & Luk (1995) (chapter 2.2.1) to make it possible to understand the background, circumstances and in the end the cultural backpack carried with her or him. The rest of the interviews were focused on the perception of the other nationality, experienced similarities and differences or perhaps even frictions in the organization.

3.2.3 THE INTERVIEWS

All interviews were done in person in order to get as much information as possible from the interviews and to get to know the persons better than we would on the phone. We made sitting face to face a priority and thus three different trips were made across Sweden to visit each office. Both authors were present during the interviews except for the one with Mr. Nishio where only one author had possibility to attend. The interview with Mr. Heidenberg was done over phone due to inconvenient geographical location at the time. All interviews were recorded, summarized and transcribed.

The interviews were done in English with the Japanese managers and in Swedish with the Swedish HR staff as well as with Mr. Heidenberg. The quotations in this report have been slightly adjusted for grammatical errors and cleared of speech fillers to increase the understandability. The Swedish quotations have been translated into English by the authors.

Two major weaknesses in our chosen approach are the facts that we only got to do interviews and not spending more time with the organization, as well as the interviews only cover subsidiaries with very similar operations. The responsibilities of the offices we have visited includes sales, coordination and consultant tasks but sadly all manufacturing subsidiaries have declined our requests for interviews. We were hoping they could have given us an interesting counter weight to the kind of subsidiaries we got into contact with, or perhaps insight in how Japanese production systems affect the relationship we study.

3.3 ANALYSIS METHOD

All interviews were recorded and later transcribed or summarized in writing by the authors. Since the interviews were fairly loose in structure it meant that the answers varied rather much from person to person, but instead of forcing definitions out from our interviewees, we

wanted to have honest and flowing conversation to reach as honest answers as possible. To ensure honesty we have chosen to not include names in the empirical presentation as some of the topics could be sensitive. We were also interested in showing the similarities, differences and adjustments between the groups rather than individuals and these factors made us approach the empirical presentation in a way where we present the Japanese managers as one group and Swedish HR managers as the other. The HR staff will represent the rest of the Swedish workforce as well as they have knowledge about the interactions between the manager and employees.

Of course the individual answers are very diverse and very many interesting opinions and thoughts were shared with us. To identify the issues that were interesting to us was the first major obstacle, but we pretty quick noticed similarities in the responses. Our approach was that when we found two answers correlating to each other we put focus on that and in later interviews we asked specifically of these circumstances.

The presentation of the empirical findings is based on this way of analysis. Finding two or more correlating answers and then trying to find deeper opinions concerning these issues. Despite the spread and variation in answers there were without doubt opinions and thought that kept surfacing in our interviews, even when not specifically asked. Thus the next chapter will explain the tendencies and thoughts of these two groups trying to simplify and remove some of the individual variations and present it as group answers to find the core of the issues.

4 EMPIRICAL DATA

4.1 THE JAPANESE MANAGERS

All of the interviewed Japanese managers have completed Japanese University studies, all from prestigious ones such as Keio University, Waseda University or Tokyo University. This is not surprising since most top positions in Japanese businesses are held by alumni from these institutions. One of them had been an exchange student, at Stanford. As is normal in Japan, all of them started work directly after graduation, in the companies they are currently still employed at although positions and responsibilities have changed over the years. The pattern of career have been a rise inside their company, starting with basic tasks and working the ladder up.

4.1.1 INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The international background and experience each manager hold have been acquired in varied ways. The exchange year at Stanford is a typical example of international experience, but this manager had actually no previous professional international position prior to the one he currently hold in Sweden. Another manager had his first real international experience while holding a minor manager position in Thailand directly before his transfer to Sweden. We also interviewed a younger manager (in his 30's) who is working at a company, that in order to increase the advantages of being a global company, utilize an international exchange program and thus came to Sweden through this program to act not as a top manager but as a coordination and IT service manager. The most experienced, international business wise, would be the manager whose company sent him on a two year training program in the US to become an international manager for them. After this period he worked at several overseas offices in North America and Asia over several years before coming to Sweden two years ago.

By now the time spent in Sweden for the managers varies between roughly one to three years. One striking common nominator is that none of the interviewed managers had any previous experience of Sweden, neither in business nor in private. All four of them were transferred to the Swedish subsidiaries by order from their respective company and did in all but one case not actively request Sweden as the specific destination while the last exception chose Sweden when faced with a choice of Germany or Sweden. The managers voiced wishes for

deployment and specific responsibilities to their companies and were thereafter appointed their positions, but in general the control over the destinations seemed very limited and as one manager expressed when asked if he knew why he was appointed to Sweden: *“Nobody knows”*.

The reason Japanese subsidiaries tend to put Japanese managers on the top chair seems to be slightly cultural, and in own experience a HR manager told us that Japanese companies tend to use Parent Company Nationals (PCN) in their subsidiaries for supervising and overview and then let the subsidiary have greater freedom and independence. In American companies on the contrary, Host Country Nationals (HCN) or even Third Country Nationals (TCN) are often put on these top positions but the subsidiary is less independent, more restricted and forced to report to the parent company in much greater extent.

4.1.2 TRAINING AND OVERLAPPING

In connection to the appointments the different companies have offered a variation of training and preparation for overseas assignment. The similarities of the training offered is that it is short, general and not tailored for the specific countries the expatriates are heading to, except for in one company where half of the 100 hours of training was spent on studies in Swedish. After arriving in Sweden two of the managers had an overlapping period lasting about 1-2 weeks with the previous manager, in all cases also Japanese. This overlap and guidance mostly consisted of an introduction to people and general businesses and basic advice on how to live in Sweden. The other managers came after the previous one left respectively occupied a brand new position not previously existing. Apart from control and reporting, the informal contact network the Japanese managers bring in to their companies are invaluable and that HCN would not have this advantage.

“What you miss if you had a Swedish manager here, [...] are the informal contacts, because that’s something you can’t handle if you don’t have a Japanese manager.” (Swedish HR manager)

4.1.3 MANAGEMENT ROLE AND STYLE

When asking the Swedish HR staff as well as the Japanese managers, many of the answers pointed out stereotypical Japanese leadership and manager style as valuing details, following strict rules and regulations, and in the manager’s own sense try and educate or raise their staff.

“Most of the Japanese managers, they place value, more value on doing things as they are told, or doing this according to rules and regulations. For example if you

are driver of Shinkansen [Japanese high speed train] you have to do things exactly right and be on time, be punctual,[...] you have to be very exact."

(Japanese manager)

Exactness and focus on detail is something that HR staff also concur with when it comes to their managers in general. To get more involved in the processes and focus on details in a greater extent is a noticeable slower management style as many Swedes in our interviews have stated, but it should be put in contrast to what a Japanese explained as "*people [in Sweden] tend to try and act and let's think afterwards*". Speed and making things move forward is a strength in Sweden while the slower speed in Japan comes with higher quality and reliability.

Managers go into details with employees to perhaps make sure work is done correctly but also in a way to teach how it is done, as they are seniors to the employees. The aim of a top level manager is usually of the controlling and coordinating sort and bringing the organization towards a common goal. However a Swedish HR manager pointed out a difference when comparing a more Western way of reaching the goal compared to how perhaps Japanese do.

"Management style, again, every person got different style, but the point is when the management person set up the goal how much he makes the employees understand equally or not." (Japanese Manager)

"From what I've seen is that they [Japanese managers] are very focused on details. In a typical Anglo-Saxon or perhaps Scandinavian way, the manager usually says 'That's where we're going, here's the goal, here's the guidelines' and then dares to delegate some and then act. I think the Japanese style is to start with the details, starting to talk about why we haven't sold five of this product when supposed to sell five and only three are sold. But what they really talk about is still the bigger picture but always start in the details. It's very detail oriented."

(Swedish HR manager)

Going into details and in general have a patriarchal and upbringing way of working might be somewhat of a Japanese trait. One HR manager had by chance once met other HR managers from organizations with Japanese managers and they had all agreed that the educative and upbringing managerial style was very similar in their experiences.

The educative and upbringing aspect of a Japanese manager seems to be connected to hierarchy which is another big difference when it comes to the style. A long time employed HR staff told us that there used to be more old fashioned and closer to the stereotypical hierarchical kind of Japanese expatriates before, but that the old generation is now gone and retired. Nonetheless during the periods of the most hierarchical managers a clear separation between the Swedish employees in the organization and the top manager was there both physically in the office as well as in the communication. Most new managers, despite coming directly from Japan, seem to have a deeper understanding that cultures varies from place to place. But in the end of course the character of the manager is what matters the most and each and every manager's style is influenced by personality and individual character and a mix of different traits.

“Depends on the character of the manager.” (Japanese manager on how Japanese managers work in Sweden)

“It depends on personality, no? Where ever we visit or go, not only Sweden, but any other country, I think style really depends on personality.” (Japanese manager)

Just like the managing style is affected by personal characteristics the managers also pointed out the employees are not all and the same and a fully culturally homogeneous group. When coming to their respective organizations, the managers all empathized the importance of getting the feel for the people and for the people to get a feel for them. It will take time to understand the environment and the social and organizational codes and from our interviews it seems the time it takes to familiar oneself as manager in a new organization is roughly a year but of course it keeps changing as the knowledge and familiarity gets deeper over the years. One manager explained he has to *“see the situation first, observe, and then you start to learn what's happening”* before he tries to change or do any major decision in the organization.

4.2 LEADING SWEDES IN SWEDEN

All of the expatriates find life in Sweden easy and have not come across any difficulties in adjusting to a Swedish lifestyle. A common first impression of Swedes is the kindness and humbleness of the people, very much similar to Japanese. So in general there seems to be no complications living in Sweden personally for the Japanese managers. Both managers who

brought their family and those who did not, find Sweden a safe, calm and pleasant country to live in. However interacting with Swedes at the workplace is different.

4.2.1 WORK HOURS AND LABOR LAWS

Despite the ease of life in Sweden there are some major differences leading a Swedish workforce compared to a Japanese. The first and most obvious characteristic the managers expressed is the fact that despite the high productivity rate during office hours, when the clock strikes five the office is suddenly empty. The culture of long overtimes in Japan stand in great contrast to the Swedish ways. Although, while higher position Swedish employees seem to value the early finishing time and having dinner with their families, the work does not end when going home.

“If I look at the people around me, which is quite senior people and quite the people on the top levels, they are working harder than Japanese, 24 hours. [...] They leave the office on 5 or 6 but they still replies emails up to 12 o’clock or something.” (Japanese manager)

The Scandinavian countries have more generous labor laws such as longer maternity leave, for both men and women, long continuous summer vacations and the right to take leave when your child is sick. These institutionalized preconditions in Sweden are a factor managers are forced to adjust to despite sometimes being in the way of productive work in their sense. Regardless of the frictions that occur, not adapting to the Swedish legal system is obviously not a choice. Most adapt to the legal differences with ease while others were more shocked at first contact.

“When we explained you have 480 days of maternity leave, the blood disappeared from his face.” (Swedish HR manager)

The generous labor laws might in some way reflect the difference in attitude toward work and leisure. In Japan people might tend to prioritize work and the society is built on the expectation that one parent in the family is the provider, loyal to her or his company, while the other one takes care of the household. In Sweden on the other hand both adults are expected to work and share the household chores and put very high value on time spent with family and on leisure.

“It’s a matter of weighing things; your company life and your private life, and in Japan the company life weighs probably more, especially in big in very competitive companies [...]” (Japanese manager)

The Japanese workforce might be more stable since the workers would not unexpectedly go home to tend to their kids, take long vacations and also not move forward in their career through switching companies. To have a key figure in the office absent at critical times could cause problems explained by a manager as

“Supposed that they are trying to change the line of the production, then all of a sudden the production manager takes off and won’t come for a couple of days because the kids are sick, then the whole thing will stop.” (Japanese manager)

4.2.2 CONSENSUS AND DECISION MAKING

But there are characteristics that makes it easier to work with Swedes as well compared to other cultures expressed by both Swedish HR and Japanese managers. One similarity between the cultures is the importance of consensus when it comes to decision making. In both countries the opinion of the people related to the issue at hand is very important. Although, in Swedish context the decision seems to be made within the group while our Swedish interviewees pointed out that this was a different from their experience with Japanese managers. The input from people is the same as well as the importance of people agreeing with the decision. However, when the decision is made, it is made solely by the manager and then she or he is expecting people to accept and fully support it. To bring it up again for discussion seems to be a bit odd for some Japanese.

4.2.3 MOTIVATION

The leadership style in Sweden, with its independence and ease of movement have also a created a slightly demanding and flexible workforce. While a Japanese manager might expect the workforce to be productive and happy because they are there at work only, a Swedish manager use more of *“positive reinforcement and encouragement”* according to a HR manager.

“To motivate the employees doesn’t really exist. [...] and they expect the staff to naturally do their best and that it’s nothing you have to motivate them to do” (Swedish HR manager)

A difference in formal behavior in the organization is wage negotiations. In Japan raises are set in collective groups, decided beforehand and just communicated to the employees who will simply acknowledge. In Sweden on the other hand a raise is negotiated individually with the responsible manager. One Swede explained the Japanese manager got slightly perplexed first time when faced with an employee arguing for a greater raise than first proposed.

4.3 COMMUNICATION AND FRICTION

How people communicate depends on several organizational factors. Barriers exist in different shapes and the ones that have been the most prominent in the conducted interviews are based on the manager's style, hierarchical structure, language and culture

4.3.1 COMMUNICATING IN DETAILS

The educative and upbringing management style among the Japanese managers, as mentioned before, have led to some frictions in the organizations. Swedes might not be very used to being reprimanded at work or having a manager going into details in your work, it might cause Swedish employees some ambiguity or even feel offended or annoyed if you are not used to or aware of the reason behind this different management behavior. A Swedish manager reprimanding an employee most likely derives from a more serious situation and in general does not concern oneself with the details in the employee's work in these kind of organizations. What is important is to understand that the difference in cultural norms and styles exist and thus not take it to heart.

“That’s where we get the clash of cultures, that Swedish employees are unused to this and can be, how to put it, a bit easily offended, [...] and it can be a unfamiliar situation for many Swedes, including myself. You might never been treated or led in that way so that might be a shock before you understand it’s a cultural clash.”
(Swedish HR Manager)

Managers getting involved in details and trying to raise and educate their workforce might not always be very popular in Sweden where people are used to work more independently. Swedes as workers were often described in our interviews as self-going and able to interpret their work orders and solve the given mission, sometimes through bending rules, making up temporary solutions and in general efficient without detailed governance from higher managers. Having a manager involving herself or himself in details in greater extent than a stereotypical Swedish one might do, might create a feeling of intrusion or like someone is looking over one's shoulder. As one HR manager described, to be able to recognize the

cultural difference in management style and communication, when it comes to work tasks, makes it possible to reduce chances of open friction between the parties.

“I think that’s why he gets involved with details because he believes he is practicing leadership because he is sitting down with people; ‘Now let’s do this together’ and his intention when sitting down with us is for us to learn. He probably sees his role here as to teach us and sit down and share. [...] You have to have an understanding of that cultural difference so you don’t misinterpret.”
(Swedish HR Manager)

One Swedish HR managers said *“To a certain extent even I can feel that the Swedish workforce is pretty spoiled and used to be allowed to say ‘No, this isn’t fun’.”* The Japanese working environment might sometimes seem a bit stricter and formalized because of the importance some Japanese managers put on details and their educative style and in a sense limit some of the freedom employees might have felt at previous Swedish employers.

4.3.2 HIERARCHY

The hierarchical structures in the Swedish and Japanese societies differs great extent and has come to light in different ways in the interviews we have conducted. Most managers find their organizations places where the communication climate is open and free where whoever can get access to her or him. In most cases it is backed by the Swedish perspective that this is the case. In general it seems that the old type of managers who distanced themselves from the staff and only were visible and accessible when it came down to important decision making and only communicated with the closest senior staff are gone. A HR manager believed it might be that the older generation is retired by now, while another Swede thought it might be that companies are aware of the cultural climate in Europe and thus pick managers more suited for work in this region. However, it might be more open than it used to be, but still some HR manager said that in his organization it might be harder to make one’s voice heard with the top manager if you are further down the ladder so apparently there still exist some differences in some places.

“If you’re one or two steps below me, it might not be that easy to talk to the CEO as it would have been if this was a Swedish company, so that’s something I believe people might be a bit frustrated at.” (Swedish HR manager)

The office interior layout also reflects the hierarchic structures in the organization. The managers have just like modern offices usually open spaces with no closed off spaces for senior staff or similar. It is an environment made for horizontal communication and interaction. The managers are supposed to be easily available and open for communication. The managers all find this a good way to work but there had been differences in the past as well as a more recent rejected suggestion to rearrange the office to more reflect seniority.

4.3.3 COMMUNICATING GOALS AND STRATEGIES

To be an efficient manager you must be able to talk and communicate with your organization. To also be able to communicate the greater goals and strategies, to make the employees understand where the goal is and how to get there is very important. However hierarchy, language difficulties and leadership style makes it sometimes very difficult to know if the message is understood by the other part. While the manager might think clear and sound communication of goals and strategies is the centre of importance, the employees might not be on the same level. As one HR manager explained the situation that the strategy *“is communicated a bit informal to the ones directly reporting to him, but he isn’t someone who would stand up in front of the whole staff and speak out the strategy”*.

4.3.4 COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

All of the interviews with Japanese managers were done in English, and the communication in their companies are also done in English. However, neither Japan nor Sweden have English as native language and despite the proficiency the employees and managers might have, misunderstandings and misinterpretations is bound to happen. The use of English and Swedish varies between the organizations but of course as soon as the Japanese are involved all communication is done in English.

“When they switch to Swedish then all of a sudden all the people start speaking out loud a lot of information, 3 times 4 times more compared to the case we speak with English, which means that even though the Swedish people are quite good at speaking English, the mother language is still the best way to show the heart, the thoughts and the impressions of each individual.” (Japanese manager)

To avoid some of the language barrier, one manager is trying to increase and empathize written communication, especially when it comes to important issues and problems. This way of trying to minimize the mistakes done due to language difficulties has proven to have a backlash since part of the workforce does not appreciate the increased paperwork. Some

interviewed have also noticed the increase in the politeness levels both in speech and on paper, this reflecting Japanese way of writing.

More than just misunderstandings because of various skill levels in English, another issue was brought up in an interview where the Japanese manager empathized the point of apart from language there is an underlying difficulty in understanding each other.

“There is some hidden local rule that is not written on paper. For instance, I don’t know what kind of emotional issues exist, or may be not, between the European countries or maybe in the areas [...] inside Sweden.” (Japanese manager)

To see and understand these differences, to really get into depth in a foreign culture like explained in the previous quote, might be impossible in such short period of stay as most expatriates seem to experience. Several comments and answers from interviewed persons enforce the fact that the sensitivity of cultures is extremely important, from both parts as full knowledge is almost impossible to reach.

At some offices where several Japanese expatriates work, a grouping of the Japanese employees sometimes occur. One manager jokingly called it *“Little Tokyo”*. This group can of course create a barrier between the Japanese and the rest of the organization when the communication inside the group and between them differs. The interviewees told us this could happen but in the current state, none of this is a fact at the offices we have visited mainly because the number of Japanese are very few, although there have been examples in the past.

4.4 THE GLOBAL MANAGER

There has been changes over the decades in the behavior of both the companies and managers. Gone are the hierarchical top managers who do not communicate deeper down in their organizations. Companies have exchange programs and international business and management study programs for their employees and trying create a more globally adapted manager group. Expatriates seem to understand that bringing their whole Japan and their organization with them is not a productive strategy.

“To me, probably, I’m a combination of Japanese and Global. Because, Global in the sense that I can live anywhere, and do business with almost anybody. And I do not force my sense of value or my Japaneseness on to local people.” (Japanese Manager on whether he consider himself Japanese or Global)

5 ANALYSIS

In our research an assumption that national culture is a factor that affects people's behavior. People in the world are individuals but the social programming, underlying assumptions and human psychological behavior in general makes us a part of the context we grow up, live and work in. When analyzing two different nationalities like we do in this thesis with this precondition, it is a necessity to analyze the two different cultures to be able to determine the similarities as well as the differences. Through analyzing our empiric data with the help of the theories concerning national culture, organizational culture and expatriate management, presented in chapter two, we will determine the similarities and differences in our studied organizations. Correlating information in these four organizations will be used to describe the relationship and with this the challenges and frictions that occur.

5.1 THE JAPANESE MANAGER

We expected to find Japanese managers at the bigger subsidiaries of Japanese companies here in Sweden since looking at Oddou's (1995) table (Table 2-1) One HR manager told us that in an American subsidiary it is more likely to have a Host Country National (HCN) at the manager position but have stricter over all control from the parent company and put focus on conformity towards the headquarter. Japanese companies very seldom put HCNs on management positions, and indeed many offices we contacted for interview and heard about from the people we interviewed had Japanese managers employed. From the interviews we could also derive that the bigger headquarters in Europe, the regional offices, have Japanese expatriates in more positions than just the top controlling managers like the case in Sweden usually is.

Leaving more freedom to the local offices seems true but it is still keeping a Parent Company National (PCN) on the top manager position, this to secure control and overview of what is happening in the subsidiary. But rather than forcing the Japaneseness of the parent company, more freedom is left for the local ways. A Japanese manager said he did not want to change but rather "*add*" instead.

5.1.1 TRAINING, OVERLAPPING AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Theories in the book edited by Selmer (1995) point out that when working in an overseas workplace, the more familiarity, experience and standardization exist the higher the success rate of the expatriate missions are. However, as we have concluded in chapter four, the

previous international experience varies between the managers, but in general a rather limited experience was rather common. This would probably mean that lacking personal experience, training and overlapping period with the previous manager would lead to managers being closer to the Japanese national culture values and have stereotypical view of the Swedes. Managers are individuals but if raised and spending most of their career in one single country with a more or less homogenous culture we would expect this to be the case. One reason that despite the lack of experience, the managers are still able to be successful in Sweden, as our interviews show, could be that the fairly long time (roughly two to three years for all of them) spent in Sweden. This could have given them the time needed to understand and adjust to the culture. Since we did not get the opportunity to interview more newly appointed expatriates we lack information of effect of training and international experience on the initial acclimatization period in Sweden, according to the expatriate theories of Brewster (1995). Despite employees being individuals, there are some generalizations that can be made when it comes to managing Swedes.

5.1.2 MANAGEMENT STYLE

The interviews we made gave indications that there were a few differences in how the Japanese managers behave and communicate to their employees compared to what the Swedes are used to. First of all there seems to be a style of management that would probably be best described as educative or upbringing, a kind of mentorship as the senior manager and thus having responsibility to take care and mentor your workforce. As in Japan the PDI is slightly higher and would thus mean that the manager would have a greater role as a leader and the employees would respect and follow him. PDI explains one part of this characteristic.

There is also a difference in organizational culture here connected to the educative style; in Japan you will in many cases work in the same company for a much longer period of time, just like the managers we have interviewed have done. They started right after graduating university and begin their career at a fairly low level and work upwards in the same company. This system means you spend your effort in one and the same place and promotion is handed down instead of improving your career through switching companies every couple of years like in Sweden. This also leads to a situation where the employees in Japanese businesses are assumed to work hard and do their best since they build their own career at their current employer. Swedes on the other hand demand more motivation to work diligent and Japanese managers might not be used to motivate their workforce to put their best efforts in.

Explained by the PDI for Japan, having senior managers taking care of you, educative and in a sense mentoring you, a new generation of company employees is groomed. This argument makes it possible to understand the focus on details which the Japanese managers seem to put, in a better way as well. The interviews showed that some Swedish HR managers had the experience of this very fact. Through focusing on and engaging oneself in details, the manager can help and educate, being the patriarchal father figure of your department, division or company.

5.2 LEADING SWEDES IN SWEDEN

Looking at this mentoring and upbringing style of Japanese managers, there is a greater element missing if you only look at the PDI difference between the countries. To fully understand the interaction and communication it is important to look at the major difference in UAI and MVF between Japan and Sweden, rather than focus on only PDI, to be able to get the perspective of the Swedish workforce. The UAI scores indicates the fundamental differences in the behavior at work and how to deal with tasks. Sweden scores very low on UAI meaning . As explained in the theory and empirical data, Swedes find their own solutions to problems, willing to bend rules and work independently. Not being afraid of taking one's own decision and responsibilities creates a workforce able to reach goals without the controlling hand of a senior.

The very low MVF score describes the Swedish kind of management style that most Swedes are used to and that fit very well with the low UAI Swedish worker. The more Feminine side of this index means a nurturing kind of leadership and positive reinforcement. Productive and impressive work is rewarded and praised. The low UAI shows how the managers are able to delegate work more easily, trusting employees they can handle it and that they will solve problems that transpire over the course of the task. This behavior has of course its counterpart; Swedish employees often expect to a greater extent of positive reinforcement and independence in their work. Of course there is a difference in the level of independent work between companies and industries, but in general looking at the interview material we have gathered, there is an underlying assumption that in Swedish companies there is a greater delegation from seniors and freedom.

5.2.1 WORK HOURS AND LABOR LAWS

During our interviews we had reoccurring answers that Swedes have a very different priorities in life when it comes to work and leisure compared to what Japanese have. This is supported by the theories of Indulgence Versus Restraint (IVR) by Hofstede. Just like according to the IVR scores, the Japanese are much more restrained and puts less value on leisure and free time than Swedes do.

This difference in IVR is also visible at the office. Productivity is good at the office just like Japanese but Swedes in general dislike overtime and prioritize leaving work according to schedule, despite the task at hand not fully done sometimes. Dinner with family and not spending the night at the office is sometime very common among Swedish employees however it doesn't mean work ends, it is not uncommon for the work to continue later at home working with or finishing tasks not done at work. This requires a mentality and environment where the employee is free to dispose her or his own time for both work and leisure, and stand in contrast to Japanese manager who value and reward face time at the office.

More than just IVR difference it can also be derived to the national variance in Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI). The Swede is used to be able to work under freedom as long as the task gets done and thus the low UAI score, and also shows the contrast of value put on face time at work and the freedom of the Swedish workforce.

The focus on leisure is not only an underlying assumption and feeling of Swedes, it is extended into the legal system and just further proves the importance and differences in IVR between the two nations. These institutionalized preconditions that the Japanese managers encounter when working in Sweden have sometimes proven a bit of a disgruntled adjustment. The lack of experience of working in this kind of environment brings forced adjustment due to the sometimes almost antonymous to the Japanese style of management.

Examples of the institutionalized preconditions managers are facing are long maternity leave for both men and women, ability to stay home with sick children and long summer vacations. This also includes Masculinity Versus Femininity as in Sweden also the men take care of the children and thus the whole workforce is affected by these laws and institutions.

5.2.2 CONSENSUS AND DECISION MAKING

In every company we interviewed one thing was highlighted as a characteristic between the two countries that was very similar and that is the focus on consensus. In the case of Sweden, a very feminine country with very low MVF score, it is based on the importance to take care

of your group and make sure a compromise is reached where nobody is uncomfortable. Japan however is a country where collectivism is deeply rooted, and this lower IVC score shows why the involvement in and loyalty towards your own organization and group is so important.

Even though this similarity in importance of consensus exist, there is one fundamental difference, namely the final decision making. Low UAI, MVF and PDI score have shaped Swedish managers decision making. The effect is that the group must be involved in the decisions, leaving the manager with less direct power. Also, the decision is allowed to be reconsidered in some cases showing the ability to involve some maintained uncertainty. Japan is almost the opposite of this. While the input and opinion of the group is important, the reason behind is rather a high UAI score; increasing the quality of the final decision through getting as much information as possible, thus decreasing any form of uncertainty. The manager then takes the final decision on her or his own and assuming the group will rally behind it (high PDI).

This means that when combining the two cultures of consensus there is a chance for conflict and misunderstanding when the final decision is made as shown in our interviews. The result can be that when the Swedes sometimes assume a decision has been taken at a meeting after a discussion, the Japanese manager might present a different decision of her or his own later that will be the final one. The Japanese manager will assume the employees will unite behind it, while the Swedes find it odd and confusing.

5.3 COMMUNICATION AND FRICTION

5.3.1 COMMUNICATING IN DETAILS

As for the communication aspect in the Japanese style of management previously analyzed, the interviews told us that managers will of course indulge in details when interacting with subordinates as well but also to be more direct when reprimanding an employee, expressing displeasure with work not properly done or finished in time. Accepting the fact that a senior is above you and able to control and reprimand is a clear PDI aspect.

If Japanese managers would interact in the same way as with Japanese employees who depend far more on rules and regulations as well as expecting a higher level of guidance from seniors, a clash or adjustment seems unavoidable. A manager focusing on details and that wants to be involved in the processes stand in contrast to the independent Swedish worker. Several frictions can occur. If a manager starts looking into details more than what the

employees are used to, it might feel intimidating and like “someone is looking over one’s shoulder”. Some indications in the interviews gave this exact answer. The ability to let your employees work freely without communicating detailed instructions and involvement demands a very low UAI score, just like Sweden has.

Another communication dissonance we have encountered in our study which is related to the topics of this chapter, is the perception of articulating and communicating the greater clear goals and strategies. While for managers it is important to enforce the role as manager making people go in the same direction, there is a tendency among HR managers to perceive the managers as vague and unclear when it comes to communicating these goals. Here too UAI is the major cause. One Swedish HR manager put it very well when saying that Japanese managers focus on details but think of the big picture still, they just start in the opposite end than a Swedish manager would do. Focusing on details, a reassurance that things are done as planned, according to rules and that the project is keeping high quality are all ways of making sure the organization is striving against a common greater goal. However with a lower UAI score like Sweden it seems more likely of having a manager focusing on explaining the bigger picture and strategy delegating the details.

5.3.2 COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

The most common communication barrier is without doubt the language. Language knowledge is in expatriate management theory seen as an important issue but not seen as the most important one. Our interviews showed that the managers were satisfied with the level of English the Swedes were able to speak, nonetheless English is neither the native language of Sweden nor Japan. This means that all communication has to be done in a third-party language none of the communicators can possibly master the same way as they can with their native language. As one manager empathized, that when meetings turn from English to Swedish, a lot more people speak and a lot more information is exchanged than previously in English. To feel insecure in a foreign language might have negative effects on the openness and communication volume in an organization. The interview data also told us another deeper complication when not working in one’s native tongue, namely the cultural barrier. Cultural understanding is much more likely to be higher when able to speak the native language. However the interaction seems to be working well in English since much of the business is done in English too.

Even if you get past the language issue, being able to speak to each other in a proper manner, there is still barriers left. The manner of hierarchy thinking is slightly different from Japan to Sweden. A higher PDI and MVF in Japan reflects the notion of having seniors and hierarchical structure in an organization. When moving around from offices with an average of 3-5 years in each position, it most likely is very hard to change an existing structure, however communication hierarchy is much more individual. Who, where and how can one communicate with one's manager is something easily controlled by the manager herself or himself. Drawing conclusions from the previous discussion about management styles in Sweden and Japan with focus on detail focus or delegation methods, we can also derive that a higher PDI and MVF among Japanese should make us expect a more distanced Japanese manager. Indeed HR managers have indicated that there are slightly more restrictions in the communication than it would be with a Swedish manager. Lower ranks find it a lot easier to gain access to Swedish top managers compared to Japanese. Japanese managers also seem to prefer to have the responsible middle manager involved in the communication if it the conversation or discussion is held with a lower rank employee. Looking at the conclusions of focus on details and high UAI, this is hardly an unexpected effect. But both HR managers and the Japanese managers in our interviews point out that despite the slight difference in the ease of access, open offices, central position in the office layout and general availability is something the Japanese expatriates all adjust to very well. Swedes, very used to the open and informal way of office environment would most likely not accept, or at least find it frustrating if the top manager would close herself or himself away not being accessible for the rest for the organization.

5.4 SUMMARIZED ADJUSTMENTS

McEvoy & Parker (1995) summarize the adjustments an expatriate manager goes through when working at an overseas position, described in chapter 2.2.2. By using this sorting method on the relationship between the Japanese managers and Swedish employees rather than only on the expatriate, we can easily sort the differences and adjustments made analyzed in this chapter. This creates a better overview of how the relationship between these two group work and change in the organizations in our study.

(1) General Living Adjustment

All the managers find Sweden a very easy country to live in and despite living in a country with different weather, food, rites and atmosphere, only positive remarks about living in

Sweden were voiced, apart from the long dark winter. Those expatriates coming to Sweden without family have had to adjust to living alone, while those with family with them have to make sure their families have adjusted properly. But from what we have concluded from our interviews is that in both cases it has been a fairly smooth adjustment. Much thanks to the fact that Sweden just like Japan is a safe country with a high proficiency of English among the general population.

(2) Work Adjustment

Looking at how the HR managers described the situation and the theory behind expatriate behavior of Japanese firms, we find it clear that the way the subsidiaries in Sweden are handled are very much like how Japanese subsidiaries usually work; a lot of freedom but with a Japanese top manager. The manager of course has the power to change and control the subsidiary, like described in Schein's organization theories, but it seems according to the interviews and theories that the manager emphasize on adjusting to the local ways rather than the other way around. Thus very few things are changed in the way of work procedures and responsibilities in the subsidiary, and rather, it is the manager that adjust to the way of work in the local businesses.

In Sweden, this local adjustment of the manager is rather obvious because of the presence of very strong institutionalized preconditions. What we have focused on in the analysis, deriving from the answers we got in during the interviews, are the labor laws in Sweden since they are very generous and different from many other countries, not only Japan. This leads to a very obvious and also forced adjustment upon all expatriate managers working in Sweden. To lead a company where the workforce has a high IVR score backed up with laws concerning maternity leave, staying home with sick children and an organizational culture of leaving the office at finishing time reducing face time at work considerably compared to Japan. All these factors are inflexible and forced upon the expatriate manager who is consequently forced to adjust to these preconditions.

(3) Interaction Adjustment

The language barrier is the easiest to recognize when it comes to interaction adjustment. Both the Host Country Workforce (HCW) and the manager are forced to communicate in a language not native to either one. This will of course affect the information exchange and daily communication at the company, however it seems to be a reasonably easy adjustment in most cases. The hierarchy aspect of managers distancing themselves from the workforce is

not present in any major extent in the organizations we have studied and it seems the openness and flatter shape of Swedish organizational pyramids have influenced the managers.

As explained earlier, the management style of focusing on details and leading in a upbringing and educative style have created an interaction friction. This is a friction that we do not seem to find any clear adjustment to from either side. The way it works seems to be a respect of differences in opinions. Going into details and increasing paperwork and reports seems to be a symptom of the difference in culture and management style but also connected to the language barrier, making sure that there is no miscommunication, either from language misunderstandings or earlier decisions.

5.4.1 STEREOTYPING, PROJECTION AND DECOUPLING

Stereotyping often occurs when frictions are deep and adjustments hard to reach. It is easy to stereotype the other national as for example "typical Japanese" and that the friction derive from the stereotypical and prejudicial traits. Stereotyping makes it easier to use the Japanese manager or Swedish employees as a target for projections.

An example could be the increase in written reports seen in interviews. Some employees find it unnecessary extra work that would not occur if it was a Swedish manager in the organization. Thus the displeasure of the reports is projected upon the Japanese manager, meaning that her or him is blamed for these feelings, instead of adjusting and understanding the rational reason behind the reports. The result is that employees can motivate trying to avoid the reports by blaming the Japanese manager and her or his Japaneseness. To openly resist might not always be an option, instead employees find ways around the demand of reports to minimize the work effort they find unnecessary.

To keep appearance and legitimatization of their work up, reports might be written but in the absolute least possible effort and always resisting the idea underneath. An effect can be that the actual purpose of decreased language difficulties and higher quality decisions might be lost as the employees do not use the system as it is supposed to. This is a clear situation of decoupling in the organization.

Another example of decoupling is the Japanese manager, coming from a hierarchical culture, meeting a very feminine and low power distance culture like Sweden. The manager is forced to adjust to his new surrounding and keep an appearance up of being open and accessible in an open office space. But as indicated in some interviews, despite the appearance of being

accessible, lower level employees still find it hard to reach the manager as they would be able with a Swedish manager. In the same way the manager only communicate bigger picture issues to his closest senior staff members. The decoupling theory explains the legitimization created through the manager seeming accessible like any other Swede, but in reality the communication is still limited and done in a more similar way to the Japanese hierarchical culture.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 THE PROBLEMATIZATION

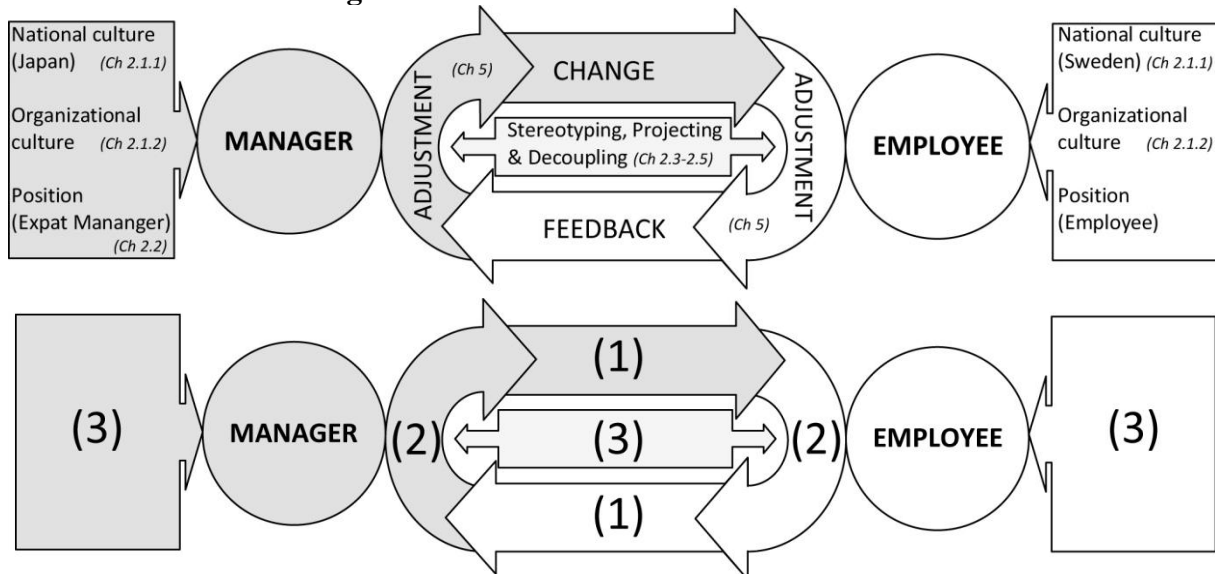
In this conclusion we will be using the Theoretical Framework Model introduced in the very beginning of this thesis, to answer our questions and show what our analysis has brought us.

The questions from chapter 1 were as follow:

- (1) Which challenges and frictions can be derived from Japanese leadership in organizations in Sweden with Japanese management?
- (2) Which adjustments occur in organizations in Sweden when specifically having a Japanese instead of a Swedish manager?
- (3) What is the cause of these challenges and adjustments?

Following is the Theoretical Framework Model, same as Figure 2-1, but also included is the same model showing where we find the answers for each problem we used to define this thesis. (1) is found in the Change and Feedback as it is here the frictions occur. (2) concerns the Adjustments made or not made by the Swedes and Japanese. The causes of both frictions and adjustments can be found in (3) as cultural heritage and work position influence the behavior of the parties. The cause of this behavior is also explained in the middle square showing the effects of the psychological and organizational aspects of stereotyping, projecting and decoupling.

Figure 6-1: Theoretical Framework Model



(1) Which challenges and frictions can be derived from Japanese leadership in organizations in Sweden with Japanese management?

All friction can be derived from the change and behavior of the manager or the feedback and behavior of the employees. The manager comes into her or his new position and as an individual carrying a unique style of management. This change of managerial behavior and perhaps implemented change into the organization is what triggers the adjustment of the employees. In the study made, we have found that the focus on details and the educative and patriarchal style of Japanese managers cause Swedes to feel uncomfortable or even offended.

The difference in IVR between the countries and the institutionalized preconditions are unchangeable factors that often leads to some kind of level of friction. Social benefits such as staying home with sick kids, long vacation and maternity leaves forces adjustment upon the manager. The daily challenges of the great IVR differences like having a workforce that leaves the office at 5pm reducing face time at work is also part of the frictions.

The last major friction we want to highlight derives from the difference between the Japanese and Swedish consensus systems. The opinion of co-workers and everyone involved in projects is valued by both Japanese and Swedes. However when it comes to taking the actual decision the similarities ends as the Japanese manager is the sole decision maker and assumes that employees will rally behind the decision that is made. The Swedes are used to having decisions taken by the group in greater extent and thus confusion and conflict can occur.

(2) Which adjustments occur in organizations in Sweden when specifically having a Japanese instead of a Swedish manager?

Of all frictions we have discovered in our interviews most of them seems to have ended in some kind of adjustment from either part. The level of understanding and depth in the adjustments varies, but in general one part needs to adjust to overcome the difference in opinions or behavior.

As for the difference in managerial style with focus on details and educative managing, it is one friction that seems to be ongoing and lack any deeper adjustment. Swedes accept the difference but might not feel comfortable being treated in a way that contradicts their culture and way of ideal work. Japanese managers on the other hand try to communicate goals and manage in the most efficient way in their mind. This is a rather deep friction and it seems it is the kind that needs to be accepted for what it is rather than finding a compromise that is

perfect for both parties. This friction can be traced to the vast difference in the MVF dimension. Sweden is the most feminine country in the world while Japan is the second most masculine country in the world. The difference in this dimension explains why the friction might be as prominent as it is. IVR related frictions such as labor laws and working hours are such institutionalized preconditions it is impossible not to adjust for the manager. Since many of these preconditions are entwined in the legal system of Sweden, to follow the law, the Japanese managers have no choice but to adjust in their organization activities.

Language and communication is another adjustment needed from both parts since none are native English speakers. The linked increase in written reports etc have been a forced adjustment to the Swedes who might not approve but have no choice.

The first impression of the hierarchical friction in the studied organizations shows that the Japanese managers have adjusted to a more flat Swedish organizational structure. However, when talking in depth it seems you still cannot compare these structures to the flat and open kind found in Swedish ones. This can be explained by the theories of decoupling.

(3) What is the cause of these challenges and adjustments?

In all challenges and frictions there seems to be an underlying lack of understanding of the cultural differences. To be able to understand a foreign culture in depth, you must understand your own culture and put it in a greater perspective. As one HR manager put it in one of our interviews:

"In general we think that our own culture is the best and that we are the most enlightened. You often hear Swedes saying we are the ones that have gotten the furthest and that the world is lagging behind us when it comes to gender equality etc, but what reasons can be found to prove that? It's incredibly arrogant to see one's own culture as the most highly developed and furthest ahead." (Swedish HR Manager)

This arrogance could easily lead to conflicts and frictions. All of us carry with us different cultural heritage, national as well as organizational and created from personal experience, as individuals and it is something that will make the workplace diverse even between the same nationalities. In the case of Japanese managers and Swedish employees we have found in our study that the UAI dimension have a significant part in the frictions. However, the most prominent reason for the frictions can be assumed to be a combination between the difference

in MVF and IVR. The focus on personal life with clear feminine culture in Sweden stand in stark contrast to the masculine and restrained virtues in the Japanese society.

Obvious and more superficial cultural differences are easier to identify and adjust to, but when we do not recognize the deeper social programming and underlying assumptions of other cultures we greatly increase the risk of misunderstandings. Underlying assumptions will affect how we interpret the actions and words of the opposite culture.

Frictions deriving from underlying assumptions can be linked to stereotypes. Humans in organizations use these stereotype images of the opposing culture, group or individual to project their discomfort and fears upon. The projection can motivate and legitimize an individual's behavior that would differ from how she or he would normally act. Being able to avoid the discomfort through projection, a third aspect occurs, decoupling. Acting and behaving according to rules and normal codes give legitimization to one's work. But using that as a facade, the underlying discomfort can lead to actually disapproving and secretly counteract the rules and codes.

6.2 MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Throughout our interviews many voices expressed the importance and influence of each and every manager's character and personality when it comes to management. However, in our analysis we reach the conclusion that despite having personality traits, there certainly are similarities in culture both among the Japanese managers as well as in the Swedish workforce. Each expatriate comes to Sweden with a more or less clear vision and mission but are all affected by The Expatriate Paradox; bringing one's ideas and parent company culture into a subsidiary with its own characteristics, and at the same time the expatriate is supposed to adjust to local culture to avoid frictions. This is obviously a huge challenge. Who adjust to what and how much is really adjustable is very hard to generalize. But what we can say when looking at our research results, is that the strongly institutionalized preconditions in Sweden and the not so aggressive attitude on implementing change of Japanese parent companies and expatriates, have led to a situation where the Japanese managers try to adjust to local ways to make work as successful as possible. At least this seems to be the ambition of the managers even if it sometimes is difficult to let go of one's old behavior. To avoid friction and conflicts, it is necessary for both managers and employees to understand the cultural differences and underlying assumptions.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (Manager)

Background

- Name
- Age
- Education?
- Position/Responsibilities?
- How long time at current employer?
- Previous international missions/positions?
- How long in Sweden?
- Did you have any previous knowledge of Sweden? Professional training/briefing, previous visit, business in Japan with Swedes?

Getting to Sweden

- Swedish or Japanese predecessor?
- How did the process look like when you got to Sweden? Was it an urgent spot filler or rather a longer planned process?
- Did you have an overlapping period with the former manager, and if so How long?
- Do you consider yourself a Japanese, Swedish or Global manager? Motivate

Organizational Culture

- Does your company carry specific values or culture that are particular to just yours?
 - Does your parent company have a global standardized system across its subsidiaries?
- What formal changes have you tried to implement in your organization?
- Are there any changes you would like to implement but feel unable to in a Swedish organization?
- How do you communicate in the organization? Which internal communication methods do you use?
 - Different from in Japan?

Being Japanese

- What do you say are the characteristics of a Japanese manager in general?
- What changes do you think was expected by the employees of you to implement?
- Do you think people in the company had any thoughts on how you would be, how you would be working or any other misconception of you, being a manager from Japan?

Leading Swedes

- First impression of working with Swedes in Sweden?
- How would you describe Swedes and Swedish workers?
 - Have your opinion changed over time?
- How do You change to lead Swedes in Sweden?
 - Is the interaction with Swedes different compared to Japanese?
- Do you think the Swedes have changed in anyway having a Japanese manager?

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (HR Staff)

The interviews were held in Swedish and the questions were translated for those occasions.

Background

- Name
- Age
- Position/Responsibilities?
- Higher education?
- How long time at current employer?
- Any previous positions involving international/Japanese managers?

Organizational Culture

- Does your company carry specific values or culture that are particular to just your company?
- How do you communicate in the organization, more formal or more informal communication?
- What language are used at your company?
- Do you/employees have direct contact with the manager?
 - Would it be different communicating with a Swedish manager?

Having a Japanese manager

- What would you say are the characteristics of a stereotypical Japanese manager?
 - Does these attributes apply to Your Japanese manager?
- What differences or changes did you expect by having a Japanese manager instead of a Swedish coming into your current company?
- What is your first impression of working under/with a Japanese manager?
 - Has this perception changed over time?
- Have you personally changed or adapted, both professionally and personally, to the fact of having a Japanese manager?
- Have your work description and responsibilities changed?

- How would you describe a stereotypical Swedish worker?

- What has been changed or tried to be changed in the organization coming from the Japanese manager/parent company?
 - Are there any of these changes you feel are not suited in a Swedish organization?
 - Have any frictions occurred due to "Japanese" ideas trying to be implemented?

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (Swedish Employee)

The interviews were held in Swedish and the questions were translated for those occasions.

Background

- Name
- Age
- Position/Responsibilities?
- Higher education?
- How long time at current employer?
- Any previous positions involving international/Japanese manager?
- How much does it matter what kind of nationality your manager or CEO have for you personally at work?
 - What matters..?

Organizational Culture

- Does your company carry specific values or culture that are particular to just Yours?
- What has been changed or tried to be changed in the organization coming from the Japanese manager/parent company?
 - Are there any of these changes you feel are not suited in a Swedish organization?
- How do you communicate in the organization? Which internal communication methods are used, do you have direct contact with the manager?
 - Would it be different communicating with a Swedish manager?

Having a Japanese manager

- What do you say are the characteristics of a Japanese manager in general?
 - Does these attributes apply to Your manager?
- What differences or changes did you expect by having a Japanese manager instead of a Swedish?
 - First impression of working under/with Japanese?
 - Has this perception changed over time?
- Have you changed or adjusted to the fact of having a Japanese manager?
 - Do you interact differently with a Japanese manager compared to a Swedish?

Being a Swedish worker

- How would you describe a Swede and Swedish worker?
- Would you describe yourself like that?

APPENDIX 4: LIST OF INTERVIEWED COMPANIES & INDIVIDUALS.

MITSUBISHI CORPORATION STOCKHOLM LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE:

Naohiko Nishio, General Manager. Interviewed in person, 2012-04-30

Anna Rambäck, Assistant Manager (responsible for HR), Interviewed in person, 2012-04-30

HONDA NORDIC AB:

Takanobu Ochiai, President. Interviewed in person, 2012-05-03

Helena Truedsson, Human Resources Manager, Interviewed in person, 2012-05-03

Fredric Heidenberg, Senior Staff, Interviewed on phone, 2012-05-18

PIONEER SCANDINAVIA AB:

Masaki Takahashi, Managing Director. Interviewed in person, 2012-05-14

Linus Jönsson, Head of Finance (responsible for HR), Interviewed in person, 2012-05-14

FUJITSU SWEDEN AB:

Shunsuke Takagi, Outsourcing Coordination Manager, Interviewed in person, 2012-05-16

APPENDIX 5: WORD LIST

IVC	Individualism Versus Collectivism
IVR	Indulgence Versus Restraint
LTO	Long Term Orientation
MVF	Masculinity Versus Femininity
PDI	Power Distance Index
UAI	Uncertainty Avoidance Index
HCN	Host Country National
HCW	Host Country Workforce
PCN	Parent Company Nationals
TCN	Third Country National