The use of storytelling in middle-level management in the case of Telenor

Written through the precondition that storytelling is an effective method for building and strengthening organizational culture.

Thesis paper – BAC3100: 984175 and 984301

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1.0 Abstract

The purpose of this thesis will be close examination of the coherence between organizational culture and storytelling through the studies of secondary data resources, which again will lead to a qualitative study with the purpose of answering our research questions and thesis statement.

Our thesis is organized in a manner which starts by introducing our thesis statement and research question. It will continue to address our research of secondary data on organizational culture, the coherence between storytelling and organizational culture as well as give an outline of the storytelling which currently exists within Telenor. Furthermore it describes our research method before finally demonstrating and analyzing our findings and reaching a conclusion.

The findings of our thesis are objectively interesting, because they demonstrate that there is not necessarily coherence between the external displays of storytelling and the internal experience of daily use of storytelling in leadership. They will also be subjectively interesting for the Telenor organization, as they lay groundwork for further research on the topic as well as gives information which could be interesting for the further development of strategies to implement storytelling in the middle-level management.

2.0 Preface

Dear reader!

This thesis is the finishing chapter of our three-year bachelors programme at the Oslo School of Management – Campus Kristiania. For us, the task of choosing a subject for our thesis has not been a difficult one. We underwent a very inspirational semester with the elective class International Business Communication taught by Hanne Stavelie, and saw that the impact of storytelling and the effects it had as something we wanted to explore further.

Storytelling is a subject that has been quite controversial and the theory is vast and in some way not conclusive in the results. Trying to comb through all of these different theories and results have given us the understanding of storytelling as a subject and furthermore how we can utilize storytelling and organizational culture in our thesis. We have learn a lot both about our subject and furthermore about ourselves. We have put a lot of work into this thesis and are proud of the results, we hope that the readers also think that this is a intriguing subject and that you enjoy it as much as we did.

During this period of time we have had tremendous help. We want to give thanks to our supervisor Hanne Staveli for all the help and support and furthermore Tore Fagernes for helping us structuring our thesis. Moreover we want to thank Customer center at Fornebu for lending us their employees and leaders and moreover customer service leader Torfinn Eriksen for his inspiration, guidance and all our fruitful conversations.

Thanks to all our friends and family that have helped us by reading through our paper, putting up with our mood swings and stress, making us food while we were too busy writing, and all over acting as a great support system.

Thank you to the Oslo School of Management for three years of fun and hardship, and for teaching us how to utilize our knowledge and experience.

Oslo

June 01. 2015

Sincerely 984175 and 984301

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Background for thesis

Our choice of thesis statement came to be through a lengthy process of research on the topics organizational culture and storytelling, as well as several guiding conversations with Torfinn Eriksen at Telenor and Hanne Stavelie at the Oslo School of Management. We found that there is a large quantity of existing research on both of our main topics. We eventually found that seeing as there is a lot of external evidence of the existence of storytelling in Telenor, it would be interesting to investigate how storytelling shows itself within the organization. Seeing as Telenor shows clear evidence of the existence of storytelling, we found that it would be interesting to research whether the same level of storytelling that one can observe externally, also exists internally. It was the suggestion of Torfinn Eriksen that we chose the department of customer service, and so our thesis statement came to be.

3.2 Thesis statement

Are middle-level managers in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service utilizing storytelling as a mean to building and/or strengthen organizational culture?

3.3 Research questions

The process of developing our research questions has been quite challenging, for the same reason as why it was challenging to develop a well-phrased thesis statement. Exactly how do you go about measuring the existence or lack of storytelling in an organization? Through the wise and inspiring guidance of Hanne Stavelie and also in part Tore Fagernes, we were lead to see the subject matter, storytelling, in the perspective of being a tool utilized to build, support and strengthen organizational culture. This is further supported by a variety of literary resources, as this thesis will further demonstrate.

An important precondition of our thesis is the view of storytelling as being a social

construction which only exists insofar as it exists within the consciousness of members of our population. This is a rather hermeneutical way of viewing it, as chapter 7.2 will further demonstrate. Taking on this form of ontology also meant that we would most effectively be able to measure the existence of storytelling through measuring its effect, because it cannot exist without being noticed or remembered by members of the culture.

Defining the four functions of organizational culture as creating stability, identity, commitment and meaning, as per Kaufmann and Kaufmann (269, 2014), our research questions thereby are;

1)   *Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating identity?*

2)   *Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating stability?*

3)   *Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating commitment?*

4)   *Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating meaning?*

3.4 Structure of thesis

Upon further studying the topics of storytelling and organizational culture, we found that the theory on both subjects was vast and we needed to structure the thesis in a way in which the reader would have the same assumptions and background as we had when writing both our interview guide and analysis. Therefore relevant theoretical

background is outlined to provide background for our thesis statement and furthermore utilized to create a consistency in the paper.

Fig 3.4 Structure of thesis

3.5 Preconditions/refinements

The preconditions of our thesis are some general assumptions that we based our research upon. These are as follows:

- *Storytelling is an effective way to build organizational culture*
- *Storytelling in an organization only exist insofar as it is experienced by the members of that organization*

We also had to make some important refinements. The primary refinement is that we, as students, do have a large, yet somewhat limited work capacity. Therefore we have had to choose a narrow population and a small amount of informants. The consequence of this is that our data will not be suited for generalizations regarding the Telenor organization, or even the chosen population. We will, however, be able to gather indications regarding our thesis statement that might be suitable to make certain more qualified assumptions.

4.0 Organizational culture

Organizational culture is described as why a company does the things they do. More accurately it's a system of the basic values and the perceptions of the employees of the company or organization (Kaufmann and Kaufmann, 2014, 269). In organizational culture the social climate of the company can also have an effect on the culture. The properties of organizational culture are therefore in some way the causes to the climate; they have a cause and effect relationship (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269). There is a wide range of theoretical definitions of culture and especially organizational culture, but the consensus in the theory is the basic idea of the essential

values. Furthermore there are four core values that are important; the degree of sensitivity towards customers and colleagues, the freedom to develop new ideas, the willingness to take risks and the openness with the communication opportunities.

This goes back to Abraham Maslow´s hierarchy of needs, our basic need for safety and security is in many ways why we work. Our needs are the driving force behind why we work, however, these needs will not create a feeling of identity or commitment in the employees. Figure 4.0 tells us how the needs decrease in their impact on humans (Ind 2007, 28). Therefore to create feeling, organizations need to look at other functions that can contribute to building these emotions in the employees (Ind 2007, 27).
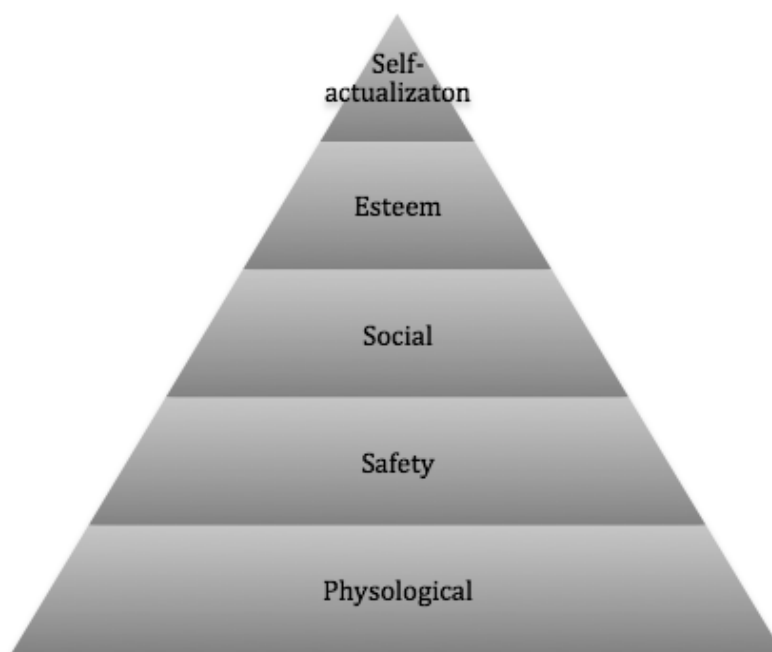
Fig. 4.0 Maslow´s hierarchy of needs (Ind 2007, 28)

The main focus in organizational culture is described as four functions that contribute to creating a dynamic culture within the organization. Identity, stability, meaning and commitment will within an organization contribute to how the behavior of the

employees develops, how they perceive their work environment and maybe in some way how long they will stay in the company.

4.1 Identity

For all employees the way they identify themselves with the organization will in some way be colored by the way they identify with themselves in their private life. In their article R. Barker and K. Gower describes how the evolving multinational relationships in an organization are affected by the diversity of the employees, given that all employees have a multitude of backgrounds like age, religion, gender, race and ethnicity. The diversity creates different ways in which employees identify with the company (R. Barker and K. Gower, 2010, 1-3). This takes us back to Kaufmann and Kaufmann, who state that the behavior of the employees and how they identify with the organization is established through integration. The process of integration is influenced by the organizations ability to create loyalty and creating a common meaning. A sense of identifying with the organization is built upon how the leaders are perceived and their ability to be role models (Kaufmann and Kaufmann, 2014, 269).

In identity, culture is conveyed through the mechanisms socialization, rites and ceremonies. Socialization is maybe one of the most important factors of organizational culture, and describes a process through which members of the organization will adjust to the culture. The employees will through imitation, compliance and identifying with the cultures, norms and values, adopt and internalize these and therefore be a bigger part of the organizational culture. The rituals and ceremonies of the organization is meant to emphasize its values and beliefs, they are often organized and planned (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269).

4.2 Stability

Creating a stable and predictable work environment for employees should be a goal for every organization. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, very person's task in life is to be the best person they can be (Ind, 2007, 28 -29). Therefore, when an organization aspires for a stable work environment all the basic needs of their employees should be taken in to consideration.

When talking about organizational culture stability is an important function of creating a good culture in the organization. The values of the organization are better defined and therefore create the stability the employees search for in their work (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269). Organizational culture contributes and can increase their sense of identity with the organization, this will again create stability and moreover, a loyal community inside the organization.

With stability in organizational culture as in identity there are different mechanisms that can be used to create it. In this case they are rituals and stories. Equally for stability the way the organization plans and organizes different activities to emphasize their values is important in both the day to day work life and also when highlighting success. Highlighting success stories will be of importance, telling the organizations core story, playing to their employee's sense of identity and pride. All these mechanisms will help creating stability and moreover create an organizational culture that is stable over time (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 272).

4.3 Commitment

Every day a person commits to the choices they take, being what to wear for work, going to work or not, and all they choices they have to make at the workplace. Kaufmann and Kaufmann suggest that mutual influence and interaction through socialization is a big part of forming organizational culture (2014, 271). Socialization is maybe one of the most important factors in a culture and when aspiring for commitment in their employees an organization could use role models when training their employees and furthermore throughout the everyday work of their employees. In training a role model is key in the sense that they teach the employees the "lay of the

land", how the organization works, its values and goals as well as the norms of the organization (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 267).

The mechanisms for creating a committed employee in an organization and its culture are described as heroes and myths, along with socialization. A culture does not appear from nothing and an organization's history will in some way be a big part in creating and building the organizational culture. The development of an organizational culture can be seen as how leaders, employees and outside factors all play a part in the development. A hero is described as a person that personifies the organizations visions and goals in a way that inspires others. When a leader becomes a role model they confirm and reinforce the organizational culture and help the employees to understand and make their own commitments to the organization. The heroes of the organization help the employees to commit (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 272).

Another part of the commitment mechanism is myths. These are linked with the background and history of the organization. For many employees this may not be so important to know about in their day to day work, but for an organization to build commitment in their employees these are good mechanisms to utilize. Building committed and loyal employees is for many organizations very important; this can create employees that have the organizations values and goals in their "backbone" and will always have the organizations best interest at heart in everything they do (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 272).

4.4 Meaning

Linked with the commitment, stability and identity in organizational culture is meaning. Some of the mechanisms used to create meaning for employees are the symbols and language of the organization. The main goal is to clarify and strengthen the behavior of employees, which can be done in different sets of ways. In some cases using the organizational culture can contribute to creating and developing a behavior that is beneficial for the organization (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 2269-272).

The function of meaning is to create a sense of identity and commitment in the employees of the organization. Given that you want to create a community both socially and professionally the way you do this through the basic values of the organization creates a common meaning inside your employees (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269).

Using symbols and language is a way of conveying the culture in an organization. Symbols can be a number of things, but most often it refers to physical attributes of a company. This can be the building where the offices of the organization are located, the logo or a nice reception to convey a people oriented organization. Telenor's Fornebu office is a prime example of a symbol. All these physical attributes can express how the organization is regarded externally (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 272).

Creating meaning for an organization and its employees can be a vague and difficult task; the theory on the subject is dispersed and there are many different opinions of the topic. In his article Adam Grant suggests to lead with meaning and expresses how beneficial contact can help employees understanding the organizations core values and story (2012, 459). Furthermore he suggests that a leader's task is to motivate their employees to accomplish greatness (Grant 2012, 458). Transformational leadership is meant to engage employees with inspirational behaviors such as:

- Articulating a compelling vision
- Emphasizing collective identities
- Expressing confidence and optimism
- Referencing core values and ideals

All these behaviors are important when inspiring meaning in an organizations employees. Furthermore, they are known to create employees that set goals that are more in line with company values, and additionally that experience more meaning in their work (Grant 2012, 458). Employees' needs when it comes to meaning are diverse, but mostly they need to understand that the work they do for the organization has meaning also for others. Beneficiaries can be a great source to understanding and creating meaning for employees of an organization. Furthermore it can strengthen the

impact of transformational leadership (Grant 2012, 459). In an organizational culture the contact with beneficiaries can be a credible link between the leaders' words and how they behave, as well as creating meaning for their employees (Grant 2012, 459). Creating meaning for employees can be a vague and intangible concept for most of us. Therefore, by utilizing transformational leadership the concept becomes more clear and tangible for employees (Grant 2012, 460).

5.0 Storytelling and organizational culture

5.1 Background/History

"Since the dawn of humankind, stories have accompanied social life and represented forms of cultural transmission" (Van Laer et al 2014, 797).

Organizational culture is gained through shared opinions that all the members of the organization hold, as well as a shared interest in developing and maintaining the organization and that which separates the organization from others. The passing of wisdom and culture has always been a part of humankinds tradition and the use of storytelling can anchor an organizations past to its present (Brady and Haley 2013, 40).

The roots of the principles of traditional storytelling date all the way back to Aristotle's "Poetics". Said principles tell us that a story should have a beginning, a middle and an end, furthermore it should include complex characters, a plot that engages the reader or listener, a message either with a reversal of fortune or a lesson learned and a conflict. These are elements in the recipe for a good story. The collection of these elements can be described as the fairytale model of storytelling (Fog et al, 2010, 33). For a story to engage its audience these elements need to be in place, moreover without these there is no story according to Klaus Fog, Budtz, Munch and Blanchettes book "Storytelling – Branding in practice" (2010, 32). This book tells us that a story is something that lives within every company, human, employee or organization, and that it is the way you tell the story and how this engages your audience that is the key to how good your story is.

Going back in time, stories have always been a part of organizations, societies, cultures and us as humans. Nicholas Ind discusses this, as well as how storytelling translates into the human aspect of the company in his book "Living the brand" (2007). All organizations consist of employees that have two stories, their own and that of the organization. Therefore "Living the brand" entails bringing together the organizations story and that of the employees themselves (Ind 2007 43 – 48).

The abovementioned book argues that the primary function of a brand is to remove anxiety throughout the purchase. Given that all customers have so many different brands to choose from, standing out in the crowd and be the "top-of-mind" brand in the customers' none-assisted knowledge is the goal of many organizations (Samuelsen et al 2013, 104). The employees of the company are the best source for information from the customers. In Telenor the customer service agents handle several inquiries per day and all the feedback they get creates information that can be translated into better marketing, better conditions and better products for the customers. Furthermore the book argues that "Many large organizations have the knack of taking in enthusiastic, committed and hopeful people and turning them, unwittingly and over time into hostile, cynical and hopeless people" (Ind, 2007, 41).

Every organization needs to use their employees' full potential and not squash the enthusiasm they bring in to the company on their first day. Given that Telenor is such a large company, employees can easily disappear in the crowd, therefore seem unhappy and as a result not thrive in the organization (Ind 2007, 43-46). In Norway the structure of the organization is not a traditional "top down" hierarchy and therefore the information may float more fluently, which can create an environment of creativity and nurture (Ind 2007, 43-46).

Looking at fig 5.1, Barker and Gower suggest a model as being a hybrid to understanding both socialization and communicational needs within an organization. Furthermore it shows an effective way to use storytelling to develop a "swift communication" method. A swift communication environment is a part of Barker and

Gower's suggestion on how storytelling can be used to develop trust in an organizations employees. They also discuss how "swift trust" is used to explain going from the time consuming way of building trust face-face to using electronic communication as a means for building trust. By using swift communication organizations can help build and develop a mutual understanding with its employees and moreover lead to behaviors that can benefit the organization (Barker and Gower, 2010, 5 – 8).

The article also uses the phrase narrative paradigm theory (NTP). Narrative paradigm theory is used as a way of exchanging information that is accepted and familiar to employees of an organization. Furthermore NTP is used to establish a common ground by using stories that are easily understood and memorable to employees (Barker and Gower 2010, 299 – 300). NTP tells us that all humans are innate storytellers, and as Van Laer et al support this by stating that it's a part of human kind to tell stories (2014, 797). Given that narratives are a big part of us as humans, NTP can also contribute to creating a sense of empathy both intellectually and emotionally to help understanding other employees and additionally strengthening the organizational culture (Barker and Gower 2010, 299). The article also suggests that NTP can eliminate the more time consuming process of creating trust through socialization. Given that stories can be perceived as both a part of the organization and of its employees, using stories that already are approved by the employees to be true can improve the organizational results (Barker and Gower 2010, 299 – 300). Figure 6.1 demonstrates how the interaction between NTP and Social Exchange Theory is needed to establish social relationships in the organization and furthermore how communication inside the organization floats more fluently and creates a better collaboration between the different cultures (Barker and Gower 2010, 301).

> "The strengths of storytelling as a communication method, recognizing all humans as storytellers with the ability to send and receive messages that establish a value-laden reality, establishes a common ground among all participants and provides a faster method of establishing a social relationship." (Barker and Gower 2010, 302)

Fig 5.1 Storytelling model of organizational communication (STMOC) (Barker and Gower 2010, 302)).

The principles of storytelling are to capture your audience and create emotions throughout every stage of the branding of your organization, both internally and externally. Storytelling will as such create different opportunities, from using it in external marketing or using it as a leadership tool (Fog et al 2010 68 - 69). Our focus will be how Telenor can and/or does use storytelling as a leadership tool, how this affects the organizational culture as well as how it creates better relationships with employees.

Storytelling is built around how you tell a story and how your recipients interpret the message you portray. Storytelling can be used as a leadership tool in the way that you train your leaders to always tell a story when they present, talk and interact with employees. By playing to emotions the leaders can create a greater ownership to the work they do and as such create employees that do a better job in their everyday work (Fog et al 2010,132-133).

5.1.1 Definition

Storytelling is in the dictionary described as: the telling or writing of stories (Dictionary.com) This gives us a wide perspective of the word and doesn't explain

storytelling and how it is perceived throughout time. Given that our goal is to discuss storytelling in the context of organizational culture, we need to define it in a better way. A story is a narrative that links a set of events – true or fictional – in some kind of causal sequence; moreover it is a way of organizing information in a structure – so that it can be remembered. As such, the values, the core story and the employees need to be organized in a way that conforms into the rules that are perceived as governing rules of story structure (Eldbarry.net).

Ernest Kadembo suggest this definition of the term "story":

"story is something told or recounted in the form of a causally-linked set of events; account; tale: the telling of a happening or connected series of happenings, whether true or fictitious. Narrative meaning is created by establishing that something is a part of a whole and usually that something is the cause of something else. It is usually combined with human actions or events that affect human beings. The meaning of each event is produced by the part it plays in the whole episode" (2012, 223).

5.2 Storytelling and identity

Storytelling and identity can go hand in hand when used right. By using stories as a persuasive communication method they can serve to provide both a personal and organizational identity (Barker and Gower 2010, 304). The theory tells us how a multitude of backgrounds can affect the organizational culture. Furthermore the use of NTP and STMOC is interpreted as ways of reducing anxiety and uncertainty in an organization and with its employees (Barker and Gower 2010, 304). The employees identify with the organization through integration, loyalty and creating a common meaning (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269). Additionally the theory tells us about the mechanisms of identity and how these convey the organizational culture. These mechanisms help the organization emphasize their values and beliefs and moreover make the employees a bigger part of the organizational culture (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269 – 270).

"*Stories serve a persuasive communication function for organizations by representing personal, interpersonal and corporate perspectives*" (Barker and Gower 2010, 304). This tells us that by applying storytelling as an additional mechanism in building and developing the culture of the organization, we can create lasting impressions and evolving talents (Brady and Haley 2013, 40 – 41). In their article "Storytelling defines your organizational culture", William Brady and Shar Haley have explored the importance of storytelling for an organizational culture. In the case of the Presbyterian Hospital they do an empirical study of how the story of the hospital drives the basic dimensions of their organizational culture (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 267 – Brady and Haley 2013, 40). Brady and Haley suggests different dimensions that can define a organizations storytelling. When discussing the application of storytelling to identity, they state that it entails "conveying a sense of identity for their organizations members" and "facilitating commitment to something larger than individual self-interest". These two dimensions apply directly on how employees identify with the organization (Brady and Haley 2013, 42). When telling positive stories about things that have happened in the organization it engages emotions. Employees can make the stories into their own and moreover identify and relate with the organization in a positive way (Brady and Haley 2013, 42). Furthermore identifying themselves with the stories of the organization can create a new sense of commitment. As such, employees are better able to trust and further an inherent identity within the organization (Brady and Haley 2010, 42).

For an organization their core story is essential when creating identity in their employees. When developing their core story leaders need to create a "shared mental image" of the organization together with "a driving passion". Both these steps can help the employees identify with the organization, and as such they may proudly share the organizations core story (Fog et al 2010, 62 – 63). A core story doesn't just appear out of nothing, and using the organizations values is key. These values are carefully developed with the goal of uniting the employees and helping them identify with the organization. The core story puts organizational values into a human context (Fog et al 2013, 69).

Given all the perspectives about identity and storytelling, providing a short and concise summary of how identity is created through storytelling is not easy. It can be a large task, but the benefits are that using storytelling can captivate, connect and inspire employees into action (Ohara and Cherniss 2010, 31). Employees can be the best ambassadors of an organization. Because of their close relationship with the organization storytelling can nurture a deeper understanding of the organizational culture (Ohara and Cherniss 2010, 31 – Fog et al 2010, 63).

5.3 Storytelling and stability

Every day humans crave stability in their lives; both in their workplace and in their private life. As such, ensuring that the basic needs of the employees are met should be a priority in the organization (Ind 2007, 27 – 28). Kaufmann and Kaufmann suggest two mechanisms to convey the stability of an organizational culture. These are rituals and stories, and translate into the use of storytelling (Kaufmann and Kaufmann, 2014, 272). When planning and organizing celebratory activities, using storytelling could entail building a story about why the celebration is important as well as why the organization has come into success (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 272).

Developing stability in an organizational culture will generate questions on how this can be done both here and now and also over time, using storytelling to anchor the stability of the organization and its stories with employees (Fog et al 2010, 62-63).

When applying storytelling to an organization it has been suggested "that communication fills an organization-making function rather than just an organization-maintaining one" (Barker and Gower 2010, 305). Storytelling can be used to maintain and coordinate all the aspects of organization making functions. Furthermore, the employees that participate and contribute to the storytelling become more empathic, thus allowing them to identify with other employees and creating a more stable work environment (Barker and Gower 2010, 305).

Storytelling has also been suggested to be effective when introducing change (Barker and Gower 2010, 305). Given that the organizational culture often is "set" in an organization, changes can often be difficult; also, change in the organizational culture takes time (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 273). When introducing change there are different approaches to doing so, but the most effective way may be by using storytelling. Storytelling as a communication tool can eliminate different obstacles such as grievances, employees not understanding the changes and the reasoning behind the changes (Fog et al 2010, 52).

Storytelling can be a good way to create a better and deeper understanding of the organizational culture and bond employees across the organization (Ohara and Cherniss 2010, 31). When using storytelling to implement change, organizations can create a bigger significance of commitment, stability and society inside the organization, and as such the employees connect (Ohara an Cherniss 2010, 31). In their article about Juniper Networks, Ohara and Cherniss describe how the organization when implementing change took on a communication project to strengthen their "storytelling DNA". This was done to connect their employees globally and support the needs of the organization (Ohara and Cherniss 2010, 31). So for organizations like Juniper Networks, the importance of establishing a core story is key when handling large changes that effect a multitude of their employees. As the researchers state that the:

> Development of important organizational capability for Juniper, which strengthened our "storytelling DNA", globally and, ultimately, supported multiple business needs. (Ohara and Cherniss 2010, 31).

All these functions and mechanisms help build and maintain the organizational culture, and furthermore increase commitment and dedication in the organization (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 271). The main functions of an organizational culture are often seen as normative for behavior and thus seeming stable over time through integration (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269).

5.4 Storytelling and commitment

When creating commitment in its employees an organization needs to make sure that the values and goals of the organization is clear, and that every employee becomes organizational committed. This commitment stems in many ways from the sense of identity, and are a way to contribute to building the organizational culture (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269). As for the theory about storytelling and identity; creating commitment in an organizational culture using storytelling are in many ways built around the leaders of the organization (Fog et al 2010, 63). The mutual influence and interaction between employees in socialization is often a way to pass knowledge through the culture (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 271). In organizational culture different mechanisms are used to convey and corroborate the culture, for commitment these mechanisms are heroes and myths (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 272).

In storytelling heroes are often seen as the person seeking out a goal (Fog et al 2010, 39). When applying this to organizations and organizational culture this hero can be both the founder of the organization or a leader that personifies its values in a way that inspires other employees to reach a common goal (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 272). For an organization there is not always a founder that can be portrayed as a hero. As such, to generate commitment in its employees, the organization itself needs to be the hero and the employees will become the beneficiaries, according to the fairytale model in "Storytelling – Branding in practice" (Fog et al 2010, 90 – 91). Heroes in stories are often portrayed as classical heroes that stem from Greek mythology, and can be quite different in their characteristics. According to Fog et al, "Each hero represents a set of values and is driven by his or her passion", and the classical hero figure appeals to the basic human needs (Fog et al 2010, 91-93). Translating this into an organization, all leaders can take on the role as a hero. A leader that is also a hero needs to have strong interpersonal skills and traits, and can add the human traits that employees need to identify with the organizations story (Fog et al 2010, 93). Commitment is more easily translated to the employees when hero stories are translated in ways that are comprehensible and furthermore when the employees identify and get an emotional bond with the core story. A hero/role model

can therefore help the organization by supporting the values and their groundwork (Fog et al 2010, 93 – 95).

A leader's job in an organization is to create an environment that nurtures and corroborates its employees, starting from recruitment, continuing through the conclusion of their training as well as continuously throughout their career (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2914, 271). Figure 5.4 tells us how all the components, both internal and external are participating in affecting the development of an organizational culture. The leaders' impact on the culture can be obtained through the core story and the values, and the result can be committed and loyal employees. The figure tells us how all the different elements are a part of developing the organizational culture and furthermore how it is maintained. All these elements also contribute to increasing the commitment and dedication in employees (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 270 – 271).
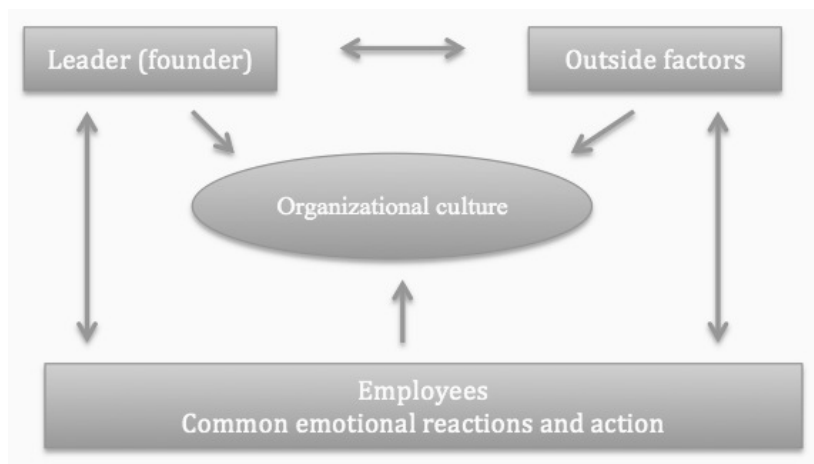
Fig 5.4 Development of organizational culture (own translation) (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 270)

Creating committed employees is a good way for an organization to strengthen their organizational culture. Using storytelling in this process enables the creation of new opportunities that may not be present in the organization today. An organization will always have the need for good knowledge management in every part of their organization. This can be a challenging task because all knowledge is not passed in a structural setting, but also in social contexts (Swap et al 2001, 96). Knowledge is often passed in subtle, unstructured and dynamic processes. It is not easy to set knowledge passed in informal settings in connection with training and training systems. All employees have traits and characteristics that can be helpful for the organization when transferring knowledge. As such it is important to establish a system that can utilize all these traits in a way that benefits every part of the organization (Swap et al 2001, 96).

After the organizational culture has been developed, the focus shifts to keeping that culture alive, and one of the most important elements in this process is socialization. This process is where the employees adapt to the organizational culture as well as acquire thought systems and behavioral patterns related to the culture (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 271). In this process imitation and identifying with role models play a big part, and as such the leaders, by acting like role models, can tighten the gap between experienced and inexperienced employees and leaders (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 271). An inexperienced employee can in some way be afraid of making the wrong choices and their commitment to the organization will therefore be lacking. Given that storytelling is often used to create shared meaning and identity in employees of an organization, the use of role models and heroes can further strengthen the organizational culture and thus create more committed employees. For an employee a role model may transfer their behavior and values in a way that is more understandable and relatable, thus creating more loyal and committed employees. Furthermore a role model may increase an employees sense of pride in their position and moreover their commitment to the organization (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 271).

5.5 Storytelling and meaning

For many people, understanding the meaning of their work can be a vague concept which is not easily understood through the values and visions of the organization alone (Grant 2012, 458). Using transformational leadership can be one of the ways to make these concepts more tangible for the employees. Furthermore, by combining transformational leadership and storytelling, employees can get a better comprehension of meaning. Grant suggests beneficiaries as an additional component to creating meaning for employees of an organization. One tends to apply lifelike situations to understanding and interpreting values and purpose. A beneficiary contact can provide a meaningful face to daily routines and as such create evidence in addition to communicating visions and values of a leader (2012, 461).

Creating meaning for employees in their everyday work is strongly linked to the other functions of organizational culture. "Through stories employees come to understand themselves and the company brand" (Fog et al 2010, 132). This tells us that by both implementing transformational leadership as well as using storytelling, it is possible to ease the difficulty of creating meaning. Additionally, using storytelling can help build upon the other functions of organizational culture (identity, stability and commitment). The best assets of an organization are its employees. This is because they are great ambassadors of the brand, and the strength of your brand stems from your employees (Fog et al 2010, 132). Stories can be looked at as building blocks of any human relationship. Moreover stories place experiences into shared words and images (Fog et al 2010, 132). Fog et al suggest two purposes for using storytelling as a management tool: "to strengthen the culture" and "to show the way" (2010, 133). When creating meaning in their organization, leaders can use storytelling as a tool to complement other traditional leadership tools (Fog et al 2010, 133).

Nicholas Ind discusses the importance of "living the brand" in his book by the same name, furthermore he suggests how storytelling can be used to sustaining the brand and by default the organizational culture (2007, 137). When leaders personalize the

ideas and values of the organization, it can create its own vitality and attain a function that motivates employees, as well as create meaning for said employees (Ind 2007, 137). Meaning can for many employees with the help of storytelling jolt the imagination for the organization, and in addition it can act as a bonding agent when it becomes a common view of the organization (Ind 2007, 137).

6.0 Telenor: their organizational culture and evidence of use of storytelling

6.1 Telenor´s Background and history

Telenor is a company with a large and influential history going all the way back to 1855 when the company was called "Det norske Telegrafverket" (Telenor 9). All the way through their long history, the company has been know as one of the biggest telecommunication companies not only in Norway, but also in Asia and other parts of Europe (Telenor 1).

Given Telenor's extensive background, their story will always be a big part of Norway´s state history. In its 160-year history Telenor has gone from a state company focusing on telegraphy to a multinational corporation with the most advanced telecommunication technology and services. From the name "Det norske Telegrafverket" to Telenor, the different names the company has had is also a big part of the Norwegian history. Going on to be Televerket (1969) to becoming a public corporation with the name Telenor (1995), the organization has always been seen as one of the largest companies for telecommunication in Norway (Telenor 1).

For employees of Telenor, the vast history can create a better understanding for visions and values and furthermore create a better sense of ownership to new strategies. In one of the more recent ones, "Empower societies", Telenor describe that this is a task that always have been a part of the Norwegian Telenor history and now they want to take it to a global level (Telenor 1).

6.2 Evidence of storytelling in Telenor

Torfinn Eriksen is clear and adamant that he wishes for the middle level managers of the company to be competent storytellers, so that they may communicate with their employees in a way that is engaging and which creates a bigger commitment to the company (informal conversation with Torfinn Eriksen). In a video (created in 2011) that only can be accessed through Telenor intraweb, the company clearly and simply explains the core story of the company, as well as how they wish to utilize a strong background in order to continue being a market leader in a fierce and competitive industry.

Further evidence of the existence of storytelling within Telenor is found on their website Telenor.com. On the website there is a timeline which outlines the milestones of The Telenor Group, from its establishment in 1853 'till the 10th anniversary of the companys presence at Fornebu (Telenor 2). The milestones are of both larger and smaller scale, both national and international character.

Storytelling is also something that is taught – if not mentioned by that name – at Telenor's Talent Programs. This we know both from talking to Torfinn Eriksen, and from one of our sources which had participated in said program. The latter (L2, see chapter 8.2.5) states in his interview that «I participated in the Talent Program (...) where we no doubt have literally worked with storytelling» («Jeg var med i talentprogrammet (...) der har vi jobbet med storytelling uten tvil, bokstavelig talt») upon being given an operationalized definition of the term storytelling. Further evidence of the existence of storytelling within the organization appears several times through our interview process. This will be further addressed in the chapters 8.0 Findings and 9.0 Analysis.

6.3 E4: Telenor´s leadership strategy – impact on organizational culture

Given that Telenor is a large company with more than 4000 managers in the Telenor Group a collective strategy for leaders creates a shared meaning for the attitudes of

the leaders. Furthermore it can benefit both the organizations employees and its culture (Telenor 5). Telenor recently conducted a survey about their organizational culture and found that the "culture is the glue that binds us together and the way we do business" (Telenor 5). The survey showed that Telenor "operate with integrity, we are results-oriented and we put customers first" (Telenor 5), this is shown in how hard it is for others to copy the culture and furthermore it is evidence of why people want to work for Telenor (Telenor 5). The leaders of Telenor are a great part of building, maintaining and conveying the culture and as such the organization has created the new leadership strategy E4; Explore, Engage, Empower and Execute (Telenor 5). Leaders in Telenor are meant to be the employees' source of correct behavior, as well as role models of this behavior (Telenor 5).

6.3.1 Explore

"Exploration is the act of searching for something new – often into the unknown" (Telenor 5). The goal in Telenor is leaders that are curious, and open to new ways of thinking. Moreover exploration is about challenging conventional ways of thinking, and employees and leaders learning from each other and improving (Telenor 5). By being open and curios and learning from each other both employees and leaders can create a shared meaning and identity within the organization that fuels the organization to further improve (Telenor 5).

6.3.2 Engage

Engaging employees is a key attitude of every leader, creating a winning spirit and moreover "walk the talk" (Telenor 6). Given that Telenor is a customer driven organization with a goal of being preferred by customers, employee engagement is key to driving this goal forward. Without engaged employees Telenor is not able to set themselves apart from their competitors in the market they operate in, and thus their goal is not reached (Telenor 6). Grameenphone´s Quazi Mohammed Shahed explain engagement as "a journey that you take with your team". Engagement is also a collaboration, without sharing and learning from other departments and units in the organization a subculture can be as engaged as they want, but the bottom line is that

it's not about us and them but the fact that the organization needs to "win" together (Telenor 6).

6.3.3 Empower

"To empower is to actually give other people power, not only to delegate" (Telenor 7). Giving power to employees means setting them up for success and creating the right conditions for employees to perform their best. For leaders this entails building trust, enabling employees and giving constructive feedback (Telenor 7). Keywords in empowerment are accountability, openness, nourish and trust – these are essential in practicing empowerment. Moreover a leader should convey clear goals and expectations, as well as value driven leadership (Telenor 7). For Telenor, a great sense of ownership is also significant. This is because employees perform best when they have a strong sense of ownership to their work and a leader that supports their success (Telenor 7).

6.3.4 Execute

Executing is one of the most challenging tasks an organization can face, and moreover failure to execute is often the main reason for an organization's lack of keeping promises (Telenor 8). Since "Keeping promises" is one of Telenor's values, this is as important as executing (Telenor 4). "If strategy is about what a company should do, execution is about getting it done" (Telenor 8). The main purpose of execution is to deliver results. Execution can be looked at as the difference in what the organization wants to achieve and what they actually deliver (Telenor 8). Executions require leaders that are clear in their goals and furthermore that set realistic goals that are obtainable for employees. In line with empowering, leaders trust employees to execute and deliver results in accordance with the values (Telenor 8). Without a clear execution all the other attitudes of a leader and their employees will not produce any results (Telenor 8).

6.4. Vision and mission; is it transmissible between the leaders and employees?

Telenor´s vision for their organization is "Empower societies". With this they want to bring power to every part of the world both locally and beyond, as well as secure a better future for all (Telenor 4). By providing digital communications and also help building societies with both infrastructure and products, Telenor help progress and improvement (Telenor 4). With this vision Telenor has set out a strategy that they want to obtain within 2017 – the strategic goals are:

1. Internet for all
2. Loved by Customers
3. Efficient operations

This strategy is grand and can for many be hard to create ownership to. "Loved by customers" is relatable for most employees because of their daily work and moreover the customer contact they have. "Internet for all" and "Efficient operations" can be tougher to translate. The communication method of leaders can help employees to see them as a part of their own day to day job (Telenor 3). The strategy is also easily translated into meaning for employees through the mission statement of "we´re here to help our customer" (Telenor 4). Alongside with their E4 program, leaders of Telenor have a great toolbox for motivating employees (Telenor 5). The backside of the grand vision and mission is how transmissible it is from leaders to employees.

The values of Telenor are deeply rooted in the organization in the sense that they have not changed for a long period of time and as such are a large part of the routine decisions made by Telenor leadership. Furthermore they are easily relatable and thusly also easily memorable. With values like: Be respectful, Keep promises, Make it easy and Be inspiring, Telenor has made it easy for its employees to create ownership. Furthermore, these values are easy translatable into employees' daily life, both private and professional (Telenor 4).

6.5 Telenor – creating a stable work environment, the impact of the core story

For an organization, the stories that are told create a great way of understanding and committing for both employees and leaders (Boyce 1996, 5). With the use of social constructivism and organizational symbolism the organization can look at the impact and thus how stable their core stories are internally (Boyce 1996, 5). As humans we are all a part of history, both our own and the shared story. Boyce suggests that we have both an internal story and a story that has been constructed through our social interaction (1996, 5).

For an organization creating a core story is in many ways essential when developing their storytelling and their organizational culture (Fog et al 2010, 62). Given that employees are the most important resource for an organization, the impact of the core story is essential. Humans need to know that they serve a purpose and that their efforts have impact both on the organization and on their customers (Fog et al 2010, 62). A core story may create a justification and furthermore confirmation of their purpose (Boyce 1996, 5).

The impact of the core story may in some ways create stability and regarding the social construction Boyce suggests:

> Brown concluded not only that organizational members express understanding and commitment to the organization and their use of stories, but also that the degree of member familiarity with the dominant story of the organization might indicate the member's level of adaptation to the organization. (1996, 6)

Given that employees of an organization need verification of their purpose, the core story will create meaning, generate commitment and additionally a stable work environment (Boyce 1996, 6).

In her article about "Storytelling in practice at Ericsson Australia and New Zealand" Sonia Aplin indicate how the use of storytelling can change the motivation of an organization from low to high (2010, 16). Because of external factors, motivation

levels within Ericsson managers dropped, and as such, so did employee engagement (Aplin 2010, 16). They saw the need to take action to turn the trend and increase the engagement of the employees, and decided to introduce storytelling (Aplin 2010, 16). Drawing inspiration from Barack Obama, their communication department chose to introduce storytelling. With the integration of leaders and the trust in the organizations history, they saw an increase in motivation and employee engagement (Aplin 2010, 17). This case shows us how trust in the company and integration of leaders in an organization's story can create stable and committed employees.

6.6 Telenor – how to create commitment through storytelling and the organizational culture

In customer relations the key is to find which position the brand wants to have in the market (Samuelsen et al 2010, 103-104). Given Telenors history and years of experience it's easy to say that the brand is a "top-of-mind" brand. For a long time Telenor was the leading company in the telecommunications market with a market share of over 50% (Telenor 9). This combined with the growing competition in the market has created competition that no longer only gives a company challenges with their marketing but also with their internal branding. In branding we primarily discuss the knowledge and position the brand has in a customer's mind (Samuelsen et al 201, 103 - 104). Being a "Top-of-Mind" brand creates both challenges and positivity. Yes, Telenor has a large market share, but given the disloyalty in this market the position will often be diffuse and largely dependent on the needs of the customer in the situation they are in (Samuelsen et al 2010, 104-105).

The branding of the company through internal marketing by use of storytelling could create brand ambassadors. This is seen as likely because storytelling is a leadership and communication tool which is assumed to touch upon the emotions in the employees and create commitment to the brand and the company (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269).

Fig 6.6 Depth in brand awareness (Own translation) (Samuelsen et al 2010, 104)

6.7 Telenor – creating meaning in the organizations employees

Meaning in an organization can be described as the organizations ethos (Boyce 1996, 7). By setting up employees for success through empowerment, the organization creates the right conditions for performance, and thus a strong sense of ownership in both themselves and their work (Telenor 7). Furthermore the stories of the organization are centered around the shared beliefs and meanings (Boyce 1996, 7). These can be developed by engaging with your team and working towards a shared goal (Telenor 6).

All the other factors of an organizational culture influence how meaning is developed (Kaufmann and Kaufmann 2014, 269). A large organization like Telenor might not have a shared system for meaning without a good story. Why does the strategies of

the company entail the things they do? For Telenor sustainability is an area they deal heavily with. With the vision of "Empowering societies" Telenor has already enabled their employees to understand and feel meaning in the vision and for themselves. Furthermore they seek to give power to their employees and create a "winning spirit" (Telenor 6 and 7).

6.7.1 Telenor customer service as a subculture

Organizations often contain different departments and units, and Telenor is no exception. As a culture Telenor has been good at creating communal vision, mission and values. These have permeated all cultures of Telenor through how leaders convey the behavior through E4 (Telenor 5-8).

Kaufmann and Kaufmann suggest that big organizations often have more than one culture, often called subcultures. These can for example be a department or a unit, and these cultures can have their own core values (2014, 268). Telenor as a brand consists of many different cultures both in Norway and also in other countries and on different continents (Telenor 1). This can create snags in establishing a mutual vision because of the diversity in the employees. Vastly different cultural background can lead to variations in the interpretation of the vision (Barker and Gower 2010, 297). Figure 6.7.1 describes what Barker and Gower call the "Organizational Diversity Continuum". This concept tells us how the level of diversity affects the different parts of the organization and thus how these parts interact and communicate (2010, 297). When dealing in a world of diversity the messages you portray should be translatable between all of the diversities that can exist. Messages should take into consideration these diversities (Barker and Gower 2010, 297).
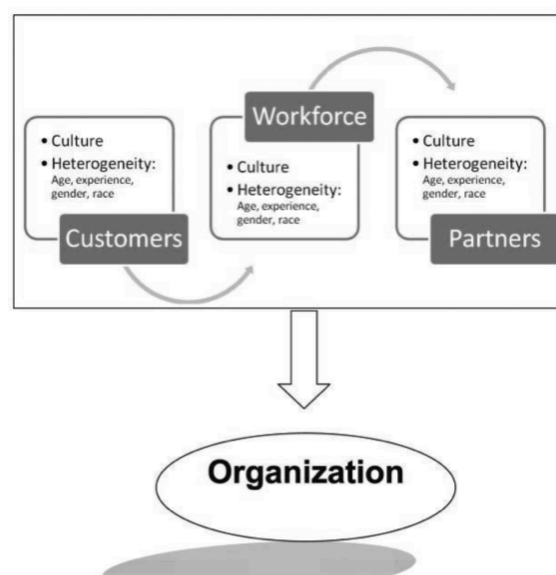
Fig 6.7.1 Organizational diversity continuum (Barker and Gower 2010, 298).

Telenor describes themselves as an organization that "operate as a flat organization that is not dictated by hierarchy, no matter the culture context" (Telenor 7). Given that Telenor operates in many different markets and cultures, this can affect the business relationships and additionally the employees (Barker and Gower 2010, 297).

7.0 Research method

In the following chapter we will seek to clarify and explain the phases and processes of our research. We will go through the discussion of the strategic decisions made regarding our research method and research design. Lastly, we will give a description of the execution of our research methods, as well as discuss the challenges of our research.

7.1 Research design

In our case, we have utilized an intensive research design in order to approach the relevant phenomenon in a manner which we feel best allows us to give an answer to our thesis statement and research questions. When discussing storytelling, we do not feel that numeric objective values are sufficient to give a full understanding that would function as a response to our thesis statement. The intensive research design we chose is meant to gain a more nuanced and detailed perspective of the concepts in question. As described by Jacobsen (2005, 87), this is done in the intensive research design by choosing fewer research subjects and a higher number of variables.

7.2 Chosen research method

The decision of choosing a qualitative research method was uncomplicated in our case. We already held a basic level of knowledge on storytelling as a theme, as well as a good knowledge of organizational culture and its functions. However, our knowledge of the utilization of storytelling by the managers in Telenor was limited and potentially biased, seeing as our perceptions of the organization largely stem from an external point of view. As such, it was necessary for us to hermeneutically study secondary data on the relevant topics. The hermeneutical philosophy is combined with our qualitative studies.

The hermeneutical ontology is described by Aksheim og Grennes (2008, 36-37) as being an ontology in which phenomena are social constructions that only exist insofar as they do in our individual or collective consciousness – in other words, that the reality is what we understand it to be. This is a core concept for our thesis, as we only consider storytelling to be present insofar as employees and leaders understand it to be.

The qualitative research method seeks to assess quality rather than quantity. Berg et al. describe qualitative research as referring to "…the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions of things" (3, 2014). Our qualitative approach will help us to gather the subjective experiences of each informant. This is imperative to answering our thesis statement.

7.3 Collection of data

We have used individual interviews to collect data. The background for the decision was that any group context where subjects are surrounded by leaders or colleagues might affect their responses, as they may feel they're being evaluated or judged by their leaders or peers. We strongly feel that anonymous individual interviews facilitate a comfort zone within which informants feel more comfortable. An important objective for us is to gather not only objective facts, but also subjective descriptions of phenomena from the informants' point of view.

7.3.1 Selection and recruitment of informants

For this type of study, there would be a point of saturation where gathering data from a higher number of informants would be pointless (Johannessen, Tufte og Christoffersen, 2010, 104). Considering however, that Telenor is a very large organization; even limiting the population to two units at Fornebu, we as students would not be able to reach such a point. We decided to limit ourselves to six informants, wherein two are leaders and four are employees of said leaders.

The decision to interview both leaders and employees was made very consciously on our part. The background of the decision is that we feel that the existence or lack of storytelling cannot solely be measured by interviewing leaders. Their statements may be colored or affected by previous training within the organization. The measures they feel they have taken, and the effect they experience those measures as having, may be differently perceived by their employees.

As for our recruitment process, Telenor has been an extremely facilitating collaboration partner. The units chosen were suggested by Torfinn Eriksen, Director Market and Product at Telenor Norge AS, based on our requests regarding population size. Furthermore we were given contact details of the two leaders and four employees whom all happily agreed to participate in our research. This could be considered selection through gatekeeper, wherein a common concern is that the gatekeeper affects the selection of informants.

7.3.2 Preparation of interview guides

We made the decision of creating two separate interview guides, wherein one would be used to interview leaders and one would be used to interview a selection of their employees. The decision was made as a consequence of our decision regarding informant selection, to interview both leaders and employees within Telenor.

Both interview guides are of the semi-structured form. The main difference between a semi-structured and fully structured interview guide is that the semi-structured option leaves room for improvisation. Such improvisation could take the form of adding sub-questions or probing questions that might help enlighten a certain fact or phenomenon

that is mentioned in an unexpected context. This could become greatly beneficial for us, as we are largely dependent on the subjective experiences of each informant to answer our thesis statement.

The development and selection of our interview questions was guided by our thesis statement and research questions, as well as core literature on the main topics. By isolating some main indicators of each research question as well as of the thesis statement, we were able to form questions which without using complicated and potentially unfamiliar terminology, would lead informants to revealing responses. After developing a complete set of questions, with some suggestions to sub-questions and probe questions, they were arranged in an order which we believed would allow a comfortable flow of conversation.

Questions directly relating to the thesis statement were organized at the end of the interview. This was done so that we would be able to give them an operationalized definition of the term storytelling, to see whether it would cause our informants to recall information or situations that they had not previously mentioned. Lastly, we added a few extra questions that would serve to check reliability through examining consistency in responses (Berg et al., 2014, 121).

7.3.3 Pretesting the interview guide

According to Berg et al. (2014, 126), pretesting should consist of two stages; firstly having the guide critically reviewed by someone familiar with the subject matter, then executing practice interviews. As we worked separately when developing the interview guide, we ourselves were able to fill the function of the critical review, which is mainly to identify poorly worded questions (ibid.). Furthermore, we chose not to execute practice interviews on Telenor employees. This was specifically avoided because Telenor operates with open workspaces, and employees as well as leaders have a continuous dialogue. As such, by doing practice interviews, word might reach our informants of what questions they will get. This again might color the

data they would give us during the interview, and we would no longer be able to claim validity of our research.

7.3.4 Execution of interviews

We have used individual interviews to collect data. The background for the decision was that any group context where subjects are surrounded by leaders or colleagues might affect their responses, as they may feel they're being evaluated or judged by their leaders or peers. An important objective for us is to gather not only objective facts, but also subjective descriptions from the informants' point of view. Auditory recordings were made of all interviews.

The interviews were executed face-to-face in mutually agreed upon locations at Telenor Fornebu. While individual interviews are usually executed with only one respondent and one interviewer present, we chose to both be present at all interviews. This made the process of observing facial expressions, gesticulations and other non-audible behavior both simpler and more secure. Simpler in the sense that the job of hosting the interview and taking notes of non-audible behavior was divided between two people. More secure in the sense that as two people were observing non-audible behavior, we are better guarded against colored views or lack of attention than if only one person was to be present.

In the process of scheduling interviews, the selected informants were sent an agreement of informed consent to review and bring with them to the interview. This was done in order to assure them that their responses would be handled with care and their identity would not be reviled. The only information given in advance regarding the theme of the interview was that we would be discussing organizational culture.

7.4 Organizing data

Data from our interviews was first carefully transcribed, then organized within five categories; the four research questions as well as the thesis statement. Information and quotes seen as valuable or potentially valuable was then collected in a separate document. This process is further described in 9.0 Findings.

Considering the fact that we had very few informants, and also informants of both genders, careful measures had to be made in ensuring the anonymity of our informants. As the reader will see later on in this dissertation, we chose to refer to informants by codenames and gender-neutral terms. This became necessary to preserve their anonymity.

7.5 Strategy of analysis

As we had already coded the interview guide according to which questions would fall under what category (thesis statement and research questions), we continued building on this coding during our analysis. A complete transcription was done, however not included in this thesis for the sake of protecting the anonymity of our informants. As the themes of our research questions are very much fluent and all interrelated to one another, some responses would be indicative of more than one category, in which case we would make note of this. The essences of the data was extracted through clarifying, restructuring and summarizing responses – all along ensuring that we were not going beyond the limits of the data given. Findings are demonstrated in Appendix 3.

For the purpose of the analysis and the effective response of our thesis statement, we further decided to describe the level of evidence found in our data using the terms *no evidence, low evidence, some evidence* and *high evidence*. The significance of each description is as follows;

No evidence = no mention of stories, no recollection of core stories or other stories, no evidence that stories have in any way affected the employee/leader/their leadership method in the context of identity, stability, commitment or meaning.

Low evidence = some mention of indicators of storytelling, e.g heroes, background, success stories, core stories or other stories. Indicators may be mentioned out of context and the informant does not necessarily hold detailed knowledge of stories.

Some evidence = mention of stories, heroes, background, success stories, core stories or other stories that have been conveyed through L1 and L2 as a direct cause of the function identity, stability, commitment and meaning.

High evidence = the informant utilizes stories themselves to explain cause and effect relations within the organization, and demonstrate high knowledge of company stories.

7.6 Ethical concerns

In this case, the most critical ethical concern would be the issue of anonymity. This is a key factor because we ask the informants to reveal facts and experiences that they do not wish for colleagues, employees or managers to be able to trace back to themselves. This is also why later in this paper, it is necessary for us to be very adamant about not using gender descriptive phrases or words.

All interviews were executed with informed content through a contract signed by the informant. The contract stated the rights and reservations of both ourselves as researchers and them as informants, including our permission to take auditory recordings and quote them directly and their right to abort the interview. It also functioned to ensure anonymity.

8.0 Findings

Our data was coded as further described in chapter 7.5, Strategy of Analysis. For a short summary of how this was practically executed; In order to start ciphering our findings from the interviews, we started by color-coding the five topics of our research questions – the same topics by which we created the interview guide; identity, commitment, stability, meaning and thesis. By giving each topic a color, we could manually go over the transcripts and use colored markers to sort our findings.

Herein we present the conclusions of the findings within each function and each unit. For the full summary of our individual findings see Appendix 3.

The abbreviations L1 and L2 signify Leader 1 and Leader 2. M1 and M2 are Employees 1 and 2. As such, L1M2 would signify Employee 2 of Leader 1. These abbreviations have been put in place in order to uphold the anonymity of our research subjects.

8.1 L1 and employees

Herein we will describe the findings made in interviews with L1, L1M1 and L1M2 within the five sub-categories of our research.

8.1.1 Identity

Findings give *some evidence* that L1 does attempt to utilize storytelling to create identity. However, it also suggests that L1M1 and L1M2 have limited knowledge of the company core story, and while they both are aware that company values do exist, neither know these particularly well. L1M1 and L1M2 do not display evidence that they identify themselves particularly much to the company, nor that storytelling has been utilized by their manager to steer them in that direction. It is also noteworthy that L1M1 mentions large rituals where storytelling was utilized for building identity.

8.1.2 Stability

Rules and norms are important factors in upkeeping stability. These interview results indicate that all subjects have different experiences of the rules and norms of the company, as well as the communication of such. While the manager, L1 expresses that it is of importance that employees know the company's core story in order to understand routines and procedures, neither L1M1 nor L1M2 are able to make a connection between the two factors.

While L1 states that the core of her motivational messages are messages that involve background and purpose, L1M1 and L1M2 both respond differently – where L1M1 states that her motivational messages come from customers, L1M2 states that they do come from L1 but are rather messages containing positive results. There is *low evidence* of the intention to use storytelling from L1's perspective. There is *no evidence* that this has been received by the employees.

8.1.3 Commitment

While L1 displays *no evidence* of attempting to utilize storytelling to create commitment, both employees mention CEO's, current and elected, as people they look up to. We therefore conclude that these two have a hero position in the view of L1M1

and L1M2. Both employees recognize their positions as important, but L1M2 also states that he is one of many people who bear the brunt. Both employees have a long-term perspective of their careers within Telenor, but not necessarily within the same position. The results give *some evidence* that storytelling exists within the organization, but *no evidence* that the manager utilizes it to create or support commitment.

8.1.4 Meaning

Findings suggest that L1 has strong knowledge of stories within Telenor. This gives *some evidence* that storytelling does exist within the organization. However, neither employee is consistent in referring to their leader as a motivational person. L1M2 suggests that core story may have been touched upon within team meetings. There is *low evidence* of stories being utilized to create meaning.

8.1.5 Thesis statement

In this case, all subjects agree that the use of storytelling would be beneficial. Again, it is stated (in this case by L1M2) that top managers utilize storytelling. L1M1 misinterprets the term. L1 understands the term, and sees high value in the use of storytelling. L1 believes that they need more assistance or correction on how to utilize storytelling in their leadership.

8.2 L2 and employees

8.2.1 Identity

L2 aspires to be an inspirational leader but does not give indicators of storytelling as being part of their leadership method in the context of identity. Findings show that both employees perceive their identity with Telenor to be something that lies inside themselves. L1M2 says: "you have a sense of pride as sort of responsibility to the community" ("...det er slags stolthet du har der, det er et samfunnsansvar da på sett og vis"). L2M2 has low knowledge of organizational values but state that they are

"generally values that I feel I can relate to" ("…generelt verdier jeg kjenner at jeg kan relatere"). Findings show *no evidence* of the use of storytelling to create or support identity.

8.2.2 Stability

L2 displays knowledge of company background, furthermore L2 states that they utilize core story by video as well as success stories, in team meetings and one to one communication. L2 sees it as an important task to communicate company background and history. There is *some evidence* that L2 intends to use storytelling to create or support stability.

Neither employee give evidence of recalling stories being communicated to them by L2. Regarding organizational behavior they both express that they feel this is more or less common decency rather than Telenor specific behavior. There is *no evidence* of storytelling being used to create stability in a way that employees can remember.

8.2.3 Commitment

Our findings show that L2 themselves express that they frequently use success stories to create heroes and thereby commitment, as well as to some extent meaning. Findings from interviews with L2M1 and L2M2 shows that their sense of commitment stems more from their unit and its results. Findings thereby show *some evidence* of use of storytelling from the perspective of L2, but *no evidence* of it being picked up by the employees.

8.2.4 Meaning

L2 again states that they utilize success stories in their leadership method as a way to engage employees; "for as long as I can find a story to use, a success story from our unit is gold" ("Ja, så lenge jeg finner en historie jeg kan bruke, en suksesshistorie fra avdelingen er jo gull."). L2 expresses that they feel it's important to take pride in the company you work for. Findings show *some evidence* that L2 intends or attempts to use storytelling to create meaning.

Both L2M1 and L2M2 are motivated by some of the behavior of their leader. L2M2 also expresses that they do not feel the need for being motivated directly by L2. Neither employee mention success stories as being messages that frequently motivate

them. There is *no evidence* that storytelling being utilized to create meaning in a way that has resonated with the employees.

8.2.5 Thesis statement

Upon having been given a definition of the term storytelling, L2 clearly recognizes the value of the concept. Findings suggest that L2 themselves often feel they utilize storytelling in the sense of success stories. They also expressed having worked theoretically with the concept through the Talent Program, however without coining it to be storytelling. L2 states that he believes more conscious use of storytelling from their part would affect both themselves as a leader as well as their employees, in the sense that it would increase the employees' inspiration, loyalty and pride.

L2M1 and L2M2 both state that they have not seen much storytelling from L2, with the potential exception of success stories being indicated by L2M1. They both indicate that they observe storytelling on higher management levels, but not on their own. L2M2 also mention Mobile Gathering as an event where storytelling was utilized, and states that it gave them a sense of pride to understand that they were a part of such a large organization.

9.0 Analysis and discussion

In this chapter we want to analyze findings that are of value for reaching a conclusion on our thesis statement:

Are middle-level managers in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service utilizing storytelling as a mean to building and/or strengthening organizational culture?

We have until now focused on systemizing the data from our interviews. In this chapter we will further focus on interpreting our empirical findings within our theoretical framework. Furthermore we will look at differences and similarities both between the two leaders, the employees within each unit as well as between the units as wholes.

As previously mentioned in chapter 7.1, we constructed our interview guide based on the four functions of organizational culture according to Kaufmann and Kaufmann

(2014, 269). These are identity, stability, commitment and meaning, with the additional theme of the thesis statement. In the following analysis we have further utilized these main themes to structure our paper. Based on our previous chapters about storytelling and the four functions of organizational culture (chapters 5 through 7), we have isolated the main elements of each function to be as follows:

Identity: Rites and core story

Stability: Rules and norms resulting from rituals

Commitment: Heroes and role/position

Meaning: Motivation.

It should however be emphasized that all elements will to some extent be relevant for all four functions, as the four functions do not exist separately of one another and are all intertwined. We have associated each element to the function for which we find it to have the strongest connection.

The reason for utilizing these elements rather than the mechanisms outlined by Kaufmann and Kaufmann (2014, 269) is that while Kaufmann and Kaufmann study the four functions solely in the context of organizational culture, we study them in the context of storytelling and its relation to organizational culture. For an example, Kaufmann and Kaufmann (2014, 269) organize stories as a mechanism of stability, whereas in our study we try to study stories as a general strategy for accomplishing the execution of the four functions.

9.1 Identity

Leaders

The biggest difference between the two leaders are how L2 mentions employee identification in the larger context of the Telenor brand. L2 states that they *"make sure to mention stories that are of importance to understanding of the organization and their identity, that they feel that they wear a Telenor-costume underneath their*

clothes" ("Passer på å dra frem historier som er viktige for forretningsforståelse og identitet, at de føler at de har en Telenor-drakt under klærne sine").

L1 looks at identity in the sense that employees need to understand the background and intent of the values, as evidence of this they utilize Telenors strategy to emphasize the intent. L1 expresses that they feel stories are important for employees to identify with their workplace.

Both L1 and L2 emphasize how the use of stories is important in building identity in their employees, the difference between the two is in how they communicate the stories and which mechanisms they highlight. L2 focuses more on pride and how they as a leader need to convey their knowledge in addition to correcting behavior in line with the values. L1 emphasizes the importance of background and how the strategy is important to conveying the background and intent to the employees.

While attention to employee identification within the larger context of the Telenor brand could indicate that L2 also has more of a focus on this type of identification with his employees as well. If so, this would be conveying a commitment to something larger than individual self-interest, which applies directly to how employees identify with the organization, see chapter 5.2 and Brady and Haley 2013, 42.

Our theoretical framework together with the empirical results show that both L1 an L2 have some way to go in how they convey the organizations core story and furthermore why developing both the background and rites create a bigger sense of identity within the employees. Fog et al suggest how leaders when developing their core story need to create a "shared mental image" and a "driving passion" (2010, 62-63). Given that L1 communicates that the values of the organization is something that they assume their employees already understand and therefore do not emphasize this in their communication. Barker and Gower suggest storytelling as an "action oriented" method and therefore all employees need to participate (2010, 302).

Employees

When looking at the results of the interviews with the employees of L1 and L2 we see that there are sizeable differences between the intent of the leaders and their use of storytelling and how the employees interpret and experiences their leaders use of storytelling. For L1 there is *some evidence* of storytelling, both L1M1 and L1M2 do not show evidence that they identify themselves with the organization and furthermore that it is no evidence that L1 utilizes storytelling to direct them in identifying with the organization. Given that employees are the best ambassadors for the organizations core story having employees that do not identify with the organization can create employees that are less connected with the organization.

The employees of L2 there are *no evidence* in using storytelling to convey or support identity for their employees. This is shown in how both employees indicate that they perceive their identity with something that they already have within themselves, given that the employees do not emphasize storytelling as a method that L2 uses, L2s intent of creating identity in their employees may have fallen short and should maybe be conveyed in a different sense.

9.2 Stability

Leaders

The findings indicate differences both in the knowledge of company background and history, as well as in the level of evidence to them being utilized to facilitate stability within their units. Both leaders demonstrate knowledge of Telenor background and history – L1 in a larger extent than L2, but both are considered to hold sufficient knowledge to be able to communicate core story to their employees.

Regarding their own behavior, L1 refers to the E4 strategy which entails a compass for leader behavior within Telenor. On the other hand, L2 states that there is no directory for their behavior as a leader, but emphasizes that they would have to hold a certain type of behavior in order to be recruited into a leadership position in the first place.

The leaders both mention company background as well as success stories as contributing factors in their attempt to facilitate stability. However, only L1 demonstrates, and in fact explains in detail, how daily operational processes, rules and norms relate to the core story of Telenor. While L2 does see the communication of background and stories as an important task, they state that they communicate behavior through one-to-one conversations and the only example given of communication of background is the display of a Telenor-made video on annual team-days.

These evidences combined indicate that L1 has a much broader knowledge of the company's overall rules and strategies as well as background and core story. L1 also demonstrates a clearer image of the connection between core story and daily rules and processes. However, neither L1 nor L2 give evidence of frequency of the communication of background and core story.

Employees

Employees of L1 fail to make the connection described by their leader between the company background and the current rules, norms and routines. Employees of L2 cannot recall stories being communicated to them by L2. They also express that they feel the norms and routines of the company is more descriptive of general professional behavior, rather then Telenor-specific behavior.

No employees in either unit individually draw a connection between rules and norms and company background. Had this evidence been separated from the findings of interviews with L1 and L2, it would stand as a clear signal of storytelling being non-existant. However, as both leaders express that communication of company background is important in this context, the results need to be seen in a different light. We will get back to this discussion in chapter 9.6: Summary of Analysis.

9.3 Commitment

Leaders

L1 has no comments that suggest or indicate the utilization of storytelling to facilitate commitment amongst its staff. L2 on the other hand, express upon several occasions that they use success stories to create heroes. L2 states that they mostly utilize their own tales of success, and that they use stories whenever they have one to bring to the table. L2 also states that the success stories they use are mostly tales of their own experiences, but that they also use other stories when they can think of something relevant. On that note, L2 also states that when they use success stories of others, they will be less familiar with the details of the story.

The results indicate that L1 is mostly oblivious to the use of storytelling as a tool to facilitate stability and communicate rules/norms. On the other hand, L2 is very aware of this and states that they utilize it. This vast difference could simply be a result of differences in leadership methods resulting from differences in personality. However it could also be an expression of different levels of awareness to the importance of stories resulting from L2 having attended the Talent Program, wherein they, according to themselves, received theoretical understanding of the importance and relevance of storytelling.

Employees

No findings from employees either unit give evidence that storytelling is being utilized to facilitate commitment. Again, had these results been viewed independently of the findings from the findings of the interviews with their leaders, the overall conclusion would have been that storytelling for the purpose of facilitating commitment does not exist within these units.

The closest thing to evidence of storytelling that facilitates commitment is that findings from L1M1 and L1M2 mentions the companys CEO's, current and elected, as people they look up to. We conclude that these CEO's hold the position of heroes for said subjects. The fact that this was mentioned by both members of one team and no members of the other could indicate that L1 somehow pays better attention to, or keeps better in contact with, top management. It could also be mere coincidence. Still,

the conclusion remains that there is no evidence among employees of either unit that storytelling is utilized by their managers to facilitate commitment.

9.4 Meaning

Leaders

Meaning is seen through how leaders motivate their employees and evidence shows that both L1 and L2 utilize background and intent when conveying motivation for their employees. L1 emphasizes being a clear leader that eliminates uncertainty in their employees. There are not a lot of differences in conveying meaning to their employees for L1 and L2, both feel that success stories are a good way of creating meaning, but evidences show that L2 emphasize this further than L1 in how L2 are conscious in how their employees have a role in the company. Furthermore L2 conveys the pride of working in an organization that they are proud of and moreover how Sigve Brekke has a energy that inspires and creates meaning for L2.

Employees

There are indicators that all the employees of L1 and L2 either do not need their leader to be the motivator or that they don't referrers to their leader as the instigator for motivation and meaning. For L1 there are some evidences of the utilization of storytelling on the basis that L1 knowledge of the background of Telenor. Evidence show that this is not transmissible between leaders and employees and as suggested by Fog et al "through stories employees come to understand themselves and the company brand" (2010, 132). This indicates that L1 and L2 have an intent in their conveying of meaning and motivation but that employees are not responsive and will not interpret their communication as motivation.

9.5 Thesis Statement

Leaders
Both L1 and L2 agree that storytelling is utilized most effectively when done consciously by a leader. Moreover, there are differences in their previous knowledge of the term Storytelling. Both L1 and L2 see the value of storytelling and how it would have an effect on their employees if they utilized it better than they do today.

L1 describes how "stories target the heart rather than only the mind" ("Historier treffer hjertet, i stedet for bare hodet"). Furthermore L1 expresses that they would recall stories more easily then what they call "grocery lists" ("handlelister").

L2 indicates that utilizing storytelling could affect the employees in that they would become more loyal, more inspired and more proud. When using storytelling in a more conscious way than what they currently do, L2 believes these effects would become clearer. They also believe that increased competence within storytelling would help them to convey messages more effectively.

The major difference between L1 and L2 is their previous relation to the term Storytelling. While L1 is quite unfamiliar with the concept, L2 expresses that they have received theoretical training in how to use storytelling through their participation in Telenors Talent Program. The term storytelling was not used, but L2 feels this encapsules some of the content of the Talent Program. This might have had an effect on L2's leadership style in that they might actually have become more attentive to the use of stories in their own leadership. It might also just have affected their responses in this research, in that they now know how stories should be utilized, and thereby their responses are more colored by this than by the actual reality.

Employees

The responses of the employees are somewhat unanimous with the exception of L1M1. The responses of L1M1 are dismissed as irrelevant as they misinterpreted the term storytelling and digressed onto other topics, even when given a definition of the term.

Findings from L1M2, L2M1 and L2M2 indicate that storytelling is being used at higher management levels. L2M1 and L2M2 both state that they have not made note of particular use of storytelling being used by L2, with the possible exception of success stories.

Evidence is not given to indicate that either leader utilize storytelling in their leadership at all. However, keep in mind that due to the dismissal of the interview results of L1M1, we are one respondent short and might not be getting a complete overall impression of the situation.

9.6 Summary of analysis

There is a significant gap between the statements of the leaders and those of the employees as far as storytelling goes. The leaders state in different contexts and in different words, that they do use stories as part of their leadership method to some extent. However, findings from interviews of their employees suggest that this either is not being executed, or is executed in a manner which does not cause said stories to stay in the memories of the employees. Whether or not such use of storytelling can be considered effective could be the topic of an entirely other thesis. To demonstrate the differences in the findings from interviews with the leaders and interviews with employees, we have inserted the levels of evidence to the use of storytelling to facilitate each function in a table, shown in the figure Simplified Categorization of Results. In this table, the level of evidence in leaders reflect their statements of when and in what context they utilize stories. The level of evidence in employees reflect their knowledge of stories as well as their statements regarding whether stories are told, in what contexts (which again reflects frequency), and with what purpose. Further description of levels of evidence is given in chapter 8.5 Strategy of Analysis.

	Identity	Stability	Commitment	Meaning
L1	Some evidence	Some evidence	No evidence	Low evidence
L1M1 and L1M2	Low evidence	No evidence	No evidence	Low evidence
L2	No evidence	Low evidence	Some evidence	Some evidence

L2M1 and L2M2	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence	No evidence

While there are differences and discrepancies between the two leaders regarding the execution of storytelling, both leader interviews indicate that they on some or another level mean to utilize storytelling for the purpose of building the organizational culture. This is also where our method of interviewing leaders as well as employees proves exceptionally beneficial, as employee interviews demonstrate low to none evidence that storytelling is being experienced by the employees. However, this is also a point where one has to be critical. When storytelling is utilized, should the employees understand the use of the tool to such an extent that they will point to stories when being asked questions to indicate features of the four functions of organizational culture? Or should they simply display a positive effect of storytelling, without being conscious of the presence of the strategy, or even the stories themselves? Is it necessary for storytelling to be effective, that employees understand that it is present? We have tried to solve this issue by not informing of storytelling as a focus in our research before the end of our interview. As such, we have attempted to observe the consequences of the use of storytelling in the form of its effects on employees' and leaders' feelings, actions and interpretation of their workplace.

In several cases, we see that leaders give evidence of use of storytelling, but employees do not give evidence of experiencing it. We consider that this could have several causes; The leader could be responding our questions with the full intent that they do utilize storytelling, while in reality it does not occur. This could for example happen if in a hectic everyday life, the communication of stories is neglected or forgotten. Such diversity in responses could also point to that stories are being communicated, but in a way which is ineffective.

If we were to look into causes of the lack of storytelling, both leaders have given indicators to what this could be. Both L1 and L2 indicate that they lack training in how to utilize it as a tool. L2 also indicates the lack of sufficient knowledge of actual stories within the company.

Additionally to the results of our research into secondary data regarding the existence of storytelling within the overall organization of Telenor, interviews also show that this is being detected by both leaders and employees.

10.0 Conclusion

Our research has come to its final point. From the collection and analysis of data, we have reached the following conclusions:

- There are differences in the extent to which the leaders feel that they utilize storytelling, and the extent to which it is experienced by their employees

- Although there is much evidence to the existence of storytelling within the organization, there is little evidence of it being utilized on middle-level management

- This could be caused by a lack of training or a lack of knowledge of relevant stories, as suggested by L1 and L2 themselves.

As such, we give the following responses to our research questions:

1) *Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating identity?*

   Our research indicates that it is being utilized or intended utilized to a low extent and not by all managers, and in a manner which in very low extent affects the employees' sense of identity.

2) *Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating stability?*

   Our research indicates that it is being utilized or intended utilized by managers, but not in a manner which affects the employees' sense of stability.

3) *Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the*

customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating commitment?

Our research indicates that it is being utilized or intended utilized to some extent and not by all managers, but not in a manner which affects the employees' sense of commitment.

4)   Is the use of storytelling in middle-level management in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service, providing or facilitating meaning?

Our research indicates that it is being utilized or intended utilized to some extent by all managers, and has affects some employees' sense of meaning to a low extent.

We give the following response to our thesis statement: ***Are middle-level managers in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service utilizing storytelling as a mean to building and/or strengthen organizational culture?***

Our research does not provide a large enough selection of informants to give a definitive answer to the thesis statement. However, it does suffice to give indicators of the current state within the relevant units. Our research indicates that middle-level managers in Telenor, specifically in the customer service department, units Technical Support and Retail Service to a low extent feel themselves that they are utilizing storytelling as a mean to building and/or strengthening organizational culture. Interviews with the employees of said managers indicate that this is either not being executed or is being executed ineffectively.

11.0 Thesis evaluation

The goal of our thesis is to find a valid answer for our thesis statement. The consistency of our thesis paper have come from our prior knowledge and experience through our 3 years at Oslo School of Management. The thesis have been hard work and our results have been gathered through hard work, careful consideration of the theory and in addition research that have been thoroughly been considered throughout

the process. There are still some weaknesses in our thesis paper and these are something we want to address in the following sections.

Storytelling as a subject has been researched in many different ways and this has given us a challenge in defining the theory. As a phenomenon storytelling is for many a wide and unclear subject, therefore by thoroughly reading through existing theory given us a background for our thesis.

11.1 Validity and relability

The concepts of validity and reliability are used to describe respectively the extent to which an assessment tool produces consistent results, and whether a test measures what it is purposed to measure. These are used to create rigor in research. Morse et al. state that "Without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction, and loses its utility" (2002, 14). The process of ensuring validity and reliability has been ongoing throughout the thesis.

A core strategy for ensuring validity and reliability in any qualitative research project, ours included, is that of verification. Verification refers to the constantly ongoing process of going back to check, confirm and be certain (Morse et al, 2002, 17). An example of utilizing verification is our interview guide, where this was built in in the form of several differently phrased questions which were essentially meant to measure the same thing and thereby serve as control questions to one another.

When conduction our interview we that many of the respondent didn't have the objectivity we search for. The effect of the context the interview was conducted created a sense of uncertainty in the respondents especially in the employees. They did not want to "answer wrong", and the objectivity was somewhat weak. We still feel that the results are in some way reliable.

11.2 Transferability and external validity

In our thesis we have chosen to use a qualitative method in our interview, since our selection is somewhat small the purpose of the qualitative method is to do a

theoretical generalization. When you do a theoretical generalization, the purpose is to generalize from a small selection of research units and going from empiric to theory (Jacobsen 2005, 222). We feel that our thesis concludes well in how the four functions in organizational culture can by utilizing storytelling be strengthened. Additionally because we do not want to generalize we feel that our findings are transferable to other units of Telenor and thus function as information for other units.

12.0 Recommendations for further research

During our conversations with Torfinn Eriksen, the leader of customer service in Norway for Telenor, it has been implied that we should suggest to Telenor a way of furthering the research on this topic. This is due to the interest that he himself and senior management has on strengthening the collective organizational storytelling skill level. Therefore, we have chosen to include suggestions for further research, so that Telenor may further develop this as a research project, should they wish to do so. If the decision was made to further the research and once and for all get a definitive answer to whether or not storytelling is being utilized within middle-level management, we would firstly recommend to choose a larger population, so that results would be fit for generalizations for a larger portion of the organization. Furthermore, they would also need to interview a higher number of informants. We would recommend to continue utilizing both employee and manager informants, as this has proved fruitful. However, when choosing a larger population and increasing the number of informants, we would consider utilizing a quantitative interview form with the employee interviews. This is for the sheer purpose of reducing the mass of data, as it is a time-consuming process to transcribe interviews and to analyze detailed transcriptions.

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