Anthropological study of organisational culture and leadership

"I Love Telenor"

Shezana Islam

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Summary

Which cultural traditions of Norway and Pakistan manifest themselves in the organisational culture and leadership style of Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan? Which strategies does Telenor (as a particular example of Norwegian leadership) use 'to survive' in a global business arena? These are the questions I have decided to consider in my thesis.

My fieldwork, which can be divided into two parts, was conducted in Telenor's offices in Norway and Pakistan. This thesis aims to show how an anthropological approach can provide a more fruitful framework for understanding organisational culture and leadership. I have applied the anthropological method by looking at the unique cultural traditions of Norway and Pakistan and seeing how they manifest themselves in the organisational and management dynamics in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan.

The analytical source of inspiration in grasping organisational culture and leadership anthropologically has been the cultural anthropologist Andrew Jones. Sørhaug's concepts of trust and power are valuable concepts that I have applied to the analysis of trust and power in the multinational company of Telenor. Dahl-Jørgensen's theories about Norwegian leaders wanting to hold onto the 'local' in meeting with the 'global' are also central to my analysis.

To analyse the cultures of the two countries I have found Gullestad's analysis of Norwegian culture and Alvi's theories on Pakistani culture particularly useful. I have therefore applied their perspectives (and other theories which derive from anthropological thought) to show how the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan manifest themselves in the organisational culture and leadership styles in Telenor.

My thesis suggests that even though Norwegian workers and leaders are part of a global business arena, their approach is in many senses local. This is, I argue, in contrast to Pakistani workers and leaders, who are mainly part of a local arena, but have in many senses a global approach.

Preference and Acknowledgement

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Part I

Chapter 1: Introduction of the research topic and theoretical framework

Introducing the topic and research question

Studies of work organisations and leadership have been dominated by quantitative studies. I believe that an anthropological approach can provide a more fruitful framework for understanding organisational culture and leadership in a global company. Laura Nader (1972) argues that anthropologists need to 'study up' and explore elites.[1] Although there are an increasing number of anthropological studies of modern organisations, few empirical studies have been undertaken regarding business organisations and the leadership strategies of large multinational corporations.

Most scholars in organisational behaviour and management would agree to the following definition of leadership: 'Leadership is an influence process whereby usually one person influences a group toward achievement of group goals' (Yukl 1994). Even though most scholars in organisational behaviour and management would agree to this meaning, most anthropologists would be critical of such a definition. I will in my research argue, as Jones (2005:264) has done, that organisational culture is not something which is developed by leaders, but rather that culture creates organisational culture, and that leaders emerge somewhere in the middle of that process. Jones argues that:

> An 'anthropology of leadership' would suggest that organisational leadership has to be studied empirically in the conjuncture between local culture schema and larger economic and cultural forces in order to be fully understood. In some respects, the anthropology of leadership is more a method for understanding leadership in different cultural contexts than it is a theory of leadership (Jones 2005: 265).

I will throughout my research argue that if one wants a meaningful anthropological understanding of culture in multinational organisations like Telenor, it may be necessary to look outside the organisation itself. The focus of my research will therefore be to explore the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan and see how they manifest themselves in the

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[1] Laura Nader coined the term 'studying up' as part of an attempt to encourage anthropologists to broaden their channels of study to include cultures in positions of power, not just those who tend to be oppressed.

organisational and management dynamics of the Way of Work (WoW) project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

I started the fieldwork by asking the following questions: is the Norwegian leadership style universally applicable? Does the WoW project in Telenor Norway stimulate better collaboration across the Telenor Group? As I acquired new knowledge during my fieldwork another question came to mind: how do the Pakistani and Norwegian cultures affect the business and management practices in Telenor?

In this thesis have I therefore decided to consider the following questions: which Pakistani and Norwegian cultural values have an impact on the meetings and organisational environment in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan? Which kinds of cultural traditions of Norway and Pakistan manifest themselves in the management dynamics in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan? Finally I will try to answer the following question: which strategies does Telenor (as a particular example of Norwegian leadership) use 'to survive' in a global business arena?

To find answers to these questions I conducted fieldwork at the WoW project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan. I sought to explore how the employees in both places viewed the organisation and leadership style at their place of work. I have used the data gathered during my fieldwork to look at which unique cultural practices of the Norwegian and Pakistani cultures have an impact on the work dynamics in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan. By looking at the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan and seeing how they manifest themselves in Telenor, I will shift the attention from an 'anthropology *for* business' (Schein, 1985), to an 'anthropology *of* business' (Jones 2005:264).

Theoretical Framework

To support a study approach based on theoretical considerations I will situate the thesis theoretically by sketching the theoretical approach I have used to analyse the data gathered during my fieldwork.

Theoretical considerations of organisational culture and leadership

The analytical source of inspiration in grasping organisational culture and leadership anthropologically has been the cultural anthropologist Andrew Jones. He has carried out two years of ethnographic and documentary research in three firms in a medium sized city in the American South. He has used this research to articulate a 'cultural theory of leadership'. Jones' cultural theory of leadership is premised on the idea that 'the anthropology of leadership takes as its object of study the Culture in which an organisation is founded and operates, and in which individuals work' (Jones 2005:260). Therefore Jones focuses in his research on the unique cultural traditions that create and determine leadership styles in those three Southern firms.

Jones (2005) argues that the culture in the American South creates the organisational culture of the three Southern firms. Similarly, Marshall Sahlins (in Jones 2005:264) suggests that a particular organisational culture is produced at the intersection of local cultural schema as the organisation interacts with larger (national and global) forces within its industry. This is supported by Jones, who argues that to arrive at a significant anthropological understanding of culture in business organisations, it is necessary for anthropologists to look outside the firm. Jones' theory of leadership suggests that 'leadership capital is drawn more from the elements of the region's culture – religion, social capital, gender and class identity and so on – than it is from individual personality or firm history' (Jones 2005:259).

The social anthropologist, Tian Sørhaug's theories on leadership are also central to my work. His book *Om Ledelse Makt og tillit i moderne organisering* (1996) is about leadership that primarily focuses on the organisation and culture. Sørhaug suggests that the economy effectively revolves around the organisation, and, conversely, that every organisation is economic activity. One of Sørhaug's main arguments is that every organisation has to deal with a paradoxical tension between power and trust. He further argues that power is about the capabilities of individuals and institutions to make people do things they (likely) would not have done otherwise. Such a potential exists in all social situations, and it can be found in things and ideas, language and actions, structures and processes. Therefore, the concept of power is best understood as a fluent expression. Fluent expressions are signs that in themselves are 'empty' but that become meaningful as they are applied in specific situations.

Trust, he argues, creates conditions for and mobilises action and interaction. Trust relationships are always paradoxical. They assume themselves because they consist of the mutual expectations of that which has not yet been realised, and which therefore have existence only in virtue of these expectations (Sørhaug 1996:22-23).

According to Sørhaug (1996) organisations are always based on power and trust, and power and trust are phenomena which both threaten and presuppose each other. In every organisation, the management function is located at the intersection between power and trust. Management over time cannot be based on power alone as trust is a necessary primary source of management. On the other hand, trust in organisations is based on the fact that someone can wield power.

Another analytical source of inspiration is Carla Dahl-Jørgensen. Dahl-Jørgensen (2003) has gathered data from 3 different Norwegian-owned companies: namely Norsk Hydro, Kværner and Kongsberg. All of them have expanded their business to many different countries; they have many thousands of employees around the world. Dahl-Jørgensen has interviewed 25 leaders at the top and middle level in each of these three companies. She has also interviewed employees working at different levels in the corporations. Her main research question is what effect leaders and employees think globalisation has on them, and which strategies they use 'to survive'. One of her main findings is that employees and leaders talk and relate to uncertainties and challenges associated to globalisation in different ways. However she further points out that the base common to both groups is that the symbolic meaning they associate with the 'local' and known is held onto in meetings with the unknown and uncertain.

The 'local' and the known in this case is the Norwegian management style. Most of the directors in her study were aware of the problems associated with calling themselves 'a global company' and recruited only Norwegian managers in their companies abroad. They argued for the importance of having a Norwegian knowledge of their corporate aims and how they wanted to develop and sell their products. To achieve this, they thought that it was important to preserve the Norwegian leadership style. According to Sejersted (1997), Norway has a historically distinct characteristic of legitimising leadership, with the emphasis on 'democratic legitimacy'. This includes the democratic or quasi-democratic procedures for the election of leaders, but also a more general demand for openness and transparency, whereby one should state reasons for decisions and even promote employees' closeness to decisions. Furthermore,

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the Norwegian management model tones down hierarchical differences, emphasises cooperation and motivates employees to participate actively in the organisation (Dahl-Jørgensen 2003:35). This is in contrast to the typical description of Pakistani managers as being authoritarian and unwilling to share power (Jaffrelot 2002:19).

In my research Jones' cultural theory of leadership is central. I will apply this theory to my study in Telenor and will analyse whether and in which ways the respective cultures create the organisational culture and leadership styles in Telenor Pakistan and Telenor Norway. Sørhaug's concepts of trust and power are valuable concepts that can be applied to the analysis of trust and power in a multinational company like Telenor. Dahl-Jørgensen's theories about Norwegian leaders' tendency to hold onto the 'local' in meeting with the 'global' are also central to my analysis.

I will also apply other theories which derive from anthropological thought. I want to investigate organisational culture and leadership in a cultural and historical context. For this end I will analyse the Norwegian and Pakistani cultures using Gullestad's and Alvi's work, which I will outline presently.

Theoretical considerations of Norwegian and Pakistani culture

The Norwegian social anthropologist Marianne Gullestad has carried out extensive fieldwork in Norway. She is interested in the Norwegian culture and the notion of everyday life in Norway. Gullestad's studies show that Norwegian culture is fundamentally individualistic. The Pakistani culture on the other hand is known as one focusing on collectivism. Alvi's work shows that in the state of Punjab, a person is defined first and foremost with respect to the relationships he forms with other people. A Pakistani person is likely to understand himself through the notion of caste, and his network of social relationships in terms of 'brotherhood' (*biradari*) – a category which is context dependent (Alvi 2001). According to Alvi:

> The importance of the *biradari* lies in the fact that a Punjabi self is continuously
> formed by and reflected in it. The *biradari* is a network of social relations and is one
> of the primary concepts used in defining a person in the Punjab, whereas in the West
> an individual principally defines his or herself as discrete from, and in opposition to,

other people on whom his or her dependence for material and emotional needs is considered to be of secondary importance (Alvi 2001:53).

The Norwegian forms of individualism coexist with a strong concept of equality. Gullestad (1992) shows in her analysis that there is a cultural tension in the Norwegian culture between equality on one side and the prominence of individuality on the other. In Norway 'equal worth' (*likeverd*) is synonymous with equality (*likhet*). This means that in many social arenas in Norway it can be problematic to manage differences.

Wilber, looking at Pakistani society, argues that Muslims in Pakistan adhere to the Islamic teaching that all human beings are equal in the eyes of Allah. However, this notion of equality does not exist in ordinary life. Pakistani society is highly conscious of rank and social categories such as castes (Wilber 1964:5). Alvi (2001) places importance on the idea that the source of equality in collectivistic societies such as those in South Asia is the perception that human beings are qualitatively different from each other. She argues that the notion of equality in Pakistan is generally found within separate categories, not between them.

In Norwegian organisations, Norwegian employees are generally ready to accept a certain hierarchy on the basis of professional competence (Barnes 1978). However, in their private lives, Norwegians like to socialise with people who 'match them' (*passer sammen med*). Those people who 'match them' are of equal social standing and embrace similar norms and values as themselves (Gullestad 2006).

Ideas of equality (*likhet*) in other words lead to an interaction style emphasising what the parties have in common (*likhet*), and keeping peoples' distinguishing features outside the interaction. In this way the term does not necessarily mean equality, but rather a style that highlights and emphasises the similarities between people. This interaction works only up to a certain point: when differences are perceived as too significant, the interaction between people breaks down.

This is particularly relevant because 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) is also a central value in Norwegian culture, whereby one tries to avoid open conflicts (Gullestad 1989). As a contrast to a Norwegian who will do almost anything to avoid an open conflict, a Punjabi is not generally afraid to get into such conflict. He will do everything, even be ready to kill a person to restore his honour (*izzat*). "Not to take a decisive step in such a case would mean losing

one's honour. In the Punjab, a man or woman with no honour (*izzat*) is no person, because he or she is no longer able to face others" (Alvi 2001:52).

I find Gullestad's analysis of Norwegian culture and Alvi's theories on Pakistani culture useful. I will therefore apply their perspectives (and other theories which derive from anthropological thought) to examine how the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan manifest themselves in the organisational culture and leadership styles in Telenor.

Outline of the thesis

My thesis is divided into three parts, each containing two chapters. In the rest of part I (chapter 2) I will provide methodological and ethnographic background information. I will present Telenor's enterprises in Pakistan and Norway where I conducted my fieldwork. I will continue by sketching out the methodology used for collecting data during the fieldwork and reflect on my role in the field. Lastly, I will introduce the Pakistani and Norwegian setting to provide an ethnographic context for the research I conducted. The second and third parts of my thesis focus on the organisational culture and leadership style in both of the places where I conducted my fieldwork.

Part II concentrates on the cultural traditions of Norway and Pakistan and how they manifest themselves in the organisational culture at the WoW project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan. Chapter 3 focuses on how Norwegian cultural values such as equality and individualism and Pakistani cultural values such as collectivism affect the organisational culture in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan. Chapter 4 deals with how the cultural values of time, language and decision-making are central to how meetings are held in the respective settings.

In Part III I will explore how the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan have an impact on the management practices of Norway and Pakistan. In chapter 5, the Norwegian leadership style is viewed in a historical perspective. In the Norwegian management tradition democratic values are central. Values such as equality and trust are important. These values are compared and contrasted with the Pakistani culture and management style. In the last chapter, I will explore which strategies Norwegian top leaders use 'to survive' in a global business arena. Finally, I will draw a conclusion pertaining to the whole of my thesis.

Chapter 2: The setting and methodological reflections

This chapter provides the setting for the thesis. First, I will present both of the places where I conducted my fieldwork. I will then present the anthropological techniques I used in my research. Following this I will reflect on my role in the field. Lastly, I will introduce the ethnographic context for both Norway and Pakistan, focusing on the aspects that influence organisational culture and leadership in Telenor.

Introducing Telenor Norway

My fieldwork lasted from December 2008 to April 2009 and can be divided into two parts. The first part of the fieldwork was conducted at Telenor's premises in Norway at the division working on the Way of Work (WoW) project. The fieldwork in Telenor Norway was conducted in their relatively new headquarters at Fornebu. Fornebu is an area between Lysaker and Snarøya in the Bærum Municipality. The Oslo Airport was located in Fornebu until 1998 and the old terminal building is now used as offices for a number of different companies. Telenor launched its new headquarters at Fornebu in September 2002.

Telenor's head office has received a great deal of international attention due to its architecture, the integration of artwork, and in particular the innovative office layout which is still considered modern. Telenor's own vision for their head office is that "*the Telenor centre is to be the foremost work place for innovative activities*". The company argues that Telenor's centre at Fornebu is based on interplay between people, technology and the surroundings. This interplay helps create a more efficient, innovative and flexible organisation. The centre at Fornebu is, and shall be, a platform for the continuous development of Telenor (Telenor 2010). The WoW project where I conducted my fieldwork is creating a new database which the organisers argue will make this interplay between people, technology and the surroundings even more efficient.

Telenor's headquarters consist of a northern and a southern wing, which, with its curved lines, envelope the square. Each wing contains four separate blocks and each building contains 25

work zones. All vertical and horizontal communication between the 25 zones runs via the atriums. The areas are organised to encourage meetings - chance meetings as well as meetings that are on the fixed agenda - at all levels in the structure. In chapter four I will look at how Norwegian and Pakistani cultural factors have an impact on the meeting situation in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan.

Figure: Plan of Telenor's headquarters, Fornebu

My fieldwork was conducted in block C, in the zone on the first floor, working on the WoW project. Around 50 employees are working on this project. The WoW project is a pilot project that is working to develop and implement a unified communications and collaboration solution for the Telenor Group. Their main aim is to develop and unite the different communications and collaboration tools such as instant messaging, a common intranet and a common document system. This would develop one virtual workplace for all the Telenor employees across the company. By introducing one virtual workspace for all employees in Telenor, the project aims to make employees in Telenor solve tasks more easily by making communication and collaboration with employees across Telenor more efficient.

The WoW project's work zone contained between 30 and 40 workstations. However, none of the employees had a fixed seating place. Therefore the workstations are often shared between employees. The WoW work zone was furnished with an informal kitchen area, quiet rooms, as well as a service room containing a scanner, printer, post shelves and accessories. The kitchen area had a sofa and a table with high chairs. In the kitchen area people would often gather around the coffee machine to have a coffee and informal conversation with their colleagues in the morning or during the day. When all the other meeting rooms were occupied, the kitchen area was sometimes used as a meeting room.

The quiet rooms were used to hold meetings on a one-to-one basis, or to have private conversations over the phone, and to have live meetings using the computer. Employees preferred to make phone calls and live meetings on laptops in the quiet room, so as not to disturb other colleagues. An employee at the WoW project had the following to say, while talking about the open landscape at WoW:

> I don't like the open landscape. I want to have a fixed seating place, so I can feel that I belong to this place. I want to personalise my place. If we had fixed seating places maybe I could put up pictures of my dog or children there. And if we could have a normal office like most of the companies we wouldn't have to go to the quiet room to make a phone call or be annoyed at our colleagues who were talking on the phone or chatting with other colleagues in the open space.

This quotation suggests that the employee is not satisfied with the open space solution. In chapter three will I look at how thoughts about individualism in the Norwegian culture and ideas of collectivism in the Pakistani culture affect the Norwegian and Pakistani employees' approach to the open landscape in Telenor. In the next section will I introduce Telenor Pakistan.

Introducing Telenor Pakistan

I conducted the second part of the fieldwork in Telenor's premises in Pakistan at the Human Capital Division. Telenor Pakistan is wholly owned by Telenor ASA. Telenor launched its operations in March 2005 as the single largest direct European investment in Pakistan and it is the fastest growing mobile network in the country. Current figures show that the company is acquiring more than 20,000 new subscribers in Pakistan every day (Telenor 2010).

Tore Johnsen, a Norwegian, was Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Telenor Pakistan from its inception in 2004 to August 2008. Currently, Jon Eddy Abdullah, an American, is the CEO of the company. In chapter six I will look at Abdullah's and some others CEOs' roles as global leaders in Telenor and identify which strategies Telenor uses 'to survive' in a global business arena. I will examine the idea that the more global Telenor is becoming, the more important it is for the leaders to hold onto their cultural distinctiveness.

Telenor has four buildings in Islamabad, respectively called CHQ, RHQ, THO and Paris Plaza (in sector F-11). The headquarters are divided into two buildings: CHQ and Paris Plaza. My fieldwork was conducted in the CHQ building located in sector F-7 in Islamabad. Around 300 employees are based in CHQ and they belong to three different divisions: Human Capital, Finance & Corporate Affairs and Safety & Security. The CHQ building, also called F-7 markaz, has 4 floors. I conducted my fieldwork on the first floor. Around 75 employees sit there and most of them belong to the Human Capital Division. The Human Capital Division has a helpdesk working to give technical support to users of WoW tools in the Telenor Group.

Islamabad is one of the well-planned cities in South Asia and was built during the 1960s to replace Karachi as Pakistan's capital. The city is divided into different sectors and zones. Eight zones make up the city: Administrative Zone, Commercial District, Educational Sector, Industrial Sector, Diplomatic Enclave, Residential Areas, Rural Areas and Green Area. Each sector is also assigned a letter from A to I and each sector is divided into four sub-sectors, denoted numerically. Many foreigners and diplomatic personnel are housed in the E sector. The F and G sectors contain the most developed areas. The F-7 sector, where Telenor is located, has offices of national and multinational organisations. The main market of Islamabad, Jinnah Super Market, is also located in this sector.

Glass dominates the exterior facade of the CHQ building. Before entering Telenor's building in F-7 one has to pass through a security check. Inside the building one has to show an employees' card to the receptionist.

Each floor has meeting rooms, a kitchen area and a shared printer room. I did not find any quiet room but at the entrance of each floor there is a small seating area where one can have informal chat with colleagues, or make a phone call. In contrast to Telenor Fornebu where employees only have access to their own work zone, employees can move freely in CHQ between different floors.

In the Pakistani offices I was told that it is normal for companies in Pakistan to have 'tea boys' who come around with tea or coffee to the offices. However this is not case for Telenor Pakistan. Instead, employees are encouraged to make their own tea or coffee. I will in chapters three, five and six show how Telenor Pakistan in many senses can serve as an example of how the management and organisational culture is changing in some companies in Pakistan. I will point towards the idea that the employees and the leaders in Telenor Pakistan

are in many cases open for change and that they have also adopted many organisational and leadership strategies from Norway (as Telenor is a Norwegian company). An example of this is the Human Capital Division leaders' willingness to be approachable to their employees and use an open seating environment to appear less hierarchical than is normally evident in Pakistan.

In the next section will I present methodological reflections on the fieldwork I conducted.

Anthropological techniques

The difference between anthropology and other disciplines lies less in the topic studied than in the distinctive methods anthropologists employ; namely fieldwork based on participant observation (Ferguson and Gupta 1997:2). During my fieldwork I have used anthropological techniques such as participant observation, attending and recording meetings, investigation of documentary records and interviewing.

Participant observation takes place with the collection of data by participating in the daily lives of the people studied, seeing which situations they enter, and how they behave in them (Becker 1970:25). I participated in my informants' daily life at work. I observed them in the open landscape environment, attended (and recorded) their meetings, had lunch with them and sometimes socialised with some of the informants after work.

At the starting point of my fieldwork I talked informally to employees and leaders in Telenor in order to learn what issues are important to them. I encouraged my informants to talk about life in the organisation, and discuss topics such as collaboration in Telenor, organisational culture and personal definitions of successful leaders and teams. From these informal interviews I gained descriptive data about Telenor, which helped me to formulate appropriate questions for the interview guide. In total I conducted 37 qualitative interviews: 18 in Telenor Norway and 19 in Telenor Pakistan.

In the interviews I used Urdu, Punjabi, Norwegian and English. When meeting Norwegians the interviews were conducted in Norwegian. When I interviewed the Pakistani employees the interviews were carried out in a mixture of Urdu, Punjabi and English. When meeting employees from countries other than Norway and Pakistan the interview was always conducted in English.

I started the interview by informing all the informants that they were promised full anonymity, and that I will not use their original name in my thesis. I have therefore in my work not used any of the original names of my informants. I also informed them that I was not working for Telenor, and therefore not reporting any data to the Telenor Group. All the information I gathered was used only for my thesis.

I have however used the original name of the CEO in Telenor Norway, and the current and former CEOs in Telenor Pakistan. The reason I have not made them anonymous is because they are well-known leaders of Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan. However it is important for me to point out here that none of the three leaders have been my informants. I have used them as an example of the leadership styles of Norway and America, on the basis of the information gathered by my informants in Telenor about them.

During the interview I used an interview guide to help me conduct the interview. I started by asking my informant to describe a typical workday for them in Telenor. Usually, the informant had so much to say that I continued simply by asking follow-up questions such as: how would you describe the work culture in Telenor? How would you describe the work culture in your division? How would you describe the leadership style in Telenor and in your division? How is hierarchy expressed in Telenor? What can your colleagues and leaders do to win or lose your trust? Would you say there is a culture of equality in Telenor? Can the idea of equality create differences within the company? Should the Scandinavian leadership style be used in the Telenor Group? What do you think about the fact that the top leaders in other countries where Telenor has operations are Norwegian?

Several times I had the chance to talk to different employees involved in the same incident. This meant that I could compare what different employees said about the same issues. In addition, some of the employees referred to episodes and people that I had already met or interviewed on the same topic. This led to interesting comparisons and perspectives.

In the next section will I reflect on my role in the field and argue that because of my background I had both the closeness and distance necessary to conduct good fieldwork and analysis.

Reflection on my role in the field

In my fieldwork in Telenor I experienced that my status as a Norwegian-Pakistani was an advantage. I was born in Pakistan but raised in Norway of Pakistani parents. I can therefore speak the language of both countries fluently. Among the Pakistani languages I not only speak English and Urdu which are the official languages in Pakistan, but I also speak Punjabi which is the major language in Punjab, the state where Telenor Pakistan's headquarters are located. I found that my background as a Norwegian-Pakistani gives me both the closeness and distance to Norwegian and Pakistani informants. It gives closeness in the sense that I have insight into the everyday life of both cultures; distance in the sense that Norwegian and Pakistani informants often perceived me as not one of them.

Øygarden (2000) had a similar experience in the field. Øygarden, who was from a working class background, studied boxers of a similar background. He recognised many of the elements of working class culture. But as he points out, the boxers he studied knew that he was from Uppsala University. So even though he sometimes felt he had come 'home', this did not mean that the boxers perceived him as belonging to their culture. Similarly, I often noticed that the Norwegian informants perceived me to be Pakistani and Pakistani informants often perceived me as Norwegian. This was evident in the way the informants asked me questions. The Norwegians were concerned about my Pakistani background and the Pakistanis were concerned about my Norwegian background.

My study of the organisational culture and leadership style in a multinational organisation is a comparison study carried out in Norway and Pakistan. Comparison is an analytical principle that is common in anthropology. It involves either comparing one culture with other researchers' studies of other cultures, or by comparing it with one's own culture, or by doing field work in two different cultures (Fangen 2004:176).

By studying two fields in parallel, one can preserve more strongly the ability to distinguish the characteristics of each of the fields. One can see what is different in the two fields, and what is common. Often one will also be able to form opinions on why something appears in a certain way in one field and in another way in the other field (Fangen 2004:177). I have deliberately chosen to compare the Norwegian and Pakistani work environment in Telenor. This comparison gives me an analytical advantage in the sense that I can more clearly distinguish between the different cultural characteristics in both of the fields.

But the question could be asked – would I have enough experience to see different dynamics in a work organisation, at a relatively young age? The answer to this question is, in my opinion, yes. Despite the fact that I am 26, I have many years of work experience in Norway. This work experience includes being a teacher, an administration assistant and a counsellor in the integration and diversity field. This experience has given me access to see working life in Norway in different work settings. Furthermore, my work experience has been important in gaining acceptance and respect amongst informants, and to be taken seriously in the field.

Fangen (2002:121) notes that there are few examples of fieldwork where a researcher with a minority background performs fieldwork among people who belong to the white middle or upper class. My fieldwork can represent an important contribution in this sense, though 'studying up' is not always easy. Nader (1972) uses the term 'studying up' to describe anthropologists who are studying people who have more power than the anthropologist themselves. Gullestad (1996:56) argues that it is easier to undertake research on working class communities, where people either accept or reject the researcher. In work organisations and other formal arenas, people often have strategies to keep in touch with the researcher without divulging much information.

Nader (1972:303) points out that it has been easier for most anthropologists to study marginalised groups and situations where the balance of power is in favour of the researcher. In those situations the researcher presents an opportunity for informants to gain access to the gifts and prestige associated with contact with strangers. In traditional anthropological studies the anthropologist is not a threat to the informants as he/she may be when 'studying up'. When one 'studies up' as an anthropologist, one's own interest is more closely linked to the reality and the arena than the group being studied. This allows the anthropologist to be perceived as a threat to established power structures and power relations.

> The most usual obstacle is phrased in terms of access. The powerful are out of reach on a number of different planes: they don't want to be studied: it is dangerous to study the powerful; they are busy people: they are not all in one place, and so on (Nader 1972:302).

I discovered scepticism and reluctance to be studied among some of the informants in Telenor Norway. This meant that I was unable to conduct three of my interviews in Telenor Norway. The interviews had to be scheduled in advance, and when the day of the interview arrived the

informant was either too busy, had other tasks that came up or had forgotten the interview and made another appointment that clashed with my interview. By comparison in Telenor Pakistan I could conduct all the interviews without a problem.

In order to analyse the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan and see how they manifest themselves in the work environment in Telenor, I will use ethnography from these two countries. I therefore find it necessary to give a short ethnographic introduction to both Norway and Pakistan before continuing my thesis.

Introducing Pakistani Ethnography

Pakistan is an ethno-national state formed in 1947. Its 'nationhood' is based on the Muslims' claim of being a distinct religio-cultural nation. However:

> Since its inception, Pakistan has faced the monumental task to spell out an identity different from the Indian identity. Born from the division of the old civilisation of India, Pakistan has struggled in constructing its own culture, a culture which would not only be different from the Indian culture but that the whole world would acknowledge (Jaffrelot 2002:7).

According to Jaffrelot (2002), today Pakistan is still searching for its identity. The founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, wanted to build a nation relying on the threefold principle 'one nation, one culture, one language'. Initially Pakistan was conceived as a centralised state dominated by the Mohajirs (a term which refers to Urdu speaking Muslim refugees from India, who settled in Pakistan after independence from Britain in 1947); nationalists who wanted a nation state to govern. According to the 1951 census, the Mohajirs numbered 7 million in the newly created Pakistan (including 700,000 in East Pakistan). In West Pakistan, they numbered 6.3 million out of 33.7 million people – one fifth of the total population. Their immediate influence was disproportionate to their number: the group formed an intellectual and commercial elite and settled down in cities. The Mohajirs also dominated Pakistan in part because Jinnah himself was a Mohajir. Pakistan being to a large extent the creation of Mohajirs, Urdu (and English) was to be an official language, as many members of this group were Urdu (and English) speaking. Today, Pakistan's population falls into six major ethnic groups: Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pushto, Saraiki and Urdu. 44 percent of the population of

Pakistan have Punjabi as their mother tongue, while only 8 percent have Urdu – the official language of Pakistan - as their first language (Qadeer 2006:7).

According to Verkaaik, in Karachi and Hyderabad, rumours depict the Pakistani state as being 'captured' by Punjabis. This feeds into the sense of displacement and loss which is so pivotal to the Mohajirs' identity (Blom Hansen & Stepputat 2001:23). However in the early years of the Pakistani state, the country was dominated by two groups: the Mohajirs and the Punjabis. The Mohajirs were over-represented in the bureaucracy and controlled the political decision centres in Pakistan. The Punjabis, who represented only one quarter of the Pakistani population in 1951, occupied 80 percent of posts in the army and were also over-represented in the Pakistani administration. However, after 1951 the Mohajirs gradually lost power to the Punjabis (Jaffrelot 2002:16-17).

> The rise to power of the latter was total in 1958 with the military coup of Ayub Khan, a Pathan who initiated a new Pathan-Punjabi axis, since an overwhelmingly Punjab-dominated army was now in command (Jaffrelot 2002:16-17).

According to the 1951 census (in Jaffrelot 2002), the predominantly Bengali East Pakistan had a population of 41.9 million while West Pakistan had a population of 33.7 million inhabitants. The Pakistani state however failed to include the Bengalis. The Bengalis were marginalised in the political arena; they were under-represented in the Army and the Administration. Therefore, Mujibur Rahman established a Bengali party named Awami League. In 1966 he formulated a Six-Point Programme in which he asked for democracy and a loose federal system. Ayub Khan's reply to that was to put Rahman under arrest by accusing him of receiving arms from India. According to Jaffrelot (2002) this case is an example of the authoritarian methods of West Pakistani leaders who were simply unwilling to share power. Kohli argues (in Jaffrelot 2002) that:

> In contrast to India, Pakistan cannot accommodate centrifugal movements (as those of Tamil Nadu and Punjab in India) because it does not have a federal framework and the democratic culture to do so (Jaffrelot 2002:19).

The quotation above suggests that Pakistan lacks a democratic culture and that Pakistan has a hierarchical leadership style. In chapter five I will look at the Pakistani culture's approach to

hierarchy and equality and see how this has an impact on the leadership style in Telenor Pakistan.

Telenor's head office, where I conducted my fieldwork, is located in Punjab, and most of the employees and leaders observed in my study were Punjabi. In my thesis it is specifically Punjabi culture rather than Pakistani culture as a whole which is described. Alvi's research focuses on the concept of the self of a Pakistani Punjabi. She argues that 'the concept of the self of a Punjabi person is not to be equated with the Western concept of 'one self, one body', but is rather constituted through its relationship with a plurality of bodies' (Alvi 2001:46). Alvi (2001) distinguishes two aspects of the self: the hidden one and the shared one. The shared one is of special interest to Alvi, since that aspect is the collective one, and focuses on similarities among the persons in the Punjabi community. These similarities, or the collective aspect of the self, give us insight into the concept of the self in Punjabi society. A Punjabi understands himself through:

> The notion of caste and the network of social relationships in terms of 'brotherhood' (*biradari*), a category that is context-dependent. These social relationships are best understood with reference to the categories of the own and the other, which also vary not only according to the context but even within one context according to the gender perspective. The notion of honour (*izzat*) and the potential to react in defence of one's honour emphasise the shared aspect of the self (Alvi 2001:50).

Alvi's (2001) analysis of the aspects of the self of Punjabis shows how physical limits of the self are constructed. The concept of the self in Punjab is unlike the Western concept, which is defined in the first place by the boundary of the body and restricted by the notion of one body and one self. Alvi's analysis of the concept of the self of a Punjabi person is central in my thesis.

Introducing Norwegian Ethnography

Norway's independence dates from 1905, before which it was a colony under Denmark until 1814, and under Swedish rule from 1814 until 1905 (Vike 2002). According to Kramer (1991), after Norway's independence, serious efforts to develop the Norwegian economy began. In the early 1900s the following industries were established: consumable goods, textiles and electrometallurgical industries. Timber logging, iron production and shipping

were already well-established in Norway. Even though Norway established new industries after its independence, the country remained one of the poorest countries in Western Europe. This situation continued through and after World War II. After World War II the Norwegian country and its economy was in ruins. Reconstruction began in the 1950s and was partly financed by aid from America. In the 1960s a period of high economic growth began, and the economy accelerated again in the 1970s as the oil economy emerged and made Norway quite suddenly into one of the richest countries in the world.

> From the 1960s to the present, Norwegians have been experiencing and participating in wide-ranging changes that can be associated with general transformation from classic modernity to a transformed and transforming modernity (Gullestad 2006:69).

In this transformation, the relationship between employers and employees in particular is changing. According to Mjøset, the assembly principle never played an important role in Norwegian industries, but other aspects of mass production were present and are now undergoing radical revision (Mjøset 1993:114). Changes in working life focused on creating flexibility at work and an egalitarian power structure. New models of management began to be applied both in the public and private sector in Norway. The model's main focus is on flexibility, creativity, increased effectiveness, competitiveness, quality control and technological innovation (Gullestad 2006:70).

Since the early 1900s, the various workers' movements had a strong foothold in Norwegian politics. After the Second World War, when high economic growth began in the country, Norway developed a strong welfare state, characterised by the ambition to establish and secure universal welfare. Norway has nurtured a sense of politics as a collective activity and as the privileged tool for the realisation of humanistic goals (Vike 2002:57). According to Gullestad (1992) the welfare state in Norway is based on the ideas of solidarity, security (*trygghet*), and equality (*likhet*). The idea of equality (*likhet*) has a strong presence in the Norwegian community as a code for interaction, as a goal for the political ideology and as a national myth. However, the idea of equality today can be seen as more concerned with agreeing on equal rules in different forms of market competition than about equality as the same result for everybody. The fundamental social concept of equality (*likhet*) is central in my research. I will during my thesis look at how the idea is expressed in multinational corporations like Telenor.

Sørhaug (1996), in analysing leadership in Norway, explores the idea that a modern leadership is a blend of two concepts: trust and power. According to this work, a leader's function is located in the intersection of the contradictory dependency between power and trust. A leader will not obtain control of an organisation without having to demonstrate the will to violence, because trust requires guaranteed limits, and the warranty is dependent upon someone who can stop violence, that is, to use violence. Sørhaug's concepts of trust and power are important to my thesis. I will use them to explore the leadership dynamics in Telenor Pakistan and Telenor Norway.

Throughout the thesis I will look at how the Pakistani and Norwegian cultural values have an impact on the organisational culture and leadership styles at the WoW project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan. Thoughts about the cultural values of time, language, hierarchy, equality, trust and power and individualism versus collectivism are central to the study. In the next chapter I will focus on some of the unique traditions of Norway and Pakistan and see how they manifest themselves in the organisational cultures at Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan.

Part II Telenor Culture

In part II, I will explore some aspects of the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan and see how they manifest themselves in the organisational culture at the Way of Work project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

Part II, which is divided into two chapters, focuses on the organisational culture at Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan and how this cultural practice is rooted in Norwegian and Pakistani traditions. In chapter 3, I analyse Norwegian cultural values, such as equality, and look at how the Pakistani cultural focus on collectivism, and Norwegian cultural focus on individualism, impacts on the work environment in the respective settings. In chapter 4, I will explore how meetings are conducted in Norway and Pakistan. Thoughts about the cultural values of time, language, and decision-making are central to this chapter.

Chapter 3: The Telenor DNA

To arrive at a meaningful anthropological understanding of the culture in Telenor, I will look outside Telenor, at 'the intersection of the local and global, at the indigenisation of the utilitarian cultural order that orders the business environment' (Jones 2005:264). In this chapter I will explore how the unique cultural qualities of Norwegian and Pakistani society manifest themselves in the organisational culture at the Way of Work project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan, in comparison to the effect of shared vision and values, codes of conduct and other shared practices in Telenor.

Theorising Pakistani and Norwegian culture

Since the early 1980s, culture has emerged as the dominant concept in discussing organisations. Terms like work culture; organisation culture; strong organisational culture; team culture; corporate culture; our culture; their culture; national culture; local culture and global culture are much used in the study of organisations. But what does the word culture stand for? The anthropologist Marshall Sahlins (1976, 1999, 2000) has a structural approach to culture. According to his work, we interpret, act in, and experience the world through (shifting) cultural structures, codes, or 'orders' that not only provide meaning to those experiences, but also *condition* and direct them (Jones 2005:262). The anthropologist Andrew Jones (2005) suggests that a working definition of culture could be stated as follows:

> Culture consists of the symbolic schema, both linguistic and non-linguistic, through which humans apprehend, act in, and interpret their experience in the world (Jones 2005:262).

According to Sahlins, the relational thinking that underlies a structural perspective focuses attention on the fact that cultural structures, and boundaries, are most visible and identifiable when juxtaposed against, and in contact with, other cultural orders and schemas. Sahlins addresses this in an important way:

> 'Consider again the surprising paradox of our time: that localisation develops apace with globalisation, differentiation with integration; that just when the form of life around the world is becoming more homogenous, the people are asserting their cultural distinctiveness' (Sahlins 1999:410, Jones 2005:262).

Similarly, Carla Dahl-Jørgensen (2003:38) points out that when Norwegian companies become global it becomes important for them to maintain the local Norwegian culture despite, or because of, the fact that they are now a global company.

But what is the Norwegian culture that they try to maintain? According to Gullestad (2006) culture (*kultur*) can signify three things in Norway:

> 'Culture' (*kultur)* is a complex and polysemous concept in Norway. The word can signify: 1) the *cultural sector* covered by official cultural policy (encompassing, in particular, 'culture' in terms of art works and historical monuments); 2) 'culture' understood more broadly as *ways of life* ('rural culture', working-class culture') and as *patterns of social action* (as in "at this place of work a culture has developed which consists in covering each other no matter what happens"); as well as 3) 'culture' as *frames of interpretation* (focusing not primarily on what people say or do but on what they take for granted when they say and do whatever they say and do) (Gullestad 2006:238).

Furthermore, in Norway, the word 'culture' is ambiguous in terms of value. In some contexts it carries negative connotations; in other contexts the connotations are positive. As a positive term culture is associated with 'nature'. This is in contrast to the negative notion which is associated with the 'artificial' and the 'unnatural' (Gullestad 1992:201-210). According to Gullestad (2006) the term 'culture' can also be class-laden in Norway. 'Culture' can be associated with *folkekultur* meaning 'the culture of the people'. In contrast to *folkekultur* there is *finkultur* meaning 'high culture' or 'fine culture'. *Folkekultur* is seen as something positive while *finkultur* is seen as being negative. The positive connotation of the word culture confers value to objects and events. An example of this is the use of terms such as 'local culture' and 'working-class culture'. These terms are related to people (*folklighet)* and are contrasted to 'fine culture' (*finkultur).*

Gullestad is inspired by symbolic anthropology, and particularly by the work of David Schneider, in her analysis of Norwegian culture. Schneider has been one of the major figures in the Chicago school of symbolic anthropology. Schneider's analysis of American culture concentrated primarily on refining the concept of culture. For him, culture is not simply a set of values that maximise or norms that regulate, but the symbols with which we conceive and understand. His efforts therefore went towards understanding the internal logic of systems of

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symbols and meanings. The tradition of symbolic anthropology is primarily concerned with identifying the cognitive tools people use to perceive, combine, interpret, understand and communicate. These cognitive tools are often implied and appear 'natural' for those who use them. Culture in this sense is something people live and think within, rather than a belief they consume. We think *from* culture rather than *about* it (Gullestad 1992, Schneider 1976, Ricoeur 1971).

According to Alvi (2001), the concept of the person in Punjab can give an insight to understanding the Pakistani culture. In Pakistani culture one distinguishes two main aspects of the concept of the person. The first aspect may be termed subjective. According to Alvi the subjective aspect is formed by:

> The thoughts and representations of the people about themselves. It may be inferred from written sources like law, religion, philosophy and literature, should a society differentiate these fields, and it may simply be enquired about. This aspect includes the indigenous categories of a society, like nationality, notions of private and public spheres, centres of authority, symbolic continuity of the values of the society, or honour (*izzat*), shame (*ghairat*) and caste (*zat*) in the Punjab. It also includes spheres like the social construction of gender, whether expressed as a demand for equal rights in the West or expressed as a division of space within and outside the house (Alvi 2001:49).

The second aspect of the concept of the person is seen as the objective aspect in Punjab. This aspect refers to the things people in a society are not aware of because they are an inherent part of their everyday life.

> In the Punjab, marriage with cousins is subjectively preferred but an objective analysis shows that there is a compulsion for the exchange of women, called *watta-satta*, this exchange being the basis of all the other extensive gift exchanges carried out among Punjabi women, which constitute the matrix of social relations (Alvi 2001:49-50).

Ewing (1990) would present a critical view of describing the concept of the person in Pakistan in such terms. Ewing argues that a single concept of the person is not adequate for describing how selves are experienced or represented in any culture. She shows this by using a Pakistani woman, Shamim, as an example:

If we were to construct a single model of the Pakistani self or person and apply it to Shamim, for instance, we could explain only certain aspects of Shamim's utterances. A model based on codes of conduct and concepts of person derived from Islamic doctrine would be appropriate for elucidating Shamim's concept of herself as a good daughter and future good wife and would also account for its antithesis, the concept of herself as "bad," which was stimulated by memories of her father's anger at her. This Islamic model, however, would say little about Shamim's self-image as a "politician" and her view of the politics of everyday life, as I will demonstrate below (Ewing 1990:257).

Ewing's (1990) example of Shamim suggests that in all cultures people can be observed to project multiple, inconsistent self-representations that are context-dependent and may shift rapidly. According to this view, as a context-dependent concept, the self is displayed differently in different contexts.

For Alvi, however, the notion of self has two aspects: a hidden and a shared one. The shared aspect deals with similarities among different people within a society. This aspect is known as the collective aspect, and is of greater interest to Alvi than individual character traits. She argues that people in a particular society tend to act in the same way in similar situations. For example, Alvi argues that a Punjabi person will do almost everything to restore his honour (*izzat*) in the Punjabi society. She observes that a Pakistani man is not likely to be afraid of addressing conflicts with others. In fact, to restore his honour (*izzat*), he may even be ready to kill a man (Alvi 2001).

As a contrast to this, Gullestad (1989) indicates that a Norwegian person will do almost anything to avoid addressing conflicts in a direct manner, because 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) – a cultural category – is achieved through the control of one's feelings and the absence of open conflicts. These cultural categories consisting of avoiding direct conflicts in Norwegian society and being ready to kill in a conflict situation in Pakistani society are clearly determined. I have not gathered data in my thesis that suggests that Pakistani employees would do almost anything to restore their honour, though I will cover in my research (at pages 53, 54 and 85) the importance of the cultural category 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) in Telenor's work environment.

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Theorising Organisational culture

The business and industrial anthropologist Allen Batteau suggests that:

> Within the study of organisations, there are two sets of divergent streams in
> understanding culture. Some studies (e.g., those in Turner 1990 or Gagliardi 1990)
> focus on *symbol systems* and the meaning found in rituals and taboos. Other studies
> (e.g., Briody and Baba 1991; Fiske 1994) examine *the adaptation of different groups*
> within the corporation to each other and to their external environment. A second set of
> contrasts is between those who view culture as something shared throughout an
> organisation and those who take a more nuanced perspective (Batteau 2000:732).

In this outline, Batteau describes that in research on organisational culture, there has been a
tendency to treat culture as homogeneous, and widely shared. Edgar Schein (1985) uses
anthropology to build his theory on organisational culture. Schein argues that cultural beliefs
shared across an organisation usually address its mission, core tasks, goals, strategies,
membership boundaries, norms, and criteria for results. This theory is similar to Peters' and
Waterman's (1982) view, that suggests that 'good managers make meanings for people, as
well as money.' Schein too argues that organisational culture is developed by founders and
leaders.

Jones (2005:264) criticises Schein's view and argues that the wider culture creates
organisational culture, and that leaders emerge somewhere in the middle of that process. This
is opposed to the view that, as Schein suggests, organisational culture is created by leaders.
Jones suggests that Marshall Sahlins' perspective on culture can make a contribution to the
field of organisational culture studies. A Sahlinsian organisational anthropology would
suggest that a particular organisational culture is produced at the intersection of local cultural
schema as the organisation interacts with larger (national and global) forces within its
industry. Jones further point out that:

> To arrive at a meaningful *anthropological* understanding of culture in corporate
> organisations, it is necessary to look outside the organisation, at the intersection of the
> local and the global, at the indigenisation of the utilitarian cultural order that orders the
> business environment. Such a conversation shifts the attention from an 'anthropology
> *for* business' (Schein, 1985), to an 'anthropology *of* business' (Jones 2005:264).

In my research I find Sahlins' and Jones' perspectives on organisational culture useful. I will apply their perspectives to how I view Telenor as an organisation. In the next section I will suggest that the development of shared values may not foster a common culture and identity for the employees in Telenor. Rather, it may be the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan that create the organisational culture.

Theorising Corporate culture

In recent years, management in Western organisations such as Telenor has looked increasingly to corporate culture as the key to organisational success. It has been suggested that organisations, like nations, have cultures, composed of shared values, norms and meanings. Some organisations are said to have cultures which enhance efficiency, productivity, innovation and service while others have cultures which stand in the way of success. A corporate culture which promotes innovation, team work and commitment is often seen as the secret to the success of some organisations, such as Telenor.

In one of the biggest selling and widely read business books *In Search of Excellence* (1982) Tom Peters and Robert Waterman argue that successful companies are those which have strong cultures; that is a, strong commitment to a shared set of values and norms, which both unite and motivate organisational members. The forging of a strong culture; the strengthening of norms and values; the creation of meanings; these are all important functions of leaders. 'Good managers make meanings for people, as well as money' claim Peters and Waterman (1982:29). Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter at Harvard Business School has drawn a similar conclusion in her book *The Change Masters* (1984). She believes that most Western organisations have developed 'bureaucratic cultures' that thwart innovation and entrepreneurship by emphasising adherence to rules and procedures. Organisation consultants Deal and Kennedy suggest in their book *Corporate Cultures* (1982) that, in future, successful organisations will have to generate cultures in which every employee has a sense of being a hero. Such arguments have encouraged the view that managers can virtually manipulate organisational culture at will to produce a winning cocktail, through the use of symbols, stories, myths and metaphors. This neglects the fact that people may not like being manipulated and that, while may they strive for meaning, they will not embrace any meaning.

Within organisations, sub-cultures and counter-cultures may spontaneously grow and prosper which can complement or undermine the official values. Telenor as an organisation is highly likely to use these terms to define its organisational culture. I will, however, suggest that organisational culture is produced at the intersection of local cultural schema as the organisation interacts with larger (national and global) forces within its industry; a view in support of Marshall Sahlins' (work in Jones 2005).

The Telenor Group has operations in 13 countries in Asia and Europe. All of them share some similarities. They all share the same vision and values and all of them have to follow the Codes of Conduct. The concept of open landscape is also common to each country's operations, as are technological tools such as laptops and mobile phones.

Telenor Group describes its vision and values as follows:

> Our vision is simple: Telenor exists to help customers get the full benefit of communications services in their daily lives. We're here to help.
>
> Our values are a constant reminder to us of how we should serve all our customers around the world. They inspire us to be a driving force in modern communications and customer satisfaction.
>
> Our vision and values define a common approach for all our employees setting out how we do business at Telenor. They provide a fundamental guide for taking care of our customers. Together they set the standard for how we work in order to create sustainable value for our shareholders, customers, employees and partners.
>
> We want to make it easy for our customers to get what they want, when they want it. We will keep promises and do what we say we will do. We will innovate to deliver fresh ideas. And, as an international company, we will respect our customers and their local cultures (Telenor 2010).

In 2003 Telenor established its Codes of Conduct, covering a broad set of ethical issues. The Codes of Conduct constitute the basis upon which all of the company's policies and procedures are built. Telenor's guidelines for corporate ethics apply to members of the board of directors, managers and other employees of Telenor as well as others acting on behalf of

Telenor. It is the line managers' responsibility to make sure everybody is aware of, and complies with, these guidelines.

> "Telenor is opposed to discriminatory practices and shall do its utmost to promote equality in all employment practices. No direct or indirect negative discrimination shall take place based on race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, language, religion, legitimate political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. We do not tolerate degrading treatments towards any employee, such as mental or sexual harassment or discriminatory gestures, language or physical contact that is sexual, coercive, threatening, abusive or exploitative". (Excerpt taken from Telenor's Code of Conduct).

It is important to note that the vision and values and the Code of Conduct are presented not only as ideals, but they are taken to reflect current Telenor practices. The vision and values and Code of Conduct are constantly evoked in meetings and seminars in Telenor. They also appear as key topics in internal leadership programmes (see page 73 for further details about how the vision and values and Code of Conduct are a central element in leadership courses in Telenor Pakistan). Kenichi Omhae (1990) predicts the development of shared values in global organisations, claiming that the corporation will foster a common culture and identity for the employees. Even though all the Telenor employees act according to guidelines for corporate ethics and they share the same vision and values, which define a common approach for all Telenor employees on how to do business, this does not appear to be enough to create a homogenous culture in Telenor. I will, in what follows, try to show how some of the unique cultural practices in Norway and Pakistan have an impact on the organisational culture in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan rather than shared values, strategies and beliefs in Telenor.

The case of WoW

The Way of Work (WoW) project is a pilot project that works to develop and implement a unified communications and collaboration solution for the Telenor Group. The main aim for the project is to develop and unite the different communications and collaboration tools in Telenor into one virtual workplace. By introducing a common virtual workspace across Telenor the organisers want to change the way people work in the organisation.

The virtual workspace will consist of many components. It will be a common intranet for all members of the Telenor Group; provide a compliant document and records management system; encourage all employees to have their own sites presenting their skills and contributions; form an instant messaging system that is linked to Microsoft Outlook; and offer the opportunity for virtual meetings.

By introducing the virtual workspace the aim is to increase the value of people's work across the Telenor Group. By creating the opportunity to search for information across the Telenor Group they hope to make the Group's common workforce more efficient. At the time of my fieldwork, the WoW project was developing this solution and planning when to implement the end result in the different countries where Telenor conducts business.

During my interview with employees working in WoW, one of them had the following to say about the WoW culture:

> The WoW project is characterised by a bad atmosphere. The project has too many tasks but not enough resources. The work increases and the employees feel they lose control, and they get sick. The work environment in WoW is really bad; people only have professional work relationships. The element of friendship is missing totally. Some of the employees have even quit the project because of that. At the 'WoW cake' one employee even started to cry when she quit the job, because of the bad work environment in WoW.

> The project has changed so many times from the start, now no one really knows when the project is going to end and what the end result will be. There is also a kind of uncertainty characterising the project. No one really has control over how much money the project has, and where to use the money. There is no indication, for example, on how much money you can use to hire-in externals.

Most of the workers in the project team would agree to the sentiment behind this description of the WoW project. The project goals have been changed many times. There have also been many changes affecting timing of implementation of solutions in different countries and when to finish the project. The project has run over budget and there is now also uncertainty about whether the project will receive any more money, and if it does then how much it will get. All of the uncertainties characterising the project make some of the workers feel that they no

longer have control of their work situation. The feeling of lacking control of the situation and a pressure to finish their work tasks soon as possible creates a stressful atmosphere for many in the project.

According to Thorsrud, a professor at the University of Trondheim, management practices in Norway are too centred on internal control. He suggests that leaders should give the workers more authority and influence. In this way the work environment in an organisation would improve (Sørhaug 1996). However, according to some leaders at the WoW project the psychosocial work environment would improve with better communication within the project. They therefore called people into meetings to focus on how to improve the internal communication in the project. There were numerous meetings held in WoW on this issue, but many workers continued to complain about the poor standard of communication within the project.

Every Thursday the team has an event called 'WoW cake'. The event's main aim is to improve the internal communication in the project. Many employees indicated that the 'WoW cake' in itself was fine, and it helped in getting information about the various different processes in the WoW project, but the 'WoW cake' alone was not enough to improve the internal communication.

An external employee at the WoW project had the following to say about the WoW culture:

> I feel that I am unfairly treated because I am an external. Whenever something is not going in the right direction, the (Telenor) leaders feel that the external workers are not doing their job. The externals on the other hand feel that the Telenor leaders are shirking their responsibility by blaming the externals.
>
> As an external you get given tasks without them (the leaders) asking you if this is something you want to work on. In WoW I am forcefully put into a role in this project which I don't want to work on at all. I think this is a sign of disrespect. But if you are employed by Telenor you can have an opinion on what kind of tasks you want to work on within the project.
>
> I think if they want the work culture in WoW to be better, they should try to involve the externals in the social arenas. This month there is a huge social event in the Telenor arena for the employees of Telenor. They have not invited any external from

the WoW project. This distinguishes us from the Telenor employees. And whenever someone suggests an event for everyone working in the WoW project it is not prioritised, because they do not want to spend any money on the externals. They feel they have already spent enough on the externals.

The relationship between the WoW leaders and externals was not good. WoW managers felt that the external workers did not deliver what they had promised on time, or that they did not deliver the technical solutions they had agreed on developing. The externals on the other hand felt that the WoW leaders wanted to make someone else responsible for their own mistakes; That the leaders felt it was easier to blame someone else.

Overall, the work environment in WoW can be deemed to be poor. Almost everyone complained about problems in the work environment. Employees and leaders worked for long hours every day. Some complained about working on weekends. Some went on sick leave for long periods because of the poor work environment. Employees complained that they did not feel like a team, they felt that this was a one person race, where everyone was busy trying to impress people above them, so they could get into better positions themselves.

As mentioned previously, communication was a problem at the WoW; particularly the communication between external and internal employees. Employees also complained about poor communication with leaders as well as with employees from other cultural groups. In the next section I will look into how the WoW project worked as a cross cultural team.

Cross Cultural work group

Cross cultural interaction is not only practised at the WoW project, but is something which is going on throughout Telenor - from the executive committees to the shop floors. Throughout the organisation I heard non-Norwegian employees talking about unequal treatment from some Norwegians. They often complained that many Norwegians were stereotyping people who are not of the same background as themselves. Most of the Norwegian employees on the other hand thought that all of the employees in the organisation were equally treated and given equal opportunities. They often gave examples such as the number of people from different countries who are working for Telenor.

The WoW project is a temporary cross cultural work group, with employees from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, China, Malaysia, Serbia, Pakistan and Hungary. The written and spoken language in the project is English. I believe the thinking behind creating this cross cultural work group is that it is likely to generate more creative ideas and a wider variety of solutions in the project. Telenor, being a multinational corporation, also anticipates gaining the perspective of the other countries where Telenor conducts business, so that the WoW solutions may be more responsive to other countries' needs. Another socially conscious benefit that Telenor may expect from a cross cultural group is the promotion of equal opportunities by incorporating employees from non-Norwegian countries into a Norwegian dominated organisation or work group.

These are laudable goals, yet according to the non-Scandinavian members in the project, the reality is different. They often complained about unequal treatment form the Norwegians in the project team. As mentioned earlier in the thesis (page 20), the welfare state is seen in Norway as based on ideas of solidarity, security *(trygghet),* and equality, defined as sameness *(likhet)* (Gullestad 1992:64). However Lien, Vike and Liden, the authors of the book "*Likhetens paradokser*" (2001) claim that the sameness (*likhet*) discourse is alive in contemporary Norway, in the form of the strong binding social codes and conventions that the Norwegian people have to deal with actively. The book analyses different expressions of the sameness (*likhet*) ideology in Norway, and the authors point out that, ironically, the idea of sameness (*likhet*) is actively used to create differences. Marianne Gullestad (in Lidén, Lien, Vike 2001) portrays the idea that national community's actions on sameness (*likhet*) are ethnically rooted and thus can be exclusive.

Non-Norwegian workers at WoW often complained that the Norwegian workers inappropriately stereotype colleagues from other cultures rather than accurately observe and assess their skills and potential contributions for accomplishing particular tasks. For instance, one team member told me that she once went to a meeting where everyone was Norwegian except her. They had decided to hold the meeting in Norwegian, not taking into account her not understanding a word of Norwegian. In another situation, a non-Norwegian employee described the lack of respect granted him by many of his Norwegian colleagues who, he believed, "assume that I am underdeveloped," simply because he came from an economically underdeveloped country.

According to Gullestad (2006) a revitalisation of Norwegian national identity has taken place over recent decades as a response to immigration, Europeanisation, individualisation and globalisation. Gullestad suggests that:

> In this revitalisation, 'culture' is a central notion; it is important 'to feel secure in one's own culture' (*være trygg i sin egen kultur*). Thus majority Norwegians apply the notion of culture to themselves. This is also evident in the expansion of the neologism *fremmedkulturell* ('of foreign or strange culture') about 'immigrants' from non-Western countries. The expression implies that the difference between 'them' and 'us' is not that 'they' have culture while 'we' do not, but that majority people regard 'their' culture as strange and alien and 'our' culture as close and familiar (Gullestad 2006:239).

According to Gullestad (2006) there is an assumption in Norway that people need to be more or less similar to get along well. This assumption is expressed in the sentence; '*like barn leker best'*. This means: 'children who are like each other play together more happily than other children'. There is therefore no surprise that Norwegian workers often find themselves more attracted to people from their own culture than to people from other cultures. I observed that Norwegian workers at WoW spoke most frequently to colleagues from their own culture; they also took lunch breaks mostly with their Norwegian colleagues. Non-Norwegian employees sometimes ate together in lunch breaks; however it was a rare sight to see Norwegian and non-Norwegian workers eating together. It should be noted that a reason that Norwegians spoke more frequently and ate lunch with other Norwegian is that they could communicate in Norwegian, instead of English. Norwegian employees generally felt more uncomfortable speaking English than employees from non-Norwegian countries. I will look in more detail at how language affects the work environment in Telenor in the next chapter.

Everyday life in Norway is often characterised by an egalitarian individualism based on the notion of equality, conceived of as sameness. The focus on sameness in Norwegian society means that differences become a problem to be tackled (Gullestad 1992). I think that Telenor's organisation is based on ideas such as equality, defined as sameness *(likhet).* This idea of sameness, though, can seem exclusive to non-Norwegian employees. Non-Norwegian employees feel that the Norwegian employees view their own group as superior and more trustworthy than other ethnic groups. Telenor is an organisation where prejudice and discrimination are socially unacceptable. Despite this, workers from other countries

sometimes feel excluded (a similar view is expressed by many Pakistani employees, see pages 90-92 for further details). Employees from other cultural groups often feel like outsiders compared to Norwegian employees.

According to Gullestad, in order for non-Norwegians to fit into Norwegian society, they have to let the Norwegians 'feel secure in one's own culture'. Non-Norwegians have to demonstrate their loyalty more explicitly by praising everything Norwegian. It is important that they learn and appreciate majority traditions and values. If they fail to do that, it leads to strategies of avoidance - in social life, in the housing market and in work life (Gullestad 2006, Gullestad 1992). This form of equality is thus not incompatible with hierarchy and class division. On the contrary, it functions by hiding the hierarchical aspects of society and life. In this way, equality may well be an important notion in Norwegian society, while in reality Norwegian society can remain divided and hierarchical (Gullestad 1992). I would suggest that in Telenor, as in wider Norwegian society, we think equality but do in practice organise for inequality.

"I Love Telenor"

As mentioned in the outline of my thesis, the second part of my fieldwork was conducted in Telenor's premises in Pakistan at the Human Capital Division. The Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan has focused on creating a good organisational culture from its inception. They want their employees to be creative in developing the way people should work in Telenor Pakistan. The average age of the employees in Telenor Pakistan is 28 while in Norway it is 45 years old. According to Khilji (2004), younger employees in Pakistan exposed to Western management education early in their careers are more likely to be influenced by modern work-related values, such as the values of Telenor. This is despite the fact that these values are contrary to the dominant values in society. The younger educated employees in Pakistan are aware of developments in the field of management through reading management magazines, perusing the Internet, or studying the policies of multinational companies. They therefore develop a positive attitude towards similar progress in their own organisations. As Khilji's studies show, Telenor Pakistan's Human Capital Division believes that by hiring young people, it will be easier to create their own Telenor culture in Pakistan. As the younger people have not worked anywhere before, it will be easier to adopt them into

the Telenor culture and Telenor's vision and values (see page 29 for details about Telenor's vision and values).

The Human Capital Division also has a helpdesk working to give technical support to the users of WoW tools in the Telenor Group. It also has, similar to the WoW project, a staff where many employees are hired on a contractual basis (see pages 32-33 for further details). An external worker described his situation in Telenor Pakistan as follows:

> I love working in Telenor Pakistan, but if I had to point out one negative thing about working here, it would be that Telenor Pakistan hires many people on a contractual basis. People hired on a contractual basis do not have the same benefits as other Telenor employees. Therefore the motivation level for all the contractuals is low. We are underpaid and still it is us doing all the hard work. Why are we on contract when we can be hired on a permanent basis? As a contractual it is difficult to get a permanent job in Telenor Pakistan. Whenever Telenor recruit they will recruit people outside the company. I will move out as soon as I get another offer. This is sad though because I love working for Telenor Pakistan.

One possible reason that external workers do not get the same benefits as employees working on a permanent basis is that Telenor does not want to invest in external employees. Contractors are hired because they possess the skills required for a specified role, and when the role is no longer needed, the company does not have to keep them. One of the leaders in Telenor Pakistan explained the reasons for hiring people on a contractual basis as follows:

> The background for hiring people on contracts is that they effectively have to meet operational needs whether an operational need is for the long term or short term. Further, the company also wants to avoid over-staffing in any area.

During my interviews with employees in the Human Capital Division, most of them were very satisfied with Telenor. One employee had the following to say about Telenor:

> The culture in Telenor is open, friendly and innovative. The focus is on work in a environment. We call each other by first names, and whenever I need help I can just ask my colleagues or my boss. I love the open space environment; it is great, it gives you freedom, I no longer have any barriers to approach my manager. Because of

Telenor's policies our managers actually value their employees, which is a rare thing in Pakistan.

This quote is representative of most of the employees in the Human Capital Division. Everyone I spoke to loved working in Telenor Pakistan. One could really sense their pride in being a Telenor employee, in the way they emphasised all the benefits of working in Telenor. The employees were proud of working in a company that had a corporate responsibility programme, good vision and values, good ethical guidelines and was focusing on health and environmental issues for its employees. All the employees at Telenor Pakistan, I was told, had health insurance and accesses to a psychologist working for Telenor.

Furthermore, the employees pointed out that Telenor Pakistan focused on being innovative in its way of doing business. They wanted to create something new, something different in a really competitive market, especially at the outset. When they started the company they had much freedom; that freedom allowed them to be more innovative. All the employees in the company were trusted and this made people more creative and innovative. This innovativeness is something the leaders are trying to keep alive in Telenor Pakistan.

Telenor's employees also pointed out that they loved the open space. One possible reason might be that the open workspace gives everyone a feeling that they all have the same privileges whether one is a worker or a manager. The open space makes it easier for people to collaborate with their team, as they can access team members more easily. The open space also promotes greater interaction between the employees and the managers. On the other hand, for managers, the open space can also give them more control over what their employees are doing. It is, for example, more difficult for the workers to surf the internet or talk on the phone aimlessly.

Another possible reason that the open space concept is so popular in Pakistan could be the focus on collectivism in the Pakistani society. In the next section will I therefore look at the open space concept and see how this might be linked to thoughts about individualism and collectivism in the Norwegian and Pakistani societies.

Open landscape and thoughts about Individualism in Norway and Collectivism in Pakistan

In Telenor everyone sits in an open landscape. No one has a permanent place to sit in, so the employees take the first available desk in the morning. I observed the interaction that occurred in the open landscape. In Telenor Norway, people would normally be quieter in the open space and normally be annoyed if their colleagues talked loudly or were talking on the phone in the open space. Many people also used headphones (to listen to music and to have live meetings through the virtual database) while sitting in the open space. On the other hand, in Telenor Pakistan, people seemed more relaxed working in the open space. Many employees mentioned that the best thing about working in Telenor Pakistan was that they had this open landscape. By having this set-up, one creates a less hierarchical culture according to these workers. A person's boss could be sitting next to them in the open landscape and one could interact with him without first having to make an appointment through his secretary. People also seemed comfortable with their colleagues laughing, joking and talking to each other and some were talking on the phone in the open landscape. This is in contrast to the attitudes of many people in Telenor Norway. If employees in Telenor Norway could choose between the open space environment and normal offices, it would seem that most of them would prefer offices. An office would give them a private space, where they would no longer have to be annoyed at others' behaviour. They could also get more privacy and have, for example, pictures of their dog or of family members in their office.

Why is it that the people in Telenor Pakistan seem to love the open space environment, while employees in Telenor Norway often prefer offices? Does the reason have anything to do with the differences between the Pakistani and Norwegian cultures - where the Norwegian culture is seen to value individualism and the Pakistani culture to focus on collectivism?

Dumont, the celebrated student of Marcel Mauss, differentiates between two conceptions of the individual. He writes:

> (1) The empirical agent, present in every society, in virtue of which he is the main raw material for any sociology. (2) The rational being and normative subject of institutions: this is peculiar to us (modern society) as is shown by the values of equality and liberty. As opposed to modern society, traditional societies which know

nothing of equality and liberty as values, which know nothing, in short of the individual, have basically a collective idea of man (Dumont 1970:9).

According to Dumont, Western society has an individualistic ideology. In such a society, a human being or any social unit is defined primarily in relation to itself, and only secondarily in its interaction with other such units. But in a society with a holistic ideology (i.e. non-Western societies), such entities are defined first and foremost with respect to the relationships they form with other entities (Alvi 2001:46). Dumont's analysis refers specifically to India, though he generalises his conception of holism to pre-capitalist societies. Marriot also stresses a lack of 'individualism' in South Asian culture, and states the following:

> Persons – simple actors are not thought in South Asia to be 'individual', that is, indivisible, bounded units, as they are in much of Western social and psychological theory as well as common sense. Instead, it appears that persons are generally thought by South Asians to be 'dividual' or divisible (Marriot 1976:111).

Gullestad, in discussing Norwegian society, points out that modern society confers a particular focus on the individual (Gullestad 2006). Geertz (1983), in looking at the concept of the self and the person in different societies, places importance on how people understand themselves, as they express this with their own words, images, institutions and ways of acting. In Norway, the idea of independence is linked to the idea of 'finding oneself', of 'finding out who you really are'. Parents in Norway do not directly ask for obedience, but they seem to use direct and indirect ways of influencing their children (Gullestad 2006). In Pakistan, by contrast, children are expected to be obedient to their parents. A Pakistani daughter talking about her parents said:

> If I work, I will get money to help my parents. If I get a Ph.D., I will help my society. I am not much of a religious person, but my religion is to make my parents happy. If we make our parents happy, they pray for us. God prefers the prayer of parents. They gave us birth, food, modern education (Ewing 1990:253).

This comment indicates that women have a strong desire to be obedient and grateful daughters. According to Ewing (1990) these images are directly based on a Pakistani concept of the person that is familiar to scholars of South Asia, highlighted in Dumont's notion of

homo hierarchicus, in which persons are regarded as units of the social order (Dumont 1970). This is in a contrast to the idea of individuals with personal needs. For example, the idea that a self can be 'found' now seems to be ubiquitous in the Western world. In Norway there is an increasingly popular notion of youth as a stage in one's life where the specific task is to 'find oneself'. In order to establish a self, the youth often must break out of the family, as family life is often seen as restrictive and emotionally binding. In order to establish a self, one has to identify with people and activities outside the family (Gullestad 2006).

People in Pakistan on the other hand understand themselves through the notion of caste, and their network of social relationships in terms of 'brotherhood' (*biradari* - a category that is context-dependent), the notion of honour (*izzat*) and the notion of sorrow (*dukh*). These notions are of central importance as an underlying aspect of the self in Pakistan (Alvi 2001). Alvi (2001) further argues that the concept of the self in Punjabi culture is not to be equated with the Western concept of 'one self, one body', but is better constituted through its relationship with a plurality of bodies. In Punjab, people use the terms *apna*, meaning 'own', and *ghair*, meaning 'the other' to identify themselves. The term *apna* applies to 'cherished relations' such as friends, insiders, parents and siblings whereas the term *ghair* implies the opposite and means 'not constituting a part of the self'. One can refer to people one finds untrustworthy, an enemy or an outsider as *ghair*.

In Telenor Pakistan I often heard employees saying *apna* Telenor ('my Telenor' '*mitt* Telenor'), when they were referring to Telenor. They felt that Telenor was a part of themselves. Most of the employees in Telenor Pakistan spend a majority of their time at work. A normal work day lasted from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m., but most of the workers worked until late almost every day, and some also worked at the weekends. When talking about their colleagues, employees at Telenor Pakistan often referred to them as 'friends at work'. Colleagues were often seen as colleagues and friends at the same time. It was therefore not unusual to socialise with friends from work after the work day was over, and even in the weekend. By spending most of their time at work, and socialising with other Telenor employees after work, many employees developed a sense that that Telenor was a huge part of themselves and their identity. In this sense Telenor was not only 'their own' (*apna)* but it was also a part of their *biradari* ('brotherhood').

I have indicated that the Pakistani cultural focus on collectivism and the Norwegian focus on individualism might be the reason why the open space concept is not so popular in Telenor

Norway, while Telenor Pakistan's employees love the open landscape. The open landscape allows them to maintain a feeling of being a part of the group, while it can serve to make the Norwegians feel that they have lost some of their individuality.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have suggested that to arrive at a meaningful anthropological understanding of the culture in Telenor, it is important to look at some aspects of the cultural traditions in Norway and Pakistan, rather than focusing solely on the shared values, strategies and beliefs in Telenor.

I have described how 'culture' (*kultur*) is a complex concept in Norway. Depending on the context it can carry negative or positive connotations, and in other contexts it can be class-laden and associated with 'highculture' (*finkultur)* or 'the culture of people' (*folkekultur*). To understand the Pakistani culture the concept of the person in Punjab is central. Alvi distinguishes between the subjective and objective aspect of the person. He also suggests that the notion of the self has two aspects: a hidden and a shared one. The shared aspect of the self is central in this thesis and deals with the idea of how Punjabi people in Pakistan tend to act in the same way in similar situations.

According to Marriot (1976) Pakistani society shows a lack of 'individualism'. There is also a collective idea of man (Dumont 1970). Gullestad (2006) argues that Norwegian society lays particular focus on the individual. The idea of the individual is linked to the idea of 'finding oneself'. To find oneself the youth must often break out of the family and not remain obedient to parents. As a contrast to this, in Pakistani society it is crucial to remain obedient and respectful not only to one's parents but also to other elders. In Pakistan, social actors are defined first and foremost with respect to the relationships they form with other entities. People in Pakistan understand themselves through the notion of caste, and their network of social relationships in terms of 'brotherhood' (*biradari*). Alvi (2001) further argues that Punjabis use the terms *apna*, meaning 'own', and *ghair*, meaning 'the other' to identify themselves. I have tried to indicate how the concept of the person and terms like *apna* ('own') and *biradari* ('brotherhood') in Punjab are central to how employees view themselves in Telenor Pakistan.

At the end of this chapter I have indicated how the Pakistani cultural focus on collectivism and the Norwegian focus on individualism can be used to indicate why the open space concept is popular among the Pakistani employees, and not so liked among the Norwegian employees in Telenor Norway.

'Egalitarian individualism' is often said to be a characteristic feature of the Western world (Dumont 1970). Gullestad (1989, 1992, 2006) has suggested that a special emphasis on this can be found in Norway. Ideas about 'egalitarian individualism' relate to how 'ordinary people' relate to differences in everyday life. The central value concept is *likhet,* meaning 'likeness', 'similarity', 'identity' or 'sameness'. The concept *likhet* implies that people in Norway must consider themselves as more or less the same in order to feel of equal value. This assumption is expressed in the sentence; '*like barn leker best'* (meaning: children who are like each other play together more happily than other children).

In order for non-Norwegians to fit into Norwegian society, it is important to let Norwegians 'feel secure in one's own culture'. This is done by demonstrating loyalty more explicitly and praising everything Norwegian. I have in this chapter shown how these ideas of *likhet* can be ethnically rooted and thus can seem exclusive to the non-Norwegian employees at the WoW project. Similarly some Pakistani employees in Telenor Pakistan also complained about unequal treatment from some Norwegians (see pages 90-92 for further details). I have in this chapter suggested that in Telenor as in wider Norwegian society, we think equality but do in practice organise inequality.

In chapters 4, 5 and 6 will I reflect in further detail on the concept of equality (*likhet)* in Norwegian society. In the following chapter will I look at how the Norwegian and Pakistani cultural thoughts of time, language, obedience, hierarchy and equality have an effect on the meetings at the WoW project and at the Human Capital Divsion in Telenor Pakistan.

Chapter 4: Meetings at the WoW project and the Human Capital Division in Pakistan

I will start this chapter by describing a typical meeting room in Telenor. Following this, I will look at what kind of relationship the Pakistani and Norwegian employees in Telenor have in relation to time and the English language; whether and how these relationships are culturally determined and how they impact on meetings held in Telenor. I will also show how the Norwegian and Pakistani cultural concepts of obedience, hierarchy and equality affect the meetings in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan. Finally I will explore how the concept of 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) in Norwegian society on the one side and the idea of playing with open cards in a company on the other side affect each other in a meeting situation in Telenor Norway.

Description of meeting rooms in Telenor Norway and Pakistan

All work zones in Telenor's headquarters in Fornebu contain meeting rooms, either directly accessible from the work zone, or via the common areas. The work zone where I conducted fieldwork had two meeting rooms. In the CHQ office in Telenor Pakistan there was a meeting room on each floor. Anyone can book any meeting rooms through a shared calendar, provided it is not occupied.

Both settings had meeting rooms broadly similar in appearance. There was usually a table in middle of the room and some chairs placed around the table. The room also contained a board, easel, projector and other technological tools that may be needed for the meetings. Water, pens and notebooks with the Telenor logo were also available in some rooms. There were no meeting rooms in my work zone with a window that could be opened, and people often complained about the air quality and of getting a headache if they were in a meeting room for a long time.

The CHQ office in Pakistan and Telenor Fornebu had meeting rooms equipped with the latest technology. Employees were encouraged to use the technology during meetings. All of the

employees in Telenor use laptops rather than desktop computers, and they use mobile phones instead of office landline phones. Most of the employees bring their laptops with them into the meeting room whenever they have a meeting. Instead of writing notes in a notebook, they write them using their computer. It was also normal for people to be working on their computer during the meeting.

The Pakistani and Norwegian approaches to English

The language spoken at the meetings was English, both in Norway (at the WoW project) and Pakistan. However, in Norway, the meeting language was switched to Norwegian if only Norwegian people were present in the meeting. In Pakistan the meeting language was always English, even if everyone there was Pakistani, although jokes and the informal chat were sometimes made in Urdu or Punjabi.

The reason behind using English for meetings in Telenor Pakistan, even though all employees are Pakistani, is that Telenor is a global company, and the use of English makes it easier to conduct business in a global context. However, the Pakistani employees in Telenor often continued speaking English in non-formal settings, or often mixed English with some Urdu and Punjabi words. Rahman (2004) argues that the reason that English is preferred among Pakistani employees is because English is valued more than other languages in the Pakistani society. In Pakistan the linguistic hierarchy is said to be as follows: English, then Urdu, followed by local languages such as Punjabi. Furthermore, the Pakistani state's use of Urdu is seen as a symbol of national integration. This, together with the preference of English is a threat to linguistic and cultural diversity in the country.

In Punjab, there is widespread cultural shame about the Punjabi language. According to Bourdieu the reason for this is that market conditions are such that one's language represents a deficit of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1991). Instead of being an asset it becomes a liability. It prevents one from rising in society. In short, it is said to have a ghettoising effect. When this occurs, the users of the language become ashamed of it. Punjabi parents, teachers and the peer group combine to cause embarrassment for students over the Punjabi language. In most of the elite English schools policies forbidding students from speaking Punjabi at school are in place. If anyone speaks it he or she is often called '*paendu*' (rustic, village yokel) and made fun of. Even in cases where language movements and ethnic pride do not make Punjabis

ashamed of their language, they often do not want to teach it to their children because children can become overburdened with too many languages (Rahman 2004).

Despite the Pakistani state's use of Urdu as a symbol of national integration, English is valued more than Urdu in Pakistan. According to Rahman (2004), in Pakistan, the elite has invested in a system of elitist schooling of which the defining feature is teaching all subjects, other than Urdu, through the medium of English. This is in contrast to the public school or traditional (madrassa) education where all subject are taught in Urdu. The elite prefer using English medium teaching because it differentiates them from rest of the Pakistani people, and gives them the cultural capital that represents a snob value and constitutes a class-identity marker.

Furthermore, in Pakistan, English is identified with modernisation and good education. English is also used in modern contexts such as in global multinational companies like Telenor. According to Brutt-Griffler (2002), by supporting English through a parallel system of elitist schooling, Pakistan's ruling elite and upper middle class act as allies of the forces of globalisation in promoting the hegemony of English. The major effect of this policy is to weaken local languages and lower their status even in their native countries. In turn, this militates against linguistic and cultural diversity, weakens the 'have-nots' even further and increases poverty by concentrating the best paid jobs in the hands of the English speaking elite. Skutnabb-Kangas calls English a 'killer language'. Globalisation can serve to increase the power of English by opening up more jobs for those that speak it (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000:46).

According to Rahman (2004), these jobs will be controlled by multinationals (such as Telenor) and by international bureaucracies such as the World Bank, UN etc.-which have started operating increasingly in English. This effect has created generations of young people who have a direct stake in preserving English in Pakistan, because of the high unemployment rate in Pakistan. By having knowledge of English they might be able to be employed by multinationals (such as Telenor) and international bureaucracies. In comparison to the Pakistani unemployment rate which is 15,2 % (in 2009), the unemployment rate in Norway is 3,2 % (in 2009). These rates show that 25,7 million people are unemployed in Pakistan while 155,000 thousand are unemployed in Norway.

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By observing Norwegian employees at WoW I noticed that they often felt more uncomfortable speaking English. As soon as they had the opportunity, they switched to Norwegian. Norwegian is the official language in Norway. While Urdu is not the mother tongue for most Pakistanis, Norwegian is the first language of the majority Norwegians. However, the Norwegian language has two official written forms: *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*. There are both historical and political reasons why two variants of the Norwegian language have formed.

Historically, *Bokmål* is a Norwegianised version of the Danish language that was in use in Norway from the time when the country was in political union with Denmark (from 1400 to 1814). *Nynorsk* on the other hand is a new written language that was established around 1850. *Nynorsk* was established as a form based on Norwegian dialects as opposed to Danish. *Bokmål* is very similar to Danish in writing, while *Nynorsk* is similar to most dialects in Western Norway. Therefore in rural areas in this western region *Nynorsk* is the main written language, while *Bokmål* is the dominant language in western Norwegian cities and everywhere else in Norway. Most of the children in Norway attend public schools, and are educated both in *Bokmål* and *Nynorsk*.

Professor Kristoffersen (2005) wrote in the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten that in recent years, the issue of whether the Norwegian language is in danger of being replaced by English has appeared in the public discourse in Norway. According to Kristoffersen, in recent years, the Norwegian language has been under pressure from English in some areas of social life. At the same time a flood of English 'loan words' have been used in spoken Norwegian. Kristoffersen argues that it does not mean that the Norwegian language is dying, but rather that it is going to change dramatically.

Kristoffersen further suggests that English has gained greater acceptance in international business, research and higher education in Norway. English is beginning to establish itself as a working language in many companies, particularly where the company is part of an international business. However, it is important to keep in mind that no business requires English as a mother tongue; the requirement is for good English language skills. The Norwegian employees in Telenor felt that it was important to speak English, but they felt much more comfortable speaking Norwegian which was their native language. They often pointed out that they could express themselves much better in their native language. They also

felt that it was important for them to hold onto their national language and its different dialects as this was a part of their Norwegian identity.

By using Rahman's analysis I suggest that English is valued more than Urdu and Punjabi by the Pakistani employees in Telenor. They prefer English because the market conditions are such in Pakistan that speaking only Punjabi (and Urdu) prevents them not only from rising in society, but also from getting jobs in international companies. Since Norway is one of the richest countries in the world, and has one of the lowest unemployment rates globally, most Norwegians do not fear unemployment. Therefore, most Norwegians do not consider it so important to have knowledge of English. Looking at the language preference in Norway and Pakistan, one can link it to the power relations in a society. I will argue that it is a great advantage for employees in Telenor to have good knowledge of the English language; but that they should also be aware of the advantage of knowing languages other than English. My own research at Telenor can serve as a good example of the advantage of multilingualism in a global business environment.

The Norwegian and Pakistani cultural approaches to the English language have an impact on the meeting situation in Telenor. Since English is the most valued language in Pakistan, the Pakistani employees are not only comfortable using English in meetings, they actively prefer using English at work and often in their daily lives. As a comparison the Norwegian culture highly values the Norwegian language. Therefore it is rare for Norwegians to speak with each other in English in meetings unless they have to because of the presence of non-Norwegians.

I have in this section indicated that a cultural approach to language has a direct impact on the meetings situation in Telenor, but another factor which might affect the meeting situations is whether people attend meetings on time or not. In the next section I will look at what kind of relationship the Pakistani and Norwegian employees in Telenor have with regard to time, and how this may be culturally determined.

Organising time

During my interviews in both countries I asked people whether they thought it was more important to attend meetings on time or to let meetings run their course even though that would make them late for their next appointment. Most of the employees would find this question difficult to answer, and people often said that it depends on the situation. But to

categorise the answers, most of the people in Norway said that it depends on the priority of the topic of the meeting, but were most likely to go to the next appointment on time, out of respect for other people's time. However, in Pakistan, most of the employees said that it was important to end a meeting properly and to come to a conclusion, before moving to the next meeting. They often said that if you did not end a meeting properly, the meeting would have been waste of time.

In Shaw's study (1998:402), Pakistani managers often disrupted their workers' schedules by giving them last-minute tasks, such as receiving a visitor. The frequent arrival of unscheduled visitors, late starts to meetings and frequent last-minute crises in document preparation meant that work planning or time management was very difficult. But this also meant that new problems were addressed quickly. Comparing Shaw's observations with my fieldwork in Telenor Pakistan, I would say that new problems in Telenor Pakistan were also addressed very quickly, and attempts to solve them were made as soon as possible. In contrast, unscheduled changes often caused disruption and resentment in the WoW project. Telenor Pakistan had less tightly scheduled meetings which is a further contrast to the WoW project. In the WoW project, whenever I asked someone to have a meeting to conduct an interview with them, it would be almost impossible to schedule it for within a week's time. I often had to book interviews some weeks in advance. When the day of interview arrived the person was either too busy, was working from home or had forgotten about the interview. This meant that another date had to be found to conduct the interview. During my fieldwork I was unable to conduct three of my interviews at WoW. In comparison, in Telenor Pakistan I could normally conduct the interview on the same day that I had asked for it. Whenever I asked people for an interview, their response would normally be, 'When do you want to interview me? Now or later on today or tomorrow?' This shows that the Pakistani employees are flexible, and are used to handling unscheduled meetings and tasks on a normal basis. However, this can also be a reason why they sometimes have late starts to meetings, because they have to deal with last-minute crises and they address problems as soon as possible.

Hall (1983) argues that in complex societies time is organised in two different ways: logically and empirically. Northern Europeans focus on 'one thing at a time' whereas non-European are often involved in 'many things at a time'. The Northern European have internalised a clock time to the extent that they are guilty if they feel that they would be late for an appointment. The feeling of guilt is attached to the 'rules' in society and in the way in which society is

organised. The society is organised in such a way that it is important for people to comply with time appointments.

The fact that a person is late for an appointment is seen as a great insult, because he has made the others wait and disturbed the 'network' of other plans and agreements that they had planned for that day. For many non-European societies, however, Hall argues, that it is the qualitative relationships (and time), and involvement with other people, which is essential. While Northern European society is structured around an abstract network of plans that rest on a fundamental quantitative and externalised clock time as the organising principle, non-European societies are more focused on working through social networks and systems of contacts and alliances (Hall 1983).

By using Hall's analysis, one can argue that when a Pakistani employee at Telenor thinks of a day, he is not focusing on that day as comprised of 12 hours between sunrise and sunset. He focuses more on the events he has to finish in this day. The Pakistanis have internalised a sense of responsibility for such qualitative relationships and time in the same way that Norwegians have internalised a quantitative external clock time. A Norwegian employee will feel guilty if he cannot make it in time for an appointment, as Norwegian society is organised in such a way that it is important to comply with time appointments. A Pakistani employee on the other hand will not feel guilty about being late for an appointment. He will instead feel a strong discomfort if he is prevented from completing a 'good quality' task or satisfying the expectations of key people in their network. Arriving late thus does not have the same meaning in a Pakistani society and will not been seen as such a negative thing, as long the person has a good excuse for not having appeared. It is more important to complete a social interaction in a good way than to attend the next appointment at the right time.

I have in this section indicated that for a Pakistani employee it is important to complete a meeting properly, and for Norwegian employees it is important to make it in time for the next appointment. But how do the Norwegian and Pakistani employees act when they are a part of a meeting? In the next two sections I will look at how the concept of 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) in Norwegian society on the one hand, and the idea of playing with open cards in a company on the other, can lead to contradictions in meetings in Telenor Norway. I will also look at how the Norwegian and Pakistani cultural concepts of obedience, hierarchy and equality might impact the decision-making process at the WoW project and the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

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Decision-making

The following statement was made by an employee from Telenor Pakistan who had been to Norway to work on the WoW project for some weeks:

> What I don't like about Norway is that they spend all their time in meetings. They discuss and discuss and discuss an issue, but never come to any conclusion. If I call for a meeting I want it to end with a result.

The Pakistani employee pointed out that in Norway people wanted to discuss in great detail, but often did not come to any conclusion at the end of a meeting, and so they decided to have another meeting to discuss the same issues further. In Pakistan on the other hand they were focused on being productive and effective, and to come to a conclusion in the meeting. In Telenor Pakistan decisions for meetings were often already taken elsewhere. If not, the team would come to an agreement in that meeting, often agreeing with what their manager had suggested, or they would make an agreement on a temporary measure. In meetings in Telenor Pakistan employees often presented a case or project or the final result of something they had worked on for their teams and managers. This would often be an opportunity for the employee to assert himself and show the others how talented he or she was.

In Norway the social democratic tradition has left an imprint on Norwegian organisations (Sejersted 1997, Byrkjeflot 1997, Røvik 1998). The Norwegian management tradition, relative to other Nordic countries, has the historically distinct characteristic of legitimising leadership, with an emphasis on 'democratic legitimacy'. The democratic management tradition focuses on democratic procedures for the election of leaders. Within the organisation it focuses on openness and transparency. In Norwegian organisations it is crucial that one states reasons for decisions and even promote employees' closeness to decision-making (Sejersted 1997). (For further details on decision-making in Telenor see pages 83-86).

The democratic tradition had a strong hold at the WoW project. Employees' closeness to decision-making was stressed. The leaders wanted to consider everyone's opinion before taking a decision. The managers and the employees looked to meetings as a place where problems were discussed and common solutions were sought. Decisions were taken together. An example of this is the meetings held in WoW about the poor communication in the project. (For further details on communication in WoW see pages 31-32). In the meetings, the

bad communication in WoW was discussed, and sometimes a conclusion was reached on how to deal with the issue. After a short while, people gathered again to discuss the poor communication in WoW, and whether the communication has improved in WoW or not, why it has or why it has not. In this pattern, people continued to have many meetings about the communication in the project. Having many meetings, with much discussion, often leading to no conclusion, was often frustrating for non-Norwegian employees. In the Pakistani environment as mentioned earlier, the meetings were opportunities for employees to assert themselves: to show how good they were. Decisions were often made by the leaders in the meeting or by managers elsewhere.

Shaw, in analysing management behaviour in Pakistan noticed that even where officers had clear duties they were often disrupted by their managers. Leaders often disrupted them either with a new task with a very short timescale or by a requirement to attend a meeting or receive a visitor (Shaw 1998:402). In such a situation the Pakistani employees will usually be obedient to their managers. This is in contrast to the Norwegian ideology. Gullestad (2006) points out that Norwegian parents usually think that it is wrong if children abide by their parents' values just to please them. If they do, the children may be characterised as being too obedient. I will suggest that this concept of obedience can also be seen in a work environment. In Norwegian meetings one is not encouraged to be obedient to one's manager, but instead to be a part of the discussions in the meeting, of the decision-making process.

In Norway, children seem to have to learn indirect and finely tuned ways of paying attention to other people and to contexts. This learning is entirely different from the rigid power hierarchies of straightforward obedience (Gullestad 2006). As a contrast, obedience to parents is a cultural ideal in Pakistani society. Parents are seen as people who provide everything for their children; they therefore deserve obedience (Ewing 1990). These thoughts of obedience are directly linked to the concept of the person in Pakistan. In South Asia the 'condition humana' can be said to be hierarchical in itself (Dumont 1970). In Pakistan people are seen as qualitatively different from each other. The notion of equality is generally found only within separate social categories. People belonging to other social categories are seen as either superior, inferior or sometimes just different (Alvi 2001). In a work context, a manager is seen as superior to the workers. Therefore the employee should abide his leaders.

However, hierarchy can be just as real in Norwegian society as in Pakistan. It is more likely not to be as easy to see it because of the concept of *likhet* (equality) in the Norwegian society.

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An example, given by Henningsen (2001), is that Norwegian football players have to strike a balance between their life on and off the field. A football player can perform well and be a hero on the field, but outside he should appear as the same person he was before becoming a 'hero'. A Norwegian football player should not act as if his status off the field has been transformed as well. One player who has done this is the Norwegian player Ole Gunnar Solkjær, He is a player who has performed well both in Norway and outside Norway, and yet he is firmly anchored in everyday life. Solkjær has become an ambassador for UNICEF from 2001. In 2007 he went to residents in Oslo and raised money for that year's TV campaign 'Unite for children'. This shows that off the field, Solkjær appears as 'the same old boy', not acting as if his status outside the football field has changed. This can be said to be the reason why Solkjær is the subject of such admiration among the Norwegian public.

According to Gullestad (1992) *likhet* (equality) has been perceived as a natural source of order in Norwegian society. Henningsen (2001: 126) argues that this does not mean that hierarchy does not exist and that formal arenas are open to all, but rather that the elites have to demonstrate a familiarity with the concept of equality to gain legitimacy (Henningsen 2001: 126). Norwegians in general think that all people should have equal rights; for this reason Norwegian employees expect power relations to be more consultative and democratic. Henningsen's study can therefore provide an interesting reference point to the decision-making process in Telenor Norway, where Norwegian leaders have to deal with the concept of equality to gain legitimacy. (See pages 73-76 for further analysis on Pakistani and Norwegian employees' and leaders' approaches to hierarchy and equality).

'Peace and quiet' and to play with open cards

According to Archetti, in Norway, in contrast to Latin American countries, for example, one should not talk about the outcome of decisions as a product of conspiracy, but as a result of decent conduct. He further points out that it is an ideal in Norway that stakeholders play with open cards and that issues should be decided upon and put into action by information that is available to everybody (Archetti 1986:49). Gullestad (1989) has pointed out that 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) form a central concept in Norwegian culture. The expression 'peace and quiet' is used in a variety of ways in Norway. Among other things, it is associated with having control of a person's emotions and actions. A corollary to 'peace and quiet' would be to enter into conflict with other people, or to be in conflict with one's own feelings. 'Peace

and quiet' has to do with a desired state of mind, characterised by the absence of negative emotions such as fear, chaos, uncontrolled actions and feeling. Norwegian culture values wholeness and personal integration, and this is achieved partly through 'peace and quiet'.

'Peace and quiet' is therefore achieved through control of feelings and an absence of open conflicts. The idea of 'peace and quiet', however, requires that one does not bring out differences or make underlying conflicts explicit (Gullestad 1992). This idea of 'peace and quiet' on the one side and the idea of playing with open cards in business are perhaps contradictions in the Norwegian business environment. In some business situations these two values are in direct conflict with each other. The contradiction is especially visible in meetings. On the one hand the Norwegian culture focuses on openness, transparency and playing with open cards. This means that employees and their leaders are encouraged to come forward with their thoughts and ideas in the business environment. On the other hand, if their thoughts and ideas are in conflict with others' ideas in the meetings, it is best not share them, as the value of 'peace and quiet' requires one to avoid bringing out differences or make underlying conflicts explicit.

Part III Practising leadership in Telenor

In part II, I explored how Pakistani and Norwegian cultural values have an impact on the meetings and organisational environment in Telenor Norway and in Telenor Pakistan, compared to shared vision and values, the Code of Conduct and other shared practices in Telenor. In part III, I will further attempt to explore the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan and see how they manifest themselves in the management dynamics of the WoW project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan. I will also look at which strategies Telenor (as a particular case of Norwegian leadership) uses 'to survive' in a global business arena.

Part III, which is divided into two chapters, focuses on management practice in Norway and Pakistan and how this management practice is rooted in Norwegian and Pakistani traditions. In chapter 5, I will look at the Norwegian leadership style with a historical perspective. This portrays a tradition where democratic values are central. Values such as equality and trust are important. These thoughts are compared and contrasted with the Pakistani management style. In chapter 6, I will explore how Norwegian and Pakistani employees view global leaders and what Telenor's survival strategies are in a global business setting. Finally I will look at the impact of the Norwegian local arena on Telenor's global business environment.

Chapter 5: Leadership

Anthropologists throughout history have been interested in looking at how people lead, organise, gain and use power. In various anthropological studies we have seen leaders at work in a range of different settings. In some places leadership is exercised by priests, tribal leaders, elders and other prominent men. Fredrik Barth's classic study of *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans* (1959) shows two types of leaders among Swat Pathans in Pakistan. One group of leaders is known as Pakhtun *khans* (landowners). In Barth's words, "Each chief (khan) establishes, as it were, a central island of authority, in the form of a men's house group, in a politically amorphous sea of villagers. From this centre his authority extends outwards with decreasing intensity" (Barth 1959:91). The other type of leader was referred to as 'Saints' whose authority is premised on their association with Islam. In contrast to khans, whose success requires a reputation for self-assertiveness and ruthless defence of their interests, well-regarded saints will have established a reputation for "moderation, piety, indifference to physical pleasure," as well as "wisdom, knowledge, and control of mystical forces" (Barth 1959:101). Another important example of the study of leadership is Evans-Pritchard's (1940) study of Nuer. Evans-Pritchard shows that the Nuers have a leader that they call Leopard-skin chief. The Leopard-skin chief holds ritual power and has a role as a negotiator and mediator. According to Annette Weiner (1988) chiefs in the Trobriand Island belong to a ranked series of chiefly positions and must work hard to maintain their position. In other anthropological studies leaders might be known as 'big men'. In Melanesia for example 'big man', is an entrepreneurial leader who commands support through prominence in feast giving and exchange. The 'big man' generally bases his influence on his prominent role in exchanges of wealth goods and the accompanying speech-making (Keesing and Strathern 1998).

Before continuing this chapter, I should express that these examples do not, of course, represent the full discursive universe of how leaders are viewed in anthropology. It shows that in anthropology we have already seen leaders at work in a range of different settings, so my study of leadership is not a new phenomenon. I will therefore start this chapter by showing how the anthropology of work has been conducted in America in different historical periods. I will continue by looking at management in Norway in a historical context. Following this, I will look at how the Norwegian management tradition affects the leadership style at the WoW

project in Telenor Norway. I will continue by looking at what effect the Pakistani management tradition has at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

According to Sørhaug (1996:22) concepts such as trust and power are important in modern leadership. In this chapter I will analyse the importance of the relationship between trust and power in the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan and at the WoW project in Telenor Norway.

Norwegian leadership portrays a tradition where equality and a democratic style tend to be preferred. I will in the final section look at approaches to equality and hierarchy in Pakistan and Norway and how this has an impact on the WoW project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

Theorising leadership

As anthropological research has shown, leaders have existed in all cultures throughout history. Although the subject of leadership has generated more than 7,500 academic papers, articles, and books, there is no consensually agreed upon definition of leadership (Bass 1990). Despite this, most definitions of leadership in organisational studies include several core concepts, which are contained in the following definition: 'Leadership is an influence process whereby usually one person influences a group toward achievement of group goals'. Leaders may influence the organisation's objectives; organisation of work activities; motivation of followers; facilitation of cooperative relationships and teamwork; and the enlistment of support from people outside the group or organisation (Yukl 1994). Even though most scholars in organisational behaviour and management may agree with these concepts, most anthropologists would be critical of such a definition of leadership.

Jones for example criticises scholars in organisational behaviour and management for looking at organisational culture as something which is developed by founders and leaders. Jones defines leadership as:

> 'A mediating, translating, representational *and* technical function and capacity, wherein organisational leaders possess legitimacy in both the local cultural order and the global world (of business), and in whom the indigenisation of modernity takes place' (Jones 2005: 264).

The Norwegian anthropologist, Sørhaug's (1996) book about leadership suggests that every organisation has to deal with a paradoxical tension between power and trust. Trust creates conditions for and mobilises action and interaction and power relates to the capabilities of individuals and institutions to make people do things they (likely) would not have done otherwise. Sørhaug (1996:26) argues that the management function is located in the intersection between power and trust. Management over time cannot be based on power alone. Far less obvious is that trust in organisations is based on the fact that someone has power. The development of trust assumes that there is leadership that has the power to sanction disloyalty, but that does not use power in a way that internal and external trust relationships are impossible. Such protection requires someone that has power.

Jones further suggests that:

> An 'anthropology of leadership' would suggest that organisational leadership has to be studied empirically in the conjuncture between local culture schema and larger economic and cultural forces in order to be fully understood. In some respects, the anthropology of leadership is more a method for understanding leadership in different cultural contexts than it is a theory of leadership. No one particular leadership theory, or style, or approach, can necessarily be carried over from one firm to the next (Jones 2005: 265).

In my research Jones' and Sørhaug's understanding of leadership will be central to my analysis.

Leadership in work organisations

Earlier in this chapter I indicated that the study of leadership is not a new phenomenon in anthropology, as we have already seen leaders at work in a range of different settings in anthropological work. Similarly, anthropological studies about leadership in work organisations are not a new phenomenon either. Merietta L. Baba, shows that the earliest anthropology of work in America was conducted in large industrial corporations, in the period between 1930 to 1960. Baba divides the anthropology of work in America into three historical periods: the first period was between 1930 to1960, the second between 1960 and 1990 and the third between 1990 to the present (Baba 1998:17). In the first period a small circle of

anthropologists, such as W. Lloyd Warner and his student, conducted research in large corporations.

> The work Warner and his student conducted in large corporations was dedicated to this global comparative project – to understand the basic structure and functions of diverse human social systems, and thereby to grasp the similarities and differences across societies. They were guided in this effort by functional equilibrium theory (widespread in the social sciences at that time) which viewed human organisations as integrated social systems, with specific structures that interacted to maintain a smoothly operating whole (Baba 1998:17).

The anthropologists of this period not only studied workers, but leaders as well. In the second period, between 1960 to1990, anthropology of work went international. Anthropologists of this period wanted to understand industrialisation processes overseas. In America, the Marxist tradition dominated the study. Anthropologists working in this tradition wanted to expose the management strategies used to control and exploit workers. They also wanted to show how workers countered this with formal and informal strategies to protect their jobs. However, anthropologists in this period had little influence on formal organisational theory as many management scholars dismissed the literature of the Marxist era as countercultural and/or irrelevant (Baba 1998:20).

According to Baba (1998:22-23), in the third period (from 1980 to the present), anthropology is again in the centre of corporate knowledge management. One of the main reasons for anthropology being so popular is that, in order to know themselves better, companies' leaders have found that they must know the workers better. Significant work is being done by anthropologists in different companies, such as Xerox, Hewlett Packard and Motorola. Anthropologists of this period study work activity inside large corporations using ethnography methods. Their work is methodologically sophisticated, theoretically informed, and is being used by corporations to develop new products and change basic processes. Anthropologists doing research in Hewlett Packard for example, found that emergency room physicians prefer medical equipment that delivers information quickly rather than equipment that is more accurate but not as fast. Physicians had that knowledge, but they did not express it verbally – they had to be watched by anthropologists to find out what they knew.

So far I have illustrated the idea that anthropological studies about leadership in work organisations in America is divided into three historical periods. In the next two sections I will first look at the situation of Pakistan concerning leadership studies, and secondly at leadership in Norway in a historical context.

Leadership in Pakistan

> Despite its unique cultural set-up, a large and capable workforce educated and well versed in English, liberal privatisation and investment policies and strategic geographical importance (the gateway to the Central Asian Republics, bordering China and Russia in the North and adjoining India on its eastern borders), Pakistan has been largely ignored in management research (Khilji 2001:102).

I have had difficulty finding anthropological papers concerning leadership in a Pakistani work organisation. It has also been difficult to find research conducted on this topic from other fields as well. As Khilji notes, Pakistan has largely been ignored in management research. I hope therefore that my contribution to this field may be particularly relevant for anthropological research into organisations' culture and leadership in Pakistan.

Leadership in Norway in a historical context

Norway was a colony under Denmark's rule until 1814, and was handed over to Sweden after the Napoleonic wars. This simulated the development of an independence movement and the growth of democratic institutions under Swedish rule. This process was profoundly shaped by a peasant influence (Vike 2002:61). After Norwegian independence in 1905, social and economic issues became more central in public debate. The workers' movements had their final breakthrough in professional as well as in political life. The Labour party maintained growth in force and numbers, and formed its first government in 1928. Although the government was short-lived, the party established itself as a realistic political alternative in the eyes of the general population, and has remained strong ever since. According to Vike:

> The Second World War added to this ideology of the democratic state by uniting people in the image of the nation, expressing itself through representations of working-class heroes whose legitimacy was based on their role in leading and organising Norwegian resistance to National Socialist Germany. In the period

following the Second World War, extreme economic growth and full employment contributed to a strong sense of the population belonging to a welfare community. Although the seeds of the welfare state were sown much earlier, it was fully realised during this period and extended to include not only free services for all in education and health, but also offered welfare provisions that guaranteed decent life conditions for marginal groups (Vike 2002:62).

From the 1960s to the present the relationship between workers and leaders has evolved. The assembly principle never played an important role in Norwegian industries, but other aspects of mass production were present and are now undergoing radical revision (Mjøset 1993). According to Gullestad (2006) the rhetorically pre-eminent models of work organisation in Norway are no longer those of mass production and mass marketing but rather those of fleeting and fluid networks of alliances. Furthermore, there is now an emphasis on flexibility, quality and egalitarian power structures. Sejersted (1997) states that the Norwegian management tradition regards egalitarianism as more important than is the case in other Nordic countries. Norway, compared to other Nordic countries, has a historically distinct characteristic of legitimising leadership, with the emphasis on 'democratic legitimacy'. This includes democratic or quasi-democratic procedures for the election of leaders, but also a more general demand for openness and transparency, whereby one should state reasons for decisions and perhaps even promote employees' closeness to decisions.

George Kenning, an American consultant, came to develop management training courses. In the course of a few months, he established close links with a number of influential Norwegian managers. Over the years, this network expanded, and the top management in some of Norway's major corporations came to embrace Kenning's management ideas. Kenning's approach was centred on 31 theses or 'praxes', identifying important roles and responsibilities in management. One of Kenning's most important messages was that management is a profession and involves a form of knowledge that is valid across organisations. Kenning has been accused by Utnes and Kalleberg of simply selling the management principles he saw at work in his former company, and of advocating an authoritarian management style (Sørhaug 1996:87-92).

A different line of management thinking that emerged in Norway around 1960 was 'the Thorsrud line' (*Thorsrudlinjen*). Professor Thorsrud of the University of Trondheim established a tradition of explicitly normative and development-oriented research. The

research was aimed at work processes, and was based on socio-technical theory. Thorsrud defines management's responsibility as being to regulate the boundary conditions (*grensebetingelser*) - not to exercise internal control. He wanted to grant more authority and influence to workers. By doing this Thorsrud believed the productivity, flexibility, and learning ability of the work organisation would increase. Furthermore, the psychosocial work environment will also improve. According to this view, there is a close coupling between management, organisation, and democracy at work (Sørhaug 1996:93-97).

One can say that Kenning's and Thorsrud's perspectives on management were in many ways opposed. Where Thorsrud wanted management to be considered in relation to the form of organisation and production in each enterprise, Kenning saw management as involving a universal kind of expertise. While Kenning placed internal control at the core, Thorsrud considered external relations to be a manager's most important field of activity. And where Kenning continued a more authoritative, bureaucratic line, Thorsrud advocated a democratic, participative approach. Thorsrud's research had a strong effect on Norwegian legislation, including the Working Environment Act (*arbeidsmiljøloven*). Kenning, for his part, was very popular among some Norwegian business leaders (Sørhaug 1996:100).

In the 1970s, equality and mutual respect were stressed in management relations. This focus on equality has remained in Norwegian workplaces ever since. Further, in the 1970s, some managers influenced by Thorsrud started to focus on employees' individual competence and motivation; they increasingly opted for more involvement. Employee appraisals, mass training, and co-determination came to be important areas of intervention (Røvik 1998).

At the end of the 1970s, technological development was moving at a faster rate, and business was also becoming more global. Therefore a need for readjustment became increasingly apparent in the Norwegian business environment. Some companies reacted to signals from the market and changed their strategy, organisation and leadership style and therefore survived. However, many companies in the 1980s went under, partly because they failed to readjust to the global environment and technology quickly enough (Qvale 1995). According to Reve (1994), another reason for this could be that the Norwegian companies did not focus enough on growth and profit; this may have had a negative effect on the ambitions and international competitiveness of Norwegian companies.

In the 1980s these developments made the Norwegian companies realise that participation and democracy in a company could neither counteract nor occur independently of international market trends. This realisation led to a renaissance for Kenning's perspective, since Norwegian managers increasingly saw a need for 'strong leadership' as an alternative to the participatory model. To find 'strong leadership' they did not only look to Kenning's perspective but they also looked towards other successful foreign corporations and consultancies. Within a few years, a multitude of new management concepts were introduced in Norway. In fact, multiplicity and an 'explosive' pace of change are considered to be key characteristics of Norwegian management in the 1980s (Røvik 1998).

The concept of corporate culture was introduced in Norwegian management in this time. The term corporate culture refers to the idea that one might build a stronger organisation by developing a closely integrated world of company-specific norms, ideas and values. Inspired by this, many Norwegian companies such as Telenor developed explicit values and norms charters (Røvik 1998). (I have at pages 28-30 explored how the term corporate culture is central in Telenor).

In the 1980s, management was also increasingly being treated as a separate and important field. Norwegian companies established units and positions that were specifically devoted to management issues. They also invested in extensive management training programmes (Røvik 1998, Byrkjeflot 1997). Telenor has also developed its own training management programmes (see page 73 for further details).

The Norwegian School of Economics in Bergen strengthened its position in the 1980s. The social climate and call for strong leadership worked in the School's favour. In the 1980s it developed a leadership training programme called 'Solstrandprogrammet'. Solstrandprogrammet was attended by most top-level managers in Norway at the time and served as a distinguishing mark and locus for networking among influential business leaders. The emphasis in the programme was, and continues to be, on the development of individual management styles (Strand 1996). Jon Fredrik Baksaas, the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Telenor, has studied at the Norwegian School of Economics. Many of the management recipes from the 1980s are used in Norwegian business life today.

In the 1990s a new concept called business process reengineering (BPR) was introduced (Hammer 1990). The concept presented a fundamental change of perspective as a process

used to achieve dramatic improvements within a limited time frame (Hammer and Champy 1993). BPR was seen as a means to cut costs and improve quality and effectiveness, without adversely affecting customer relations. This concept is applied in many major corporations today, such as Statoil and Telenor. In Telenor, downsizing is presented as a necessary aim that will improve Telenor's position and efficiency.

In the 1990s, many Norwegian companies such as Telenor also wanted to expand their business abroad. By the mid 90s, international expansion became a proclaimed strategy in Telenor and Telenor brought its business into international markets. Telenor became involved in mobile operations in Russia in 1994, Bangladesh, Greece, Ireland, Germany and Austria in 1997, Ukraine in 1998, Malaysia in 1999, Denmark and Thailand in 2000, Hungary in 2002, Montenegro in 2004, Pakistan in 2005, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Serbia in 2006 and India in 2009. Telenor's operations in Greece, Ireland and Germany were sold in 1999/2000 and the profits were re-invested in the emerging markets (Telenor 2010).

Today there is a strong consensus that the social democratic tradition has left a distinct imprint on the Norwegian leadership style (Sejersted 1997, Byrkjeflot 1997, Røvik 1998). The Norwegian model, like the other Scandinavian systems, has the following macro-level characteristics:

− Influential trade unions, where the majority of workers in the private and public sector are members and there are few ideological distinctions.
− A high degree of employer organisation.
− Three-party cooperation between employers, employees and government.
− Relatively centralised organisational structures and a national hierarchical system for collective negotiations.
− An extensive set of appointments among the three parties (Bruun 1994, Ingebrigtsen 1994).

In this section I have presented leadership in Norway in a historical context. In what follows I will take a closer look at the leadership styles at the WoW project and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

Leadership style at the Way of Work project

At the WoW project, leadership was not the prerogative of a single boss; it was distributed across managers and team members. Two people had primary responsibility for the project, and they were the main leaders, both of them being ethnically Norwegian. Those two individuals delegated leadership tasks to managers in different teams, each team working on different tasks within the WoW project. One of the managers at the WoW project was from Pakistan while most of the other managers were from Norway. In this section I will look at the leadership style at the WoW project in general; this means that I am including all of the managers at the WoW project when referring to management at the WoW project. I also assume all of the managers to be ethnically Norwegian, since the Norwegian management style is the dominant style at the WoW project. The following quotation is representative of what employees in the WoW project think about the leadership style in the project:

> The leadership style in the project is definitely hierarchical. Much more hierarchical than what we might think of as acceptable in Norway today. Some of the leaders are nice people, but they are not leading the project in a good way. In another situation they might be better leaders but in the WoW project they are doing a poor job as leaders.

The employees at WoW project indicate that the managers at the project have a hierarchical style of leading the company. However, looking at academic research on the Norwegian leadership style, most of the authors argue that the Norwegian leadership style is less hierarchical than other places. According to Sejersted (1997) for example, comparative studies of workplace organisation indicate that the Norwegian management tradition regards egalitarianism as more important than in other Nordic countries. According to Byrkjeflot (2003:33) the historical development of social democracy had a profound influence on organisational practices in Norway. In relation to management traditions Scandinavian countries have an emphasis on 'compromise and negotiation and with management philosophy of a democratic participative kind'.

According to Sørhaug, on the other hand, leadership always works to create a hierarchy and the ethical rationale for management is deeply paradoxical: the hierarchy is used to defend and develop the egalitarian values that are, on the one hand, related to opportunities for personal autonomy and on the other hand, dialogues or communication (Sørhaug 1996:152). I

suggest, in common with Sørhaug, that hierarchy is just as real in Norway as in other places, though it is more hidden than in other countries.

George Kenning, an American consultant working in Norway, points out that many Norwegian leaders try to avoid management responsibilities. Important defence strategies for Norwegian managers are to 'escape' into the professional duties or tasks. They are trying to be the best professionally and to delay and circumvent tough decisions (Sørhaug 1996:88). I believe Kenning's description of Norwegian managers can be appropriate for the leaders at the WoW project. My observations indicate that the leaders at WoW wanted to give the employees at the project an impression that they have great expertise and professional knowledge in the field in which they work.

According to Goffman (1992) when an individual appears in the presence of others, there will usually be some reason for him to mobilise his activity so that it will convey an impression to others which it is in his interests to convey. Goffman looks at how people seek to communicate an impression of themselves, and introduces the concept of 'impression management'. Impression management is the goal-directed activity of controlling or regulating information in order to influence the impressions formed by an audience. Through impression management, people try to shape an audience's impressions of that person. I find that Goffman's concept of 'impression management' can be applied to leaders at the WoW project. I suggest that the WoW leaders believed it to be important to appear that they were seen to possess professional knowledge not many employees have. I will further suggest that this leads to power. Bourdieu (2000) attaches power to symbols, and states that various actors possess different types of 'symbolic capital'. Symbolic capital can be any characteristic that makes it possible for other actors to recognise and acknowledge the symbols that give value. Creating an impression can be such a symbol.

Jones (2005) looks at cultural qualities of the American South as they manifest themselves in the leadership dynamics of three Southern firms in America. The study suggests that leadership capital in the American South is drawn more from the elements of the region's culture – religion, social capital, gender and class identity – than it is from individual personality or firm history. Jones (2005:271) shows that the leaders in the American South are known as tough men who negotiate hard and are hard to work for. Their toughness and intelligence are seen as serving the interests of the company, while they distinguish themselves as separate from and superior to the rest of the employees in the firm.

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> The leaders in the American South further possess 'exotic' educational capital, expertise and southern leaders develop professional and personal linkages with other elites in different parts of the country and the world, representing a type of cosmopolitanism that is inaccessible to their employees. Elite-elite linkages beyond the purview of employees provide an important foundation for the legitimisation of their power as organisational leaders (Jones 2005:261).

The leaders in the American South express their symbolic capital by possessing toughness, intelligence, technical and exotic capital. This gives them power and makes them seem superior to the rest of the employees. Similarly, my research indicates that the leaders at the WoW project wanted to be acknowledged by their intelligence and their knowledge.

The leaders also maintained a certain distance with the employees by constantly keeping themselves busy, always having a lot of work to do and things to deal with. This ensured impression management through mystification by regulating contact, thereby maintaining a social distance to the employees. As mentioned earlier, Kenning (in Sørhaug 1996:88) points out that Norwegian leaders delay and circumvent tough decisions. This can also be said to be the case at WoW project.

To give an example, an employee at the WoW project told me during an interview that his contract was expiring at the end of February. The manager had approached him on the last day in February in the open landscape, to ask in front of everyone if he wanted to continue working at WoW. I suggest that this example shows how Norwegian leaders sometimes delay and circumvent tough decisions. According to that employee this decision should not have been delayed to the last day on which his contract had expired. The leader should have approached him at a minimum some weeks before his contract expired. The second notable aspect of this case is the way the employee was approached by his leaders. The leader discussed the employee's contract in front of everyone in the zone. He should, according to the employee, have done this in private; in a quiet room or a meeting room where only he and the employee was present.

Even though most of the employees did not like the leadership style at the project, all of them pointed out in the interviews that the leaders were good people. They were intelligent and had knowledge of working in the project. Furthermore, they pointed out that the Norwegian leaders probably also possessed good leadership knowledge, but somehow, perhaps because

of stress and the hectic work situation in the WoW project, they had become more hierarchical and more commanding than normal. My research suggests the reason employees mentioned the good qualities of the leaders whilst still criticising them was because conflict and criticising is seen as a threat to basic Norwegian values, such as 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) (Gullestad 1992). The expression 'peace and quiet' is used in a variety of ways. Among other things, it refers to a desired state of mind, characterised by the absence of negative and the presence of positive emotions. Since 'peace and quiet' and avoidance of conflict are central values for Norwegian employees, they will avoid their leaders rather than confront them. If they are forced to confront them – to meet with them in an open conflict – it would be something that will be experienced as anxiety-filled and painful (Gullestad 1992:127).

Until to this point have I been looking at the leadership style at the WoW project. In the next section I will focus on the leadership style at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

Leadership style at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan

The weather was cloudy outside, and inside the Telenor Pakistan building everybody wanted to go outside to enjoy the weather. Unlike most Norwegians, Pakistanis love it when the weather is cloudy and when it is raining. This might not be as strange as it seems because Pakistan experiences sunshine most of the days and extremely hot summers. Because of the 'beautiful' weather Sana had invited me to have lunch outside the office with her and some of her friends.

When the clock struck 12.00 we met outside the Telenor building and walked 100 metres to a restaurant close to Telenor. Sitting there I observed that we were not the only ones who had decided to take lunch outside. In our restaurant most of the people sitting there were from Telenor, and the cafe close to our restaurant was also full of Telenor employees. We ordered shisha and some food. While enjoying the weather and the meal we began talking about the leaders in Telenor. Ali, who was sitting with us, said the following about the leadership style in the Human Capital division:

> I love my boss, and I love that we can dress casually at work. Have you seen our HR director? He comes to work wearing a t-shirt and jeans. This makes it so much easier for us (the newly graduated men); we don't have to put on formal clothes before going

to work. My friends (working in other companies in Pakistan) are so jealous of me for that.

Later on during my interviews with one of the employees at the Human Capital Division, the following comment about the leadership style was made:

> I would say that there is more or less a flat structure in Telenor. My boss is sitting in the open space with me and he doesn't have a secretary. I can just directly go and approach my leader if I want to talk to him or make an appointment with him.

> I would also say that my division is really democratic, my boss asks us for input about different topics. But not all leaders here are the same, some are definitely more authoritarian.

The above quotations are representative of how most people would describe the leadership style at the Human Capital Division. The leaders at the Human Capital Division dress less formally than other leaders in Pakistan at the same position. I was told that a Pakistani leader in a similar job in another company would always wear a suit. Jane Shaw (1998) describes the difficulties experienced in introducing 'Western' management theory in a Pakistani government training centre. The material for her article was gathered when she was working in a health training centre in Peshawar[2]. In Pakistan she observed that the prevailing management style was highly autocratic and that displays of status and power were admired and respected.

> Management behaviour in Peshawar seemed to reflect the social standing of the other party: punctilious courtesy to guests or visitors, cordiality and affection to collateral colleagues, humility to superiors and disdain for juniors and lower-grade staff (Shaw 1998:403).

In Norway, by contrast, there is an expectation that leaders treat everyone, staff and public alike, with the same courtesy. The organisational structure in Pakistan is known to be highly bureaucratic. For example, in public sector organisations, the majority of decisions are made

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[2] The data was gathered through three years of observation, by conducting questionnaires and structured interviews on beliefs, assumptions and management views with 12 national colleagues working in health management and training, and by conducting three focus group discussions during training courses.

by government-appointed committees and managers in those organisation are often forced to accept them (Klein 1992).

Before the 1990s, public sector organisations were marked by a passive management culture, as the scope of creative management was limited by rigid rules and regulations (Qureshi 1995). However since the 1990s, Pakistan has been implementing a comprehensive programme to open up to the private sector activities previously monopolised by the public sector. This effort aims to reverse the trend of nationalisation, improve economic growth and create a suitable business environment in Pakistan. As part of this process the private sector was encouraged to develop a new future oriented management system. The Government of Pakistan also wanted to create a new work culture which was characterised by innovation, quality and discipline (Khilji 2003). According to Bokhari (1996) this program was a success, as investors' interest was sparked and many new enterprises were created. The programme was also a success as multinational companies started reinvesting in the Pakistani market through expansion of services or diversification of products. The Government took on initiatives to encourage the use of modern management practices. This shift, according to Bokhari, created a healthy, profitable and competitive business environment, making the private sector more progressive than the public sector.

According to Khilji (2003) Pakistani culture is an amalgam of Islamic religion, Indian origins, British inheritance and American influences. The American influence is especially visible in Pakistani work organisations. In Pakistan affiliates of American business schools are seen in major cities. Even management faculties of government universities in Pakistan follow American syllabuses. Khilji observed that Pakistani managers want to follow the American leadership style, because it is considered to be more progressive and results-oriented, compared to, for example, the Norwegian management style. Today Pakistani organisations are undergoing a dramatic change. This change has added a fresh perspective to management systems in Pakistan. In general this style has given employees the autonomy to take decisions in a work environment. Top management and HR departments are becoming more accessible. Many of the companies are adopting an open door policy (Khilji 1999). Private companies are also trying to create a culture whereby the power distance is being reduced to allow for employees' autonomy, involvement and participation.

I suggest that Telenor Pakistan can serve as an example of how the management culture in changing is Pakistan. A typical 'old fashioned' Pakistani leader would dress formally and

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keep a clear distance with his employees. However, this is not the case with the leaders at the Human Capital Division. They often dress casually and do not want to appear distanced from their employees. The leaders at the Human Capital Division want to be approachable to their employees and adopt an open door policy to appear less hierarchical. This can be one way of expressing symbolic capital. But in contrast to the leaders at the WoW project, who express their symbolic capital by keeping a certain distance to the employees, the leaders at the Human Capital Division expressed their symbolic capital by being approachable to their employees as well as being seen as intelligent and less hierarchical.

When I conducted my research in Telenor Pakistan I had the opportunity to interview some of the leaders in the Human Capital Division. One of the leaders had the following thought about leadership:

> I believe in setting a shared vision. For me it is important that people can relate to the same vision. And then you need to have the culture and structure to back it up. For me as a leader it is important to empower people and give them responsibility and an opportunity to grow in their careers.

> As a leader I want to have an open dialogue with my employees. By doing that I am open to taking in feedback from them and include them in different projects.

> I trust my employees but I always want to check their work so I can monitor them in the right direction. I often check the work in status meetings. It would be foolish not to have status meetings and not check the work. If I don't do that then I can't have anything to say about the end result.

I trust my employees but I always want to check their work. This quotation shows that the manager trusts his employees but still he uses his power to check on their work. The manager can be said to view leadership as a function located in the intersection between power and trust. I will in the following section explore the relationship between trust and power in the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan and at the WoW project in Telenor Norway.

Trust and power

Sørhaug argues that when analysing leadership, concepts such as trust and power become important. He explores modern leadership as a blend of these two concepts (Sørhaug

1996:22). Sørhaug suggests that the management function is located in the intersection of the contradictory dependency of power and trust. According to him, a leader will not obtain control of an organisation without having to demonstrate the will to violence. This is linked primarily with the power that is the (indirect) prerequisite for trust. Trust requires guaranteed limits, and the warranty is dependent upon someone who can stop violence, or use violence (ibid:50).

Harris (2003) concludes in his study that the significance of trust is over-estimated in some of the literature. Most organisational relationships involve power as well as or more than trust. In other words most organisational relationships involve hierarchy rather than collaboration. Weber (2000) points out that in every organisation lies the idea of the bureaucracy and its unequal power structures. In his view, every type of administration needs a form of authority, where power is attached to certain positions. Bachman looks at power as something which is 'double faced', in the sense that there are some cases where it is incompatible with trust, but others where it can be taken as supportive of the production of trust: 'Power in the form of hierarchy and structural domination can in fact enable social actors to trust each other at the impersonal level' (Bachman 1998:313).

According to Shaw (1998) the Pakistani management style is highly autocratic. A leader that displays status and power is admired and respected. The leaders at the Human Capital Division however look at themselves as less hierarchical; they imply that they trust their employees, and that they often delegate responsibility early to skilled employees.

The leaders in Telenor Pakistan go through a 'Core programme' designed to help managers in Telenor Pakistan improve their leadership style. The Core programme is carried out in all operations. Part of the training is to improve the participants' perspective of how Telenor does business across the world. This programme also teaches the leaders how to use their own values and abilities to motivate and build trust among employees in Telenor. This method of leading an organisation is likely to make employees commit to the same vision and values and codes of conduct. By using the same vision and values and codes of conduct one formulates a common understanding of how Telenor as an organisation should be. The Telenor Core programme teaches the Pakistani leaders these values and the techniques and procedures to apply these values in Telenor Pakistan. The leadership programme designed and introduced by the Telenor Group for Pakistani leaders seems to encourage a veiled use of power, and reduced use of visible control of the employees.

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As a comparison Harris's study can be considered here. Harris conducted ethnographic studies in small and large firms in India. The study shows that some Indian firms have moved from 'control-compliance' to 'trust-based organisations'. This shift to 'trust-based organisation' is a 'reliance upon abstract principles and professional codes, and that the language of 'trust' frequently conceals, or seeks to conceal, relationships of power' (Harris 2003:18). Similarly, my research indicates that, at the WoW project and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan, the language of trust conceals power. Even though both places focus on collaboration in the organisation, the organisational relationships at both places involve hierarchy rather than collaboration.

So far have I looked at the relationship between trust and power in the Human Capital Division (in Telenor Pakistan) and at the WoW project. But how do Pakistani and Norwegian leaders in Telenor relate to hierarchy and equality? To answer this question I will in the next section look at the Pakistani and Norwegian societies' approaches to equality and hierarchy and examine how this affects Telenor Norway and Pakistan.

Approaches to equality and hierarchy in Pakistan and Norway

Norwegian leadership is known as a tradition with a focus on equality, participation and negotiation. Furthermore, a democratic, humble style is to be preferred, since the social democratic tradition has left a distinct imprint on Norwegian leadership practices (Sejersted, 1997). Even though Norwegians are proud of having a democratic and fairly just system, they have created a society where the form of legitimacy associated with the village or local community (*bygd*) has remained strong (Sørhaug 1991). One of the reasons for this is that Norway was urbanised relatively late. Traditionally in Norwegian eyes, the city in Northern Europe has been seen as associated with exploitation and sin, in contrast to the good life in the countryside and in small towns. Therefore many city-dwellers retain remnants of a peasant way of life in their leisure time. They do this by gardening and participating in outdoor activities while keeping a home in the city. The ideal home is thus often modelled on the rural household (Gullestad, 1992). Today, the home is seen as an arena for cultivating and idealising 'roots' and identity, as well as for maintaining stability and control over one's life (Gullestad, 2006).

In the local community (*bygd*), relations are characterised by local knowledge, the ideal of lifelong friendship, close-knit networks and a basic, common sense of equality (Sørhaug, 1991). As mentioned earlier in the thesis (pages 7 and 34), in Norway equality is more or less synonymous with *likhet*. The concept *likhet*, means not only equality, but also likeness, similarity, identity, or sameness (Gullestad 1992). It implies that in many social situations it can be problematic to deal with differences. Norwegians must consider themselves as more or less the same in order to feel that they are of equal value. Somewhat paradoxically, it is mainly when social actors manage to establish such a situation that they gain confirmation of their own individual worth. In order to have their identities confirmed, social actors need relevant others to support them. For Norwegians the relevant supporters are people who are regarded as similar to themselves. This often leads to an interaction style where sameness is emphasised while differences are played down (Gullestad 2006).

In their private lives, Norwegians like to associate with friends, family and neighbours who 'match them' (*passer sammen med*). Those people who 'match them' are of equal social standing and embrace similar norms and values: they have 'to share the same ideas' (*ha sammenfallende synspunkter*) (Gullestad 2006). In working life, Norwegians are ready to accept a certain hierarchy on the basis of professional competence (Barnes 1978). Still, the ideal form of interaction for Norwegians is one where differences of rank are downplayed. Efforts at self-assertion are best made within an idiom of equality. This means that a good performance has to be presented indirectly, modestly, and in the context of contributing others. Among Norwegians a more outright or aggressive forms of self-assertion is therefore evaluated negatively (Gullestad 1992).

Hierarchies in Norway are as real as elsewhere, but they often find minimalist forms of expression in an organisation. Often it requires a great deal of local knowledge to identify the leaders in Norway (Sørhaug 1996). In the WoW project the hierarchy is more explicit than in a 'normal' organisation. The leaders maintained a certain distance to the employees, by having many tasks to deal with. Further they gave their employees more direct orders. Norwegians are not used to receiving direct orders, as they mostly express themselves with phrases such as 'can you please', 'when you have time', 'do you think', 'should we'. Although these phrases are not always meant literally, they do imply agreement in a work situation. In general it creates the impression that the recipient has a choice, and that he is in a horizontal

relationship (Sørhaug 1996). When these phrases are lacking, the employees feel that they do not have a choice and that their boss has given them orders.

In general, Pakistanis do not think or express equality in the same way as Norwegians. Punjabi society is based on the thought that people are different from each other. The central point in Dumont's (1970) writings is that generally in South Asia the condition *humana* is hierarchical. Alvi illustrates that the people in Punjab understand themselves through the notion of caste, and the network of social relationships in terms of brotherhood (*biradari*). Further, the notion of honour (*izzat*) is the public part of the self of every Punjabi. To have a daughter and sister with good reputation, belonging to a high caste, own land, have education and money are all sources of honour for a man. A person with no honour (*izzat*) is no person because he has 'lost his face' (*mu na rea*). He can no longer live in harmony with others because he or she can no longer be able to face other people. Another way in which Punjabis understand themselves, is that the Punjabi self is incomplete without the notion of sorrow (*dukh*):

> It is the hidden, private and fragile aspect of the self in which a person reconciles him- or herself from the 'face' which has always to be presented according to the expectations of the society. Not only Punjabi poetry, but films and much of the literature involve this concept, which is of central importance as an underlying aspect in constituting the notion of self in South Asia (Alvi 2001:50).

The source of equality in Punjab is based on the thought that people are different from each other. This way of looking at equality was confirmed by many Telenor employees. They pointed out that equality in Pakistan only existed between people belonging to the same caste (and sometimes also the same class). People in the same caste are treated alike, and are thus equal. In other words, people belonging to the same caste are equal; people from other castes are superior, inferior or not the same (Alvi 2001:51). These thoughts about equality affect all areas of Pakistani society. In a work situation a person will feel different from colleagues who belong to another caste, even though they have the same position (Alvi 2001:52).

The important point, one employee argued, is that people who are alike prefer each other; this is not only the case in terms of caste but something which can be said at the provincial level. Punjabis prefer Punjabis. Jaffrelot (2002:31) confirms this, by showing that in the second Sharif Government (1997-1999) not only was the President, but also the Prime Minister and

85 percent of his Ministers from Punjab. With the Telenor Pakistan head office being located in Islamabad, the majority of employees are Punjabi. A reason behind this, as one employee in Telenor Pakistan pointed out, is simply because Punjabis prefers Punjabis. (However I would suggest that another reason for this could also be that most people living in Punjab are Punjabis, and therefore the majority of people working in Telenor in Punjab are Punjabi).

Shaw (1998), in observing the leadership style in Pakistan, described it as hierarchical. The display of status and power was admired and respected in society. Jaffrelot (2002:19) describes Pakistani leaders as highly hierarchical and unwilling to share power. He also points out that Pakistan lacks a democratic culture. However, in Telenor Pakistan the employees and leaders were proud of having a less hierarchical structure than is normally the case in Pakistan. Despite this, hierarchy is just as real there as it is in other places. While sitting in the open landscape I once observed that a leader started to yell at an employee in front of everyone. No one said a word. Later on, some people did talk about this in interviews; they felt embarrassed by what the leader had done, and it meant that one bad leader put many good leaders in a poor light.

Even though Telenor Pakistan is known to be a 'trust-based organisation' this language of trust can be seen to conceal power. This power relationship might not be easy for Pakistani employees to see, however, when the power is not normally displayed as openly as employees are used to from other Pakistani managers.

Chapter 6: Global Leaders in Telenor

In the previous chapter I have shown how the unique cultural qualities of Norway and Pakistan manifest themselves in the management dynamics of the Way of Work (WoW) project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan. In this chapter I will look at some global leaders in Telenor and see which strategies Telenor uses 'to survive' in a global business arena. I will suggest that for a global company such as Telenor the local Norwegian arena is an important resource. Finally, I will look at the social hierarchy in Telenor and try to answer the following question: Why does Telenor Pakistan not have a Pakistani Chief Executive Officer (CEO)?

The global and the local

Many anthropologists have emphasised the importance of locating ethnography within a globalised world, and have stressed that this involves documenting the impact of large-scale processes on subjectivities and communities, but doing so in a way that demonstrates the specific and evolving nature of local responses (Moore 1999). Moore argues that there is generally an acknowledged view in anthropology that the context in which the discipline is operating has changed and is continuing to change because of globalisation. Globalisation has led to the increasing articulation of industrialisation, political and economic shifts from centralisation to decentralisation; increasing disparities of wealth, health and well-being; increasing communities of identity and imagination across space and time; the increase of information through mass media; and an increase in conflict, violence and warfare, associated with a nexus of poverty, discrimination and cultural politics (Ibid: 10-11). One way of understanding globalisation is presented by Ulrich Bech. He defines globalisation (using Giddens) as:

> So does globalisation conjure away distance. It means that people are thrown into transnational lifestyles that they often neither want nor understand – or following Anthony Giddens's definition, it means acting and living (together) over distances, across the apparently separate worlds of national states, religions, regions and continents (Beck 2000:20).

Comaroff's work (1996) is also concerned with globalisation. He points out that today the world is characterised by revolution and globalisation. These are known by the following features:

1. accelerated process of globalisation accompanied by a dramatic growth of transnational institutions, movements and diasporas;
2. the weakening of the nation-state;
3. the rise of a new politics of identity;
4. a crisis of representation in the human sciences (Comaroff 1996:167).

According to Moore these features of globalisation are well recognised. But they have not produced cultural homogenisation. Comaroff also argues that globalisation and localism are complementary sides of a historical movement. A specific feature of this is, he argues, that there is no such thing as a universal symbol or image. Denotation may be global. But connotation is always local. Meaning is always filtered through a culturally endowed eye or ear. Symbols and images are understood differently everywhere. It is the very experience of globalism that underscores an awareness of localism (Comaroff 1996:174).

Tsing, similarly to Comaroff, is interested in the relationship between the local and the global. Tsing points out that most anthropologists agree that the new global era is characterised by 'local' cultural diversity, rather than a global feature which is culturally homogenous (Tsing 2002:464). Appadurai argues that the local will not diminish in a global world; rather it will be an aspect of social life in relation to the global. Appadurai views locality primarily as relational and contextual rather than as scalar or spatial. He uses the term neighbourhood to refer to existing social forms in which locality is realised (Appadurai 1996:178-179). The production of neighbourhoods is always historically grounded and thus contextual. Neighbourhoods are opposed to something else and derive from other already existing neighbourhoods. This 'something else' is often conceptualised ecologically. Neighbourhoods which are produced in this context are seen as ecological, social and cosmological terrains. Appadurai argues that neighbourhoods are always to some extent ethnoscapes insofar as they involve the ethnic projects of 'others' as well as a consciousness of such projects (Appadurai 1996:182-183).

In other words, neighbourhoods can be said in some situations to be ethnoscapes, as long as they are either aware of their identity or use it as a criterion for inclusion in the neighbourhood; this again leads to differentiation from the other.

According to Gullestad (1992), belonging to a neighbourhood is very important to the Norwegian identity. The Norwegian idea of the good life will often include a local connection. In Norway the notion of local community was transformed into a notion of 'close environment' or 'close surroundings' (*nærmiljø*) towards the end of the 1970s. This concept:

> *Nærmiljø* links rural communities and urban neighbourhoods in the wish to regenerate the supposed care, sharing and togetherness (*felleskap*) of traditional peasant society. *Lokalsamfunn* and *nærmiljø* both suggest communities located in specific places; physical space, it is thought, connects human beings to one another (Gullestad 1992:45).

At the end of the 1980s the neighbourhood where Norwegians actually live started to become less important. The concept 'everyday life' (*hverdagslivet*) partly replaced the two notions for local community (*lokalsammfunn and nærmiljø*) in social sciences and in political debates in Norway (Gullestad 1992:35-61). The concept of 'everyday life' could indicate that a new and enlarged concept of local space which includes the home, place of work and other institutions has developed, all of which together comprise 'the daily round'. Whenever I refer to the 'local' and local community in this chapter, I am referring to the 'everyday life' (*hverdagslivet*) of my informants.

Defining global leaders

During my fieldwork I often heard employees in Norway mentioning the term global leader. They thought that Telenor should have more global leaders. This was also something I heard that the Telenor Group was working on. But whenever I asked someone to explain what they meant by the term global leader, no one could give me an exact answer. Professor DiStefano's and Assistant Professor Maznevski's literature (both teaching Organisational Behaviour and International Management) describes a global leader as someone who must develop a strong portfolio of technical, interpersonal, and conceptual skills appropriate for managing the most complex of all possible situations. Further they point out that certain skills are required for a global leader. Firstly, global leaders must have extensive knowledge of business in general.

They need knowledge of other parts of the world and what it is like to manage and do business in other countries. Secondly, global leaders need skills in three areas: learning and adapting, managing relationships, and managing ambiguity (Maznevski and DiStefano 2000). This description can be appropriately applied to how workers and leaders conceptualise the term global leader in the Telenor Group. Looking at the current CEO of the Telenor Group, former and current CEOs of Telenor Pakistan, one can observe that all of them have extensive knowledge of business, they manage different relationships both locally and globally on a daily basis, and they learn and adapt to the new global environment quickly. Telenor Pakistan has adapted to the South Asian environment, for example, by providing enterprise opportunities for many poor people through *apna*PCO ('my PCO' - PCO stands for public call office). This has helped people in rural areas to open up small tuck shops, where people from their village and nearby areas can make phone calls.

However, for anthropologists, it is difficult to talk about leadership as something in itself. This is not because individual leadership qualities are irrelevant, but because leadership is often seen as an ascribed status through institutions that provide the ability to exercise leadership (Sørhaug 1996). Many anthropologists argue that organisational culture is produced at the intersection of local cultural schema as the company interacts with larger global forces within its industry. An 'anthropology of leadership' would therefore suggest that a global leader is a leader who possesses legitimacy in both the local cultural order and the global world of business. Leadership in anthropology is also seen as a mediating, translating, representational and technical function and capacity (Jones 2005). (See the previous chapter on leadership for more discussion on how leadership is defined anthropologically). I will in this chapter suggest, like Jones, that to be a good global leader one needs to possess legitimacy in both the local cultural order and the global world.

Social hierarchy in the Telenor Group

Jon Fredrik Baksaas is the current CEO and President of the Telenor Group. Baksaas is in charge of the day-to-day management of the Group. Under the CEO is the Group Executive Management which consists of heads of key business areas and functions at Telenor. The Group Executive Management consists entirely of men from a Norwegian background, except for one woman (who is also of a Norwegian background).

In Norway, egalitarian values and welfare state policies have had a positive effect on the welfare of Norwegian women. A law of gender equality in Norway from 1978 promotes equal status between the sexes. Any form of discriminatory treatment is illegal in the workplace. The equality policies have by no means led to equality among men and women, though they have increased female employment levels dramatically. Today there are almost as many women as men in paid work.

Despite this, there are still clear distinctions between female and male occupations, and women are much more likely to work part-time than men (Førde and Hernes 1988). Although more women are becoming managers, only 1 out of 5 executive managers are women. Women manifest themselves most frequently among the middle managers, particularly in teaching, health and social services. In Telenor there are some women holding positions as middle managers, but there is only one woman in the Group Executive Management.

According to Jones, at the centre of social hierarchy in Western society there is a male-centric worldview that manifests itself as a colour-caste hierarchy. In this hierarchy white males represent a founding source of authority and power, with white women, working class white men, and non-white people representing the hierarchy in descending order (Jones 2005:266). In this case Jones refers to Southern American culture as being 'culturally conservative' in terms of ethnic and gender relations. There should not be any doubt that Jones's perspective is one of many on social hierarchy in Western society. Other anthropologists have different views on the subject. Gullestad (2006) for example argues that Norway is characterised by an egalitarian individualism based on the notion of equality (*likhet*).

Even though equality among genders is stressed in Norway, women struggle against employment institutions based on the male provider. According to Gullestad:

> Many aspects of the organisation of society act as barriers to women's full emancipation. Women today may follow a wide range of possibilities. Yet in a social world where maleness is usually the implicit norm, many apparent openings remain closed (Gullestad 2006:37).

During formal and informal conversation with employees in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan I noticed that many women and non-Norwegian employees expressed ambitions to climb the organisational hierarchy. However, as many employees expressed, that can prove to

be an almost impossible task. I have not pursued the dimension of gender relations in Telenor in my current research. As important as this line of research is, I have not focused on this during my fieldwork; it will therefore be difficult for me to include this topic in my thesis.

The big chief in Telenor

Today, Baksaas is the 'big chief' in Telenor. He has been the President and CEO of Telenor since June 2002. Baksaas was born in Skien in Southern Norway. He now resides in Bærum just outside Oslo. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) and has additional training from the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) in Lausanne, Switzerland. Prior to becoming the President and CEO, Baksaas served as Telenor's Deputy CEO, CFO and Executive Vice President with overall responsibility for Telenor's networks and communication services in Norway. Before joining Telenor in 1989, Baksaas served as CFO in Aker AS, CFO in Stolt-Nielsen Seaway and held finance related positions in Det Norske Veritas in Norway and Japan. Baksaas is currently a board member of Svenska Handelsbanken AB, the GSM Association and a member of the Advisory Council of Det Norske Veritas (Telenor 2010).

Baksaas made the following statement when he was appointed CEO of Telenor:

> I look forward to take up one of the most interesting and challenging positions in Norway. As the new CEO, I intend to pursue the efforts to increase profitability, to strengthen the focus of the activity and further the development of Telenor as a powerful and internationally oriented telecommunications company. The Telenor I now take leadership of has a very good basis for further development and growth (Telenor 2010).

According to Vagstad the combination of increasing competition and high domestic cost levels pushed internationalisation and outsourcing even closer to the top of the agenda for Norwegian companies. The thirty largest Norwegian companies had approximately 40 percent of their staff located abroad by the end of the 1990s. As a comparison, this figure was10 percent in the late 1980s (Vagstad 1997). After Baksaas became the CEO in 2002 he further expanded Telenor's business abroad. The Telenor Group became involved in mobile operations in Hungary in 2002, Montenegro in 2004, Pakistan in 2005, Slovakia, Czech

Republic and Serbia in 2006 and India in 2009. In Telenor the future success of Telenor as a company is associated with growth and international expansion.

In the interviews in Telenor Norway people had the following to say about the top management group in Telenor:

> I have to say that the top management group has many accomplished people *(dyktige folk).* The top management group in Telenor has a typical Norwegian management culture. It is relatively informal and democratic. It has a kind of 'dialogue focus', which means that one comes to conclusions together while talking about or discussing an issue.

Gustavson would agree that the top management group in Telenor is likely to be relatively democratic. Gustavson's comparative studies of workplace organisation indicate that within Europe, the democratic form of organisation has taken strongest hold in Scandinavian countries (Gustavson 2007:1).

Norway's and Pakistan's approach to work organisations and leadership

Sejersted (1997) discusses the historical development of social democracy and the ways in which this has had a profound influence on organisational practices. In Norway it has been and continues to be important for everyone to have a sense of control over their working conditions. Resilient unions are important elements in the Norwegian way of framing legitimate leadership and management. The unions have contributed robustly to negotiations in the workplace and represent a form of institutionalised trust relations. A strong welfare state has simultaneously played a powerful role in shaping job security.

In relation to management, Scandinavian countries were seen by many to represent a model of good practice, with their emphasis on 'compromise and negotiation and with management philosophy of democratic participative kind' (Byrkjeflot 2003:33). In contrast, Pakistani managers are typically described as authoritarian and unwilling to share power (Jaffrelot 2002:19). Pakistani culture is often described as status-conscious and hierarchical. (See pages 65-71 and 73-76 on Telenor Pakistan and Telenor Norway leaders' approach to hierarchy).

According to Khilji (2003) hierarchical differences are learned early in life in Pakistani society. Pakistani children are thought from the start to be respectful in relationships and are discouraged from questioning authority. (See pages 46 and 52 for a discussion on the cultural thoughts on obedience in Pakistan and Norway and how this impacts Telenor). Later on, this thought is carried over to organisational settings, as the organisational settings have a formal, hierarchical structure. Further, Pakistani culture is family centred, and lives are therefore built in groups. A person in Pakistan can be defined with regard to the relations he forms with other entities. A Pakistani will understand himself through the notion of caste and the network of social relationships in terms of 'brotherhood' (*biradari)*, a category that is context-dependent (Alvi 2001).

Furthermore, in Pakistani society a pattern of dependence pervades all human interactions and requires a degree of surrendering to authority. People therefore maintain a strong need for security, and disapprove of originality, independence in decision-making and questioning authority. The society can be seen as deeply divided into two main classes: the elite and non-elite (or the general public). The elite class exemplifies money, power and status. The non-elite longs for the fundamental rights of justice and democracy. The former uses (or misuses) its power and money for personal gain, from jumping queues to breaking laws of a more serious nature. These abuses cause frustration among the general public, who hold that there are no checks and balances to curb the power of the influential (Hussain 1999).

According to Khilji (2001) the organisational structure in the Pakistani work organisation is bureaucratic and not generally responsive to the needs of the workers. Due to a large power distance in the organisation, the decision-making authority is located at the top management level. There is limited employee autonomy; top to bottom communication is minimal and bottom-up communication is unheard of. Employee involvement is often a foreign concept in Pakistani work organisations.

However, I will suggest that Khilji's view in this case is a simplified way of looking at Pakistani work organisations. My research in Telenor Pakistan has shown that the employees describe the work culture in Telenor as open and friendly. The open space in Telenor makes sure that they no longer have any barriers to approach their managers. They also point out that because of Telenor's policies, their leaders value and respect their employees. (See pages 36-38 and 68-71 for further discussion).

I suggest that the Pakistani employees' (in Telenor Pakistan) view is in this case consistent with the Norwegian leadership style which regards egalitarianism as important. The Norwegian management tradition, as mentioned earlier, focuses on openness and transparency throughout the organisation. In Norway, the common practice is for leaders to state reasons for decisions and sometimes even try to promote employees' influence on decisions (Sejersted 1997). Norwegian managers have a tendency to invite the employee into dialogue. Furthermore 'The Thorsrud line' of management in Norway argued that by granting more authority and influence to workers, the productivity of the organisation would increase (Sørhaug 1996).

A further influence on management practice is, as Archetti (1986: 49) argues, the idea that in Norway there exists an ideal whereby stakeholders should 'play with open cards' and that issues should be decided upon and put into action by information that is available to everybody. Gullestad (1992:125) has pointed out that 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*), are important values in the Norwegian culture. The expression 'peace and quiet', is used in a variety of ways. Among other things, it is associated with the control of a person's feelings and the absence of open conflicts. 'Peace and quiet' requires that one does not bring out differences or make underlying conflicts explicit. I have indicated in chapter four (pages 53 and 54) how the idea of playing with open cards in business on the one side and the idea of 'peace and quiet' on the other can be contradictions in the Norwegian business environment and in Telenor. On the one hand the Norwegian culture values openness, transparency and playing with open cards in business. This means that workers and managers are encouraged to actively provide input in different settings. On the other hand, if their input about a topic is in conflict with others in the Norwegian business environment it is best to be quiet.

The American and Norwegian CEO in Telenor Pakistan

Since the launch of their business in Pakistan, Telenor Pakistan has had two CEOs, and neither of them have been Pakistani. The first president was a Norwegian named Tore Johnsen, and the current president is Jon Eddy Abdullah. He is, in spite of his name, ethnically American.

Tore Johnsen was CEO from the inception of Telenor Pakistan in 2004 to August 2008. Johnsen obtained a Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Trondheim in 1972. He began as an engineer at Telenor's Radio Transmission Office in 1974, and advancing through the ranks, soon increased his involvement in Telenor's mobile activities. He gained extensive international experience in various cellular business areas in his appointment as Senior Advisor and Deputy Chief Technology Officer of Telenor Mobil AS. He also worked in the Malaysian mobile company DiGi, in which Telenor holds a stake. At DiGi he began as a Senior Advisor and then served as its Chief Operating Officer from February 2001. He also served as CEO of DiGi before moving to Telenor Pakistan. He is currently working as CEO of Total Access Communication Public Company Ltd. (DTAC). DTAC is Thailand's second largest mobile operator and Telenor holds a 65% stake in the company (Telenor 2010).

Jon Eddy Abdullah was appointed as Telenor Pakistan's CEO in August 2008. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Montana State University in the USA. Abdullah has more than 15 years of experience in the telecommunications industry. He has been working both in infrastructure vendors as well as several mobile operators, most recently as Chief Operating Officer in Maxis Telecommunications in Malaysia and Chief Technology Officer in DiGi (Telenor 2010).

During talks with employees in Telenor Pakistan, great differences were noted between the leadership styles of the previous Norwegian President and the current American President of Telenor Pakistan. I will in the following use the Norwegian CEO and the American CEO as examples of management styles of Norway and America.

The Norwegian CEO was often described as a humble person. One of the leaders in Telenor Pakistan told the following story about Johnsen:

> I was in Bhurban[3] with my family for a holiday. There I saw Tore standing in a queue, to get into a restaurant in Bhurban. I asked some of the staff members in the restaurant to let him in first, so he doesn't have to stand in the queue. To my surprise Tore did not like that, he wanted to stay in line, and wait like all the others. That is why I believe that Tore would never treat anyone unfairly.

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[3] Bhurban is a small town and hill station in Punjab, Pakistan. It is located approximately 13 kilometres from Murree city. It is one of the most picturesque places in the country; a tourist paradise with fauna, flora and a wide variety of species of animals not found elsewhere in Pakistan.

Many foreign workers describe Norwegians as modest with an informal management style (Habert and Lilleboe 1988). Modesty is said to be a virtue (*Beskjedenhet er en dyd*), and Norwegian society treats it as an ideal. It is therefore valued in Norway to be humble. In the Norwegian society one should not make too much of oneself and an ideal situation is where differences of rank are downplayed. According to Gullestad (1992) efforts at self-assertion are best made within an idiom of equality, where a good performance is presented indirectly, modestly, and in the context of contributing others. More outright or aggressive forms of self-assertion are seen negatively. For example, many Norwegians tend to experience Americans, with their more direct forms of self-expression, as boastful.

An employee in organisational development offered this description of the American CEO:

> Jon is aggressive and at the same time intelligent. He wants fast results. What I like about him is that it is difficult for people to manipulate him.

Another leader in Telenor Pakistan described the difference between the former and the present CEO in the following way:

> Tore he was a good leader and he left a good impression. He was humble. He used to say 'Hi' to everyone and meet all the employees. He was also more democratic. If he gave me a task he will give me the whole ownership of it. It would be up to me how to complete it. He will just give me a deadline for the task. Now it is not the same anymore. If Tore wanted to give me a task he would come down to me and politely ask if it was possible for me to do that task. Jon on the other hand makes his secretary invite me to his meeting room, and there he gives me an order on what to do and when to finish it. Now I feel like that I am working in the same company but in a different cultural environment. Jon is more closed; he doesn't say 'Hi' to everyone. We say that we have an open seating environment. But this does not apply to Jon, he has his own office. Tore did not have his own office.

This person's view is not representative of most of the employees in Telenor Pakistan. Looking at all of the interviews, some people preferred Tore's style of leadership and others liked Jon's style. Employees who liked Jon's leadership style often refer to him as a person who is extremely talented and knows what he wants. He is a person who drives himself and the company. He is not only thinking about Telenor Pakistan as a telecom company, but he

wants to expand the company. He is not only thinking about Telenor Pakistan's present but is also thinking about its future: what will happen to Telenor in years from now. Jon is also often described as a tough leader and someone who is more aggressive than Tore. He wants fast results. Jones (2005), after two years of ethnographic research in three American firms, describes American leaders as tough leaders. The American leaders are known by their toughness and their intelligence. The leaders are men who negotiate hard and are hard to work for; their toughness and intelligence makes them superior to rest of the employees in the company. This description can be considered appropriate for Jon, as he is a leader admired for his intelligence and toughness. Many employees in Telenor also pointed out that Jon's toughness and intelligence is serving Telenor Pakistan's interests.

In contrast to Jon, Tore's leadership style was admired by people because they thought that it was more relaxed and down to earth. Currently, people feel that whenever Jon comes to their zone it is an important event; as if a 'big person' was coming to see them. Jones (2005:271) shows that the firms he studied whenever the company's CEO came to any working zone, people thought of this as a 'big person' attending. Many employees avoided Jon and feared that he would ask them about results from the task on which they were working.

Tore on the other hand was known as being less tough. He was known as being more democratic and incorporating people in the decision making process. According to Dahl-Jørgensen (2003) the concept of democratic leadership is important to Norwegian leaders. They wanted to have a less hierarchical structure and focus on collaboration. Jon (according to Telenor employees) liked to take decisions by himself.

Employees in Telenor Pakistan said that it was a good thing that Tore was democratic but this also gave people room to manipulate him. Similarly Dahl-Jørgensen (2003) shows in her study that the Norwegian leadership style made the Norwegian managers appear informal. Therefore sometimes non-Norwegian employees in Telenor saw them (Norwegian managers) as managers with too little control.

Many foreigners who have spent some time in the Norwegian business environment describe Norwegians as very straight to the point. According to Habert and Lilleboe, "this is in many contexts is a valuable asset. However, the other side of the coin is lack of diplomacy, where that should be exercised" (Habert and Lilleboe 1988:62). Some foreigners have also indicated that Norwegian workers sometimes appear rude and impatient, as they often lack the

technique to carry out small talk in formal settings (Habert and Lilleboe 1988). These descriptions of Norwegian employees and leaders were also offered by many non-Norwegian employees in Telenor.

According to Sørhaug (1996) the American and the Norwegian cultures share several similarities. Both cultures are relatively egalitarian and informal. Both cultures value local communities: the 'community' concept has an important significance in the US and local affiliation and local knowledge is an identity marker for Norwegians. According to Gullestad (2006) the home is used as a metaphor for the local community and the nation, such as in expressions *hjemsted* ('home place'), meaning local community, *hjemby* ('home city'), and *hjemland* ('home country'). Sørhaug (1996) also notes that there are some parallel historical patterns between Norway and the US, for example, the lack of feudal institutions and the importance of self-owning farmers as a social class.

On the other hand, there are also major differences, including those in relation to the scale, mobility and legitimate forms of self-assertion. American culture is designed to move both geographically and socially, and it involves large distances both in space and in rank. Americans are also known for their openness, friendliness and helpfulness. Furthermore, the American mentality is often described as being presentation and competition oriented. This mentality motivates open forms of self-assertion. In contrast, the Norwegian mentality emphasises an indirect way of reviewing one's own value. Therefore, it may require a great deal of local knowledge to identify who the leaders are in Norway.

In this section have I used the previous and current CEOs' leadership styles in Telenor Pakistan as an example of the leadership styles of America and Norway. I have also shown how both of the CEOs are admired because of their leadership style: Jon because of his intelligence and toughness and Tore because he had a more democratic style. However, even though the present and current Presidents were respected and admired by many, many Pakistani leaders and employees complained about not having a Pakistani CEO in Telenor Pakistan. In the next section I will look at why Telenor Pakistan does not have a Pakistani president.

Why does Telenor Pakistan not have a Pakistani CEO?

As noted above (page 82), Telenor has operations throughout Europe and Asia. In all of the operational countries abroad (OpCo) except two (one of them being Telenor Pakistan), the CEO is Scandinavian. Telenor Pakistan was also led by a Norwegian initially but is now led by an American. Why does Telenor Pakistan not have a Pakistani CEO, and why are the CEOs in other OpCo Scandinavian? During my interviews in Telenor Pakistan and Telenor Norway I asked the employees what they thought about Telenor having Norwegian leaders in their OpCo. A leader in Telenor Pakistan had the following to say about this issue:

> I believe that the person who is best qualified should get the job, ethnicity should not matter. But for me it is hard to believe that it is always a Scandinavian who is the best person to get the job as CEO or other top positions.

> For me, the Telenor Group's practice of not giving locals an opportunity to lead the company is the most open form of discrimination from Telenor Group. Tore and Jon both have said that they have never met so many talented people elsewhere than in Telenor Pakistan. So why won't they give us an opportunity if they know that we are the best?

> For example, Telenor is now going into India. Why haven't any of the good Pakistani or Bangladeshi leaders been asked to work in India? They know the culture, they know the language and they are doing a good job with great results at their organisation.

> I often feel that the best talent is not given the opportunity. At this moment we are exporting talent from the worst operated company (Telenor Norway) and not from the best (Telenor Pakistan).

Sims, Fineman and Gabriel (1993) discuss organisational discrimination and society at large. They point out that all organisations are part of wider society. Inequalities of gender, race, ethnicity and class are not forgotten once people enter the world of their organisations. In fact, the odds are that most people see many of the inequalities recreated and amplified in their workplace. Jones (2005:266), looking at the social hierarchy in the American South, argues that social hierarchies of different types affect work organisations in the American South. At

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the top of the social hierarchy is a white male who represents the founding source of authority and power; behind him are white women; behind the white women are working class white men and at the bottom are non-white employees.

According to Sims, Fineman and Gabriel (1993) one of the strategies for handling these issues in organisations is to pretend that they do not exist. Everyone is dealt with as an individual, being judged on their merits rather than on other criteria. Admirable in principle, this strategy fails to recognise subtler form of prejudice and discrimination. Even if they are not directly victims of negative stereotypes, members of ethnic minorities often fail to live up to the criteria of 'merit' laid down by dominant social groups.

My research indicates that some of the most talented Pakistani leaders in Telenor Pakistan feel that they fail to live up to the criteria of 'merit' laid down by the dominant social groups in Telenor. Some Pakistani leaders in Telenor Pakistan believe that the Telenor Group has a hidden agenda of hiring only Scandinavian top leaders. For example, they believe that being Norwegian is an unspoken qualification which may be used in hiring the 'best' person for leaders' jobs abroad. They argue that this handicaps leaders belonging to other ethnic groups.

In Norway, as in many other countries, networking can be important to climb up the organisational hierarchy. Network formation is based on exchange processes (reciprocity forms) and trust (Mauss 1924/1966, Polanyi 1957, Powell 1990, Sabel 1991). Network formation is able to convey complex information and 'thick description', and given a certain excess of confidence it can also handle continuous change. On the basis of trust the parties can reach agreement on the new thick descriptions that are part of the quality requirements (Sabel 1991, Gambetta 1993). The network's ethical foundation is reciprocity. In the network it is trust that gives prestige. As discussed earlier, trust can be seen as a combination of history and expectations, which assumes itself (Sørhaug 1996).

In Norway, information is obtained through relations that are characterised by social intimacy and stability, close-knit networks and a basic, common sense of equality (Sørhaug 1991). The understanding of equality does not, however, mean that all people are perceived as being equal. People must consider themselves as more or less the same in order to feel of equal value (Gullestad 1992). According to Gullestad (2006) many Norwegians turn to the simultaneous production of differences and call for sameness. She points out that there are connections between egalitarian cultural themes and a racially coded majority nationalism.

The Norwegian focus on descent, ancestry and cultural sameness implies the existence of an invisible barrier for non-Norwegians. According to Gullestad:

> 'Immigrants' are asked to 'become Norwegian' at the same time as it is tacitly assumed that this is something they never can really achieve unless they praise everything Norwegian. 'Immigrants' are often criticised without much corresponding consideration of our knowledge about their traditions, or our ability and willingness to reflect critically upon our own, 'We' ('Norwegians) are thus considered more advanced and hierarchically superior to 'them' ('Muslims', 'Pakistanis' etc,) (Gullestad 2006:189).

'Home', used as a metaphor, can serve as a boundary between the Norwegian nation (the home) and the non-Norwegian world (the foreign guests). This relationship between the 'host society' and 'guests' is described as a hierarchical relationship, where Norwegians are hierarchically superior to the non-Norwegians. A guest must be grateful to the host letting for letting him stay at his house. This gratefulness is shown by not provoking the host through calling attentions to their differences. The guest is expected to become like the host and adopt Norwegian values (Gullestad 2006).

Gullestad argues that egalitarian logic is woven into hierarchical models of society; it is not only tied to the term *likhet* (equality) but also to a whole range of other expressions, such as 'to share the same ideas' (*ha sammenfallende synspunkter*) and 'to fit in together' (*å passe sammen*). This group of ideas creates 'invisible fences' for non-Norwegians. Non-Norwegians are often perceived to be 'too different' from Norwegians (Gullestad 1992). I suggest that one of the reasons the Telenor Group may prefer Scandinavian CEOs is that they 'share the same ideas' (*har sammenfallende synspunkter*) and that they 'fit in together' (*passer sammen*) with the Norwegian top leaders' group. This and other sets of Norwegian ideas can create 'invisible fences' for non-Scandinavian leaders, as they can be perceived to be too different, not sharing the same values and ideas as Norwegians.

An employee from the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan had the following to say about why there are Scandinavian leaders in Telenor's foreign operations:

> The Telenor Group wants to have a strong unified culture, a Norwegian culture. It also has to do with trust. They are not sure if they can trust a local. However, I believe that it is necessary that the CEO knows the local culture.

The following quotation is representative of what the employees in Telenor Norway think the reason might be for having Scandinavian CEOs abroad:

> It has to do with trust and the Telenor Group will only trust Scandinavians. They are afraid that a local leader might be corrupt. The other thing is that by having a Norwegian CEO you would make sure that the company will have a Telenor culture, a Norwegian culture.

Dahl-Jørgensen (2003) found in interviews with directors at Norsk Hydro, Kværner and Kongsberg Automotive that for the Norwegian-owned global companies the local arena is an important resource for success in the global arena. According to her work, the more global the world is becoming the more important is it for people to maintain their cultural distinctiveness. This is backed up by Sahlins, who notes that at the local level are we not witnessing the rejection of globalisation but rather the 'indigenisation of modernity'.

> W]hat they [at the local level] are after is the indigenisation of modernity, their own cultural space in the global scheme of things. They would make some autonomy of their heteronomy. Hence what needs to be recognised is that similitude is a necessary condition of the differentiation. (Sahlins 1999: 410-11 and Jones 2005:262).

The Norwegian directors' 'uniqueness' is described as part of their leadership style. Therefore, when the Norwegian companies are scattered in many countries, it is important for the Norwegian-owned companies to create a homogeneous culture so that the company appears to be unified. A homogeneous culture is created by the employment of Norwegian leaders in the OpCo. By doing this they keep the local Norwegian aspect; in this case Norwegian knowledge and a Norwegian management style. The Norwegian directors assume that Norwegian managers can communicate and pass these values and leadership styles onto local employees (Dahl-Jørgensen 2003).

Sørhaug also points out that local belonging and local knowledge are important identity values for Norwegians (Sørhaug 1996:84). The Norwegian directors viewed the Norwegian management style as an important advantage in the global arena. They argued that it toned

down the hierarchical differences, and made it possible for employees to participate in the decision-making processes and cooperate better with each other (Dahl-Jørgensen 2003). (For further details about hierarchy in Telenor Norway see pages 65-68 and 73-76).

Telenor's employees in Pakistan agreed that by being introduced to the Norwegian management style, the organisational culture in Telenor Pakistan was less hierarchical than was the case in Pakistan (see pages 68- 71 and 73-76 for further details). The leaders in Telenor Pakistan were also willing to receive feedback from their workers and focused on a democratic style of leadership. This shows that not only did the Pakistani employees and leaders adopt many of the Norwegian values and tradition in business, but they were also proud of following them. This further suggests that even though Pakistani employees and leaders are based in a local business environment, they in many cases have a global mindset.

According to Habert and Lilleboe (1988) many foreigners who had spent time in the Norwegian business environment described Norwegians as honest and concerned with employee welfare. The management style was described as being egalitarian and informal. On the other hand many foreign business executives thought that their Norwegian associates were being overly self-centred and protective of their country and culture. A similar view was shared by many non-Norwegian employees in Telenor. In Dahl-Jørgensen's (2003) work in three Norwegian multinationals, she too found that Norwegians are very protective of their culture.

Habert and Lilleboe (1988) and Dahl-Jørgensen (2003) also point out that Norwegian leaders tend to believe they use a universally applicable approach. Foreigners on the other hand see this approach as grounded in Norwegian values and therefore expressive of a local, rather than global, mindset (Habert and Lilleboe 1988). I suggest that this can be said to be the case in Telenor. My research indicates that the Telenor Group and Norwegian leaders in Telenor believe that they use a universally applicable approach but the non-Norwegian employees see this approach as expressive of local Norwegian values, rather than a global mindset.

Thinking globally - acting locally

Jones (2005) argues that even though CEOs derive their leadership legitimacy and power from being 'local' and 'global' at the same time, discourse about globalisation exists at a certain level, and in a certain space, within our evolving global society. For most of the

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employees in Telenor that discursive space is far removed from their daily reality. Jones argues that experience of work and organisational identity, remains a very local experience for most people.

I believe that this is the case for the employees in Telenor. Most employees in Telenor do not talk about themselves as being a part of a global company, but rather see themselves working in Telenor's company at a local level. However, I also suggest that Pakistani employees and leaders have in many cases adopted some of the Norwegian organisation and leadership strategies. They are also much more comfortable in speaking English than Norwegian employees (see pages 45-48 for discussion of Telenor employees' approach to English language). By adopting Norwegian organisational and leadership strategies and using English in their organisation, the local employees in Telenor Pakistan are more global than local in many senses.

Dahl-Jørgensen (2003) points out that the workers in global Norwegian companies argue that to survive in a global context they have to act and think local. The local approach is an important survival strategy in a global business world, both for the leaders and the workers in multinational companies. The local aspect in this case is their expertise, experience and management culture. This is defined as a major advantage for both managers and employees. My research indicates that this is the case in Norway but for many Pakistani employees and leaders knowledge of the English language and of American business practices is a survival strategy in Pakistan (see page 70 for American business influences in Pakistani organisations). This is so as many Pakistani-educated employees aim to work in multinational companies in Pakistan and abroad, because of the high unemployment rate in Pakistan (for further details see pages 46-48).

Dahl-Jørgensen (2003) further points out that the interaction between the global and the local can be expressed along a 'security dimension' (*trygghetsdimensjon*). Both managers and workers in global companies often express that they seek safety. But the leaders and workers seek safety in different ways. The Norwegian managers do this by bringing their management culture and working environment into the global arena. Employees on the other hand gain confidence by identifying themselves with the local arena. Their expertise is locally bound. The survival strategy of the employees is to convey that they cannot be replaced by someone who does not possess local expertise. According to Jones:

Employees of most organisations go to work, ultimately, as part of kin and community-based efforts at social reproduction, not to make a contribution to the development of a global society. In this respect, social reproduction and organisational leadership necessarily intersect at a local level (Jones 2005:76).

Similarly many anthropologists say that the new global era is characterised by 'local' cultural diversity, rather than a global feature which is culturally homogenous. Local culture will not diminish in a global world; rather will it be an aspect of social life in relation to the global (Appadurai 1996, Comaroff 1996, Dahl-Jørgensen 2003, Jones 2005, Moore 1999, Tsing 2002).

My research has indicated that even though Telenor is a global company which focuses on creating a common Norwegian culture – by bringing the Norwegian leadership style, Norwegian vision and values and codes of conduct into their companies globally – these features have not produced cultural homogenisation. The new global business area has made people more aware of their 'local' cultural diversity at work.

In suggesting this I have looked outside Telenor to arrive at a meaningful anthropological understanding of culture in a global company like Telenor. Throughout thesis I have shown how Pakistani and Norwegian cultural traditions are central in the organisational and management dynamics of the Way of Work project in Telenor Norway and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan.

I have also suggested that even though Norwegian leaders in Telenor believe that they use a global business approach, it is in many senses an approach expressive of local Norwegian values, rather than a global mindset. This is in stark contrast to the Pakistani workers and leaders. These workers, who are primarily part of a local arena, have in many senses a global approach, with their knowledge of English, of American business practices and by their adoption of some of the Norwegian organisation and leadership strategies.

Conclusion

This thesis has aimed to show how an anthropological approach can provide a more fruitful framework for understanding organisational culture and leadership. I have applied the anthropological method by looking at the unique cultural traditions of Norway and Pakistan and seeing how they manifest themselves in the organisational and management dynamics in Telenor Norway and Telenor Pakistan.

Quantitative methods struggle to capture how the unique cultural traditions of Norway and Pakistan affect the outcome of what takes place in formal organisations. A concrete example of this is how the Pakistani cultural focus on collectivism and the Norwegian focus on individualism are central to the popularity of the open space concept among Pakistani employees, and its dislike among Norwegian employees in Telenor Norway.

Pakistani and Norwegian cultural influences in meetings

By using Hall's analysis, I have indicated at pages 48-50 that a Norwegian employee is likely to feel guilty if he cannot make it in time for an appointment, as Norwegian society is organised in a way that makes it important to comply with time appointments. A Pakistani employee on the other hand is unlikely to feel guilty about being late for an appointment. He will instead feel a strong discomfort if he is prevented from completing a 'good quality' task or satisfying the expectations of key people in their network.

In Norwegian organisations it is crucial that one states reasons for decisions and even promote employees' closeness to decision-making (Sejersted 1997). I have indicated that employees' closeness to decision-making was stressed at the WoW project. The managers and the employees looked to meetings as a place where problems were discussed and common solutions were sought. In contrast, in Telenor Pakistan, the meetings generally were opportunities for employees to assert themselves: to show how good they were. Decisions were often made by the leaders in the meeting or by managers elsewhere.

I have pointed out that the cultural concept of obedience is central to Telenor's working environment. In Telenor Pakistan, a manager is seen as superior to the workers. Therefore the employee should abide by his leaders. In Telenor Norway on the other hand workers are not

encouraged to be obedient to their managers, but instead to be a part of the decision-making process. I have also described how the idea of 'peace and quiet' (*fred og ro*) on one side and the idea of playing with open cards in business on the other are contradictions in the Norwegian business and meeting environment (pages 53-54).

Trust and power

Sørhaug (1996) argues that when analysing leadership, concepts such as trust and power become important. Harris's (2003:18) study of India shows that some Indian firms have moved from 'control-compliance' to 'trust-based organisations'. This shift to 'trust-based organisation' is a 'reliance upon abstract principles and professional codes, and that the language of 'trust' frequently conceals, or seeks to conceal, relationships of power'. My research has indicated that at the WoW project and at the Human Capital Division in Telenor Pakistan the language of trust does appear to conceal power (pages 72-73). Even though both places focus on collaboration, the organisational relationships in both settings promote hierarchy rather than collaboration.

Approaches to equality and hierarchy: Pakistan and Norway

In chapter 5, in looking at the Norwegian leadership style in a historical perspective, I have argued that it represents a tradition where democratic values are central. The Norwegian leadership style is known as a tradition with a focus on participation, negotiation and equality. According to Gullestad (1992), in Norway, equality is more or less synonymous with *likhet*. The concept *likhet*, means not only equality, but also likeness, similarity, identity, or sameness. The Norwegian focus on descent, ancestry and cultural sameness implies the existence of an invisible barrier for non-Norwegians. My research has indicated that this set of ideas creates 'invisible fences' for non-Norwegian employees at the WoW project, as non-Norwegians are often perceived to be 'too different' from Norwegians. I have also pointed out that one of the reasons Telenor may prefer Scandinavian CEOs is that they 'share the same ideas' (*har sammenfallende synspunkter*) and that they 'fit in together' (*passer sammen*) with the Norwegian top leaders' group.

Hierarchies in Norway can be as real as elsewhere, but they often find minimalist forms of expression in organisations. It often takes a great deal of local knowledge to identify the leaders in Norwegian organisations (Sørhaug 1996). I have indicated that in the WoW project the hierarchy is more explicitly expressed than in a 'normal' organisation in Norway. The leaders kept a certain distance with the employees by giving them many tasks to deal with. They also gave their employees more direct orders. Norwegians are used to phrases that imply indirectness such as 'can you please' and 'when you have time'. When this language is lacking, the impression of choice is removed and employees feel that they are being given orders (Sørhaug 1996).

Many anthropologists have stated that Pakistanis do not think or express equality in the same way as Norwegians. Punjabi society is based on the idea that people are different from each other. The central argument in Dumont's (1970) writings is that generally in Pakistan the condition *humana* is hierarchical. In Pakistan, social actors are defined first and foremost with respect to the relationships they form with other entities. People in Pakistan understand themselves through the notion of caste, and their network of social relationships in terms of 'brotherhood' (*biradari*). Further the Punjabis use the terms *apna*, meaning 'my own', and *ghair*, meaning 'the other' to identify themselves. My research has shown at page 41 that employees in Pakistan refer to Telenor as *apna*Telenor ('my Telenor', '*mitt* Telenor'). This crucially shows that they are proud of being a part of the Telenor *biradari* ('brotherhood') and look to Telenor as a part of themselves.

Jaffrelot (2002:19) describes Pakistani leaders as undemocratic, highly hierarchical and unwilling to share power. However, my research found that the employees and leaders in Telenor Pakistan were proud of having a less hierarchical structure (pages 68-71). The employees and leaders in Telenor Pakistan describe the work culture as open and friendly. They argue that the open space in Telenor makes sure that they no longer have any barriers to approaching their managers. Furthermore, they point out that because of Telenor's policy, their leaders value and respect the employees. The leaders in Pakistan wanted to have a democratic leadership style and foster a 'trust based organisation'.

Despite this, my research has suggested that hierarchy is just as real in Pakistan as it is in other places. Even though Telenor Pakistan is known to be a 'trust-based organisation', this language of trust serves to conceal power. This power relationship might not be easy for

Pakistani workers to see, however, when the power is not usually displayed as openly as they are used to elsewhere.

Telenor's 'survival' strategies in a global business arena

In chapter 6 I have suggested that the Telenor Group's 'survival' strategy in a global business arena is to maintain a local Norwegian perspective, by having Norwegian top leaders in their companies abroad. For Norwegian-owned global companies the local arena is an important resource for success in the global arena. The more global the world is becoming the more important it is for Norwegian people to maintain their cultural distinctiveness (Dahl-Jørgensen 2003). Therefore, when Norwegian companies have concerns running in many countries, it is important for them to have Norwegian CEOs in the companies abroad. This maintains a local Norwegian culture and management style, as Norwegian managers tend to pass Norwegian values and leadership styles on to local employees abroad. The Norwegian top leaders viewed the Norwegian management style as an important advantage in the global arena. They argued that it toned down the hierarchical differences, and made it possible for employees to participate in the decision-making processes and cooperate better with each other (Dahl-Jørgensen 2003).

The Norwegian leaders also tended to believe they use a universally applicable approach (or the best of the possible approaches). Non-Norwegian employees on the other hand see this approach as grounded in Norwegian values and therefore expressive of a local, rather than global, mindset.

Jones (2005) argues that experience of work and organisational identity remains a very local experience for most people. Sørhaug (1996:84) also points out that local belonging and local knowledge are important identity values for Norwegians. The workers in global Norwegian companies argue that to survive in a global context they have to act and think local. The local approach is an important survival strategy in a global business world, both for leaders and workers in multinational companies (Dahl-Jørgensen 2003).

My research has indicated that this may be the case for the employees at Telenor. Most employees in Telenor do not talk about themselves as being a part of a global company, but rather see themselves working in Telenor's company at a local level. However, Pakistani

employees and leaders have in many cases adopted some of the Norwegian organisational and leadership strategies. By adopting Norwegian strategies and using English in their organisation, the local employees in Telenor Pakistan are more global than local in many senses. For Pakistani workers, knowledge of the English language and use of Norwegian and American business practices are survival strategies in the Pakistani work environment, as many educated Pakistanis aim to work in multinational companies in Pakistan and abroad.

I would like to conclude by arguing that the many strands to my research suggest that even though Norwegian workers and leaders are part of a global business arena, their approach is in many senses local. This, I argue, contrasts with Pakistani workers and leaders, who are located primarily in a local arena, but have in many senses a global approach.

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