



UNIVERSITETET I AGDER

The “dark side” of projectification: The impact of project work on the employees’ emotions.

What are the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker’s emotions in a project life cycle?

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Abstract

In this thesis, we explore the “dark side” of projectification. Working on projects have become an increasing trend and preferred way of working in most types of businesses and industries. This transition is described as being among the most significant changes in modern organisations. Critical studies, focused on the subject have emphasised some noteworthy, but perhaps blocked existential consequences for individuals involved in project work. This thesis, therefore, aims to add to this field of research and uncover the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker’s emotions in a project life cycle.

The thesis is an exploratory study of the Norwegian economy, where we have obtained primary data through the use of semi-structured interviews from ten project workers and project leaders, representing different industries, sectors and company sizes. The findings suggest that the project workers are affected by sleeping problems and are subject to negative mental stress due to demanding work situations. Further, our findings indicate that projects, as a design of professionalism, is where managing and conquering difficult project work situations becomes a part of being dependable, successful and professional, and where extraordinary emotions do not belong. Thus, similarly to Cicmil, Lindgren, and Packendorff (2016), we worry about the ethical issue of “projectification” with its impact on the lasting sustainability for both organisations and humanity. However, project tools and methodologies seem to have a moderating effect, whereby the use of appropriate tools and methods appear to help employees feel a sense of safety while also making projects more manageable. Regarding the process of emotions in a project situation; our findings suggest that projects start with being positive where there is a belief that dreams can be realised. However, by the end negative emotions become dominant, and one is longing for a new project.

Foreword and Acknowledgements

Writing this thesis has been a fascinating and educational journey from the beginning to the end. It has been wonderful to immerse ourselves into a topic that we find so interesting, and to work with such amazing and helpful people. We would, therefore, like to thank everyone who has been involved and made it possible for us to accomplish this master's thesis.

Firstly, we wish to thank Professor Andreas Wald. His guidance and support have given us confidence when writing this thesis. Secondly, we would like to thank Maria Magdalena Aguilar Velasco for her useful comments and suggestions.

Thirdly, we would like to express our gratitude to all who contributed to our data collection for taking time and resources. Without you, it would not have been possible to write this thesis.

Lastly, some special thanks also to our parents, for their words of encouragements and support throughout the whole process, and to the School of Business and Law at the University of Agder for a master's program that have provided us with essential knowledge through these five years with stimulating and thought-provoking courses.

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1. Introduction

Working on projects has become one of the most important trends in modern organisations. It appears that most are moving away from the conventional way of working, as the project-based working situation is developing into the common employment setting for a growing amount of individuals (Bredin, 2006; Lundin et al., 2015). Although projects, were predominantly applied in construction, defence and civil engineering, projects have spread from the traditional fields into less traditional ones (Lundin et al., 2015). Today it has become the preferred way of working in most types of businesses and industries (Bredin, 2006; Lundin et al., 2015). This growing trend has been termed differently by researchers, but the common term preferred by most is “projectification” (Midler, 1995; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Schoper, Wald, Ingason, & Fridgeirsson, 2018).

Previous studies view this shift towards project work as a long-awaited replacement to the ineffective and boring bureaucratic method of working. From the companies’ viewpoint projects provides manageable flexibility to work and becomes a facilitator for innovation. As for the individual, a project is seen as unique, stimulating and thrilling experiences (Cicmil, Hodgson, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2009; Gill, 2002; Lindgren, Packendorff, & Sergi, 2014).

While several studies have highlighted positive effects of project work, critical studies, focus on the subject of projects have emphasised some noteworthy, but perhaps blocked existential consequences for individuals involved in project work (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Cicmil et al. (2016) note that a work setting where all is temporary, such as the relations and tasks, along with regular performance assessments, might similarly be a work-life where nothing is steady, nothing and no individual is reliable. Moreover, the employee’s professional reputation, performance and feeling of personal worthiness are constantly tested and could be lost.

It is not until recently that emotions of employees have been acknowledged as a legitimate and significant part of work life within the field of organisational studies (Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Fineman, 2006; Lindgren et al., 2014). Although there is some research conducted with an emotional emphasis, most previous research has focused on how project employee’s emotions, if correctly administered, could be a contributor to the project’s success (Lindgren et al., 2014). With their focus on suggestions and how to achieve project success,

their research does not expressively advance our knowledge of the emotional processes of project employees progress in project-based work. Other research has been focused on emotional conditions and developments in the interview objects with emphasis on industry-specific settings. The centre of these studies has not been on the subject of emotions experienced in project work, as it conveys the broad concept of project management concerning a practical and performative work method. The typical emphasis has existed on the theme of emotional labour (Lindgren et al., 2014). Besides, most researchers have previously struggled to incorporate the progression of emotions over a projects lifetime when studying emotions in projects (Peslak, 2005).

Accordingly, we saw the prospect of studying a somewhat uncharted area of an individual employees' emotions in a project setting. Such a study, according to our understanding, has not been conducted in Norway. Following Peslak's (2005) suggestion, this thesis incorporates the sequence of emotions over a projects lifetime. While both Lindgren et al. (2014) and Cicmil et al. (2016) have studied the progression of emotions, Lindgren et al. (2014) are limited regarding studying a specific sector, whereas, Cicmil et al. (2016) examine a particular industry. Our thesis incorporates project workers from both the private and public sector. Also, this thesis is not limited to one specific industry. This study will, therefore, contribute by capturing a broader perspective. In this way, we will add new insight to the projects life cycle and its various emotional stages. This thesis builds further on the conceptual framework by Cicmil et al. (2016), that takes into consideration the projects life cycle and its various emotional stages. As such, our research question is;

What are the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker's emotions in a project life cycle?

For this thesis, a qualitative approach was chosen as it is helpful when wanting to analyse words rather than numbers (Silverman, 2000). Further, it enabled us to connect with the research objects and to view the world from their perspective (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Mayring (2000, p. 1) content analysis was applied which is described as a “*systematic, rule guided qualitative text analysis, which tries to preserve some methodological strengths of quantitative content analysis and widen them to a concept of qualitative procedure*”. To collect our data ten interviews were conducted using semi-structured interviews and an interview guide, which was predominantly used as a tool to ensure all areas of research where

covered (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012; Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). This sample size was selected due to time constraints, as well as, Saunders et al. (2012) recommendation of a minimum non-probability sample size between 5-25 interview objects for semi-structured interviews. After all of the interviews were coded, the collected statements were analysed and interpreted (Mayring, 2014).

In conclusion, this thesis aims to discover the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker's emotions in a project life cycle, not merely in the Norwegian economy – but also different industries, sectors, age groups, gender and seniority. We aspire to uncover the progression of emotions and whether project tools and organisational support could have a moderating effect on the emotions experienced.

1.1. Structure

This thesis is devised into five main chapters, supplemented by the reference list and appendices. In the current chapter, an overview and argument for the thesis relevance are specified. In the following, Chapter 2, a presentation of previous research, which has been divided into two subchapters, namely “projectification” and employees emotions, will be given. Further, this chapter describes the conceptual framework used in this study. Chapter 3 gives a thorough explanation of our methodology. Subsequent, an analysis is completed in Chapter 4. Lastly, in Chapter 5, the study is concluded grounded on outcomes and results. This chapter also presents the research limitations and critique, as well as, suggestions for further studies.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, a thorough investigation of previous studies on the subject of project work and employee's emotions will be presented. Within the first part, subchapter 2.1, we will address the trend of “projectification” in modern industries and establish a shared understanding of project by definition. Furthermore, in the second part, subchapter 2.2, we will address the emotions of individual's working on projects. Moreover, within the last part, subchapter 2.3, an examination of the theoretical framework that our research is based upon will be presented and discussed.

2.1. “Projectification”

Though projects probably were applied for major construction and civil engineering feats such as the creation of the Pyramids and other historic buildings, it was only at the beginning of the 1930s that projects became a noteworthy part of industrial organisations. Lundin et al. state that “projectification” took a step forward, from a qualitative and quantitative perspective, in the mid-1960s, when, project forms of systematising and manufacturing spread from the traditional fields. During this period projects moved from the common fields of construction, defence and engineering, and extended into other industries such as power, pharmaceuticals, IT and creative industries like marketing as well as television (Lundin et al., 2015).

A survey conducted in 1999 of 3,500 European companies showed that only 13 percent of the surveyed companies placed much or great emphasis on project structures in 1992. However, already in 1996, this emphasis had grown to become 42 percent (Whittington, Pettigrew, Peck, Fenton, & Conyon, 1999). Research conducted in 30 countries by PWC in 2004 discovered that in the 200 companies studied there were 10,640 projects per year (Evrard & Partner, 2004). In 2009 the World Bank published a report on the world development indicators stating that 22 percent of the world’s gross domestic product originated from capital formation, which predominantly derived from projects (Bredillet, 2010; Lundin et al., 2015; World Bank, 2009). As such it is not surprising that a growing number of studies has been focused on the topic of the temporary organisation to broaden the field of knowledge. Although the research on temporary organisations may seem limited at first, this is mainly due to researchers using different labels to describe the phenomenon (Bakker, 2010). If grouped under a standard description, it is possible to see the growth in focus portrayed through Figure 1, which is from a study by Bakker (2010, p. 468). In fact, the research on temporary organisations grew by 339 percent when comparing the last decade (1998-2008) with the one before (1988-1998). According to Schoper et al. (2018) there are currently more than 1500 studies that are focused on the topic of work increasingly being conducted through the use of project and less through the “common” line of work.

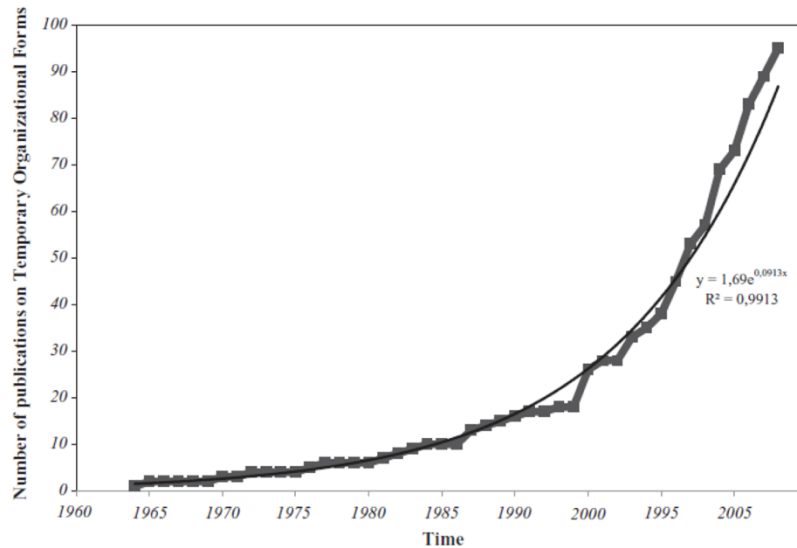


Figure 1: Growth of literature on temporary organisational forms from 1960 to 2008 (Bakker, 2010, p. 468).

2.1.1. The concept of “Projectification”

Concurrently with the growth in research on temporary organisation and projects, comes an increase in definitions. Although there are similarities, there are some variances due to the specific authors’ focus. Some of the most highlighted aspects of a project are the nature of tasks, team involvement and team character. To illustrate these variations, three often-quoted definitions by Goodman and Goodman (1976), Morley and Silver (1977) and Bechky (2006) is presented in the following (Janowicz-Panjaitan, Bakker, & Kenis, 2009).

A set of diversely skilled people working together on a complex task over an limited period of time, present management with several issues such as task effectiveness, innovation, and the professional growth of the system’s members (Goodman & Goodman, 1976, p. 494).

Together a group of people who are unfamiliar with one another’s skills, but must work interdependently on complex tasks (Bechky, 2006, p. 3).

Limited in duration and membership, in which people come together, interact, create something, and then disband (Morley & Silver, 1977, p. 59).

This small sample of definitions shows that Goodman and Goodman (1976) has developed a definition that underlines the nature of the task, while Bechky (2006) focuses on the character

of team involvement. Morley and Silver (1977), on the other hand, emphasises the numerous of forms that temporary organisations may take. Janowicz-Panjaitan et al. (2009) indicate that as a result of all these differences, Lundin and Söderholm (1995) developed a theoretical skeleton of temporary organisations that define the concept in a way that makes it possible for most temporary organisations to be incorporated. The skeleton consists of four components;

- *Limited time*
- *A task as a projects reason for existence (raison d`être).*
- *A team that works on the task within the time available*
- *Transition reflected in the ‘expectation that there should be a qualitative difference in the temporary organization “before” and “after”.*

(pp. 438-439)

As for our thesis, we are basing our research on a definition derived from the study “*Towards a measurement of “projectification”: A study on the share of project-work in the German economy*” conducted by Wald, Schneider, Spanuth, and Schoper (2015). Their broad definition manages to capture all of the aspects within our research. It was developed as a preliminary exploratory study, conducted as preparation for their research study, aspiring to identify a definition that could be used within all types of projects, across industries and company sizes. Their definition also fits proficiently within Lundin and Söderholm (1995) skeleton.

“A project is an undertaking largely characterized by the uniqueness of the conditions in their entirety, i.e.

- *A specific target has been defined for the project.*
- *The project is limited in terms of time (start and end).*
- *The project requires specific resources (e. g. financial, staff, etc.).*
- *An independent process organization exists, which is defined as different from the standard organization in the company.*
- *The projects work on non-routine tasks.*
- *The project has a minimum duration of four weeks.*
- *The project has at least three participants.”*

(Schoper et al., 2018, pp. 73-74); Wald et al. (2015)

Alongside the definition, Wald et al. (2015) discuss how projects are intended to make organisations more flexible, innovative and efficient. Further, Lundin et al. (2015) state that projects are being used to handle a variety of tasks such as the creation of new products and services, structural change or instigating new technologies. This is an effort to tackle a progressively more fluid, intricate and global commercial environment (Chiocchio et al., 2010; Cicmil et al., 2016; Ives, 2005; Pinto, Dawood, & Pinto, 2014; Schoper et al., 2018). Projects are widespread and are being used in every part of society and our lives (Schoper et al., 2018). This growing trend that the temporary, project-based way of working is becoming the common way of operating has made it among the most significant changes in modern organisations (Chiocchio et al., 2010).

The change whereby a growing emphasis of the company's operations is focused on projects and project management (Midler, 1995; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Schoper et al., 2018) has been termed differently by researchers. Some have called it "projectified" (Arvidsson, 2009; Lundin & Söderholm, 1998), others "projectized" (Ekstedt, Lundin, Soderholm, & Wirdenius, 2003). However, the common term preferred by most is "projectification" (Cicmil et al., 2016; Ekstedt, 2009; Hanisch & Wald, 2014; Jensen, Thuesen, & Geraldi, 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Midler, 1995; Schoper et al., 2018).

Midler (1995) was the first to use the term "projectification" in 1995 when researching the French firm Renault. In his research, Midler observed the different phases of transition towards "projectification" of the firm. He forecasted a trend that portrays the present change seen in Western societies, in which less work is being conducted through the common line of work and more through projects. Since Midler introduced the term, "projectification" has later become a buzzword for describing the phenomenon (Schoper et al., 2018).

The shift towards "projectification" implies important consequences for an individual's work and life. An increasing amount of people spend their time working in different kinds of project organisations, and even more, people are working on projects as a part of their otherwise routine-based employment. To understand the different individual's perceptions of working on a project, knowledge of different types of projects and project work situations is essential. Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) have ranked different project work situations from "perfect projects", that involves working full-time on only one project, to all kinds of "imperfect" project work situations, where life may become extra complicated. In the

book “*Beyond project management: New perspectives on the temporary-permanent dilemma*”, Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) present two dilemmas for a deeper understanding of the matter.

1. *To what degree the individuals work situation is tied to the temporary project or the permanent organisational context.*
2. *To what degree project work is routine or exception to the individual.*

(p. 42)

For the first dilemma, the question of representation appears. Does the individual represent the project or the organisation? This may cause a matrix problem of having dual loyalty for serving two leaders (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Braun, Ferreira, and Sydow (2013), as well as, Lundin et al. (2015) state that it is not an uncommon occurrence that employees in project organisations tend to feel a greater belonging to their project, than to their organisation. In fact, the employee’s ties to the organisation are often rather weak (Lundin et al., 2015). The second dilemma addresses the question of a projects uniqueness. Previously projects have been viewed as something exciting and unique, where the individual work on different and new tasks to pursuit new innovative an ambitious goal. As a consequence, projects have become a sort of temporary work situation where one can work abnormally hard and have remarkably fun, being unusually creative. To understand today’s project work situations, one may be compeering this view to the modern reality of today, where projects are not only a routine, but also the work form that entire companies are founded upon. As previously stated, project-based firms have become an increasingly common phenomenon, and more and more individuals devote their entire day of work in different projects (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002).

In the same way, as there are several types of projects, there are various types of project work situations. Projects are not just one standardised form of work but differ according to the situation in which it is executed. During the past decade, the importance of identifying types of projects has been widely acknowledged in the literature by many researchers, such as Packendorff (1995), Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) and Turner and Cochrane (1993). By analysing the two dimensions previously presented, Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) has identified four main types of project work situations, which are shown below in Figure 2.

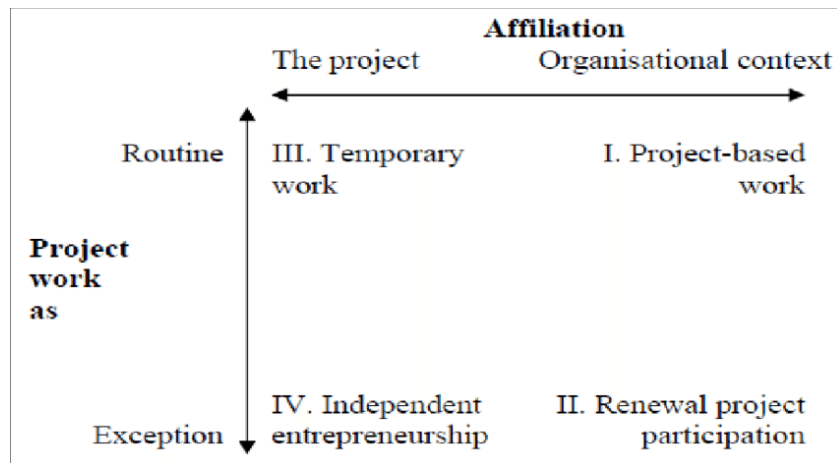


Figure 2: A typology of project work situations (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002, p. 43).

Project-based work, type I, is the most common way for individuals to work on projects. For the individual, this means that their time is spent working on different projects within a stable organisational framework. Here projects are acknowledged within the organisation, and therefore a natural part of the employment, and not the unusual. For the individual, the constant project work means to always “begin over again”. However, while team members of a project are assumed to be dedicated and motivated from the beginning of each project, this is not always the case for the individual. Sometimes a project is not exciting enough to awaken this enthusiasm. A related problem with this kind of project work is the lack of time for reflection and learning between the projects. There is often lack of recourses and overoptimistic time schedules (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002).

An increasingly used type of project work is type II, *renewal project participation*. These are often projects launched to bring the organisation to a higher level through a temporary process. It differentiates from type I, in the way that the projects are unique for the individual and are something performed in parallel to the everyday work. With an expectation of temporary commit to the project, as well as performing the day-to-day work tasks, these types of projects often face time conflicts. However, these kinds of projects also represent an opportunity for the individual to expand competence and show off abilities. Thus, these projects can become essential for making career steps and gain learning experience (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002).

The two last types of project work mentioned by Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) are type III, *temporary work*, and type IV, *independent entrepreneurs*. These types typically

consist of individuals who are self-employed. For our thesis, these latter are of less relevance, and the focus will, therefore, be on *project-based work* and *renewal project participation*.

In their study "*Project overload: An exploratory study of work and management in multi-project settings*" Zika-Viktorsson, Sundström, and Engwall (2006) explore the effect of a multi-project setting and its effect on the project worker. Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006) describe a multi-project setting as a numerous of projects being executed simultaneously. The multi-project setting enables companies to use human resources effectively as limited assets can be utilised in several projects. While being advantageous as less crucial time is used, it additionally allows for knowledge transfer and some capabilities shared. The affliction caused of the multi-project setting is dependent on the kind of project, its distinctiveness, magnitude and scope. According to Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006), a central quality for a healthy setting in which to work in is a fitting degree of strain. Negative mental stress responses are "*sleeping problems, fatigue and inability to let go of problems when leaving the job for the day*" (Zika-Viktorsson et al., 2006, p. 388). An important aspect to reduce these negative emotions is a feeling of control at work (Zika-Viktorsson et al., 2006).

Given the various types of projects that modern individuals are exposed to, as well as the shift towards "projectification" we want to study the consequences of project work further. According to Bredin (2006), "projectification" has numerous consequences for the bureaucratic philosophy when it comes to for example employee relations, organisation, contracts and management. In the article "*The Future, Disposable Organizations and the Rigidities of Imagination*" March (1995) express some concerns regarding this trend.

Throw-away personnel policies, where emphasis is placed on selection and turnover rather than on training and learning, have become common in modern business, politics and marriage. In such a throw-away world, organizations lose important elements of permanence.

(p. 434).

While March (1995) has some disbelief with the temporary organisations due to throw-away employees' policies, modern organisations operating in today's economy seem to be depending more heavily on its employees competence and knowledge than ever before (Bredin, 2006). A common motto for many organisations is "*Our employees are our most*

valuable assets” (Brummet, Flamholtz, & Pyle, 1968, p. 217). This motto then shows how the employees can be viewed as the organisations main competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). As such, being able to attract the best assets or employees, as well as, integrating their efforts within the company is critical in a strive to attain long-term competitiveness (Söderlund & Bredin, 2006). Further, this indicates that the work situation of one employee is a crucial strategic competitive factor (Bredin, 2006).

Overall, for both organisations and individuals projects are inherently viewed as a positive experience (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). The transition towards project work is viewed as a long-desired substitute to the ineffective and boring bureaucratic way of working. From the organisations, perspective projects provide manageable flexibility to work and become a facilitator for innovation. As for the individual, a project is seen as unique, stimulating and thrilling experiences (Cicmil et al., 2009; Gill, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014). However, with the shift towards “projectification” resistance and conflicts are inevitable (Lundin et al., 2015). Although one finds employees that view project as liberating, others may feel that they are imprisoned by projects (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2006a). Critical studies, centred on the topic of projects have highlighted some significant, but possibly blocked existential outcomes for people involved in project work. Their findings indicate that working conditions are stressful, and characterised by oppression to unrealistic plans, goals and deadlines (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Furthermore, their findings indicate that projects have short-term perspectives focusing on each project separately, instead of having a long-term perspective that copes with the organisational and individual project-based work-life (Cicmil et al., 2016). Moreover, the employee is also faced with responsibilities to continuously perform in projects to ensure positive business results, as well as, safeguard future employability (Lundin et al., 2015; Packendorff, 2002). Because, as Lindgren et al. (2014, p. 1390) proclaims, “*you are only as good as your last project*”.

Cicmil et al. (2016) state that a work situation where everything is temporary, such as the relations and assignments, together with recurring performance evaluations, could also be a work-life where nothing is stable, nothing and no person is dependable. The researchers express a concern over employees’ professional reputation, performance and feeling of personal worthiness being lost since they are continuously tested. Although project management promises to bring the justifiable, rational, and manageable, Cicmil et al. (2016) unveil that project-work may create settings which are difficult to handle, defend and control.

Further, the researchers view “projectification” as an ethical issue with impact on lasting sustainability for organisations and humanity. The authors believe that “projectification” could make employees, both independently and jointly, susceptible to a situation that could in the long haul deplete available resources and decrease employees ability to adapt, thereby making the organisation unsustainable (Cicmil et al., 2016).

2.2. Employees emotions

Newer research on project-based work has addressed some of its emotional consequences (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014). As this thesis is researching the emotional effects on the individual project worker, the highlights of this research will be presented in the following.

It is not until recently that the emotions of employees have been recognised as a legitimate and vital part of work life within the field of organisational studies (Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Fineman, 2006; Lindgren et al., 2014). As a result, during the past two decades there has been a significant increase in research that stresses the theme of emotions in organisational behaviour (Callahan & McCollum, 2002). To better manage and measure the effect of emotions on organisations there is a need for a basic understanding. However, there has been a variety of perspectives and fields, reaching from psychological and sociological research to disciplinary that distinguish these studies (Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014). Furthermore, it is characterised and studied with both a critical and instrumental aim, and with interpretive and essential approaches (Lindgren et al., 2014).

Most of the previous research on projects where researchers have had an emotional focus has centred on how project employee’s emotions, if correctly administered, could be a contributor to the project’s success. With their focus on suggestions and how to achieve project success, their research does not expressively advance our knowledge of the emotional processes of project employees progress in project-based work. There are also some studies on the topic of emotional labour conducted on “creative industries”. The focus has been regarding emotional conditions and developments in the interview objects with emphasis on industry-specific settings, corresponding to emotions such as public exposure and short-term work. Though, the focus of these streams of studies has not been on the subject of emotions experienced in project work, as it conveys the broad concept of project management concerning a practical and performative work method (Lindgren et al., 2014).

With all these different approaches to studying the theme of emotions, there is a lack of a general agreement on a definition (Cabanac, 2002; Kappas, 2002). Moreover, the term is often taken for granted (Cabanac, 2002; Fineman, 2006). Despite an absence of consensus on the definition of emotions, some are more acknowledged and used than others. In the article “*What is emotion?*”, Cabanac (2002) conducts a critical review of different perceptions and definitions of emotions by various authors. He proposes his definition of emotion as “*any mental experience with high intensity and high hedonic*”, with hedonic meaning a motivational experience to emotion (Cabanac, 2002, p. 90). A similar approach was made by Cole, Martin, and Dennis (2004, p. 319) where they define emotions as a “*biologically endowed processes that permit extremely quick appraisals of situations and equally rapid preparedness to act to sustain favourable conditions and deal with unfavourable conditions.*” However, a more specific definition towards emotions within a project work setting will be appropriate for the aim of this thesis.

Previous research by Lindgren et al. (2014), with focus on the topic of “projectification”, uses a definition that is based on the standing that emotions are an essential part of an organisation and its processes. Moreover, that it is experienced by employees when working on projects and that it affects the processes within the organisations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Lindgren et al., 2014). Their definition is developed from Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) who states that emotions can be separated between two central emotional extremes. (1) *The social constructionist and the symbolic interactionist*, and (2) *naturalistic and positivist perspectives* (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, p. 100; Ratner, 1989; Thoits, 1989). The first extreme believes that an emotional experience is primarily depending on how the situation is defined. An individual interprets a situation through the use of symbolic or social interactions and labels it as a particular type of emotional experience. The second extreme, on the other hand, the naturalistic/positive, believe that certain situations provoke specific emotions and that there exist only a few basic and universal emotions. Emotions that are primarily genetically determined and secondarily a function of knowledge and experience. When comparing the two extremes the disagreement in the definition are to what extent emotions are cognitively and socially communicated (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995).

Lindgren et al. (2014) wish to capture the central variety of perspectives without arbitrarily eliminating other specific aspects of their research and therefore apply Ashforth and

Humphrey (1995) definition. Ashforth and Humphrey (1995, p. 99) define emotion in rather extensive and comprehensive terms as purely a “*subjective feeling state*”. This definition entails a person alleged basic emotions, social emotions in addition to correlated concepts such as effect, sentiment and moods. When mentioning basic emotions Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) refer to emotion such as *joy*, *boredom* and *anger*. Further, they use examples such as *shame*, *guilt* and *jealousy* to portrait social emotions. As this research is centred on the topic of “projectification” and emotions, we will be using the same definition as Lindgren et al. (2014), and Ashforth and Humphrey (1995).

This definition becomes an “interpretive” middle-ground between the two emotional extremes of the *social constructionist and the symbolic interactionist*, and the *naturalistic/positive* as explained above (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995, p. 100). Their approach is established on the concept that emotions are perceived subjectively and entrenched in a social setting, whereby specific emotions are suitable and legitimate (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). We wish to capture all the employee’s emotions and, therefore, we believe it is central having a broad definition. A comprehensive definition will ensure that certain emotions are not overlooked. The interpretive method is founded on the principle that emotions play a crucial part in organising processes, both with focus on the experiences of the employees while partaking in these processes, as well as, affecting these same organising processes (Lindgren et al., 2014).

In the article *Love, hate and projects: On passion, obsession and depression in project-based work*, Lindgren and Packendorff (2009) base their research on three primary considerations, when analysing how projects are created as items of emotions on a daily basis. Which further builds on our description of project work. Firstly, a consideration of the socially created expectations that appears when labelling something a project. The expectations for a project are typically commitment, devotion and passion in a controlled and planned manner, where extraordinary emotions do not belong. Moreover, it is seen as something out of the ordinary and only a temporary happening. Secondly, a consideration of projects expression of dreams and hopes, whereas a project is often seen as an opportunity for a long-desired change and achievement (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014). This consideration has two opposite sides, where one is positive as of the change of using projects to accomplish something extraordinary. The other one is negative as of the emotional risk of failure (Lindahl & Rehn, 2007), obsession and situations, where sacrifices and heroism are necessary as a cause of collapsed control and planning models. Thirdly, a consideration of projects as an illustration

of professionalism, where handling and mastering challenging project work situations become a part of being reliable, successful and professional (Hodgson, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014).

Projects are noted by several researchers to contain a fundamental duality or a contradiction in the way it becomes a diffuse promise of both control and adventure. The promise is closely related to the confidence of handling a complicated situation, and the excitement of making new and astounding things (Lindgren et al., 2014). Although project work often is “coined” as an exciting and thrilling experience (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014), researchers have shown that projects often tend to be an arena in which stress, frustration, disappointment and conflict flourish. With the restricted possibility for knowledge development and distressing deadlines, as well as, shame being ever-present, projects become very emotional work incidents (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005).

Over the past six decades project tools have been created to handle complex project work situations, aiming to make new projects easier to control and more likely to accomplish project goals and in the end become successful (Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Today there are a variety of different methods, some more known and used than others such as the PMBOK, PRINCE2 and Gantt-chart (Wideman, 2002). Although project tools are intended to support the project worker through the project, it may be perceived as a burden if it becomes too bureaucratic. In the article *“Project overload: An exploratory study of work and management in multi-project settings”*, Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006) writes about the balance between implying too many routines where the project becomes too standardised, and too few routines where control may be lost, as a delicate matter. Further, they argue how this balance is essential to maintain the individual’s motivation, creativity and impulsiveness throughout a project.

While project tools can affect project workers, the perceived organisational support is another aspect believed to influence personnel. A review of 70 articles conducted by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) examined the effect that perceived organisational support could have on the employees. The study showed that it had a strong correlation regarding the forecasted direction of job satisfaction (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Spector (1997, p. 2) define job satisfaction as *“how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs”*. According to Spector (1997), it is possible to view job satisfaction as a display of emotional

well-being. Further, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) conclude that their review indicates that essential antecedents regarding perceived organisational support include reasonable firm practices, supervisor support, as well as, work conditions results in an improved commitment to the firm and enhanced performance. Additionally, employees exhibit less absence and a lower chance of resigning.

2.3. “Projectification” as a circular process and its emotional consequences

In “*Thrilled by the discourse, suffering through the experience: Emotions in project-based work*” by Lindgren et al. (2014) the researchers develop a conceptual framework, which combines four emotional processes, together with information about individual’s characteristics and specific projects. Through their research, they identified four groups of emotions, namely: *confidence, thrill, anxiety and weariness* as presented in Figure 2.

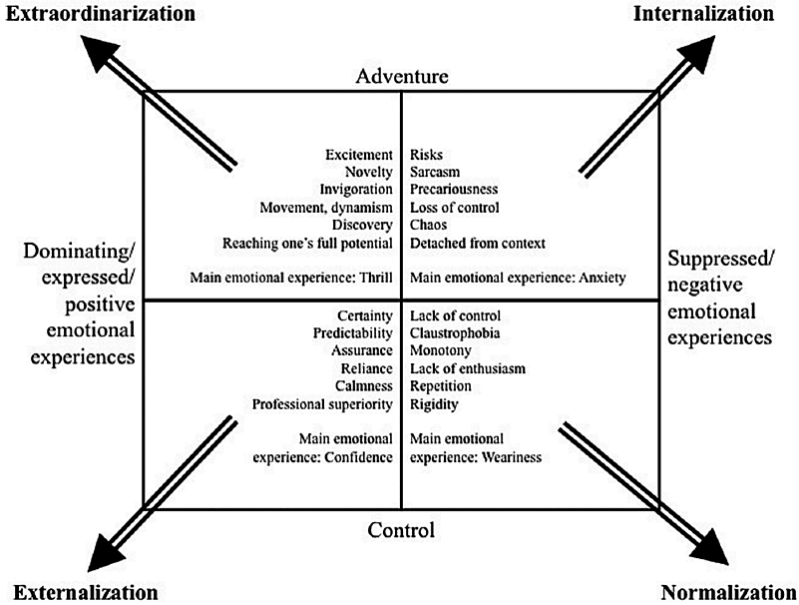


Figure 2: Processes of invoking the project management discourse in everyday work practice (Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014, p. 1402)

Lindgren et al. (2014) argue that these elements combined might increase the intensity of perceived emotions and especially those that have a negative undertone. Lindgren et al. (2014) study concludes by stating that project workers are meant to bring passion to every new project, thus lighting their flame of passion time and time again, which they entitle “*extraordinarization*”. Another aspect is “*normalization*”, whereby the project workers shall admit to unexpected changes, delays and unforeseen overtime as normal parts of their jobs.

Thirdly, titled “*externalization*”, Lindgren et al. (2014) state that project workers are meant to adhere to “*organisational project planning, control and evaluation systems without further ado*” (Lindgren et al., 2014, p. 1405). Lastly, the individual project worker is responsible and should accept developing difficulties with calm and self-control, which is entitled “*internalization*”.

According to Peslak (2005), most researchers have previously struggled to incorporate the progression of emotions over a projects lifetime when studying emotions in projects. In the article “*Emotions and team projects and processes*”, he stresses the importance of emotions development through a projects lifetime. He refers to the importance of tailoring initiatives and actions to improve the emotions experienced at the various stages of a project, and thus conclude with multiple measurements of emotions to be extremely useful in studying emotions in projects (Peslak, 2005).

In the article “*The project (management) discourse and its consequences: on vulnerability and unsustainability in project-based work.*” Cicmil et al. (2016) adopted the previously mentioned conceptual framework, and developed it further into a process that captures the progressing of emotions, corresponding with Peslak (2005) suggestion. They elevated it from exploring a worker’s subjective experiences of project work, to additionally examining how these experiences are embedded in dominant discourse. Furthermore, they investigated the reasons why the workers continued to tolerate these discourses despite their emotional consequences. Figure 3, illustrates Cicmil et al. (2016) conceptual framework in a circular process of “*projectification*”. It raises the elements of project discourse and includes its potentially suppressed negative emotions and consequences within the various parts of a project. The four characteristics of the process are the “*Dependence on great expectations, follies and sensation*”, followed by “*Commitment to blank sheets, fresh starts and ‘professional’ performance*”. Next the “*Internalisation of honour/shame and personal worthiness*” and lastly the “*Exhaustion, finiteness and the end of resilience*” (Cicmil et al., 2016, p. 64). These processes will be discussed separately and more in depth within the following section.

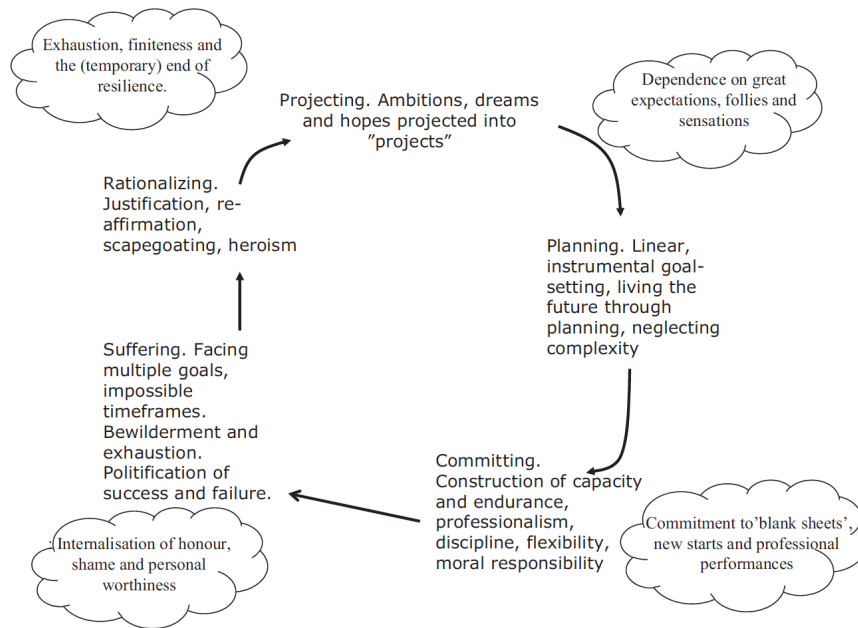


Figure 3: “Projectification” as a circular process of invoking elements of the project discourse, including potential suppressed consequences. Adapted and developed from Packendorff and Lindgren (2014), p.17, (Cicmil et al., 2016, p. 64).

Dependence on great expectations, follies and sensation

This first characteristic of the circular process is related to Lindgren et al. (2014) aim for a broad conceptualisation of “projectification”. It indicates that “projectification” promotes a specific value regarding success, accomplishment and inventiveness, which frames the ongoing series of projects opportunities. Cicmil et al. (2016) state that project management encourages a certain sense of accomplishment, triumph and creativity. Thus, appealing to one’s “ambitions, dreams and hopes projected into projects” (Cicmil et al., 2016, p. 64). To achieve these ambitions, dreams and hopes clear and instrumental goals are set. Moreover, employees tend to exist in the future in the way of plans and overlooking complexity (Cicmil et al., 2016). Project work is seen by employees as occasions to start over. Which results in employees continuing to engage in project work, creating a circular, where a sustained and intense way of working becomes “normalized” (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014).

Another study that contributes to this view is “Emotional project management” by Gareis (2004). According to Gareis (2004), positive emotions which are associated with the start process is the excitement of a new and stimulating project. Further, it is also the excitement of meeting new employees or known colleagues in a new project. Contradictory, negative

emotions may also arise, such as being over challenged, either by the work or responsibility; this may in turn cause project workers to experience a decrease in motivation.

Commitment to blank sheets, new starts and professional performance

This second characteristic is closely related to the grand expectations addressed within the first characteristic. Furthermore, it relates to the personal achievements and benefits generated by projects in the long-run, such as the hope of projects contributing to long-awaited professional fulfilment, success in life or to be a springboard for one's career (Cicmil et al., 2016). These discoveries correlate with the findings by Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) as previously discussed. Further, Cicmil et al. (2016) state that it makes an illusion of projects creating a unique arena where one can personally excel and where excellence is fundamental. A culture where workers are expected to excitingly volunteer and commit to projects occurs and becomes the norm. Simultaneously there is an awareness of the sacrifices that have to be made concerning extreme determination and responsibilities that do not always correlate with recourses available. According to Cicmil et al. (2016, p. 64), there is created an expectation for the individual project worker to construct; *capacity and endurance, professionalism, discipline, flexibility and moral responsibility*.

Gareis (2004) describes the common positive emotions at this stage of a project to be joyful as a result of creative problem solving, reaching intermediate project results and good feedback. Further, he portrays the typical negative emotion of fear that may appear as a cause of vague project status, groundless feedback, the use of insufficient controlling methods, as well as too much competition inside the project team. For managing these emotions, he emphasises the importance of communicating the “*Big Project Picture*” to all of the project workers.

Internalisation of honour/shame and personal worthiness

Characteristic number three is drawn from the project management discourse where aspects of failures and deviations are suppressed and sometimes ignored (Lindahl & Rehn, 2007). Project workers may be suffering due to facing several project goals, with impossible deadlines. These aspects can cause project workers to feel panic and exhaustion (Cicmil et al., 2016). If a project is not able to live up to its expectations and not go as planned or even fail, it may leave the project workers with an emotion of having deceived both themselves and others. The project work then turns out to be a question of managing shame and honour (Rehn & Lindahl, 2011). An emotion of feeling inadequate is also common in project work, as a

consistently high work intensity is required (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2006b). There is an anticipation of working long hours as well as to be available to work extra on short notice (Kunda, 2009; Nandhakumar & Jones, 2001). Consequently, leaving no time for personal development in the long run (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2006b; Peticca-Harris, Weststar, & McKenna, 2015). However, any confrontation to these working conditions can be perceived as prohibited or unnecessary conduct, or even poor individual performance (Hodgson, 2002).

Exhaustion, finiteness and the end of resilience

This last characteristic of the circular process addresses the exhaustion, underperformance and crises caused when the motivation and enthusiasm cannot be upheld anymore (Cicmil et al., 2016). The project workers start to express their emotions of never being able to perform at their professional standard, never feeling satisfied with themselves and always having to carry the feeling of being ashamed not being able to deliver (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2007).

Additionally, the accessible resources are depleted, and the administration expects the project team to handle and solve possible difficulties without complaining. During this period heroism tends to surface, whereby project workers sacrifice themselves to save the project (Cicmil et al., 2016). Contradictory to Cicmil et al. (2016), Gareis (2004) believes that it is during the termination process of the project that the positive emotions should dominate. Nevertheless, the joy of reaching one's goals might also have project workers experience the sadness of splitting from project employees, as well as, the insecurity of one's future career prospect.

In summarising, Figure 1 embodies a circular character of "projectification" as a discursive exercise, which operates as a helpful conceptual framework of the disregarded individual experiences related to the process of a project and its structures. The research by Cicmil et al. (2016) functions as a reminder of the potential ordeal dangers associated with project-based work, such as exhaustion, disappointment and unsustainability. A project is an emotional journey that begins with positive emotions that later evolves to become increasingly negative throughout the projects. This evolvement of negative emotions in a project correlates with Peslak (2005) findings in his article "*Emotions and team projects and processes*". Here he discovered that a project team starts out with more positive emotions than negative emotions and that certain negative emotions developed during a project. However, he also found that the positive emotions increased as well. Another interesting finding by Peslak (2005) is the timing of support from the management given during the projects life cycle. He found there to

be much support at the beginning of a project, where he suggests it is least needed, and less support during the later stages, where he proposes the support might be more valuable.

Following Peslak (2005) suggestion, this thesis incorporates the progression of emotions over a projects lifetime. Lindgren et al. (2014) conceptual framework, as discussed above in Figure 2, was drawn on illustrative empirical material from previous research in the Information and Communications Technology sector, whereas Figure 3 studies individuals in the creative industry (Cicmil et al., 2016). We want to contribute by capturing a broader perspective, investigating different types of industries, sectors and projects. In this way, we will add new insight to the projects life cycle and its various emotional stages. This thesis, therefore, builds further on the conceptual frame by Cicmil et al. (2016), that takes into consideration the projects life cycle and its various emotional stages.

3. Methodology

This chapter serves to explain how this study was conducted. Firstly, the chapter will give a justification as to the reasoning behind the choice of a qualitative research method. Secondly, there will be a description of how data was collected and, lastly, how it was analysed and interpreted.

3.1. Deciding a research methodology

Compared to the choice of research methodology there is perhaps no other subject in the study of social sciences discussion that receives more variances of opinion. Furthermore, there is possibly no other subject with greater importance for the results of scientific work and valid research, compared to the use of satisfactory research methods (Mayring, 2014). As such a brief explanation of the characteristics of the two methodologies will be given and the reasoning behind our choice of method.

3.2. Reviewing qualitative and quantitative research

Sekaran and Bougie (2014) describe quantitative data as being data in the shape of numbers, which are usually collected by the use of structured questions. Additionally, Taylor, Bogdan, and DeVault (2015) state that, in common quantitative research scholars choose cases according to statistical probability. To ensure the examined cases are descriptive of a larger

population to which the study is focused, probability techniques are used, such as random sampling and stratified sampling. Per critics of quantitative research, there is disapproval of the fact that quantitative research may disregard the social and cultural structure of the 'variables' in which it pursues to correlate. Because it may be founded on 'variables' that are arbitrarily defined, considering the perspective of naturally manifested interaction. Further, as quantitative research generally entails little or no interaction with people, it is viewed by some as being a 'quick fix'. Critics also believe that for some social science studies a quantitative research method is merely inappropriate. Since it is based on the belief that experiments, statistics, as well as, survey data disregard the observation of behaviour, thus it can hide basic social processes (Silverman, 2000).

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2014), qualitative research can be defined as:

Data in the form of words as generated from the broad answers to questions in interviews, or from responses to open-ended questions in a questionnaire, or through observations, or from already available information gathered from various sources such as the Internet.

(p. 3)

Qualitative studies are primarily inductive and interested in the analysis of words, and images instead of numbers (Silverman, 2000). As such, studies using a qualitative research method are interested in the chance to connect with the research objects and to view the world from their perspective (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Although the research should be supported by a theoretical framework, it is the research data which should be directing the research, and not a theory (Taylor et al., 2015).

The criticism of qualitative methods is primarily directed towards the subject of validity and reliability. As such, these concerns are discussed in greater detail in the following subchapters. Although most of the criticism of qualitative research is aimed concerning validity and reliability, there are also many quantitatively oriented methodology textbooks that propose that qualitative research ought only to be considered at the preliminary or 'exploratory' phases of the research (Silverman, 2000). Further, there is a danger of generalising qualitative research, due to the research often only studying a small group of individuals as part of a greater population. Moreover, qualitative data stand the chance of

becoming rather subjective. Because all observations are categorised through the examiners' selective lens. Bias is a factor which in traditional research should be evaded at all costs. Taylor et al. (2015) believe it is impossible to research without being affected by bias. Instead, one should confess to one's perceptions and study the results in this light.

The research question primarily determines the decision of one's research methodology. When conducting explorative research, such as this thesis, a qualitative methodology seems appropriate (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). Rather than studying the topic numerically, we wish to view the question from the project workers perspective, as such open questions are used. Taylor et al. (2015) suggest that once researchers condense people's words and behaviour to statistical calculations, one will possibly miss the perspective of the human perception of social life. However, through the use of qualitative studies, researchers connect with the person and gets an understanding of their everyday battles in society. As such, one gets an understanding of concepts and emotions such as suffering and frustration. The essence of these concepts is lost when using other methods of research (Taylor et al., 2015). Following the suggestion by Taylor et al. (2015), this explorative thesis is also supported by a theoretical framework. Nevertheless, as the primary emphasis of this thesis is inductive, aiming to discover the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker's emotions in a project life cycle, by analysing the interviewees' statements we find a qualitative approach appropriate.

3.2.1. Verification of qualitative methods

According to LeCompte and Goetz (1982, p. 55) "*attaining absolute validity and reliability is an impossible goal for any research model*". Nonetheless, it is crucial to consider different variables to improve the research's credibility. Since qualitative research is chosen for this study, the challenges regarding validity and reliability for qualitative research has been in high focus. Although they are central concepts for quantitative research, there have existed discussions between qualitative researchers about its importance. The qualitative researchers who believe that reliability and validity are central concepts for qualitative research believe that the concepts need to be altered. One approach, which will be used in this thesis, is to include validity and reliability, but with a reduced focus on measurement issues (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Validity

According to Silverman (2000), validity is a synonym for ‘truth’. Sekaran and Bougie (2014, p. 225) define validity as “*a test of how well an instrument that is developed measures the particular concept it is intended to measure*”. However, Sekaran and Bougie (2014) state that in the context of qualitative research validity has another meaning. They state that in a qualitative study, validity refers to whether the research can achieve *internal* and *external validity*. Internal validity refers to whether the study’s results correctly embody the gathered data. Whereas, external validity deals with whether the study can be generalised or conducted in other situations or scenarios. To overcome these challenges of attaining validity in qualitative research, Sekaran and Bougie (2014) have created two methods, used in this study. The first method deals with the challenge of avoiding a distinct temptation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). Since qualitative researchers most often only have access to a few in-depth cases, there is often a temptation to use stories that support the examiner's theory, or paying too much attention to a few stories, rather than the common ones (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014; Silverman, 2000). We have including all the respondent’s answers, thus ensuring that not only one, or a selected few stories are represented. Further, this has ensured that a representation of opposing cases are present.

Reliability

Another important concept is reliability. According to LeCompte and Goetz (1982, p. 35) “*reliability refers to the extent to which studies can be replicated. It requires that a researcher using the same methods can obtain the same results as those of a prior study*”. Similarly to Sekaran and Bougie (2014) explanation of validity within qualitative research, LeCompte and Goetz (1982) separate reliability into two categories, namely *external-* and *internal reliability*. External reliability refers to the degree that research can be repeated. This condition is demanding to meet when using qualitative research since ‘freezing’ a social situation is merely impossible. Thus, when contrasted to the rigorously organised designs of laboratory experiments, qualitative research may seem like disordered efforts at reproduction. Internal reliability, on the other hand, refers to whether, within a specific study, when there are multiple observers, will harmonise in their understanding of what they see and hear (Bryman & Bell, 2015; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). These concerns of reliability will be furthered discussed in the following as a part of overcoming data quality concerns were also our measure to overcome these concerns will be presented.

Overcoming data quality concerns

Prior to a discussion of our reasoning behind a semi-structured interview method, we will examine some of the quality issues linked with this manner of research interviews. The absence of standardisation when conducting semi-structured interviews may cause some worries regarding reliability. Another concern with this type of interviews is bias. There are three kinds of bias to assess when conducting these forms of interviews. Interviewer bias is the first to consider (Saunders et al., 2012). Interviewer bias is “*where the comments, tone or non-verbal behaviour of the interviewer creates bias in the way that interviewees respond to a question being asked*” (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 381). Interviewer bias can come from the interviewer imposing individual philosophies by the questions asked, or the way in which one responds to answers. Secondly, one must consider response bias. This form of bias may be triggered due to the interviewees' perception of the interviewer. Partaking in an interview is an invasive procedure. Since researchers want to investigate an event or pursue justification. The interviewee may be prepared to participate in an interview. However, the interviewee might answer certain sensitive questions in a way which throws the interviewee in a ‘desirable light’. Lastly, the research may be affected by participation bias. Which is caused by the individuals' contributors who agree to partake in the research. Due to interviews frequently being time-consuming, there often is a decline in motivation in wanting to take part in the interviews. As such, some researchers sample may be affected by bias in the form of selecting whom the data is gathered from. To overcome participation bias in this thesis, a third-party was used to assist in finding suitable interview objects (Saunders et al., 2012).

One response to the problem of reliability in the findings when using semi-structured interviews is that they are not necessarily meant to be repeatable as they reveal the truth at the point in time of which they were collected. One approach to overcoming the issue of repetition is to present notes regarding the research design, reasoning behind the selection of strategy and methods, and the gathered data. Following this suggestion, we conducted transcriptions of each interview, using audio-recordings, and incorporated it into a category system presenting the answers (see Appendix C). Further, our reasoning behind strategy and method is stated in this chapter allowing other researchers to reanalyse our data (Saunders et al., 2012). In addition to furthered increase reliability, Silverman (2000) suggest conducting a pre-test of data collection method. Thus, we also tested our interview guide on one interview object beforehand.

Bias is an aspect we strongly wish to prevent. Saunders et al. (2012), states that one important aspect which can affect interview objects is the amount of information supplied. To ensure that interview objects would not feel encouraged to answer questions in a specific way interview objects were only informed that the research was focused on project work. Further, all questions were open-ended, which accommodates any possible answer by the candidate and reduces the chance of interviewer bias. Additionally, our questions were approved by our supervisor. Nonetheless, our research may be affected by some form of interviewee bias, where they want to be seen in a favourable 'light' since some questions are centred around emotions and may be viewed as sensitive. However, we believe our research will not be affected by this to a large degree as our research respondents are anonymous. Lastly, we ensured that our behaviour during the interview would not lead the interview object in any direction by responding simply with 'ok' or other similar remarks to their answers (Saunders et al., 2012).

Saunders et al. (2012) state that generalisability of qualitative research is linked to whether one can relate one's research to existing theory. Further, this will permit theoretical suggestions to be progressed which can be examined in alternative contexts. It is important to note, however, that this thesis cannot achieve statistical generalisation concerning a whole population since using semi-structured interviews.

3.3. Collecting the data

Choosing the appropriate research method for collecting data is important in order to gather data answering the specific research question, and it can increase the value of the research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). An explanation of semi-structured interview as our choice of research method will therefore be given in the following, as well as a description of how this data has been collected.

3.3.1. Choosing a method

Various methods can be applied for collecting data, such as interviews, observation and focus groups. For this thesis, which is aimed at exploring the individual's experience of emotions working in projects, interviews appear to be the appropriate method. Interviews are by nature a social meeting where an individual's actions, experiences, thoughts and feelings are expressed (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004). Interviews allow researchers to ask

open-ended questions and get the individuals opinions regarding the studied phenomenon (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In comparison, the method of observation will not be able to observe an individual's feelings, thoughts or intentions (Quinn Patton, 2002). Moreover, interviews have been found to be more likely for managers to agree to participate in, rather than to complete questioners, especially when they find the interview topic fascinating or relevant to their work (Saunders et al., 2012).

How interviews are structured vary, among other things, according to their purpose (Saunders et al., 2012). For quantitative analysis, the interviews are often highly structured and standardised to obtain quantifiable data and to maximise reliability and validity (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Saunders et al., 2012). Furthermore, this type of interviews is frequently used by researchers to collect generalizable data. For qualitative analysis, on the other hand, the interviews tend to be less structured and more flexible, as the purpose is to obtain in-depth data. This type of interview has a larger focus on the interviewees' point of view, opposed to quantitative that reflects the concern of the researcher to a greater extent (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Semi-structured and unstructured interviews are such examples, and are types of interview that provide essential background or contextual material (Saunders et al., 2012). Due to the low degree of structure, these types of interviews are frequently used in exploratory studies where the research is flexible. Concerning a rather small group of interview objects, like for this thesis, where the primary focus does not concern comparison of cases, the structure does not need to be highly standardised but can be somewhat open (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014).

Due to the theory presented above, semi-structured interviews seemed to be the most suitable interview type for this thesis. Moreover, the semi-structured interview made it possible to maintain a certain consistency of the concepts covered throughout each interview, due to the premade interview guide. Further, the structure of the interview guide made sure all of the important theoretical issues were covered during the interviews. The interview guide also contributed to the analysis by facilitating it according to the different categories. As for the interview being structured only to a certain degree, it opened up the possibility for the interviewee to talk in a non-constraining way. Additionally, it also opened up for other upcoming topics and questions that could not have been foreseen due to the exploitative character of the thesis. Hence, a structured interview may have hindered the conversation.

Besides, the order of the questions in the interview guide could be asked according to what seemed most suitable for each interview (Saunders et al., 2012).

3.3.2. The Interview Guide

As with all research methods, the key to a successful interview is careful reading and preparation (Saunders et al., 2012). Therefore, before conducting the interviews, existing literature was studied extensively. Relevant theories, definitions and related themes were collected and used as inspiration for the development of open questions to understand the concept of “projectification” and its impact of project work on the employees’ emotions to a greater extent. Based on these questions an interview guide was developed, which may be found in Appendix A.

The interview guide was mainly used as a tool to ensure all areas of research were covered and served as a guideline during the interviews (Saunders et al., 2012). The questions within the interview guide were categorised into different themes and a natural sequence to allow for fluent interviews. However, due to the exploratory character of this study and use of semi-structured interviews, this order was not strictly followed. Sometimes it seemed more appropriate to let the interviewees answer the questions in an unconstrained way and let them mention all that came to mind. Furthermore, several of the interviewees brought up topics at the beginning of the interview that was planned for later. Thus, it became more suitable to progress with these questions. Additionally, as the interviewees had different work experience and educational background concerning projects, possible misunderstandings regarding the questions were taken into consideration (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). Hence, clarifying questions were asked whenever it seemed necessary to make sure the interviewees understood the questions correctly.

As previously mentioned, a pre-test of the interview guide was conducted to test the interview questions and to increase the reliability of the research (Silverman, 2000). This test led to some minor changes of the reformulations of some questions, as some were formulated somewhat unclear and might have caused misunderstanding of its meaning. Moreover, as the pre-test interview provided interesting insight for this thesis, and due to only minor changes being made to the interview guide, this interview was included in the research.

3.3.3. Conducting the interviews

Ten interviews were conducted to answer this thesis research question. The sample size was selected due to time constraints. Besides, Saunders et al. (2012) recommend a minimum non-probability sample size between 5-25 interview objects for semi-structured interviews. As non-probability sampling implies, the interview objects were carefully selected to be suitable for answering the research question. A selection of six project workers and four project leaders, with a different experience from projects were made. However, it is of relevance to mention that some of the project leaders were also working as project workers in periods. Furthermore, they were selected due to working within different industries and sectors, as well as their variation in age, ranging from 31 to 63 years. This selection was aimed produce a variation in the data collected, thus enabling a broader description and explanation of the key research themes (Saunders et al., 2012). Although such a variation might seem like a contradiction, as a small sample size can contain completely diverse views, and cases, Quinn Patton (2002) argues that it is in fact a strength. Table 1, presents an overview of the interview respondents information, but to maintain the anonymity of the respondents the presented names are fictional.

Interview object (IO)	Project leader / Project worker	Gender	Age	Industry	Public sector / Private sector	Company
IO1 Lisa	Project leader	Female	31	IT	Private sector	Company A
IO2 Susan	Project worker	Female	39	IT	Private sector	Company A
IO3 Betty	Project leader	Female	39	IT	Private sector	Company A
IO4 James	Project worker	Male	45	Municipal services	Public sector	Company B
IO5 Helen	Project leader	Female	50	Environmental	Private sector	Company C
IO6 Brian	Project leader	Male	50	IT	Private sector	Company D
IO7 Kevin	Project worker	Male	63	Environmental	Private sector	Company C
IO8 David	Project leader	Male	36	Environmental	Private sector	Company C
IO9 Mark	Project worker	Male	36	Environmental	Private sector	Company C
IO10 Linda	Project worker	Female	48	Municipal services	Public sector	Company B

Table 1: Overview of interview objects

Lastly, the researchers, Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002), state that it is essential to know different project work situations when trying to understand individual's perception of working on a project. Projects are not only a routine, but also the work form that entire companies are founded upon. It is therefore essential to mention that all of our respondents work in a project type I work situation, except for interview object four, which works in a project type II work situation.

At the start of the interviews, respondents were acknowledged for taking time to participate. Further, they were given the opportunity to request additional information regarding the research. Additionally, the respondents were informed about their anonymity and the option to not answer questions. It would also be respected if one decided to withdraw from the interview at any time. Further, all the respondents granted us permission to tape record the interview. The interviews lasted between 40 and 70 minutes each. As location may impact the interview (Saunders et al., 2012), we chose to conduct each of them at the interviewees workplace, allowing the conversation to flow more freely as the respondents were familiar with the location. It may have helped gather more honest and sensitive information compared to executing the interviews in more public surroundings where one may feel intimidated or exposed. For the same reason, all of the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, as that was the mother tongue of all the interviewees.

3.4. Analysis

Consequently, to finalising the interviews, all audio-recordings were transcribed to prepare them for the analysis. After thorough investigation for an appropriate method for analysis, Maryng's content analysis was selected as an suitable method. This chapter will explain the method and how it was applied.

3.4.1. Qualitative content analysis

Mayring (2000, p. 1) describes a qualitative content analysis approach as a "*systematic, rule guided qualitative text analysis, which tries to preserve some methodological strengths of quantitative content analysis and widen them to a concept of qualitative procedure*". There are relatively few well-established and universally recognised standards for analysing qualitative data. However, one accepted is the qualitative content analysis, which is a useful and systematic method for analysing large volumes of textual material (Sekaran & Bougie, 2014). Although there exist other text analytical methods, few seem to be as exact, with

guided models analytical rules, and far graphing as the qualitative content analysis method developed by Mayring (2014). This method seems useful for this thesis since it attempts to build on the advantages of quantitative analysis, such as being guided by rules and incorporating the concepts of reliability and validity.

Mayring (2014) has developed a seven-step process for qualitative content analysis (Figure 4). The first step in the research process is the need to present the research question as a real question, not merely a topic. Refraining from this condition makes the research arbitrary. By stating a clear research question, it in turn becomes practically relevant. This thesis presented its research question in chapter one. Secondly, the research question needs to be related to theory, which was presented in the theoretical framework in chapter two. It is required that the research question and results are framed within the theory. As such, the analysis section of this thesis will be linked to theory. Additionally, the theory was analysed to formulate the interview guide and coding agenda used in this thesis (see Appendix A and B). Thirdly, Mayring (2014) states that after identifying the research question, a definition of the study's research design needs to be provided. The reasoning behind the use of an explorative research design is stated in this thesis's methodology section (see point 3.2). Mayring (2014) proclaims that if explorative studies are correctly formulated, they can contribute to important outcomes similar to those that are scientifically valuable. Fourthly, Mayring (2014) states that one needs to define the research sample or use of material, as well as, the research sampling strategy. Although qualitative research regularly has small samples, with some case studies, researchers have to explain and argue the sample size and sampling strategy. This thesis uses a non-probability sample strategy, and arguments for the use of interviews can be seen in the chapter focused on collecting data (see point 3.3). The fifth step of the qualitative content analysis is to argue for the use of analysis method, as occurred in the introduction to this subchapter (see point 3.4.1). Further, Mayring (2014) states that a pre-test of the interview should be conducted, which was done for our first interview. The sixth step is to present the research results regarding the research question. This dissertations result is found in the next chapter (see chapter 4). Lastly, in step seven one has to discuss the research quality criteria, for this discussion see the critique section as part of the thesis conclusion (see subchapter 5.2.). A summary of the seven steps can be seen in Figure 4.

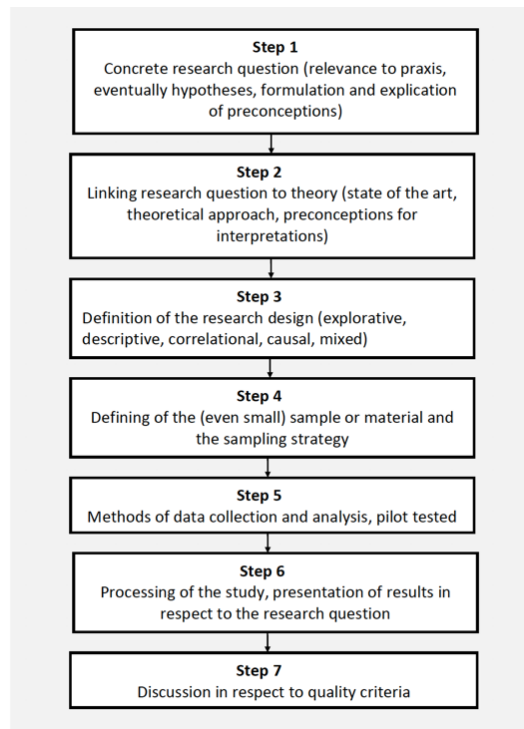


Figure 4: Step-by-step model for the research process (Mayring, 2014, p. 15)

Mayring (2014) states that there are three simple forms of interpretation for qualitative content analysis. The first form is ‘summary’, which entails a reduction of the data until the essential content remains. It allows the researcher to create a complete summary of the base material. The second form is ‘explication’, which is focused on gaining further material on uncertain text, such as terms or sentences. The goal is to improve understanding and explanation regarding a specific passage of writing. For this thesis the latter for seems relevant, namely ‘structuring’. Structuring is focused on categorising out specific aspects of the material. It enables the researcher to assess material fitting to specific criteria (Mayring, 2014).

3.4.2. Coding and content analysis

A critical stage in qualitative research is coding, as this is needed to analyse transcribed materials gained from interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Mayring (2000) refers to the development of categories for coding as art with few answers as to where they develop. Further, he argues that for a qualitative approach an important method would be to develop categories as close as possible to the gained material, hence formulating them regarding the material, developing the aspect of interpretation. Based on this Mayring (2000) writes about a procedure of category development, a procedure that was used for this thesis that will be described in the following.

As a first step, a criterion of selection was defined based on the research question and the theoretical background of the thesis, to determine which aspects of the data material to take into account. As a second step, based on this criterion the material was worked through, and tentative categories including variables were formulated, which are explained in the coding agenda in Appendix B. Subsequently, coding rules were developed to differentiate the categories. As a third step, the categories were reconsidered and checked regarding reliability. Mayring (2000) refers to this as the feedback loop, and what finalises the main categories. Within the fourth step, the data was worked through again by colour scheming the different finalised categories. Statements and opinions were then taken out and organised into the category system, found in Appendix C. Most statements were quoted directly, however, some were also paraphrased or summarised. In case some of the content did not fit into any of the categories, new were developed to make sure that no critical data was lost (Mayring, 2000).

After all of the interviews were coded, the collected statements were analysed and interpreted as seen in chapter 5. During this data analysis and interpretation, some of the categories had to be changed or merged due to their interrelation. An example of such is the category *organisational support*, where support and job satisfaction had to be merged. Furthermore, in the process of finding the categories which provided the most important and relevant findings for our study, one category was left out because the findings were apparent in other categories.

3.4.3. Discussion of the method

As the qualitative content analysis is a method that considers the theoretical background of the research, as well as, taking into account the context in which the data has been generated, it appears as a valuable method for this thesis. Furthermore, this method aims to provide a valuable, rule-guided structure based on its quantitative background, that is suitable for the inductive research approach in the thesis. Moreover, by coding the data, using a structured category system, the method opens up the possibility for others to replicate or reconstruct the steps of the analysis. Hence, it increases comparability of the results and the reliability of the analysis. Additionally, with the category system, the categories could easily be revised during the process according to the data material (Mayring, 2014).

On the other hand, the method of inductive categories development may in some cases become a restriction within the qualitative content analysis, making it an unfavourable method. For example, research indicates that the method appears to be less appropriate for studies based on highly open-ended questions. It is vital to maintaining the rules and the system flexible to make sure the connection between the research question and the data is what guides the analysis (Mayring, 2014). Bryman and Bell (2015) suggest that a way to ensure this is to include several researchers for the coding. For this thesis, however, only two researchers were able to contribute to the coding, due to the character, time and financial restrictions of this thesis.

4. Results and Discussion

In the following chapter a presentation of the findings conducted from the interviews will be given. In each section, the results will be discussed and analysed concerning the literature presented in the literature review. Following our research question, we aim to investigate the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker's emotions in a project life cycle. Our analysis will be presented in six different parts; *The term "project"*, *Organisational support*, *The emotional process of a project*, *Acceptance of emotions* and *Project methodology and tools*.

4.1. The term "project"

In this chapter the emphasis is centred on the project term. As such, it is helpful to analyse how the interview objects define a project. The next subchapter wishes to determine the interview objects workload and their perception of the ideal and unideal project worker, as well as, their view of professionalism.

4.1.1. What does project mean to the interviewee?

To develop an understanding of how the interviewees perceive the term project they were asked to give their definition of the term. This subchapter thus sets the foundation for all future question answered concerning the topic project.

Definition of the term project

The respondents' definitions have been systemized according to Wald et al. (2015) definition of the term project. Their first condition is the project having a specific target. Several of the respondents underline the importance of target and having clear responsibilities.

[...], one must have a proper goal hierarchy, [...] projects that are not successful often forget to have an appropriate goal hierarchy.

(David, Company C)

[...] clarifies responsibilities and tasks, as well as goals.

(Kevin, Company C)

[...] I think that one must have an ambition at a certain level [...]

(James, Company B)

[...] There is a defined amount of work that is expected to be delivered on a target date. It should essentially be a specification of the expected outcome and the available resources.

(Betty, Company A)

The next aspect of Wald et al. (2015) definition is limit in time. The condition regarding time is an aspect of the project definition which all the interview objects mention.

In its simplest form, it has a start and an end. [...]

(Helen, Company C)

[...] with a clear start and end.

(Kevin, Company C)

It is start and an end. [...]

(James, Company B)

For it to be a project, there must be a limited scope and an agreed upon end date. [...]

(Susan, Company A)

Something that has a start and an end. [...]

(Betty, Company A)

It has a clear start and a clear ending [...]

(Mark, Company C)

It must have a start and an end.

(David, Company C)

Further, Wald et al. (2015) definition state that a project demands particular resources. Some of the respondents mention the need for resources when defining a project.

[...] Has to have its own resources [...]

(James, Company B)

[...] available resources.

(Betty, Company A)

If you have finances, then you have progress.

(David, Company C)

In line with Wald et al. (2015) definition of a project, several respondents mention a project as a non-routine task and being independent of standard functions.

[...] to create something that does not already exist. [...] separate from the rest of the organisation.

(James, Company B)

A project is a task consisting of many parts that are temporary [...] with a purpose that is not part of the company's normal operation. The content of projects varies greatly.

(Mark, Company C)

[...] A project cannot be a regular delivery situation. As such, there must be something different required beyond the normal operation of the organisation.

(Susan, Company A)

A project is a task, a challenge, an opportunity to be solved. [...]. A project is intricate and something you do once. [...] project is apart from that of the company's ordinary operation.

(Linda, Company B)

Amongst Wald et al. (2015) conditions, is that a project has minimum three members. Although Kevin and David do not mention a specific number of participants, both highlight the need for a team in their definition.

There must be a team that can perform the task effectively. [...]

(Kevin, Company C)

There must be team members.

(David, Company C)

While defining a project, James expresses frustration over the term becoming diluted and used merely to create a feeling.

When we use the project term here, it is a bit diluted and not according to the textbook. It is used to create a feeling of hope, excitement and to lift things up. Maybe the word creates some kind of status. However, we run around in a hamster wheel with it as with everything else.

(James, Company B)

Discussion

As stated in the literature, project work has spread from the traditional fields and extended into other industries (Lundin et al., 2015). This is also evident from our interview objects as several of the respondents are from fields other than the traditional, such as the IT- and the environmental industry. In addition to working in different industries, this study includes respondents working in both the public and the private sector. Since our respondents are represented from various industries and sectors, our study similarly to Schoper et al. (2018), indicate that projects are widespread and are being used in every part of society. Additionally, it demonstrates how projects are being used to handle a variety of tasks such as the creation of new products and services, structural change or instigating new technologies (Lundin et al., 2015). Suggestive of the growing trend whereby an increasing emphasis of the company's operations is focused on projects and project management (Midler, 1995; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Schoper et al., 2018).

Though not all the interview objects mentioned every condition of Wald et al. (2015) definition, none of the respondents had an opportunity to prepare for any of the questions. Besides, we did not state how detailed we wanted to respondents to define the term. Still, most of the respondents incorporated several of the conditions mentioned in Wald et al. (2015) definition. Thus, we believe that all the respondents seem to have a good and similar understanding of the term. It is helpful in the further analysis since it signifies that all following answers build on a similar perception.

In addition to defining the term project, James gave an interesting opinion of his thoughts regarding the use of the term project. James is frustrated over his colleagues' diluted use of the term, stating that it has created social expectations. He states that the term "*is used to create a feeling of hope, excitement and to lift things up. Maybe the word creates some kind of status*". The comment correlates with Lindgren and Packendorff (2009) study which showed that labelling something a project would often conjure feelings of commitment, devotion and passion. Similarly to studies by Lindgren et al. (2014) and Cicmil et al. (2016), James statement shows how his colleagues may view projects like an arena where their dream and hopes can be realised, plus seen as an opportunity for a long-desired change and achievement. James seems to be stating that his colleagues are almost obsessed and that his co-workers seem to be embracing projects as a working form. However, he states that "*we run around in a hamster wheel with it as with everything else*", seemingly suggesting that James believes

that there is a collapse of control and that there may be a lack of planning models (Hodgson, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014). Previous research has shown that projects often tend to be an arena in which stress, frustration, disappointment and conflict flourish thereby making projects very emotional work incidents (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005). In the case of James, his colleague's demeanour appears to foster emotions of disappointment and frustration (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995).

4.1.2. Workload

The shift towards “projectification” implies important consequences for an individual's work and life (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). This subchapter intends to explore the interview objects workload, to discover some of these consequences. The focus is on their formal- opposed to actual work and how many projects they work in simultaneously.

Formal vs. actual work content

From the organisations, perspective projects provide manageable flexibility to work and become a facilitator for innovation (Cicmil et al., 2009; Gill, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014). The question is whether this flexibility comes at a cost to the project workers, who are required to work long hours to deliver within the strenuous time frames or whether it is merely a *win-win* where everyone is happy. Most of the respondents' state that they work more than a regular work week.

I have been among those that work at three o'clock at night answering emails [...].

Yes, there is substantial amount work. It is something that not everyone can manage. I have also been on projects that have been too much. I would not say this is an A4 job.

(Lisa, Company A)

At times one works 60 hours of weeks. I had a longer period like that last fall. So, if you want a routine job, [...], you have to work with something else. So, project work is not for everyone.

(Susan, Company A)

As long as this is completely anonymous, then I may answer it. I never have a week where I work less than 60 hours. [...]

(Betty, Company A)

Last year I had 200 hours overtime, and fifteen transferred vacation days [...]. There is a gap between my contract and the actual workload, but management does not demand it. They presumably do not realise how much work this job demands.

(James, Company B)

I worked more than what is noted in my contract during the current period. [...]. This position is no 7,5-hour mainstream job, but I think that is all right. [...]. One is expected to deliver.

(Linda, Company B)

I have never had a regular work week. I probably work 5-10 hours more a week than those who work a regular week [...].

(Brian, Company D)

While several of the respondents work more than a regular week, the respondents from Company C seem to all work relatively close to a regular work week.

On average I work 40-hours, maybe I will work 43 one week, but I will collect extra hours which can be used to get time off. Therefore, I may have been an extra week of vacation during the summer. [...].

(Helen, Company C)

It is usually fine. It has not been strenuous. Still, it is a bit on and off at times. Sometimes one has to work overtime, but ordinarily, one can do it during normal working hours. [...].

(Kevin, Company C)

I am very consistent, and among the few who invariably works 40 hours, hence I have very little overtime. I am very fond of free time.

(Mark, Company C)

I would not say it greatly exceeds that of a regular work week, I possibly work two hours more a week compared to what I record. I report all the hours I work physically [...].

(David, Company C)

Although stating that they usually work a regular workweek, both Kevin and David confess to thinking about work outside of working hours.

Some days you go around thinking about your work, like today, when I woke up at five o'clock, I started thinking about something.

(Kevin, Company C)

[...] but you check emails at home, and I think about work outside my working hours, which I do not record.

(David, Company C)

While most work more than a regular week, several of the respondents argued or tried to justify their workload.

[...] It is enjoyable to work as a project manager, and accordingly it is fairly easy to get carried away.

(Lisa, Company A)

Considering I have been required to get familiar with numerous tasks [...]. I assume it will alter throughout the project.

(Linda, Company B)

[...] It is far less stressful to sit at work doing the job than to sit at home pondering about all I should have completed.

(Betty, Company A)

Brian states that projects eventually become routine and therefore reduces the hours needed to complete the project.

[...] I try to work as little as possible. When one has worked on as many projects as I, everything becomes more methodical, so one manages to reduce the time needed to finish tasks.

(Brian, Company D)

Discussion

Our findings show that there is a difference in the amount of work between our respondents. The data indicates a trend where most of the respondents work above a regular week, whereas some work a regular week. As stated in the literature Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006) study shows that an essential aspect of the quality of the individual's health setting is a fitting degree of strain. Several of the respondents' answers are suggestive of stressful working conditions and negative mental stress. Due to mention of sleep problems and incapability of letting go of work-related issues when leaving work. Examples being, Lisa stating that she has answered emails at 3 o'clock at night. Further, both Kevin and David admit to thinking about work outside of work hours. Lastly, Betty stated that she would work long hours than *"to sit at home pondering about all I should have completed"*. Besides, these statements also point towards respondents possibly being faced with unrealistic plans, goals and deadlines (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002).

From Company A, four of the respondents reveal that they have a heavy workload and declare that project work is no *"mainstream job"*, as well as, *"project work is not for everyone"*. Following the respondents' beliefs and spending 60 hours working, Cicmil et al. (2016) worry about the ethical issue of "projectification" with its impact on lasting sustainability for both organisations and humanity may be warranted. A society where every organisation is fully "projectified" and subject to working hours similar to some of the respondents, could be one where workers who seek a mainstream job and does not enjoy project work will not survive.

While this paints a rather dark and gloomy picture of a possible "projectified" society, respondents from Company C reveal that they are in fact among those that work a regular week. While Kevin and David mention thinking about work outside of working hours, most still seem to be very close to a regular week. The respondents from Company C are represented in all age groups and both gender, as such that does not seem to be playing a part. Since all respondents from Company C state that they have regular working weeks, this suggest that Company C can promise a justifiable and manageable project-work. Therefore

contradictory to Cicmil et al. (2016) seem to create a setting which is easy to handle, justify and control. Further, an issue of sacrifices and heroism does not seem to be apparent. Besides, the project workers seem to be, conflicting to Cicmil et al. (2016) and Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) studies, working with realistic plans, goals and deadlines. Although the respondents from Company C are suggestive of a typical working load, Mark states “*I am very consistent, and among the few who invariably works 40 hours*”, as such, some of the employees at Company C could be facing similar challenges to our other interview objects.

As stated while analysing the different respondents’ definition of the term project it is necessary to understand the working situations of the project individuals (Packendorff, 1995; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002; Turner & Cochrane, 1993). James states that “*There is a gap between my contract and the actual workload*”. It could be due to his project work situation as a *renewal project participation*, project type II, causing a time conflict and requiring him to work long hours. Further, James notes that the workload is self-imposed since he states that “*management does not demand it*”. As such, it seems an easy solution to speak to management about his heavy workload. However, one possible reasoning behind James refraining from such a conversation may, according to Hodgson (2002), may be due to confrontation to these working conditions being perceived as prohibited or unnecessary conduct, or even poor individual performance.

One possible reason behind several respondents working unusually hard could be due to a belief that handling and mastering challenging project work situations become a part of being reliable, successful and professional (Hodgson, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014). Since one could be faced with similar thoughts to Betty who proclaimed that she finds it less stressful to sit at work longer than to go home. Moreover, Linda states in her interview; “*One is expected to deliver*”. Indicating that employees are faced with responsibilities to continuously perform on projects to ensure positive business results and safeguard future employability (Lundin et al., 2015; Packendorff, 2002). Because, as Lindgren et al. (2014, p. 1390) puts it, “*you are only as good as your last project*”. It may be due to Hodgson (2002) suggestion of not wanting to be labelled as poor performers. Our respondents’ answers are indicative of employees who continue to engage in project work, create a circular process, where a sustained and intense way of working has become normalized (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014).

Number of project simultaneously

Most of the respondents' state that they work in parallel projects simultaneously. These respondents are either from Company A or Company C.

I work in simultaneous projects [...]

(Lisa, Company A)

One to three projects simultaneously.

(Susan, Company A)

I work on parallel projects. Indirectly, I have to keep control of fifteen parallel projects at a time.

(Betty, Company A)

I can work in seven to eight projects at a time. Since I may operate as both a project worker and project manager [...]. I may assist in a big project to do a minor part, while I manage several small projects.

(Helen, Company C)

I practically always work on parallel projects, usually about three to four at a time. We have many parallel tasks, and if you have some slack on one of the projects, then you can switch to another project and work on that.

(Kevin, Company C)

There have been multiple since the projects are not that big. On average I work effectively on five to seven projects simultaneously. From signing the contract until completion, these projects usually take between four to six months. [...]

(David, Company C)

[...]. I probably have about three to four projects at the same time, while I also assist others. I normally work on longer projects lasting between one to two years.

(Mark, Company C)

Linda comment that she works on one project, whereas Brian states that he, for the most part, also works on one.

I only work on one project and have no other parallel work tasks. It is unique.

(Linda, Company B)

I mostly work on one. That is what I enjoy the most because then I get to have maximum focus. It is often a bit exhausting when you work on several [...]. So last autumn there were suddenly three projects. So about 20-30 percent of my time is spent working on more than one project.

(Brian, Company D)

While both Kevin and David work on parallel projects, both state that it is not ideal work situation.

[...] Unfortunately, there is not only one project at a time It would have been so much better.

(Kevin, Company C)

I feel that working on seven projects is not always effective.

(David, Company C)

While Kevin and David are unhappy about parallel projects, James takes it even further as his comment seems to suggest that projects in their entirety aggravate him.

I work on projects all too often! [...] Projects will always be a competitor for other work tasks.

(James, Company B)

Discussion

As specified in the literature Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) have ranked different projects from “perfect projects”, to all kinds of “imperfect” projects. The “perfect projects” being one’s that encompasses operating full-time on only one project, whereas the “imperfect” is where life could become more complex. Concerning our interview objects, it is

evident that they for the most part work in several and parallel projects at a time. These respondents are, therefore, categorised as working in an “imperfect” project situation. Only two out of the ten respondents state that they work in one project, for the most part, thus working in a “perfect” project. One possible issue with this use of multi-project setting, which several of our interview objects are exposed to, is that the project workers have to rush to a new projects, hence the project worker has no time for reflection or learning between the projects (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). These findings could be an indication of March (1995) concerns over the project work setting being justifiable as the organisations may “lose important elements of permanence.” (March, 1995, p. 434).

It appears that several of the respondents wish for a “perfect project” situation, where they could focus on only one task, instead of the “imperfect” where work seems to become more complicated (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Both Kevin and David’s statements indicate that they wish for or even envy a project situation with fewer projects. Furthermore, David notes that working on multiple projects, “*is not always effective*”. In line with David’s comment, Brian states that he likes one project “*because then I get to have maximum focus. It is often a bit exhausting when you are in several*”. Thus, our findings seem to suggest that a “perfect” project situation is where project workers are allowed to focus on one project, which summons feelings of satisfaction and happiness. Whereas an “imperfect” seems to conjure more negative emotions and feelings of envy (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). Another finding corresponding to Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006) study, is that it seems apparent regarding both Helen and Mark’s statement, where they note that they assist on specific projects, that the multi-project setting is enabling their company to use human resources effectively as limited assets are utilised in several projects.

It is apparent that most of the project workers from the same company have the same work situation. Conversely, James and Linda from Company B, have different work situations. James, on the one hand, is in a *renewal project participation*, type II, work situation, whereas Linda is type I, namely *project-based work*. This difference could be among the reasons why their opinion of project work is so different. Linda’s comment, seem to suggest that she is happy and satisfied with working on one project, noting that it is “*unique*”. While James indicate negative emotions such as anger and frustration stating that “*I work on projects all too often!*” (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). Further James’s comment “*projects will always be a competitor for other work tasks*” seems to suggest that our findings correlate with Sahlin-

Andersson and Söderholm (2002) study where they discovered that project workers in type II project work situation, face time conflicts. His comment also appears to propose that he feels imprisoned by projects and it is a work situation he resents (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2006a).

4.1.3. Ideal project worker

Another aspect of interest when studying the term “project” is the interview objects perception of the ideal project worker. According to several of the respondents being flexible is an important characteristic.

I believe that one must be flexible [...]

(Lisa, Company A)

You must be flexible [...]

(Susan, Company A)

[...] a bit flexible. Because it involves change, you must not be locked.

(Brian, Company D)

[...] Flexible and not a rigid person, but flexible at work and not privately. An organisation that does not have staff that is flexible is an organisation that stops at once. You must be able to set things aside and prioritise according to what is expected.

(David, Company C)

Another aspect mention by the interview objects is that an essential characteristic of ideal project workers is creativity.

You must be flexible, creative and solution-oriented [...]

(Susan, Company A)

[...] you both have people who are very creative and efficient.

(Betty, Company A)

One must be [...] creative.

(Brian, Company D)

Several respondents' state that being solution-oriented, structured and able to follow guidelines are necessary qualities.

You must be [...] solution-oriented [...] able to follow what is set by guidelines and standards.

(Susan, Company A)

[...] having the structured project workers who have an overview, add a plan before they begin.

(Betty, Company A)

[...] One must be structured [...].

(Brian, Company D)

Someone who is solution-oriented. [...] It is about following the systems here.

(Mark, Company C)

James believes it is vital to perform under pressure and not be petulant.

That is not touchy, someone that can perform while under pressure. One that does not drain energy from the team because we as colleagues disagree regarding certain aspects of a project.

(James, Company B)

Further, Susan and Lisa states that it is important to say yes to tasks.

[...] one needs to say yes to tasks you do not know how to solve, and one needs to solve problems - because that is what you should do on a project.

(Susan, Company A)

[...]. It is not every assignment that is amusing, but you have a job to fulfil, you get paid to perform. It is imperative. [...] If you do not have these abilities, then you have nothing to do on a project team

(Lisa, Company A)

While several of the respondents have stated that an ideal project worker is someone who is creative, flexible and structured, Betty indicates that this is rare to find in one person.

These qualities together are very good for a team. It is rare that you find a person who has all these features.

(Betty, Company A)

An interesting finding regarding unwanted aspects in a project worker for some of our respondents was towards showing emotions.

It quickly becomes unprofessional if there are too many emotions in things. [...]

(James, Company B)

[...] a professional project worker is calm, even though they know that there are deadlines, so they are not particularly stressed and produce poor quality.

(Betty, Company A)

There may be plenty of things inside a team. However, one does not display that to the client. [...]

(Lisa, Company A)

It is not that you should not show feelings and opinions, but you have to be very aware of what you use when.

(Linda, Company B)

[...] I expect that one does not bring feelings into the project straight away, [...]. It is important that we keep calm, if not, then things can go south.

(Mark, Company C)

Discussion

As stated in the literature, flexibility is among the central reasons behind the use of projects for organisations (Cicmil et al., 2009; Gill, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014), according to several of our respondents, this is also an essential trait for an ideal project worker. While flexibility is essential, being creative, structured and solution-oriented is also frequently mentioned by the respondents when categorising an ideal project worker. As stated by several researchers, this contains somewhat fundamental duality where there is a desire for both control and creativeness. This is closely related to the confidence of handling a complicated situation, and the excitement in making new and astounding things (Lindgren et al., 2014). In line with the argument, Betty notes that *“it is rare that you find a person who has all these features”*.

Projects tend to be labelled as exciting and thrilling experiences (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014). However, scholars have revealed how projects are often an arena in which stress, frustration, disappointment and conflict flourish, thereby, making projects very emotional work incidents (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005). During our interviews, several of our respondents stated that it might become unprofessional if one shows too much emotion and does not stay calm. Also, according to two respondents, it is important to say yes to tasks even the ones that one may not feel comfortable doing. Accordingly, this suggests that a culture is created where workers are expected to volunteer and commit to projects excitingly has become the norm. Simultaneously these answers suggest that there may be an awareness of the sacrifices that have to be made regarding extreme determination and responsibilities that do not always correlate with recourses available (Cicmil et al., 2016).

Having to volunteer and take on unfamiliar task can be work situations where shame and the emotional risk of failure can be ever-present. It suggests that projects as a design of professionalism are where managing and conquering difficult project work situations becomes a part of being dependable, successful and professional, and extraordinary emotions do not belong (Cicmil et al., 2016; Hodgson, 2002; Lindahl & Rehn, 2007; Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005). Comments from two of our respondents suggest that opposition to these working conditions may be perceived as a forbidden, unwarranted, or even poor individual performance (Hodgson, 2002). Due to the belief *“that is what you should do on a project”* and that *“if you do not have these abilities, then you have nothing to do on a project team”*. In line with Lindgren et al. (2014)

these comments may propose a feature of *normalization*, whereby the project workers shall welcome unforeseen changes, delays and unexpected overtime as ordinary parts of their employment. Further, Betty and Susan comments are suggestive of *extraordinarization*, whereby project workers are expected to bring passion to every new project, stating that “*one needs to say yes to task*” and “*it not every assignment that is amusing, buy have a job to fulfil, you get paid to perform*”. Additionally, *internalization* as some of the respondents’ comments suggests that the individual project worker is responsible and should accept developing difficulties with calm and self-control, entitled Lindgren et al. (2014). Lastly, some of the respondents’ state that it is important to follow company standards and systems. It is suggestive of a belief whereby project workers are meant to obey to these systems without additional objection (Lindgren et al., 2014).

4.2. Organisational support

To gain a deeper understanding of the emotional effect which a project may cause, we find it central to uncover the interviewees’ perception of organisational support and job satisfaction. In the following, a presentation of our findings will be presented in two parts, firstly *experiences support and support mechanisms* and secondly *emotional well-being*, followed by a joint discussion.

4.2.1. Support

As stated in literature; perceived organisational support results in an improved commitment to the firm and improved performance. Additionally, employees exhibit less absence and a lower chance of resigning. Perceived organisational support may, therefore, have an emotional effect on the project worker (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Experienced support and support mechanisms

Our respondents explain numerous support mechanisms used by the different companies.

We have an appraisal interview twice a year which is mandatory. We also have employee surveys four times a year where you have the opportunity to express your thoughts and get support if you need any.

(Betty, Company A)

The company monitors our hours weekly and they "force" us to take time off, which I think is a great thing! I also believe that contributes to us working more efficiently.

(Lisa, Company A)

Most companies in the public sector have incorporated appraisal interviews. Then there is some course about coping strategies. I believe there is a lot of focus on this in public sector. [...]

(Linda, Company B)

In our company, it is very collegial. We have had a psychologist workshop where we learned about everyone's profiles. [...]

(Brian, Company D)

Recently we found a mechanism or tool that allowed us to sit in the same room and anonymously express what we mean. Thus, without exposing the conflict between the employees! It is brilliant!

(James, Company B)

Helen also describes how they perceive support by different support mechanisms, but also how some of these mechanisms are dependent on the individual group leader and does not always work as intended.

We review our workload plan with our group leader, and if we have a large workload, then the group leader can help find solutions to support. However, if the group leader does a poor job, which we certainly have examples of. I have seen employees who go on sick leave due to for instance high stress. You also have a safety representative, which I do not know if anyone has used, but it exists. There is also the opportunity to go one further level up to the regional manager or contact HR.

(Helen, Company C)

Further, James and Betty describe how they are not entirely satisfied with the support mechanisms and the perceived support of their company's.

We have an appraisal interview yearly, but I am not fond of it. There are 364 other days of the year which is equally important, but of course, it is good to have a safety net.

(James, Company B)

This company does not quite manage to create a feeling of closure after projects. You will always feel like you are in some delivery, so you have to find your techniques to get those victories along the way. [...]

(Betty, Company A)

Moreover, Brian and Lisa bring up two different issues of being external consultants and describes how they perceive support.

[...] As an external consultant on a project, one occasionally becomes a victim. I have not experienced this myself, but it is very tough, and I have seen this happen to colleagues [...] We are aware of negative tendencies with projects, and I try to prevent them. Every fortnight we have a company meeting to review how people are doing. Further, we call each other when it is hard.

(Brian, Company D)

As a consultant, I am often working with other companies, but the company where I am employed is good at making sure that they are the company where I feel most at home. I think that is very important. Since one can quickly slide away from one's organisation when having your base at another company for maybe over a year, suddenly your own business feels foreign.

(Lisa, Company A)

David mentioned another aspect of support and expressed how he feels appreciated at Company C. Further, he believes there to be different between the private and the public sector, where he previously worked.

The fact that we go on study tours, do nice things together and have dinners, makes me feel appreciated and happy about my job. The job does not only pay us our salary but wants to give us something beyond that. The private transcends the public sector

in that regard. The public has stringent rules and is, consequently, struggling with turnover. They struggle to build that solidarity and sense of belonging. They do not have much to compete with if you ask me.

(David, Company C)

4.2.2. Job satisfaction

According to literature, it is possible to view job satisfaction as a display of emotional well-being (Spector, 1997), and we will, therefore, present some of the statements regarding this matter in the following.

Emotional well-being

The respondents perceived job satisfaction is presented in chronological order from a slightly lower perceived degree to a higher.

Most of the time I am looking forward to going work [...]

(Kevin, Company C)

[...] I suppose I am pleased where I am currently. I enjoy this industry and I believe I have a career here [...]. I am probably easily influenced to feel appreciated where I work, such as the fact that there is a nice office space.

(David, Company C)

Sometimes I am thrilled, other times I am not. [...] Generally, I would say that I am satisfied 70-80 percent of the time. [...]

(Brian, Company D)

Most of the respondents have higher perceived job satisfaction, stating how they enjoy their work.

I find my job to be very interesting [...]

(Betty, Company A)

I enjoy my job. [...]

(Mark, Company C)

I am happy with the job I have now [...]

(James, Company B)

Compared to the previously mentioned statements, comments by Linda and Lisa seem to imply an even higher perceived job satisfaction.

I love working here! [...] I am very pleased, and this is a rewarding job.

(Linda, Company B)

I am very pleased - this the dream job. [...] It is a great feeling to arrive at work and know this is great.

(Lisa, Company A)

Some of the respondent's note that a reason why they are satisfied with their job is that they find it challenging.

[...] and I like that there is a good mix of academic challenges and project management.

(Helen, Company C)

I must say that I am very pleased, it is exciting and challenging.

(Susan, Company A)

Others also mention how they enjoy complex situations and the excitement of making new and astounding things.

I am fond of a challenge and finding solutions. I am working in a very positive industry where it is exciting to see the results of your work upon completion of the project.

(Kevin, Company C)

Betty and James take enjoyment of complex situations a step further and talk about how working on a project sometimes can be uncomfortable and a struggle.

[...] When working on projects, you have to enjoy being a bit uncomfortable. One will always work a little on the edge of your field of expertise or with a lack of time and resources.

(Betty, Company A)

[...] I need some struggles. Struggles that create the feeling of a punch in the face, so it hurts a bit. In that way, everything here at work is in a way not good, but I am doing well and want it like that.

(James, Company B)

Despite a high overall job satisfaction, different negative aspects are mentioned by several of the interviewees.

[...] every company has something one dislikes, but that one has to cope with. Large companies like this are a breed of their own - there are a lot of rules, procedures and policies.

(Susan, Company A)

I think it is like that with all professions, and you get bored sometimes. I have managed a lot of long-lasting projects and it is something I find tiring because then both you and your team get a feeling of fatigue.

(Brian, Company D)

[...] However, of course, sometimes the work tasks can be boring and dull as well.

(Kevin, Company C)

Discussion

Our respondent mentions numerous support mechanisms used by their companies, such as appraisal interview, psychologist workshop and weekly reviews of hours. Furthermore, a majority of the respondents talk about how this leads them to work more efficiently and enable them to talk about problems and be supported. As such, we find there to be evidence of

the companies using a variety of support mechanisms and that employees feel supported. However, a few respondents also mention some problems and how these mechanisms do not always work as intended. Helen mentions how the dysfunction of mechanisms may lead to sick leave and how she has seen examples of this happening.

As stated in the literature, perceived organisational support results in an improved commitment to the firm and improved performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), which correlates with our findings. Further, David notes that he feels greatly appreciated by his firm and mentions how he has seen the public sector struggling with the turnover as a result of not being able to give the same amount of support. These findings are similar to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) study of employees experiencing less absence and a lower chance of resigning. However, it should be mentioned that Linda, which is currently working in the public sector, states that she believes the public sector has a high focus on this matter and that they have functioning mechanisms, thereby indicating a slightly different impression.

Lundin et al. (2015) and Braun et al. (2013), highlight how there is often a tendency for employees in project organisations to feel a greater belonging to their project compared to their organisation. In fact, Lundin et al. (2015) note that bonds to own organisation are often rather weak. While most of our interview objects did not express such feelings, this could potentially be due to most of our respondents working on several projects at the same time, and most are stationed at their organisation headquarter. Since being in a multi-project situation, there may not be enough time for the individual to build a relationship with the project organisation. Further, Lisa is aware of that possibility of consultants feeling a greater belonging to their project compared to their organisation. However, this is not an issue for Company A as they are aware of the problem and created support mechanisms when some employees started to lose their sense of belonging. Brian was the only respondent who spends all his time working at the project organisation while also having one project. Nevertheless, Brian did not mention such emotional attachments to the project organisation. Consequently, our findings suggest that project workers, in similar work setting as our interview objects, may be less vulnerable to experience a loss of belonging. While Linda is also in a one project work situation, she works for the municipality and is not contracted out to different organisations such as Brian.

According to Spector (1997), it is possible to view job satisfaction as a display of emotional well-being. We find the interviewee respondents mention several emotions when asked about their job satisfaction. They mention positive emotions such as love, happiness and excitement which may indicate a higher job satisfaction, as well as, negative emotions such as boredom, tiredness and the feeling of being fatigue, which may indicate a lower degree of job satisfaction. Despite there being both positive and negative emotions when analysing the respondents' emotions as a whole, one can say that they all have a relatively high job satisfaction.

One of the aspects mentioned by several of the interview objects as the reasoning for their high job satisfaction was that they found their job challenging. It correlates with the research conducted by Hodgson (2002) and Lindgren et al. (2014) who writes about how handling or mastering a challenge is connected to success. However, according to Gareis (2004), it may be hard finding a right balance between a challenge that creates positive emotions, where a person gains motivation, and a challenge that becomes too much to handle, which may cause project workers to experience a decrease in motivation.

Even though we find relatively high job satisfaction and that most areas of work are perceived as positive, there are also some adverse aspects mentioned. The most evident negative emotional effect of a project mentioned is by Brian, who stated the feelings of boredom and tiredness when working on longer projects. According to Cicmil et al. (2016), exhaustion is a feeling that project workers may be experiencing due to several project goals, with impossible deadlines. In our case, Brian does not mention any of these aspects. Although, as previously discussed we discovered that Brian works a lot more than his formal working agreement requires, as he states, he has never worked a “*regular work week*”. Our findings are therefore suggestive of individual viewing projects as stimulating and a thrilling experience (Cicmil et al., 2009; Gill, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014).

4.3. The emotional process of a project

In this chapter, the emphasis is on the emotional process of a project. As such it is helpful to analyse the way in which the interview objects describe the different phases of a project and their experienced emotions.

4.3.1. Circular process of a project

Similarly to the conceptual framework developed by Cicmil et al. (2016), shown in Figure 3, we have divided a project into four main phases namely the *conceptual phase*, *planning phase*, *executing phase* and the *termination phase*. The findings within each of these phases will be presented, followed by a collective discussion.

Conceptual phase

As previously examined within the literature both individuals and organisations generally view projects as a positive experience (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). It was also found to be evident in our discussion of job satisfaction. Looking at the answers given when asked to talk about a projects conceptual phase we can see some of the same positive notes again.

It is entertaining starting up new projects. Then you are fresh in mind and ready to dive into new tasks.

(Susan, Company A)

I consider this phase both incredibly important and exciting. It may become much less interesting phases later.

(Kevin, Company C)

For me this is an exciting phase and a phase where I am very open emotionally in the way that I use many senses, to get to know people and to understand my tasks. I am open and curious.

(Linda, Company B)

As a project manager, you rarely enter the conceptual phase. Nevertheless, it is a fascinating phase. There have been numerous times where I have had to challenge and question the customers' decisions from the conceptual face and then had them change it.

(Brian, Company D)

Further, James continues to discuss the positive enthusiasm and commitment at the beginning of a project and how he enjoys the conceptual phase as it is more open to new thoughts and ideas.

The enthusiasm and commitment are greatest in the beginning. I prefer to be in the concept phase where things are not sealed and where we can afford to throw a little ball to see where it bounces in the planning of where we are going.

(James, Company B)

Furthermore, David talks about being eager to get a new fresh beginning and the opportunity to do everything correctly.

We can start with blank sheets, and there are no problems to be seen in the distance - everything is great. [...] It is an opportunity to do everything according to the book. I always say to my selves, this time I will do it - new start new opportunities.

(David, Company C)

Nonetheless, several of the respondents also expressed more negative aspects of the conceptual phases, as well as challenges which may appear at this stage. Such as Helen and Betty who talk about the heavy workload that they have to tackle at the beginning of a project.

At first, I have a peak, with a high pulse and stress, as I have a lot to do. However, that is something that goes a little easier every time I start a new project because one gets used to reading the order and documentation [...], but when we have new project workers, it is a little different. It is important that the person who has received the message is sure of their task.

(Betty, Company A)

Our first phase consists of making offers, which can be a bit heavy. Since there it is much material to go through. Challenges may be that the client has a defuse request or does not fully know what they want. Then it is important that we work together and that we get input from the different professional groups within the office.

(Helen, Company C)

Mark takes it further and expresses his emotions of tiredness and uncertainty when describing the complexity of large projects.

[...] you may be tired or nervous already from the beginning. You are often thrown into something you have never done before with anyone to help, being told, "You have not done this before, but you will fix it." [...] there are many uncertainties at the beginning.

(Mark, Company C)

David, on the other hand, expresses emotions of being annoyed and view some the work in the conceptual phase to feel meaningless.

I think the period when we write offers is disorderly and the use of resources annoys me. At times there may be eight other companies doing the same. Concerning resources, this is rather demanding. Not that it is meaningless, but you are doing a job with uncertainty if there is any purpose.

(David, Company C)

Planning

When moving over to the second phase, David changes his negative expressed opinions of the conceptual phase and instead indicate positive emotions.

This is a phase I am very fond of, setting up a project with detailed progress plans and budgeting. It is exciting with something new.

(David, Company C)

The same change applies for Betty and Helen, who indicated a rather heavy workload in the conceptual phase causing tiredness and stress, and which now instead describe emotions such as excitement and enthusiasm.

For me, this may be the most critical and exciting phase [...]

(Betty, Company A)

[...] It is the best phase with great enthusiasm! Additionally, I enjoy developing plans, and I like the systems that we use for this. [...]

(Helen, Company C)

Brian, on the other hand, expresses how his excitement from the conceptual phase continues within the planning phase. He makes an interesting metaphorically explanation of how he enjoys the complexity of it.

This is a fascinating phase because I love to put my mind to complex issues, which I might not have any knowledge about beforehand. For me, it is almost like a puzzle that is messed up with many dimensions, not like a regular puzzle.

(Brian, Company D)

A similar statement is made by Susan, who describes how the challenges and problems, which may occur in this phase, is fun when managing to overcome them. However, we find her statement as somewhat more negatively loaded than Brian's:

This phase is where you often meet numerous of challenges since it is usually the phase where one identifies all possible problems [...] Hence, one may have to find other solutions and adjust plans. Nevertheless, it is fun when one can overcome these challenges.

(Susan, Company A)

Linda and Lisa whom both expressed positive emotions in the conceptual phase are now describing the planning phase as the most demanding and tiring.

The analysis part is the most exciting [...] However, this part is also the heaviest and most demanding because one has to uncover the right needs for the project to build a good foundation.

(Lisa, Company A)

[...] It is a tiring and demanding phase with a lot to do compared to the other phases. [...] Sometimes we have torn our hair out. The emotions go up-and-down during this phase [...], but that is project life.

(Linda, Company B)

Executing

Helen and Betty point out how the executing phase of a project typically is associated with somewhat negative emotions, but how they perceive it differently.

Usually this phase is associated with a drop of enthusiasm and commitment. However, I have not felt this as I find the challenges that appear in this phase to be exciting. I like to solve problems [...]

(Helen, Company C)

For me, this is the most pleasant phase of a project, because I mostly receive reports from others. However, it should be noted that this phase is the most stressful for those who work directly in the project.

(Betty, Company A)

Similarly, Brian describes how he enjoys this phase of the project and talks about how he tackles its challenges.

This phase is very exciting in terms of deliveries. I always try to divide a project into smaller deliveries if possible and strive to have many of them during this phase. This creates a security by verifying or testing along the way. It follows the old saying; How do you eat an elephant? You have to take one bite at a time.

(Brian, Company D)

Susan, on the other hand, describes how she finds this phase both exciting and hectic.

[...] It is always an exciting period when testing and discovering flaws that we correct or rectify. However, it is always hectic just before delivery. Especially when the test-pilots find all the mistakes we had not foreseen.

(Susan, Company A)

Likewise, David and Linda describe this phase as consisting of a lot of different emotions.

I have mixed feelings about this phase, due to the difficulty concerning control and dependence on others all the time, however, I mostly enjoy it. It is also the phase where all the unforeseen difficulties appear, which I find is exciting to solve.

(David, Company C)

There will be ups and downs in this phase. The progression plan that we made will probably not go exactly according as planned, and we will have to do modifications [...] it is also very emotionally ups and downs.

(Linda, Company B)

Kevin and Mark describe the executing phase as being more of a stable and safe phase.

During this phase, we usually do a little more standardised work. [...] I would say it is a safe phase which I find to be nice to have occasionally. However, it depends a bit on the project whether or not we work this way.

(Kevin, Company C)

It is a phase where everything becomes a bit more stable. You will establish a decent organisation, with scheduled meetings. [...]

(Mark, Company C)

James takes it a step further and states how he finds this phase a bit boring.

I think the execution phase is a bit monotonous, both the commitment and enthusiasm decline within the team.

(James, Company B)

Lisa talks about how she perceives this phase as demanding, but how it is demanding differently way compared to the planning phase.

For example, some customers may have said that they want something, only to change their minds and suddenly demand something different, which is demanding. Besides, I

know from previous experience that this phase regularly produces some unexpected predicaments.

(Lisa, Company A)

Lastly, another mentioning by Helen who brings up an important aspect of how projects are dependent on the customer and thereby may affect the emotions.

Currently I have a project with a very unprofessional customer who does not relate to what we have written in the contract and monthly reports and this has become heavy for me.

(Helen, Company C)

Terminating

Within the last phase, the termination phase, the project is coming to an end. Both Kevin and Linda express how they are experiencing an increased amount of stress.

In this phase, you are close to a deadline, which I find to be stressful. [...]

(Kevin, Company C)

Sometimes you become frustrated and may panic a little at this stage. [...]

(Linda, Company A)

Also, Betty mentions her increased stress level during the termination phase and talks about the effect of a “stressful red zone”.

During completion and delivery, my stress level raises again. [...] I know there are several who never manages this stressful red zone. It makes them sleep poorly, feel uncomfortable and never able to deliver. Consequently, they end up changing jobs. I know that many people avoid work that involves much project work.

(Betty, Company A)

David continues by calling the phase hectic, thus also indicating that he finds this phase to be stressful. Furthermore, he brings up another interesting emotion of a project never having a definite ending like in theory.

The termination phase is hectic. It is a good feeling to deliver, but I often feel uncertain of whether or not the project actually is done. Because the customer might come back with questions, so it almost never feels like it is over. It is not as clear as in theory. The solution might be to give the customer a deadline for feedback, but it does not create such a good customer relationship either.

(David, Company C)

Susan, on the other hand, talks about how she gets tired rather than stressed during this phase of a project and wants to move on.

Currently, I am finishing a project where I am incredibly tired of the customers. It will be incredibly enjoyable to wrap up that project. I tend to get a bit tired at the end. I would rather start something new than make sure that everything is a one-hundred percent at the end.

(Susan, Company A)

Brian differs from the other respondents in the way that he expresses a verity of both positive and negative emotions, such as sadness, stress, pressure and motivation. Furthermore, he talks about an important aspect of losing the team when the project is finished.

Emotionally it is sad because you lose great and knowledgeable colleagues to whom you have built a close relationship. You lose a good team that could have delivered countless other good things. However, it is natural as the project is finished, and one has to move on to the next. Otherwise, the termination and delivery phase motivate me as it brings new challenges. The termination can also be stressful due to much pressure, but I enjoy both pressure and stress.

(Brian, Company D)

James and Helen talk about the termination phase on a more positive note where they focus on the satisfaction of reaching the project goal.

You become proud when you reach the project goal and finish a project.

(James, Company B)

It is always satisfying when you arrive at the end of the project and deliver. [...]

(Helen, Company C)

Furthermore, likewise David, Helen talks about how a project is not quite finished at this phase. However, Helen brings up another reasoning.

[...] We are not finished at that point, because an evaluation should be conducted. However, this only happens in five percent of our projects, because normally the budget is finished, or all team members have started new projects. Consequently, we cheat project theory at this stage. We should evaluate strengths and weaknesses, what went wrong and why, so we can learn from the experiences, but the problem is that the air has gone out of the balloon.

(Helen, Company C)

Discussion

In our aim to investigate the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker's emotions, we find it useful to research the emotional process of a project. As stated in the literature Peslak (2005), stresses the importance of following the emotional development through a project's lifetime to discover the emotional consequences of project work. Following his suggestion, we are incorporating the progression of emotions over a project's lifetime by looking at the different project phases.

When asking the interview objects about their perception of the conceptual phase of a project, it is evident that they perceive it as something positive. These findings correlate with previous studies by researchers such as Cicmil et al. (2016), Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) and Gareis (2004). Within the conceptual framework by Cicmil et al. (2016), they refer to this phase as *dependence on great expectations, follies and sensations*. Looking at Brian, Kevin and Linda's responses they are using the phrasing "exciting" when describing their feelings towards this phase which indicates a great expectation similarly to Cicmil et al. (2016)

description. Accordingly, Gareis (2004) describes the positive emotions which are associated with the beginning of a project to be the excitement of a something new and stimulating.

David discusses the opportunities which present themselves when starting a new project. Again correlating with Cicmil et al. (2016) discoveries where they find “projectification” to be promoting a specific value concerning *success*, *accomplishment* and *inventiveness*, which frames the ongoing series of projects *opportunities*. However, David is first and foremost discussing opportunities regarding a given chance to do everything correctly and by the book. Nonetheless this can be seen as an attempt to make the project more successful similarly to Cicmil et al. (2016). Furthermore, concerning Cicmil et al. (2016) findings regarding a promise of inventiveness, this is also evident in our findings where both James and David talk about how they can be more creative and are being able to test new ideas as everything appears to be more open within the conceptual phase of a project.

Despite our findings of experienced positivism within the conceptual phase, we also find evidence of the opposite. This is contrasting with the findings by Cicmil et al. (2016), where no evidence of negative emotions are reviled in the conceptual phase of a project. However, our findings are correlating with Gareis (2004) study where he finds negative emotions to appear at the beginning of a project as a cause of being over challenged either by work or responsibilities. Among our interview objects, both Betty and Helen states that they are experiencing the workload to be heavy within this phase, and Betty expresses her emotions of stress and having a high pulse during the conceptual phase. Similarly, to our findings within the discussion of formal versus actual work, where David and Kevin mention sleep problems, Betty also states how she has experienced project workers having sleep difficulties, as well as, feel “*uncomfortable and never able to deliver*”, which may appear due to stress. These findings correlate with Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006) findings who states that negative mental stress may cause sleeping problems. Another finding of negative emotions within the conceptual phase is evident in Mark and David’s interviews where they describe emotions as tiredness and uncertainty, as well as the emotion of being annoyed feeling that once work is meaningless.

The second phase, the *planning phase*, is closely related to the conceptual phase. We find the great expectations and positive emotions addressed within the conceptual phase to be continuing. Corresponding with Cicmil et al. (2016) findings who describes how the emotions

of excitement are remaining from the previous phase. In their framework, they refer to this phase as a; *Commitment to blank sheets, new starts and professional performance*. In our findings, Susan and David state how they feel “*fresh in mind*” and “*can start with blank sheets*”. However, this is mentioned within the conceptual phase and not the planning phase, which indicates that the emotions found within Cicmil et al. (2016) study, differs slightly from ours concerning the time these emotions are experienced.

Regarding the emotional aspect of the planning phase Gareis (2004) describes the common negative emotion of fear. A feeling which may appear as a cause of vague project status, groundless feedback, the use of insufficient controlling methods or much competition inside the project team. In our findings, no one states fear as Gareis (2004) suggests. However, Linda and Lisa talk about how they find the planning phase to be the most substantial and most demanding stage. Linda’s description where she states “*sometimes we have torn our hair out*” indicates the emotions of frustration. Furthermore, Lisa explains how this is due to the importance of building a good foundation for the rest of the project. The perceived importance of the planning phases for the project to become successful is also evident in Betty, Brian and Marks answers.

During the third phase, we find some differences between Cicmil et al. (2016) findings compared to ours. Whereas Cicmil et al. (2016) discusses negative emotions such as suffering, bewilderment and exhaustion within this phase, which they refer to as; *Internalisation of honour/shame and personal worthiness*, we find a whole spectre of emotions both positive and negative. Interestingly it seems that the respondents perceive more positive rather than negative. However, both Helen and Betty indicate that they perceive their feelings within this stage to be out of the normal and that they know this phase to often come with a drop with regard of enthusiasm and commitment as well as a higher stress level. Nevertheless, none of the other eight respondents indicates that they are experiencing these kinds of negative emotions, except for Lisa who finds this phase to be demanding.

Another central aspect within the executing phase, which is discussed by several researchers, is how the emotions experienced within a project may be dependent on whether it goes as planned, such as a demanding customer as Helen describes in her interview. In general, Helen states how she finds the executing phase to be exciting, but also tell us about an unprofessional customer who does not relate to the project plan and agreed tasks, which

makes the project feel “*heavy*” for her. Rehn and Lindahl (2011) suggest in their study that a project which does not live up to its expectations or does not go as planned, may leave the project workers with an emotion of having deceived both themselves and others. Even though this is not what Helen states directly, her statement may indicate something similar to Rehn and Lindahl (2011) suggestion.

In the fourth and last phase, the termination phase, where the project is coming to an end, we find a majority of the respondents to perceive negative emotions. Most evident is the perceived stress caused in this phase, noted by Kevin, Linda, Susan, Betty, David and Brian. Correlating with Cicmil et al. (2016) study which finds negative emotions to be dominating this phase. However, they do not directly connect this phase to stress, but rather discuss the emotions of *exhaustion, finiteness and the end of resilience*. Furthermore, this is the phase where Cicmil et al. (2016) emphasise how the enthusiasm and motivation cannot be upheld anymore, whereas this in our findings this was emotions stated already within the *executing phases* by Helen and Betty.

Contrary to Cicmil et al. (2016) and our findings of dominating negative emotions, Gareis (2004) state that it is during the termination process of the project that the positive emotions should be dominant. Although this is not the case in our findings, it is still discussed by some respondents. Helen and James talk about the termination phase on a more positive note, where they focus on the satisfaction of reaching the project goal. Furthermore, Brian discusses how he finds the challenges, stress and pressure of the termination phase to be motivating. Although these emotions tend to be perceived as negative, Brian is in fact motivated by such emotions and therefore view them as positive. Another aspect discussed by Gareis (2004) is sadness, which one might experience within the termination phase, due to being split from co-workers. This, on the other hand, correlates with our finding where Brian states “*Emotionally it is sad because you lose great and knowledgeable colleagues to whom you have built a close relationship*”. Furthermore, similarly to the description of project type I, where the individual constantly works in projects and always have to “begin over again”, (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002) Brian states that it is a natural part of a project and that you have to move on to the next.

David brings up a new interesting aspect of their interview where he discusses the closure of a project and how they find it to deviate from project theory. David explains how he seldom

feels that a project has a definite ending as it has in theory, and how this makes him feel uncertain. He also discusses how he struggles to find a satisfying solution to the problem, as it again might cause new problems, he states *“the solution might be to give the customer a deadline for feedback, but it does not create such a good customer relationship either”*.

As stated in the literature, project work situation, type I, often experience a lack of time for reflection and learning between the projects. There is often a lack of recourses and overoptimistic time schedules (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Concurrently, Helen reviles in her interview how they *“cheat project theory”* by not conducting a final evaluation of the project. She states how they only conduct these within five percent of the projects, and that she finds it to be due to; *the budget is finished, all team members have started new projects or that the air has gone out of the balloon*. Further, she discusses how this is something they should do to learn from experiences. This could be suggestive of March (1995) concerns about project work being warranted. He states that project work may not give project workers enough time for training and learning.

4.4. Acceptance of emotion

The following part will analyse the interviewees' perception of organisational acceptance for emotions. Furthermore, it will look at the project workers attitude towards the organisational- and project team culture.

4.4.1. Work

When asked about whether the respondents felt that there was an acceptance for showing emotions at the workplace, several stated that they believed there is.

There is a great acceptance for showing emotions here. One is allowed to show frustration. [...] If you are sad or there is something, then you will get support if you need it. I find it much easier to do my job when being allowed to express my emotions.

(Lisa, Company A)

We are pretty good at showing feelings here. We are in an open office environment, and you can constantly hear an outburst. [...] there is room to speak out and air frustrations.

(Susan, Company A)

There is a tolerance for people to say almost anything, as long as it is said with a tone of voice that is appropriate. We are grown-ups, so I expect that you are clear about what you think, feel and believe, which we will accept. Everyone does not always have a good day at work, and you can have a bad project.

(Betty, Company A)

My feelings can be spontaneous and everything possible, really. [...] So, there is an excellent environment for it. [...] In front of the customer then it is important to act professionally. [...] However, we keep our anger and outbreaks within the company.

(Helen, Company C)

Yes, I will certainly say that. I feel that there is an acceptance. [...]

(Linda, Company B)

We are all different. Some show many emotions and others a little less. When you are trying to make people succeed there are sometimes emotions that play a role in some form, so it is important.

(Brian, Company D)

Interestingly James reports that he believes that working in the public sector is more emotional than within the private sector.

[...] We work with people, trying to meet an infinite need. Hence, I believe we have a stronger or more natural culture for feelings in the workplace. I have never worked in the private sector, so I do not know how it is there, but I wish it sometimes because it seems less complicated without all the emotions mixed in.

(James, Company B)

Some of the respondents from Company C state that they are uncertain whether there is an acceptance. However, all guess that there is approval.

I do not quite know. [...]. Yes, it probably is, but I do not have any emotional outbursts. You are allowed but within certain bounds, but few run around screaming here, it is rather civilised.

(Kevin, Company C)

I do not think you would lose your job exactly. I am a bit unsure whether it is okay, but maybe I have not worked here long enough. I imagine there should be an acceptance.

(David, Company C)

I think there is a tolerance for people to express their emotions at work.

(Mark, Company C)

While many felt that there is a tolerance for showing emotions, Brian and Linda, on the other hand, tries to refrain from showing emotions as project managers. However, both also state that there is an acceptance for showing emotions.

As a project manager, I try to avoid emotions as much as possible. I am trying to stick to the facts [...] I do not have the mandate of those who own the project to walk around feeling; one should deliver.

(Brian, Company D)

I think I express few emotions and try to be aware of the feelings I show. However, I am an emotional person and do not think many wonders where I stand. I am very keen to give good feedback to those who deserve it. At yesterday's meeting, I expressed feelings by saying that it motivated me to work with them.

(Linda, Company B)

Both David and Mark state that they are not good at showing emotions.

I am probably not very clear from an emotional perspective. [...]. I could probably be better at showing emotions.

(David, Company C)

I may not be very good at expressing emotions here at work.

(Mark, Company C)

Mark recollected an emotional episode of when a project did not go as planned during the interview.

In February, I had to report that there were zero days left on a project, which was to be delivered in June. During that period, I had a constant exam feeling and slept worse. You do not feel like the hero of the day, which affects you a lot. Then you are not able to grasp what is rational. Thereby becoming a bad leader and you also lose control.

(Mark, Company C)

Discussion

According to previous studies, projects often tend to become very emotional work incidents (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005). Harmonising with this research, it seems evident that our respondents experience several emotions during projects (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). According to Lindgren and Packendorff (2009), study projects are temporary work situations where extraordinary emotions do not belong. Contradictory, our study seems to suggest that most of the respondents believe that there is an acceptance for showing emotions. All the respondents from Company A implied that there was much acceptance for showing emotions. In fact, one of the respondents believed that she was able to perform better as a result of an acceptance of showing emotions. From a gender perspective, all the female respondents' comments suggested that they perceived an acceptance for showing emotion, whereas some of the men seemed uncertain, although they stated that it was most probably accepted. One possible new interesting finding was James's belief that since people in the public sector try to "*meet an infinite need*" there is "*a stronger or more natural culture for feelings in the workplace*". James also appears to believe that emotions make things complicated.

Similarly, our findings in the chapter focusing on organisational support, we see evidence of respondents' who are supported through these emotional outbursts. Some interview objects also mention that there is support from co-workers and supervisors when needed. It could, therefore, have a positive impact on the direction of job satisfaction. Further, this suggested perceived organisational support, may according to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), results in an improved commitment to the firm and improved performance. Moreover, personnel exhibit less absence and a lower chance of resigning. Comparably, to other sections of the analysis, there is once more evidence of a respondent experiencing negative mental stress since there is mention of sleeping problems and fatigue during a project. Mark's comment could be suggestive of a feeling of losing control, which Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006) states have an important effect on negative emotions.

Two of the project managers mentions that they accept emotions shown by their project workers, but that they are rather aware of which emotions they show themselves. Accordingly, this could indicate that there is a belief among project managers that extraordinary emotions do not belong in projects which correlates to previous research. Moreover, not showing these extraordinary emotions could be an illustration of professionalism as a project manager. Thus, correlating with theory stating it as a part of being reliable, successful and professional (Hodgson, 2002; Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009; Lindgren et al., 2014). As Brian states "*I do not have the mandate of those who own the project to walk around feeling; one should deliver*".

4.5. Project methodology, tools and their emotional effect

The following section will be presented in two parts. Firstly, the findings regarding the methodology and tools used and then, the outcomes of the perceived emotional effect of these. Lastly, a discussion will be conducted regarding the two parts.

4.5.1. Methodology and tools

Several of the respondents' state that they use various project methodologies and tools in their work. Further, PRINCE2 and Scrum seem to be among the preferred methodologies.

We use many different methods. The method we use is largely dependent on the customer and the project. However, many of the methods are quite alike, and most of the employees in this company have some form of certification, I have PRINCE2. Otherwise, I know PMI and have much experience with Scrum.

(Lisa, Company A)

The company has named PRINCE2 as its project management methodology, in which I am certified. [...] We also use other methodologies like Scrum or similar methods.

(Susan, Company A)

I am PRINCE2 certified and ScrumMaster. I use what is the most natural method, but never the method for the sake of the method.

(Brian, Company D)

I use many tools in my work, and it is increasingly shifting towards digital tools.

(Kevin, Company C)

I have taken a course that earns you 15 credits, focused on project methodology. Here we have an internal project tool for project methodology that we use.

(Linda, Company B)

Mark states that he uses many tools and that they help him with his varied work task. Mark is working on incorporating LEAN into the company and is also involved in a group who are working towards finding other tools that can be beneficial for his fellow colleagues.

I use numerous. Considering I have quite varied work tasks [...] I am currently working on earning a PRINCE2 certification and use several elements of it. I also have a yellow belt in LEAN and use some of this knowledge in projects. [...] I am trying to get LEAN into our company. I look at it as very appropriate. [...] We have a great toolbox that has not been released. I have been in a group to come with input.

(Mark, Company C)

While mentioning tools and methodologies they use in their work, Betty and Helen also highlight some of the experienced benefits of them.

I am Scrum certified and have a master's degree with several subjects focused on project management. It increases my consciousness concerning the phases of a project, the pitfalls and the importance of setting goals. [...] We use Scrum and PRINCE2 - agile methods.

(Betty, Company A)

[...] We have several templates and tools to assist us in our work. We have a quality system that describes how we should formally conduct a project. I keenly follow the recipe to reduce risk. There is a reason why the templates and information are made. We have a quality assurance system that ensures that we deliver within the agreed upon date.

(Helene, Company C)

Although stating that they use the methods, some of the respondents admit to only using them partially.

Often in projects, we only follow it partly.

(Susan, Company A)

I am not as rigid as the theory. That is not how the world is, nobody works like that. I use the methods which are most fitting to use.

(Brian, Company D)

Several of the systems were created for larger projects. So, you need to pick parts that are relevant to your work.

(Kevin, Company C)

Betty and David also state that they are not so rigid in following the methodologies as they have developed some of the methods further to fit their needs.

I am a bit more determined to define the finish line and other aspects that are not part of Scrum's methodology, but you manage it with a traditional project culture.

However, you implement it with a Scrum methodology. Hence, they are very dependent on each other.

(Betty, Company A)

I always start a project with a process of breaking down the project, in a little more detailed fashion than what it is intended [...]. I use it much more as a contribution to my thought process. I have also created my risk framework [...]. On the short projects, I may have made a progress plan [...].

(David, Company C)

Although some respondents mention that they deviate from some of the methodologies and systems, Mark, contrastingly, shows his discontent with project workers who do not follow the systems.

I am a bit surprised that there is such a deviation from systems. I at least expect the internal staff to follow the system and that I do not have to follow-up, but it often happens that I have to.

(Mark, Company C)

Betty brings up an interesting aspect of how using the wrong type of method may cause increased stress.

We have completely ignored the Waterfall methodology. I do not understand that it was a successful method. There is very little planning, and I think this methodology gives an increased stress factor because you do not see the big picture. However, this is something you can with the agile methods we use, and you are also able to adjust more.

(Betty, Company A)

Another interesting aspect is brought up by James, who does not have any project certifications like the others. He points out how not using any methodology or tools at all may be inefficient.

I worked on projects where there have been major discussions about which methodology or tools to use [...] I cannot take a stance to that. Tell me what to deliver and what is required to reach success at the end, so that I know what is going to get us there. It may not be the most effective method.

(James, Company B)

Further, James states that not having tools have at times created losses.

We do not have any project tools. [...] When we work with people who have project expertise and want to use tools, then we get into a vacuum, and I see that it simply means a loss that we did not have a tool from the start.

(James, Company B)

In line with James's comment, Brian states that he believes that project methods are crucial and that without them one will do a worse job.

I certainly think it is an advantage to have some methodology. There is no doubt about it. It is absolutely essential. If you do not have a methodological understanding of project management and have been through methods, then you will do a worse job, that is for sure. It is like building a house without the drawings, you will get there in the end, but it will be expensive, lots of planks and not what the customer requested. It does not work. You have to make a plan and use the tools plus the methods that work.

(Brian, Company D)

Furthermore, Brian also highlights the benefit of reaching project industry standards by using the right methods and tools.

It is a big advantage that we are reaching industry standards [...]. There are now more people in management who understands projects and technology. Before, it was empty of that knowledge. Then companies did not know how to create framework conditions for project managers or projects. It has been a welcomed change.

(Brian, Company D)

Although James admits to not having tools, he comments that there have been several attempts towards attaining project tools.

We requested tools for the people working in the municipality, but we are not able to get our message through to management. So, we have stopped nagging.

(James, Company B)

4.5.2. Emotional effect

Betty states that the methods and techniques are helpful as it takes more to get out of her comfort zone.

[...] You learn methods and techniques to cope with stress and can increasingly move your comfort zone.

(Betty, Company A)

Similarly, to Betty, most of the respondents' find that these methods and tools are supportive and give a sense of security.

I have learned a structured way of working through the course I took on project methodology. It gives me a sense of security. [...]

(Linda, Company B)

[...]. Having a familiarity with methodologies and theories makes me feel safer so that I can make better decisions. It is good to have something to lean on. The theory is best practice. You know that someone already attempted and failed before you and discovered what works.

(Susan, Company A)

It is a kind of reassurance. [...]

(Kevin, Company C)

You become aware of your role, and it gives you an overview. You feel safer about the job you are doing.

(David, Company C)

While also feeling safer, Mark states that the tools make the project more manageable, gives control and an overview.

I found that all these tools make project work easier and you have a better overview of time. You have control of what to do when. It makes you feel safer.

(Mark, Company C)

Further, Helen states that the tools make her feel professional and helps reduce risk.

[...] The tools make me feel more confident and professional at carrying out a project with the lowest possible risk.

(Helene, Company C)

Moreover, James expresses his frustration of not having methods and tools but manage to move forward.

It does not work optimally at all [...] as I say, it is almost as if we are bow-legged or knock-kneed, but in a way, it works, we move forward.

(James, Company B)

Discussion

As detailed in our theoretical framework, project tools were created to give the project workers a way to easier control and more likely to accomplish project goals, thus becoming successful (Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). While project tools are intended to help the project succeed, Zika-Viktorsson et al. (2006) study state that it is a fine balance between implying too many routines, where the project becomes too standardised, and too few routines where control may be lost.

The respondents' answers suggest that they view project methodologies and tools as helpful in their work. Similarly, to literature, it is apparent that project tools are viewed as beneficial in handling complex project work situations (Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Correspondingly with Wideman (2002) study, our results seem also to show that PRINCE2 is among the most known and used methods. While

Lindgren et al. (2014) mentions a phenomenon entitled “*externalization*”, whereby project workers are meant to adhere to “*organisational project planning and control systems without further ado*” (Lindgren et al., 2014, p. 1405), our results suggest that obeying to these systems seem to be something which the respondents, for the most part, do gladly and willingly. Additionally, the respondent without these tools and methodologies believes that it is less effective and desires them. James and Brian’s comment suggest that not having project tools result in losses. As Brian states “*If you do not have a methodological understanding of project management and have been through methods, then you will do a worse job, that is for sure*”. Further, Brian metaphorically comments that not having methodologies and tools is “*like building a house without the drawings*”. While it is evident that the respondents who have access to the tools and methodologies appreciate them, it is also clear that James believes not having them are not “*optimal*” and therefore tried “*nagging*” management to get them.

Although these tools, for the most part, seem to be viewed as helpful, similarly to literature, our study also indicates that these methodologies and tools may at times be viewed as too bureaucratic (Zika-Viktorsson et al., 2006). Mark’s comment stating that he is surprised “*that there is such a deviation from systems*”, could be an indication of some of his colleagues believing that the systems are too bureaucratic and therefore refraining from following them. While Marks comment could suggest that some project workers may view some methods as too bureaucratic, it is also possible that it is simply as “*several of the systems were created for larger projects. So, you need to pick parts that are relevant to your work*”, and as Brian states, “*that is not how the world is, nobody works like that*”. While it could be argued that these methods could be perceived as too bureaucratic, most seem to be satisfied with applying methods and tools.

From an emotional perspective, these tools and methodologies seem to primarily create a sense of security for the project worker. One of the respondents even states that they make the project more manageable. Another respondent felt more confident when using these tools and that it helped her reduce the risk of the project. James figuratively states that not having these tools makes them stumble along and that it is not optimal. While previously stating that James’s work situation could be among the reasons for his frustration over projects, this chapter may be suggestive of the lack of project tools and methodologies could be another possible reason.

It could be argued that contradictory to March (1995) having some disbelief with the temporary organisations due to throw-away employees policies. Our findings are more an indication of modern organisations viewing their employees as their “*most valuable assets*” (Brummet et al., 1968, p. 217) since these tools are aimed towards the project employee succeeding in their work. Our findings suggest that methodologies and tools are helpful in lessening projects as a contradiction of a diffuse promise of both control and adventure. Instead, they are helpful in making projects the adventure they were intended to be, while also being beneficial in controlling the processes. As such, they are effective in making a promise that projects are helpful in handling a complex situation (Lindgren et al., 2014). Further, these tools seem to be beneficial in the way of reducing project as an arena where stress, frustration, disappointment and conflict flourish, which is correlating with previous studies (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005). Rather it is helpful in assisting the project worker to “*feel more confident and professional at carrying out a project with the lowest possible risk*”.

Although project methodologies and tools are helpful in assisting the project workers during the project, they are by no means removing all the negative aspects of project work. As suggestive by some of our respondents, tools may become too bureaucratic, and certain project methodologies may, in fact, increase the experienced stress and can become very emotional work incidents (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005).

4.6. Career and ambitions

In the following, we wish to investigate whether career and ambitions have an effect on projects and if it has an emotional effect. The findings will be presented separately between the two variables; *interviewees ambitions* and *promotion*, followed by a collective discussion.

4.6.1. Interviewee ambition

Within this first variable, we aim to figure out what effect ambitions may have on the individual project worker, and if it influences their project work. Some of the respondent’s state how they find their ambitions to be very important and a reason for what they have achieved in their career.

I have ambitions, and that is important to me. They have helped me to my current position. It gives me a driving force.

(James, Company B)

I think career ambitions affect how we work on a project. It has to do with what drives people, whether it be money, prestige, promotions etc.

(Brian, Company D)

Also, Betty describes how her ambitions are important to her and drive her to deliver her best and to achieve goals. However, she also brings up a negative aspect of having ambitions and how it is not just affecting the way she works, but also her team.

My ambitions have been essential for my current standing. I always have the ambition to deliver the best. Thus, my ambitions have influenced how I work on a project. Delivering well on a regular basis is important to achieve new goals. However, ambitions may also have a little negative effect, because it increases the expectations I set for my teams, and they could probably have gotten away with less work.

(Betty, Company A)

While the previously mentioned respondents underline the importance that ambition can have, Kevin, Mark and Linda, on the other hand, describe how they do not have that many ambitions and how they are satisfied in that way.

I do not have that many ambitions. It is okay as it is. I have more long-term plans like a career path rather than career steps. It does not change much.

(Mark, Company C)

I have probably not been very ambitious throughout my career. I had a project leader role a few years ago, but I realised that it became too strenuous. It required a lot follow-up, so suddenly I needed to do both my usual work and project management at the same time, it did not go so well.

(Kevin, Company C)

I do not have any career ambitions other than that I want a job I enjoy. Nor did I have any ambition to become a project manager like I am now. [...]

(Linda, Company B)

In between, we find Brian, Helen and Lisa who states how they are satisfied with their positions and their cares so far.

[...] I feel that I am where I am supposed to be right now, regarding my age and career ladder. I am very pleased.

(Lisa, Company A)

I want to become an even better project manager and continue with this career.

(Helene, Company C)

[...] I will probably continue in my current position for at least a few years I have no ambition to become a director and take responsibility elsewhere. I want to work less and earn more.

(Brian, Company D)

4.6.2. Promotion

The second variable was intended to determine whether a promotion affects the project employee emotionally and if it is affecting their effort put into a project. When asked about what the respondents believed was required to achieve a promotion there was a general agreement that it is achieved by doing good work, as stated in the following by Susan and James.

You earn a promotion by performing a good job. I have not experienced anything specific that indicates otherwise, which is a good thing.

(Susan, Company A)

To get a promotion, you have to do a good job and be yourself. I also believe credibility is important.

(James, Company B)

Helen and David also mention other important qualities such as:

You have to take the initiative and be interested. Additionally, you must be able to show that you can lead, be flexible, and deliver on projects, while also be a well-functioning employee who fits in with the company culture. [...]

(David, Company C)

You are tidy, delivering the appropriate quality at the right time, within budget and get a high score on our feedback program from the client.

(Helen, Company C)

James, on the other hand, brings up another aspect of how to achieve promotions by talking about the opportunities presented within projects.

Projects can give employees an opportunity to become more visible than they would normally have been. Thus, you get the chance to get up and say “Hi, here I am, see what I have delivered and seen what I can contribute! [...] it is a career path.

(James, Company B)

Discussion

We find there to be differing opinions regarding the effect of ambitions and how it influences their project work. On the one hand, there is James, Brian and Betty who states who their ambitions drive them and are a contributing factor in their goals and careers achievement. A perspective in which correlates with the study by Cicmil et al. (2016, p. 64) who finds project management to encourage a certain sense of accomplishment, triumph and creativity appealing to one’s “*ambitions, dreams and hopes projected into projects*”. While some mention the importance of career ambitions, most of the respondents do not seem to be affected by career ambitions or appear satisfied in their current position. As such, our findings do not seem to indicate that ambitions have a significant effect on the project worker.

When investigating what the respondents believed to be required to achieve a promotion, James brings up an interesting aspect of how projects are an opportunity to be seen and a career path. It is also mentioned by Brian when talking about ambitions where he mentions how promotions as an example of a driving force working on projects. James and Brian’s statements correlate with both Cicmil et al. (2016) and Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm

(2002) findings. As discussed within our literature Cicmil et al. (2016) find projects to be related to the personal achievements and benefits, such as the hope of projects contributing to long-awaited professional fulfilment, success in life or to be a springboard for the career. Similarly, Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) study discover that these kinds of work situations represent an opportunity for the individual to expand competence and show off abilities. Moreover, they state that it applies in particular to project work situation type II. We find an evident correlation between their study and James' s answers, who is a type II work situation; *“you get the chance to get up and say “Hi, here I am, see what I have delivered and seen what I can contribute!”*, indicating that it is an opportunity to show off abilities.

5. Concluding remarks

We will in the following make some concluding remarks by highlighting our main findings and results. Next, we will discuss this thesis limitations, followed by recommendations for further research.

5.1. Conclusion

In this thesis, we have explored the “dark side” of projectification, by analysing the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker's emotions in a project life cycle. Working on projects have become an increasing trend and the preferred way of working in most types of businesses and industries. This transition is described as being among the most significant changes in modern organisations (Chiocchio et al., 2010). Our findings, similarly to Schoper et al. (2018), indicate that projects are widespread and are used in every part of society. Further, they are used to handle a variety of jobs such as the creation of new products and services, structural change and instigating new technologies (Lundin et al., 2015). Critical studies, focused on the subject have emphasised some noteworthy, but perhaps blocked existential consequences for individuals involved in project work (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002).

Our findings show that there is a difference in the amount of work between our respondents. Most reveal that they have a hefty workload and answers are suggestive of stressful working conditions and negative mental stress. Further, their statements point towards being faced with unrealistic plans, goals and deadlines (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Moreover, the interview objects declare that project work is no

mainstream job and not for everyone. Thus, similarly to Cicmil et al. (2016), we worry about the ethical issue of “projectification” with its impact on lasting sustainability, may be warranted for both organisations and humanity. A society where organisations are fully “projectified” and project workers are subject to long working hours, similar to some of the respondents, could be a society where workers who seek routine and a mainstream job may not survive. Among the possible reasons behind several respondents working unusually hard, could be a belief that handling and mastering challenging project work situations, become a part of being reliable, successful and professional (Hodgson, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014).

Regarding the preferred project situation, our findings suggest that a “perfect” project situation, where project workers are allowed to focus on one project, summon emotions of satisfaction and happiness. Contrastingly “imperfect” seems to conjure more negative emotions and feelings of envy (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Concerning the ideal project worker, our findings correlate with studies conducted by Lindgren et al. (2014), Cicmil et al. (2016) and Gill (2002). We discover flexibility to be an essential characteristic for the ideal project worker, as well as, to be creative, structured and solution-oriented.

Correlating with previous research, this thesis has shown that project work can become very emotional work incidents. However, our interviews suggest that it is seen as unprofessional to show too much emotion and not stay calm. Further, our findings indicate that projects, as a design of professionalism, is where managing and conquering difficult project work situations becomes a part of being dependable, successful and professional, and where extraordinary emotions do not belong (Cicmil et al., 2016; Hodgson, 2002; Lindahl & Rehn, 2007; Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005).

Concurrently with literature, our findings imply that project work situation, type I, often experience a lack of time for reflection and learning between the projects. The reason being that there is often a lack of recourses and overoptimistic time schedules (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). These findings could be suggestive of March (1995) concerns about project work being warranted. Since as March (1995) states, project work may not give project workers enough time for training and learning, thereby losing important elements of permanence. Correlating with Cicmil et al. (2016) and Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) studies, our finding suggest that projects are viewed as opportunities and a career path.

Moreover, Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) study states that this applies in particular to project type II. We find an apparent correlation to their statement in one of our respondent's answers, who is in a project work situation II, clearly indicating that projects are an opportunity to show off abilities.

When analysing the perceived organisational support, our respondents mentions numerous support mechanisms being used. A majority state that it leads to more efficient work and enabling them to talk about problems and be supported. Studying the respondents' emotions as a whole, most have a relatively high job satisfaction. In line with Spector (1997) study, it may be possible to view their job satisfaction as a display of positive emotional well-being. Additionally, findings in this thesis are suggestive of project workers being vulnerable to feel a greater belonging to their project compared to their organisation (Braun et al., 2013; Lundin et al., 2015). However, our findings suggest that organisational support may, in fact, be a way to mitigate the issue of belonging to the project organisation rather than one's organisation.

In our analysis of the *emotional process of a project*, we find several similarities with previous research. Our findings indicate a positive perception of a project within the *conceptual phase*, correlating with findings by Cicmil et al. (2016), Sahlin-Andersson and Söderholm (2002) and Gareis (2004). Furthermore, we find the perception of opportunities and inventiveness to be apparent in this phase of the project (Cicmil et al., 2016). Corresponding with Cicmil et al. (2016) we also reveal that high expectations and positive emotions addressed within the *conceptual phase* continue in the *planning phase*. In the *executing phase*, we uncover similarities with Rehn and Lindahl (2011) suggestion of more negative experienced emotions.

During our research, we also discover some differences with previous research of the *emotional process of a project*. Contrasting to research by Cicmil et al. (2016), we find statements concerning the *conceptual phase* indicating negative emotions. However, these findings correlate with those of Gareis (2004). Furthermore, we reveal a slight difference concerning the time emotions are experienced, such as the *commitment to blank sheets* and the *lack of motivation and excitement*. Our findings indicate that they appear at an earlier stage compared to the findings by Cicmil et al. (2016). Moreover, in the third phase, where Cicmil et al. (2016) discuss negative emotions such as suffering, bewilderment and exhaustion, we find a whole spectre of both positive and negative emotions. Interestingly it

seems that the respondents experience more positive rather than negative emotions during this phase. However, in the fourth phase, the *termination phase*, the negative emotions dominate similarly to Cicmil et al. (2016) findings. However, this is contrasting to Gareis (2004) who find positive emotions to be dominant. Similarly to Gareis (2004), we discover that project workers experience sadness due to being split from co-workers. Additionally, our results suggest that project workers are expected to move on to next project and “begin over again” (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Another interesting aspect is that the *termination phase* does not always have such a clear end as is suggested in theory.

Regarding project tools and methodologies, our results suggest that obeying these systems is something which the respondents, for the most part, do gladly and willingly. From an emotional perspective, tools and methodologies seem to primarily create a sense of security for the project worker (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). Further, they appear to be beneficial as they help reduce projects as an arena where stress, frustration, disappointment and conflict flourish (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005). Instead, our analysis suggests that project tools can be helpful in mitigating negative emotions in projects situations. Because they are supportive and gives the project worker a feeling of safety, as someone has walked the long and heavy road ahead before them, and suggested ways to escape potholes. Although project methodologies seem to be helpful, our analysis show how certain project methodologies may, in fact, increase the experienced stress, and that tools may at times be viewed as too bureaucratic (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005; Zika-Viktorsson et al., 2006).

In line with Lindgren et al. (2014), our respondents’ answers are suggestive of employees who continue to engage in project work, creating a circular process, where a continued and intense way of working becomes normalized (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014). Further, our findings propose a feature of *normalization*, whereby the project workers shall welcome unforeseen changes, delays and unexpected overtime as ordinary parts of their employment. Additionally, *internalization*, as some of the respondents’ comments suggests that the individual project worker is responsible and should accept developing difficulties with calm and self-control. Furthermore, that workers are meant to bring passion to every new project, thus lighting their flame of passion time and time again, referred to by Lindgren et al. (2014) as “*extraordinarization*”. More, we also discover that project workers are meant to

adhere to “*organisational project planning, control and evaluation systems without further ado*”, which Lindgren et al. (2014, p. 1405) entitled “*externalization*”.

With these findings, we have contributed to research by highlighting some of the “dark sides” of projectification as a whole and introduced new sectors and industries to the field of study. Furthermore, we have contributed to research by underlining a relatively unexplored area of emotions and project work by discovering how emotions develop throughout the process of a project life cycle.

5.2. Critique, limitations and future research

Due to project work and emotions being broad fields of research, as well as our research taking an exploratory character, we intended to, and could only contribute to a minor insight within the field. To further understand and make a generalisation of the “dark side” of projectification, and its impact of project work on the employees’ emotions in a project life cycle, the field would need to be researched more in-depth and from different perspectives. In this last subchapter, we will present some limitations and recommendations for future research.

While this research was methodically prepared, there will be factors that impact the primary data collected. Consequently, there will be deviations that makes data gathered less precise. As stated by LeCompte and Goetz (1982, p. 55) “*Attaining absolute validity and reliability is an impossible goal for any research model*”. Nevertheless, the aim is to ensure that potential errors remain as minimal as possible (Jacobsen, 2005).

Among the limitation of this thesis is the fact that data was gathered from a relatively small sample. With such a small sample it is difficult to make any generalisations with certainty. In addition, several of the respondents were represented from the same company and sector. As such, much of the data is analysed based on project workers with similar environment. Further several industries are not represented in this study. Hence, an understanding of their emotional perception of project work remains unexplored. Since this research is an exploratory research and may create the foundation for further research, it would be interesting with a future study that is able to capture data from a broader spectre of industries and with a larger sample of respondents.

This thesis may possibly have become subjective since data has been viewed through selective lens. As such, thesis may have been affected by bias. Although we carefully prepared before the interviews Taylor et al. (2015) states that it is impossible to complete research without being affected by bias. One aspect which the research may have been affected by is that we have imposed philosophies by the questions asked. Further while conducting the interviews we may possibly have responded or reacted to respondents which have lead them to answer questions in a certain way. Thereby having our research affected by interview bias. Further our research may be affected by response bias. Since our research is focused on a sensitive topic, such as emotions, respondents may possibly answer questions dishonestly which throws the interviewee in a ‘desirable light’.

When comparing the interviews there is a difference between the duration of the interviews. During the research we were able to achieve a better contact with some interview object compared to others. As such, some interview objects shared more than others. Thus, some respondents could possibly have refrained from sharing some details of working in a project setting and their emotions.

While the respondents’ answers can be found in the appendix it is difficult to achieve external reliability. Although the research may be repeated it is still difficult to adequately capture all the details from the interviews, since ‘freezing’ a social situation is simply impossible. Another aspect is that since this research was conducted by two researchers and only we were able to contribute in the coding, due to the character, time and financial restrictions of this thesis, some connection between the research question and the data guiding the analysis could possibly have been lost.

For future research we recommend expanding the horizon of our thesis by exploring other possible variables. Using our data, we believe it could be interesting to look into the possibilities of other factors, such as different project types, project situations and companies. This data is already collected, but due to restrictions concerning time and capacity of our thesis, we were not able to make such a detailed investigation into these matters. In line with one of our respondent’s comments, we believe it would be interesting to conduct future research concerning the difference in project consequences between the public- and the private sector. In addition to a more in-depth emotional research concerning the emotional differences between the project types and project situations. These aspects are shown in our

data and indicate possible interesting differences to be explored further. Another recommendation for future research due to our research is the mentioned difference between project theory and practice, and how the project theory is “cheated on” among some project workers. Lastly, since we were only two researchers analysing our data, due to previously mentioned constraints, it would be interesting to determine whether including several researchers, thus following Bryman and Bell (2015) suggestion, would discover possible interesting findings which we may have overlooked.

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Appendences

Appendix A: Interview guide

The interviews were conducted between 7th March and 10th April after an ongoing dialog with the respondents, where they were informed about the purpose and content of the research. Ahead of the interviews a confirmation of available time of approximately 60 minutes were also given. At the beginning of each interview, respondents were acknowledged for taking time to participate. Further, they were given the opportunity to request additional information regarding our research. Furthermore, the respondents were informed about their anonymity and the option to not answer questions. It would also be respected if one decided to withdraw from the interview at any time. The respondents also permitted us to tape record the interview. At the end, the respondent was given the opportunity to give additional information that would not come forward during the interview.

Interview guide – English

Personal information and project experience

1. Could you shortly tell us about yourself and your project experience?
 - Your work-life history?
 - Your view of the relationship between formal and actual work content?

Interpretation of project

2. What is a project – how would you define the term?
3. How would you characterize the ideal project worker?
 - How do you judge professionalism?
 - How would you characterize an unideal project worker?

Job satisfaction

4. How satisfied would you say you are with your job?
 - How do you feel about your job and the different aspects of it?

Emotional process of a project

5. Can you tell us about your emotions throughout a project?
 - Concept, planning, executing and termination (Project life-cycle).

Acceptance of emotions

6. How do you express your emotions at work?
 - Is there an acceptance for people to show emotions at work?
 - What kind of emotional reactions do you express in the event of project failure or success?

Project methodology and/or project tools

7. Do you use any formal project management methodology and/or technology, and if so which?
 - Have you received any formal project management training?

Career and ambitions

8. What is your career ambitions?
 - Is it important to you?
 - How do you believe a promotion is earned?
 - Does this have an effect on you during projects? Positive/Negative?

Support employee, firm level

9. Does your company have any mechanism to support employees in managing emotions?
 - Is your company aware of any negative consequences of project work?
 - If yes, how do they try to prevent these.

Is there anything else you think would be useful for us to hear about?

Interview Guide - Norwegian

Personlig informasjon og prosjektopplevelse

1. Kan du i korte trekk fortelle oss om deg selv og din prosjekterfaring?
 - Karriereveien din?
 - Hvordan er forholdet mellom formelt og faktisk arbeidsinnhold?

Tolkning av prosjekt

2. Hva er prosjekt – Hvordan ville du definere det?
3. Hvordan vil du karakterisere den ideelle prosjektarbeideren?
 - Hva ser du på som profesjonalitet?
 - Hvordan ville du karakterisere en uprofesjonell prosjektarbeider?

Jobbtilfredshet

4. Hvor fornøyd ville du si at du er med jobben din?
 - Hvilke følelser har du rundt jobben din og de ulike aspektene av den?

Emosjonell prosess av et prosjekt

5. Kan du fortelle oss om følelsene du opplever igjennom et prosjekt?
 - Konsept, planlegging, midten og avslutning (prosjekt livssyklus).

Godkjenning av følelser

6. Hvordan uttrykker du dine følelser på jobben?
 - Er det en aksept for folk å vise følelser på jobben?
 - Hvilke emosjoner eller følelser uttrykker du når et prosjekt går galt eller er en suksess?

Prosjektmetodikk og / eller teknologi

7. Bruker du noe formell prosjektledelsesmetodikk eller teknologi i ditt prosjektarbeid, i så fall hvilke?
 - Har du mottatt noen formell prosjektledelse trening?

Karriere og ambisjoner

8. Hva er dine karriereambisjoner?
 - Er disse ambisjonene viktig for deg?
 - Hvordan tror du man oppnår en forfremmelse?
 - Har dette en effekt på deg under prosjekter? Positiv/negativ?

Støtte medarbeider, fast nivå

9. Har din bedrift noen mekanismer for å støtte ansatte i å håndtere følelser?
 - Er din bedrift oppmerksom på eventuelle negative konsekvenser av prosjektarbeid?
 - Hvis ja, hvordan prøver de å forhindre disse?

Er det noe annet du tror er nyttig for oss å høre om?

Appendix B: Coding Agenda

This table represents the coding agenda for the qualitative content analysis by Mayring explained within subchapter 4.4.2.

Category	Variables (sub-categories)	Definition of category	Examples from the interviews for statements fitting into the category	Coding rules (to limit the categories)
Theme 1: The term “Project”				
a. What does project mean to the interviewee?	- Definition of the term project	The thesis aims to discover how our interview objects define the term project themselves.	«For it to be a project, there must be a limited scope and an agreed upon end date. A project cannot be a regular delivery situation. As such, there must be something different required beyond the normal operation of the organisation». (IO2)	This sets the foundation for all future answers. Thus, allowing us to compare individuals answers with a common understanding of the term.
b. Workload	- Formal vs. actual work content - Number of projects simultaneously	Looking at the interviewees’ actual work content compared to formal content. Also, whether the number of projects affects the project worker.	«I have been among those that work at three o'clock at night answering emails (...). Yes, there is substantial amount work. I would not say this is an A4 job». (IO1) «I work on parallel projects. Indirectly, I have to keep control of fifteen parallel projects at a time». (IO3)	Limited to formal and actual tasks, as well as, number of projects.
c. Ideal project worker	- Characterize of an ideal project worker - Unideal project worker - Professionalism	What does the interview object believe is the ideal/ unideal project worker? Additionally, we want to discover how the interviewee perceives professionalism.	«That is not touchy, someone that can perform while under pressure. One that does not drain energy from the team because we as colleagues disagree regarding certain aspects of a project». (IO4)	The question is limited to project workers.

Theme 2: Organisational support				
a. Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experienced supported - Awareness 	Intended to discover whether employees feel supported. As stated in the literature; perceived organisational support results in an improved commitment to the firm and improved performance. In addition, employees exhibit less absence and a lower chance of resigning. Perceived organisational support may, therefore, have an emotional effect on the project worker.	<p>«As a consultant, I am often working with other companies, but the company where I am employed is good at making sure that they are the company where I feel most at home. I think that is very important. Since one can quickly slide away from one's organisation when having your base at another company for maybe over a year, suddenly your own business feels foreign».</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(101)</p>	Is limited to organisational support and does not wish to discuss project methodology or technology.
b. Job satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional well-being 	According to literature, it is possible to view job satisfaction as a display of emotional well-being. It is to discover the interviewees' perception of their jobs different aspects.	<p>«I am fond of a challenge and finding solutions. I am working in a very positive industry where it is exciting to see the results of your work upon completion of the project».</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(107)</p>	The question is limited to the interviewees' satisfaction with their work and no other aspects of life.
Theme 3: Emotional process of a project				
a. Circular process of a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conceptual phase - Planning phase - Executing phase - Terminating phase 	Peslak (2005), stresses the importance of emotions development through a projects lifetime. It is to discover the emotional	<p>«The enthusiasm and commitment are greatest in the beginning».</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(104)</p> <p>«(...) When, or if, we get the offer is when the fun begins! It is the best phase with great enthusiasm!</p>	The variables incorporate the interviewees' perception of the different stages of a project.

		consequences of project works different stages.	<p><i>Additionally, I enjoy developing plans, and I like the systems that we use for this (...).</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(I05)</p> <p><i>«Sometimes you become frustrated and may panic a little at this stage».</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(I010)</p>	<p>The question does not limit the interviewees to use the stated words but may, for example, involve using the <i>end of the project</i> rather than termination.</p> <p>Personal experiences and feelings throughout a project. Collection of stories.</p>
Theme 4: Acceptance of emotions				
a. Interviewees emotional expression	- Work	Interviewees perception of organisational acceptance for emotions.	<p><i>«There is a great acceptance for showing emotions here. One is allowed to show frustration. (...) If you are sad or there is something, then you will get support if you need it. I find it much easier to do my job when being allowed to express my emotions».</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(I01)</p>	Looking at the project workers attitude towards the organisational- and project team culture.
Theme 5: Project methodology, tools and their emotional effect				
a. Methodology and tools	- Training/certifications - Tools	Believed helpfulness of training/certifications. Effect of project methodology on emotions in a project.	<p><i>« I certainly think it is an advantage to have some methodology. There is no doubt about it. It is absolutely essential (...)</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(I06)</p>	Is regulated to project methodology and does not wish to discuss project tools/technology or other support mechanisms.
b. Emotional effect	- Emotions	Does the project worker perceive tools as supportive or confiding and what emotional effect do they have?	<p><i>«(...) The tools make me feel more confident and professional at carrying out a project with the lowest possible risk».</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(I05)</p>	Is limited to project tools/technology and does not wish to discuss project methodology or other support mechanisms.

Theme 6: Career and ambitions				
a. Ambitions	- Interviewee ambition	What effect does possible ambitions have on the project worker? Does it have any influence on their project work? How important is it for them?	<p><i>«My ambitions have been essential for my current standing. I always have the ambition to deliver the best. Thus, my ambitions have influenced how I work on a project. Delivering well on a regular basis is important to achieve new goals. However, ambitions may also have a little negative effect, because it increases the expectations I set for my teams, and they could probably have gotten away with less work».</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(103)</p>	The question is restricted to the project workers ambitions and its effect on the individual.
b. Career	- Promotion	Discover what project worker believes is required to achieve a promotion. Intended to determine whether it affects the project employee emotionally, and their effort put into the project.	<p><i>«Projects can give employees an opportunity to become more visible than they would normally have been. Thus, you get the chance to get up and say “Hi, here I am, see what I have delivered and seen what I can contribute! (...) it is definitely a career path».</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(104)</p>	Is restricted to how the project worker believes a promotion is achieved and its emotional effect.

Appendix C: Category system

Interviews IO1-IO4

Theme 1: The term “Project”				
Variables	IO1 – Lisa (pre-test)	IO2 – Susan	IO3 – Betty	IO4 – James
a. What does project mean to the interviewee?				
- Definition of the term project	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>	<i>«For it to be a project, there must be a limited scope and an agreed upon end date. A project cannot be a regular delivery situation. As such, there must be something different required beyond the normal operation of the organisation».</i>	<i>«Something that has a start and an end. There is a defined amount of work that is expected to be delivered on a target date. It should essentially be a specification of the expected outcome and the available resources».</i>	<i>«It is a start and end. Furthermore, I think that one must have an ambition at a certain level to create something that does not already exist. I probably associate it with some innovation concept. Has to have its resources and separate from the rest of the organisation».</i> <i>«When we use the project term here, it is a bit diluted and not according to the textbook. It is used to create a feeling of hope, excitement and to lift things up. Maybe the word creates some kind of status. However, we run around in a hamster wheel with it as with everything else».</i>
b. Job content/ relationship to project				
- Workload	<i>«Currently, it is very all right, because I only work 80 percent and solely on small projects, however, it depends</i>	<i>«At times one works 60 hours of weeks. I had a longer period like that last fall. So, if you want a routine job, where you</i>	<i>«As long as this is completely anonymous, then I may answer it. I never have a week where I work less than 60 hours. I</i>	<i>«Last year I had 200 hours overtime, and fifteen transferred vacation days. I have used the vacation days,</i>

	<i>on what responsibilities you have and the projects you are on. On some projects I have been on, it has not been adequate with 37,5 hours. It is enjoyable to work as a project manager, and accordingly it is fairly easy to get carried away. I have been among those that work at three o'clock at night answering emails (...). Yes, there is substantial amount work. It is something that not everyone can manage. I have also been on projects that have been too much. I would not say this is an A4 job».</i>	<i>put the same lid on the same box every day, you have to work with something else. So, project work is not for everyone».</i>	<i>spend approximately 20-30 hours a week on follow-up. It is far less stressful to sit at work doing the job than to sit at home pondering about all I should have completed».</i>	<i>though I do not know if I will be able to use the 200 hours. There is a gap between my contract and the actual workload, but management does not demand it. They presumably do not realise how much work this job demands».</i>
- Number of projects simultaneously	<i>«I work in simultaneous projects».</i>	<i>«One to three projects simultaneously».</i>	<i>«I work on parallel projects. Indirectly, I have to keep control of fifteen parallel projects at a time».</i>	<i>«I work on projects all too often! (...) Projects will always be a competitor for other work tasks».</i>
c. Ideal project worker				
- Characterize of an ideal project worker	<i>«I believe that one must be flexible, independent and curious. You must also be able to work with people – that is a crucial aspect».</i>	<i>«You must be flexible, creative and solution-oriented. Not so rigid, but still able to follow what is set by guidelines and standards (...) one needs to say yes to tasks you do not know how to solve, and one needs to solve problems - because that is what you should do on a project».</i>	<i>«Well-composed team, where you both have people who are very creative and efficient, while having the structured project workers who have an overview, add a plan before they begin. These qualities together are very good for a team. It is rare that you find a person who has all these features».</i>	<i>«Someone who realises that right now this is the priority. Someone who contributes by sharing one's experience, experience and professional weight. That is not touchy, someone that can perform while under pressure. One that does not drain energy from the team because we as colleagues disagree</i>

				<i>regarding certain aspects of a project».</i>
- Unideal project worker	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>	<i>«Someone who is not flexible or able to find solutions. Flexibility is critical!».</i>	<i>«It is someone who never concentrates on where the goal is. A project worker who develops things just because it seems like a fascinating task to keep up with, but that is entirely on the side of what is meant to be delivered. Who cannot perceive the client's specification?»</i>	<i>«It quickly becomes unprofessional if there are too many emotions in things. One must be able to stand for what one believes in. If not, you lose the core, the progress and the obvious goal ahead».</i>
- Professionalism	<i>«There may be plenty of things inside a team. However, one does not display that to the client. This assures that the customer is not alarmed (...) and one must respect one another and be committed to whatever one has been asked to do. It is not every assignment that is amusing, but you have a job to fulfil, you get paid to perform. It is imperative. However, we are only human so that everyone may have a bad day. If you do not have these abilities, then you have nothing to do on a project team».</i>	<i>«I think communication skills are the most important towards customers. It is important to be correct in one's language, but not overly formal. The most important thing is to have the appropriate expectations with a continuous clarification of what is demanded. An example is clarifying with the customer where we are currently at in the project. Additionally, having a good dialogue with the client in an initial phase where we collect the demands or what is expected upon delivery».</i>	<i>«A professional employee is conscious of the goals, takes the time to comprehend what shall be delivered, and works towards that goal without too many divergences (...) and reports any deviations. Similarly, a professional project worker is calm, even though they know that there are deadlines, so they are not particularly stressed and produce poor quality. It is necessary to reach the goal versus to be delivered on time».</i>	<i>«Honesty and respect for others. Someone who can accept feedback. Open to others point of view and handle hearing it in a good way».</i>

Theme 2: Organisational support				
a. Support				
<p>- Experienced support and support mechanisms</p>	<p><i>«As a consultant, I am often working with other companies, but the company where I am employed is good at making sure that they are the company where I feel most at home. I think that is very important. Since one can quickly slide away from one's organisation when having your base at another company for maybe over a year, suddenly your own business feels foreign».</i></p> <p><i>«The company monitors our hours weekly and they "force" us to take time off, which I think is a great thing! I also believe that contributes to us working more efficiently».</i></p>	<p><i>«I feel supported when I need it. However, I believe that there is always a conflict in larger companies when you are higher up in the hierarchy, and your colleges are scattered throughout the nation, so you do not have daily communication».</i></p>	<p><i>«This company does not quite manage to create a feeling of closure after projects. You will always feel like you are in some delivery, so you have to find your techniques to get those victories along the way. In this department, this is my responsibility (...), so I usually handout a little Twist chocolate or something just for the mental part. I think it is important to get a break and understand that you have reached a goal».</i></p> <p><i>«We have an appraisal interview twice a year which is mandatory. We also have employee surveys four times a year where you have the opportunity to express your thoughts and get support if you need any».</i></p>	<p><i>«We have an appraisal interview yearly, but I am not fond of it. There are 364 other days of the year which is equally important, but of course, it is good to have a safety net».</i></p> <p><i>«Recently we found a mechanism or tool that allowed us to sit in the same room and anonymously express what we mean. Thus, without exposing the conflict between the employees! It is brilliant!».</i></p>
b. Job satisfaction				
<p>- Emotional well-being</p>	<p><i>«I am very pleased - this the dream job. In my previous job, I missed being independent and having flexibility. I like to coordinate and lead teams. I think it is fun working together to achieve</i></p>	<p><i>«I must say that I am very pleased, it is exciting and challenging. However, every company has something one dislikes, but that one has to cope with. Large companies like this are a breed of their</i></p>	<p><i>«I find my job to be very interesting. When working on projects, you have to enjoy being a bit uncomfortable. One will always work a little on the edge of your field of expertise or with a lack of time and resources. Besides, you are</i></p>	<p><i>«I am happy with the job I have now. I need some struggles. Struggles that create the feeling of a punch in the face, so it hurts a bit. In that way, everything here at work is in a way not good, but I am doing well and want</i></p>

	<i>something. It is a great feeling to arrive at work and know this is great».</i>	<i>own - there are a lot of rules, procedures and policies».</i> <i>«I think it is nice to have customer interaction and would like more of it. However, what I enjoy the utmost is working internally at the company. I enjoy following the work concerning the development of new solutions and coordinating internal resources. This is when I feel self-development».</i>	<i>completely dependent on the others in your team and must be able to rely on them. For my part, that works well».</i>	<i>it like that. Nevertheless, it is important to enjoy the company you work for and those you work with. I had a leadership position previously and, in many ways, hit a wall. I was so tired of the organisation and of my closest manager that I had to quit».</i>
Theme 3: Emotional process of a project				
a. Circular process of a project				
- Conceptual face	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>	<i>«It is entertaining starting up new projects. Then you are fresh in mind and ready to dive into new tasks».</i>	<i>«At first, I have a peak, with a high pulse and stress, as I have a lot to do. However, that is something that goes a little easier every time I start a new project because one gets used to reading the order and documentation (...), but when we have new project workers, it is a little different. It is important that the person who has received the message is sure of their task».</i>	<i>«The enthusiasm and commitment are greatest in the beginning. I prefer to be in the concept phase where things are not sealed and where we can afford to throw a little ball to see where it bounces in the planning of where we are going».</i>
- Planning	<i>«The analysis part is the most exciting because that where you get to work with people. However, this part is also the heaviest and most demanding because one has</i>	<i>«This phase is where you often meet numerous of challenges since it is usually the phase where one identifies all possible problems, which may affect what you planned in the</i>	<i>«For me, this may be the most critical and exciting phase since it has a considerable effect on the time that we can start the implementation phase. If the plans we make</i>	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>

	<i>to uncover the right needs for the project to build a good foundation».</i>	<i>conceptual phase. Hence, one may have to find other solutions and adjust plans. Nevertheless, it is fun when one can overcome these challenges».</i>	<i>does not work, it may prompt a large impediment for our delivery date».</i>	
- Executing	<i>«The implementation phase is demanding, but at a completely different level compared to the planning phase. For example, some customers may have said that they want something, only to change their minds and suddenly demand something different, which is demanding. Besides, I know from previous experience that this phase regularly produces some unexpected predicaments».</i>	<i>«On major projects, we find one or two pilot customers where we install and test the product. It is always an exciting period when testing and discovering flaws that we correct or rectify. However, it is always hectic just before delivery. Especially when the test-pilots find all the mistakes we had not foreseen».</i>	<i>«For me, this is the most pleasant phase of a project, because I mostly receive reports from others. However, it should be noted that this phase is the most stressful for those who work directly in the project».</i>	<i>«I think the execution phase is a bit monotonous, both the commitment and enthusiasm decline within the team».</i>
- Terminating	<i>«The terminating phase is mostly about controlling what we have done. Also, to make sure we are delivering what we have agreed and make a plan for how everything will be followed up after delivery».</i>	<i>«Currently, I am finishing a project where I am incredibly tired of the customers. It will be incredibly enjoyable to wrap up that project. I tend to get a bit tired at the end. I would rather start something new than make sure that everything is a one-hundred percent at the end».</i>	<i>«During completion and delivery, my stress level raises again. Since then I am reliant on good communication with the teams to review and control everything. I know there are several who never manages this stressful red zone. It makes them sleep poorly, feel uncomfortable and never able to deliver. Consequently, they end up changing jobs. I know that</i>	<i>«You become proud when you reach the project goal and finish a project».</i>

			<i>many people avoid work that involves much project work».</i>	
Theme 4: Acceptance of emotions				
a. Interviewees emotional expression				
- Work	<i>«There is a great acceptance for showing emotions here. One is allowed to show frustration. You have to be yourself. If you are sad or there is something, then you will get support if you need it. I find it much easier to do my job when being allowed to express my emotions. Because if there is something, there's always someone there who can help you».</i>	<i>«We are pretty good at showing feelings here. We are in an open office environment, and you can constantly hear an outburst. I have also had frustrating customer meetings where I have called senior vice president and said: "this does not work". So, there is room to speak out and air frustrations».</i>	<i>«There is a tolerance for people to say almost anything, as long as it is said with a tone of voice that is appropriate. We are grown-ups, so I expect that you are clear about what you think, feel and believe, which we will accept. Everyone does not always have a good day at work, and you can have a bad project».</i>	<i>«Nothing of what I work with, in the public sector, provides a positive bottom line. We work with people, trying to meet an infinite need. Hence, I believe we have a stronger or more natural culture for feelings in the workplace. I have never worked in the private sector, so I do not know how it is there, but I wish it sometimes because it seems less complicated without all the emotions mixed in».</i>
Theme 5: Project methodology, tools and their emotional effect				
a. Methodology and tools				
- Methodology and tools	<i>«We use many different methods. The method we use is largely dependent on the customer and the project. However, many of the methods are quite alike, and most of the employees in this company have some form of certification, I have PRINCE2. Otherwise, I know PMI and have much experience with Scrum. These methods have become buzzwords for the customers.</i>	<i>«The company has named PRINCE2 as its project management methodology, in which I am certified. Often in projects, we only follow it partly. We also use other methodologies like Scrum or similar methods».</i>	<i>«I am Scrum certified and have a master's degree with several subjects focused on project management. It increases my consciousness concerning the phases of a project, the pitfalls and the importance of setting goals».</i> <i>«I carry out projects with Scrum. I am a bit more determined to define the finish line and other aspects that are not part of Scrum's</i>	<i>«I have no more methodology than what I learnt from studying and is something which I do not remember very well. You create personal systems».</i> <i>«I worked on projects where there have been major discussions about which methodology or tools to use (...). I cannot take a stance to that. Tell me what to deliver and what is required to</i>

	<p><i>However, it does not mean one gets any more assignments for that reason. Everything is usually dependent on experience».</i></p>		<p><i>methodology, but you manage it with a traditional project culture. However, you implement it with a Scrum methodology. Hence, they are very dependent on each other».</i></p> <p><i>«We use Scrum and PRINCE2 - agile methods. We have completely ignored the Waterfall methodology. I do not understand that it was a successful method. There is very little planning, and I think this methodology gives an increased stress factor because you do not see the big picture. However, this is something you can with the agile methods we use, and you are also able to adjust more».</i></p>	<p><i>reach success at the end, so that I know what is going to get us there. It may not be the most effective method».</i></p> <p><i>«We do not have any project tools. We only use Excel, Word to create a simple setup that we use as a guideline. It works, but it is not optimally. When we work with people who have project expertise and want to use tools, then we get into a vacuum, and I see that it simply means a loss that we did not have a tool from the start».</i></p> <p><i>«We requested tools for the people working in the municipality, but we are not able to get our message through to management. So, we have stopped nagging».</i></p>
<p>b. Emotional effect</p>				
<p>- Emotions</p>	<p><i>[Did not mention anything]</i></p>	<p><i>«I am one of those who reads a lot about theories and subject matter during my spare time. Having a familiarity with methodologies and theories makes me feel safer so that I can make better decisions. It is good to have something to lean on. The theory is best practice.</i></p>	<p><i>«The more competence you have, the more it takes for you to get out your comfort zone. You learn methods and techniques to cope with stress and can increasingly move your comfort zone».</i></p>	<p><i>«It does not work optimally at all (...), as I say, it is almost as if we are bow-legged or knock-kneed, but in a way, it works, we move forward».</i></p>

		<i>You know that someone already attempted and failed before you and discovered what works».</i>		
Theme 6: Career and ambitions				
a. Ambitions				
- Interviewee ambition	<i>«That is a bit difficult to answer because there are so much interesting I would like to do, like strategy and business development, change management, efficiency, etc. However, I feel that I am where I am supposed to be right now, regarding my age and career ladder. I am very pleased».</i>	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>	<i>«My ambitions have been essential for my current standing. I always have the ambition to deliver the best. Thus, my ambitions have influenced how I work on a project. Delivering well on a regular basis is important to achieve new goals. However, ambitions may also have a little negative effect, because it increases the expectations I set for my teams, and they could probably have gotten away with less work».</i>	<i>«I have ambitions, and that is important to me. They have helped me to my current position. It gives me a driving force».</i>
b. Career				
- Promotion	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>	<i>«You earn a promotion by performing a good job. I have not experienced anything specific that indicates otherwise, which is a good thing».</i>	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>	<i>«To get a promotion, you have to do a good job and be yourself. I also believe credibility is important. Projects can give employees an opportunity to become more visible than they would normally have been. Thus, you get the chance to get up and say “Hi, here I am, see what I have delivered and seen what I can contribute! (...) it is a career path».</i>

Interviews IO5-IO7

Theme 1: The term “Project”			
Variables	IO5 – Helen	IO6 – Brian	IO7 – Kevin
a. What does project mean to the interviewee?			
- Definition of the term project	<i>«In its simplest form, it has a start and an end. Further, if viewed in greater detail a project is also divided into project phases».</i>	<i>«There are tasks to be terminated and transferred that is crucial. Also, it involves a change».</i>	<i>«A project should perform a task, with a clear start and end. There must be a team that can perform the task effectively. Moreover, there must be some follow-up along the way, so that one has some status of what is going on. Which is helpful as it clarifies responsibilities and tasks, as well as goals».</i>
b. Job content/ relationship to project			
- Workload	<i>«On average I work 40-hours, maybe I will work 43 one week, but I will collect extra hours which can be used to get time off. Therefore, I may have been an extra week of vacation during the summer. If not, we have flexitime and keep track of our hours».</i>	<i>«I have never had a regular work week. I probably work 5-10 hours more a week than those who work a regular week. Nevertheless, I try to work as little as possible. When one has worked on as many projects as I, everything becomes more methodical, so one manages to reduce the time needed to finish tasks».</i>	<i>«It is usually fine. It has not been strenuous. Still, it is a bit on and off at times. Sometimes one has to work overtime, but ordinarily, one can do it during normal working hours. It may be a bit problematic for some because if one relies on someone else to finish a job before one can start doing one's job. Then one may have more overtime in certain periods».</i> <i>«Some days you go around thinking about your work, like today, when I woke up at five o'clock, I started thinking about something».</i>
- Number of projects simultaneously	<i>«I can work in seven to eight projects at a time. Since I may operate as both a project worker and project manager (...). I may assist in</i>	<i>«I mostly work on one. That is what I enjoy the most because then I get to have maximum focus. It is often a bit exhausting when you work on</i>	<i>«I practically always work on parallel projects, usually about three to four at a time. We have many parallel tasks, and if you have some</i>

	<i>a big project to do a minor part, while I manage several small projects».</i>	<i>several (...). I may work in more than one when transitioning between projects if I am with one client. Due to there being some backlog from the one project, for example. So last autumn there were suddenly three projects. So about 20-30 percent of my time is spent working on more than one project».</i>	<i>slack on one of the projects, then you can switch to another project and work on that. Unfortunately, there is not only one project at a time It would have been so much better».</i>
c. Ideal project worker			
- Characterize of an ideal project worker	<i>«It is someone who delivers within the agreed deadline, according to agreed quality and within the budget available. If for some reason, that is not possible I want to be notified in ample time, so I can find other solutions and possibly interpolate someone else or tell the client that we need to postpone the deadline».</i>	<i>«There are many qualities. Firstly, you must know what you are doing. One must have a delivery capability. In fact, a large delivery capacity. Maybe a bit flexible. Because it involves change, you must not be locked. One must be structured, but at the same time creative. One does not have to be an artist who forgets their wallet on the roof of the car creative. Focus on the goal ahead».</i>	<i>«You must have an accurate perception of your task plus an overview of what the others do. If you merely focus on yourself, it is often going to be a misunderstanding. Consequently, a little overview of what the others do is essential. There must also be someone who is cooperative and aspires to work towards that goal».</i>
- Unideal project worker	<i>«People who do not deliver within the deadline or spend more hours than allocated without giving notice or asking first. It is also important that if you are uncertain about what to deliver, you should contact your superior since it is unprofessional if one does not».</i>	<i>«Unstructured. Going around and believing and perceiving without knowledge. Writes or delivers things that are in poor condition. It slows the process down a lot and takes plenty of time. It will be very demanding for the project and those around. You have to patch over their mistakes and have to start a process of getting them out of the project because you cannot use them».</i>	<i>«I just do not think I have been worked with a lot unprofessional».</i>
- Professionalism	<i>«That I have a good relationship with our client who is our customer, good communication and that the</i>	<i>«First of all, one needs to know one's field of work. Those who are the most professional are usually</i>	<i>«Professionalism is that you deliver within the deadline and expected quality. It is also important for</i>

	<i>customer knows that we will deliver on time, within budget and according to the expected quality. If something occurs in a project, as it often does, then we have to notify the client in good time and talk about any possible changes».</i>	<i>most confident in themselves, as well as, their abilities and are straightforward to work with. They have nothing to defend. Professional people are honest, reasonable, deliver and follow up».</i>	<i>someone who can take the advisory role. In the past, I have not been so conscious about that, but as I have discovered in recent years, that is something that means more and more to the customer – in the end, one is rewarded for it».</i>
Theme 2: Organisational support			
a. Support			
- Experienced support and support mechanisms	<p><i>«We review our workload plan with our group leader, and if we have a large workload, then the group leader can help find solutions to support. However, if the group leader does a poor job, which we certainly have examples of. I have seen employees who go on sick leave due to for instance high stress. You also have a safety representative, which I do not know if anyone has used, but it exists. There is also the opportunity to go one further level up to the regional manager or contact HR».</i></p> <p><i>«We always had an ambition that we should celebrate when we finish a project, but they are short, and mostly we just celebrate with a high-five before we move on to the next project».</i></p>	<p><i>«In our company, it is very collegial. We have had a psychologist workshop where we learned about everyone's profiles. We also provide big support to anyone who needs help, and it is being practised. As an external consultant on a project, one occasionally becomes a victim. I have not experienced this myself, but it is very tough, and I have seen this happen to colleagues».</i></p> <p><i>«We are aware of negative tendencies with projects, and I try to prevent them. Every fortnight we have a company meeting to review how people are doing. Further, we call each other when it is hard».</i></p>	<i>«We have an HR-system that will deal with employee questions. I know it has been in use. In some situations, as in conflict, they enter as a supporting function. We also have appraisal interviews, or we can talk to our manager. (...) I would like to have some more positive feedback once in a while».</i>
b. Job satisfaction			
- Emotional well-being	<i>«I am very pleased with my job! I have good colleagues, and I like that there is a good mix of academic</i>	<i>«Sometimes I am thrilled, other times I am not. I think it is like that with all professions, and you get</i>	<i>«Most of the time I am looking forward to going work. I generally think that there is a good</i>

	<p>challenges and project management. As a project manager, I do not have staff responsibility, but I have management duties - something that suits me greatly».</p> <p>«I enjoy having many responsibilities. Here time is money, and everything goes very fast. Unlike the public sector, where you have lengthy procedures for approval. I enjoy the speed of the private sector after working many years in the public sector».</p>	<p>bored sometimes. I have managed a lot of long-lasting projects and it is something I find tiring because then both you and your team get a feeling of fatigue. Generally, I would say that I am satisfied 70-80 percent of the time. It is best to get the people around me to succeed, and I think it is the most rewarding».</p>	<p>environment here. I am fond of a challenge and finding solutions. I am working in a very positive industry where it is exciting to see the results of your work upon completion of the project. However, of course, sometimes the work tasks can be boring and dull as well».</p>
Theme 3: Emotional process of a project			
a. Circular process of a project			
- Conceptual face	<p>«Our first phase consists of making offers, which can be a bit heavy. Since there it is much material to go through. Challenges may be that the client has a defuse request, or does not fully know what they want. Then it is important that we work together and that we get input from the different professional groups within the office».</p>	<p>«As a project manager, you rarely enter the conceptual phase. Nevertheless, it is a fascinating phase. There have been numerous times where I have had to challenge and question the customers' decisions from the conceptual face and then had them change it».</p>	<p>«I consider this phase both incredibly important and exciting. It may become much less interesting phases later».</p> <p>«It is imperative to have a good understanding of the objective. Thus, it is essential to have documentation from the start-up meetings, which serves as a guideline and sets the foundation for all further work. It is comforting to have if you become uncertain».</p>
- Planning	<p>«When, or if, we get the offer is when the fun begins! It is the best phase with great enthusiasm! Additionally, I enjoy developing plans, and I like the systems that we use for this. A lot of the planning is</p>	<p>«This is a fascinating phase because I love to put my mind to complex issues, which I might not have any knowledge about beforehand. For me, it is almost like a puzzle that is messed up with many dimensions,</p>	<p>[Did not mention anything]</p>

	<i>prepared during the conceptual phase, although they must be slightly polished and refined (...) So this is the best stage. The phase before all the problems start».</i>	<i>not like a regular puzzle. Another aspect is working with the right people who have the right knowledge and who understands the project and that we together managed to root the project within the management – that is very exciting and rewarding».</i>	
- Executing	<i>«Usually this phase is associated with a drop of enthusiasm and commitment. However, I have not felt this as I find the challenges that appear in this phase to be exciting. I like to solve problems as long as I have good communication with the client. Currently I have a project with a very unprofessional customer who does not relate to what we have written in the contract and monthly reports and this has become heavy for me».</i>	<i>«This phase is very exciting in terms of deliveries. I always try to divide a project into smaller deliveries if possible and strive to have many of them during this phase. This creates a security by verifying or testing along the way. It follows the old saying; How do you eat an elephant? You have to take one bite at a time».</i>	<i>«During this phase, we usually do a little more standardised work. It is a phase where we know what to do and we normally just follow a premade template. In this way I would say it is a safe phase which I find to be nice to have occasionally. However, it depends a bit on the project whether or not we work this way».</i>
- Terminating	<i>«It is always satisfying when you arrive at the end of the project and deliver. We are not finished at that point, because an evaluation should be conducted. However, this only happens in five percent of our projects, because normally the budget is finished, or all team members have started new projects. Consequently, we cheat project theory at this stage. We should evaluate strengths and weaknesses, what went wrong and why, so we can learn from the experiences, but</i>	<i>«Emotionally it is sad because you lose great and knowledgeable colleagues to whom you have built a close relationship. You lose a good team that could have delivered countless other good things. However, it is natural as the project is finished, and one has to move on to the next. Otherwise, the termination and delivery phase motivate me as it brings new challenges. The termination can also be stressful due to much pressure, but I enjoy both pressure and stress».</i>	<i>«In this phase, you are close to a deadline, which I find to be stressful. Before delivering you would like to have a quality assurance on your work and if necessary correct it. So, it is important to work hard in this phase as well».</i>

	<i>the problem is that the air has gone out of the balloon».</i>		
Theme 4: Acceptance of emotions			
a. Interviewees emotional expression			
- Work	<p><i>«My feelings can be spontaneous and everything possible. I may get frustrated when someone sends rude emails with feedback that I do not think makes sense. Then I speak with colleagues and get support. The same applies if we win an offer, then we gather and celebrate a little. Alternatively, if there is something technical, then one might hear an outburst. So, there is an excellent environment for it».</i></p> <p><i>«In front of the customer then it is important to act professionally. I usually use humour and small talk to try and find something common. It can also be disarmament and makes it easier to resolve conflicts if something is to happen. However, we keep our anger and outbreaks within the company. I have been to some meetings where someone it has happened to someone, and it seldom leads to something positive».</i></p>	<p><i>«As a project manager, I try to avoid emotions as much as possible. I am trying to stick to the facts. I get excited and think things are fun. I am keen on having fun. It is a profile of mine, I am very direct, but spice it with some humour. Then you can say pretty tough things and do not spend so much time on uncertainties. I say it as it is, I do not have time to keep up with anything else. I do not have the mandate of those who own the project to walk around feeling; one should deliver».</i></p> <p><i>«We are all different. Some show many emotions and others a little less. When you are trying to make people succeed there are sometimes emotions that play a role in some form, so it is important».</i></p>	<p><i>«I do not quite know. You may get a little grumpy sometimes if things do not go the way they are intended. You might feel like you are walking through mud and cannot move. Then I notice that you can get a bit cross and sore sometimes, though it may loosen the next day. So, you have to work a bit on yourself».</i></p> <p><i>«Yes, it probably is, but I do not have any emotional outbursts. You are allowed but within certain bounds, but few run around screaming here, it is rather civilised».</i></p>
Theme 5: Project methodology, tools and their emotional effect			
a. Methodology and tools			
- Methodology and tools	<i>«We have a quality system that describes how we should formally conduct a project. I keenly follow the recipe to reduce risk. There is a</i>	<i>«I am PRINCE2 certified and ScrumMaster. I use what is the most natural method, but never the method for the sake of the method. I</i>	<i>«Normally when you go to one of these courses, it is tough to find one that is appropriate for you. Often the examples are used without any</i>

	<p><i>reason why the templates and information are made. We have a quality assurance system that ensures that we deliver within the agreed upon date».</i></p> <p><i>«Knowledge transfer is something that happens when sitting in open office environment where we can quickly help each other. It is essential. I believe I have a lot to contribute with or learn, from those who have worked here shorter or longer than me. We also have internal courses and have hired external companies. I have been taking courses through the internal academy that have been highly useful and valuable. Additionally, we have several templates and tools to assist us in our work».</i></p>	<p><i>certainly think it is an advantage to have some methodology. There is no doubt about it. It is absolutely essential. If you do not have a methodological understanding of project management and have been through methods, then you will do a worse job, that is for sure. It is like building a house without the drawings, you will get there in the end, but it will be expensive, lots of planks and not what the customer requested. It does not work. You have to make a plan and use the tools plus the methods that work. I am not as rigid as the theory. That is not how the world is, nobody works like that. I use the methods which are most fitting to use».</i></p> <p><i>«It is a big advantage that we are reaching industry standards. Like the customer I have now does not have PRINCE2, but it is about 90 percent similar to PRINCE2. The most valuable aspect of PRINCE2 and PMI, in the last ten years, is governance, i.e. decision-making. That side of things has developed to become a lot more positive. There are now more people in management who understands projects and technology. Before, it was empty of that knowledge. Then companies did not know how to create framework</i></p>	<p><i>challenges or problems, so once you get to work, it is not like that at all. I am more comfortable with practical learning. We have a lot of internal resources that teach courses on certain themes, and we have a lot of outstanding people».</i></p> <p><i>«I started here in 1980, and at that time we had a computer where you had to run one and one calculation. I have participated in the digital journey, and a great deal has happened. I have also been part of a course, and I am a little self-taught. I use many tools in my work, and it is increasingly shifting towards digital tools».</i></p>
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		<i>conditions for project managers or projects. It has been a welcomed change. As a graduate, there is a lot to learn from these methodologies. One feels much safer when one has a method».</i>	
b. Emotional effect			
- Emotions	<i>«When writing bids to customers we have a risk assessment form. It is also used along the way in the project. If we see that there is considerable risk associated with a customer or project, we may refrain from bidding. We have many tools we use along the way. We have a checklist for the completion of projects. It is part of the quality system that we are certified. If we do not complete it, we may lose our certification, so it is essential. The tools make me feel more confident and professional at carrying out a project with the lowest possible risk».</i>	<i>«I am an emotional person, but I try to prevent too many emotions».</i>	<i>«It is a kind of reassurance. Several of the systems were created for larger projects. So, you need to pick parts that are relevant to your work, but it is helpful, for sure! We have systems of filing routines and many other necessary and helpful tools».</i>
Theme 6: Career and ambitions			
a. Ambitions			
- Interviewee ambition	<i>«I want to become an even better project manager and continue with this career».</i>	<i>«I do not know what to do when I grow up. I will probably continue in my current position for at least a few years since I am the owner of the company. I have no ambition to become a director and take responsibility elsewhere. I want to work less and earn more».</i>	<i>«I have probably not been very ambitious throughout my career. I had a project leader role a few years ago, but I realised that it became too strenuous. It required a lot follow-up, so suddenly I needed to do both my usual work and project management at the same time, it did not go so well».</i>

		<i>«I think career ambitions affect how we work on a project. It has to do with what drives people, whether it be money, prestige, promotions etc.».</i>	
b. Career			
- Promotion	<i>«You are tidy, delivering the appropriate quality at the right time, within budget and get a high score on our feedback program from the client».</i>	<i>«Do a good job. However, I have seen a lot of strange things too - disappointingly many strange things, although luckily it is not usually like that».</i>	<i>[Did not mention anything]</i>

Interviews IO8-IO10

Theme 1: The term “Project”			
Variables	IO8 – David	IO9 – Mark	IO10 – Linda
a. What does project mean to the interviewee?			
- Definition of the term project	<i>«It must have a start and an end. Further, there must be team members. Should it succeed, one must have a proper goal hierarchy, something one might not always think of and which I would say is essential. Of course, projects that are not successful often forget to have an appropriate goal hierarchy. Additionally, if you have finances, then you have progress».</i>	<i>«A project is a task consisting of many parts that are temporary. It has a clear start and a clear ending with a purpose that is not part of the company's normal operation. The content of projects varies greatly».</i>	<i>«A project is a task, a challenge, an opportunity to be solved. Before opting for a project and assigning the assignment as a project, you need to assess whether it can be solved in another way. A project is intricate and something you do once. More, there is a deadline and, lastly, a project is apart from that of the company's ordinary operation».</i>
b. Job content/ relationship to project			
- Workload	<i>«I would not say it greatly exceeds that of a regular work week, I possibly work two hours more a week compared to what I record. I report all the hours I work physically, but you check emails at home, and I think about work outside my working hours, which I do not record».</i>	<i>«I am very consistent, and among the few who invariably works 40 hours, hence I have very little overtime. I am very fond of free time».</i>	<i>«I worked more than what is noted in my contract during the current period. Considering I have been required to get familiar with numerous tasks (...). I assume it will alter throughout the project. This position is no 7,5-hour mainstream job, but I think that is all right. (...). One is expected to deliver».</i>
- Number of projects simultaneously	<i>«There have been multiple since the projects are not that big. On average I work effectively on five to seven projects simultaneously. From signing the contract until completion, these projects usually take between four to six months. (...) I feel that working on seven projects is not always effective».</i>	<i>«I work on many projects concurrently. I probably have about three to four projects at the same time, while I also assist others. I normally work on longer projects lasting between one to two years».</i>	<i>«I only work on one project and have no other parallel work tasks. It is unique».</i>

c. Ideal project worker			
- Characterize of an ideal project worker	<i>«I think that the ideal project employee is always an adviser, someone who can recommend and see solutions. Somebody with the ability to manage and who you can count to stay within budget (...) good at working in a team and at collaborating. Communication is important, and you have to be able to take a quick phone call to discuss and solve difficulties. Flexible and not a rigid person, but flexible at work and not privately. An organisation that does not have staff that is flexible is an organisation that stops at once. You must be able to set things aside and prioritise according to what is expected».</i>	<i>«Someone who is solution-oriented. One who likes to talk about what is challenging and takes hold of it in a good way. Not just sends emails but calls or arranges a meeting. Then the person must be independent».</i>	<i>«Curious and good at communicating. Understanding of project as a working method. That you bring something of value into the project».</i>
- Unideal project worker	<i>«Someone who expect to get things on the table. Somebody who does not take the initiative to contact the other project workers on their own. One who is difficult in meetings. Sometimes you get the feeling that you have to check what a professional resource has done. Then you do not trust that person, although it is not so often it happens, if you have such a feeling then I think it's not a good project employee».</i>	<i>«That you do not follow deadlines. Moreover, someone who does not keep in line with what has is agreed and does not say anything if something goes wrong. One that does not come prepared».</i>	<i>«That you bring personal opinions into the job you are going to do and cannot distinguish. It is not that you should not show feelings and opinions, but you have to be very aware of what you use when».</i>
- Professionalism	<i>«That we communicate what is happening in the project. A good flow of information is important and</i>	<i>«It is about following the systems here. Otherwise, I expect that one does not bring feelings into the</i>	<i>«I would say is to be able to distinguish between personal feelings and opinions against what is</i>

	<i>creating a relationship with the client».</i>	<i>project straight away, because that happens when we work on a construction site. It is important that we keep calm, if not, then things can go south».</i>	<i>expected of you in the role you have».</i>
Theme 2: Organisational support			
a. Support			
- Experienced support and support mechanisms	<i>«The fact that we go on study tours, do nice things together and have dinners, makes me feel appreciated and happy about my job. The job does not only pay us our salary but wants to give us something beyond that. The private transcends the public sector in that regard. The public has stringent rules and is, consequently, struggling with turnover. They struggle to build that solidarity and sense of belonging. They do not have much to compete with if you ask me».</i>	<i>«There is an acceptance to say if there is something you are not satisfied with, but it is not a huge focus we have, and we have appraisal interviews».</i>	<i>«Most companies in the public sector have incorporated appraisal interviews. Then there is some course about coping strategies. I believe there is a lot of focus on this in public sector. I usually take a triangle conversation if there are any disagreements and many emotions involved».</i> <i>«Yes, I am pretty sure the company knows the negative consequences of projects. They have worked project-based for many years and seen the pros and cons as well as the challenges that projects may bring».</i>
b. Job satisfaction			
- Emotional well-being	<i>«I am a person who is neither on top or bottom emotionally. However, I suppose I am pleased where I am currently. I enjoy this industry and I believe I have a career here. Also, think my colleagues here are upright people to work with. Otherwise, I am probably easily influenced to feel appreciated where I work, such as the fact that there is a nice office space».</i>	<i>«I enjoy my job. I appreciate external projects compared to internal, though that could be because I am most familiar with them. I am most comfortable working with the broad perspectives, rather than with internal coordination that can be very narrow and challenging».</i>	<i>«I love working here! Especially working in teams to discover solutions, but also independent work where you can sit quietly and immerse yourself in something. Something that I was not able to do in my previous job. So, I am very pleased, and this is a rewarding job».</i>

Theme 3: Emotional process of a project			
a. Circular process of a project			
- Conceptual face	<p><i>«I think the period when we write offers is disorderly and the use of resources annoys me. At times there may be eight other companies doing the same. Concerning resources, this is rather demanding. Not that it is meaningless, but you are doing a job with uncertainty if there is any purpose».</i></p> <p><i>«I like the period when we have won the offer. We can start with blank sheets, and there are no problems to be seen in the distance - everything is great. (...) It is an opportunity to do everything according to the book. I always say to my selves, this time I will do it - new start new opportunities».</i></p>	<p><i>«If the project is large and complex you may be tired or nervous already from the beginning. You are often thrown into something you have never done before with anyone to help, being told, "You have not done this before, but you will fix it." However, if I feel comfortable with the tasks, then I believe it is something to look forward to and a pleasure. (...) there are many uncertainties at the beginning».</i></p>	<p><i>«For me this is an exciting phase and a phase where I am very open emotionally in the way that I use many senses, to get to know people and to understand my tasks. I am open and curious».</i></p>
- Planning	<p><i>«This is a phase I am very fond of, setting up a project with detailed progress plans and budgeting. It is exciting with something new».</i></p>	<p><i>«This is the phase where you begin to understand the concept of the project. Even though we are required to start planning before we win a project, it is rare that we have a long planning phase. We need to get started fast and not use much time here (...) it does something to project, it is ideal with a little longer planning phase, but it is not easy to plan before winning the project».</i></p>	<p><i>«There is concentrated energy in this phase, where we start to plan what we are going to do and which effect we desire. It is a tiring and demanding phase with a lot to do compared to the other phases. (...) Sometimes we have torn our hair out. The emotions go up-and-down during this phase (...), but that is project life».</i></p>
- Executing	<p><i>«I have mixed feelings about this phase, due to the difficulty concerning control and dependence</i></p>	<p><i>«It is a phase where everything becomes a bit more stable. You will establish a decent organisation, with</i></p>	<p><i>«There will be ups and downs in this phase. The progression plan that we made will probably not go exactly</i></p>

	<i>on others all the time, however, I mostly enjoy it. It is also the phase where all the unforeseen difficulties appear, which I find is exciting to solve».</i>	<i>scheduled meetings. There are not so many feelings other than when something goes wrong, or something unexpected occurs».</i>	<i>according as planned, and we will have to do modifications (...) it is also very emotionally ups and downs».</i>
- Terminating	<i>«The termination phase is hectic. It is a good feeling to deliver, but I often feel uncertain of whether or not the project actually is done. Because the customer might come back with questions, so it almost never feels like it is over. It is not as clear as in theory. The solution might be to give the customer a deadline for feedback, but it does not create such a good customer relationship either».</i>	<i>«My emotions within this phase depends on whether or not the project went well. If it did, then it is fun. However, if not the emotions are dependent on the consequences of the errors for why it did not».</i>	<i>«Sometimes you become frustrated and may panic a little at this stage. For example, because you figure out new and better solutions to problems that you should have liked to be discovered earlier».</i>
Theme 4: Acceptance of emotions			
b. Interviewees emotional expression			
- Work	<i>«I do not think you would lose your job exactly. I am a bit unsure whether it is okay, but maybe I have not worked here long enough. I imagine there should be an acceptance».</i> <i>«I do not express my personal feelings at work. I have no wish for that either. I am probably a little flat emotionally, but I am not one who suppresses emotions. I think it is just who I am as a person. Regarding project success and crises, I do not get any emotional outbursts. What I might say is that it was a downer</i>	<i>«I think there is a tolerance for people to express their emotions at work».</i> <i>«I may not be very good at expressing emotions here at work. We often work separately, and no one knows my projects or meet my clients, so I talk more to colleagues about issues. We are happy to talk more than show emotions. I rarely get angry with people and rarely show it. On the construction site, there are probably quite many emotions at times. There you can be</i>	<i>«Yes, I will certainly say that. I feel that there is an acceptance. In the project I have working on now we have had, if not yelling and screaming, something pretty close to it. At least in the beginning. Now it is less of it. Now if there is an enthusiasm».</i> <i>«I think I express few emotions and try to be aware of the feelings I show. However, I am an emotional person and do not think many wonders where I stand. I am very keen to give good feedback to those who deserve it. At yesterday's</i>

	<i>when something happened. I am focused on the fact that we are in a situation which we must solve. Not any joy scenes either. I am probably not very clear from an emotional perspective. I am a person who rarely gets stressed. I could probably be better at showing emotions. If it is a feeling, I try to spread a sense of being serious and at the same time add some humour in meetings. So that we have fun together. I think it is important. I think that you need a mix of all personalities on a project in one way or another».</i>	<i>screamed at, and things can be thrown after you».</i> <i>«In February, I had to report that there were zero days left on a project, which was to be delivered in June. During that period, I had a constant exam feeling and slept worse. You do not feel like the hero of the day, which affects you a lot. Then you are not able to grasp what is rational. Thereby becoming a bad leader and you also lose control».</i>	<i>meeting, I expressed feelings by saying that it motivated me to work with them».</i>
Theme 5: Project methodology, tools and their emotional effect			
a. Methodology and tools			
<i>- Methodology and tools</i>	<i>«I always start a project with a process of breaking down the project, in a little more detailed fashion than what it is intended. It designed for financial management. Whereas, I use it much more as a contribution to my thought process. I have also created my risk framework, which I may not always be as good at following. It is a process to get everything out of my mind, address what we should do and clarify things. On the short projects, I may have made a progress plan that we may not always follow so carefully. Then you often know what to do. We also have</i>	<i>«I use numerous. Considering I have quite varied work tasks, ranging from being on construction sites to sitting in the office, there are different tools for various tasks. We have a layout and tools for decision points, progress management, budget tools, uncertainty tools, change plans, time tracking and phase plans. I use software called EasyProjectPlan and Project. I am currently working on earning a PRINCE2 certification and use several elements of it. I also have a yellow belt in LEAN and use some of this knowledge in projects. It is the lowest certification, but I am trying</i>	<i>«I have taken a course that earns you 15 credits, focused on project methodology. Here we have an internal project tool for project methodology that we use».</i>

	<p><i>an economic system that I try to follow every week. We are getting a new one soon, which I think will be better and has more forecasts. I do not use any special technology. I might have to get better at that».</i></p> <p><i>«In my previous job, I went to a project management school, which I took to an intermediate level. I have also started the same course here. I believe it has a bit of a mixed effect. I prefer a more practical approach than a static. I do not see the benefits of assignments because you do not earn money from doing it. It is good to have your CV, and the courses have helped me on a project. Among other things, I have learned a structure for the project degradation and how to follow-up projects».</i></p>	<p><i>to get LEAN into our company. I look at it as very appropriate. We have an internal academy that runs internal training of project management. I have taken all the courses offered by the academy. There is an exam that you take at the end, which earns you 15 credits. Then PRINCE2 is the next step. We have a great toolbox that has not been released. I have been in a group to come with input».</i></p> <p><i>«I am a bit surprised that there is such a deviation from systems. I at least expect the internal staff to follow the system and that I do not have to follow-up, but it often happens that I have to».</i></p>	
c. Emotional effect			
- Emotions	<p><i>«You become aware of your role, and it gives you an overview. You feel safer about the job you are doing».</i></p>	<p><i>«I found that all these tools make project work easier and you have a better overview of time. You have control of what to do when. It makes you feel safer. One agrees that this is the way we will carry out the project. I use these tools a lot».</i></p>	<p><i>«I have learned a structured way of working through the course I took on project methodology. It gives me a sense of security. It is an experience that I will bring into other projects, although there are certainly 10,000 ways to do this».</i></p>

Theme 6: Career and ambitions			
a. Ambitions			
- Interviewee ambition	«Currently my ambition is to get responsibility for larger projects. (...) I have received several requests concerning the prospect of taking on management responsibility. However, I do not feel that I am there emotionally, and I do not feel I am competent enough. I need some more experience».	«I do not have that many ambitions. It is okay as it is. I have more long-term plans like a career path rather than career steps. It does not change much».	«I do not have any career ambitions other than that I want a job I enjoy. Nor did I have any ambition to become a project manager like I am now. I would like to immerse myself professionally».
b. Career			
- Promotion	«You have to take the initiative and be interested. Additionally, you must be able to show that you can lead, be flexible, and deliver on projects, while also be a well-functioning employee who fits in with the company culture. Together with your boss, you have set up a career plan based on your goals».	«There is not much of a hierarchy in this company. As a consultant who is contracted out to other companies, sometimes you are on top, while other times you are a further down the ladder».	[Did not mention anything]

Appendix D: Reflection notes

In the following, we will present our reflections from our thesis, as well as from our master's program at the University of Agder, School of Business and Law. The reflections are drawn in connections to the themes of internationalisation, innovation and responsibility.

Reflection note: Ingrid Espe Myrmæl

This thesis aimed to explore the “dark side” of projectification, by uncovering the negative aspects of project work and its effects on the individual project worker's emotions in a project life cycle. The thesis is an exploratory study of the Norwegian economy, where we obtained primary data from ten project workers and project leaders by semi-structured interviews.

Through our study, we uncovered findings suggesting that project workers are affected by sleeping difficulties and become subject to negative emotional stress due to challenging work situations. However, project tools and methodologies appear to have a moderating effect. The use of appropriate tools and methods seem to create a sense of safety, as well as, making the projects more manageable. Concerning the process of emotions in a project situation, our findings imply that projects starts out positive with a belief that dreams can be realised. Nevertheless, by the end negative emotions become dominant, and we find the project workers yearn for starting new projects.

Working on projects has become one of the most important trends in modern corporations. The changes of today are rapid, as the world has become more globalised. There is a growing need for businesses to tackle a progressively more fluid, complex and global commercial environment. Consequently, we have seen a shift from the conventional way of working. Today the project-based working situation is developing into the most common employment setting for a growing number of individuals, and it has become the preferred way of working in most forms of businesses and industries. This trend is referred to by most researchers as “projectification” and was first used by the researcher Midler, in 1995, who forecasted this trend when studying the French firm Renault.

The shift towards “projectification” involves essential consequences for an individual's work and life. With the increasing amount of people spending their time working in different kinds of project organisations and even more working on projects, as a part of their otherwise

routine-based employment, it has been essential to broaden the field of knowledge of project work. Accordingly, an increasing amount of research has been conducted. However, several areas are somewhat uncharted. As such, it is not until recently that emotions of employees have been acknowledged as a legitimate and meaningful part of work life within the field of organisational studies. Therefore, we wanted to contribute to fill this gap with our research and provide new knowledge to this important field of study.

Regarding innovation, we find a close relation to our topic as projects are intended to make organisations more flexible, innovative and efficient. Projects are being used to handle a variety of tasks, for example, the creation of new products and services, structural change and new technologies. In carrying out projects, we find project tools and mythologies to be essential and to have a moderating effect on the employees' emotions, and a constant innovation of these are therefore essential. Our research indicates a gap and need in the public sector to innovate within this area, to improve and provide better project tools. However, our research cannot draw any conclusions on this as it requires further research.

In general, projects are viewed as a positive experience with great opportunities. However, several ethical challenges are arising with the growth of project-based work. One challenge addressed in our thesis are the negative emotions such as stress, frustration and disappointment that appears due to challenging work situations with unrealistic plans, goals and deadlines. Another challenge that appears in our research, is the social aspect of losing colleagues when dissolving a project team. We find evidence of negative emotions such as sadness and the feeling of a loss when splitting up the project employees. We believe that an awareness of these challenges within the organisations are essential both for the organisations' success, in terms of being able to seize the opportunities that project work presents, as well as for the individuals' well-being. Modern organisations operating in today's economy appear to be depending more heavily on its employees' expertise and knowledge than ever before. Thus, the employees may be considered the organisations main competitive advantage. Therefore, being able to keep and attract the best assets or employees, as well as, integrating their efforts within the company is critical in an attempt to accomplish long-term competitiveness.

Reflection note: Henrik Husby Alfredsen

This reflection is divided into four main parts. Firstly, a summary of the main parts of this thesis with mention of central findings is highlighted. Secondly, a reflection of international trends that is relevant in connection with this thesis. Thirdly, an overview of how this thesis ties to the topic of innovation. Lastly, a review of how this study links with responsibility.

Summary

This thesis examines the “dark side” of projectification. Working in a projects setting has become a growing trend and the preferred form of working in most kinds of companies and industries and become a vital topic for in contemporary organisations. Critical studies, centred on the subject have highlighted some noteworthy, but perhaps blocked existential consequences for individuals committed to project work. This thesis, accordingly, intends to add to this area of research and unseal the negative features of project work and its consequences on the individual project worker’s emotions in a project life cycle.

The thesis is an exploratory study of the Norwegian economy, where we have collected primary data by semi-structured interviews from ten project workers and project leaders, representing different industries, sectors and company sizes. Summarising our results, the respondents appear to have high job satisfaction. Nevertheless, there looks to be a case of *normalization*, whereby project workers proceed to engage in challenging work situations which often entails working long hours. Subsequently, project workers are influenced by sleeping difficulties and are subject to negative mental stress. Project tools and methodologies appear to have a moderating effect, whereby the use of suitable tools and methods look to support employees to feel a sense of security while also causing the project to be more manageable. Although respondents declare that it is permitted that employees show emotions, several of the respondents imply that it is viewed as unprofessional to displays too many emotions and not stay relaxed through difficult times. Concerning the process of emotions in a project situation, our findings imply that projects begin by being positive where there is a notion that dreams can be accomplished. However, by the end negative emotions become predominant, and one is yearning for a fresh project. With these findings, we have added to research by underscoring some of the “dark sides” of projectification as a whole and introducing new sectors and industries. Moreover, we have added to research by indicating a nearly unexplored field of emotions and project work, by observing how emotions evolve during the process of a project life cycle.

International Trends

Although projects, were mainly practised in construction, defence and civil engineering, projects have expanded from the conventional fields into less traditional ones (Lundin et al., 2015). Nowadays it has grown to become the favoured way of working in most kinds of enterprises and industries (Bredin, 2006; Lundin et al., 2015). Projects are widespread and are being applied in all parts of society and our lives (Schoper et al., 2018). This developing trend that the temporary, project-based way of working is becoming the standard method of working has made it amidst the most notable shifts in present organisations (Chiocchio et al., 2010). This developing trend has been term differently by researchers, but the general name favoured by most is “projectification” (Midler, 1995; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Schoper et al., 2018).

A review carried out in 1999 of 3,500 European firms revealed that only 13 percent of the examined companies placed much or great importance on project structures in 1992. However, already in 1996, this emphasis had grown to become 42 percent (Whittington et al., 1999). In 2009 the World Bank issued a report on the world development indicators declaring that 22 percent of the world’s gross domestic product originated from capital formation, which mainly stemmed from projects (Bredillet, 2010; Lundin et al., 2015; World Bank, 2009). As such it is not surprising that an increasing amount of studies has been centred on the theme of the temporary organisation to expand the realm of knowledge. According to a recent study, there are currently more than 1500 studies that are focused on the subject of work increasingly being administered by the application of projects and less through the “common” line work (Schoper et al., 2018).

Concerning emotions, it is not till newly that the emotions of employees have been identified as a valid and essential part of work life within the field of organisational studies (Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Fineman, 2006; Lindgren et al., 2014). As a result, we have during the past two decades seen a notable rise in research that emphasises the subject of emotions in organisational behaviour organisational behaviour (Callahan & McCollum, 2002).

Innovation

Projects as a working form are not precisely innovative and have existed for quite some time. While projects are not innovative, they are often used in an innovation process, since they from the companies’ viewpoint, provide manageable flexibility to work and facilitate

innovation (Cicmil et al., 2009; Gill, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014). Lundin et al. (2015) state that projects are being utilised to manage a mixture of assignments such as the production of new products and services, structural change or instigating new technologies to tackle an increasingly more fluid, intricate and global commercial environment (Chiocchio et al., 2010; Cicmil et al., 2016; Ives, 2005; Pinto et al., 2014; Schoper et al., 2018).

Over the prior six decades project tools have been designed to cope with complicated project work situations, striving to make new projects more manageable to control and increasingly destined to achieve project goals and in the end become successful (Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Our findings suggest that projects tools are helpful as they reduce some of the negative tendencies of project work. One potential gap that our thesis implies concerning the public sector is that there is not an access to adequate tools which are helpful in a project context. Consequently, there is a feeling of lack of control. There appears to be considerably larger access to tools in the private sector and hence a higher satisfaction with it as a working method. Improving access to project tools, while also inspiring and facilitating for employees to earn project methodology certification, such as PRINCE2. Our findings suggest that these tools help create a feeling of safety and that the project becomes easier using project tools and methodologies.

Ethical Challenges

Although many studies have highlighted positive outcomes of project work, critical studies, centred on the topic of projects have highlighted some noteworthy, but possibly blocked existential consequences for individuals involved in project work (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Cicmil et al. (2016) state that a work situation where everything is temporary, such as the relations and assignments, along with recurring performance evaluations, could also be a work-life where nothing is stable, nothing and no person is dependable. Further with the employee's professional reputation, performance and feeling of personal worthiness are tested continuously and could be lost. Although project management promise to bring the justifiable, the rational, as well as the manageable, project-work, may create settings which are difficult to handle, justify and control. Cicmil et al. (2016) view "projectification" as an ethical issue with impact on lasting sustainability for both organisations as well as on humanity. The authors believe that "projectification" could make employees, this both independently and jointly, susceptible to a situation which could in the

long haul use available resources and decrease employees ability to adapt, thereby making the organisation unsustainable (Cicmil et al., 2016).

Although project work often is “coined” as an exciting and thrilling experience (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014), researchers have shown that projects often tend to be an arena in which stress, frustration, disappointment and conflict flourish. With the restricted possibility for knowledge development and distressing deadlines, as well as, shame being ever-present, projects become very emotional work incidents (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014; Packendorff & Lindgren, 2014; Peslak, 2005).

Our findings show that there is a difference in the amount of work between our respondents. Most of the respondents’ reveal that they have a hefty workload and their answers are suggestive of stressful working conditions and negative mental stress. Further, their statements point towards being faced with unrealistic plans, goals and deadlines (Cicmil et al., 2016; Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). Moreover, the interview objects declare that project work is no “*mainstream job*”, as well as, “*project work is not for everyone*”. Thus, similarly to Cicmil et al. (2016), we worry about the ethical issue of “projectification” with its impact on lasting sustainability for both organisations as well as on humanity may be warranted. A society where every organisation is fully “projectified” and subject to working hours similar to some of the respondents, maybe one where workers who seek a mainstream job and does not enjoy project work will not survive. Among the possible reason behind several respondents working unusually hard, could be due to a belief that handling and mastering challenging project work situations, become a part of being reliable, successful and professional (Hodgson, 2002; Lindgren et al., 2014). The respondents’ answers are suggestive of employees who continue to engage in project work, creating a circular process, where a continued and intense way of working becomes normalised (Cicmil et al., 2016; Lindgren et al., 2014).

Since this thesis does not focus on one specific company and the topic is studied on a micro level, it is difficult to discuss any competitive advantages related to potential responsible administration exercises. Nevertheless, previous studies and our findings indicate that perceived organisational support may be helpful in creating a complete advantage. A review of 70 articles conducted by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) conclude that their review indicates that essential antecedents regarding perceived organisational support include

reasonable firm practices, supervisor support, as well as, work conditions results in an improved commitment to the firm and enhanced performance. Additionally, employees exhibit less absence and a lower chance of resigning. The study also showed that perceived organisational support had a strong correlation regarding the forecasted direction of job satisfaction.

When analysing the perceived organisational support, our respondent mentions numerous of support mechanisms being used within their companies and a majority of the respondents talks about how this leads to them working more efficiently and enabling them to talk about problems and to gain support. Studying the respondents' emotions as a whole one can say that they all have a relatively high job satisfaction with few or non-expressing negative feelings towards their job. As such, it may be possible to view their job satisfaction as a display of positive emotional well-being (Spector, 1997). Our results are suggestive of project workers being vulnerable to feel a greater belonging to their project compared to their organisation (Braun et al., 2013; Lundin et al., 2015). Our findings also suggest that organisational support may, in fact, be a way to mitigate the issue of belonging to the project organisation rather one's organisation.