The Power of Unity

A qualitative case study of organisational culture, norms, and unity in Sopra Steria Norway.

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Abstract

Sopra Steria is one of Norway's leading consulting businesses. For several years, they have been at the top of the prestigious Great Place to Work rankings. Considering the change in the external environment, their size of over 3000 employees, and their new direction of establishing smaller "district" offices. The thesis strives to answer the question: "*How does Sopra Steria create a feeling of unity among their employees?*". By examining the employees experience and perception of organisational culture, norms, interpersonal relations, judgement and decision-making, we explore factors underlying their success in creating an attractive workplace.

This study uses a creative qualitative approach combined with Prisoners Dilemma simulations, and semi-structured interviews on 29 employees at Sopra Steria. The findings suggests that morale, experience, climate, regulations, and values contribute to a higher feeling of unity among Sopra Steria's employees. Being an inductive theory building study, we put forward two propositions for further research into organisational and individual attributes can result in either higher or lower levels of unity and knowledge sharing in organisations.

Acknowledgements

This thesis marks the end to our academic careers. It has been five informative, challenging, giving, and forming years. We started planning this thesis in the fall of 2023 with contacting different consulting businesses, and Sopra Steria stood out as our talking pig. We sent Helene Eide a message on LinkedIn, and asked if she knew anyone who would be interested in working with us on this thesis. To our surprise she mentioned it in a meeting with leaders from the different local offices in Norway, and Cecilie Bøe and Tobias Bjørnstad raised their hands in excitement.

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Hope you enjoy this thesis, have a great read!

Maren Refve & Alexander S. Ytterbøl

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1 Introduction

Sopra Steria is one of Norway's leading information technology (IT) consulting companies. With over 3000 employees the organisation has a reputation for fostering a friendly work environment (Proff.no; Sopra-Steria, 2024). Underscored by creditable outcomes in the annual Great Place to Work (GPtW) rankings over the previous years, consistently placing in the top three among firms with a staff exceeding five hundred employees (Sopra-Steria, 2023). As soon as in 2023, Sopra Steria placed second in the GPtW ranking employees in Norway, and they have achieved the title of one of the country's best places to work for several consecutive years, only outscored by Cisco the last few years (GreatPlacetoWork, 2023, 2024).

In recent years Sopra Steria has focused on establishing smaller, "district"-offices, which have experienced big growth in a short amount of time. These offices vary in size, with some having over 300 employees and others around 30 employees. The Kristiansand office, for example, has grown from three employees to 30 employees in just two years (C. Bøe, personal communication, November 15, 2023).

There have been significant changes in how organisations structure their work environments and manage employee interactions. Some notable shifts have been the move towards smaller offices, working from home, and the implications it has on organisational culture and employee behaviour (Cooke et al., 2022; Kniffin et al., 2021; Mariotti et al., 2021; Mihalache & Mihalache, 2022). Despite these changes, Sopra Steria has maintained high levels of employee satisfaction, as reflected in their GPtW rankings. The company's consistent top-tier performance in these rankings, year after year, highlights an exceptional case of thriving organisational culture and employee unity amid the rapidly evolving modern workplace. Although the GPtW is not scientific research, it is still a thorough investigation in the employee environment at Sopra Steria.

An organisational component that has experienced shifts partly due to the Covid-19 pandemics introduction to working from home, is teamwork (Waizenegger et al., 2020). Collaboration within teams is a fundamental skill, cultivated from the earliest stages of human development (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). As children, our initial experiences in

teamwork unfolded through play, learning to navigate the subtle yet distinct norms of interaction with peers as opposed to adults. Take, for instance, the act of participating in team sports: under our trainers' watchful eyes, we might have followed their lead, but when collaborating with peers, we negotiated roles and shared the team roles/work autonomously. Such early life lessons illustrate how norms gradually shape our interactions. These norms guide our social engagements, we intuitively interpret the patterns, rules, and norms of others to ensure that each party leaves the interaction feeling positive. This early, instinctive grasp of social norms lays the groundwork for later understanding the complexities of organisational cultures and workplace dynamics, such as interpersonal relations, and how you become unified with you colleagues.

Sopra Steria, with its robust reputation, employee-centric culture, and their focus on teamwork and implication of norms, presents an ideal case study to explore these dynamics.

The central research question guiding this study is:

How does Sopra Steria create a feeling of unity among their employees?

Exploring how Sopra Steria fosters unity among employees is relevant for organisations aiming to enhance workplace culture. By examining Sopra Steria's strategies for maintaining high employee satisfaction and unity despite challenges like remote working and different office sizes, this study clarifies effective practices. The study's primary purpose is to generate propositions for further research, advancing knowledge on organisational behaviour and team dynamics, and providing a foundation for future studies across various contexts.

In this thesis, we first provide an extensive introduction to the literature on organisational culture, norms, morale, cross-functional teams, and team sports, establishing a foundational framework for our study. Next, we outline the research philosophy, approaches, design, and data collection methods employed. We then present the empirical findings derived from interviews and Prisoners Dilemma simulations. These findings are subsequently discussed in relation to the research question, offering insights and extending existing theories. Finally, we summarize the findings, discuss the study's limitations, and propose suggestions for future research, making this a theory building thesis.

2 Literature

In this chapter, the reader will get an extensive introduction to the themes regarding organisational culture, norms, morale, cross-functional teams, and teamwork. Additionally, the theory will be used to discuss the findings.

In this thesis *unity* is a central aspect.
Unity is perceived in this thesis, as the collective feeling and solidarity the employees have towards each other and Sopra Steria.

2.1 Organisational Culture

Organisational culture is essential in the modern corporate world. It helps define how the employees act and work together in a company through shared values, assumptions and norms (Schein, 2010). Organisational culture forms the daily work life, influence decisions, and creates unity amongst the employees. It is also crucial to establish a strong organisational culture, so the employee has a feeling of belonging to their company, especially in the consulting industry where employees often work at their customers offices (Warrick, 2017). In this chapter we will dive further into what organisational culture is, different aspects of the term, how it affects the corporate world, and its relevance to this thesis.

Creating and establishing a strong organisational culture can be quite challenging and tedious. History, leadership, and external environment are factors that can affect the longevity of establishing this. Stories, rituals, and symbols which are shared within the organisation, are contributing factors for developing culture (Schein, 2010; Sun, 2008; Trice & Beyer, 1991). The culture within an organisation plays a pivotal role in deciphering its internal dynamics and creating an environment which strives for creativity and innovation (Tesluk et al., 1997). Norms, leadership, open communication, and values are some crucial elements in organisational culture for driving an innovative and creative environment and creating unity within the organisation (Fiol, 1994; Hughes et al., 2018; Martins & Terblanche, 2003).

2.1.1 Norms and organisational culture

Norms has affected our lives since childhood (Schmidt & Tomasello, 2012). It influences how we act with others, how we behave, and what we do (McDonald & Crandall, 2015; Zaki et al., 2011). A precise differentiation between norms and social practices is quite challenging to construct (Morris et al., 2015). For example, recycling and sorting garbage is both a norm and social practice in Norway. It is something a great part of the population does, and it is somewhat sanctioned by the government.

Norms are enforced through social sanctions, ranging from mild disapproval to total exclusion (Posner & Rasmusen, 1999). The enforcement of these norms might have a significant impact on social cohesion, and the functioning society. For instance, norms around cooperation and fairness can foster trust and cooperation, while norms that discriminate against certain groups can lead to social tension and conflict (De Cremer et al., 2010; Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999). Understanding social norms is key for anyone who wants to interact well with society or push for social change, because these norms shape how people behave and interact.

Within organisations, norms can be used as an element of how we communicate with our peers and superiors (Kahneman & Miller, 1986; Postmes et al., 2000). It is a way to create power dynamics, autonomy, cooperation, information flow, and morale (Feldman, 1984; Therborn, 2002). Norms are unwritten rules and can be referred to as objective patterns of behaviour (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). It can mean what is normal or normative to do (Morris et al., 2015). In this thesis, normative is used. There are several different types of norms (Gibbs, 1965). This thesis will focus on cooperative norms, social norms, and personal norms.

Cooperative norms demonstrate the value people place on both their common objectives, mutual benefits, and shared qualities that unite group members (Chatman & Flynn, 2001; Wagner, 1995). These norms act as a social barometer, measuring the collective ethos of a group by assessing how personal goals are integrated with, and sometimes combined, by the underlying goal of the group (Bettenhausen & Murnighan, 1991).

The strength of cooperative norms is particularly noticeable in their ability to align diverse interests towards a unified purpose (Gillies, 2014). They serve as a catalyst for collective effort, encouraging individuals to contribute towards a shared vision (Chatman & Flynn, 2001). This alignment is crucial for maintaining group cohesion, and for achieving organisational goals that requires a shared effort (Chen et al., 2009). The advantage of cooperative norms is reflected in increased levels of trust and cooperation among colleagues, which is vital for the continuous functioning of any collaborative endeavour. Cooperative norms are a great contributor towards creating a feeling of unity amongst employees. By unifying their purpose, they can create a united atmosphere.

Social norms govern the behaviour of individuals within a group or society (Ostrom, 2000). These norms are understood by members of the group and serve to promote order and consistency by defining acceptable and unacceptable behaviours (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Social norms can vary broadly between different social groups and cultures, reflecting the values and beliefs of those communities (Triandis, 1989). They influence a wide range of behaviours, from basic manners and etiquette to more complex social interactions. There are not only positive sides with social norms. Individuals who deviate from established norms often face penalties from social groups, regardless of how minor the deviations may be (Bernheim, 1994). This may result in a feeling of being outside the social group, and the individual may deviate from the unity they formed.

Personal norms are internal standards that individuals hold themselves to, based on their own beliefs about right and wrong (Morris et al., 2015). Unlike social norms, which are influenced by societal expectations, personal norms are self-imposed and deeply rooted in an individual's moral beliefs and values (Schwartz, 1977). The integrative model presented in Figure 1 from Morris et al. (2015) illustrates how personal norms fit into the broader context of social influences and behaviours.
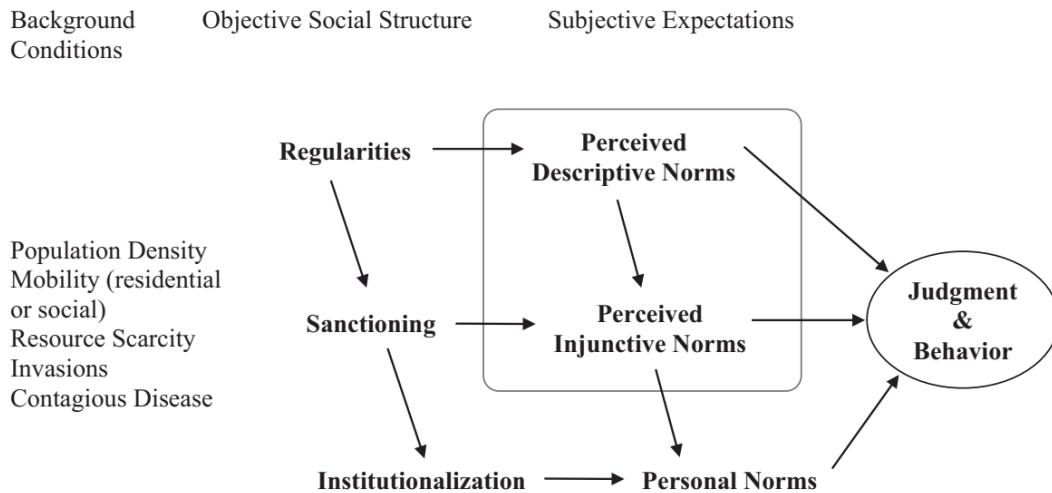
Figure 1 - An integrative model of the elements of norms and some primary interrelationships (Morris et al., 2015).

Figure 1 illustrates how background conditions influence individual judgment and behaviour through a series of mediating factors (Morris et al., 2015). Background conditions such as population density, mobility, resource scarcity, invasions and contagious disease set the stage for the process. These conditions shape the objective social structure, which includes regularities, sanctioning, and institutionalisation. These structural elements influence subjective expectations, comprising perceived descriptive norms (beliefs of what most people do) and perceived injunctive norms (beliefs about what most people approve or disapprove of). These subjective expectations and the process of institutionalisation then shape personal norms. Ultimately, this entire process affects individual judgment and behaviour.

In an organisation, these dynamics explain perceived unity. Office density (Population density) impacts social interactions and norms. High office density can foster frequent interactions and stronger perceived norms, enhancing unity. Conversely, low density might weaken these interactions and norms, reducing the sense of unity. Thus, the alignment of social structures and individual perceptions within an office setting shapes the overall perception of unity.

Descriptive norms illustrate the behaviours that are typically observed and accepted within a community (Gelfand & Harrington, 2015). They provide individuals with a clear sense of what is commonly done, guiding actions and decisions, particularly in situations where the appropriate actions might be unclear (Cialdini et al., 1990). These norms are especially

influential because individuals often use the behaviour of the majority as a guideline for appropriate action, assuming that these commonly observed behaviours are the correct behaviours to follow (Axelrod, 1986). This influence is powerful in promoting conformity and establishing behavioural standards within social groups. For example, in the consulting industry which Sopra Steria operates within, if the office density is high, employees might frequently observe their colleagues working closely together, engaging in face-to-face discussions, and collaborating on projects. This creates a perceived descriptive norm that such in-person interaction is standard behaviour. Additionally, if these interactions are positively reinforced and expected by superiors, this forms a perceived injunctive norm.

Injunctive norms detail the behaviours that a society approves or disapproves of, carrying strong moral implications (Cialdini et al., 1990). Unlike descriptive norms, which regards what is typically done, injunctive norms dictate what should be done, imposing a moral duty on individuals to comply (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Injunctive norms are crucial for maintaining social order and ethical conduct as they align individual behaviours with the broader values and expectations of the community, thereby promoting societal cohesion and mutual respect (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). These norms are often enforced by the leaders of the organisation.

2.1.2 Leadership, morale and organisational culture

Leadership is crucial when nurturing an organisational culture (Trice & Beyer, 1991; Warrick, 2017). How a leader acts, their leadership style, appearance, and their communication with their employees can be the alpha and omega for a team's efficiency and interpersonal attitudes, and creating unity (Gillespie & Mann, 2004; Ruiz Ulloa & Adams, 2004; Schaubroeck et al., 2011). There is no definite answer to the best leadership style. The situation differs depending on the company, the employee, and the leader involved. There are many different types of leadership, but transactional leadership and ethical leadership will be the focus points of this thesis.

Transactional leadership is centred on the exchange between a leader and an employee, with the aim of serving the employee's personal interests (Bass, 1999; Ma & Jiang, 2018; Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). These leaders establish goals and clarify the employee's role and responsibilities (Hamstra et al., 2014). Transactional leaders motivate the employees with

rewards and often monetary incentives such as bonuses, commissions, and promotions (Ma & Jiang, 2018). In Sopra Steria this is practiced through bonuses as an incentive for taking certifications and further education (C. Bøe, personal communication, November 15, 2023). Transactional leaders typically concentrate on efficiency and risk reduction (Eagly et al., 2003). This approach to leadership guides followers in pinpointing the necessary actions to achieve specific outcomes, including improved output quality, enhanced services, and lowered production costs (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012).

In ethical leadership, the leader has a strong focus at being a role model for ethical and normative behaviour for their employees (Treviño et al., 2000; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009; Zheng et al., 2022). Ethical leadership is characterised by the personal exhibition of conduct deemed appropriate by societal standards, extending this conduct in relationships, and the cultivation of similar behaviours in followers through mutual communication, recognition of ethical conduct, and informed ethical decision-making (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Brown et al., 2005). Abdullah et al. (2019); Men et al. (2020) claims that ethical leadership has a negative impact on knowledge sharing within the organisation. However, further research by Anser et al. (2021) shows that when the ethical leader promotes emotional support and meaningful work, ethical leadership will increase knowledge sharing between the employees. This is shown in Sopra Steria through their slogan "Power of Sharing" which promotes knowledge sharing in the organisation.

Brown and Treviño (2006) claims that ethical leadership consists of two fundamental components. The moral individual, characterised by qualities of honesty, integrity, and fairness. And second, the moral leader, who conveys ethical expectations and steers the moral behaviour of their followers. A leader who practices ethical leaderships must be the ideal moral reference for their employees (DeConinck, 2015; Shamir et al., 1993).

Morale is an important element within any organisation. It covers the attitudes, satisfaction, and overall perspective employees have towards their workplace/work (Momeni, 2009; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Paek et al. (2015) claims that high morale is often characterised by enthusiasm and a strong belief in the organisations goals and objectives. According to Weakliem and Frenkel (2006) is morale closely related to the emotional and psychological well-being of the workforce, influencing productivity, job satisfaction, and retention rates.

Work environments where the employee feels valued and motivated, is typically related to organisations with a high morale (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). This positive atmosphere sets the stage for better teamwork, encourages innovation, and leads to more effective problem-solving, as employees are more willing to invest greater effort into their tasks and projects (Eisenberger et al., 1990). On the other hand, Anton (2009) claims that low morale can lead to disengagement, decreased productivity, and a higher turnover rate, which negatively impacts the organisations ability to achieve its objectives and maintain competitive.

Leaders play an important role in shaping and maintaining morale in the organisation, by creating an inclusive and supportive culture, recognising and rewarding good performance, and aligning the goals of the individuals with those of the organisations (Deci et al., 1999; Kane-Urrabazo, 2006). Effective communication, opportunities for professional growth, and fair treatment are also crucial in boosting morale (Ruck & Welch, 2012; Weng et al., 2010). Therefore, nurturing high morale is not just about making employees feel better, it is a strategic approach that enhances organisational performance and sustainability.

2.2 Cross functional teams

When working as a consultant in Sopra Steria you are most likely exposed to working in a Cross-functional team (CFT) (C. Bøe, personal communication, November 15, 2023). CFTs are assembled of various people with different competencies, a concept explained by researches as McDonough III (2000) and Volpe et al. (1996). These teams, also known as multi-disciplinary teams, serve as conduits for interdepartmental collaboration, encouraging connections across organisational silos (Lichtenstein et al., 2004; Mohamed et al., 2004). Members of CFTs draw inspiration not only from their individual perspectives but also from the collective knowledge of the team, thereby assisting the sharing of knowledge across the organisation (Mohamed et al., 2004).

Empirical evidence suggests that CFTs are particularly effective in the field of new product development. Valle and Avella (2003) found that firms utilizing CFTs experienced improvements in product quality and achieved these outcomes within more efficient timeframes. Similarly, research by Sethi et al. (2001) exhibits a positive correlation between

team innovativeness and factors such as risk-taking propensity, customer influence, and senior management oversight for CFTs.

To optimise the effectiveness of CFTs, certain requirements must be in place. McDonough III (2000) proposed a model delineating various stage-setting elements that conclude in team performance, represented in Figure 2.
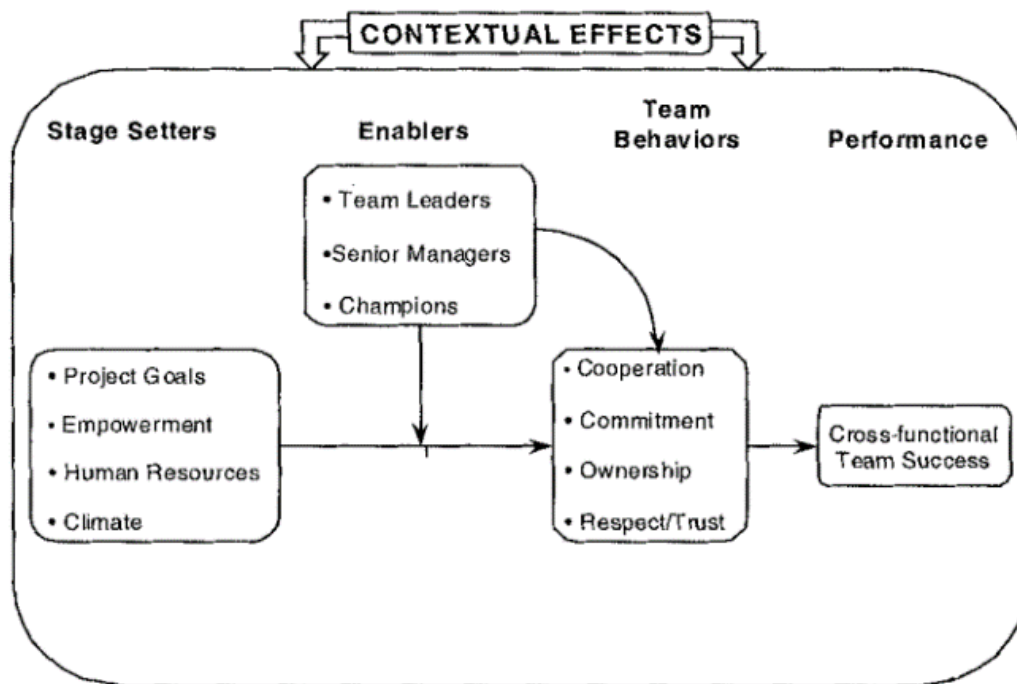
Figure 2 - Proposed model of interactions among stage setters, enablers, team behaviours, and cross-functional team success (McDonough III, 2000).

Figure 2 shows that situated between the stage-setting elements and team behaviours, are enablers such as team leaders, senior management, and champions. Notably, the impact of these enablers, particularly team leaders and senior leaders, extends beyond their direct involvement in the project itself (McDonough III, 2000). McDonough III (2000) further claims that effectiveness of CFTs is dependent on having good team leadership, and interpersonal relations, by doing this it is easier to form unity within CFTs. In addition, Lichtenstein et al. (2004) says that CFTs should choose team leaders grounded on their competency rather than their career, and that efficient leaders should be able to create an open environment that eagers for cooperating.

2.3 Team sports developing skills to future teamwork

As mentioned in the introduction, team sports are an important contributor to forming collaborative norms and prepares you for future professional teamwork. According to a study by Holt et al. (2008), students reported acquiring skills such as setting realistic goals, taking personal responsibility, and managing time effectively by having a background in team sports. The study found significant positive outcomes related to initiative and teamwork/leadership. For instance, initiative was demonstrated through students taking responsibility for training and maintaining team cohesion during challenging times. In terms of teamwork and leadership, students integrated these skills into other areas of their lives beyond the team context.

Further evidence supports the transferability of these skills to other domains. Papacharisis et al. (2005) found that young athletes could apply the skills learned in sports into different life situations. Additionally, sports psychologists Danish and Nellen (1997) have argued that sports contexts are effective environments for teaching life skills. These skills, which can be physical, behavioural, and cognitive, are often transferable to other areas of life (Papacharisis et al., 2005). Participation in team sports from a young age aid in the development of self-awareness, emotional regulation, problem-solving, goal attainment, teamwork, and skill development (Hansen et al., 2003; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). Thus, research consistently demonstrates that involvement in team sports fosters the development of numerous transferable skills.

3 Methodology

The goal of this study is to build a theory from the case of Sopra Steria using an inductive orientation (Crowe et al., 2011; Eisenhardt, 1989; Runyan, 1982). The study aims to unravel the details surrounding the perception of unity at Sopra Steria. This study takes a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand the employee's perception of unity at Sopra Steria. The methodology chapter is structured based on the framework of Saunders et al. (2009) research onion (Figure 3), providing a guide to the study's direction.
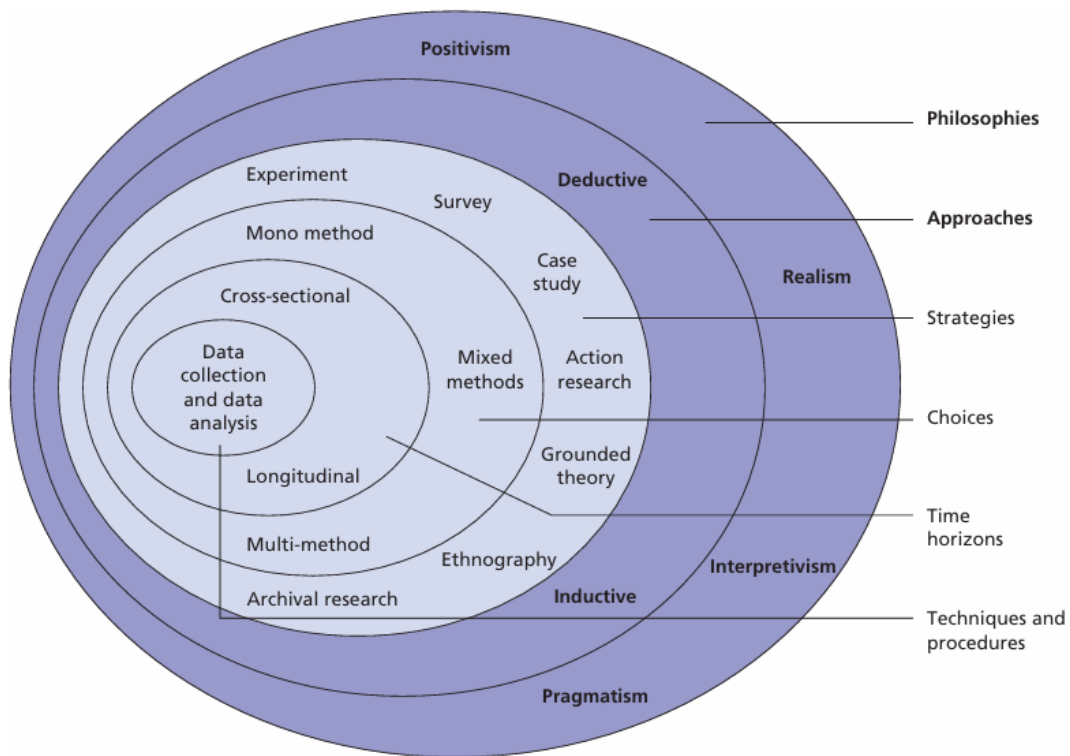

Figure 3 - The research onion (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.1 Research philosophy

Several factors most by taken into consideration when selecting a research philosophy, such as the research question (RQ) (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 106). Researchers' epistemological perspectives and perceptions of the world are captured in this reflection. It has also been demonstrated that the researcher's philosophical angle substantially influences the selection of the research design and, therefore, the outcomes collected from the research (Mbanaso et al., 2023). A research philosophy that aligns with the research question is crucial for validity and credibility. Researchers can achieve significant insights into the chosen topic by selecting methodologies and theoretical frameworks aligned with the research objectives.

In Saunders et al. (2009) research onion (Figure 3) there are three different types of research philosophy, positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism. The research philosophy deemed most suitable for this thesis is pragmatism. Pragmatism incorporates different elements from both positivism and interpretivism, and shows which methodological approach that best fits our research issue (Robson, 2002). The pragmatic approach aligns well with our overarching methodological framework across ontology, epistemology, axiology, and preferred data collection techniques (Saunders et al., 2009). As the goal of the study is to understand how Sopra Steria creates a feeling of unity among their employees.

It is important to maintain an objective and external perspective on Sopra Steria. The only way to understand all information is through the employee's words. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) acknowledge the significance of both objective and subjective phenomena when generating viable knowledge relevant to the research question. In addition, practical research is a primary focus, and incorporating diverse perspectives facilitates the elucidation and interpretation of the data collected. Similarly, participant input is of primary importance in axiology, where interpreting results is defined by participant input. Researchers consider objective and subjective viewpoints in a balanced manner.

3.2 Research Approach: Qualitative

A qualitative approach is the most appropriate to address the research inquiry posed in this thesis. Specifically, this is relevant to enlightening Sopra Steria employees' nuanced attitudes. Qualitative methodologies distinguish themselves from exploring phenomena' intricacies, providing researchers with a deeper understanding of their underlying dynamics (Firestone, 1987).

When using qualitative approach, data can be acquired through a variety of methods, such as interviews, experiments, and observations (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In Fehr and Fischbacher (2004) study, cooperative tendencies were investigated using Prisoners Dilemma (PD) and dictator game paradigms.

3.2.2 Prisoners Dilemma

The Prisoners Dilemma represents an orthodox example of a game characterised by two players confronted with binary choices: to defect or cooperate. The dilemma is rooted in a hypothetical scenario of two "prisoners" apprehended and interrogated individually for a shared felony. The essence of the games lies in the uncertainty surrounding each player's counterpart's decision during interrogation. Consequently, lacking access to the other player's response, participants must rely on personal judgment. The punishment the participants get hinge on the alignment or disjunction of the player's choices. In instances where both players opt for the same course of action, punishment is matched. However, in a scenario where one player chooses a strategy that is different from that of their counterpart, different punishments are placed. Specifically, the defector, opting for non-cooperation, gets a milder punishment, while the cooperating part faces a comparatively harsher punishment. The best rational choice will be to defect, since you will get the minimum amount of punishment (Dixit et al., 2020).

When both parties opt for defection, there are nothing to hold them "liable" for. This strategy represents the rational player's choice, even within numerous rounds/repetitions. The individual players stick to their first strategy, that maximises the collective outcomes best. This results in a concept called the Nash Equilibrium, where each player attains an optimal outcome (Aumann & Brandenburger, 1995). In the context of the PD, Nash Equilibrium is

attained when both players defect, as this choice ensures minimal consequences because complete information about your counterpart is available (Barreda-Tarrazona et al., 2017).

In scenarios characterised by incomplete information, where one player remains uncertain regarding the true intentions of their counterpart, the possibility exists that the other party may opt for cooperation rather than defection. In such instances, cooperation becomes the sustained equilibrium (Kreps et al., 1982). Those who opt for cooperation are often characterised as altruists, motivated by the desire to maintain a reputation for cooperative behaviour in repeated games, thereby enhancing their long-term pay-off (Andreoni & Miller, 1993; Dreber et al., 2014). Research by Andreoni and Miller (1993) and by Dreber et al. (2014) indicates that the presence of significant proportion of altruistic individuals within the population, who consistently adhere to cooperative strategies in repeated instances of the Prisoners Dilemma.

Prisoners Dilemma is characterised by strategic interactions where the participants must choose between cooperating and defecting. It provides a framework for examining individuals feelings towards altruistic or egoistic behaviours in the organisation. The perception of unity can be mirrored in how participants choose to act in the PD.

3.3 Research strategy and design

The selection of Sopra Steria as the focal case is based on its relevance and the potential to uncover noticeable patterns within its consultants' actions, especially considering the high rankings from GPtW.

As indicated by Eisenhardt (1989) and Robson (2002), it is advantageous to incorporate diverse methods into the design of the case study. In this study the Prisoner Dilemma is used as a small-scale experiment to provide an additional depth to understand perception of unity of the employees at Sopra Steria. The PD is used in this study to understand personal interests and norms, as Bettenhausen and Murnighan (1991) has used PD to discover personal norms, when it comes to cooperation.

Robson (2002) emphasises that case studies are inherently flexible. This allows researchers to conduct nuanced investigations and gain comprehensive insights. By incorporating various methodological elements, including experimental components, the research endeavour can be enriched, and a deeper understanding of the phenomenon investigated can be gained (Eisenhardt, 1989).

3.4 Data collection: Interview

The data for this thesis is collected through semi-structured interviews, with a small-scale PD simulation. The choice of doing interviews is to gain the in-depth answers to better understand the background in how perception and practice of unity really is (Robson, 2002). 29 interviews were conducted between February 1st and March 6th. The interviews are divided into two parts, the first part containing three Prisoners Dilemma cases, and the second part consisting of a semi-structured interview.

The interviews begin with the implementation of the Prisoners Dilemma, designed to reveal participants' initial opinions of cooperation (Fehr & Fischbacher, 2004). During this process, participants are confronted with the choice of cooperating or defecting, actions that can serve as factors for determining altruistic or egoistical attitudes (Dixit et al., 2020).

The PD cases are displayed in Table 1. The first two cases go into work errors, that could happen in the work life of a consultant. These cases share the same type of punishment of suspension. Case 3 however is a more unserious case of an office party incident. The punishment is less threatening monetary stated. The cases are arranged in this order to lower the cooperation rate as the cases progresses. Each PD case is repeated one time, making it possible to change the answer from the first round, till the second round. Under the cases is described and augmented on why and how the reasoning behind the cases are put together.

Prisoners Dilemma	
Case 1	*You and a colleague are tasked with delivering a report to a client. You both decide to plagiarise results from another report and incorporate these into your own report. Your rationale for doing so is based on the belief that "no one will find out," allowing you to complete this project sooner and prioritise other "larger" projects on your agenda. The client to whom you submit the report discovers the plagiarism and reports this to your manager. Consequently, you are summoned to an urgent meeting with your manager. You do not know what your colleague has disclosed to the manager. Faced with this situation, you must decide whether to confess (cooperate) or remain silent (defect). The penalty for this misconduct is unpaid suspension.*
Case 2	*You and a colleague have accidentally been assigned to a project you are not working on. Seizing the opportunity, you both log hours on the project, assuming no one will notice. You rationalise this by thinking it is management's fault for mistakenly assigning you to the project. Management eventually realises the error and the hours you have logged, and summons you to a meeting to discuss the payments made for the project. You were aware of the mistake but chose to exploit the situation for some extra cash. Now, you and your colleague face two options: either confess or remain silent. You do not know what your colleague has said. The penalty for this misconduct is unpaid suspension.*
Case 3	*At this year's Christmas party, you and a colleague danced on the tables and managed to break two of them. Management has gotten wind that you and your colleague were responsible for the broken tables. You are now scheduled for a meeting with management. You can choose to confess or deny your involvement in damaging the tables. The penalty is a percentage of the cost of the tables that you will have to pay.*

Table 1 - Prisoners Dilemma cases

Case 1:

In Case 1, it is assumed that you, Person A, have stolen a report instead of creating your own. The punishment in this case is unpaid leave ranging in length from 1 month up till a year, as illustrated in Table 2. The foundation of Case 1 is based on reflections on illegal actions that you have done. The goal of Case 1 is to encourage the subject to engage in self-reflection if they had committed the act themselves, would they have cooperated and taken the punishment and responsibility, or would they have defected and let their colleague bear the responsibility?

Case 1 & 2			
		Person A	
		Defect	**Cooperate**
Person B	Defect	*3 months* - 3months	*1 year* -1 month
	Cooperate	*1 month* -1 year	*6 months* -6 months

Table 2 - Punishment for PD case 1 & 2

Case 2:

Case 2 carries the same punishment as Case 1 and is based on the same moral principles as a work-related dilemma. The dilemma is that you have logged hours on a project that you do not work on, but via a mistake you have been written on the project and taken the advantage of this fault form the management to write hours on the project. Therefore, making the hours illegitimate. An ethical approach would be to cooperate and take responsibility for your action, which would be consistent with an ethical approach. This error can be set to the management in this case since they should have caught the error in the first place. Considering the hours have been paid for, defection may be a more appropriate response.

Case 3:

The last case is not revolving around your work as a consultant, but with your own personality. In Case 3 the subjects broke a table at an office party. As opposed to the two cases mentioned above, this is a more innocent case. As a result, the punishment is reduced to a single payment not the unpaid leave as earlier, as shown in Table 3. It must only be paid if you cooperate, and there is no punishment for defection, therefore lowering the chance of cooperation.

Case 3			
		Person A	
		Defect	**Cooperate**
Person B	Defect	*0%* -0%	*100%* -0%
	Cooperate	*0%* -100%	*50%* -50%

Table 3 - Punishment for PD case 3

These three cases are designed to encourage the subjects to reflect on their decision using ethical reasoning. And to put themselves into the different situations. The cases are arranged in this order to reduce the chance of cooperation, as each case progresses. When ethical morals and reasoning are taken into account, as the information about the counterpart is limited, cooperation is the sustained equilibrium if both parties cooperate (Kreps et al., 1982). Following a mathematical strategy would be to always defect, to minimize the punishment resulting in a Nash Equilibrium if both parties defect (Barreda-Tarrazona et al., 2017).

Sopra Steria is known for its ethical organisational culture. Testing this statement via these PD cases might show if Sopra Steria employees are thinking more ethically or mathematically.

The predicted outcome is that cooperation will be the preferred answer to each case, and that it could change into cooperation in the repeated rounds, as the subject would know their opponents answer. This prediction is based on the organisational culture at Sopra Steria. The cooperation rate will be much higher than the defection rate, and the instances of defection will probably come from mathematical reasoning.

Following the PD part, there is a semi-structured interview to better understand the underlying reasons to how the reasoning in the PD evolves, and an opportunity for the subjects to reflect on their answers for the cases. Later the questions get into different themes evolving the research question. The goal of the interview is to find correlation to existing literature and better understand this social phenomenon. The interview guide is shown below in Table 4.

Theme	Interview questions
Prisoners Dilemma	*What are your first thoughts after the Prisoners Dilemma simulation?*
	Would you change your answer in the first round if you already knew what your opponent chose?
Teamwork	*Can you explain how your optimal teamwork-situation is like?*
	How is this situation compared to how you work in teams in Sopra Steria?
	What is your attitude towards the different Business Units in Sopra Steria?
	Can you elaborate on a situation were working together with others has either positively and/or negatively surprised you, where you might have prejudged your colleague? You do not have to inform us of any personal information.
	What is your impression of yourself in a situation when you work together with a team?
Morale	*How do you react when you feel you are being treated unfair in a job situation?*
	Have you experienced any norms in Sopra Steria?
	Anything further you would like to add?

Table 4 - Interview guide

3.4.1 Choosing the sampling group.

The number of participants was an essential consideration when structuring the interview process. A significant factor in this outcome was the time restraints set by Sopra Steria, which ranged from thirty to forty-five minutes per interview. Sandelowski (1995) emphasises the importance of determining sample size based on judgment and prior experience, emphasising the necessity of acquiring sufficient data to fully understand the subject (Moser & Korstjens, 2018; Sandelowski, 1995).

The size of the sampling group was determined over the time restraint and earlier experience, the number were set up to 30 subjects. We established criteria's for participant selection, which required individuals to have a minimum of one year's experience at Sopra Steria, prior experience at other consulting firms, and be at least 25 years old. The objective of this strategic extension was to facilitate a broader understanding of specific elements and cross-verification across interviews (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012).

The inclusion of the Prisoners Dilemma component required allocating half of the interview time to this segment. As a result, the remaining time was available for a brief interview. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic, this strategy was employed. Our sources within Sopra Steria indicated that more than 60 people volunteered to participate in the interview and checked the criteria. After that, an NDA was signed by the participants and researchers with guidelines on how not to violate the participants rights under this agreement (Sikt, 2024).

Once this email was sent, the logistics of the interview meeting and the location were arranged. Each of us conducted interviews in parallel with one another. The parallel timeline was designed to allow participants to play the PD against one another. When this was not possible, a simulation of the opponent was made. It is critical to note that the participants were located at different locations and did not know each other's names or locations. Allowing the participants to act according to their intuition and thoughts by keeping their identities anonymous. By validating the PD, finding out how the participants think, and then, during the second interview portion, allowing them the opportunity to defend their opinions and reflect on the dilemma.

As a result, interview sessions were structured within the designated thirty- to forty-five-minute timeframe to accommodate the consultants' busy schedules, which often required consultants to use their lunch break to complete interviews.

Participants were selected from diverse locations to ensure organisational unity rather than individual leadership personas. This strategic approach acknowledges that organisational unity is a collective phenomenon that transcends individual influence (Cooper, 2000).

3.4.2 Teams interviews

All interviews were conducted remotely using the virtual platform Windows Teams, which was the preferred medium by both interviewer and interviewee. There are several notable advantages for both parties to running virtual interviews through Teams. Considering the geographical location of the participants, logistical challenges related to physical travel were effectively mitigated, making virtual interviews more practical (Archibald et al., 2019; Oliffe et al., 2021). Additionally, virtual interviews provided additional control over interview logistics by setting up interview scheduling and execution to be more efficient (Oliffe et al., 2021). Because of the confidentiality of the other person during the PD and interview, as well as the time and cost savings involved, it was decided to conduct the interviews virtually rather than in person.

3.5 Data analysis: Thematic analysis

After the interviews are conducted, thematic analysis is used to discover patterns and themes cross checking with earlier observations. Thematic analysis is frequently used in qualitative research, however, it receives less recognition than methodologies such as grounded theory, ethnography, or phenomenology (Braun et al., 2022). Using this method, qualitative data can be dissected flexibly, with the primary objective of identifying recurring themes or patterns within social phenomena to then build theory (Aronson, 1995; Braun et al., 2022; Eisenhardt, 1989). To use it, researchers must possess the ability to identify underlying patterns necessary for its application, which requires a systematic process of encoding quantitative information (Walton, 2000). Despite this, thematic analysis has its limitations, which is pointed out by Holloway and Todres (2003), who cautions that it may lead to inconsistencies and confusion in theme development.

The six phases of thematic analysis are described in Table 5 by Nowell et al. (2017). Initially, after the interviews had been conducted. It was necessary to familiarise both parties with the transcripts to ensure that we both understood the subject and the transcript. To gain a deeper understanding of certain answers from the interviews, both read through the transcripts and cross-checked certain misunderstandings.

Table 1. Establishing Trustworthiness During Each Phase of Thematic Analysis.

Phases of Thematic Analysis	Means of Establishing Trustworthiness
Phase 1: Familiarizing yourself with your data	Prolong engagement with data Triangulate different data collection modes Document theoretical and reflective thoughts Document thoughts about potential codes/themes Store raw data in well-organized archives Keep records of all data field notes, transcripts, and reflexive journals
Phase 2: Generating initial codes	Peer debriefing Researcher triangulation Reflexive journaling Use of a coding framework Audit trail of code generation Documentation of all team meeting and peer debriefings
Phase 3: Searching for themes	Researcher triangulation Diagramming to make sense of theme connections Keep detailed notes about development and hierarchies of concepts and themes
Phase 4: Reviewing themes	Researcher triangulation Themes and subthemes vetted by team members Test for referential adequacy by returning to raw data
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	Researcher triangulation Peer debriefing Team consensus on themes Documentation of team meetings regarding themes Documentation of theme naming
Phase 6: Producing the report	Member checking Peer debriefing Describing process of coding and analysis in sufficient details Thick descriptions of context Description of the audit trail Report on reasons for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices throughout the entire study

Table 5 - Establishing Trustworthiness During Each Phase of Thematic Analysis (Nowell et al., 2017).

As a result of proofreading and cross-checking the transcripts, codes were created. Codes were used to categorise the data into distinct themes and later to identify patterns. There were several codes: organisational culture, norms, Power of Sharing, social, personal-team sport, Prisoners Dilemma impressions and meaning changes, self-reflection, personal reflection, reflection upon unfair treatment, themselves in teamwork, and negative experiences with co-working. These codes reflect the questions asked during the interviews, based on Morris et al. (2015) and McDonough III (2000) frameworks.

Upon coding the transcripts, the search for patterns and themes revealed overlapping patterns and themes. The themes that emerged from the analysis were organisational culture, norms, and expectations, sharing and socialisation, fairness and collaboration, personal reflection, and team sports and organisational culture.

Patterns will appear in the findings, and these will be further discussed and correlated with theoretical findings in the discussion.

4 Findings

The analysis chapter delves into the organisational culture and norms within Sopra Steria, exploring how these elements influence employee behaviour and interaction. This study aims to uncover the underlying patterns that govern team dynamics, particularly focusing on the concept of "Power of Sharing" and its practical implications. By analysing both data from the Prisoners Dilemma simulations, and the qualitative interview data, this chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the organisational environment at Sopra Steria.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The demographic data of the interview participants show a diverse range of ages, genders, and professional experiences, as illustrated in Table 6. Most of the participants are from the larger offices with a big emphasis on the Stavanger office, but there are a significant number also representing medium and small offices across Norway. The data collected through interviews and the PD simulations provide a robust foundation for analysing the organisational culture and unity at Sopra Steria.

Demographics	Number of participants	
Gender		
Male	16	
Female	13	
Age group		
20-29	4	
30-39	10	
40-49	6	
50+	9	
SUM	29	
Location		
Oslo	2	Large
Stavanger	14	
Bergen	5	Medium
Trondheim	4	
Kristiansand	3	Small
Tromsø	1	

Table 6 - Participants overall demographics

4.2 Prisoners Dilemma

The PD analysis provides valuable insights into the decision-making processes of the participants, reflecting their strategic thinking, ethical considerations, and team loyalty. The responses from the PD simulations reveal how individuals balance personal gain, against collective benefit, and how their professional and personal values influence their decisions. Participants had two rounds in each case, where they could change their answers after learning their opponent's decision in the first round.

4.2.1 Decision-making factors

Participants approached the PD scenarios using either mathematical or moral reasoning:

Mathematical Reasoning: Some participants viewed the dilemma as a mathematical problem, focusing on the potential outcomes and benefits of different choices. The most prominent example in the experiment was from Person 5, a male contestant in the age group 20-29, who chose to defect in every round because it gave him the least punishment.

Moral reasoning: Most of the participants based their decisions on moral and ethical considerations, emphasising the importance of honesty and integrity. Both Person 7 (male, 50+), and Person 10 (female, 40-49) stated in the following interview that their decisions were rooted in their personal values and ethical standards. Table 7 illustrates how each participant answered the simulations.

4.3 Findings from the Prisoners Dilemma simulations

Table 7 shows that most of the participants chose to cooperate throughout the whole simulation, and therefore were using moral reasoning as predicted. As mentioned above Person 5 chose mathematical reasoning in every case and round and is the anomaly in this experiment by being the only one who did not cooperate once. Person 6 chose mathematical reasoning in round one of every case, but when she learned that her opponent cooperated, she changed to moral reasoning in every case, which she further explained in the interview.

Participant	Age-group	Gender	Location	Case 1 R1	Case 1 R2	Case 2 R1	Case 2 R2	Case 3 R1	Case 3R2
Person 1	20-29	Male	Kristiansand	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 2	30-39	Female	Trondheim	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 3	50+	Male	Trondheim	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 4	30-39	Male	Stavanger	**Defect**	**Defect**	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 5	20-29	Male	Tromsø	**Defect**	**Defect**	**Defect**	**Defect**	**Defect**	**Defect**
Person 6	20-29	Female	Kristiansand	**Defect**	Cooperate	**Defect**	Cooperate	**Defect**	Cooperate
Person 7	50+	Male	Bergen	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 8	50+	Male	Trondheim	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 9	30-39	Female	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 10	40-49	Female	Trondheim	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 11	40-49	Female	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 12	30-39	Female	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 13	50+	Female	Oslo	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	**Defect**	**Defect**
Person 14	30-39	Female	Bergen	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	**Defect**	**Defect**
Person 15	40-49	Female	Bergen	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 16	30-39	Female	Stavanger	**Defect**	**Defect**	Cooperate	Cooperate	**Defect**	**Defect**
Person 17	50+	Male	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 18	40-49	Female	Bergen	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 19	20-29	Male	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 20	50+	Male	Oslo	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 21	30-39	Female	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 22	40-49	Male	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 23	30-39	Male	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 24	30-39	Male	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 25	50+	Male	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 26	50+	Male	Bergen	Cooperate	**Defect**	Cooperate	**Defect**	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 27	40-49	Male	Kristiansand	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 28	50+	Female	Stavanger	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate	Cooperate
Person 29	30-39	Female	Stavanger	**Defect**	**Defect**	**Defect**	**Defect**	Cooperate	Cooperate

Table 7 - Participants PD Choices

Table 8 and Table 9 shows us what the male participants chose during the simulations. Most of the men chose to cooperate in every round, but as we see Person 5 (male, 20-29, Tromsø) was the only one to defect every round. Further it shows there was only one male in the age-group 30-39 who decided to defect being Person 4 (Stavanger). Not a single male participant in the age-group 40-49 chose to defect. This is the only male age-group who did not defect once. It should be said that it is also the smallest male age-group with only two participants. Last is the biggest age-group, 50+, where the only participant to defect was Person 26 (Bergen) who defected in round two of both Case 1 and Case 2. The six remaining men in the 50+ age-group cooperated in every single round of the PD simulation.

Cooperate					
Men	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	SUM
C1 R1	2	3	2	7	14
R2	2	3	2	6	13
C2 R1	2	4	2	7	15
R2	2	4	2	6	14
C3 R1	2	4	2	7	15
R2	2	4	2	7	15
SUM	12	22	12	40	86

Table 8 – How many men who chose to cooperate in the PD simulations.

Defect					
Men	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	SUM
C1 R1	1	1	0	0	2
R2	1	1	0	1	3
C2 R1	1	0	0	0	1
R2	1	0	0	1	2
C3 R1	1	0	0	0	1
R2	1	0	0	0	1
SUM	6	2	0	2	10

Table 9 - How many men who chose to defect in the PD simulations.

If we categorise the age-groups from the two youngest till the two oldest, we clearly see a difference in how many defections there were. For the category 20-29 there was 8 defections, but for the category 40+ there were only 2 defections. This can be a little misleading considering a single male chose to defect six times

Cooperate					
Women	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	SUM
C1 R1	0	4	4	2	10
R2	1	4	4	2	11
C2 R1	0	5	4	2	11
R2	1	5	4	2	12
C3 R1	0	4	4	1	9
R2	1	4	4	1	10
SUM	3	26	24	10	63

Table 10 - How many women who chose to cooperate in the PD simulations.

Defect					
Women	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	SUM
C1 R1	1	2	0	0	3
R2	0	2	0	0	2
C2 R1	1	1	0	0	2
R2	0	1	0	0	1
C3 R1	1	2	0	1	4
R2	0	2	0	1	3
SUM	3	10	0	2	15

Table 11 - How many women who chose to defect in the PD simulations.

Table 10 and Table 11 illustrates how the women cooperated, and/or defected during the PD simulations. The smallest age-group, also being the youngest, is the age-group 20-29, with only one participant. This was Person 6 (Kristiansand) who is mentioned earlier. The biggest age-group for the women is 30-39, here there was a total of six participants, and 10 defections. The defections were done by Person 14 (Bergen), Person 16 (Stavanger), and Person 29 (Stavanger), where Person 14 only defected in Case 3 round one and two, which have a lower monetary punishment. Person 16 defected in both rounds in Case 1 and Case 3. Person 29 defected in Case 1 round one and two, and Case 2 round one and two.

Like the males' choices, not a single woman in the age-group 40-49 decided to defect. This is also a larger group with 4 participants. There were only two defections for the age-group 50+ for the women as well. This was Person 13 (Oslo) who stated in the interview that she did not care as much in the scenario in Case 3, because she meant she could talk her way out of the punishment.

When we categorise the women into similar age categories as the men, we see the same trend, being that the category 20-39 defect more than the category 40+. There were 13 defections for category 20-39, and only 2 defections for 40+.

Cooperate					
Both sex	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	SUM
C1 R1	2	7	6	9	24
R2	3	7	6	8	24
C2 R1	2	9	6	9	26
R2	3	9	6	8	26
C3 R1	2	8	6	8	24
R2	3	8	6	8	25
SUM	15	48	36	50	149

Table 12 – How many in both genders who chose to cooperate in the PD simulations.

Defect					
Both sex	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	SUM
C1 R1	2	3	0	0	5
R2	1	3	0	1	5
C2 R1	2	1	0	0	3
R2	1	1	0	1	3
C3 R1	2	2	0	1	5
R2	1	2	0	1	4
SUM	9	12	0	4	25

Table 13 - How many in both genders who chose to defect in the PD simulations.

In Table 12 and Table 13 both genders are combined, showing how they collectively decided to Cooperate and/or Defect. This further illustrates that the younger participants defects more than the older. When combining the genders we also get a clearer view of how these categories chose regarding each other, considering it is a total of 14 participants in category 30-39, and 15 participants in category 40+. There was a total of 21 defections for category 20-39, and four defections for category 40+. This is shown further in Table 14 and Table 15.

Chance for cooperation			
	Men	Women	Both
C1 R1	88 %	77 %	83 %
R2	81 %	85 %	83 %
C2 R1	94 %	85 %	90 %
R2	88 %	92 %	90 %
C3 R1	94 %	69 %	83 %
R2	94 %	77 %	86 %
SUM	90 %	81 %	86 %
Case 1	84 %	81 %	83 %
Case 2	91 %	88 %	90 %
Case 3	94 %	73 %	84 %
Case 1 & 2	88 %	85 %	86 %

Table 14 - Percentage of the participants who chose to cooperate, divided by gender.

Chance for defecting			
	Men	Women	Both
C1 R1	13 %	23 %	17 %
R2	19 %	15 %	17 %
C2 R1	6 %	15 %	10 %
R2	13 %	8 %	10 %
C3 R1	6 %	31 %	17 %
R2	6 %	23 %	14 %
SUM	10 %	19 %	14 %
Case 1	16 %	19 %	17 %
Case 2	9 %	12 %	10 %
Case 3	6 %	27 %	16 %
Case 1 & 2	13 %	15 %	14 %

Table 15 - Percentage of the participants who chose to defect, divided by gender.

Table 14 and Table 15 shows the percentage who cooperated and defected in each round. Overall, there is a greater chance that the women defect, than the men. When looking further into the tables, it shows that Case 3 is the big divider between the two genders. The men had 6% chance of defection, while the women had 27% chance. Case 3 is also the case, which is the most irregular one, regarding the situation presented, and the punishment one gets. It is not as serious as the others, and there is a lower monetary punishment than the others. The

case with the overall lowest chance for defection is Case 2. This is interesting considering this is the only case where the fault is not directly on the participant, but rather that the management has made an error regarding project hours.

Cooperate						
	Oslo	Stavanger	Bergen	Trondheim	Kristiansand	Tromsø
C1 R1	2	11	5	4	2	0
R2	2	11	4	4	3	0
C2 R1	2	13	5	4	2	0
R2	2	13	4	4	3	0
C3 R1	1	13	4	4	2	0
R2	1	13	4	4	3	0
SUM	10	74	26	24	15	0
Case 1	4	22	9	8	5	0
Case 2	4	26	9	8	5	0
Case 3	2	28	8	8	5	0
Case 1 & 2	8	48	18	18	10	0

Table 16 - How each office chose to cooperate in the PD simulations.

Defect						
	Oslo	Stavanger	Bergen	Trondheim	Kristiansand	Tromsø
C1 R1	0	3	0	0	1	1
R2	0	3	1	0	0	1
C2 R1	0	1	0	0	1	1
R2	0	1	1	0	0	1
C3 R1	1	1	1	0	1	1
R2	1	1	1	0	0	1
SUM	2	10	4	0	3	6
Case 1	0	6	1	0	1	2
Case 2	0	2	1	0	1	2
Case 3	2	2	2	0	1	2
Case 1 & 2	0	8	2	0	2	4

Table 17 - How each office chose to defect in the PD simulations.

In Table 16 and Table 17 the participants are sorted by what office they work at. Here we clearly see that most participants from every office choose to cooperate, except for the Tromsø office. The Tromsø office is also the smallest sample size with only one participant. The Trondheim office was the only office to not have a single defection. The two biggest

offices, Oslo and Stavanger defected different to one another with Oslo only defecting in Case 3, and Stavanger only defecting in Case 1 and Case 2.

Chance of cooperation by office category			
	Large offices	Medium offices	Small offices
C1 R1	81 %	100 %	50 %
R2	81 %	89 %	75 %
C2 R1	94 %	100 %	50 %
R2	94 %	89 %	75 %
C3 R1	88 %	89 %	50 %
R2	88 %	89 %	75 %
SUM	88 %	93 %	63 %
Case 1	81 %	94 %	63 %
Case 2	94 %	94 %	63 %
Case 3	88 %	89 %	63 %
Case 1 & 2	88 %	94 %	63 %

Table 18 - Percentage of the participants who chose to cooperate, divided by office.

Chance of defection by office category			
	Large offices	Medium offices	Small offices
C1 R1	19 %	0 %	50 %
R2	19 %	11 %	25 %
C2 R1	6 %	0 %	50 %
R2	6 %	11 %	25 %
C3 R1	12 %	11 %	50 %
R2	12 %	11 %	25 %
SUM	12 %	7 %	38 %
Case 1	19 %	6 %	38 %
Case 2	6 %	6 %	38 %
Case 3	12 %	11 %	38 %
Case 1 & 2	13 %	6 %	38 %

Table 19 - Percentage of the participants who chose to defect, divided by office.

Table 18 and Table 19 samples the participants based on their office category. The clear anomaly is from the small offices with 38% chance of defecting. This is also the smallest sample size with only four participants, so it is not representable for this category. The medium sized offices have the smallest chance for defection with only 7% overall. For them, Case 3 had the biggest chance for defection with 11%. As mentioned earlier this might be because of the "unseriousness" and low monetary punishment in this case. The large offices had their biggest chance of defection in Case 1 with 19%. The other two cases only had a 6% chance for defection.

4.4 Findings from the interviews

The interview data provides a deeper insight into the diverse organisational culture and norms at Sopra Steria. It highlights the varying perceptions and experiences of employees from different offices. This section analyses the qualitative data from the interviews, focusing on key themes such as organisational culture, norms, Power of Sharing, socialisation, personal reflection, and teamwork.

4.4.1 Organisational Culture

The interview responses reflect a diverse range of experiences and perspectives on the organisational culture at Sopra Steria. Several participants highlights both positive and negative aspects of the culture, often influenced by their specific office location and personal background.

Positive aspects of organisational culture:

Multiple participants, including Person 5 (male, 20-29, Tromsø) and Person 19 (male, 20-29, Stavanger), emphasised the importance of the knowledge sharing culture at Sopra Steria. They noted that this culture sets the stage for collaboration and knowledge exchange, which is particularly beneficial for the new employees. Participants such as Person 11 (female, 40-49, Trondheim) and Person 29 (female, 30-39 Stavanger) praised the company's emphasis on quality and supportive atmosphere among employees. They mentioned that mistakes are handled collectively, and there is a strong sense of teamwork and unity.

Negative aspects of organisational culture:

Person 28 (female, 50+, Stavanger) and Person 7 (male, 50+, Bergen) expressed feelings of exclusion and competitive behaviour within the organisation. Person 28 noted a generational gap and a lack of common interests with younger colleagues. Person 7 was surprised by the competitive nature and sharp elbows among employees. Several participants, including Person 16 (female, 30-39, Stavanger) and Person 14 (female, 30-39, Bergen) mentioned internal competition between departments and within the management. This rivalry was seen as harmful to the overall collaborative culture of the company.

4.4.2 Norms and expectations

Norms and expectations play a crucial role in shaping employee behaviour and interaction at Sopra Steria. It was revealed through the interviews that both formal and informal norms influence the way the employees navigate their roles and responsibilities.

Person 19 (male, 20-29, Stavanger) and Person 6 (female, 20-29, Kristiansand) highlight that they feel they are expected to participate in social activities. In addition to creating a sense of unity, this norm can also pose a challenge for individuals who have limited free time outside of the workplace.

It was emphasised by several participants that honesty is essential in decision-making. There is a value placed on honesty, even in difficult situations, within an organisation, according to both Person 21 (female, 30-39, Stavanger) and Person 11 (female, 40-49, Stavanger).

4.4.3 Power of Sharing

The concept of "Power of Sharing" is a central theme in Sopra Steria's culture, aimed at promoting transparency and collaboration. However, the effectiveness of this principle varies among employees.

Many participants, such as Person 21 (female, 30-39, Stavanger) and Person 18 (female, 40-49, Bergen), acknowledged the benefits of the sharing culture. They noted that it facilitates open communication and support among colleagues. Despite the positive feedback, some participants like Person 8 (male, 50+, Trondheim) expressed scepticism about the implementation of the sharing culture. They mentioned that certain individuals or

departments hinder the flow of information, thereby limiting the effectiveness of "Power of Sharing".

4.4.4 Socialisation and team dynamics

Socialisation plays a significant role in how employees integrate and interact within Sopra Steria. The interviews revealed varying experiences of social activities and team dynamics.

Person 29 (female, 30-39, Stavanger) and Person 21 (female, 30-39, Stavanger) mentioned enjoyable social initiatives like quizzes and team-building activities, which help foster a sense of belonging. Conversely participants such as Person 28 (female 50+, Stavanger) and Person 15 (female, 40-49, Bergen) noted barriers to full participation in social activities, often due to logistical issues or limited availability of free spots in certain, limited activities.

4.4.5 Personal reflection, fairness and collaboration

Participants reflections on unfair treatment and their approach to teamwork provide insights into the underlying values and challenges in the organisational culture.

Several participants, such as Person 28 (female, 50+, Stavanger) and Person 26 (male, 50+, Bergen) described feeling frustrated or irritated by unfair treatment but emphasised the importance of addressing such issues in a constructive manner. Most participants, including Person 27 (male, 40-49, Kristiansand) and Person 21 (female, 30-39, Stavanger), valued collaboration and believed that they were effective team members. In addition to clear communication, mutual respect and cross-functional teams, they emphasised the importance of effective communication.

Team sports and organisational culture

Team sports emerged as a common thread among many participants. Several employees, including Person 24 (male, 30.39, Stavanger) and Person 18 (female, 40-49, Bergen), mentioned their involvement in various team sports, like football and basketball. Having a background in team sports seems to translate into a strong appreciation for teamwork and collective success in the workplace. Person 23 (male, 30-39, Stavanger) noted that his football experience helped him navigate diverse personalities and foster a cooperative work environment. Furthermore, Person 17 (male, 50+, Stavanger) pointed out that the skills and

values acquired from sports, such as communication, strategy, and perseverance can be directly applied to team projects at Sopra Steria.

5 Discussion

In this section the main goal is to contextualise and discuss the findings of the analysis. Considering previous research and the findings of the study, to conclude the discussion and propositions will be presented, as future research objectives.

RQ: *How does Sopra Steria create a feeling of unity among their employees?*

5.1 Organisation

Several interesting discoveries have been made during the PD and interviews. When examining the association between employee unity and altruistic behaviour in office settings, offices were categorised into large, medium, and small. Oslo and Stavanger were defined as large-sized offices, Bergen and Trondheim as medium-sized offices, and Tromsø and Kristiansand as small-sized offices.

5.1.1 Large offices- Oslo and Stavanger

According to the results, there was a 92% chance of cooperation and an 8% chance of defection in the PD cases. In Oslo, only Case 3 represents a defection. In the methodology chapter, it is discussed that case designs are encouraged to choose defection as the cases progress. Since this is the only case not involving your work as a consultant. One of the participants from Oslo opted to defect, rather than cooperate in this case, while the rest of the participants from Oslo opted to cooperate in all cases. Among the participants in Stavanger, only three defected. All three of them defected in both rounds of Case 1 and one defected in both rounds of Case 2. In both Cases 1 and 2, it was person 29 who defected, claiming that decisions were made based on loyalty to colleagues. This could be an indication that there are some instances of egoistic behaviour among the employees at the Stavanger office, decreasing the feeling of unity among them. The other participants in Case 1 who defected reflected their PDs that they might have been more affected if they had known the other individual. The fact that they chose to cooperate after the first round indicates that they have

confidence in the people at Sopra Steria. They now know that the other party has shown them trust by cooperating in both rounds of Case 1, even though they chose to defect.

There is a strong sense of unity in the large offices, and many participants explain that they can always count on others for help and support. In large offices, the PD confirms that the individual uses an ethical approach when making decisions. It is argued from the paradigm of the Power of Sharing, which has been mentioned numerous times. Throughout these offices, participants frequently emphasised the importance of sharing, communicating and collaborating for boosting morale, as Ruck and Welch (2012); Weng et al. (2010) suggests in their studies. These offices can maintain a strong sense unity among their employees due to high morale and "power of sharing" practices.

5.1.2 Medium offices: Trondheim and Bergen

Nine participants represented the two medium-sized offices in Trondheim and Bergen. Combined, there was a 93% chance of cooperation and a 7% chance of defection. Compared to large offices, the difference is only one percent. No defections have been reported from the Trondheim office, but all the defections have been reported from the Bergen office. The fact that defects are observed in all the cases is not surprising, but one individual stands out, and that is the person who chose to defect only in round 2 of Case 1 and 2.

A few observations are made concerning the offices in Trondheim and Bergen, from the interview after the PD. These reflections provide insight into egoistic behaviour among employees, possibly due to the rapid growth of these offices. Sopra Steria Trondheim and Bergen have expanded rapidly because of acquiring smaller consulting firms, forcing employees from these firms to adopt Sopra Steria's values and methodologies. As indicated by the subjects, some people refrain from communicating and collaborating, which is a sign of egotistical behaviour. Creating a unified force of employees is hampered by this problem. Therefore, there has been a sense of dissatisfaction among employees and a feeling that they are undervalued. Morale has been reduced because of this environment, with a greater emphasis placed on career advancement rather than achieving the collective goals of the organisation. Based on Deci et al. (1999) and Kane-Urrabazo (2006), effective leadership is necessary in order to foster an inclusive and supportive work environment.

5.1.3 Small offices: Tromsø and Kristiansand

The sample size of small offices is the smallest, with four participants. One of the four participants was from Tromsø. This is Person 5, who defected in all rounds of the cases. His reflections revealed that he viewed the PD as a mathematical problem. However, he later explains that if the situation had occurred in the real world, he would have chosen to cooperate. As a result, it was evident that he would be using ethical reasoning in his reflection.

Among the participants in the Kristiansand office, only one chose to defect. Defection came from Person 6, who defected in all the first rounds of the cases. The reason for this was that Person 6 wanted to know if she could trust the other person. It is likely that she would have answered the question differently if she had known the other person's answer before answering. Additionally, she indicated that she wanted to be treated fairly by her colleagues. As for the other two persons from the Kristiansand office, they cooperated throughout the entire process.

There is a strong sense of unity and collective support in small offices. Employees in Kristiansand and Tromsø reported no significant differences in status and emphasised a close-knit and supportive work environment. As the subjects explain, there is a collective value that is equally valued among colleagues. The degree of unity among employees is correlated with higher levels of altruistic behaviour and unity among employees. According to the atmosphere in small offices, morale is high because they value and engage their employees, which is consistent with the research of Youssef and Luthans (2007).

5.1.4 Unity in Organisation

For an understanding of the unity among Sopra Steria employees, it is necessary to understand the organisation's culture, to get a sense of what makes employees tick. In McDonough III (2000) model of contextual factors that affect teams, the first two "bubbles" - stage setters and enablers - are related to the organisation, and then these paradigms influence the behaviour of the team members (the employees). The analysis revealed a few patterns that had an impact on the culture of the organisation.

One of the most frequently discussed topics was the rivalry between the Business Units. This was a recurring pattern that emerged when flaws in Sopra Steria culture were located. The topic of rivalry between Business Units was frequently discussed among participants when

discussing norms and negative experiences with teamwork across BUs. Rivalry among BUs undermines cross-functional teams, which enable internal communication and collaboration across departments, as noted by Lichtenstein et al. (2004) and Mohamed et al. (2004). Even though Sopra Steria promotes the "Power of Sharing" as a core cultural element, its effectiveness seems to be limited to individual business units.

Although Sopra Steria's leadership emphasises the "Power of Sharing," internal practices are oriented toward intra-BU competition rather than organisation-wide cooperation. During the interviews, several subjects referred to this rivalry. The rivalry between BUs is more harmful than beneficial. By developing it from the top down, it hinders the dissemination of information and prevents a true collaborative environment from developing. Some consultants have noted that the constant race to become the best-performing BU undermines the goal of encouraging a cooperative and altruistic environment in the workplace. Based on the findings, it has been discovered that rivalry between BUs hinders "Power of Sharing" and prevents communication and collaboration.

The reason for this rivalry is the bonuses the leaders of the different business units get based on their employees' achievements. This indicates that such monetary incentives have the potential to negatively impact altruistic behaviours as well as hinder a collaborative work environment. In a monetary reward-oriented culture, individual achievement and unit success are prioritised over organisational goals, thus undermining the principles of cooperation and altruism. As a result of the findings, it is evident that monetary incentives can engage competitive behaviour that is detrimental to altruistic practices. Developing an organisational culture that is more collaborative and altruistic requires reconsideration of incentive mechanisms that emphasise.

As a result of the pressure to maximise financial performance, a competitive atmosphere is developed rather than a cooperative one. Resulting in a reduced willingness to share resources and knowledge to other BU's.

According to McDonough III (2000), Figure 2 illustrates the dynamic by identifying key enablers for projects and team climates, such as the involvement of leaders and management. It is suggested by this framework that a leader's role extends beyond team boundaries, influencing the broader organisational culture within a Business Unit.

In addition, this competitive rivalry and money incentives creates a sub-culture within the organisation, which inhibits cross-functional collaboration and altruistic behaviours that extend beyond its boundaries. Putting forward the argument that rivalry among Business Units can harm employee unity. McDonough III (2000) suggests that incentive structures based on rivalry and competition can negatively affect unity within the organisations.

As Abdullah et al. (2019); Men et al. (2020) proved, ethical leadership can hinder knowledge sharing if not used correctly. The internal rivalry between the different Business Units promotes a culture where each BU keeps information hidden from each other to gain an advantage.

There is a lack of communication and collaboration between these BUs, suggesting the need for management-led cultural change. For Sopra Steria as an organisation it is important that the leaders, values, regularities, goals, and climate all aligns to match the culture. Therefore, we suggest this proposition:

Proposition 1: Rivalry and money incentives among the leaders has a negative impact on knowledge sharing and unity among employees.

5.2 Employee

When speaking with the consultants, one recurring element is their high morale as individuals. This is reflected in the most experienced subjects (oldest), who often tells that they strive to be good people, and due to their experience, they have learnt to stand by their decisions.

Prisoners Dilemma scenarios encourage the subjects to act on their intentions, since they are unaware of their counterparts' actions and motivations. Kreps et al. (1982) suggest that cooperation is the sustained equilibrium of PDs with limited information about their counterpart. The wanted answer from the subjects to show high morale, is to cooperate, to reach a sustained equilibrium.

In terms of defection, there is a distinct point where the old and the young split, which is at the age of 40. Among the participants in this study, the age groups 40-49 and 50+ had only four incidents of defection. The remaining incidents of defection occurred among participants 39 and younger.

In contrast, post-experiment interviews revealed that young participants were less trustful of others and preferred to resolve problems independently. Additionally, some older participants indicated that they would have defected when they were younger due to a lack of experience. It has been confirmed by Al-Ubaydli et al. (2016) that cognitive abilities have an impact on cooperation abilities.

When participants are faced with Prisoners Dilemma scenarios, their morale affects their decision-making. According to the findings of the study, several of the subjects made decisions based on morale and ethics. Therefore, participants' choices are influenced by their morale, which in turn affects the way in which they approach dilemmas. They stated that their decisions were based on their personal values and ethical standards. Several participants cited the "Power of Sharing" as a key contributor to the high morale within Sopra Steria. As a result, many of these individuals were driven by their intuition and morale in the PD's.

Despite some participants' shock when their "partner" defected, resulting in the highest level of punishment, the majority remained committed to their initial decision to cooperate. Consequently, high morale is associated with altruistic behaviour, even if it incurs personal costs (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

Additionally, participants emphasised the importance of adhering to their morals, such as valuing transparency and seeking assistance, when needed. When things went wrong, they believed it was better to seek assistance rather than to resolve all problems on your own. Taking responsibility for one's actions is also considered to be ideal.

Employee morale is a strong indicator of enthusiasm for and belief in the organisation's goals (Momeni, 2009; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). High work morale is reflected in cooperative behaviour within an organisation, reflecting employees' feelings of being valued and engaged (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Throughout the findings, participants consistently emphasised the importance of effective communication and not being afraid to seek assistance. According to research by Ruck and Welch (2012) and Weng et al. (2010), communication and

opportunities for professional growth are critical in boosting morale. The results of the interviews confirmed that employees are valued at Sopra Steria, and morale is a critical factor in the organisation's success. A similar finding has been reported by Mohamed et al. (2004), who emphasise the importance of sharing information and maintaining open channels of communication in fostering a positive organisational culture. Such practices enhance team relations as well as contribute to the development of individuals and organisations. As a result, participants' experiences emphasise the importance of cross-functional teams in creating a united organisation culture.

There was a consistent theme among the subjects that team sports provided them with essential skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, personal responsibility, time management, and emotional regulation. As mentioned, team sports assisted the subjects in navigating different personalities and create a united environment. Several studies have identified the importance of these skills for professional success and collaborative efforts at work (Hansen et al., 2003; Holt et al., 2008; Marsh & Kleitman, 2003). Participating in team sports early in life has a long-term impact on these skills as they are transferred to the professional setting.

In support of this, Papacharisis et al. (2005) provide evidence that team sports develop social and cooperative skills that can be transferred to the workplace. Participants indicated that their experiences in team sports had a significant and positive influence on their professional behaviour.

Some of the goals Sopra Steria set for their employees are certifications and further education for their employees. The leaders participating transactional leadership are clear with the goals they set for their employees and motivate them to take these certifications and further education through monetary incentives in the form of bonuses (Bass, 1999; Ma & Jiang, 2018; Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). This contributes to gaining more in-house knowledge, and further strengthens Power of Sharing.

An important factor in this case is injunctive norms, which determine the moral duty of the individual (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Sopra Steria employees demonstrate this characteristic. Employees are expected to match organisational culture based on their morale, experience,

goals, judgment, and behaviour. In the absence of an alignment between these values, the employee will disrupt Sopra Steria's culture. Therefore, we suggest this proposition:

Proposition 2: The more aged and experienced individuals there is in the team, the higher the unity, morale and the knowledge sharing across the organisation.

These are two propositions for future research based on the findings from this study. These are suggested to gain a more diverse and complex relationship with how unity has an impact on the employee and the organisation. This can ultimately lead to discover more effective strategies to foster unity and collaboration in diverse work environments.

It is essential for the paradigms of the organisation and the employees to be aligned to create a dynamic and unified organisational culture. It all concludes into the Power of Sharing as the fundamental principle. Figure 4 is a proposed research model, illustrating the fundamentals.
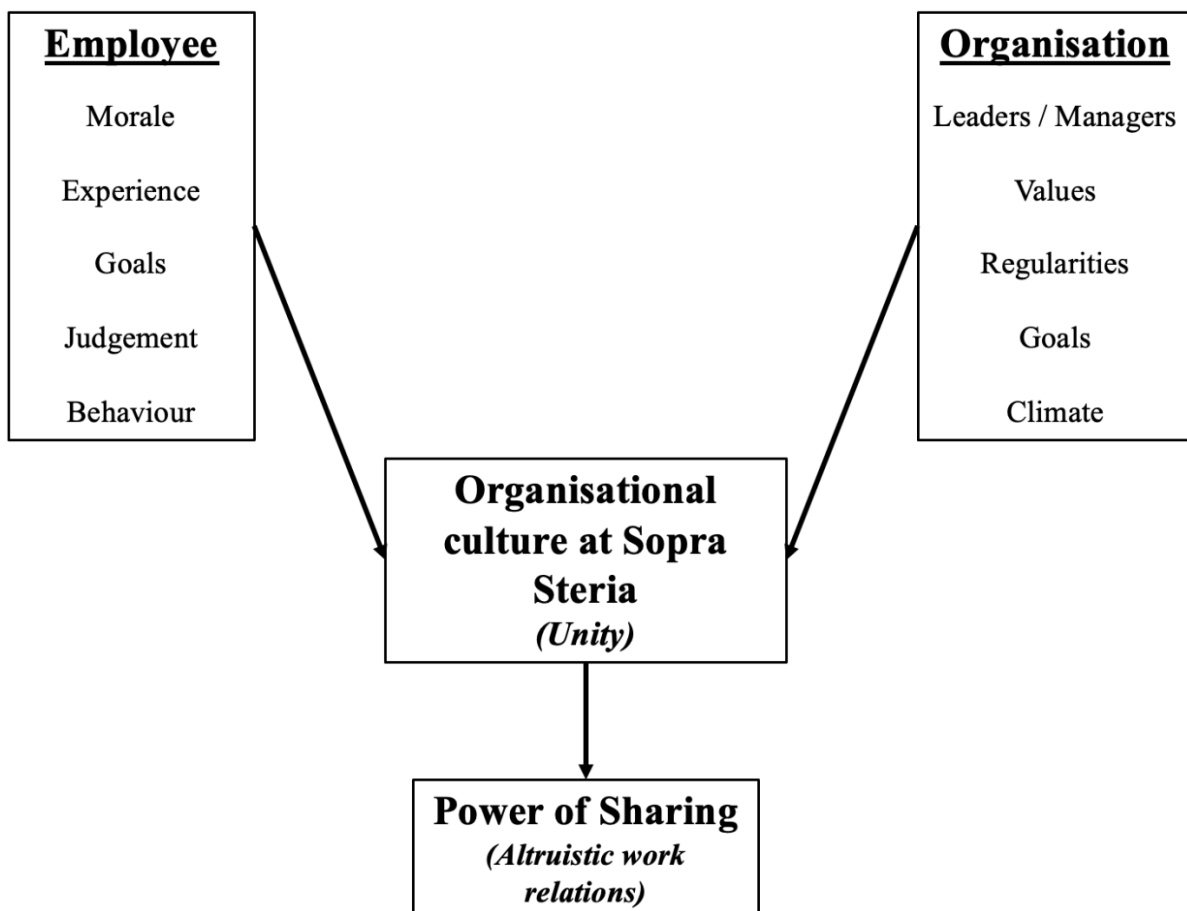

Figure 4 – Proposed research model

6 Conclusion

The research question, " *How does Sopra Steria create a feeling of unity among their employees?*" will be concluded in this chapter. As a final note, the chapter will highlight limitations of the study.

During the discussion there were two propositions. There were several factors, such as high morale, rivalry between BU, monetary incentives, and cross-functional teams, significantly influenced the prevalence of unity among the employees within the organisation.

Figure 4 presents a theory which shows how the employees, and the organisation are integrated into Sopra Steria's organisational culture and unity, leading up to the foundation of Power of Sharing. Employees' morale, experience, goals, judgment, and behaviour influence organisational culture from the employee perspective. The organisation's leaders/managers, values, regularities, goals, and climate influence from the organisation's perspective. The culture of Sopra Steria is influenced by all these paradigms. Whenever there is an uneven distribution of one of these paradigms, egoistical behaviour is more likely to occur. There must be an equal distributing of the values from both parties to achieve a unified organisational culture. "Power of Sharing" is a crucial component of creating a great company culture, especially in large organisations such as Sopra Steria.

6.1 Limitations

As the study progressed a few limitations occurred that could have an impact on the study. As Proposition 1 suggest, rivalry and money incentives have a negative impact on unity and knowledge sharing. An equal representation from all offices could have a different effect on the findings.

One limitation was that the sampling group did not represent the different offices and ages equally. Especially seen in Proposition 2, as it suggests the more aged and experienced has a correlation to creating unity. When looking at the offices, the Tromsø office only had one participant, Kristiansand only had three, and Oslo had two making them not representative. To avoid this in the study we combined offices to make office categories. We had to do the same for the age groups, since age group 20-29 had only four participants, making this not representative. The right representation would be to have at least seven people in each age group and office. This is only a limitation since there were a correlation in age when it came to cooperation in the Prisoners Dilemma simulations.

High morale and engagement represent most of the employees at Sopra Steria, but this is not a representative to how morale and engagement in other organisations are represented. The consulting industry is mostly based on project work, which may impact how employees perceive unity.

There are no regulations when it came to biases from the interview subjects. Organisational changes could influence how the subjects temporarily are influenced on perceptions of unity. The subjects can have given false answers to put Sopra Steria in a good light.

The limitations of this study is a reflection on the findings and the propositions.

6.2 Further research

We would like to recommend the propositions as suggestions for further research. These propositions discuss two different sides of organisational culture. Proposition 1 takes the organisational side, and Proposition 2 takes the employee side of our theoretical framework, shown in Figure 4.

Proposition 1: Rivalry and money incentives among the leaders has a negative impact on knowledge sharing and unity among employees.

Rivalry and money incentives that comes from the management, can have a harmful impact on the organisational culture. This was something that came up under several of the interviews as a negative impact on the participants workday/environment. By further researching this proposition the organisations could understand better how to motivate the internal culture among its employees.

Proposition 2: The more aged and experienced individuals there is in the team, the higher the unity, morale and the knowledge sharing across the organisation.

In the Prisoners Dilemma simulations, age and experience tuned out to be prominent factors for cooperating. This reflects on the higher morale, shown in the more experienced participants. By further researching this proposition the organisation could understand better how unity, morale and knowledge sharing can be a more prominent factor in their culture.

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