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Doctoral Thesis

Global Mindset as Managerial Meta-competence and Organizational Capability: Boundary-crossing Leadership Cooperation in the MNC The Case of 'Group Mindset' in Solar A/S

PhD Series, No. 24.2014

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The Case of 'Group Mindset' in Solar A/S

Rikke Kristine Nielsen

Doctoral School in Organisation
and Management Studies

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The Case of 'Group Mindset' in Solar A/S.

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Solar A/S

The Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation,
Ministry of Science, Innovation & Higher Education

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DEDICATION

For Andreas and Dagny – my miracle mangos

In gratitude and appreciation of your existence.

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"*Global mindset is being comfortable with being uncomfortable in uncomfortable places*."

Global mindset researcher, Professor Mansour Javidan citing anonymous practitioner.
US Academy of Management 2010 Annual Meeting workshop.

The academic concept of global mindset has been part and parcel of my professional life for the past three years, and I am happy to have found that the academic interest has been equaled by an intense practitioner curiosity. This allows me to be inspired by, and hopefully contribute to, the development of fruitful global collaboration, both in my research project host organization, in other corporations and practitioner networks such as the Global Leadership Academy, as well as in public debate during the project. The ability to handle diversity and complexity beneficially has become a potential, competitive advantage for societies, corporations and neighborhoods – it is indeed reassuring and gives grounds for optimism that so many have an interest in reflecting on and encountering this challenge head on! Being human, we are all prone to in-group favoritism and similarity bias - or as Scottish novelist Ian Rankin has one of the characters bitter-sweetly remark in his bestselling crime series on the life and work of Inspector Rebus: '*Ultimately, we are all racists – the interesting thing is how we go about this fact.*' I suspect and hope that the completion of this dissertation only marks the beginning of further exploration of global mindset, cooperation across borders and boundaries as well as walking the talk of 'glocalization' professionally, practically and personally.

'Stronger Together'

PhD dissertation prefaces are usually fraud with war stories from the academic trenches about seemingly unsurmountable tasks which were overcome with hard work, creativity and 'a little help from my friends'. The creation of this industrial PhD dissertation is no exception in that a number of dilemmas have been encountered. It will be up to the reader and other stakeholders to decide if these challenges have been adequately met and overcome, but I have to confess up-front that I enjoyed myself tremendously throughout the entire process!

This is not least a result of a very fruitful relationship with my industrial PhD host company, technical wholesaler Solar A/S, object of envy among many of my academic colleagues for field members' cooperative and trusting spirit. In particular, my host company advisors, Corporate HR Director Heidrun Marstein and Corporate Sales Development Manager (formerly Corporate Strategic HR Manager) Claus Sejr, merit special credit for facilitating a co-creational environment. Also, the support and never failing attention of outgoing Group Chief Executive Officer Flemming Tomdrup, who facilitated the industrial PhD initiative in the first place, has been central to the successful cooperation. In line with Solar's corporate value of 'courage', Solar is first-mover in its industry as the first (ever?) technical wholesaler to employ an (industrial) PhD. Indeed, as is remarked in the Solar 2012 Annual Report about the industrial PhD project,

"*[f]or a technical wholesaler to employ a business PhD student to study the phenomenon 'Group Mindset' is an untraditional and different move."* So, both the organization and the industrial PhD fellow have been treading new ground with regards to the industrial PhD framework as well as handling research management in practice. And so, when CEO Flemming Tomdrup remarked to the author at the outset of the project (Brøndby, May 2011): "*I think you are very brave to take on a project like this!"* I found myself among like-minded people willing to aspire to being 'stronger together' as the corporate slogan expresses it. In all parts of Solar, I have encountered curiosity, critical questions and at times even some suspicion, but I have never been ignored. Field working with the Solarians has at all times been an invigorating, motivational experience – thank you! I hope to be part of your global mindset efforts in the future, too.

Constructive Controversy

Kleinmann and Vallas (2001) remark that "*Academia and industry shows signs of convergence, because of an 'industrialization' of academy and a simultaneous 'collegialization' of industry."* While that may well be true in terms of directional convergence, we are still a long way from final convergence of practice and academia as the following remarks made to the author in the research process may illustrate: *"I take it you've never had a real job, then?,* one industrial PhD host company field member wondered about the PhD fellow's competency profile over dinner (Solar Group Leadership Program, Holckenhavn, April 2011). Academic colleagues on the other hand also found it difficult to make sense of the practice-research hybrid industrial PhD setup: *"So, you are not a real Ph.D. student, then?"* one remarked, while another wondered: *"Industrial PhD, is that a sort of academic consultant*?"(Questions directed at the author by researchers participating in the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, 2011).

Trying to facilitate an atmosphere of constructive controversy and bridging the notorious academia-practice gap in the research project, has taken quite an effort on behalf of all stakeholders. My university advisor Professor Flemming Poulfelt has been a strong role model and particularly helpful in terms of navigating the Scylla and Charybdis of academia and practice, balancing distance and nearness and trying to perform adequately in a field inhabited by a variety of stakeholders with, at times, opposing KPIs. Thank you, Flemming, for inspiring cooperation, thank you for thinking of me when it was time to move on from a decade of leadership blended learning consultancy and research communication entrepreneurship in LeadingCapacity A/S - and not least for 'blind dating' me with Solar in the autumn of 2010.

On the Merits of good Company

A host of other people must be credited for assisting me with the global mindset-project. Project co-advisor Professor (MSO) Dana Minbaeva, has been a most welcome fellow global Human Resource Management enthusiast and knowledge source, as has Professor Henrik Holt Larsen, whom I worked with for the past seven years teaching nearly any thinkable and unthinkable local or global HRM course Copenhagen Business School has to offer. Also, Global Leadership Academy coordinators and members, particularly

Andrea Straub-Bauer, Stinne Madsen and Claus Valentiner deserve special thanks as does the industrial PhD community at The Department of Management, Politics & Philosophy at CBS, above all Sanne Kjærsgaard Hjordrup and Christine Thalsgård Henriques.

My deepest appreciation and thanks also include friends and family without whom the whole endeavor would never have been possible, or at least a much less enjoyable experience. For instance, although much water has passed under the bridge since we wrote high school assignments on medieval Moslem-Christian cross-cultural encounters during the crusades together, Rikke Hostrup Haugbølle and I somehow still find each other on the same page 20 years later in each our PhD project, although researching vastly different topics. I have much appreciated our debates! Truly crossing the generation gap, I have also been fortunate to discover an inspirational debate partner in my youngest brother, Jens Boye Nielsen, completing his master in anthropology, as well as great cousin Mikkel Langer, a recently graduated M.Sc. in Political Communication & Management, who, among other things, has assisted with interview transcriptions. Finally, I have found that I inscribe myself in what seems to be a proud tradition of female single-parent researchers at Copenhagen Business School. I would never have dared to aspire to this group and venture into a job situation, where income and career prospects are at best diffuse and stability is to be found when pigs learn to fly, if not for the unequivocal support for the project by the entire extended Nielsen family – particularly in connection with the loving care for my miracle mangos to whom this dissertation is dedicated. It has truly been a team effort and I consider myself very rich in social capital!

'Nobody expects the Spanish inquisition', but it will find me in good company if and when it does arrive.

Rikke Kristine Nielsen

Copenhagen, May 2014.

SUMMARY

This dissertation deals with global mindset leadership understood as border- and boundary-crossing leadership within the multinational corporation by exploring the concept of global mindset as both an individual managerial meta-competence, as well as a strategic organizational capability. The research project presented explores the practical and theoretical avenues for working with global mindset as a strategic lever and method of securing business strategy executional agility, which is explored in the context of a single-case study organization, Solar - an internationalizing medium-sized MNC seeking to work in practice with global mindset leadership development and enactment as a strategy execution facilitator.

Internationalizing corporations often experience the liability of foreignness when moving into new markets, and in effect suffer a globalization penalty vis-à-vis local competition in different markets. At the same time, they are pushed to consider the potential non-transferability of domestic competitive advantages and business models, when moving into new territory and may have to make adjustments to cater to different customer preferences and other local specificities in a variety of markets simultaneously. Further, international and global collaboration is more complex than local collaboration and as a consequence, corporations need to be better at collaborating in order to receive the same effect compared to domestic operations alone. This is due to the fact that culturally and strategically employees and managers at all hierarchical levels understand each other less, while language barriers may at the same time place a strain on communication and collaboration. Transaction costs rise as corporations move from high-context collaboration with low psychic distance in a domestic setting or between relatively similar groupings, where many things are shared and taken for granted and thus need not be explicated to a low-context communication setting where little or no common ground can be taken for granted. This dissertation argues the case that leadership with a global mindset is relevant for companies and organizations that make strategic use of global mindset as a driver for global business strategy. As such global mindset is seen as strategic global mindset in that the rationale for developing global mindset is as a facilitator of business strategy. The context of the individual company is an indicator for what global mindset means in the particular company, and for who can benefit from it. Global mindset is not seen as generic, but highly contextual when looking at the practical implementation of the concept empirically. The aim of working with global mindset, then, is the optimization of global mindset in relation to the context, the managerial role and the business strategy, not an end in itself.

Based on a conceptual analysis of global mindset, this dissertation argues that the development of global mindset as a managerial meta-competence and organizational capability is an avenue for multinational corporations to improve their opportunities and performance internationally. At the organizational level, global mindset is a capability in that global mindset may facilitate execution of international business

strategy. At the individual level, global mindset is a meta-competence in a dual sense: First, it is a global leadership meta-competence in that it encompasses other approaches to global leadership, such as intercultural leadership, knowledge sharing, boundary brokerage and paradox management. Secondly, global mindset is a meta-competence in the sense that it is competence facilitating the adequate use of other managerial (functional and leadership) competences in global collaboration in the MNC. A central argument in this respect is how global mindset entails a broader and more multi-faceted conceptualization of globality and global leadership than a traditional cross-cultural understanding. Global mindset leadership is boundary-crossing in a broader sense of the word going beyond geographical borders and national cultural group affiliation. This is in keeping with an interpretation of the word 'global' as involving or relating to all the parts or aspects of a situation, transverse, all-embracing, inter-disciplinary and holistic. Individual and organizational global mindset is not only a question of border-crossing and cosmopolitanism, but an ability to successfully handle the duality of local and global, the need for simultaneous diversity and homogeneity. The outcome of the conceptual analysis of global mindset is laid out in a theoretical framework, 'the strategic global mindset capability model', presenting as a summation of the author's pre-understanding of extant literature about global mindset as both an individual, managerial meta-competence and organizational capability related to business strategy and performance. 'The strategic global mindset capability model' links international business strategy with business performance via both individual and organizational global mindset management practice and behavior.

An empirical analysis of strategic global mindset as a meta-competence and organizational capability supplements the conceptual analysis of global mindset, as laid out in the 'strategic global mindset capability model', by adding empirically founded suggestions for organizational/structural and individual enablers of strategic global mindset seen from a middle manager perspective in a single case study. The managerial micro-foundations of strategic global mindset is empirically explored through a case study of a medium-sized North European technical wholesaler, Solar A/S, host organization of the industrial PhD program with which the present research project is affiliated. Solar A/S is an interesting case for exploring global mindset as this organization is in the process of deliberate competence and capability development of strategic global mindset as a lever for the achievement of strategic objectives and business performance in pursuit of expansion and acceleration of internationalization through both organic and acquisitative growth. The empirical exploration takes its point of departure in the local Solar operationalization of global mindset known as 'group mindset'. The Solar case study empirically captures what global mindset is as an individual meta-competence and strategic organizational capability, as well as how global mindset capability development may be facilitated through managers' management practice. A force field of 'group mindset' enablers and barriers is drawn which is operationalized into ten

organizational enablers and ten individual enablers, some of which mirror the conceptual analysis organizational and individual enablers of global mindset, while others point in a different direction. The analysis of individual and organizational enablers of the development and enactment of global mindset, operationalized as Solar 'group mindset', stands out from the conceptual analysis of global mindset, presented earlier in that the Solar case stresses a somewhat overlooked part of global mindset, namely appreciation of the local. The Solar case emphasizes that global mindset is not only cosmopolitanism and intercultural skill for handling international interaction; it is also an appreciation for the local as an end in itself, not as a sign of international immaturity. A monopolization of global mindset by corporate functions, if not top management, as synonymous with (more) harmonization, synthesis and integration is in as much danger of suboptimization as is a too narrow, local interpretation, and so this form of 'reverse suboptimization' is seen by middle managers as an important detractor of 'group mindset' development and enactment.

This study not only adds empirical flesh to the theoretical bones of global mindset, but also applies a middle management perspective, absent in extant literature, adding a more pluralistic, albeit still managerial, perspective. This has been done from an industrial PhD insider perspective conducting (mainly) qualitative research from a field immersion position. This dissertation pictures the challenges of doing insider research as the simultaneous handling of three different domains: Doing research in/with(in), for and in-between organizations. It is suggested that optimization of research quality in this setting concerns deployment of counterstrategies for researcher bias and 'snow blindness' from going native; how to secure field impact and value through reflexive knowledge production, political entrepreneurship and engagement, as well as through choosing transparent data collection techniques that easily lend themselves to outsider evaluation and institutionalized involvement of different opinions to accommodate researcher bias. Also, tackling the researcher's dual allegiance position through boundary spanning, stakeholder management and boundary brokerage is deemed necessary to realize the potential for innovation and value creation of the in-between.These counterstrategies have first and foremost been implemented in the present study by a continuous cycle of internal and external member checks throughout the study.

In sum, this study adds to and expands the existing knowledge of global mindset by providing a concrete case of global mindset leadership as opposed to the theoretical, generic and normative recommendations typical of present global mindset literature. Also, the study focuses on the global mindset of middle and lower level management, rather than only top management and so goes beyond the connection between global mindset and global strategy formulation to strategy execution and leadership practice in multinational corporations. In addition, the study contributes by exploring 'strategic global mindset'; i.e. global mindset in alignment with business strategy, providing an inroad for uncovering the black box of

the microfoundations of the (global) mindset-performance causal chain reported in extant literature. Further, the study provides a basis from where it may be further explored how global mindset may function as an organizational capability – an ability hinted at, but undiscovered in extant literature where little is known about organizational level global mindset. This dissertation also represents a response to the call for resource-based analyses to move from a macro, firm-focused view of 'what firms are', to a micro-level process view of 'what firms do', doing research from a qualitative, more ethnographic-oriented approach in place of statistical analyses of quantitative survey data. This approach, in turn, also addresses recent calls for further exploration of more pluralistic styles of doing case analysis in international business and international management through its focus on a designated middle and lower-level management segment, giving voice to subsidiaries and middle managers instead of the traditional focus on HQ and top management. Finally, this study also adds to the pool of knowledge on the research practice of doing actionable research with a view to sustainable value creation in both academia and practice, discussing how challenges may be addressed and mutual benefit may be achieved in practice. Although the industrial PhD case is a special, perhaps even deviant case, the radical nature of this setup highlights challenges of bridging the research-practitioner gap that other researchers, be it traditional PhDs or other more experienced and tenured researchers, experience when conducting research from a field immersion position with a view to mutual value co-creation between both academia and practice.

Key words: Global mindset, managerial meta-competence, boundary-crossing leadership, strategy execution, internationalization/globalization, deliberate capability development, international collaboration, qualitative case study, actionable research, engaged scholarship, microfoundations, middle management, industrial PhD, technical wholesale.

RESUMÉ (DANISH SUMMARY)

Denne afhandling beskæftiger sig med global ledelse som 'globaliseret ledelse; dvs. ledelse i en særlig kontekst karakteriseret af strategisk og kulturel kompleksitet samt grænsekrydsning over mentale, organisatoriske og fysiske grænser – eller sagt med andre ord: ledelse med global mindset. Begrebet global mindset er et bud på, hvordan virksomheden sikrer, at de menneskelige ressourcer kan håndtere den globale strategiske og kulturelle mangfoldighed og kompleksitet, som i disse år får stigende opmærksomhed. Denne afhandling argumenterer for, at global mindset er relevant for virksomheder og organisationer, der har strategisk nytte af global mindset og derfor bør ses som strategisk global mindset. Den enkelte virksomheds kontekst er pejlemærke for, hvad global mindset betyder i den enkelte virksomhed, og hvem der skal have det. Og så er det er på ingen måde begrænset til udstationerede medarbejdere eller virksomheder med repræsentationer i flere lande, end der er medlemmer i FN. Ledelsesgerningen globaliseres, og flere kan have gavn af global mindset til at eksekvere grænsekrydsende strategier.

Traditionelt set har man talt om global ledelse i forbindelse med (typisk store firmaers) udstationering af medarbejdere eller etablering i udlandet. Med stigende globalisering af markeder og arbejdsgange, det såkaldte multikulturelle samfund og samarbejde på tværs af virksomheder kan man stille spørgsmålstegn ved, om skellet mellem hjemlig/national og global ledelse ikke skal flyttes? Betegnelsen "global" giver indtryk af, at det er noget, man tager udenlands for at støde på. Men det er langt fra altid tilfældet – måske oven i købet mere undtagelsen end reglen. Samarbejde på tværs af kulturelle, mentale, organisatoriske, professionelle og geografiske grænser er hverdagskost for mange ledere og medarbejdere i såvel små som store virksomheder, og i denne afhandling argumenteres der for, at der er brug for global, grænsekrydsende ledelse – også når man ikke har brug for at medbringe sit pas. Hermed fremhæves en vigtig pointe i forhold til det globales beskaffenhed. Der ligger nemlig i de fleste definitioner af begrebet en indbygget forståelse af ordet global, der går ud over betydningen "verdensomspændende" og "international" til i stedet at betyde altomfattende, helhedsorienteret, alt inklusive. Dette afspejles i ordets dobbelte betydning på engelsk, som desværre ikke genfindes på dansk, hvor en supplerende betydning af ordet 'global' er at forstå som tværgående, tværfaglig og helhedsorienteret indstilling til tilværelsen såvel som arbejdslivet.

Afhandlingen afdækker global mindset fra et teoretisk, et empirisk og et metodologisk perspektiv. Den teoretiske analyse konceptualiserer global mindset som både en individuel meta-kompetence for den enkelte leder og en strategisk, organisatorisk kompetence for organisationer. Global mindset er en meta-kompetence for det første, fordi begrebet i sig selv er en hybrid af eksisterende perspektiver på global ledelse, hvor den globale leder italesættes og præsenteres som hhv. interkulturel leder, brobygger/grænsegænger, videnmægler/social kapitalist og paradoksnavigatør. Global mindset er endvidere en meta-kompetence, fordi den som kompetence ikke direkte knytter sig til fremstillingen af en vare eller service, som en tredjepart er

villig til at betale for, men derimod er relevant i forhold til eksekveringen af andre kompetencer internationalt. Det er altså en indirekte kompetence, der til gengæld går på tværs af de specifikke funktionelle kompetencer, der måtte være brug for i forskellige jobroller. Samtidig kan global mindset ses som en organisatorisk kompetence, der faciliterer opnåelsen af forretningsstrategiske målsætninger. Hvis global mindset er at forstå som strategisk global mindset, må arbejde med global mindset være en reaktion på en forretningsstrategisk beslutning, der er defineret lokalt ud fra den enkelte virksomheds situation og positionering i det globale. Global mindset som organisatorisk kompetence er altså evnen til at støtte op om internationale forretningsstrategiske mål – en opfattelse der sammenfattes i en strategisk global mindset kompetence-model, som skitserer sammenhængen mellem strategi, global mindset og præstationer.

Den teoretiske analyse suppleres dernæst med en empirisk analyse af global mindset. Den empiriske analyse tager udgangspunkt i et kvalitativt casestudie af en danskbaseret international teknisk grossistvirksomhed, Solar A/S. I Solar A/S følger forfatteren virksomhedens bestræbelser på udvikling og udlevelse af global mindset, lokalt i virksomheden kendt og operationaliseret som 'group mindset', som en måde at støtte op om internationalisering, international vækst og eksekvering af forretningsstrategiske initiativer. Den empiriske analyse falder i to dele. Først introduceres Solar-casen i et forretningsstrategisk perspektiv, som det interne makromiljø i casevirksomheden, som udforskningen af de ledelsesmæssige microfoundations for global mindset operationaliseret som 'group mindset', sker inden for rammerne af. Herigennem bidrager den empiriske analyses første del også med en empirisk analyse af strategisk global mindset som individuel leder meta-kompetence og organisatorisk kapabilitet, som den teoretiske analyse allerede har givet en konceptuel analyse af. I den empiriske analyses anden del præsenteres en analyse af, hvilke leder- og ledelsespraksisser der udgør microfoundations for global mindset set i mellemlederoptik, idet der både lægges vægt på den enkelte leders adfærd samt mellemledernes opfattelse af, hvilke organisatoriske rammer og praksisser, der hæmmer/fremmer udvikling og udlevelse af global mindset hos ledere. På denne baggrund skitseres 'group mindset' i Solar A/S som et kraftfelt af kræfter, der påvirker udviklingen af 'group mindset' hhv. positivt og negativt. Disse kræfter operationaliseres efterfølgende i ti organisatoriske 'group mindset' facilitatorer og ti individuelle 'group mindset' facilitatorer. Den empiriske analyse af 'group mindset' afdækker i vist omfang nogle af de samme facilitatorer, som der allerede er peget på i den teoretiske analyse af global mindset, men adskiller sig klart og tydeligt på særligt et punkt. I Solar-caseanalysen af udvikling og udlevelse af 'group mindset' fremstår evnen til at værdsætte det lokale som en væsentlig dimension i forhold til at fremme 'group mindset'. Denne pointe findes ganske vist i nogle teoretiske definitioner af global mindset, men er generelt overset og undervurderet i den eksisterende litteratur. Solar-casen understreger, at global mindset ikke kun er kosmopolitanisme og interkulturel ledelse; det er også kompetence i forhold til det lokale og det 'hjemlige' som en selvstændig, positiv pointe og ikke som bagstræberisk etnocentrisme. Hovedkontorets, om ikke topledelsens, indstilling til det lokale fremtræder, set i en mellemlederoptik, som et væsentligt parameter for udviklingen af global mindset: Hovedkontoret har tendens til at monopolisere 'group mindset' ved at

forveksle global mindset med konsekvent prioritering af standardiserede, integrerede løsninger, der gælder for hele den internationale virksomhed. Dermed ses det som lige så sandsynligt og uhensigtsmæssigt, at hovedkontoret suboptimerer ved at standardisere og integrere som rygmarvsreaktion, en slags 'omvendt suboptimering', som ved at datterselskaber eller lokale filialer suboptimerer ved at handle for lokalt.

Denne afhandling tilfører ikke alene ny, empirisk viden til global mindset-litteraturen, som pt. primært er teoretisk og konceptuel, og - i det omfang at den er empirisk funderet – har fokus på individuelt global mindset. Afhandlingen bidrager også med et mellemlederperspektiv, der ikke bare hidtil har manglet i global mindset-litteraturen, men som også adresserer efterspørgslen efter mere pluralistiske casestudier inden for forskningen i internationale virksomheder. Selvom analysen i denne afhandling fortsat er managerialistisk al den stund, at det er ledelsen og ledere, der kommer til orde, giver den plads til en gruppe af ledere, mellemledere på taktisk og operationelt niveau, der ikke har fået taletid i eksisterende global mindset-litteratur. Den empiriske analyse er samtidig foretaget inden for rammerne af et erhvervsforskningsprojekt, hvor værtsvirksomheden er den centrale casevirksomhed, og afhandlingen bidrager dermed til vores viden om brobygning mellem forsknings og praksis. I afhandlingen diskuteres det, hvordan forskningskvalitet kan optimeres inden for en ramme, hvor forskeren er i et ansættelsesforhold med det empiriske genstandsfelt. Udfordringerne med at forske ud fra denne insider-position karakteriseres i afhandlingen som forskning bedrevet i/med, for og mellem organisationer. Der argumenteres for, at opnåelse af (kvalitativ) forskningskvalitet under disse betingelser primært handler om at modvirke sneblindhed og erosion af kritisk distance til egen praksis og felt som konsekvens af forskerens sameksistens med felten; opnåelse af positiv effekt og værdi af den gennemførte forskning i felten ved hjælp af aktiv involvering af praktikere fra værtsvirksomheden og ved at prioritere transparente datakilder og -indsamlingsmetoder, som er lette(re) for interne og eksterne 'andre' at kommentere på og forholde sig til. Samtidig understreges det, at håndtering af forskerens dobbelte tilhørsforhold med et ben i hhv. den akademiske (værtsuniversitetet) og den praktiske sfære (værtsvirksomheden) kræver aktiv brobygning og ledelse af interessenter for at udløse den kreative spænding og det innovationspotentiale, der ligger i at indtage en position i mellem to forskellige verdener.

Som helhed betragtet supplerer og udvider denne afhandling den eksisterende viden om global mindset ved at bidrage med en konkret empirisk case om ledelse med global mindset, hvilket står i modsætning til de generelt teoretiske, generiske og normative anbefalinger i global mindset-litteraturen. Samtidig fokuserer casestudiet på global mindset set i et strategiske perspektiv og oplevet af mellemledere, og går således udover det nuværende fokus på strategiformulering til også at omfatte strategieksekvering. I den forbindelse løftes (en flig af) sløret for, hvilke konkrete leder- og ledelsespraksisser, der i praksis understøtter udviklingen og udlevelse af strategisk global mindset. Afhandlingen adresserer dermed også

efterspørgslen efter studier af international ledelse og strategi, der inddrager bredere og mere mangfoldige interesserer end udelukkende topledelsens. Samtidig bidrager afhandlingen med et erhvervsforskningsperspektiv på global mindset, og bidrager dermed metodologisk til den igangværende debat om, om og hvor meget forskningsinstitutioner skal inddrage viden/personer fra og bidrage til praksis i det omgivende samfund via deres forskning. Selvom et erhvervsforskerprojekt er en helt særlig ramme at bedrive forskning indenfor, bidrager dette studie med refleksioner og metoder, der kan have generel interesse for alle forskere, der ønsker at gøre en forskel såvel akademisk og praksis ved at samskabe viden med repræsentanter for det felt, der forskes i.

Nøgleord: Global mindset, internationalisering/globalisering, international metakompetence, organisatorisk international kompetence, grænsekrydsende ledelse, strategieksekvering, microfoundations, mellemledere, organisations- og ledelsesudvikling, internationalt samarbejde, kvalitativt casestudie, aktions- og erhvervsforskning, teknisk grossistvirksomhed.

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PART I: RESEARCH CHALLENGE & CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL MINDSET

Chapter 1: Prologue

When the host company supervisor picks me up in the reception of a redecorated Hamburg docks warehouse, venue of the Solar strategy kick-off for the revised group strategy for the period of 2010-2015, I am excited, curious and a little nervous. It is the end of March 2011, my first official day on the job with my new industrial PhD employer. I am about to meet all strategic and tactical managers of the Solar Group, gathered for the strategy kick-off, which is hosted outside the Danish HQ for the first time by the German subsidiary. It is close to 8 p.m. and, according to the agenda handed out to me, the group is engaged in an after-dinner activity of enacting the concept of 'group mindset' in role plays performed by smaller groups. "*This is a most appropriate avenue of organizational entry*", I ponder, while we ascend to the second floor in the elevator, as the exploration of the Solar take on global mindset, locally known as 'group mindset', is at the center of attention in the three-year research project we have agreed to collaborate on - starting now. Approaching the conference room, I hear loud laughter and voices. As my supervisor and I do our best to slip into the room unnoticed, the first sight that greets me is a large group of men cheering for a person roaming under a table with what seems to be a yellowish table cloth wrapped around the shoulders – perhaps as a sort of cape? Meanwhile, a colleague is passionately narrating a story line in a microphone to the cheerful crowd. As I take a closer look, I am able to make out that the male person under the table is the Solar Group Chief Executive Officer role-playing 'group mindset' with his group members… And so I embarked on the first participant observation of 'group mindset' among the group of people that refer to themselves as 'Solarians' and entered the universe of European technical wholesale which, at the time, was almost as foreign to me as alien life in a faraway exotic solar system…

1.1 The Solar Group - "#1 in Technical Wholesale"

The refreshed Solar group strategy for the period 2010-2015, known as "#1 in Technical Wholesale", presented at the strategy kick-off in Hamburg, was the first business strategy formulated under the first Group CEO recruited outside Solar ranks (although from within the supply chain) in the company's more than 90-year history and one of significant change. Solar A/S (previously Aktieselskabet Nordisk Solar Compagni), was established in 1919 and listed on the Copenhagen Stock Exchange in 1953. Although relatively unknown to the general public nationally and internationally (Berlingske Nyhedsmagasin, 2012), Solar is Denmark's thirty-sixth largest company measured on revenue (Berlingske Nyhedsmagasin, 2011) and turnover amounted to € 1,531.5m in 2013. The company is one of Northern Europe's leading technical wholesalers within electrical, heating, plumbing, security, energy and ventilation products, marketing some

215,000 products. Operating in a business-to-business market, the typical customers are small and medium-sized businesses within the plumbing or electrical trade, but large industrial clients also represent a significant source of revenue, as do customer education and consulting on renewable energy. The company is headquartered in Kolding, Denmark's seventh largest city (57,583 inhabitants in 2013) situated in south-western Denmark some 230 km from the Danish capital of Copenhagen. Solar has subsidiaries operating under the Solar brand in Denmark incl. the Faroe Islands, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands (key markets); Germany, Austria, Belgium and Poland (emerging challenger markets, also known as 'sunshine markets'). The Solar Group employs a total of approximately 3,300 people; the Danish enterprise has the most employees, while the Dutch enterprise is the largest foreign subsidiary.

The refreshed group strategy for the period 2010-2015 presented in Hamburg in the spring of 2011 was designed to ensure improved financial performance and continued advancement of the group's position as a technical wholesaler in a challenging market, where expectations for market growth in the first half of the strategy period were limited due to the financial crisis. The refreshed strategy included the following initiatives:

1. To outperform the market as 'the number 1 technical wholesaler' by further expanding product range and knowledge base within electrical, heating, plumbing and ventilation products in Solar's four key markets Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway.
2. To capture organic growth opportunities by increasing its focus on the climate and energy segments as well as on facility management and utilities through an expansion of the product and service offers aimed at these segments.
3. To upgrade the group's business model to also encompass a business model for emerging markets. One model will be directed at consolidating key markets and the other at emerging markets (Finland, Poland and Germany)[1].
4. To enhance efficiency and profitability in all markets by capitalizing on the introduction of standardized processes supported by a new, common Group SAP IT platform (called Solar 8000).
5. To continue strengthening leadership and specialist competences as well as defining new ways of working across countries and functions. This is supported by the introduction of a corporate academy, Solar Business Academy. More focus will be placed on employer branding to attract new employees with competences complementing those already available.

Under new leadership and in the context of a vastly changed competitive landscape, the refreshed group strategy mirrored Solar's assessment of an altered position in the European market, i.e. caught in the middle:

[1] Approximately half way through the first half of the strategy period, the Finnish operation was divested as was Solar's engagement in consumer electronics through Aurora, and new acquisitions in the Netherlands, Belgium and Austria were included in the group of emerging markets.

following major restructuring of the European technical wholesale industry where large and, geographically speaking, considerably more multinational competitors were consolidated into two major players and fierce competition still existed in the form of small and agile local competitors, Solar found itself in the middle - neither big, nor small, international(izing), but not mature multinationally speaking - prompted to pursue a 'both-and' strategy of reaping integration and standardization benefits to match large competitors while remaining open to local market specificities and preferences to stay competitive vis-à-vis small, very local competitors.

1.2 Strategy Execution with 'Group Mindset'

To this end, the fifth strategic initiative listed above concerned with *"defining new ways of working across countries and functions*" was seen as a facilitator for achieving the objectives of the other strategic initiatives. The strategy was deemed to necessitate a new style of leadership and collaboration internally in Solar between HQ and subsidiaries, as well as between subsidiaries, representing a marked shift from a past of decentralization and profit center-orientation towards a more holistic and cross-collaborative governance and leadership style. According to Corporate Strategic HR Manager Claus Sejr, Solar's most urgent global leadership challenge was to build up an organization that moves from being primarily local with an international perspective to being an organization working globally, and with a group mindset in order to harvest the maximum value for the Solar Group: *"As Solar is becoming even more international and global, we see the need for capturing a leadership style where the strategic understanding, the leadership capabilities and the execution methods are grounded in a group mindset*." (Claus Sejr, December 2010).

An accentuation of the corporate punch line "Stronger together", the leadership concept of '*group mindset'* had been coined by the Solar leadership team, Solar Management Team, consisting of top management, corporate functional managers (incl. HR) and subsidiary directors, in the autumn of 2010 during the strategy formulation phase to characterize the desired new ways of working in general and style of management and leadership in particular in Solar: "*Group mindset is our way of thinking about what is best for Solar in everything we do and ensure that our initiatives and decisions help our colleagues across Solar."(*cf. Solar Management Team workshop, September 2010). The idea of 'group mindset' was crystallized in a suggestion of three core principles of group mindset:

Consolidation of discussions about Group Mindset – will be used in GLP for dialogue about Group Mindset

- **On Group mindset**;. Group mindset is our way of thinking about what is best for Solar in everything we do and ensure that our initiatives and decisions help colleagues across Solar. There are three elements in relation to Group Mindset that each leader should do;
  - First; Work actively to promote knowledge sharing across countries, functions and companies in Solar. Promote best practice and do not accept anyone who suboptimises. We want to make sure that anyone in Solar can face our customers with all our competences. That means that each leader hold the obligation to make sure that the specialist competences in own organization are accessible and that relevant colleagues in other countries and companies in Solar are aware that they can access the knowledge.
  - Second; Every leader should lead the way in embracing the Standards we implement across Solar. Leaders are to show the way in aligning our ways of working so we create a common platform for learning and development. Each leader must take the lead in changing habits, starting with oneself and bringing along all employees – show the way.
  - Last, but not least; Overcome and benefit from differences in culture, markets and ways of working. We are as leaders the ones who build the bridges and create the necessary understanding and cooperation across all units, countries and functions in Solar.

solar

Consolidated from SMT discussions 7th SEP

PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE

Figure 1.1: Consolidation of 'Group Mindset'-leadership behaviour. Source: Solar Management Team, September 2010.

As the 'group mindset' consolidation above indicates, the concept consists of three different perspectives that could be captured in three headlines:

1. Knowledge-sharing and dissemination of best practice
2. Group standardization and integration
3. Capitalization on local specificities through differentiation and localization

As such, the global-local dilemma and central perspectives on MNC management and leadership are echoed in the Solar Management Team 'wish list' for a new leadership style.

How group mindset was to be made concrete and realized remained a black box at the time, but the overall 'group mindset' rationale of the Solar Management Team can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 1.2: Single case host company business rationale of 'group mindset' development. Source: Author.

As indicated in the above illustration, the Solar business strategy is to be transformed in the strategy execution by developing an organizational global mindset operationalized in local 'group mindset' leadership capabilities.

1.3 From Business Case to Behavior

It was left to Solar's corporate HR to define a *'clear view of the framework for working with group mindset as a behavioral component in leadership development and a clear view on the drivers and obstacles for improving the value-adding components of group mindset in Solar.'* (Industrial PhD application, January 2011). A clear view of group mindset behaviors were believed to:

1. *raise the rate of success for the achievement of strategic objectives significantly*
2. *reduce costs of suboptimization in different strategic initiatives and projects*
3. *increase organizational agility in terms of better knowledge-sharing possibilities and the implementation of best practice throughout the Solar group*
4. *raise the potential of internal recruitments for strategic job positions throughout the group*

The fifth strategic initiative of defining new ways of working with 'group mindset', then, was anchored in Corporate HR who define their primary activity as being to *'secure the execution of the business strategy in Solar Group'*, among other activities, by seeking to '*challenge, support and coach leaders and specialists at Solar A/S and strive for excellence in leadership and execution in daily operations'* as well as '*actively support a group mindset across functions and companies and live the "Can-Do" attitude in real life [cf.*

employer branding campaign seeking to position Solar as 'The United States of Can-Do', ed.].' (cf. HR strategy and objectives, 'Solar STAR performance management system, 2012). As no internal resources were available at the time and because no external consultants seemed to offer the kind of services in demand, the idea of cooperating with academia in the form of an in-house researcher emerged, resulting in an industrial PhD project exploring the Solar case of 'group mindset' as an operationalization of the theoretical concept of global mindset. Solar Group CEO Flemming H. Tomdrup, who has been closely involved in the case study company's decision to engage in a research project on global mindset, explains: "*At Solar, we are always on the lookout for ways to optimize. We operate in 8 countries and are highly dependent on a workforce, which understands what Solar is about and what we are working towards. Solar is on a journey, moving from being a Danish company with a Danish mindset into being an international company with an international mindset. We operate in cross-border networks and work actively to open the borders internally in Solar. Therefore, our cooperation with Rikke [the author, ed.] will give us valuable knowledge of the possibilities that come with developing a global mindset: what does global mindset mean in Solar? And how can we use this knowledge to improve the efficiency, interaction and knowledge sharing in our daily work*?" (Nielsen, 2013d).

These questions are relevant for other actors and observers of international business, management and leadership, academics and practitioners alike. In this dissertation, Solar's aspirations of working with deliberate global mindset competence and capability development as a driver of international strategy execution is explored in a single case-study from the perspective of both the practitioner business case as well as academic research gaps within the extant literature on global mindset with the aim of contributing both theoretically, methodologically and practically.

Chapter 2: Introduction

This dissertation deals with leadership in an international environment as being global mindset leadership, i.e. border and boundary-crossing leadership within the multinational corporation. The objective of the research project presented in this dissertation is to explore development of global mindset (Javidan, Steers & Hitt, 2007; Lane, Maznevski, DiStefano & Dietz, 2011; Chatterjee, 2005; Gupta & Govindarajan, 2002; Erwee, 2007; Levy, Beechler, Taylor & Boyacigiller, 2007) as a managerial meta-competence and organizational capability (Khilji, Davis & Cseh, 2010; Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1990) as a way to address the increased strategic and cultural complexity, which follows when international or global corporations have to coordinate, control and create commitment across both borders and boundaries. Global mindset is a meta-competence in the sense that it is competence facilitating the adequate use of other managerial competences in global collaboration in the MNC; global mindset is a capability in that global mindset facilitates international strategy execution. A central argument in this respect is how an organizational global mindset entails much broader and more multi-faceted conceptualization than a traditional cross-cultural understanding. This is highlighted by Evans, Pucik & Björkman (2002) and Pucik (2006) who introduces what he refers to as a dual perspective on global mindset, consisting of a cultural perspective focusing on psychological (individual) sensitivity to working in a diverse and ambiguous environment (p. 86) and a strategic perspective focusing on the manager's appreciation of the strategic challenges facing the firm. From this dual perspective, "*a manager with a global mindset understands the need for global integration and local responsiveness and works to optimize this duality. The global mindset includes an appreciation for diversity as well as homogeneity and openness to learning from everywhere*." (Pucik, 2006, p. 88).

This dissertation argues the case that development of managerial global mindset competence and capability is an avenue for multinational corporations to improve their opportunities (Gupta, Govindarajan & Wang, 2009; Gupta & Govindarajan, 2001)(Khilji, Davis & Cseh, 2010) of pursuing business strategies successfully (Bower & Inkpen, 2009; Nadkarni, Herrman & Perez, 2010) and minimize the 'globalization penalty' (Dewhurst, Harris & Heywood, 2011) - incurred in part due to the liabilities of foreignness -which is often the unwelcome companion of internationalization processes. Based on a conceptualization of a 'strategic global mindset capability model', the micro-foundational management practices of strategic global mindset is empirically explored through a single case study of a medium-sized European technical wholesaler in the process of deliberate competence and capability development of strategic global mindset as a lever for the achievement of strategic objectives and business performance in pursuit of international opportunities through both organic and acquisitative growth and the acceleration of internationalization.

This introduction begins by positioning global leadership as global mindset leadership and goes on to pinpoint the research gaps in extant literature on global mindset with regards to seeing global mindset as both an individual managerial competence of middle managers as well as an organizational capability. Then, using limitations of existing knowledge as oases of opportunity to create new knowledge, the central research question is presented along with the sub-questions and definitions of central concepts from the research question. Next, an overall research logic of the project is presented followed by an overview of the theoretical, methodological and practical contributions intended. Subsequently, the empirical setting of the single-case study being the host company of an industrial PhD project is presented as an important contributor to the formulation of the research question and framing of existing research gaps along with an underlining of the empirical limitations of the single case study. A walk-through of the dissertation delineating highlights of the dissertation's four parts concludes the introduction.

2.1 Global Leadership – Leadership and Collaboration with Global Mindset - home and away

In conjunction with the symposium "Imagining the Future of Leadership" at the Harvard Business School in August 2010 (HBR Video IdeaCast, 2010), a group of ten leadership experts gathered to discuss what core competences will characterize leadership in the future. Their suggestions for future leadership competences can be summarized by the following main points:

- Cross-border leadership: in terms of both national and organizational borders.
- Relationship leadership and leadership based on commitment, negotiation and dialog (as opposed to control).
- Bridge building, development of networks and "distributed leadership" (including delegation and self and co-leadership as well as leadership teams).
- Ability to communicate at a distance, and via many different channels.
- Diversity leadership and intercultural intelligence.

If we pay serious attention to these points, it means that companies and their leaders are faced with an increased need for leadership "across boundaries and borders" both away from and at home. After all, not many companies today can say that they are not multinational and diverse to some degree, because their staff, customers, owners, employees or business partners certainly are. The number of people affected by globalized patterns of cooperation and business strategies is growing which was amply demonstrated in a 2010 Danish Confederation of Industry study: Member companies testified that handling global cooperation and ensuing increased complexity was one of their main challenges (Confederation of Danish Industry, 2010). In a similar vein, a recent European research project on global collaboration observes: '*Companies*

choose different approaches when setting up their organizational frameworks for global collaboration, but more and more leaders and employees find themselves in complex cultural environments." And they continue: "*…an increasing number of individuals require some degree of sensitivity to different cultural perspectives in order to do their jobs well and to successfully navigate within complex global organizations*." (Gertsen, Søderberg & Zølner, 2012, p. 3). These findings are accentuated in a 2013 Danish Association of Managers and Executives' survey on the challenges experienced by members working as managers/executives with employees in more than one country and managers/executives working abroad: Foreign work cultures, legal framework, leadership style, communication (incl. command of foreign languages) and distance management were factors deemed very challenging or somewhat challenging by respondents (Laursen & Jensen, 2013, p. 5).

Traditionally speaking, researchers have referred to global (staff-) leadership in the context of (mainly large companies) posting staff or establishing operations abroad (Pucik, 2006; Adler & Bartholomew, 1992). In the context of increasing globalization, internationalization, borderless financial and commodity markets and the much-discussed, so-called "multicultural society", the question is whether or not the distinction between national and international/global (staff-) leadership should be reinterpreted? The term "global" gives the impression of something one stumbles across, when one travels abroad. But that is far from always the case: Cross-border cooperation is commonplace for many leaders and staff in small, large and public companies in Denmark. The boundaries, that determine where "abroad" and "global" begin, run right through the sales department and are crossed the moment the company receives an email from a Polish supplier. Thus, the international dimension moves directly onto home territory, while the domestic aspect moves abroad.

The number of staff needing global skills is growing. While traditional expatriation still exists and remains an important tool for knowledge transfer and talent development, an increasing number of persons are used in short-term international assignments (Peck, 2013; Rossier-Renaud & O'Neill, 2012), and self-initiated expatriation (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010) is on the rise as part of changed migration and labor market patterns. Inpatriates (Kiessling & Harvey, 2006) and 'born globals' operating in many different markets (Gabrielsson & Kirpalani, 2012; Poole, 2012), domestic companies seeking to internationalize (Nadkarni, Herrmann & Perez, 2010; Nadkarni, Perez & Morganstein, 2006; Miocevic & Crnjak-Karanovic, 2012; Felício, Caldeirinha, Ricardo & Kyvik, 2013), local organizations operating with a multitude of diverse stakeholders or employees in international shared service functions or centers of excellence, need global competences. Another example is the virtual team leader, who has a team which she - sitting behind a desk in one country - must manage, work together with, and improve the performance of in other countries and units or in inter-organizational networks with external business partners. So, globality affects not only those members of staff who are exposed to international work situations, but also those who are more nationally oriented (Javidan & Teagarden, 2011). Thus, it is not just leaders heading staff in other countries, staff

posted abroad or staff traveling 170 days a year, who need to act 'globally' and who are in need of global skills (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987; Pucik, 2006): A host of other managers and employees perform job tasks heavily influenced by globality, although their work lives rarely require that they bring their passports to work.

2.2 Enter Global Mindset - a Global Leadership Meta-competence

Changed patterns of multinational collaboration between and within organizations, as described in the previous section, highlight a vital point in relation to the nature of globality and global leadership. In fact, there is a dimension to the word "global" that affects an understanding of the concept as synonymous with "worldwide" and "international": i.e. "global" in the sense of "all-embracing", "holistic" and "all inclusive". This is reflected in the double definition of the word in English, which Danish unfortunately does not convey. For example, according to the Collins *Cobuild English/English Dictionary*, "global" means **both** *"1) Concerning and including the whole world*" **and** *"2) Involving or relating to all the parts or aspects of a situation*." The second definition of the word, for example, allows for an understanding of "global" as transverse, total, inter-disciplinary and holistic. Traditionally, global leadership and collaboration has focused a great deal on intercultural skills. However, an increased need for intercultural sensitivity for an increased number of persons is just one consequence of operating in globality and what observers of business globalization has called a 'VUCA'-environment (a term borrowed from the military vocabulary), i.e. an environment characterized by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity (also see Lane, Maznevski, DiStefano & Dietz, 2009). Further, balancing the paradox of simultaneous pursuit of simplicity, standardization and cost-efficiency as well as differentiation and sensitivity to local specificities adds to strategic complexity (Morley & Collings, 2004).

Capturing these dimensions of global leadership, one of the more recent theoretical additions to these in-roads to dealing with global business, management and leadership is the concept of global mindset. The "global mindset" concept (e.g. Chatterjee, 2005; Gupta & Govindarajan, 2001; Javidan, Steers & Hitt, 2007; Javidan & Teagarden, 2011; Pucik, 2006) is a suggestion on how a company can ensure that human resources, primarily managers, can cope with the global diversity and complexity, which, in recent years, have received increasing attention. This focus should be seen as a result of the complexity and diversity of the global leadership context (Lane, Maznevski, Mendenhall & McNett, 2004; Lane & Maznevski, 2013), and also of the fact that it has not been possible to identify a definite set of special, individual characteristics of a global leader, despite many attempts to do so (e.g. GLOBE-project, Javidan & Dastmalchian, 2009). Yehuda Baruch sums up the issue as follows. "*... [S]o there is no consistent way to point out what a global manager is. What we are left with is the search for good 'conventional' managers with a global mindset*…" (Baruch, 2002, p. 36).

In relation to global leadership competences, global mindset represents a hybrid, which includes both the global leader's intercultural competence *and* his/her ability to navigate in a complex field. Global mindset can be characterized as: *"… a highly complex cognitive structure characterized by an openness to and articulation of multiple cultural and strategic realities on both global and local levels, and the cognitive ability to mediate and integrate across this multiplicity."* Levy, Beechler, Taylor & Boyacigiller, 2007, p. 32). Other researchers emphasize context-free performance criteria as central elements: "*A global mindset is the capacity to develop and interpret criteria for personal and business performance that are independent of the assumptions of a single context; and to implement those criteria appropriately in different contexts."* (Lane, Maznevski, DiStefano & Dietz, 2009, p. 14). Common to these definitions is that global mindset suggests a particular pair of glasses or mental filter, through which a person experiences the world and the globalization of markets, people and companies: "*The functions of an individual global mindset to a global leader are a means to structure the complex global reality and to provide guidelines for appropriate leadership behavior like formulating a global vision and interpersonal skills*." (Dekker, Jansen & Vinkenburg, 2005, p. 2).

Against this backdrop of seeing global mindset as a leadership meta-competence when operating in a global business environment home and away, the following sections uncover research gaps within the field of global mindset leadership with a view to positioning the present research project vis-à-vis the extant literature and academic knowledge on this topic:

2.2.1 Extant Literature on Global Mindset/Research gap #1: Individual vs. Collective

Typically, the various constructs of global mindset operate at the individual, cognitive level of managers, i.e. global mindset is seen as a mental map or schemata deemed particularly fit for global, multicultural dealings and possessed by an individual (manager). In this dissertation, the concept of global mindset is approached from a behavioral point of view that focuses on managerial behaviors (and facilitates structural surroundings) instead of as an actual neurological pattern of thinking (Dweck, 2009; Vogelgesang, Clapp-Smith & Osland, 2014). At this point, it remains uncertain to what degree the theoretical global mindset conceptions share content with extant (primarily psychological) research into mindset as a cognitive infrastructure (Gollwitzer, 2003). This is not to dismiss the cognitive perspective – indeed following the rationale of cognitive theory, facilitating enactment of new behaviors can change the patterns of thinking of individuals (new experience leads to new mindset in time) instead of the other way around, i.e. change the behavior by changing the mindset. In the present study, a different perspective on global mindset is activated, however: That of global mindset not only as an individual competence, but also as an organizational capability – as an organizational metaphor and a concrete set of routines. The point of departure is that the application of this particular leadership role can be a source of competitive advantage, if one is capable of dealing with global opportunities and threats better than one's competitors:

"*A company's ability to develop transnational organizational capability and management mentality will be the key factor that separates the winners from the mere survivors in the emerging international environment."* (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987, p. 7). So, rather than being merely an individual (managerial) competence, managerial competence may be an organizational capability potentially rendering the MNC (sustained or at least transient) competitive advantage: *The content and processes of multinational firms' sensemaking systems can be a distinct competitive advantage or disadvantage.*" (Caproni, Lenway & Murtha, 1992, p. 2).

There are many examples of the "right" mindset being used as an explanation for obtainment of business goals at a macro level. In extant literature, there seems to be a mindset almost for every occasion, or at least one that is more appropriate in order to obtain particular goals. Examples of this practice include a highly diverse plethora of focal areas such as project management (Lechler & Byrne, 2010), personnel management (Dweck & Culbert, 1996; Heslin & Vandewalle, 2008), developmental psychology (Chaiken & Trope, 1999; Gollwitzer & Bayer, 1999; Gollwitzer, 2003), change management, (Nilakant & Ramnarayan, 2006), school governance (Kaser & Halberg, 2009), trust (Haselhuhn, Schweitzer & Wood, 2010) and spirituality (Highland, 2004). Thus, the mindset concept is activated as an explanatory factor in explaining a host of positive macro or micro level results. Positive outcomes are seen to manifest themselves as a result of a mindset operating on either the individual (individual mindset) or collective level (organizational mindset). In both cases, the underlying rationale is that successful outcomes come about due to the existence of a particular attitude. A host of studies point to a positive connection between the existence of a favorable mindset and wanted results; e.g. Talke & Hultink, 2010; Smith, Mitchell & Mitchell, 2009; Bowen & Inkpen, 2009; Nadkarni, Herrmann & Perez; 2010. Examples of this use of mindset theory include concepts such as entrepreneurial mindset (McGrath & MacMillan, 2000), managerial mindset (Parisi & Hockerts, 2008), knowledge management mindset (Smith, McKeen & Singh, 2010) and talent mindset (Dattatreya, Kamath, Sharma & Williams, 2009).

Few studies focus on global mindset and business performance although there are some notable examples such as a conceptual paper seeing global leadership competences as a dynamic capability (Vodosek & Bird, 2013), i.e. a capability to creatively reorchestrate organizational capabilities in fast-changing environments. Further, the related concept of intercultural intelligence is explored as an organizational level dynamic capability in a 2011 empirical study. The meager number of studies exploring global mindset as an organizational capability available indicates the underdevelopment of this perspective on global mindset. This was further emphasized be the fact that the idea of collective or organizational global mindset was pointed out as areas for future development at an Academy of Management Annual Meeting 2013 Professional Development Workshop, arranged by central global mindset researcher Javidan, where

workshop participants brainstormed on the nature and potential of organizational global mindset as input to future research.

2.2.2 Extant Literature on Global Mindset/Research gap #2: Global Mindset and Performance

Most of the various constructs of global mindset (and other types of mindset constructs) operate at the individual, cognitive level. Studies including global mindset at the organizational level predominantly activate organizational mindset in tandem with individual mindset, where the cognitive structures of the individual (manager) come together to form an organizational capability – i.e. organizational mindset consist of the individuals' mindset much in the same way as an organizational culture is made up of the values of the individual employees. In a central article reviewing the literature on global mindset, Levy and his colleagues (2008) point to the fact that only a minority of studies on global mindset operates at the organizational level. This group of studies is found among the group of global mindset conceptions referred to as 'strategic' in that they address the connection and alignment between mindset and the overall business performance and/or competitive advantage of international businesses. Studies in this category include Jeannet (2000) who see global mindset as a state of mind potentially leading to global competitive advantage; Gupta & Govindarajan (2001, 2002) viewing global mindset as advantageous for the exploitation of global business opportunities, and Harvey & Novicevic (2001) viewing global mindset as a primary driver for securing an advantageous position in global markets.

A common denominator of the existing studies is that they are usually quite silent about the way in which a detected favorable mindset came about in the organization in the first place. Mindset is seen as a positive factor bringing about desired results, but there is less guidance with regards to how the mindset is created or changed, which makes it difficult to activate this knowledge in other organizations. Examples of a business performance-mindset connection are plenty, and central figures of the global mindset literature are open to the fact that global mindset may be an organizational capability primarily rooted in the organizations' managers (although less focus has been on middle managers than top managers). But advice as to how to establish the global mindset-performance connection and work with deliberate capability development is absent as are indications of the nature of the relation between micro-level mechanism and macro-level results.

2.2.3 Extant Literature on Global Mindset/Research gap #3: Managerial Global Mindset – Top Management vs. Managers at other Levels

An intermediate position in the global mindset literature focusing on global mindset at an organizational level is occupied by studies that look at the mindset of the top management team, often referred to as corporate mindset (Talke & Hultink, 2010). Key decision-makers and change strategists/change agent managers (Kanter, Stein & Jick, 1992) are at the centre of attention and most conceptions of global mindset

more or less explicitly focus on the mindset of managers (Rogers & Blonski, 2010; Cohen, 2010; Begley & Boyd, 2003), even if managers at all levels are included in studies on global mindset at the organizational levels. With regards to international businesses, Perlmutter's classical typology (Perlmutter, 1969; Perlmutter & Heenan, 2000) of HQ/corporate mindset towards subsidiary operations is an illustrative example of managerial mindset focus. Even the individual CEOs are sometimes portrayed as the main drivers of organizational mindset:*"…in some extreme cases the personal mindset of the CEO becomes the single most important factor in shaping the organization's mindset"* (Paul, 2000).

Middle managers and lower level managers (tactical and operational level) whose mindset may not necessarily actively and directly influence the overall strategic direction and priorities of the firm, but nevertheless are key agents in the execution of business strategy in everyday operations (Balogun & Johnson, 2005; Holst-Mikkelsen & Poulfelt, 2008; Floyd & Woolridge, 1997), are not paid particular attention in the global mindset literature. The consequence is that the strategic potential of global mindset for business performance may not be realized, because it is lost in translation in the implementation process (Holst-Mikkelsen 2013; Hrebiniak, 2006; Bossidy & Charan, 2002; Roger, 2010). Further, top manager global mindset may be different from middle manager global mindset – or, for that matter, employee global mindset (Pucik, 2006; Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2004) or board global mindset, and this is yet another interesting sin of omission within extant literature in that boards appoint top managers and so are in a position to heavily influence the top management mindset. Ghemawat (2011), for instance, argues that many of us suffer from "globaloney": globalization madness, rooted in highly exaggerated notions of globalization and its consequences. Part of Ghemawat's explanation for the non-recognition of globalization's (according to him) more moderate extent, or globalization madness, is that decision-makers in international/global organizations usually live much more globalized (working) lives than the rest of the population, including their own staff. They overestimate the scale of globalization and its impact on the staff and the company in general. So, research looking into corporate or top manager global mindset may reveal a reality that is far from the reality on other hierarchical levels. If global mindset as a governance and management practice needs to be strategically aligned and middle managers are key in realizing the strategic alignment in practice and thereby reaching business objectives (Syrett, 2007), ´this emphasizes the importance of uncovering the nature of middle manager global mindset.'

This line of thinking mirrors the predictions of Govindarajan & Gupta (2001) stating that: *"Although we contend that returns to investment in cultivating a global mindset would always be positive, we do not expect them to be uniform. The value added by global mindset, and the value subtracted by its absence, is likely to be strongest in the case of those individuals who are directly responsible for managing cross-border activities, followed by those who must interact frequently with colleagues from other countries"* (p. 124). And even focusing on global mindset of managers working in an international environment is unlikely to be

uniform. Thus, it is not just leaders heading staff in other countries, staff posted abroad or staff traveling 170 days a year, who need to act locally. In relation to locality and the presence of a global mindset, the leadership researcher Vladimir Pucik points out that "*some global managers may be expatriates; many, if not most, have been expatriates at some point in their career, but probably only few expatriates are global managers.*" (Pucik, 1998, p. 41). Pucik continues on location: "*At the same time, local managers in lead countries may not be expatriates, but they will need a global mindset.*"(Pucik, 2006, p. 88).

2.3 Research Question & Sub-questions

The exploration of research gaps above demonstrates that existing advancements in global mindset leadership research has provided valuable insights regarding global mindset as an alternative to extant literature on global leadership as being predominantly a question of handling (bi-) cultural diversity in multinational corporations, about the nature of global mindset as an individual cognitive framework as well as the potential contribution of global mindset to business performance. However, several important theoretical and methodological gaps in the literature limit our understanding of deliberate capability development of global mindset as a managerial meta-competence and a strategic, organizational capability facilitating achievement of business objectives and competitive advantage rather than being an end in itself and as an individual managerial competence. The available knowledge of global mindset does not address global mindset at an organizational, collective level, global mindset as strategic capability in alignment with business strategy or global mindset as a lower level managerial competence or global mindset as a competence in dealings that are not necessarily border-crossing and multicultural, but boundary-crossing in a wider sense. Further, the existing knowledge is predominantly based on conceptual theorizing, quantitative surveys of individual managerial traits or macro-level analysis of business performance, explaining a successful outcome as the result of a non-specified beneficial mindset from the pleasant position of hindsight. Only recently, qualitative studies of global mindset practice and development have begun to surface (e.g. March, 2012; Cseh, Davis &Khilji, 2013).

Using these gaps in extant literature as a point of departure, this dissertation deals with the following research question:

What is global mindset as an individual meta-competence and strategic organizational capability? And how may global mindset capability development be facilitated through managers' management practice?

The exploration of the research question is guided by the content of the following sub-questions:

- Strategic global mindset: What it is and why it is important
- Why and how global mindset can function as an organizational capability
- What manager behaviors facilitate development and enactment of strategic global mindset in Solar?
- What governance structures facilitate development and behavioral enactment of strategic global mindset in Solar?
- How can validity challenges researching global mindset qualitatively from and insider position be addressed?

In the following, central concepts of the research question and sub-questions are defined and pinpointed in more detail:

Global mindset: Among the diversity of conceptualizations of global mindset, global mindset as a theoretical concept is defined by Pucik's (2006) dual perspective of global mindset as consisting of a cultural and a strategic perspective. The cultural perspective focuses on psychological (individual) sensitivity to working in a diverse and ambiguous environment, i.e. *'… a set of attributes and skills that contribute to effective leadership in a global corporation'* (p. 86) such as personal traits including tolerance of uncertainty, the ability to accept and work with cultural diversity, a cosmopolitan outlook and ability to handle a high degree of cognitive complexity. The strategic perspective focuses on a manager's appreciation of the strategic challenges facing the firm, defined by Murtha, Lenway, & Bagozzi (1998) as …'*a set of attitudes that predispose individuals to balance competing business, country, and functional priorities which emerge in international management processes, rather than to advocate any of these dimensions at the expense of the others'* (p. 87).

Group mindset: The term 'group mindset' is not a theoretical concept and refers to the local formulation of a multinational collaboration and leadership style in the case study organization, Solar. 'Group mindset' is activated as an operationalization of the theoretical concept of global mindset. In summary, Solar Group mindset denotes a leadership style where local practice and international objectives are seen as an integrated unity through the simultaneous pursuit of: Knowledge sharing and dissemination of best practice, group

standardization and integration and capitalization on local specificities through differentiation and localization. (The full version of the Solar operationalization is available in the 'Prologue' section).

Management practices: Management practices include customary behaviors that support strategic needs and an organizational resource: '… *an organizational resource refers to an asset or input to production (tangible or intangible) that the organization owns, controls, or has access to on a semi-permanent basis*." (Helfat, 2003, p. 1). Further, Barney (1991) describes resources as all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information and knowledge controlled by the firm which enable the firm to conceive of and implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Management practices are processes, routines, acts and action that managers apply which may be a source of competitive advantage (Penrose, 1959; Grant, 1991). The nature of these practices may be considered a mix of both management and leadership.

Organizational capability: '*An organization capability refers to an organizational ability to perform a coordinated task, utilizing organizational resources, for the purpose of achieving particular results*." (Helfat, 2003, p. 1). Organizational resources and capabilities can and do change over time. Firms are not inert, although the evolution of resources and capabilities is history of path dependent (Helfat, 2003). In this dissertation, capabilities are different from competences in that they operate at the organizational level, while competences are individual.

Competence: Work-related competences are '*the composite of human knowledge, skills, and aptitudes that may serve productive purposes in organizations*." (Nordhaug, 2003, p. 50). The term 'competence' is used to describe performance-enhancing abilities at the individual level (Holt Larsen, 2010). Competences, then, are different from capabilities in that they operate at the individual level, while capabilities are organizational.

Meta-competence: A meta-competence is generally '*firm non-specific, industry non-specific and can furthermore be utilized in the accomplishment of a variety of different tasks*.' (Nordhaug, 2003, p. 58). Examples of typical meta-competences are change readiness, learning capacity, skill in working with others, knowledge of foreign languages and cultures or creativity. In the following, the theoretical concept of global mindset is seen as a meta-competence in that its generic version is transferable across organizations. As will be argued at a later point, the concrete application of the global mindset as a meta-competence may, however, be context-specific.

Strategic: The use of the word 'strategic' in connection with global mindset refers to the idea alignment of business strategy objectives, and management practices are seen as facilitators for the achievement of business objectives and performance. It is important to note that the achievement of such outcome is contingent upon the actual execution of strategy, that is *'…the step-by-step implementation of the various activities that make up a formulated decision-making strategy."* (Singh, 1998, p.146). The connection

between business strategy and global mindset primarily echoes a resource-based view of the firm, in that focus is on internal microfoundations (Barney & Felin, 2013; Vodosek & Bird, 2013) of the case study company although global mindset operationalized as 'group mindset' is a consequence of business strategy formulation mirroring external factors and thus a contingency perspective.

Middle managers: Middle managers refer to managers at all hierarchical levels below top management and above non-managerial employees, i.e. both managers at tactical and operational levels.

Insider position: An insider research position refers to a research setup characterized by deep field immersion of the researcher doing research from within case study organizational boundaries. In the concrete case of this dissertation, the researcher is part-time employed under the auspices of the industrial PhD program. At first glance, it may seem obvious that an industrial PhD project framework can be characterized as a research setting where the researcher is doing research in her own organization. According to the primary authority on doing collaborative research in the researcher's own organization, Coghlan & Brannick (2009), the insider research position at the centre of attention in this dissertation does not position the author as a "complete member." Complete membership refers to "*being a full member of your organization and wanting to remain a member within the desired career path when the research is completed*" (Coghlan & Brannick, 2009, p. 101). Seen from this vantage point, the researcher position in this case cannot be characterized as complete membership: Although employed in the case study company, the fixed-term nature of the employment contract does not include an open-ended commitment and career path, and the author was an organizational newcomer when embarking on the research project.

2.4 Research Logic & Contributions - Theoretical, Practical, Methodological

A map of the central questions in this dissertation can be illustrated using the following graphic demonstration of the overall research logic:

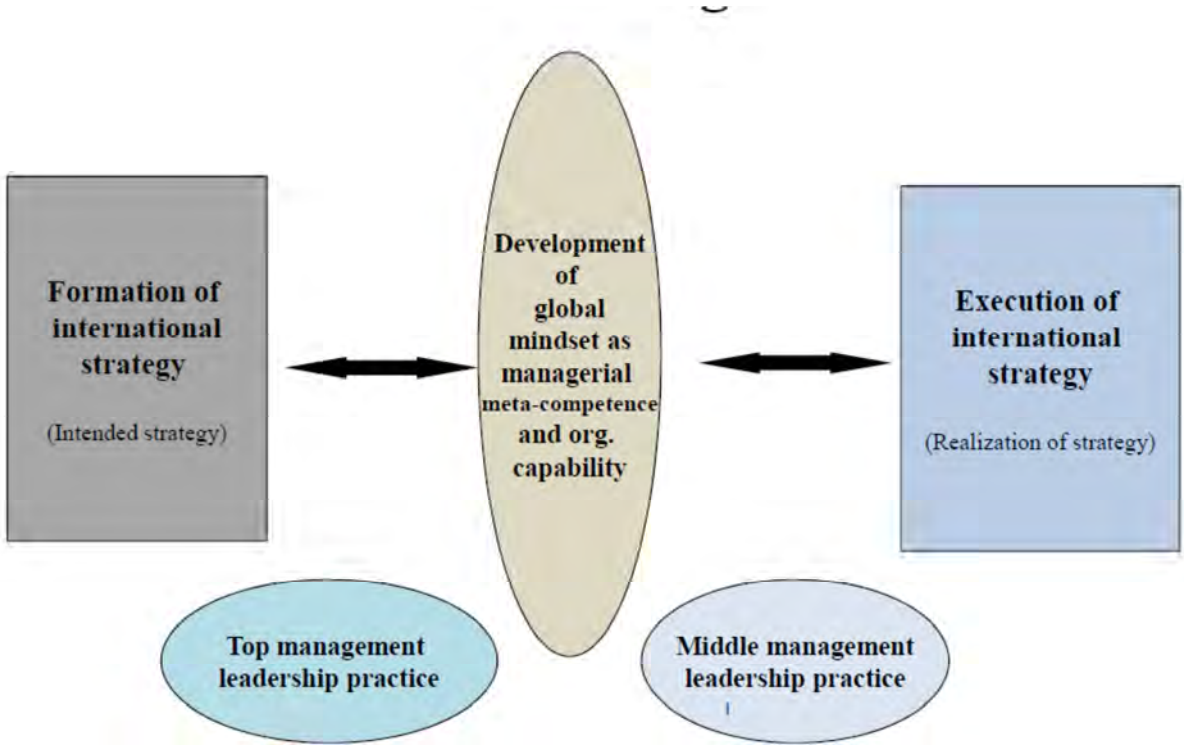

Figure 2.1: Project research logic. Source: Author.

In the context of strategy formulation and top managerial strategists leadership management and leadership practice, development of global mindset is seen as capability enabling and facilitating international strategy execution. The research questions focus on exploring the content of the middle oval "Development of global mindset as managerial meta-competence and organizational capability" seen from a middle manager perspective and management practice. The unit of analysis, then, is the individual middle manager and his/her views on global mindset in the context of local and global strategy execution. Other central actors in the strategy process, predominantly the strategy implementation, including HR and communication and top management, are represented primarily as providers of context, enablers and structural facilitators of global mindset as these are experienced by middle managers.

2.4.1 Contributions

This study contributes to the extant literature and existing body of knowledge in the following ways:

Theoretical contributions:

- A concrete case of global mindset leadership as opposed to theoretical, generic and normative recommendations in global mindset literature.

- A focus on the global mindset of middle and lower level management, rather than only top management. Although extant research on global mindset has been conducted using middle

managers as empirical basis and respondents, the conclusions arrived at do not specifically address the respondents' job role and hierarchical, managerial level and the implications of this for global mindset.

- Going beyond the connection between global mindset and global strategy formulation to strategy execution and leadership practice, routines and behavior in multi-international organizations.

- Global mindset seen in the context of medium-sized European companies in the process of growing internationally, adding to the predominantly American literature exploring big (Fortune 500) companies that have already internationalized considerably.

- Extant literature proposes that global mindset may be beneficial for the entire organization and may work as an organizational capability, but very little is known of global mindset working on the organizational level. Further, extant literature focuses primarily on the individual level from a cognitive or mental schemata outlook, not from a behavior and collaboration perspective. This study offers a concrete case of working with managerial global mindset both individually and collectively.

- Exploring 'strategic global mindset'; i.e. global mindset in alignment with business strategy, providing an inroad to uncovering the black box of the microfoundations of the (global) mindset-performance causal chain reported in extant literature.

<u>Methodological Contributions:</u>

- A response to the call for resource-based analyses to move from a macro, firm-focused view of 'what firms are', to a micro-level process view of 'what firms do', doing research from a qualitative, more ethnographic-oriented approach in place of statistical analyses of quantitative survey data.

- This approach, in turn, also addresses recent calls for further exploration of more pluralistic styles of doing case analysis in international business and international management case studies through focus on a designated middle and lower-level management segment, giving voice to all subsidiaries instead of the traditional focus on HQ and top management (Marschan-Piekkar i& Welch, 2011).

- The study adds to the ongoing debate surrounding one of the recent expressions of academia's self-reflection on the nature and goals of the relationship between research and practice - the elusive concept of actionable research (Pearce & Huang, 2012 a, 2012b; Bartunek & Egri, 2012, Ireland, 2012; Martin, 2012; Greve, 2012; Stewart & Barrick, 2012; Aldag, 2012). Addressing the debate on actionable research ignited by Pearce and Huang's assessment of the wasted resources of non-actionable research (2012a), Bartunek and Egri sum up the ensuing debate by stating that " [F]*irst, an important objective of scholarly research is to inform management and organizational practice*" and goes on to encourage academics to "*find new ways to seek out and identify research questions as well as to improve the translation and communication of their findings to non-academic audiences*" (Bartunek & Egri, 2012, p. 245), giving their views on the research practice of doing actionable research with a view to sustainable value creation, discussing how challenges may be addressed and mutual benefit may be achieved in practice. Although the industrial PhD case is a special, perhaps even deviant case, the radical nature of the setup highlights challenges that other researchers, be it traditional PhDs or other more experienced and tenured researchers, experience when conducting research from a field immersion position with a view to mutual value co-creation between both academia and practice.

<u>Practical contributions:</u>

- A view of the opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses of working with global mindset in the case-study company which, through implementation of change or supplementation of add-in practices to existing governance and management practices based on the results of the project, can facilitate an increased rate of success within the achievements of strategic objectives.
- Creation of practical impact and practitioner value through production of actionable research; i.e. research which can underpin daily corporate life decision and actions via the delivery of just-in-time, tailor-made knowledge input to the strategy formulation in the case-study company for the strategy period 2015-2020.

2.5 Industrial PhD Project: Single Case-study of Host Organization

This dissertation aims at providing a look into the theoretical black box of global mindset as a collective phenomenon and organizational capability for executing business strategy as well as into the managerial microfoundations (Barney & Felin, 2013; Vodosek & Bird, 2013) of global mindset as a collaborative managerial competence. Global mindset is explored through a single-case study that considers the development of global mindset locally in the case organization Solar A/S, known as 'group mindset', as strategically important for the successful execution of business strategy and accomplishment of strategic objectives in both the short and long term.

The single-case study is carried out under the auspices of the Danish Industrial PhD program which funds collaborative research closely linked to practice with the aim of co-creating actionable research with both academic and practitioner value and impact (e.g. Bartunek & Egri, 2012; Bell, 2011). An industrial PhD project such as the research project central to this dissertation is a business focused PhD education. An industrial PhD research project is conducted in cooperation between an Industrial PhD fellow, a university, and a private company which applies for a subsidy from the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation[2] (Also see Appendix B for further information on the Danish Industrial PhD program). The case study consists of a variety of qualitative primary data, ranging from participant and participating observations, 'hanging around' the field, (video recorded) workshops, (tape recorded) group and individual interviews as well as photos supplemented by secondary and archival data, including information such as press releases, employee performance survey statistics, annual reports and intranet entries such as internal blogs, newsletters, policies and databases. All countries where the case company operates (HQ and subsidiaries) are represented in the study, focusing primarily on managers (at both strategic, tactical and operational level of which the researcher has been in direct contact with app. 40%), but the entire HR and communication organization is represented in the data material as is half the strategy implementation organization (in the case company known as 'Strategy Program Management').The research conditions of privileged access as an insider to the empirical field (Bansal, Bertels, Ewart, MacConnachie & O'Brien, 2012; Van de Ven, 2007) as well as the particular research setup is discussed in more theoretical and practical detail in this dissertation's Part II on methodology.

The collaborative partners of the research project were brought together by Global Leadership Academy, a joint Danish Confederation of Industry and Copenhagen Business School (CBS) initiative looking to establish industrial PhD projects in academy member companies such as Solar to enhance academy knowledge creation and membership value (for further information about the Global Leadership Academy and its role in the research project, please consult Appendix A). Based on his degree of familiarity with both Solar's HR challenges and the career wishes of a relevant research candidate, Professor Flemming Poulfelt of the Department of Management, Politics & Philosophy (CBS), as academic partner of the Global Leadership Academy, set up a meeting between the author and Corporate Strategic HR Manager Claus Sejr in October 2010. The initial meeting hosted by professor Poulfelt was a project ground zero in that the meeting can be likened to a 'blind date' where the parties had no prior knowledge of each other. A successful first meeting led to several other meetings between the prospective industrial PhD student and HR

[2] The Industrial PhD Programme is authorised by the *Act on Technology and Innovation*, but the *Executive order on PhD education* guiding conventional Danish PhD education is also part of the legislative framework. The industrial PhD is employed in the project host company while merely enrolled, not employed, in a university. The main difference between industrial PhDs and traditional PhDs is that industrial PhDs have no teaching obligation. Instead, they have an equivalent knowledge dissemination obligation in the host company as well and to the wider business community and society at large. Research quality assessment criteria are the same as for traditional PhDs. Also see: http://en.fi.dk/funding/funding-opportunities/industrial-phd-programme/what-is-an-industrial-phd.

representatives from the host company about a concretization of the challenges experienced by HR and top management with the development of "group mindset." This process also included debates between student and university advisors of Global Leadership Academy on the academic framing of these challenges within existing bodies of theoretical knowledge and academic conversations (Huff, 1999, 2009).

In the course of the dialogue with corporate HR representatives, it emerged that, approaching the strategy process and formulation of strategy execution projects for the last half of the corporation's current strategy period, 2013-2015, corporate HR was commissioned by the Solar Management Team to seek answers to a number of questions regarding the development of 'group mindset' to support business strategy execution:

- What does group mindset actually consist of in Solar?
- What drives group mindset amongst Solar leaders and in the organization?
- Is the current group mindset coherent with global development?
- What are the most important obstacles for developing a group mindset?
- How are specified "drivers" transformed into group leadership behavior?
- How can the development of a group mindset be monitored in daily behavior?

The joint practitioner-researcher thesis statement and project design phase between the author and Solar lasted approximately six months by which time a formal research application was produced incorporating both practitioner wishes as well as review comments from academic partners. By the end of March 2011, the research project application was approved by the Danish Agency for Science Technology and Innovation and the Doctoral School of Organization & Management Studies, Copenhagen Business School. The outcome of the application process was the initiation of a "group mindset" research project aimed at creating knowledge to support the development of an organizational 'group mindset' supporting international strategy execution through leadership development activities. (Further information is available at www.solar.eu.)

The practical implications of the single case study host company are reported in short in chapter 8, 'Discussions and implication', chapter 9, 'Epilogue', as well as more elaborately in Part III, chapters 5 and 6.

2.6 Empirical Limitations & Assumptions

Some central empirical limitations of the project's design and the empirical setting in terms of contributing to global mindset research must also be noted. First and foremost, the project operates with the case study company concept of 'group mindset' as a contextual operationalization of the theoretical concept of global mindset. The local Solar concept of 'group mindset' is very similar to several of the theoretical definitions (Pucik, 2006; Lane & Maznevski, 2013), but not synonymous. So, although the desk research and literature

review of global mindset has formed the basis for this exploration of global mindset in Solar along with the local Solar concept, the dissertation does not test an existing global mindset definition. Rather the strategically and situation-specific concept of 'group mindset' is seen as an operationalization of the theoretical concept of global mindset used as an avenue for exploring the managerial global mindset in the context of a single case. As such, the resulting conclusions are bound to this specific context.

The 'group mindset' project in the case study organization can be considered a strategic 'pilot project'. The results of the research project are to be transformed into an organizational change project ex post including suggestions for concrete implementation for local management. There is no formal 'global mindset' implementation project in the case study company, although an embedded implementation can be said to be a consequence of the initiation of strategic initiatives such as the establishment of a corporate academy providing leadership development for the entire organization and the reduction of 70 (!) IT-systems to 2 through the implementation of SAP and Microsoft-based ERP software and harmonization of processes across countries. It follows that the present study cannot be considered a knowledge diffusion project following the translation and implementation of an upper level management concept to the rest of the organization. Rather, the current research project can be considered a center piece of an organizational bottom-up process in the case study company, where lower level managers and people involved with leadership development and strategy execution have been given their say on international collaboration with 'group mindset' in the organization. Although local upper level management in the case study company have an idea about what they consider 'group mindset' (cf. the "Consolidation of 'Group Mindset' discussion" illustration in the 'Prologue') and how this is strategically beneficial for overall business performance, a central challenge posed to the research project has been to 'reality test' the top management conceptualization with the perspective of other groups and voices in the organization, more specifically middle managers. The researcher is not following a top-down implementation, but rather participating in an emerging process where the researcher is also an actor in creating the local Solar narrative on 'group mindset' while inquiring about other perspectives in the organizations. As such, there is no 'before and after' or evaluation of a change project. As a consequence, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to evaluate whether or not the business strategy in the case company is successful or adequate in the first place – or if building a 'group mindset' is indeed linked to the desired business results in the manner that top management believe. The project adds microfoundational flesh to the theoretical bones of global mindset as a potential organizational capability, but leaves it for future research to test the connection to macro-level business performance.

It is, however, important to note that the Solar case is not an instance of an organization adopting a concept in vogue along the lines of institutional isomorphism. Interviews conducted with top management uncovered that none of them have worked with similar concepts in prior jobs. Upper level managers collectively

emphasize that the idea of 'group mindset' was born inductively out of dialog between the managers in a Solar Management Team workshop in September 2010. Of course, local sense-making does not take place in a vacuum, and Solar management is not immune to the grand narrative of globalization and multiculturalism which may indirectly have affected their decision-making process. It is noteworthy however, that the conception of 'group mindset' is portrayed by Solarians as a way of differentiating their organization from competitors generally operating with highly decentralized business models, and as a way of creating a strategic niche for medium-sized technical wholesale. Compared to competitor behavior, the Solar conception of 'group mindset' could be seen as an act of institutional entrepreneurship (Battilana, Leca & Boxenbaum, 2009) in that is represents a departure from the governance structure and strategy of both large and small competitors. In the technical wholesaler business, working with group mindset is a case apart, which is part of the reason why Solar management see this as their inroad to creating a competitive advantage in a competitive market through strategic differentiation and by occupying the middle ground of medium-sized technical wholesalers.

Further, the Solar case should not be seen as a deliberate transfer and incorporation of the theoretical concept of global mindset into local Solar governance practice. The responsibility for seeing Solar 'group mindset' as a global mindset practice proxy and a case of the theoretical concept of global mindset rests alone with the author. By the time of writing, the theoretical concept of global mindset had become known to the case company management, but this is a consequence of the author importing the concept into the organization. As such, the author has been more than participant observer, but rather a participating observer – a position which will be discussed and problematized in more detail in Part II on methodology and the empirical basis.

Finally, the project has a managerial focus. Although it differentiates itself from extant global mindset literature by focusing on lower managerial levels, it does not go beyond managers (and other actors central to the strategy execution process in Solar). As a consequence, the study has a managerial orientation, not drawing on other employees who are recipients and co-creators of global mindset behavior in everyday operations (Thomas, Harburg & Dutra, 2007; Gupta, Govindarajan & Wang, 2008).

2.7 Structure of the Dissertation

From this point onwards, the dissertation is structured as follows:

PART I, then, contains the Prologue, Introduction and the following Chapter 3 which is a theoretical exploration of strategic global mindset as a meta-competence and capability (cf. the two first sub-questions guiding the research question). Chapter 3 introduces the dissertation's theoretical framework and opens with a literature review merging global leadership and global mindset literature which is then linked to the

capability-literature via microfoundations. Global mindset is presented as a meta-competence in the sense that it is competence facilitating the adequate use of other managerial competences in global collaboration in the multinational corporation (MNC). Global mindset is framed as a capability in that global mindset facilitates international strategy execution. The definition of global mindset and how global mindset can function as an organizational capability is explored listing suggestions for individual and organizational drivers of strategic global mindset discussed in extant literature. Finally, a theoretical framework, the strategic global mindset capability model, is developed which will guide the analysis in Part III.

PART II introduces the dissertation's research approach with regards to methodology and the empirical setting. The methodology section opens with an exploration of the privileges and pitfalls of doing research closely linked to practice, such as is the case in an industrial PhD research setting. The point of departure is the single case study of development of global mindset in Solar A/S, the employer and host organization of the industrial PhD fellow. This part of the dissertation deals specifically with the research sub-question of how global mindset can be studied from a qualitative, insider research position and reflects on the industrial PhD setting as a field of doing research *for, in-between and with(in)in* (i.e. from an insider position) and *with* organizations, i.e. cooperating closely with the field as co-researchers and knowledge co-creators with a view to producing practice relevance and value. Working under the assumption that it is both possible and desirable to produce high quality research when performing a research project in which the researcher permanently or for the purpose of the project is a member of the studied organization, trade-offs involved in a position at the intersection of distance and nearness where "participant observation" becomes "participating observer" are debated.

PART III contains the empirical analysis of strategic global mindset seen from a middle manager perspective. This part opens with a case company case study elaborating further on the presentation of the 'group mindset' concept and strategic change process in Solar A/S (presented in the 'Prologue' and the present 'Introduction') empirically exploring global mindset as a meta-competence and capability in the case study corporation. The analysis following the case study contains an empirical exploration of the microfoundational management practice of global mindset operationalized as 'group mindset' in the case study organization pinpointing organizational and individual drivers of strategic global mindset from a middle manager perspective. The analysis is based on the theoretical framework introduced in Part I, the strategic global mindset capability model, and the research questions - particularly the sub-questions on how management behaviors and governance structures facilitate development and implementation of a strategic global mindset in Solar.

PART IV on findings and implications contains the central conclusions with regards to the research question and sub-questions followed by a discussion of the dissertation's implications for practice (generally and in the case company), policy and academia including suggestions for future research.

The concluding Part IV is followed by a **bibliography** of the referenced resources, a short **biography of the author** as well as a **declaration of conflicting interests and ethical considerations**. Finally, the **appendix section** contains supplementary material on the industrial PhD program and the Global Leadership Academy.

Interview guides and transcripts, survey design/questionnaire/response rates of the internal Solar organizational performance survey, the Solar Navigator survey, Solar Management Team mini-survey questionnaire and responses, tape and video recordings of workshops and interviews as well as photo documentation (examples of which are displayed directly in the dissertation) are available to the assessment committee as well as university and corporate advisors in a digital appendices folder distributed by the Doctoral School of Organizational and Management Studies at Copenhagen Business School.

Chapter 3: Conceptual analysis of global mindset: Theoretical pre-understanding and framework

This section explores global mindset both as an individual meta-competence as well as an organizational capability and state the case of strategic global mindset containing both a cultural and strategic dimension (Pucik, 2006). This argumentation is synthesized into a theoretical framework, the strategic global mindset capability model, which will guide the analysis of the single case-study of international strategy execution facilitated by global mindset operationalized as 'group mindset.' The structure of this chapter is as follows: The first part discusses the contours of the global leadership landscape (i.e. the leadership track that the global leader must follow) by presenting four, research-based approaches to what precisely global leadership consists of. The next part discusses global leadership in relation to leadership in general, as a basis for introducing the research-based concept of global mindset as a matrix mentality, which supports leadership behavior in this leadership context. Then, the discussion addresses some of the practical implications of different theories of global leadership in terms of how organizations and leaders can work with global mindset in practice in relation to their business objectives. Finally, a theoretical framework, the strategic global mindset capability model, is presented as a summation of the author's pre-understanding of extant literature about global mindset as both an individual managerial meta-competence and organizational capability related to business strategy and performance. The analysis in the Part III will be conducted against the backdrop of this model. This part of the dissertation, then, provides conceptual answers to the research sub-questions of "Strategic global mindset: What it is and why it is important" as "Why and how global mindset can function as an organizational capability" which will be explored empirically in the case study organization in the analysis with a view to contributing with new knowledge of the microfoundations of managerial practice with regards to organizational and individual enablers of global mindset.

The term "global" gives the impression of something one stumbles across, when one travels abroad. But that is far from always the case: perhaps it is even more the exception than the rule. Cross-border cooperation is commonplace for many leaders and staff in small, large and public companies. The boundaries that determine where "abroad" and "global" begin run right through the sales department and are crossed the moment the company receives an email from a Polish supplier. Thus, the international dimension moves directly onto home territory, while the domestic aspect moves abroad. The number of staff needing global skills is growing. This highlights a vital point in relation to the nature of globality. In fact, there is a dimension to the word "global" that affects an understanding of the concept as synonymous with "worldwide" and "international": i.e. "global" in the sense of "all-embracing", "holistic" and "all inclusive". This is reflected in the double definition of the word in English. As emphasized in the 'Introduction', the word "global" means **both** *"1) Concerning or including the whole world*" **and** *"2) Involving or relating to all the parts or aspects of a situation*." The second definition of the word, for

example, prepares the ground for an understanding of "global" as transverse, inter-disciplinary and holistic. So globality affects not only those members of staff who are exposed to an international situation, but also those who are more nationally oriented (Javidan & Teagarden, 2011). Thus, it is not just leaders heading staff in other countries, staff posted abroad or staff traveling 170 days a year, who need to act globally. In relationship to locality and the presence of so-called global mindset, the leadership researcher Vladimir Pucik points out that "*some global managers may be expatriates; many, if not most, have been expatriates at some point in their career, but probably only few expatriates are global managers."* (Pucik, 1998, p. 41). Pucik continues on location: "*At the same time, local managers in lead countries may not be expatriates, but they will need a global mindset."*(Pucik, 2006, p. 88).

3.1 The Global Leadership Context - four Approaches

Globality turns the notions of "away" and "home" on their heads, when viewed in the context of leadership, which crosses mental, organizational and national borders and, so to speak, "stands firm" in relation to geographical, virtual and human distances. Globality is a condition, which companies attempt to capture on the move, and which does not manifest itself in the same way in every industry and sector, because they can all be affected to different degrees. Research has attempted to pin down globality in different ways, and in my research project I depict global leadership as characterized by four different approaches to pinpointing the global leadership landscape, inherent challenges and the specific skills that are required, illustrated by the figure below:

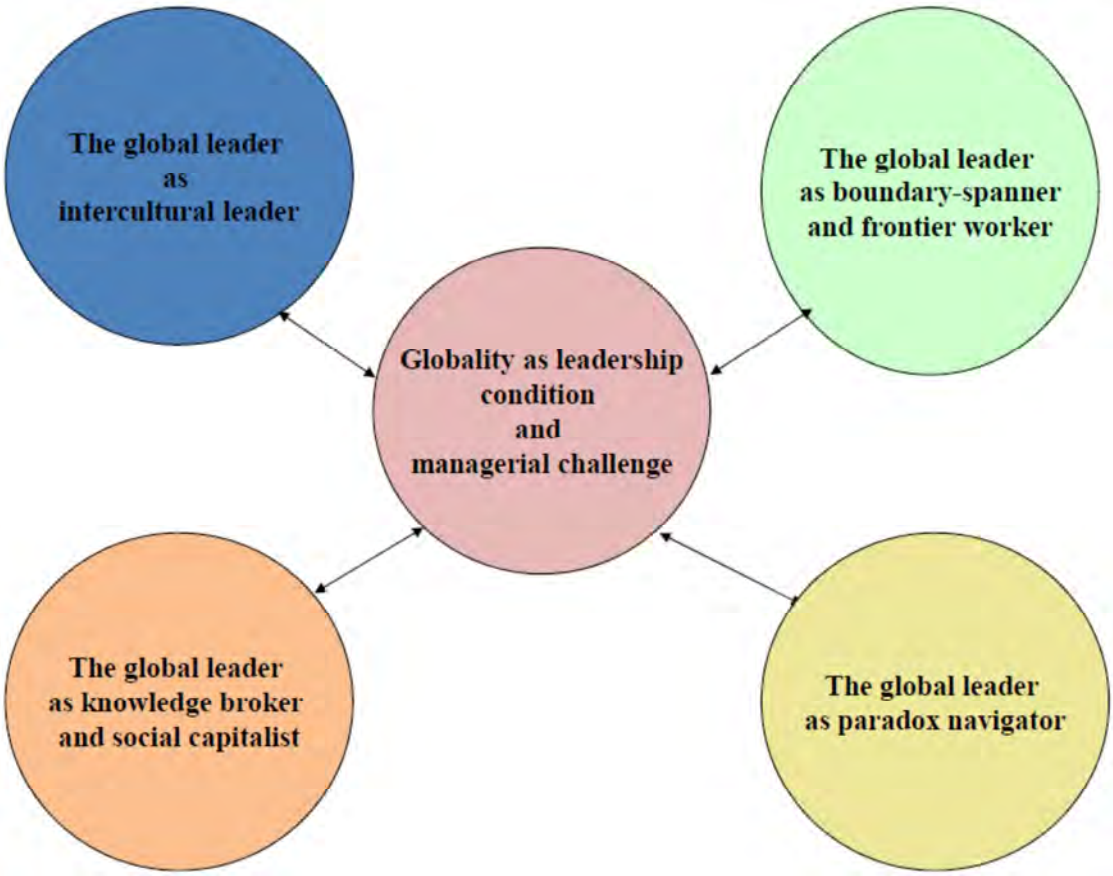

Figure 3.1: Four perspectives on globality as a leadership condition and managerial challenge. Source: Author.

These four domains are discussed in turn in the following as a springboard for discussing global mindset as one of the more recent and increasingly popular inroads to approaching management and leadership in a global environment:

3.1.1 The Global Leader as Intercultural Leader

The traditional approach to international/global leadership looks at how (national) cultural differences have an influence on our preferences for practicing and receiving leadership. National cultural differences are usually organized in different groups of countries, based on their placement of a number of scales/continua, measuring the different cultures' relative position. Readers will probably recognize culture typologies, for example from Hofstede (Hofstede, 1991), Gesteland (Gesteland, 2005) and Trompenaars (Trompenaars, 2004) in this category. The central person in this context has typically been the leader posted abroad or leaders with direct staff responsibility for persons from other cultures. The starting point is the fact that "international/global" is articulated as the opposite of "national/local", and is usually put into operation with *bilateral* cultural comparisons ("1:1"): for example, a Dane posted in Japan, a Japanese team leader for a team based in India, etc. as a basis for the adjustment of leadership.

Conduct of intercultural management is a key element of the global leader's tasks; the only twist being that the global leader has not necessarily been posted overseas, but has to deal increasingly with diversity both at home and abroad. Newer versions of the interpretation of the global leader as an intercultural leader are familiar from concepts such as intercultural competence (Gertsen, 1990) or cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003) which focus on a leader's ability to hold his/her own in culturally diverse contexts: in other words leaders, who relate *multilaterally* ("1: Several" or "Several: Several") to a diversity of various cultures. An example of this interpretation is to be found, for example, in the Danish 'Det Nationale Kompetenceregnskab' (National Competency Account) (Danish Ministry of Education, 2005), in which intercultural competence is one of ten competences, on which Danes are assessed.

The term "cultural intelligence" is a high priority in this concept of competence, since its aim is to assess various people's abilities to operate adequately and successfully in other (national) cultures and social contexts. The term was introduced by the American professors P. Christopher Earley and Elaine Mosakowski in their article "Cultural Intelligence" in the October edition of Harvard Business Review in 2004. The basis for the term's origin was a study of what characterizes staff and, in particular, leaders, who are successful in the area of cultural encounters, and is defined as "*a person's capability to adapt as s/he interacts with others from different cultural regions and has behavioral, motivational, and metacognitive aspects*." (Earley & Mosakowski, 2002). So the common denominator is that one must not only be competent in relation to another culture, but more generally be competent in cultural encounters, whatever other cultures may be involved.

A concept, which also shares focus with a more generalized cultural competence, is the concept of "global dexterity". Global dexterity shifts the emphasis away from knowledge of cultural differences, focusing instead on changing behavior. Andy Molinsky, the instigator of the concept, believes that the greatest challenge is to change personal behavior, and defines global dexterity as *"the capacity to adapt your behavior, when necessary, in a foreign cultural environment to accommodate new and different expectations that vary from those of your native cultural setting.*" (Molinsky, 2013, p. 9). A crucial point is that cultural norms are not generic and depend very much on the context. Thus, they cannot be summarized by culture typologies and diagrams, which make it easy for us to compare various national cultures. The crux of the matter is to identify the "zone of appropriateness", which a given cultural environment has, and to see how this overlaps with one's own personal cultural comfort zone. In cases where large distances are involved, the global dexterity concept includes directions on how to extend one's comfort zone in order to accommodate new expectations without losing oneself or feeling false.

Thus, Molinsky distances himself from those intercultural theories, which implicitly make the 100% culturally and organizationally liberated person the ultimate goal. Some simply operate with the term

"chameleon" to describe an advanced evolutionary phase for global leaders (Brewster et al., 2011). When viewed from this perspective, leaders ideally change color according to their surroundings and smoothly adapt to whatever situation they find themselves in (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999; Clegg, 2013). So the question is simply whether it can actually be done, or even whether it is desirable? A chameleon blends in with the wallpaper. It camouflages itself, so that it can attack prey without being preyed upon. While not being a specialist on the subject of reptiles, one assumes that the chameleon does not go through an identity crisis, every time it changes color. But what about global leaders? Can they avoid having to "dress up"? Can they "be themselves", whatever color they take on? And can they come across with integrity and authenticity? There is a fine line between the rootless, global village idiot and the real "cosmopolitan": a sailor of the world, who is at home nowhere and everywhere. In this context, research indicates that so-called "grounded cosmopolitans", cosmopolitans (Gouldner, 1957, 1958; Levy, Beechler, Taylor & Boyacigiller, 2007) with a global vision who are simultaneously rooted in their own culture, provide an alternative to the global joker, who can operate anywhere without having a single root. 'Grounded cosmopolitans' attain global success by means of home-cultural clarity and self-awareness.

3.1.2 The Global Leader as Boundary-spanner and Frontier Worker

A classic solution to the increasing uncertainty and mutual dependence that frequently characterize the situation of global companies, is so-called bridge-building or "bridge-making" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978); the term boundary-spanning is typically used to refer to collaborations between groups and bridge-making within groups. The global leader is a potential boundary-spanner (Chris & Chrobot-Mason, 2011; Schotter & Beamish, 2011, Beechler, Søndergaard, Miller & Bird, 2004) because he/she is in a position to create a link between the company and its surroundings in order to ensure understanding, influence and legitimacy. A similar function is practiced within global enterprises by "boundary spanners" (Aldrich & Herker, 1977), frontier workers of dual identity conditions, who are described in literature as (cultural) brokers, who have a leg planted in several camps and unite the organization, spreading knowledge and understanding throughout that organization. In a global, complex organization what is needed is smooth, effective cooperation across national and professional cultures, units and hierarchical positions. Global leaders are in a favorable position to perform their global role by possessing the very capacities that support this practice. This is also one of the conclusions of a Danish research project on the subject of intercultural cooperation and learning, since companies are encouraged to make "*... active use of those people in the organization, who can build a bridge across experienced differences and create a common platform based on values and good practices from several cultures. For example, bicultural and bilingual leaders and members of staff, who can change perspective more easily than others.*" (Søderberg, 2012).

Perceiving the global leader as a bridge-builder and frontier worker leads to an understanding of globality as borderless and "trans-border" in a positive sense, since a border in this context is not just a national

border, but "… *a sociocultural difference leading to discontinuity in action or interaction. Boundaries simultaneously suggest a sameness and continuity in the sense that within discontinuity two or more sites are relevant to one another in a particular way.*" (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011, p. 133). Borders in this sense are socially constructed, detectable by their creating unstable patterns of cooperation, regardless of whether the cooperating parties are located geographically in the same place or have the same national cultural background. One example of this approach applied to leadership in or between organizations in the same country can be seen in a research project on cross-disciplinary cooperation and innovation in the hospital sector, where researchers operate with the concept of "boundary-crossing leadership" (Elmholdt & Ingerslev, 2013).

Consequently, in this perspective the global leader is the person, who spans cleavage planes or "fault lines" (Bezrukova, Jehn, Zanutto & Thatcher, 2009; Barner-Rasmussen & Michailova, 2011), the fractures/cracks between the earth's tectonic plates, where there is a strong likelihood of earthquakes at the joints used as an analogy for dividing lines in groups. "*Group faultlines are hypothetical dividing lines that may split a group into subgroups based on one or more attributes. Demographic group faultlines, such as age, tend to divide a group into subgroups of different ages. In addition, faultlines based on other non-demographic characteristics, such as personal values or personality, may also lead to active subgroups within a larger group."* (Lau & Murnighan, 1998, p. 328). Other characteristics of particular relevance to MNC collaboration may be national cultural background or HQ/subsidiary affiliation. And so, this competence is not only relevant in situations, in which national borders must be crossed. Leadership across and between organizations is a leadership challenge both at home and abroad. For example, "Improve cooperation across the organization" comes 9th on a list of leadership challenges. 71% considered this "important/very important" in a study, which The Danish Association of Managers and Executives conducted among their members in 2012 (Jensen, 2013). Volberda and colleagues also emphasizes that boundary spanning is not only and internal endeavor in that they highlight the benefit of a global mindset in terms of "*managers' ability to analyze, understand and manage... in a way that is not dependent on any single context. It is particularly important to avoid being trapped by thinking in silos within the boundaries of a single firm. Only by spanning boundaries are firms fully able to recognize what resources and capabilities they possess and which they need*." (Volberda, Morgan, Reinmoller, Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2011, p. 139).

3.1.3 The Global Leader as Knowledge Broker and Social Capitalist

Researchers who work with organizations as knowledge structures, regard the gathering and dissemination of knowledge, innovation and ideas as one of the main challenges of complex, global business (Parissa, 2011; The focus is on the organization's "absorptive capacity" (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990): the "suction capacity" of the organization in relation to knowledge. This capacity requires both "source transfer capacity" (the transmitter's desire and capacity to disseminate) and "recipient transfer capacity" (interest in

picking up messages from the recipient and ability to do so). From this perspective, the global leader has an important role to play in relation to ensuring that information is not just disseminated, but that the message really gets through by virtue of his/her advantageous position between several worlds and points of view.

Special attention is often paid to leaders, who have a dual role between headquarters and local subsidiaries ("dual allegiance"), such as expatriates, and must serve more masters and perspectives at the same time (Birkinshaw, Holm, Thilenius & Arvidsson, 2000; Michailova & Mustaffa, 2012). These are in a special position to act as bridge builders, because they have a leg planted in several camps simultaneously. However, to be able to profit from this position, s/he must have his/her network skills in order, if s/he is to reduce transaction costs by crossing mental, geographical or hierarchical boundaries. The building of relationships of trust and social capital is the province of skills that generate knowledge sharing and collaboration across the organization (Lin, 2001; Mäkelä, Brewster, Minbaeva, Foss & Scott, 2009). Thus, the leader is a central person, when it comes to guaranteeing the company's social capital and reaping the benefits of knowledge sharing across the organization.

3.1.4 The Global Leader as Paradox Navigator

Cultural and organizational complexity are prerequisites for global leadership, and some researchers emphasize that global leaders have an important role to play, when it comes to articulating this complexity in a meaningful manner to the rest of the organization. It is a matter of identifying (temporary) oases of sufficient clarity until there is a sense of security, while presenting challenges and changes as manageable (Luscher & Lewis, 2008). In this context the leader is regarded as a kind of "flow designer" in a fragmentary and confusing working day.

One approach to a leader's management of complexity is to understand and articulate complexity as a set of paradoxes, between which the manager must navigate (Handy, 1994; Lewis, 2000). In this context, a paradox can be defined as "*contradictory, mutually exclusive elements that exist simultaneously and for which no synthesis or choice is possible nor necessarily desirable*" (Cameron & Quinn, 1988) and "*Contradictory yet interrelated elements (dualities) that exist simultaneously and persist over time*." (Smith & Lewis, 2011). A paradox is a situation without options or where the options on offer are illegal/unethical/dangerous/too expensive or otherwise unacceptable. Therefore, one must work on the basis of a "both-and" understanding, rather than an "either-or" understanding. Consequently, paradoxes differ from dilemmas, which can be seen as devil-and-deep-blue-sea situations, in which one actually does have a choice and scope to prioritize, even though the choice may be a hard-earned one. In a paradox, the consequence of choosing between two options is too great. "*When the trade-off of choosing one or the other is too big to choose,"* as one of the architects responsible for a major study of the working sphere of

global leaders puts it (Jules & Lynton, 2012). Thus, a paradox is not a dialectical understanding of leadership (Da Cunha, Clegg & Cunha, 2002), in which thesis and antithesis through creative thinking or conflict mediation can be brought to compromise or formulate a synthesized third way.
So what particular situations does a global leader face, which call for paradox leadership? An obvious example is the need to standardize and harmonize the organization in global terms, while at the same time embracing and addressing local differences. Another example is dealing with strategic diversity in different markets or product areas, as described in the following. "*We suggest that success over time is rooted in adopting this kind of 'both/and' approach, committing to paradoxical strategies and their associated product, market and organizational architectures…. Hosting such paradoxical strategies demands complex business models that can manage the inherent tensions involved and enable contradictory agendas to thrive at the same time*." (Smith, Binns & Tushman, 2010). In this interpretation, paradox leadership is closely related to a different concept within global leadership: "ambidexterity". While the word "ambidexterity" originally refers to the state of being equally adept in the use of both left and right appendages (such as the hands), "organizational ambidexterity" (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008) applies to the "multi-tasking" and "multi-purpose" organization, good at reconciling apparently conflicting activities simultaneously (De Wit & Meyer, 1999), e.g. operation and development, convergence-divergence, integration-localization, simplification-amplification or exploration and exploitation (March, 1991).

However, paradoxes should not be regarded as conflicts, for which the leader must find solutions or compromises, but rather as different extremes in a range of continuums, between which the leader must be able to manoeuver successfully. In this context, a leader must be capable of reconciling him/herself with the fact that no "solution" can or should be found. In a dilemma, one can select a standpoint. In a paradox, one must remain standing in the middle of a seesaw and actively do something to keep/maintain equilibrium or restore the balance. It is precisely in fluctuations that power and creativity in the global organization must exist. As such, paradox leadership is a Sisyphean task. However, while Sisyphus was compelled to work on a monotonous and repetitive task for all eternity as punishment, an important criterion of success for the global paradox leader is to see paradoxes as neither punishment nor problem (Fletcher & Olwyler, 1997).

The manager should not seek "closure" and must be prepared for the fact that one does not necessarily have to force the situation to "move on". The motto could be "the power of acceptance" or "to live with ambiguity". This involves the manager adopting a yin-yang perspective: One side is nothing without the other, and contains the other within itself. Differences are valued because of the opportunities for dialog they create, where differing views are allowed equal representation, with no attempt to suppress or iron them out. "*If I try to understand you by losing me, then we both will fail. Or if I try to understand you by*

denying our differences, then once again we will fail." (Sampson, 2008, p. 158) That is consistent with the message of leadership research operating with a dialogical understanding of cooperation (Sampson, 2008) or a relational perspective (Chen & Miller, 2011).

So, to summarize this review of central perspectives on global leadership in extant literature, one can conclude that global leadership skills should not only be defined as intercultural skills. Globality must be seen as a special context that is greater, or at least something other, than, the sum of the various cultures involved. Further, it does not only affect leaders who are posted overseas. On the contrary, the global leader is characterized by his/her way of thinking. The leader, who is posted overseas, is defined by his/her geographical location (Pucik, 2006, p. 88).

3.2 Global Leadership v. "Ordinary" Leadership

But if global leadership is all of these things, what is it not? What if there is no all-embracing, common denominator or generic definition of the term? To take the last question first, the answer is that global leadership is an area of research, which is still in its infancy or perhaps can be considered a teenager, given that no single formulation or definition has yet emerged, which sufficient people can agree and rely on. As such, the field itself exemplifies the complexity and diversity that are often part of the many different definitions of global leadership in circulation. Two examples of some of the definitions of global leaders/global leadership often used are:

"*Global leaders are individuals who effect significant positive change in organizations by building communities through the development of trust and the arrangement of organizational structures and processes in a context involving multiple cross-boundary stakeholders, multiple sources of external cross-boundary authority, and multiple cultures under conditions of temporal, geographical and cultural complexity*." (Mendenhall, 2013, p. 5).

Global leadership is *"a process of influencing the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of a global community to work together synergistically toward a common vision and common goals"* (Osland, Bird, Mendenhall, Osland, 2006, p. 204).

When one scrutinizes these two definitions, one asks oneself whether they actually add up to something significantly different from "normal" leadership. So we attempt to answer the first question by looking at global v. local leadership. According to Erik Johnsen (Johnsen, 1978, p. 200), leadership is *"a goal-setting and problem-solving interaction between people"*. Further, it can be said that I am "*playing a leadership role, when I participate actively and deliberately in a simultaneous goal-setting and problem-solving*

interaction with others." Leadership exists, emerges and is practiced in a variety of forums:

- Individual leader behavior ("I")
- Leader behavior in an immediate environment, group-dynamic leadership ("we")
- The leadership process in the form of connected leadership environments ("all of us")

Therefore, leader behavior, locally and globally, is both a single person's accomplishments and a social process, which together create leadership. The pertinence of seeing leadership as a team effort and collective endeavour is underlined by the fact that self-leadership (Pedersen & Kristensen, 2013; Kürstein, 2010; Kristensen, 2011) and other forms of distributed leadership (HBR IdeaCast, 2011) are on the rise as is leadership in teams (Pitcher, 1997; Thomas, Bellin, Jules & Lynton, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c). Furthermore, leadership is contingent upon followership, and leadership may not only be carried out by persons with a managerial title or position, but also be performed by non-managerial employees. The different elements of leadership may have different weight at different levels and in different situations, and Holt Larsen complements Johnsen 's image, specifically in relation to middle management, by noting that their "charge" is characterized by their need to: lead downward (staff), lead upward (be a part of the total management team, be an ambassador for strategy and values etc.), lead outward (customers, interest groups etc.), lead across (create cohesion, common ground, a sense of "us") and lead inward (lead him/herself) (Larsen, 2008). Whatever the hierarchical level, Johnsen underlines that the individual leader's leadership behavior can be regarded as a combination of goal-setting behavior, problem-solving behavior and language-creating/communicative behavior.

Globality does not alter the fact that these tasks are part and parcel of the leader's job description, if it is based on the definitions given above. The need for context-sensitive leadership, lean leadership, performance management, leadership of teams etc. still exists. But globality can be regarded as a special context that influences, for example, how one can suitably implement language-creating behavior, lead upward or lead teams (Valentiner, 2011). Consequently, what characterizes global leadership is the fact that the leadership role must be carried out in a specific environment and under special conditions. The conduct of this particular leadership role can be a source of competitive advantage, if one is capable of dealing with global opportunities and threats better than one's competitors: "*A company's ability to develop transnational organizational capability and management mentality will be the key factor that separates the winners from the mere survivors in the emerging international environment."* (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987, p. 7).

3.3 Global Mindset – a Global Meta-competence

The "global mindset" concept (e.g. Chatterjee, 2005; Gupta & Govindarajan, 2001; Javidan & Teagarden, 2011) is a suggestion for how a company can ensure that human resources can cope with the global diversity and complexity, both culturally and strategically (Pucik, 2006). This focus should be seen as a result of the complexity and diversity of the global leadership context, as described above, and also of the fact that it has not been possible to identify a definite set of special, individual characteristics of a global leader, despite many attempts to do so. In relation to global leadership competences, global mindset represents a hybrid, which includes both the global leader's intercultural competence *and* his/her ability to navigate in a complex field – or, framed within the four global leadership domains presented previously, as a meta-competence encompassing a variety of global leadership roles and competences:

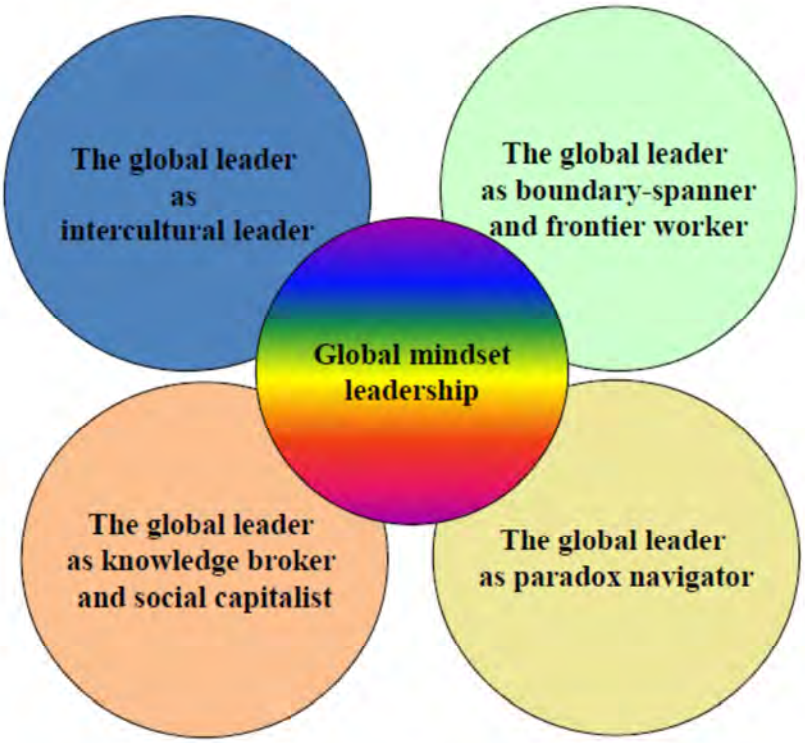

Figure 3.2: Global mindset as a hybrid global leadership meta-competence. Source: Author.

The development of global mindset as a managerial competence of international or global managers and their organizations can be seen as an attempt to discover a "blue ocean of global cooperation" across borders (institutional and cultural differences) and boundaries (internal physical, geographic, or mental fault lines) where cooperation is enabled by a holistic managerial outlook. This can be seen as opposed to and different from an increasingly 'red ocean' of traditional intercultural training and wisdom that typically focuses on collaboration between one or two cultures. This type of bicultural competence may be

adequate for the traditional expatriate spending extended periods away from his/her home country in one or two other markets. This mode of operation, however, is very sensitive to staffing changes and flexibility as is the case when, for instance, a manager is assigned to a new market or has to work with a new group of employees as a result of mergers. The skills of the modern global manager have to be more mobile, spanning a more diverse group of people in complex matrix structures and project organizations. Instead of being caught in the red ocean of trying to develop detailed knowledge about the dimensions of any one culture or department in the company, the manager – and ultimately the organization – with a global mindset has a holistic outlook, thrive on the constructive controversy and cross-fertilization in the flux of the global organization.

Global mindset, then, suggests a particular pair of glasses or mental filter, through which a person experiences the world and the globalization of markets, people and companies: "*The functions of an individual global mindset to a global leader are a means to structure the complex global reality and to provide guidelines for appropriate leadership behavior like formulating a global vision and interpersonal skills*." (Dekker, Jansen & Vinkenburg, 2005, p. 2). Thus, global leadership, in the sense of leadership with global mindset, is summed up here as a particular way of thinking, which enables a person to build a bridge between the local and the global. The leader with a global vision is capable of integrating and mediating between potentially conflicting opposites and of charting a course, which makes sense across, and profits from differences. In terms of the benefits of leading with global mindset, Gupta & Govindarajan emphasize the fact that: *"The benefits of a global mindset derives from the fact that, while the company has a grasp of and insight into the needs of the local market, it is also able to build cognitive bridges across these needs and between these needs and the company's own global experience and capabilities."* (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2001, p. 11).

3.4 Global Mindset – Cognition and Strategy

From a cognitive point of view, a mindset can be described as a filter through which we experience and make sense of the world, the motto being along the lines of "you are what you think", so to speak. Mindset as an attitude or paradigm results in a cognitive bias that could be likened to selective hearing which alerts your attention to some inputs and let others go in one ear and out the other; pricks up your ears for some clues and identifies others as irrelevant background noise. Mindset as a general term, then, refers to an outlook, attitude, paradigm, mentality, schemata of the mind or pattern of thinking. In extant literature you can come across similar conceptualizations such as 'interpretive scheme' (Greenwood & Hining, 1989; Greenwood et al. 1990), 'Meta-script' (Abelson, 1980), 'Interaction order' (Goffman, 1983) and 'Cognitive maps' (Weick, 2001). When applied within the field of organization studies, Paul (2000) has offered the following definition:*"….a set of deeply held internal mental images and assumptions, which individuals*

develop through a continuous process of learning from experience. They exist in the subconscious determining how an individual perceives a specific situation, and his or her reaction to it. So, mindset refers to a particular way of engaging with and making sense of the world, a bias or disposition towards experiencing it in a particular manner.

Mindset is one of the solutions to the challenge of committing the human resources to executing business strategy in practice that increasingly receives attention. In this vein, mindset is seen as an alternative "glue technology" (Evans, 1992), a corporate mentality or social architecture (Evans, Pucik, Björkman, 2002) placed centrally between traditional means of coordination and control such as compliance and coherence measures, strategic management and value-sharing. While classical business strategy literature primarily focuses on the properties of formulation of a successful business strategy, more recent strategy literature represents the view that strategy content is not necessarily the biggest challenge (Kaplan & Norton, 2005, 2009; Miranda & Thief, 2007). The subsequent change, strategy implementation and execution process now receive ample attention (Bossidy & Charan, 2002; Johnson, 2004; Morgan, Levitt & Malek, 2007; Syrett, 2007). A change of scene has taken place from strategy content to strategy process (both with regards to strategy formulation process and strategy implementation) where the human resources of the organization, particularly managers, e.g. Ulrich & Smallwood, 2007, and the company's strategic processes are central (Barney, 1991; Pfeffer, 1994; Huselid, 1995; Becker & Huselid, 2006): *"Strategic change involves an attempt to change current modes of cognition and action to enable the organization to take advantage of important opportunities or to cope with consequential environmental threats."* (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, p. 433)

The idea that strategy formulation, if not explicitly execution, can be seen as a result of a certain frame of reference does exist in extant literature (Gioia, Thomas, Clark, & Chittipeddi, 1994). Ohmae remarks that *"Successful business strategies result not from rigorous analysis, but from a particular state of mind."* (1982, p. 23), and Shrivastava & Schneider (1984) point out that managers develop frames of reference or a set of assumptions that determine their view of business and the organization. In the STROBE construct, Venkatraman (1989) presents the concept of strategic orientation of business enterprises as characterised and measured along six dimensions (aggressiveness, analysis, defensiveness, futurity, proactiveness and riskiness), illustrating how strategic choices are framed by different orientations in companies. Further, psychological research on individual cognitive patterns may influence both behavior in general (Armor & Taylor, 2003) and goal-directed behavior in particular (Brandstätter & Frank, 2002). Mindset (not specifically global mindset) matters for strategic behavior in that *"Generally speaking, managers will act on the basis of those mental models that shape their mundane worldview of their work. These mental models influence what we believe is relevant, how we think of it and how we act on it. Mental models can be imagined as 'cognitive maps' that will enable organizational employees to orient themselves, decide where*

to go next and discuss how to get there. Cognitive maps highlight, simplify and frame what strategists perceive as strategic issues, strategic problems or strategic solutions." (Clegg, Carter, Kornberger & Schweitzer, 2011, p. 140).

3.5 Global Mindset as a Capability

Common to most interpretations of the mindset concept in connection with strategy is the fundamental assumptions that (global) mindset is something that the individual leader has (inside his/her head) to a greater or lesser extent. Nevertheless, there are also interpretations of the concept, which regard global mindset as a collective, organizational competence. For example, Paul stresses the fact that *"[T]he concept of mindset applies not only to individuals, but also to organizations. Mindset is the 'origination point of all workplace behavior'."* (Paul, 2000, pp. 187- 188). And there are also plenty of research results, which document that this or that mindset at an organizational level is good for various types of desirable results, such as innovation, cultivation of talent or internationalization. At the same time, they are, more often than not, remarkably quiet in relation to how this mindset came about, and how it can be developed. Hence, this approach to the global mindset concept is far less developed than the individual (often cognitively focused) approach. On the other hand, there is a great demand for it in practice, where ways of thinking and forms of cooperation can represent a strategic resource: *"The content and processes of multinational firms' sensemaking systems can be a distinct competitive advantage or disadvantage* " Caproni, Lenway & Murtha, T.P. (1992) assess, and Gupta & Govindarajan (2001, p. 118) go on to suggest that *"The benefits of a global mindset derives from the fact that, while the company has a grasp of and insight into the needs of the local market, it is also able to build cognitive bridges across these needs and between these needs and the company's own global experience and capabilities."*

This echoes the resource-based view of the firm of strategic management, positing that "*the primary purpose of strategic management is to guide the organization in achieving and sustaining sustainable competitive advantage in the environment in which it operates*" (Clegg, Carter, Kornberger & Schweitzer, 2011, p. 52) of which the fundamental question is …*'how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage*" (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997, p. 509). Resource-based theory conceives of organizational resources as unique bundles that have the power to give an organization competitive advantage over others in the same industry or sphere of operation. This is done by bundling the organization's resource base, consisting of both tangible and intangible assets such as brand name, organizational structure, IT network, physical property and equipment, patents, knowledge, organizational mindset, HRM policies, distribution networks, into (core) capabilities (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994) rendering the organization a strategic advantage over its competitors. In order to achieve this, the resources and capabilities should be valuable, rare, inimitable, non-substitutable, effectively organized (so-called VRINE-principles). Some approaches see global mindset as capability and potential

core competence, others construe of global mindset as a dynamic capability enabling the organization to reorchestrate capability in a manner conducive to surviving in a global environment undergoing continuous changes. The nature of the advantage may be sustainable which has been the classic goal of resource-based theory while more recent approached highlight the futility of seeking sustainable advantage in hastily changing market conditions proposing that advantages are rather transient than sustainable and stable even in the short term.

Existing research on the concept of mindset does not address global mindset as a collaborative governance practice vis-a-vis execution of business goals although the concept is activated within a highly diverse group of disciplines in relation to achievement of goals. Even if not addressed as a collective frame of reference for executing business strategy, there are many examples of the "right" mindset being used as an explanation for obtainment of goals at a lower level. There seems to be a mindset almost for every occasion, or at least one that is more appropriate in order to obtain particular goals. Examples of this practice include a highly diverse plethora of focal areas such as project management (Lechler & Byrne, 2010), personnel management (Dweck & Culbert, 1996; Heslin & Vandewalle, 2008), developmental psychology (Chaiken & Trope, 1999; Gollwitzer & Bayer, 1999; Gollwitzer, 2003), change management, (Nilakant & Ramnarayan, 2006), school governance (Kaser & Halbert, 2009), trust (Haselhuhn & Wood, 2010) and spirituality (Highland, 2004). Thus, the mindset concept is activated as an explanatory factor in explaining a host of positive macro or micro level results.

Positive outcomes are seen to manifest themselves as a result of mindset operating on either individual (individual mindset) or collective levels (organizational mindset). In both cases, the underlying rationale is that successful outcomes come about due to the existence of a particular attitude. A host of studies point to a positive connection between the existence of a favorable mindset and wanted results; e.g. Talke & Hultink, 2010; Smith, Mitchell & Mitchell, 2009; Bowen & Inkpen, 2009; Nadkarni, Herrmann & Perez; 2010. Examples of this use of mindset theory includes concepts such as entrepreneurial mindset (McGrath & MacMillan, 2000), managerial mindset (Parisi & Hockerts, 2008), knowledge management mindset (Smith, McKeen & Singh, 2010) and talent mindset (Dattatreya, Kamath, Sharma & Williams, 2009). A common denominator of the existing studies is that they are usually quite silent about the way in which a detected favorable mindset came about in the organisation in the first place.

3.6 Strategic Global Mindset

So, mindset is seen as a positive factor bringing about desired results, but there is less guidance with regards to how mindset is created or changed, which makes it difficult to activate this knowledge in other organizations. We know that global mindset matters for global strategy formulation and execution, we know that mindset matters for business performance at a general level, but how to get from mindset to

performance? And how to develop the individual resources and organizational capabilities needed? The question is what other organizations can learn from other organizations' successes in combining a particular mindset with organizational results. It remains to be seen whether or not a type of mindset that worked well for one organization may also be a success factor in another organization facing a different type of challenge or context in that few studies include more than up to five organizations at a time. This question was answered negatively by a so-called "think box", a fast-acting working group set up in cooperation between the Danish Association of Managers and Executives ('Lederne'), The Think Tank DEA and Network of Corporate Academies (NOCA), recently commissioned to draw up a road map for how businesses can develop global mindset within two years. A central point from this think box's work is that we have to start with business strategy and look at global mindset in relation to the context-specific business objectives and priorities (DEA, 2013; Rosenfeldt, 2013). The work of the think box highlights some vital points about global leadership, in the sense of leadership with global mindset in organizations:

- Working with global mindset must be a reaction to a business-strategic decision and not a goal in itself.
- Global mindset must be defined locally, based on the individual company's situation and positioning in terms of globality.
- Global mindset as organizational competence regards global leadership as a practice, which develops between people rather than within people.

The work of the think box was presented at a conference (April 2013), at which participants and panelists (including the author) were asked to provide three good pieces of advice for working with global mindset. These were summarized in a little epilogue: "Three Things to Do" (DEA, 2013). The answers provide the suggestion that companies start by defining the strategy and then identify how global mindset will support the strategy. Finally, they should determine what global mindset specifically means, in terms of the way leadership is practiced in the organization. Building on this, it makes little sense to talk about global mindset as a generic competence; rather global mindset should be seen as "strategic global mindset" and therefore operationalized in relation to the specific strategic challenges that the company is confronted with. It is also stressed that development of global mindset is not exclusively a managerial endeavour, but rather the result of collaboration between people. General definitions of global leadership and global mindset are very informative in terms of providing an initial insight into the kind of field one is operating in. But when it comes specifically to working on the development of this organizational competence, there is a need for adaptation to local circumstances. Because, in practice, what does it mean for a leader to be able to "influence people, who are different from him/herself", as Javidan and Teagarden put it? Or how should a leader on a daily basis formulate performance criteria, which "are not only based on a specific

group's basic assumptions, and implement them appropriately in different contexts"? Or what does it mean to be "open and linguistically creative in relation to a diversity of strategic and cultural realities" as represented above?

3.7 Approaches to the Development of Global Mindset Competence and Capability

The Danish Association of Managers and Executives ('Lederne'), The Think Tank DEA and Network of Corporate Academies (NOCA) think box is not the only one with questions such as these when it comes to working with global mindset as a strategy implementation driver. Management "first movers" in global management consultancies (Thomas, Harburg & Dutra, 2007), bestselling business literature (e.g. Dweck & Culbert, 1996; Dweck, 2007), leadership blogs from Harvard Business Review and MIT Sloan Management Review (Gallo, 2010; Lahiri, Perez-Nordtvedt & Renn, 2008; Goldsmith, Xu & Dhar, 2010) workshops and seminars held by trendsetting management advisors, such as HRM guru Dave Ulrich within and outside academia (Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010) testify to the interest in mindset. In the following section, some approaches to working with development of global mindset capability are explored.

Ability to calibrate and change individual and organizational mindset on an ongoing basis to fit the current situation internally and externally is a key feature of modern international organization. As Drucker puts it: *"Every organization has to prepare for the abandonment of everything it does."* (Drucker, 1992), but: *It is imaginable that organizations will come to discard ineffective interpretative frames in the long run, but the difficulties in using history to discriminate intelligently among alternative paradigms are profound."* (Levitt & March, 1988, p. 324) But how are mindsets changed and created? Pourdehnah and his colleagues hold that "*Unlearning is a challenge because the human tendency to preserve a particular view of the world is very strong and the change to a new paradigm not only requires an ultimate act of learning but also of unlearning"* (Pourdehnah, Warren, Wright & Mairano, 2006, p. 1). A central tenet in this respect is that the existence of a mindset that facilitates strategy execution is not enough to secure strategy execution unless the mindset is enacted and practiced in everyday leadership behavior (Penrose, 1959; Grant, 1991). In order to move from "espoused theory" to "theory-in-use" (Argyris & Schön, 1974), employees must have the opportunity to learn from (a different) experience (Senge, 1990; Pourdehnah, Warren, Wright & Mairano, 2006; Conner, 2006; Gardner, 2004). Possible avenues for proactively creating learning spaces conducive to group mindset development, that supplement push from the external environment, may include, but are not limited to, addressing job design, reporting lines, hierarchical structure, career paths and other structural arrangements to enhance the opportunity to experience and capitalize on behavior consistent with global mindset.

Much of the existing literature on mindset examines a mindset that is already in place in an organization and explains successful performance with the presence of that particular mindset – how it all began is a different

story that is left untold. In comparison with mindset theory in general, the concept of global mindset is the research stream that has come the furthest in terms of conceptualization and operationalization. As an example, Levy and his colleagues (2007), operate with mindset as an individual competence consisting of the ability to cope with cognitive complexity combined with a cosmopolitan worldview. Javidan and Teagarden have developed the Global Mindset Inventory, operationalizing global mindset as a combination of three types of capital: Psychological, social and intellectual capital (Javidan & Teagarden, 2011; Javidan & Walker, 2013). Even if attempts at characterization of the constituent parts of mindset have been made, (global) creation is predominantly handled as if organizations were clean slates to be imprinted (by management) with new mental images, even if one has to presume that the organization already has a mindset, whether it is articulated or not. One notable exception is Govindarajan & Gupta (2001, p. 124-140) who have ventured into the otherwise black box of mindset creation (also see Walker & Javidan, 2013). Gupta and Govindarajan outline the following four focus areas, on which a company that wants to promote the development of a global mindset can concentrate:

- Cultivate curiosity about the world around us and generate commitment to learning more about how it works
- Articulation of the existing mindset (in both the individual and the organization)
- Build up knowledge about different cultures, markets and departments
- Create structure and conditions, in which to develop an integrated perspective that unites diverse knowledge of the cultures, markets and departments

3.8 "Global Mindset Capability" in Terms of both the Organization and the Individual

There is a shortage of global managers (Black, Morrison & Gregersen 1999), and global leadership talent shortage is cited in a top 10 of challenges that CEOs see business facing today (Boston Consulting Group, 2009). It is certainly fortunate, if the company already has at its disposal a pool of talented leaders, who meet all these requirements. Meanwhile, for many companies it is very much a question of creating global leadership expertise within their existing team of staff, who may or may not be natural talents – or may or may not have competences conducive to their current global strategy execution context. This is where the company can do a great deal to create framework conditions that support development, maintenance and further development of global leadership competences, rather than simply waiting for the perfect candidate to turn up.

One can take note of Gupta and Govindarajan' s advice concerning the development of global mindset and put it into practice in many different ways, depending on the individual company's strategic objectives. At the **organizational level**, some general approaches and facilitators that take account of the

global leadership context as described here, include building up global mindset competence by:

1. **Foreign language proficiency:** Demanding, and providing opportunities for learning languages. This is perhaps not as appealing as a "global talent development program". On the other hand, there is much to suggest that it works.
2. **Common language**: Thinking in common language-creating systems and practices: for example, if everyone is conversant with the same business process terminology, a corporate company language, corporate values discourse or management tools this common expression apparatus facilitates boundary-crossing communication.
3. **Being alert to "local" development situations**: Also working with diversity leadership within the same culture, so that interculturality in a global context is simply one more dimension, added whenever international tasks crop up. Designing leader jobs, so that the person that holds the job becomes conversant with the complexity: e.g. in a matrix structure, virtual teams, communities of practice.
4. **Diversity requirements for staffing**: Creating networks and constructing project teams across subject areas, cultures and levels of handling jobs in the company.
5. **Short-term international assignments**: Entrusting as many members of staff as possible with short-term international assignments.
6. **Global career paths:** Organizing career paths and leadership development activities, which automatically take staff around to the various corners of the organization. Guaranteeing acceptance of the need for staff mobility as part of the psychological contract with the member of staff, from the moment s/he is appointed, and subsequently in employee development dialogs and promotions.
7. **Talent status and pipeline**: Constructing databases of global talent, so there is an opportunity to identify and engage existing and future stock.
8. **Objectives and assessment**: Integrating global leadership competences in performance assessment systems.
9. **Technological bridge building**: Creating good conditions for distance leadership, including web technologies, teleconferences and, of course, acceptance of the fact that no virtual meeting can outperform a physical meeting.
10. **Learning through competition**: Attempting to absorb as much knowledge as possible from the outside world, including cooperation with competitors, who are encountering similar global leadership challenges.

These ten points list generic approaches to creating space for international and global behavior and actions based on a view that global mindset as an organizational capability or individual competence "*is unlikely to stick unless it is reinforced by organizational processes that foster decisions and behaviors consistent with a global orientation*." (Pucik, 2006, p. 92). However, organizational processes and structures facilitating and enabling global mindset behaviors are only one side of the story; the presence of individual commitment and competence the other. Facilitating factors, which are particularly relevant for the individual leader (or the organization that must recruit/further develop the leader, c.f. the list of organizational facilitators above) in identifying, cultivating or further developing competences at the **individual level**, are summarized in the following ten points:

1. **Complex leadership role**: Has the candidate previously held a complex leadership role either locally or globally? (A local complex leadership role is a good starting point for a global complex leadership role: for example, in matrix or project organizations, or in contexts in which distance leadership is called for.)
2. **Network**: Does the candidate have an extensive international network to draw on? And what role has the candidate played in this network, which is beneficial from a business perspective? (Demonstrated ability to network and build social capital.)
3. **Positive, global experience that has generated results**: Has the candidate worked (successfully) overseas? And have these overseas activities involved comprehensive contact with "locals"? (Successful integration and positive contact with another structure or another society provide a good basis for global activities.)
4. **English**: Is the candidate proficient in both spoken and written English? (The establishment of relationships, building trust and conflict resolution require more than schoolbook English.)
5. **Several foreign languages**: Is the candidate proficient in any other foreign languages? (The acquisition of several foreign languages frequently indicates that the person is keen to establish international contacts and/or has international experience and curiosity.)
6. **Self-awareness**: Does the candidate possess knowledge of his/her own culture? And has he/she looked at that culture closely, and in a critical light? (Knowledge of one's own culture is a cornerstone in terms of becoming a "grounded cosmopolitan".)
7. **Personality**: Does the candidate have a personality profile that equips him/her favorably in terms of global success? (For example, research emphasizes characteristics such as curiosity, empathy, willingness to take risks, ability to inspire confidence, self-awareness, tolerance of uncertainty and willingness to change as particularly appropriate.)
8. **Dealing with complexity**: Is the candidate capable of dealing with a large degree of

complexity? (A certain level of cognitive ability to handle complexity and code-switching is necessary, if one is to begin to understand and deal with a high level of complexity, which must be expected in a position of global leadership.)

9. **Family life:** Is the applicant's family life geared to a position that involves a lot of traveling time and Skype conversations at odd times of the day? (So-called "dual career couple" issues are a reality for many families with two breadwinners and careers, and are acknowledged as one of the main reasons why overseas postings are unexpectedly interrupted. Even short-term postings overseas make extra demands on cooperation at home.)
10. **Diversity on their home ground**: Does the candidate live a diverse private life, or do his/her family, friends, neighbors and other acquaintances have the same professional, cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and political background as the candidate?

If no opportunity is provided for employing global competences (c.f. list of organizational facilitators), they are not very beneficial. Even if there is plenty of room for the practice of global leadership, one makes no progress, if the individual leader is not competent and motivated to use his/her qualifications (cf. list of individual enablers). This is in keeping with the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity- framework (Boxall & Purcell, 2003, 2011; Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg & Kalleberg, 2000), suggesting that the level of performance, e.g. outcomes of actions and behavior of employees, depends on the mutual presence of employee ability, motivation and opportunity of which the last requires individual initiative to seize opportunities as well as supportive organizational structures.

3.9 The Strategic Global Mindset Capability Model

Therefore, to summarize both the individual and the organizational level, described in all 20 points included in the two lists in the previous sections, it means that, if global mindset is to flourish in coherence between these two levels, as underlined in Gupta & Govindarajan's recommendations, alignment (which is not necessarily equal to standardization) between business strategy, organizational enablers and individual drivers must be created to provide an integrated perspective. Such a framework for seeing strategic global mindset in coordination with individual and organizational enablers is proposed in the below strategic global mindset capability model:

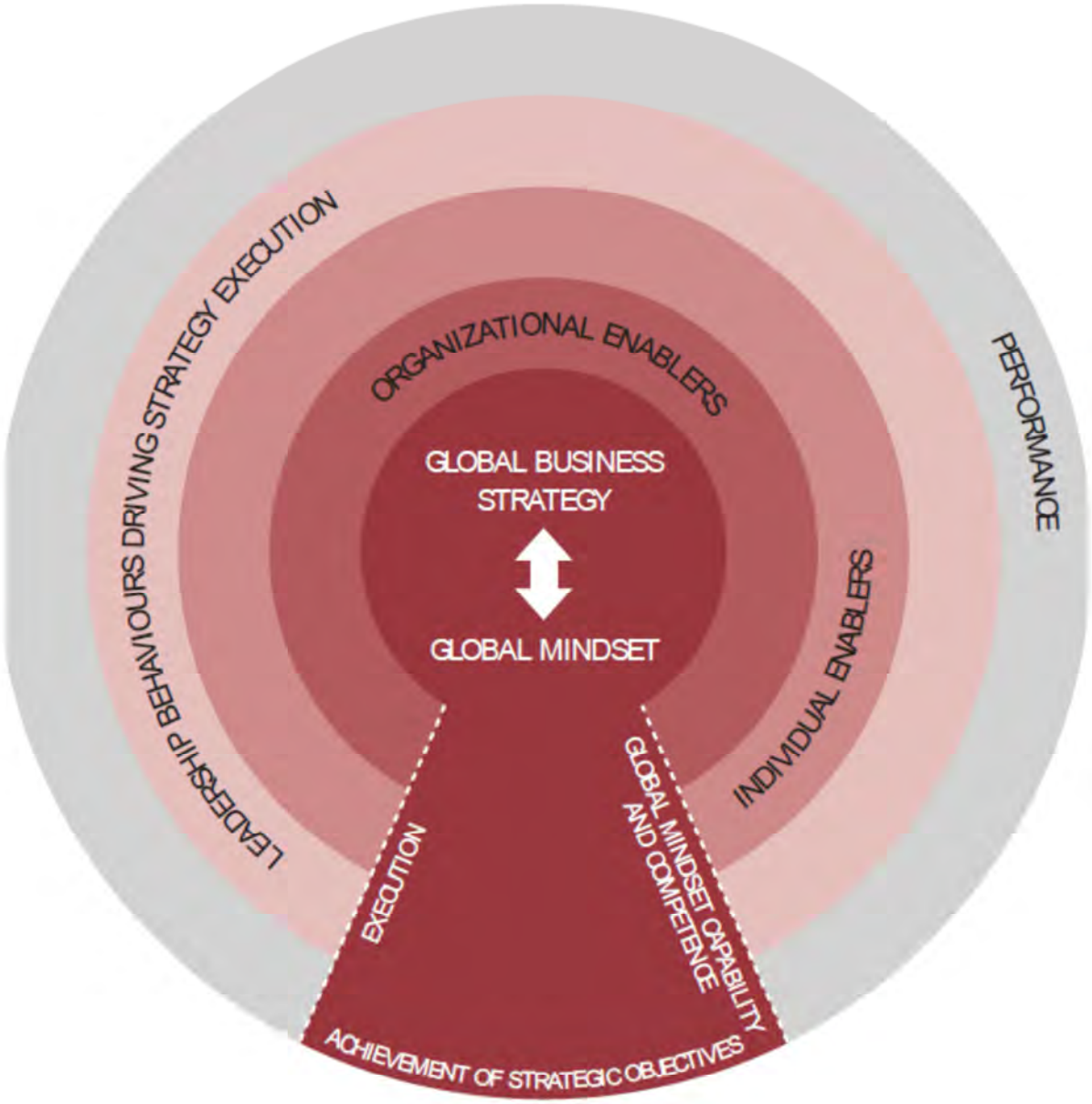

Figure 3.3: Strategic global mindset capability model: Individual and organizational enablers. Source: Author, Nielsen 2013b, 2014.

The solar plexus of the figure is the company's international/global business strategy that determines where and in what way leadership with global mindset is required. To support the conduct of, and compliance with the strategy, there is a layer of organizational levers: facilitators that must provide the opportunity for globally motivated and skilled individuals to implement the strategy.

Individual characteristics in persons who are in a favorable position in terms of executing strategy with global mindset are located in the next circle. The specific types of behavior and actions that for each company are considered to advance implementation, are located in the penultimate ring, and performance

in the last. Here “performance” refers to the implementation of the strategy (whether the content of the strategy in itself is appropriate and leads to success in the market, is another story).

The strategic global mindset capability model can be seen as a summation of the author’s pre-understanding of extant literature about global mindset as both an individual managerial meta-competence and organizational capability, related to business strategy and performance discussed in the previous sections and the analysis in the dissertation’s Part III, will be conducted against the backdrop of this model. The strategic global mindset capability model, then, provides a theoretical framework and conceptual answers to the research sub-questions of “Strategic global mindset: What it is and why it is important” as “Why and how global mindset can function as an organizational capability” which will be explored empirically in the case study organization in the analysis with a view to contributing with new knowledge of the microfoundations of managerial practice with regards to organizational and individual enablers of global mindset. In the model, global mindset competence and capability are depicted as a keyhole shape, potentially unlocking achievement of international business strategy objectives and business performance. In the following section, possible ‘key’-elements are discussed which are to be further explored from en empirical point of view in the analysis.

3.10 Creating and Maintaining Global Mindset as a Competence and Capability

In terms of the individual leader, global mindset competence can be developed by means of specific training activities in or outside of his/her work context. There is a lot that a globally interested leader can also do in the sphere of his/her private life to acquire a more global vision. We are not talking about a long-term stay in faraway, exotic places, even though, in the words of the Danish author Carsten Jensen, it is by travelling that we regain our capacity to see and hear. It is important to note that communication with people of a different cultural background does not automatically lead to special intercultural competences. It is the quality of the experience, along with the space and ability to reflect on that cultural encounter, that creates results. So, international experience does not necessarily equal a positive outlook on globality - it depends on the nature and quality of international experience which can be illustrated by juxtaposing international experience or not with positive/negative positive perception on foreignness creating for archetypical positions:

Internationally experienced	Globalization cynics: *'I came, I saw…and hurried back home'*	'Once in a life-time' expats & Serial cosmopolitans
Internationally inexperienced	Ethnocentrics	Globalization romantics
	Negative perception of 'abroad' and 'away'	**Positive perception of 'abroad' and 'away'**

Figure 3.4: International experience and global outlook – 4 archetypes. Source: Author.

In the upper left hand quadrant we find a group of people, the 'Globalization cynics', who do have international experience, which have resulted in a negative perception of abroad/away not in keeping with global mindset. This group may be lacking in global mindset to the same extend as the internationally inexperienced with a negative perception of abroad/away (bottom left hand quadrant, "Ethnocentrics") and thus an employer may prioritize the internationally experienced with a positive attitude although their ideas of working globally may be somewhat naïve or romantic. In the upper right hand corner internationally experienced people, including both 'once-in-a-life-time' expats of 'serial cosmopolitans', people on the fly continuously, have drawn a positive outlook from international experience conducive with global mindset.

Research also emphasizes that the acquisition of foreign languages in itself promotes the development of a global identity (Shokof & Erez, 2006; Erez & Gati, 2004) conducive to global mindset even if the person never leaves his home country or gets to practice the acquired foreign languages in their native setting (Walker & Javidan, 2013). For the people who already have positive (Lee, Reicke & Song, 2011) overseas experience and have mastered several languages, it is important to remember that this applies not only to developing or further developing competences, but also for maintaining global mindset. Some researchers point out that international experience and global mindset are not irreversible conditions, which cannot be changed to a more local mindset, if one is located for a long period of time in more local, homogeneous environments (Pucik, 2006; Straub-Bauer, 2013).

For anyone who would like to develop and maintain a broad horizon, simply reading books is a frequently undervalued and cheap way of travelling in the mind and drawing inspiration from the experience of others. In his thank you speech upon receiving a literary award in 2007, the Israeli author Amos Oz expressed it very aptly. *"When one reads a foreign novel, one is invited into other people's living rooms,*

their children's rooms and studies, and even their bedrooms. You will be invited into their secret grieves, their joys, their dreams". He continued, *"That is why I believe in literature as a bridge between nations. I believe that curiosity can actually have a moral dimension. I believe that the ability to put oneself in other people's shoes can be a means of combating fanaticism. To put oneself in others' shoes will not only make one a better businessman or a better lover, but also a better human being"* (Lohman, 2010). This digression into fictional authors is not to suggest that global leadership development courses or global talent rotation programs are futile or unnecessary, or that they should be replaced with a visit to the local library section on international fiction. The point is to highlight the fact that several of the basic cognitive competences suggested to enhance individual global mindset can be learned 'at home', i.e. by reading books, listening to news from different countries, learning to speak a new foreign language and paying attention to diversity in general in the local environment (Story, 2011). This emphasizes that the individual manager can develop his/her own global mindset regardless of inclusion into leadership development programs on his/her own initiative, thus seizing opportunity where it may arise, even locally.

3.11 Global Mindset - the more, the better?

It is tempting to believe that one can never have enough global mindset, that everyone must have this (Gupta, Govindarajan & Wang, 2008), and that "*Once top executives become aware of the connections between mindset, practices and outcomes, they can begin to leverage culture for better business performance*." (Thomas, Harburg & Dutra, 2007, p. 6). It is undeniably difficult to be an opponent of global mindset: it sounds modern, appealing and correct. After all, who wants to be classified as having a local, domestic or ethnocentric mindset? There is a social pressure to be trendy. But this may not necessarily reflect a company's strategic reality. If one asks Ghemawat, a professor of strategy and author of the book *World 3.0: Global Prosperity and How to Achieve It* (2011), there are many of us who suffer from "globaloney": globalization madness, rooted in highly exaggerated notions of globalization and its consequences. According to Ghemawat, there is no evidence for viewing globalization as an all-consuming, unstoppable force. Based on his analysis of world trade and international relations, it would be an exaggeration to characterize the current situation as more than semi-global. Part of Ghemawat's explanation for the non-recognition of globalization's (according to him) more moderate extent, or globalization madness, is that decision-makers in international/global organizations usually live much more globalized (working) lives than the rest of the population, including their own staff. They overestimate the scale of globalization and its impact on staff and the company in general.

Many of the recommendations, which companies can draw from research into global leadership and global mindset, are based on a more flattened "corporate world order", consistent with Friedman's conclusion that "The World is Flat" (Friedman, 2007). This is an understanding that Ghemawat and others consider

misleading and perhaps not in line with the Danish or European commercial landscape. The ideal, and thus the objective of leadership development activities aimed at the formation of global leaders in the "flat world", is usually the omni-cultural and organizationally liberated person, a merchant seaman sailing round the world with a girlfriend in every port. Such professionals certainly do exist: international "corporate nomads", who join forces with other "travelers" in the global world order, and live lives, which in many ways are way beyond the kind of context described in a Danish study of global professionals (Storgaard & Skovgaard, 2012). Meanwhile, the question is whether this group is typical or a distinctive minority (Ministry of Education, 2005)? Moreover, one wonders whether this style of working life is realistic for the majority, and whether or not it is actually necessary.

As regards the majority of leaders, Ghemawat's answer is no. He adopts a differentiation perspective in terms of global leadership skills. Only a small core need the global mindset leadership skills and they should be under no illusion that they can cultivate them locally. This group in particular should be supplied with "globaloney antidote", so they can catch up with the fact that the vast majority can do with regional leadership competences. In this respect, HQ managers are particularly in a danger zone of influencing the dominant logic (Kaplan, 2008) to be one of a global reality that is out of tune with the rest of the organization. Above the clouds, as we all know, the sun always shines and, with a bird's eye view, the world maybe appears flat(ter) to senior executives, who move in these higher altitudes. However, for the vast majority of employees and leaders in the global world, working life is quite earthbound, visibility is poorer, and the earth is still spherical. Similarly, Gupta & Govindarajan argue that global mindset is not equally important for every single group in an organization, that it does not manifest itself in the same way at the various leadership levels, and that it depends on the task. *"Although we contend that returns to investment in cultivating a global mindset would always be positive, we do not expect them to be uniform. The value added by global mindset, and the value subtracted by its absence, is likely to be strongest in the case of those individuals who are directly responsible for managing cross-border activities, followed by those who must interact frequently with colleagues from other countries"* (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2001, p. 124).

Finally, the group of cosmopolitan nomads may be difficult to keep motivated and interested because they may develop disinterest in and disrespect for local job tasks and, not least, more locally oriented colleagues (Pucik, 2006; Javidan, 2011). In fact, home culture grounding and identification with your home country may be a positive factor for positive outlook on globality in keeping with global mindset, while over-identification with globality may render it difficult to collaborate with more domestically and locally oriented persons thus not mirroring the ability to handle local and global simultaneously central to global mindset. This can be illustrated in the below matrix producing four archetypical outlooks in international collaboration based on negative/neutral or positive attitude towards home and abroad /away respectively:

Positive perception of 'abroad' and 'away'	(Grounded) cosmopolitans	'Globaloneys' Global 'nomads' and 'gypsies'
Negative/neutral perception of 'abroad' and 'away'	Nationalists	Wanna-be immigrants & Nostalgics
	Positive perception of 'home', 'local', 'domestic'	**Negative/neutral perception home', 'local', 'domestic'**

Figure 3.5: Perceptions of home and away – 4 archetypes. Source: Author.

The wanna-be immigrants and nostalgics are driven away from something rather than drawn towards something else thus seeking – if given opportunity – to assimilate and go native in effect not being able to bridge home and away. The nationalist are too caught up in maintaining and cherishing their own background to really embrace 'the other', and 'globaloneys' – although very internationally oriented, have lost a positive outlook of their own background in effect losing their ability to engage with locals. A middle ground is occupied by the grounded cosmopolitans being positive about their own background and home culture while at the same time celebrating 'the other.' And so, the global nomad workers with an high degree of cosmopolitanism may not be in pole position in terms of developing a global mindset and role as boundary spanners and paradox navigators as they have taken sides in the local-global duality.

While Ghemawat claims that we exaggerate how many people should be global in the cross-border sense of the word, and thus narrows down the group of leaders, who need to practice global leadership, other global leadership perspectives indicate that globality is also present at the national and local levels. If one adopts a perspective on global leadership in the sense of border-crossing, paradox leadership, this expands the group of leaders, who need to practice global leadership and includes a group of persons, whom up to now we have not noticed in the global leadership landscape. It is a matter of local, national-level staff with extensive international collaborative interfaces, but it is also a matter of companies, who want to achieve results across organizations (locally) or within the context of the diversity of local, multicultural society. In short, the group of persons, for whom global leadership is relevant, has been expanded to include far more than the traditional group of leaders, who have been posted overseas.

When we talk about global leadership, we often take for granted that the company already has a global strategy, and has achieved a considerable level of internationalization. Global mindset is necessary for leaders, who work in a company with a global strategy (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2001), and that global mindset should be conducted and implemented in relation to the implementation of strategy and specific management behavior in this context (Rosenfeldt, 2013; DEA, 2013). But research also points to the fact that global mindset is important in relation to the actual formulation of the strategy. This includes the question of whether national companies can arrive at a strategy that makes the most of the opportunities in global markets. Local companies with global vision have more success in internationalization and are more likely to tackle globality. This includes another group of leaders, for whom leadership with global mindset can be a competitive parameter: those who are ready to go global or born globals (Gabrielsson & Kirpalani, 2012; Poole, 2012).

3.12 Summing-up

Global leadership is globalized leadership - leadership in a special context, characterized by strategic and cultural complexity, crossing mental, organizational and physical boundaries, dealing with paradoxes, reduction of transaction costs and opposition to fragmentation, and a focus on "just enough" common ground. Leadership in this domain is leadership with a global mindset. This is relevant for companies and organizations that make strategic use of global mindset as a driver for global business strategy. The context of the individual company is an indicator for what global mindset means in the particular company, and for who should have it. As such, global leadership is not in any way limited to staff posted overseas or companies with offices in more countries than there are members of the United Nations. The business of leadership is becoming globalized, and more people can benefit from global mindset for implementing border-crossing strategies. What is needed is global, borderless, boundary-crossing management, even when a passport is not necessary. Global leadership is not one-size-fits-all. We neither can, nor should, all develop global mindset to the same extent, and businesses need to define it in relation to the specific strategic situation. Thus, the aim of working with global mindset, regardless of the specific strategic anchorage, is not necessarily 100% global mindset for everyone in every position and role, but the optimization of global mindset in relation to the situation, the managerial role and the business strategy. The objective is to create "just-enough": sufficient to prevent fragmentation and diversity from causing paralysis and confusion; but not so much that your company cannot be flexible entrepreneurs in many locations simultaneously in a process of "disciplined agility" (Jules & Lynton, 2012).

PART II: METHODOLOGY & EMPIRICAL BASIS

Chapter 4: Methodology Intro 'Research Photocol'

One avenue for keeping track of rich data and real-time reflections on fieldwork is to keep a research diary and collecting field setting physical artefacts to help jolt memory. In this research project, keeping a research diary (written or tape recordings) has been supplemented by what could be called a 'research photocol'(cf. photo protocol) – a visual research diary of photos, drawings and videos. The following first couple of pages (as well as the final pages leading up to the case study in Part III) of this second part of the dissertation on research design, empirical basis and methodology are dedicated to visually introducing some central moments of fieldwork and various forms of what could be called 'assisted reflection'. Assisted reflection designates instances of making sense of both global mindset as well as methodological opportunities and challenges of doing research from an insider position between practice and academia by actively engaging in dialogue with a variety of communities of practice. These communities range from internal field member fora in the case company as well as external audiences of academic colleagues, business school students, and a number of global mindset practitioner fora. In the following, a selection of research photocol highlights are presented to give an impression of the nature of researcher engagement and field embeddedness as a springboard for understanding the empirical basis and methodological challenges and opportunities at the center of attention in this part of the dissertation:

Figure 4.1: Industrial PhD: "Visiting scholar" or academic business guest? Author participating in the Solar introduction seminar for new employees, central warehouse tour, Vejen, Denmark, September 9, 2011. Photo: Rikke Kristine Nielsen.

Figure 4.2: Project field impact

Left: Presentation of industrial PhD-project in Solar Annual Report 2012. **Right**: 'Job-add' for master's thesis writer distributed to the cand.merc./cand.soc. human resource management master programs at Copenhagen Business School, where the Solar employer branding efforts were presented as a case about which students prepared memos in a course on "Strategic HRM in practice and theory." Autumn 2013.

Figure 4.3: Group work with participants on strategies for 'Co-Creating Actionable Research', professional development workshop, US Academy of Management 2013 Annual Meeting in Orlando, August 2013.Arranged by the author and including presentations by Anthony Buono, Rickie Moore, Flemming Poulfelt, Majken Schultz, Therese Yaeger and Rikke Kristine Nielsen (Buono et al., 2013).

Figure 4.4: Mixing business and academia. Solar's Corporate HR Director Heidrun Marstein presenting the Solar 'Group Mindset' teaching case (Nielsen, 2013e) at the CBS BA Science Theory course, January 2013.

Figure 4.5: Soliciting external opinions on global mindset at Danish Association of Managers and Executives, The Think Tank DEA and Network of Corporate Academies conference "A fast Track to Global Mindset", Copenhagen, April 17, 2013. Photo: Morten Skov, DEA.

Left: Practitioner participants and some academics preparing to do group work on 'Three Things To Do' to develop a global mindset in 24 months (DEA think tank (2013). **Right**: Plenary debate on practical global mindset development with invited panelist including the author.

Figure 4.6: Participant observation, German Solar Group Leadership Programme, Germany, August 2011. Even if popcorn is served with powdered sugar instead of salt in Germany, the same popcorn metaphor of change acceptance rate in organizations is used in both international and localized versions of the Solar Group Leadership Programme (GLP). Photo: Rikke Kristine Nielsen.

Figure 4.7: Communicating and internal project campaigning: What does an industrial PhD do in Solar and why? Author being interviewed about Solar group mindset for Solar TV by Corporate Communication Coordinator Laila Steenfat. Source: Screen dumps extracted by the author from video produced by Ebbe Wendelboe, Solar TV, August 2012.

4.1 Doing 'Double Hurdle Research' with Rigor and Vigor

Following the advice of Nobel laureate Myrdahl "*we should not try to claim to be objective, but instead show the values that may affect the results of our research*" (quoted in Löwstedt & Stjernberg, 2006, p. 9). Although this is not a confessional tale (Van Maanen, 1988) or a piece of frustration for the matter, I begin with a little story as my point of departure for discussing the potential value propositions and dilemmas of doing qualitative, collaborative research on global mindset from inside the case company/researcher employer organization of this study, Solar A/S, and from a position in-between academia and practice:

Some three months after taking up a career as an industrial PhD after ten years of practical business experience in HR and leadership development, I participated at the Academy of Management's Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, in the summer of 2011. I was thrilled to find myself in a "management super-mall" of anything you could possibly desire within organization and management studies – and not so thrilled to find that the very foundation of my industrial PhD project, including doing insider research in my employer organization, was called into question in ways I had not anticipated. For example, asking a seasoned ethnographer in a workshop about tips for working with qualitative data from an insider perspective, I was advised "*not to do so if I had the possibility not to*"... As an industrial PhD departing with the reported Academy of Management's reactions to doing research in my employer organization in the back of my mind, I was very inspired by Flyvbjerg's account (2005) of his challenges in coming to terms with the (adverse) reaction of his immediate professional surroundings to case study research designs, and found hope in the fact that there are examples of research done from within an employment relationship, published in high-ranking journals representing what could be considered the mainstream take on insider research (e.g. Schultz & Hernes, 2012, p. 13).

Further, I was inspired by the 2012 AoM Management Consulting Division Distinguished Speaker address, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, stressing that researchers are optimists by nature in that we want to and should try to make a positive difference in the world. Against the backdrop of corporate scandal and global financial crisis, increasing (European) political demands on universities to demonstrate value for a variety of stakeholders (Jacob & Hellström, 2003) and the critique of management education expressed by the Carnegie2 report and academia (e.g. Lynes & Brown, 2011; Baldwin, Pierce, Joines & Farouk, 2011), 'hanging out' (Dingwall, 1997) in practice increasingly does not equal sitting on the fence as a researcher (Ramage, 1995). Researchers should dare to care and to make a difference - "*[r]ather than emphasizing 'impact' by way of citation counts, which typically include only fellow academics citing our work, might we consider what could be the <u>true</u> impact on individuals, their work experiences and lives?"* (Bell, 2011, p. 702). Following this line of reasoning, I have been greatly relieved to find that there is a diversity of research methodologies that caters for my initial taken-for-granted assumption that academic and practical knowledge about management can and should co-exist and cross-fertilize (not least in the Scandinavian countries):

"*There is no reason to see one [form of knowledge, ed.] as superior to the other; instead, knowledge production may be strengthened by using the different sources and methods of knowledge production in cooperation"* (Löwsted & Stjernberg, 2006, p. 5).

With that said, 'double hurdle' research (Pettigrew, 2001, 2008) aiming for both academic and practical impact by engaging closely with practitioners/field members, especially when conducted from an insider position, remains somewhat of an elephant in the room. Practitioner engagement and production of actionable knowledge are deemed to pay a price for actionability so that the greatest benefits of, for instance, case-based research' may not be to '*… produce rigorous answers, but rather to raise interesting questions.*' (Martin, 2012, p. 298). A fellow newcomer researcher at one point even suggested that I should just present my study as a single case study and not mention the fact that I am part-time employed by the organization under study, since this was the inevitable path to desk reject and academic trouble in general… And certainly, qualitative studies in general (also the not-insider ones) are deemed to be less controllable, more emergent and hence more demanding, less publishable and risky for a first-time researcher (Barley, 2005; Pratt, 2008). Some researchers, then, stick to a cautious arm-length approach to reaching out to practitioners and practitioner benefit suggesting measuring researcher performance (and indirectly impact) by counting number of non-academic webpages indexed by the Google search engine as an alternative way of evaluating impact on practice (Anguinis, Suárez-Gonzáles, Lannelongue & Joo, 2012). Other researchers move a little closer in on practitioners by suggesting facilitating intermediaries between research and practice as a vehicle for increased collaboration, arguing that "*the reason why the research-practice gap endures is that bridging it is beyond the capabilities and scope of most individuals"* (Bansal, Bertels, Ewart, MacConnachie & O'Brien, 2012, p. 73); i.e. researchers should team up with "go-between" professionals to reach out. Yet others go all in suggesting that assessment of research quality ideally be co-produced and quality co-assessed with practitioners (Svensson, Ellström & Brulin, 2007) or promoting the ideal that 'real social science' *is dedicated to enhancing socially relevant forms of knowledge, that is, 'phronesis' (practical wisdom on how to address and act on social problems in a particular context)"* (Flyvbjerg, Landman & Schram, 2012, p. 1*).* In a similar vein, socially responsible innovation achieved through the democratic involvement of multiple actors in "doing, using, interacting (DUI) mode" has been suggested as a viable path ahead for sustainable business (Gustavsen, 2011).

One recent expression of academia's self-reflection on the nature and goals of the relationship between research and practice is the ongoing debate on the elusive concept of actionable research (Pearce & Huang, 2012 a, 2012b; Bartunek & Egri, 2012, Ireland, 2012; Martin, 2012; Greve, 2012; Stewart & Barrick, 2012; Aldag, 2012; Pearce, 2012); i.e. research producing knowledge that can be acted upon in practice and give rise to practical action with practical relevance. Summing up on the debate on actionable research ignited by Pearce and Huang's assessment of the wasted resources of non-actionable research (2012a), Bartunek and

Egri sum up the ensuing debate stating that " [F]*irst, an important objective of scholarly research is to inform management and organizational practice*" and goes on to encourage academics to "*find new ways to seek out and identify research questions as well as to improve the translation and communication of their findings to non-academic audiences*" (Bartunek & Egri, 2012, p. 245).

Guided by dislike for the ethical implications of hiding my employment relationship, a general reluctance towards being an "academic coward" and not least personal motivation (Empson, 2012; Vesa & Franck, 2012), I choose to open the Pandora's Box of doing qualitative collaborative research from an insider position in my project. This is not to dismiss that there are good reasons for detached research such as generalizability or minimization of risk field over-identification, going native, lack of critical distance to data, self-censorship and development of 'field snow blindness'. In addition, giving priority to practitioner relevance and impact over the course of a research project may also entail that the researcher will have to follow suite when strategic priorities in the field change. 'Going with the flow'-working conditions are not conducive to trying to control theoretical contributions aimed at a particular community, or just any researcher community for that matter, an outcome more readily available to the detached researcher, who are sole beneficiaries and decision-makers with regards to the contents of their research project. The choice to engage in collaborative, qualitative insider research is on the one hand born out of necessity as the Danish industrial PhD program is designed with a view to placing the researcher in an insider position. On the other hand, it is an active choice of aiming for deliberate impact maximization (academic and practical).

As industrial PhD fellow, the researcher has privileged data access in the research project's host organization, which entails an unique opportunity to secure practitioner relevance through joint formulation of research questions, as well as ongoing implementation of research results in existing systems, management tools etc. in the host organization to secure sustainable impact during and after project termination. In addition, practitioners are in a position to contribute with insights and benefits not yet covered by the academia so that it is not only a question of research impacting practice, but also about practice impacting on research in ways not conceivable within extant literature. Furthermore, I believe that the uniqueness of this research project lies in part in the nature and quality of organizational access and collaboration with the organizational field of study, whose members not only accept and embrace researcher presence, but actively seek to involve and engage the researcher as a knowledge resource and co-creator in ongoing organizational processes: "*The expectations for the project are to have a dynamic process, where we in a controlled and scientific way get some concrete answers and suggestions to the above questions. It is also important for Solarians to create a value-adding integration of the project into the leadership development program at Solar Business Academy, known as Group Leadership Programme (GLP), so we along the way can adjust and test the findings of the project and the actual curriculum of the training program*" (Internal correspondence, Claus Sejr, December 2010). But how to make the most of the industrial

PhD setup for exploring strategic global mindset management practices and minimizing potential hazards? What research positions are available to the industrial PhD researcher? How can challenges and opportunities of this research position be encountered and optimized for the benefit of data quality and research validity? These have been central challenges and questions of the present research project and have given rise to the formulation of one of the sub-questions through which the overall research question is explored: *'How can validity challenges researching global mindset qualitatively from an insider position be addressed?'*

Being close and collaborative will hopefully enable me to present novel and interesting empirical material and at the same time make a solid theoretical contribution of general interest to academics (Barley, 2005; Davis, 1971) and practitioners alike. Working under the assumption that it is both possible and desirable to produce high quality research when performing a research project in which the researcher permanently, or for the purpose of the project, is a member of the studied organization, trade-offs, challenges and counter strategies involved in a position at the intersection of distance and nearness where "participant observation" becomes "participating observer" are debated in this part of the dissertation. First, the industrial PhD setup is used as a showcase of research, conducted with a view to mutual value co-creation in close collaboration with practitioners. This is done by addressing dilemmas inherent in and typical for a social sciences industrial PhD research design within management and organization studies, but which are shared with other collaborative, field-work intensive forms of research, carried out by researchers and practitioners in concert with the ambition of producing actionable knowledge about management and leadership. As such, although the industrial PhD setup could be considered a deviant case, this research position exemplifies and amplifies validity challenges facing researchers using field engagement as an avenue for producing research with both rigor and vigor, practical and theoretical impact. Then the research conditions of the industrial PhD, working from an insider position with qualitative data, is presented and portrayed as characterized by 1) obtrusive, qualitative data collection from an insider position; 2) formal obligation to co-create both academic and practical value; and 3) dual-allegiance (employment) relationship spanning a case organization and a university department, practice and academia. Next, departing from these characteristics of the industrial PhD research setting, research co-creation of actionable research with practitioners is characterized as a methodological landscape of doing research *in/with(in)* organizations, *for* organizations and *in-between* organizations. Methodological requirements for research quality optimization within these three domains, when carrying out research in close cooperation with the field and with the ambition of simultaneously creating academic and practical value, are highlighted as potential counter-strategies. Against this backdrop, the research design and methods used in the present research project are discussed vis-à-vis research validity strategies for maximizing opportunities and minimizing challenges of exploring strategic global mindset from a middle manager perspective as an organizational capability in an industrial PhD research setting.

4.2 The Research Setting: Industrial PhD Research Co-creation

The challenges of exploring global mindset development in the making from a middle manager perspective, by co-creating actionable research in close collaboration with practitioners at the heart of the present research, is carried out from a position as industrial PhD fellow enrolled in a business focused PhD education. An industrial PhD research project is conducted in cooperation between an Industrial PhD fellow, a university, and a private company, which applies for a subsidy from the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation. The fellow is employed by the company and paid a salary during the entire Industrial PhD education, dividing her work between the university and the company over the three-year course of the project (for further information on the Danish Industrial PhD program and the formalities surrounding the employment relationship, please see Appendix B 'The Danish Industrial PhD Program' and 'Ethical considerations/declaration of conflicting interest´). As described in Chapter 1 'Prologue' and Chapter 2 'Introduction' the industrial PhD research project case explores global mindset as a managerial meta-competence and organizational capability for strategy execution, and is carried out in a Danish-based, listed, medium-sized technical wholesaler, Solar A/S, operating in eight European countries.

The industrial PhD can be seen as a project manager that deals with a number of stakeholders (Freeman, 1984) with different expectations and quality standards as illustrated in the stakeholder diagram of the industrial PhD project case below:

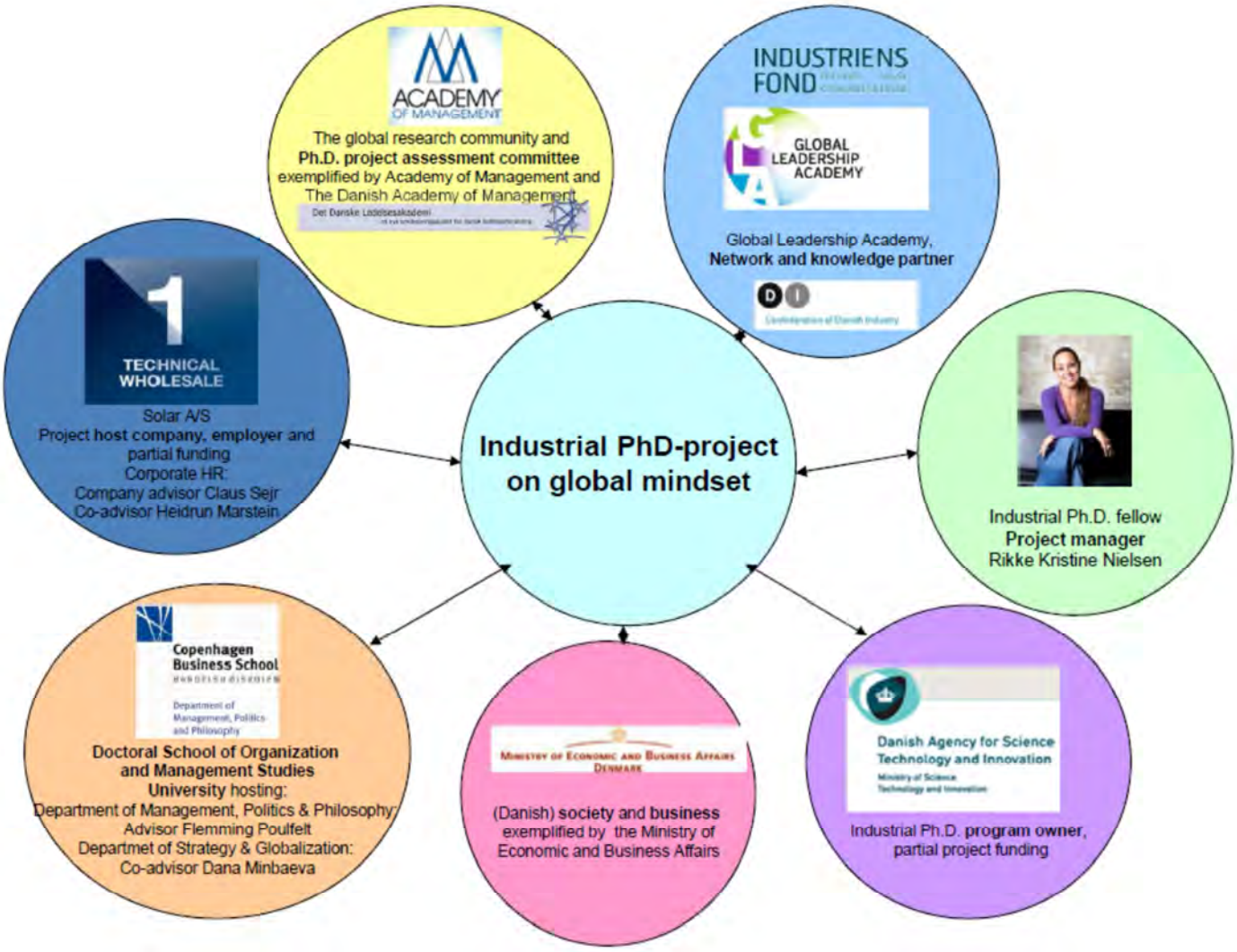

Figure 4.8: Main stakeholders of the industrial PhD research project.

Each (group of) stakeholder(s) in the diagram represents different resources, expectations and types of stakes in the industrial PhD project, all of which should be mediated successfully throughout the project process. In the stakeholder diagram, all stakeholders are illustrated as separate, but equal. In reality, some overlap and some are more important and powerful than others in that they have direct "show stopper" powers over the project. In this respect, the host company, the host university, and the PhD fellow are key players. So, the industrial PhD is born to span the academia-practitioner divide (Bansal, Bertels, Ewart, MacConnachie & O'Brien, 2012), being an outsider and a newcomer (Morrison, 1993) to the industrial PhD host corporation that come to enjoy full membership (as a formal employee) and gradual socialization into the field as an insider, but not enjoying complete membership (Coghlan & Brannick, 2009). At the same time, the industrial PhD is enrolled in a university; the research output is judged by same academic standards as a traditional PhD's, but in addition to meeting traditional research quality standards, funding is contingent upon

production of practical value and fulfilment of the business value proposition to the industrial PhD host organization.

The industrial PhD research project is considered a single case study (Yin, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2006) of the project host company, where the fellow is required by the industrial PhD program to spend approximately 50% of her time, and so the design operates within the notion on intrinsic casework (Stake, 1998). Given the nature of the research question requiring the researcher to explore the managerial microfoundations of working with global mindset development and change, which are understudied areas of organizational practice, it is necessary to get in close contact with the field, particularly middle managers, in order to be open to bottom-up input of a different nature than extant literature, which predominantly focuses on top management global mindset as well as more generic, not localized and strategically contingent interpretations of global mindset. Also, answering the call for more exploratory, qualitative studies of global mindset as well as the call for a more pluralistic approach to international business case studies, requires field immersion and engagement. In order to explore practical microfoundations of global mindset not covered in extant literature and knowledge of global mindset, the research is mainly carried out from an insider field-immersion position using highly obtrusive, qualitative data gathering techniques such as participant and participat*ing* observation, interviewing, 'hanging around', tape recording and video recording and participation. (The nature of the data collection and empirical basis of the project is presented in more detail in the last section of Part II.)

The industrial PhD project setting of this global mindset research project, can then be characterized as:

1) a formalized dual-allegiance research setup working the *in-between* of academia and practice,
2) where practitioner and academic interest by contract assume equal status in that there is a formal obligation to co-produce research *for* field practitioners with both practical and academic value.
3) In the case organization, this is primarily done through obtrusive, qualitative data collection *in* and *with(in*) the field from an insider position.

4.3 Co-creating Research in/with(in), for and in-between Organizations

An industrial PhD, then, can be characterised as being bound by both formal and psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995) to do research *in/with(in), for* and *in-between* organizations. In this section, the methodological challenges and possible counter/optimization strategies for producing valid research under these conditions are explored with a view to highlighting challenges and opportunities to cater for in the research design with a view to producing quality, i.e. valid and practically actionable input for all principal stakeholders.

Against the backdrop of the industrial PhD case research setting this section introduces a map of the research co-creation territory, characterizing research co-creation done in close engagement with practice and a view to mutual value creation. The map has been drawn based on literature studies on methodological inroads to co-creating actionable research in the case organization research setting as characterized in the previous section. This has been supplemented by PhD course activity on action research and engaged scholarship, knowledge exchange with mentees through being an industrial PhD mentor with the Doctoral School of Organization and Management Studies at Copenhagen Business School, as well as with other researchers engaged in research settings where the researcher is part-time employed by the field or otherwise closely affiliated with the field for the duration of the research project (Gummeson, 2010; Löwstedt & Stjernberg, 2006). Further, field notes and fruitful discussions in colloquia and sessions at the 2011, 2012 and 2013 Academy of Management annual meeting have generated additional perspectives, as have discussions in practitioner fora internally in the industrial PhD case organization and externally in formalized practitioner knowledge sharing fora with which the project is affiliated (cf. stakeholder diagram in Figure 2.2.1 above). Preliminary reflections have been further refined and reconsidered through papers presented at the Danish Academy of Management's (2012) and Nordic Academy of Management's (2013) annual meetings (Nielsen, 2012f; Nielsen, 2013f) as well as through organizing and participating in two professional development workshops (cf. intro and exit research 'photocol' in this Part II) organized by the author and held in cooperation with academic colleagues at the British Academy of Management's annual meeting 2012 and the US Academy of Management's annual meeting 2013 (Berg-Johansen, Flinn & Nielsen, 2012; Buono, Moore, Poulfelt, Nielsen, Schultz & Yaeger, 2013).

Co-creation of actionable research in close engagement with practice from an insider position working with qualitative data is positioned at the cross-roads of three different methodological domains - doing research *in/with(in)*, *for*, and *in-between* organizations and based on my research, an overview of relevant methodologies can be drawn arranging the methodologies as follows:

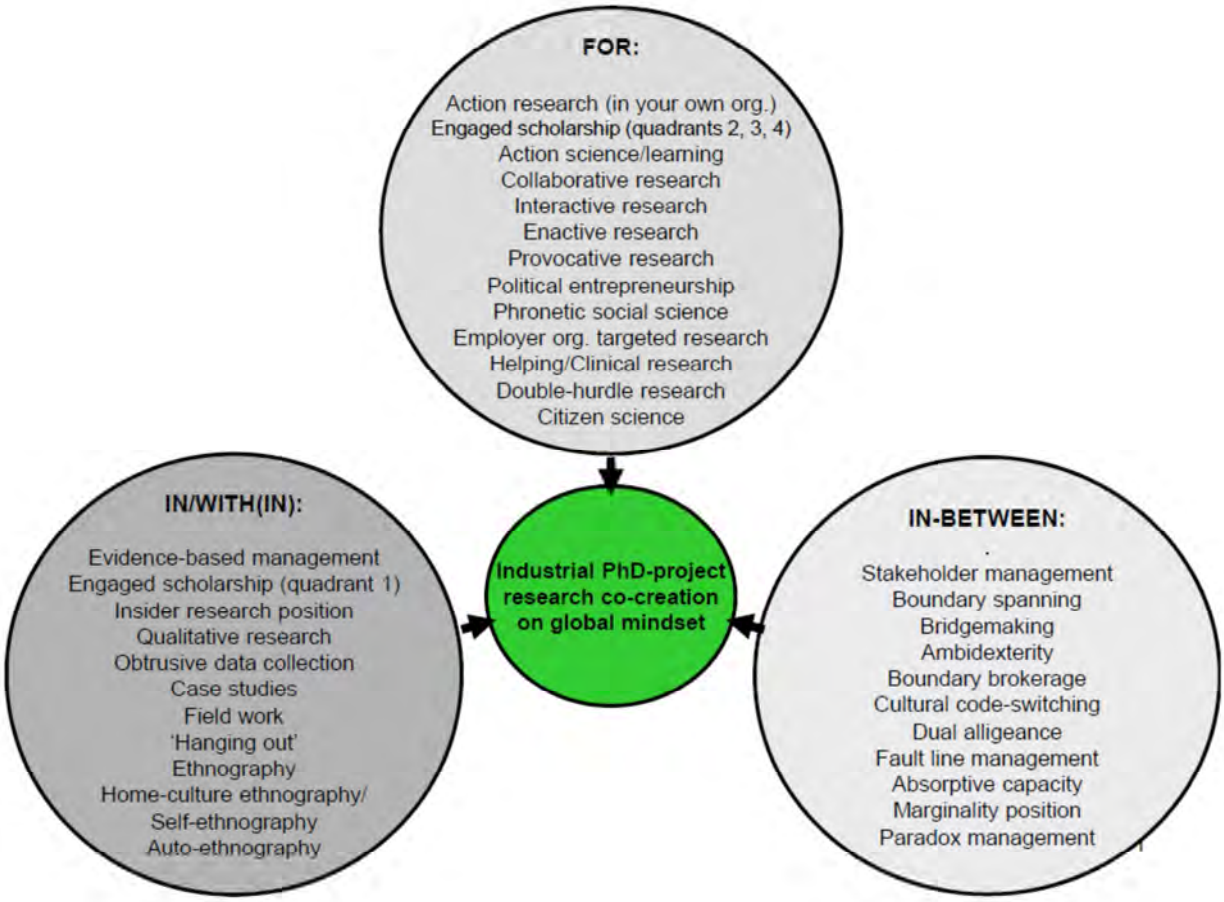

Figure 4.9: Methodological inroads to co-creating actionable research in the industrial PhD case organization

In figure 4.9 above, streams of research, theories and techniques for doing research in engagement with practice have been divided into three groups based on their take on the researcher's position and goals when engaging with the field.

The "*doing research in/with(in)* organizations'-domain contains inroads for doing research in close contact with the field and where collecting data will necessarily influence the field (as opposed to for instance mass media discourse analysis, public space surveillance cameras, or internet search patterns). The goal is to get close to the field, but mutual value creation is not a goal in itself, which is why self-ethnography, evidence-based management and quadrant 1 engaged scholarship are also placed in this domain.

The *'doing research for organizations'*-domain is exemplified by methodologies where a main goal of engaging with the field is to impact and create value for the field. "Pollution" of the field is not an unintended side-effect, but a goal in itself; i.e. field impact is intended. Action research, quadrant 2, 3 and 4

engaged scholarship are examples of methodologies, where research objects are turned into research subjects – research partners with a share in the creation and consumption of the research project outcome.

The *'doing research in-between organizations'*-domain is characterized by theories that deal with boundary crossing, be it physical, mental, organizational, or hierarchical boundaries mirroring the position of the industrial PhD researcher as a go-between of organizational and professional boundaries, and tackling different dominant logics as a basic condition positioned in the in-between of practice and academia.

Methodological challenges and possible strategies for accommodating challenges and optimizing research quality and validity when doing co-creational research in close engagement with practitioners informed by the three domains are discussed in the following.

4.3.1 Research Conditions for doing Research in/with(in) Organizations

A common challenge of doing research in, with and from within an organization is to frame research projects in such a way that being an insider is not necessarily an insurmountable problem (Parry, 1992; Coghlan & Brannick, 2009), but rather a complex position to be made the most of. Doing research in and from within organizations covers a broad range of research designs, whose common denominator is data collection from a field immersion position and mainly through obtrusive techniques (Adler & Adler,1994). As such, most case studies and qualitative studies in general could be said to fall into this category. Obtrusive data gathering research approaches for doing research with practice also includes methodological perspectives such as evidence-based management helping practitioners perform better when informed by research (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006; Briner, Denyer & Rousseau, 2009); engaged scholarship (Van den Ven, 2007) looking to proactively seek feedback and advice from practitioners in the research process; relational scholarship (Bartunek, 2007) seeking to establish academia-practitioner bridges (Bansal, Bertels, Ewart, MacConnachie & O'Brien, 2012); ethnography incl. auto-ethnography (Chang, 2008) and self-ethnography (Alvesson, 2005) as well as ethnographic fieldwork in general (Van Maanen, 1988).

Of particular concern here, though, is how obtrusive data gathering carried out from an insider position can be optimized, when the researcher is not only visiting for data collection purposes, but is part of the organizational field, such as is the case in an industrial PhD project (Ry Nielsen & Repstad, 2006; Coghlan, 2007). On the positive side of insider research, privileged data access and more detailed and richer documentation of organizational events is often cited as an obvious advantage (Ry Nielsen & Repstad, 1993, 2004, 2006; Coghlan & Brannick, 2009; Coghlan, 2007). On a continuum of data gathering methods ranging from obtrusive to non-obtrusive[3], the qualitative insider researcher is placed in the obtrusive end, but as an

[3] Unobtrusive methods do not include the direct elicitation of data from the research subjects and so the researcher observes without the awareness of the participants (Montgomery & Duck, 1993); the researcher refrains from interacting with subjects and tries to find indirect ways to obtain the necessary data. Unobtrusive data sources include a diverse group of sources such as garbage, graffiti, surveillance camera footage or web traffic as well as more conventional sources such as published statistics.

insider researcher she has privileged – if not uninhibited – access to both types of data. The insider researcher may be in a privileged position with regards to access to creating her own data through obtrusive channels (observations, interviews etc.), but as Säntti observes commenting on his own experience as an insider researcher: "*Naturally the organizational position of an inside researcher influences the amount of research materials available. On the other hand an organization's openness to 'neutral' external interviewers may sometimes be broader*" (Säntti, 2011, p. 1). In addition to data collection designed for a specific purpose, the insider researcher has access to a variety of unobtrusive, secondary data sources in that she may have access to a variety of databases and intranet, as well as access to archival data such as minutes of meetings, corporate surveys etc. Activation of such material is time-consuming, but can give the researcher information that she herself would have never thought of asking for.

This is a similar type of advantage as the rationale behind organizational "hanging out" (Dingwall, 1997), giving the researcher access to experiencing the social world that she did not think of as data collection opportunities. Hanging out (also sometimes referred to as "hanging around") can be described as an umbrella term for being physically (or virtually) present with no particular data collection agenda in the organization as one of three archetypical ways of doing social research: "*I once heard a distinguished anthropologist say something that I have shamelessly plagiarized ever since. 'There are', he declared, 'only two basic methods of social research. One is called 'asking questions,' and the other is called 'hanging out'". Since anthropologists traditionally study non-literate societies, sociologists might want to add a third method: 'reading the papers'. All human beings have used pretty much the same methods to find out about the social world around them ever since our species came down from the trees"* (Dingwall, 1997, p.52-53). The advantage of hanging around from a data collection perspective is nicely summarized by Lofland observing on the role of "hanging around" in her studies of urban life: "*Since I'm ''passing'' as someone who is simply hanging around in public, I get engaged by others in interaction, though I have rarely initiated it myself. . . .A lot of my data has come from situations in which I was out in public for non-research purposes. That is, I watch myself acting in public and note what I do and what others do vis-a-vis me, just as if I were someone else. So, I guess you could say that I move from being the largely uninvolved observer to the fully involved participant observer… Obviously, I don't take myself as a stand-in for ''everywoman'', but neither do I think my reactions are likely to be that peculiar*" (quoted in Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 379). Although Lofland's field of study is public spaces (Lofland, 2006), a similar argument can be made about hanging around "corporate spaces" such as in a single-case study done from within the case company. The researcher meets with organizational members for instance in the canteen, as participant in seminars and presentations where there is an opportunity to establish contact with (or be approached unsolicited by) field members for no particular reason thus getting access to different kind of information than the one the researcher purposefully seeks to discover. The chance and emergent nature of such encounters positions "hanging out" by spending time in the field without a preconceived plan as a way of pursuing your luck as a researcher, improvising

(Barrett, 1998) when participating in the creation of situations that may prove indeed instructive and educational for the researcher.

So, conventional wisdom has it that the insider researcher is privileged in terms of access to the field compared to traditional outsider research, and certainly data overload is a real danger if the relationship between research and field is a trusting one. Also, being close to data may give the researcher the impression that one already knows "all the answers". An insider position does not equal uninhibited total access in that the insider may inherit the entry points of her host unit, which may not grant full access (Ry Nielsen & Repstad, 1993, 2004, 2006; Coghlan & Brannick, 2009; Coghlan, 2007). Although insiders may be in pole position with regard to data access this is only one side of the coin in that smooth primary access is not necessarily accompanied by unhindered secondary access. Insider action researchers Björkman & Sundgren observe that: "*Primary access is defined as the ability to get into the organization and be allowed to undertake research. In addition, secondary access refers to the opportunities to have access to specific parts of the organization that are relevant for one's research. This can be a problem even for the insider researcher.*" (Björkman & Sundgren, 2005, p. 401). Furthermore, the organizational field is not a harmonious entity, but includes a variety of agendas and ways of thinking about what is interesting; especially with regard to being interested in generating knowledge that challenges established notions of what is appropriate action and enriches the conversations in the organization. When, for instance, the HR function is the entry-point for the researcher, a specific mindset and interest are 'inherited', affecting the way the researcher can approach the organization, compared to e.g. being anchored in more operational functions in the organization (Bevort, 2012). The researcher's intra-organizational point of departure affects the researcher's access to other parts of the organization or colors inquiries made with the researcher's host department's values in the eyes of beholders elsewhere in the organization. For instance, being affiliated with a corporate staff function in a multinational corporation, the researcher may be perceived as a representative of a HQ "dominant logic" (Prahalad & Bettis, 1986) by subsidiaries. Also, sharing nationality with the multinational corporation's home and HQ country may affiliate the researcher with a HQ or home country discourse by other parts of the field.

An insider position as an industrial PhD doing research in an organization by which he is employed, shares many traits with the ethnographer, not least due to the use of fieldwork as a primary source of data collection: "*Fieldwork is one answer – some say the best – to the question of how the understanding of others, close or distant, is achieved. Fieldwork usually means living with and living like those who are studied. In its broadest, most conventional sense, fieldwork demands the full-time involvement of a researcher over a lengthy period of time (usually unspecified) and consists mostly of on-going interaction with the human targets of study on their home ground*" (John Van Maanen, 1988, p. 2). Van Maanen emphasizes that fieldwork may vary a great deal with regard to the degree of immersion in the field all

sharing a common working condition of struggles of distance and closeness in that: "*The challenge is to see the world as others see it – without naturalizing it.*" (Dialog with John van Maanen, PDW "Being There/Being Them: Producing Ethnographies", Academy of Management Annual Meeting, 2011). So, ethnographic field immersion operates from the inside, but with the intention of "being there, without being them."

A particular brand of ethnography, Alvesson's (2005) notion of self-ethnography (also referred to as home-culture-ethnography or insider-ethnography) uses ethnographic methodology to see the field of study, but from a "being there *and* being them" perspective in that "them" is the researcher's own organization. The concept of self-ethnography refers to "a study and a text in which the researcher-author describes a cultural setting to which (s)he has "natural access" and in which (s)he is an active participant on more or less equal terms with other participants: *"The researcher, then, works and/or lives in the setting and then uses the experiences, knowledge and access to empirical material for research purposes."* (Alvesson, 2003, p. 175). Although this method is deemed particularly well-suited for research in universities since this is where researchers tend to be employed, other sites in which the researcher is engaged may also be targeted (Alvesson, 2003). In the case of an industrial PhD, this would include the employer organization under study. Unlike a part-time in-house researcher such as an industrial PhD, however, doing research is not a major pre-occupation of the self-ethnographer who merely utilizes the position one is in also for other, secondary purposes, i.e. doing research on the setting of which one is a part (Alvesson, 2003, p. 176). Furthermore, the self-ethnographer is described as a "run-away-researcher" struggling to create sufficient distance in order to get perspective on lived reality – as opposed to the professional stranger acting as a "burglar researcher" seeking to overcome obstacles in order to get in contact with a target of interest: "*While the conventional researcher (with an anthropological orientation) may ask "What in hell do they think they are up to?" the self-ethnographer must ask "What in hell do we think we are up to?"* (Alvesson, 2005, p.177).

One of the advocated dangers of doing insider research is the fact that an immersed and integrated insider may be inhibited in being critical towards the field. Lack of capacity to critically evaluate the investigated field may stem from a (too) strong identification with the field and the researcher's "going native" and developing organizational "snow blindness" (Alvesson, 2003; Ry Nielsen & Repstad 1993, 2004). Also, the researcher may engage in self-censorship, consciously or unconsciously withholding critical information out of misunderstood consideration for the persons affiliated with the activities deemed critical or out of fear that the cooperative atmosphere between field and researcher may suffer subsequently (Coghlan & Brannick, 2009; Coghlan, 2007; Ry Nielsen & Repstad, 2006). All of these biases are to some extent associated with qualitative research methodologies that by their very nature include the active participation of or other types of assistance from field setting members. Insiders – as all other (qualitative) researchers of the social world –

have to deal effectively with the fact that human memory and sense-making are biased and contextual (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Kunda suggests that 'accuracy goals', i.e. an ambition to reach an accurate goal, not a particular goal, is a way of keeping researcher bias in check. However, accuracy goals only "*serve the purpose of keeping researcher biases in check if paired with relevant and superior reasoning strategies*" (Kunda, 1999, p. 237). Creating transparency and involvement of different opinions are forwarded as examples of superior reasoning strategies. Following this line of reasoning, fact probing and sharing of ideas through written knowledge production (Sims, 2006; Huff, 2009) are suggested as types of "relevant and superior" self-check strategies, allowing the researcher as well as other internal and external audiences to inspect the thoughts of the researcher. Sims (2006) asserts that an important part of academic writing process is to engage in research conversations (Huff, 1999, 2009) and dialog with oneself and relevant others in that writing allows us to inspect our own thought processes as well as allowing others to do so, which in turn improves the quality of our thinking. Another avenue for involving different opinions from complete outsiders in external communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) as well as from internal, complete members of the field is for the researcher to prioritize participation in quality assurance networks throughout the entire research process. Insider/outsider research design is one option as a well-conducted insider/outsider research design may result in the uniquely insightful vantage of a third person (Björkman & Sundgren, 2005; Coghlan & Brannick, 2009) and as such carve out a path for securing external "reality checks". Combining an insider role with an outsider position may be approached in different manners. Gioia, Price, Hamilton & Thomas (2010) operate with an insider-outsider research design, where insider researchers team up with outsider researchers to gain a detached second opinion in their data analysis, while Bartunek and Louis (1996) have described insider/outsider team research as joint relationships between outsider researchers and field setting members.

The insider researcher has an advantage due to privileged data access (Coghlan, 2007; Ry Nielsen & Repstad, 2006), which places the researcher in position to produce new, exciting knowledge, uncovering interesting problems and questions that are central to 'real world' actors. However, the field immersion position of the researcher gives rise to concern about data validity due to problems of 'going native' and data bias due to partial access. Possible counter-strategies aimed at optimizing advantages and minimizing disadvantages include: Strict research protocol of accuracy goals (Kunda, 2009) and research question, internal and external field member checks and data gathering techniques that easily lend themselves to assessment by both internal and external fora (Löwstedt & Stjernberg, 2006; Sims, 2006). So, judging from the recommendations of the methodological domain of doing research in/with(in) organization (cf. Figure 4.9), the basic researcher competences of theoretical savvy, analytical skill and methodological craftsmanship are advisably paired with the ability to negotiate access to and obtain commitment from internal and external quality assurance networks for member checks and reflexive knowledge production settings.

4.3.2 Research Conditions for doing Research for Organizations

Moving on to the next methodological domain of doing co-creation research in close engagement with practitioners laid out in Figure 4.9, the methodological domain of doing research *for* organizations covers a continuum ranging from traditional action research setups to field engagement in an organization from where the researcher receives funding, takes on consultancy tasks or otherwise inhabits for a longer period of time as a participat*ing* observer. The distinguishing feature, however, is that the researcher is not merely researching *on, in* or *with(in)* the empirical field, but rather *for* the empirical field (and the researcher) in the sense that the research question is colored by or co-formulated with the empirical field with a view to producing practically applicable knowledge and mutual benefit. Approaching research from this angle, research objects are turned into research subjects.

The diverse concept of action research (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Coghlan, 2007) occupies a dominant role in this methodological domain. It is often the case that those who apply this approach are practitioners, who wish to improve understanding of their practice, social change activists trying to mount an action campaign, or academics who have been invited into an organization by decision-makers aware of a problem requiring action research, but lacking the requisite methodological knowledge to deal with it, in this case corporate HR and top management (Löwsted & Stjernberg, 2006). The concept of action research *"is both an approach to knowledge production, as well as a set of values emphasizing the responsibility to the system rather than to individual stakeholders"* (Löwsted & Stjernberg, 2006, p. 5) and *"…an approach to doing research, rather than an academic discipline"* (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 7). The notion of action research covers a broad spectrum of collaborative, interventionist forms of research, and the following observations will be made against the backdrop of the concept of "pragmatic action research" as advocated by Greenwood and Levin (2007, p. 10), who define action research as follows: *"Action research is social research carried out by a team that encompasses a professional action researcher and the members of an organization, community, or network ("stakeholders") who are seeking to improve the participant's situation*" (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 3). According to Greenwood & Levin, *"Action research refers to the conjunction of three elements: action, research, and participation. Unless all three elements are present, the process may be useful, but it is not AR [action research, ed.]"* (Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 5).

In this respect, it is interesting that the co-creation researcher with the ambition of doing actionable research *for* organizations has a different agenda with regard to obtrusiveness than ethnographer colleagues also depending heavily on obtrusive methods: "*The ethnographic observer attempts to be an unobtrusive observer of the inner life*" (Coghlan & Brannick, 2009, p. 104). This differs from the research approaches to research characterised as doing research for organizations emphasizing participation and agency on behalf of the researched (Raelin, 1997; Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Van den Ven, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2001;

Schensul & Schensul, 1992). Research approaches looking to engage field members directly in the process cover research approaches such as action science of action learning projects (Raelin, 1997), cooperative/collaborative inquiry (Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Heron, 1996), interactive research, enactive (and provocative!) research (Johannisson, 2012; Johannisson et al, 2014), double hurdle research (Pettigrew, 2001, 2008), citizen science (Irwin, 1995, 2001; Stilgoe, Irwin & Jones, 2006) and action research (Greenwood & Levin, 2007) – carried out by an external professional action researcher or by an insider enjoying a complete membership position (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Coghlan & Brannick, 2009; Coghlan, 2007). These positions differentiate themselves from traditional ethnographic research design where impact and researcher interference is to be avoided (Coghlan, 2009) – on the contrary, field impact is a top priority. Collaborative forms of research such as action research work from an ideal of research democratization in that the field members are not objects in the grand scheme of an ivory tower scientist, but rather subjects and research co-producers. As such, decision-making power on the course of the research project and the outcome is democratized to the extent that the division between researcher objects and subjects becomes blurred.

Since impact is an end in itself the researcher must be particularly interested in being methodologically meticulous. Even if the researcher has the best intentions, being close means being in a position to do well, but simultaneously to do harm. Commenting on the proximity of the action researcher to the field, Greenwood and Levin asserts that "*action researchers, precisely because the results will affect the lives of the stakeholders, have a profound interest in the validity of the generated knowledge*" (2007, p. 4). This is in keeping with Schein's idea of the closeness of so-called 'hired helpers' such as an industrial PhD being bound by contract to act ethically and responsibly with sensitive information: *"Formally hired helpers are in a position to exploit and take advantage of the client and must, therefore, be limited by formal rules"* (Schein, 2009, p. 27). The idea of helping is also mirrored by Johannisson, Gunnarsson & Stjernberg (2008, p. 312): "*In action research, the researcher intervenes consciously in practice, i.e. performs an action research intervention, or stated differently, 'helps' the practitioner.*"[4] It falls on the behavior of the researcher to facilitate a relationship that does not perpetuate an air of academic elevatedness and to refrain from cultivating an expert image. Renouncing the expert status is particularly important as the host organization may be inclined to cast the researcher as an expert, and the researcher may pursue the expert role in that it is only too human to fall prey to sharing your expertise and thus feeling useful and worthwhile. Apart from the not so flattering tendency to enjoy a position of "one up-manship" (Schein, 2009) the researcher may also feel inclined to cling on to an expert role in order to show some results and give the host organization 'value for money.' This line of reasoning is a continuation of the ideas of process consultation (Schein, 1969, 1999) and clinical research (Schein, 1995) or a consulting strand of action research (Huzzard,

[4] Author's translation of original quote in Swedish: "*Inom aktionsforskningen gör forskaren en medveten intervention i praktiken, d v s en aktionsforskningsinsats,eller uttryckt på ett annat sätt, 'hjälper praktikern'.*"

2012). A qualitative insider research design aiming for practical usability and relevance of research results, is likely to benefit from seeing closeness to the field as an advanced position for actually helping (Schein, 2009) – including advancement of criticism that is more likely to fall on fertile ground when made from a position of shared responsibility and mutual trust between researcher and field, and hence acted upon afterwards. In this respect, action researcher represents a quite refreshingly balanced stance on the merits of "going native" compared to other forms of research: *"…you tend to go native and more so, the more you interact. This is a problem – noted especially by researchers in the ethnographic tradition – and is perhaps even a precondition for action research, in the sense that action requires some degree of shared interests and values with those predominant in the system you are studying*" (Löwsted & Stjernberg in Löwsted & Stjernberg, 2006, p. 14). A similar point is made by Schein asserting that "…*willingness to be influenced – to listen to what the client is really saying and give up preconceptions of what the problem might be – is one of the most effective ways of equilibrating the [helping, ed.] relationship*" (Schein, 2009, p. 44). And indeed, it is difficult to help field members that you dislike or profoundly disagree with as they are likely to resist change initiatives emanating from a person they cannot trust or feel understood by (Coch & French, 1948), even if solid action science can rise from an opposition position (Johannesson, 2012). (The question is, however, if oppositional action research can still be categorized in the 'doing research for'-domain in that the researcher, then, is presenting the field with an unwelcome gift they are unwilling to receive.)

Embracing the notion of helping also entails taking a moral stance as a researcher and taking into consideration the criticism advanced of ethnographic research asserting that "hanging around doesn't mean sitting on the fence" (Ramage, 1995). Not recognizing the moral imperative of the researcher to intervene, criticize and help would, according to Ramage (1995), be to deny the researcher's value and existence as an individual: "by regarding the researcher as an uninterested observer, we deny their identity as full human beings, and treat them as if they were interchangeable." As such, Ramage is welcoming Johannessen's belief that researchers should activate their entire knowledge base, including theoretical knowledge in collaborating with practitioners, as advancement of such knowledge is not to be considered inappropriate interference, but rather bringing all available resources to a mutual inquiry (Johannesson, presentation on Action Research PhD course, LUSEM, April 2012). In a similar vein, Löwsted & Stjernberg observes that: *"Honesty to yourself and to your subjects, i.e. your partners, in the research setting you are studying requires a mutual and shared sense of a true search for knowledge"* (Löwsted & Stjernberg, 2006, p. 15). Seen in this perspective, a consulting and helping relationship with field members acting as active research participants shares traits with the idea of societal entrepreneurship (Berglund, Johannisson & Schwartz, forthcoming) although limited to one organization instead of larger communities such as municipalities, cancer patients, or native Canadians.

These inroads to conducting research in close engagement with practice alert our attention to the fact that validity in this respect is closely connected to the degree to which field member engagement can be obtained. For instance, interactive research (Johannisson, Gunnarsson & Stjernberg, 2008) operates with a different set of quality criteria, which potentially convert the ailments of insider research described in the paper's section on doing research in/with(in) organization to virtues: *"…we think that close interaction can increase the validity of the research*" (Svensson, Ellström & Brulin, 2007, p. 239). This claim is followed by a call for a different kind of peer reviewed quality assessment central to traditional academic work: "*It is no longer the case that the validity is tested within the walls of academia alone, but in dialog with the participants and society at large*" (Svensson, Ellström & Brulin, 2007, p. 239). Interactive research is characterized as a development of the action research tradition, focusing on joint learning between the researcher and the participants, but with a main focus on the outcome of the research in terms of new theories and concepts (Svensson, Ellström & Brulin, 2007, p. 233). Further, interactive researchers engage with the field with the aim of "*conducting theoretically-related analysis that can contribute to long-term theoretical development, but is also practically relevant to the participants*" (Svensson, Ellström & Brulin, 2007, p. 238). The main differences between action research and interactive research is captured in a reverse line of helping: Where action research engagement with practice foresees the researchers contributing to practical development, interactive research focuses on participants contributing to theoretical work to a larger extend, although still for the mutual benefit of all parties involved.

Industrial PhD fellows and other researchers doing research in close collaboration may also find inspiration in the upcoming idea of "phronetic social science" – a stream of research characterized as an "*alternative social science…dedicated to enhancing socially relevant forms of knowledge, that is, 'phronesis' (practical wisdom on how to address and act on social problems in a particular context)"* (Flyvbjerg, Landman & Schram, 2012, p. 1). Phronetic social science is an approach to the study of social – including political and economic – phenomena based on a contemporary interpretation of the Aristotelian concept, variously translated as practical judgment, common sense, or prudence. Phronesis is the intellectual virtue used to deliberate about which social actions are good or bad for humans and can be seen in opposition to the two other intellectual virtues of Aristotle, 'episteme' and 'techne' (Johannisson, 2008; Flyvbjerg, Landman & Schram, 2012). Just as is the case with action research, phronetic social science does not emphasize particular research methods or types of data, but has a research ambition to enhance understanding and create phronesis for the mutual benefits of all involved. And involvement is key in phronetic social science, both on behalf of the researcher and the researched, as is deliberation and action with regard to "substantive issues in social science and policy" (Flyvbjerg, Landman & Schram, 2012, p. 2). This is much in line with the action researcher's call for 'socially responsible innovation' in a capitalist society in crisis through research involvement of multiple actors and pluralist processes, characterized by "doing, using and interacting" instead of "science, technology, innovation" (Gustavsen, 2011, p. 2). Another illustrative example of the

ways in which phronetic social science can supplement action research approaches is Johannisson's notions of enactive and even provocative research, where the researcher provokes a field to spur activity, engagement and change or enacts the changes himself[5] (Johannisson, Presentation "Enactive Research – Making the Most of Insight and Involvement", LUSEM, 27th April 2012; Berglund, Johannisson & Schwartz, 2013).

In this respect, selling issue (Lawrence, 2001; Dutton & Ashford, 1993) and so-called "political entrepreneurship" can be seen as a precondition for enabling value realization and change when doing research *for* organizations: "*On a generic level, we define political entrepreneurship as the exploitation of opportunities in order to allocate scarce resources to outcomes and preferences*" (Björkman & Sundgren, 2005, p. 403). In order to create sustainable insider research-driven change, Björkman and Sundgren suggest that the researcher must act as a political entrepreneur in order to "*create and focus attention, resources, and interest*" (Björkman & Sundgren, 2005, p. 403) in the organization. The idea of political entrepreneurship also highlights that active stakeholder and project management is essential to safeguarding practitioner involvement. Researcher ambitions of 'helping' practitioners and 'making a difference' may soon wither when confronted with the fact that practitioners are just not out there craving academic knowledge. The researcher will have to work hard to create a platform of common inquiry and gain field members' attention (Björkman, 2005; Berg-Johansen, 2011; Møller, forthcoming, Degnegaard, 2010) if the co-creation researcher is not to turn into an organizational Cinderella, who is not invited to the party or even worse a Snow White, a dormant agent passively awaiting the arrival of Prince Charming in the guise of an engaged practitioner. Setting in motion changes, the researcher may meet resistance, but may also have to reckon with change fatigue (Stensaker, Meyer, Falkenberg, & Haueng, 2002).

Successful knowledge and value creation in research-practice collaborations places high demands of the absorptive capacity of the company that is its *"ability to recognize the value of new information, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends"* (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). If the practitioners/research project field members are unwilling or unable to participate and secure resources for such activities, research quality may suffer. In order to obtain collaborative advantage, i.e. "*that synergy can be achieved by integrating the resources and expertise of one organization with that of others*" (Vangen & Huxham, 2006), field members are advised to prioritize the establishment of a co-creation infrastructure with the researcher in the organization that allows the organization and the in-house field immersion researcher to form a community of practice. The concept of communities of practice stresses that learning is a social phenomenon and

[5] Johannisson observes with regard to his notions of both enactive and provocative research that: "*The social research community is not yet ready for such approaches. In order to gain insight and legitimacy young researchers should first practice conventional methodologies*" (Bengt Johannisson, Presentation "Enactive Research – Making the Most of Insight and Involvement", LUSEM, 27th April 2012).

learning occurs through social participation. Wenger explains: *"Participation here refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities"* (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). Without a proper infrastructure, one might question whether externally obtained knowledge (from the researcher) is necessarily adopted by the organization or merely co-exists in loosely coupled systems with no interconnection, which is one of the central challenges highlighted by process consulting (Schein, 1969, 1999). Following the logic of Cohen & Levinthal where R&D spending is central to the development of absorptive capacity, one might expect absorptive capacity to be rather low in an organization without formalized research activities, stressing the importance of political entrepreneurship even further where this is the case. Circumventing the 'Not-invented-here-syndrome' necessary for local action to take place, is only possible through active engagement and co-creation.

Doing research for organizations places a premium on practitioner involvement, researcher intervention and action for the mutual benefit of both researcher/academia and practitioner. Field impact is a priority and research quality is closely linked to the degree to which the researcher actually facilitates a practical difference for the co-researchers that (s)he is co-creating research with. Process facilitation/consulting skills combined with communication and marketing skills are beneficial for securing practitioner engagement as is formation of communities of practice as formalized platforms of mutual inquiry. Willingness of the researcher to be influenced by the field and partially going native is to be embraced as this enables helping and co-creation, thus facilitating field impact. To this end, political entrepreneurship (Björkman & Sundgren, 2005) and stakeholder management seem to be preconditions for engaging field members and creating internal co-ownership and countering change fatigue, thus fostering willingness to implement research project outcomes and setting in motion changes on that basis.

4.3.3. Research Conditions for doing Research in-between Organizations

In the previous two sections, co-creation actionable research conducted in close engagement with practitioners from an insider position has been presented as methodological domains of doing research *in/with(in)* and *for* organizations. This section introduces the third domain, doing research *in-between* organization. The in-between to be occupied by the co-creation researcher doing actionable research with practitioners is the intermezzo of being formally part of both the practitioner field setting as well as the university setting/academia.

The industrial PhD co-creation research setting of this dissertation positions the qualitative insider researcher as a Janus-faced partial insider of both academia and practice charged with making the most of the researcher's affiliation with both worlds, stressing that this minority position demands much of the participants in terms of absorptive capacity (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990), relationship building and boundary-

spanning competences. The project manager role of the industrial PhD (or other researcher with multiple constituents) closely resembles the role known in organization theory as a bridge maker (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1977) or boundary spanner (Aldrich & Herker, 1977). This role is the role of the (cultural) brokers transcending inter- and intra-organizational boundaries and borders through networking, social capital build-up (Lin, 2001), knowledge transfer and empathy towards points of view of internal and external "others". Thus, the boundary spanner's function is that of a messenger and go-between of different dominant logics (Prahalad & Bettis, 1986) and rationales, and the sought-after results of boundary spanning are enhanced knowledge sharing and absorptive capacity by active liaison and stakeholder management, forging common ground and discovering new frontiers in the organization. The industrial PhD serves a number of different masters simultaneously, crisscrossing fault lines (Bezrukova, Jehn, Zanutto & Thatcher, 2009) of divergent interests and different outcome success criteria in different groups of stakeholders. Successfully mastering the in-between and both-and of academia and business requires the researcher to act as a 'boundary broker' (Wenger, 1995) bridging different communities of practice. An industrial PhD – or similar 'multi-constituent' research co-creator - must act as a spanner in the web bridging and transcend different institutional logics (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), possessing the ability to master and seamlessly alternate between logics and frames of reference, an ability captured in the concept of cross-cultural code-switching (Molinsky, 2007, p. 623). A term that Molinsky adopts from sociolinguistics (Heller, 1988) referring to the ability to change from one form of behavior (or word choice) to another for the purpose of creating a desired social impression (Myers-Scotton, 1993). The dual allegiance (Black, Gregersen & Mendenhall, 1992) nature of the industrial PhD employment relationship requires the industrial PhDs to pay tribute to potentially conflicting demands through fault line management (Barner-Rasmussen & Michailova, 2011) – primarily represented by the academic quality standards in the university setting on the one hand and practical profit concerns and demand for turn-key 'management tools' by field members on the other.

The researcher's position in the industrial PhD project case could be described as a hybrid researcher position, positioning the researcher as a boundary subject (Huzzard, Ahlberg & Ekman, 2010; Akkerman & Bakker, 2011). In this sense, the researcher – much like a boundary object (Star & Griesemer, 1989) is plastic enough to adapt to local needs and constraints of the parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across site; i.e. assumed a role of a boundary subject , emphasizing the the marginality of the researcher vis-à-vis academic and practical communities. Taking departure in his own upbringing as a US immigrant of Norwegian descent and later applying it to the upward social mobility of Jewish and Quaker families, Thorstein Veblen observed that cultural marginality is frequently a stimulus for intellectual creativity (Pritzker & Runco, 1999, p. 180). Veblen captured the potential advantages of a (wo)man in the middle as follows: "*Marginality – the quality of being neither altogether inside nor altogether outside the system – informs the intelligence and gives the marginal man [sic] the third eye that*

penetrates the culture as no insider could" (Bennis, 1991 quoted in Björkman & Sundgren, 2005). The position of the industrial PhD as partially in, partially at the outskirts of both academia and practice is a marginal, minority position. This position may, depending on the (self-)reflective capacity (Schön, 1983) and general personality of the researcher, be conducive to creativity (Kim, Vincent & Goncalo, 2012).

The existence of a researcher-practitioner divide has been amply documented in literature (Bansal, Bertels, Ewart, MacConnachie & O'Brien, J., 2012) identifying fault lines of different conceptions of objectives, epistemology and quality within the communities of research and business. Potential for conflicts and controversy originating in the research practitioner divide is embedded in the formal research setting, such as the industrial PhD program used as case in this paper, and the challenge then becomes to turn conflict into constructive controversy that is a situation where "*one person's ideas, information, conclusions, and opinions are incompatible with those of another and the two seek to reach an agreement*" (Tjosvold, 2008). At the same time, it is important to realize, that not all differences can or should be overcome or done away with. Identifying middle ground and compromise may not be possible or attractive as this may erode the innovation potential inherent in bringing different competences and knowledge pools together. This is one of the main observations of the innovation and intra- and entrepreneurship research looking at ways in which companies can gain competitive edge through build- up of collaborative capital and hence so-called collaborative advantage (e.g. Lank, 2006; Hansen & Nohria, 2004; Vanger, 2012). That compromise and agreement may be counter-productive is also one of the messages from the literature on team diversity (Nielsen, 2010). Further, creating radical innovation and out-of-the-box solutions is best supported by team diversity, whereas tasks where methods and desired outcome are known in advance are more effectively solved in low-diversity teams (Earley & Mosakowski, 2000; McLeod, Lobel & Cox, 1996; DiStefano, Joseph & Maznevski, 2000; Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt, Jonsen, 2010). A similar argument is made by Amabile (1998) pointing out diverse workgroup composition as an important factor for creativity in the workplace. This assertion, of course, rests on the assumption that diversity is well-managed as diversity is not only a source of creativity and innovation, but also of conflict to the potential detriment of performance if not tackled effectively (Adler, 1997; Stahl, Mäkelä, Zander, Maznevski, 2010).

So, conducting co-creation research in-between academia and business includes running the risk of being lost in translation. The marginal researcher tries to maintain a nomadic minority position at the edge of each community due to the potential for knowledge transfer, cross-fertilization and innovation. This demands competences for paradox management (e.g. Fletcher & Olwyler, 1997; Vangen, 2012) aimed at letting go of polarity and dichotomies to the benefit of living the flux of 'both-and' academia and practice as well as giving up waiting for a stable state that may never materialize (and if it does, the dynamics is lost). The in-between academia and practice co-creation researcher has a dual allegiance position where boundary spanning, stakeholder management and boundary brokerage facilitate the potential for innovation and value

creation of the in-between. Producing research at this intersection demands much of the absorptive capacity of practitioners, the openness to collaboration with practice from academia and excellent bridge-building skills on behalf of the researcher. In effect, being neither a "run-away researcher" trying to break the bonds of familiarity, nor a "burglar researcher" sneaking away with data (Alvesson, 2005), but rather a trusted friend of the family – close enough to be part of the family and the household duties, but still a guest enjoying hospitality. The researcher occupying the in-between territory of academia and practice is advised to possess additional competences compared with a traditional research project to be able to embrace and make the most of the role as a go-between, boundary broker and bridge-maker with a Janus-face pursuing a diversity of interest simultaneously. However, researcher ability and motivation is not enough. A supportive environment, i.e. opportunity to use collaborative scholarship competences (Boxall & Purcell, 2011) is also a precondition for successful mutual value co-creation in the in-between of research and practice – you also need engaged practitioners as well as practitioner-friendly academics, 'pracademics' or 'acapracs' as professor Robert Golembiewski liked to refer to academics with a preference for business impact (Academy of Management, Management Consulting Newsletter Fall 2012).

The main challenge of doing research in-between organizations, then, is to try to maintain a marginal position in both worlds to keep creative tensions alive and neither turn into a visiting scholar nor a field member trying to run away, but rather a (wo)man in the middle. At the same time, active engagement of both camps is important, which can be facilitated by the establishment of formalized psychological contract expectation and promise management, e.g. through project management meetings with all stakeholders, pronouncement of performance requirements and prioritization of ongoing dialog in meetings, newsletters and presentations.

4.4. The Industrial PhD: Challenges and Counterstrategies

A summary of the industrial PhD research setting, methodological inroads to doing qualitative insider research in close engagement with practice along with challenges and possible counterstrategies, are highlighted in the below Figure 4.10:

Industrial PhD research setting/design	Methodological domain cf. Figure 2.3.1)	Challenges	Quality optimization strategies	Key actions and researcher behaviours	Example of industrial PhD research case organization project design
Obtrusive qualitative insider data gathering	Doing research **IN/WITH(IN)** organizations	Privileged data access 'closeness bias'	Data diversity	Ability to handle a diversity of methodologies and negotiate extended access to gain privileged access to a variety of data sources.	Mixed methods approach using existing quantitative data generated by host organization to complement interviews/photos/observation.
			'Accuracy goals'	Project management skills and adherence to research protocol.	Quarterly meetings with all stakeholders and 'project owners' discussing project progress.
		'Going native'	Insider-outsider research design	Negotiating access to relevant communities of practice and motivate participants to comment and engage.	'Work-in-progress'-seminars with academic colleagues, conference paper writing, organization of academic workshops.
					External member checks: Practitioner fora seminars (e.g. Global Leadership Academy cf. Figure 1).
				Consulting and process facilitation skills.	Internal case organization member checks and fact probing through case organization workshops.
			Reflexive knowledge production and data transparency	Communication and presentation skills including command of (several) foreign languages to reach a diversity of international host organization practitioners.	Focus on producing written work such as articles, book chapters etc. to be distributed to stakeholders for commenting.
					Tape recording of workshops, participant observation photos. Transcription of interviews.
				Research communication skills.	Presentations and activity as panelist at practitioner conferences.
					Research diary/'photocol keeping (focusing on readability to externals).
Business impact and value co-creation	Doing research **FOR** organizations	Engaging practitioners (and countering 'change fatigue')	Political entrepreneurship	Presentation and marketing skills necessary to do 'research project PR.'	Host organization internal marketing efforts: Interview with 'Solar TV'; auto-communication through quarterly business columns in corporate most read newspaper ('Jyllands-Posten'); seminar for corporate supervisory board.
		Practitioner relevance	Joint research question formulation	Practitioner-orientation and ability to formulate business value proposition (business and managerial experience an advantage).	Taking case organization as point of departure seeking to place challenges in research gap.
				'Helping' worldview and 'phronesis'	Ongoing implementation of research results in existing systems, management tools etc. in host organization to secure sustainable impact after project termination.
		Absorptive capacity	Expectation management, particularly in negotiation access phase.	Social capital building	Involvement of case organization practitioners in academic knowledge production fora and teaching activities.
					Psychological contract reality check through yearly researcher employee appraisal in host organization.
Dual allegiance	Doing research **IN-BETWEEN** organizations	Fault-line management	Relationship maintenance and development	Networking and liaison skills. Collaborative advantage-building.	Quarterly 'Industrial PhD newsletter' to host organization.
		Boundary crossing	Boundary brokerage	Boundary spanning/bridge-building. Cultural code-switching	Joint university-host organization formulation of performance and publication criteria in formal contract.
		Constructive controversy	Conflict management and mediation	Diversity and paradox ('both-and') management.	Quarterly research 'project group'-meetings with both academic and host organization project advisors.

Figure 4.10: Doing research in/with(in), for and in-between organizations in an industrial PhD qualitative case study carried out from an insider position: Challenges, counterstrategies and competences. Source: Author.

The table places the research setting of an industrial PhD project working with qualitative data from an insider position in the case company, and at the same time being part-time affiliated with a university with the aim of creating double-hurdle research in close collaboration in the left hand side (cf. '4.2 The research setting: **Industrial** PhD research co-creation'). From the three main characteristics of the industrial PhD research setting, arrows point to the three domains of doing research in/with(in), for and in-between (Cf. Figure 4.9) indicating that each of the three research setting characteristics give rise to individual challenges. Then the challenges of doing qualitative insider research discussed in the previous sections that dealt with doing research in the three domains (cf. section 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4), are summarized in the middle column along with the possible quality optimization strategies suggested in extant literature on the three methodological domains. Moving further to the right in the table, key researcher actions and competences for minimizing threats and capitalizing on opportunities, with a view to optimizing data validity in an industrial PhD research setting, using qualitative data collection from an insider position relying heavily on qualitative data, where mutual practical and academic excellence and value creation is an objective, are presented (again cf. discussion in section 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4). Finally, in the last right hand column, concrete examples of practical implementation of data validity optimization strategies drawn from the global mindset industrial PhD project are summarized.

Table 4.10, then, gives an overview of the data quality challenges of researching global mindset qualitatively from and insider position as a springboard for presenting how the challenges of an industrial PhD research setting have been handled in practice, and discussing one of the sub-questions guiding the exploration of the overall research question, i.e. the last sub-question "How can validity challenges researching global mindset qualitatively from and insider position be addressed?"

Against the backdrop of the discussion of general challenges the following section outlines the research approach of the global mindset industrial PhD project and positions the project within the three methodological domains as well as describes the concrete actions and methods of data collection and analysis.

4.5 Research Approach: Co-creational Research from an insider Position

This study places itself predominantly in the methodological domain of doing research for an organization in accordance with the philosophy of the industrial PhD program. The present study, then, adheres to the idea that impacting the field is not an unfortunate side effect, but rather a sought-after outcome. The study accepts and embraces the role of the researcher as a person, who impacts the field. This is hardly a ground-breaking position – after all, it has been known ever since the Hawthorne studies, where the behaviour and state of mind of research objects (plant employees) were affected by the mere presence of researchers (French, 1950,

1953). Researchers doing research for the field in close collaboration with practice, however, see the inevitability of impact as a resource to be made the most of rather than "field pollution" or obtrusion/intrusion as would a classical ethnographic stance on fieldwork discussed in connection with the doing research in/with(in) organizations-domain discussed earlier. This in turn adds to the challenges of bridging the practitioner/academia gap as successful boundary spanning and brokerage is a precondition for not only making a practical contribution research for the case organization, but at the same time making a theoretical contribution for the academic community at large.

At first sight, the study may appear to fall comfortably under an action research umbrella as both action, research and participation is present, which are the three distinguishing features of action research highlighted by Greenwood & Levin (2007). Still, this industrial PhD project cannot be considered action research in the traditional definition of the concept. Although the research design is inspired by the participatory values of action research due to its intensive cooperation with the case study company and the ambition of creating actionable knowledge, it cannot be characterized as an action research project due to the lack of planned cycles of action intervention characteristics of an action research project (Brannick & Coghlan, 2010). In addition, direct change agency on behalf of the researcher is not a part of the setup, so even if the industrial PhD-researcher is both doing "participant observation" and acting as "participating observer", the researcher is not leading a project or driving a particular change in the host organization. As such the project position vis-à-vis the field can be more adequately captured by Van de Ven's (2007) overview of engaged scholarship research positions of research carried out in engagement with practitioners. In the below figure, the industrial PhD project can be positioned between quadrants 2 and 4 illustrated by the coloured oval between the left and right hand lower quadrants in the matrix in that researcher impact, action and intervention is part of the desired research process and outcome, but no direct intervention cycles are foreseen in the course of the research project:

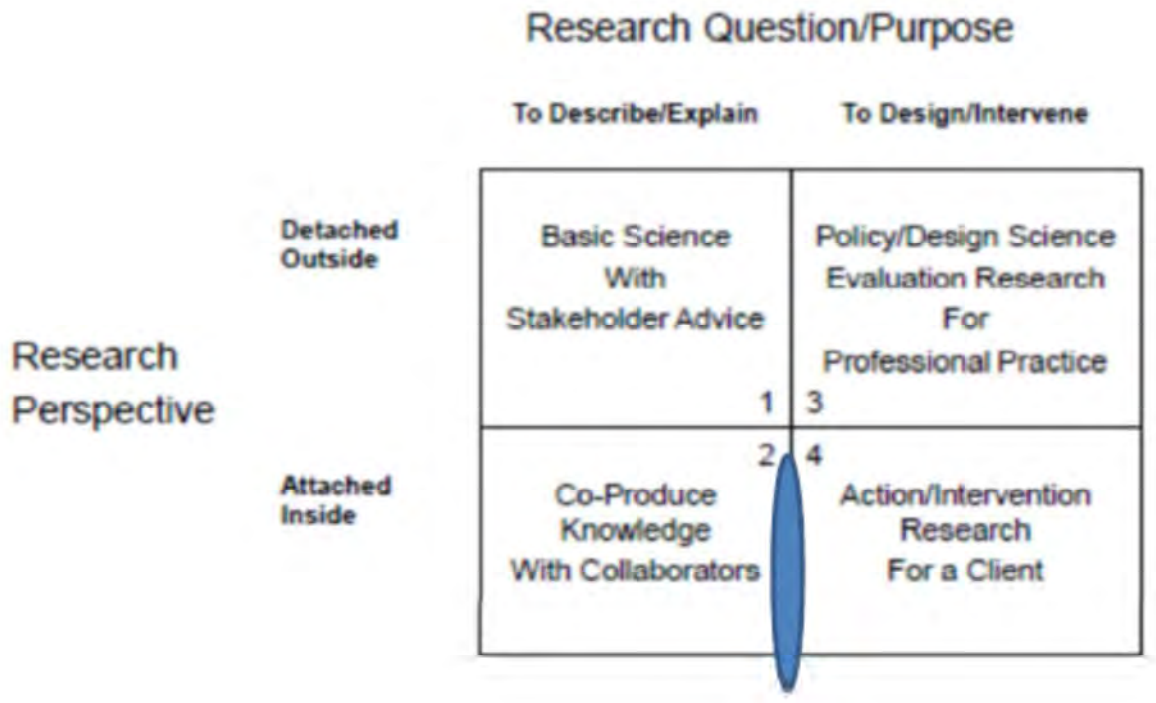

Figure 4.11: Between co-production of knowledge with collaborators and action/intervention research for a client.

The study is, however, inspired by the values behind action research, but it is important to note that this project departs from the emancipatory discourse on researching for the creation of a better world or society (Greenwood & Levin, 2007) typical for action researchers. Although it is the researcher's intention that the study benefits the case study company, the greater (Danish) business community as well as the global research community through the exploration of a research gap, the study does not have an explicit political agenda on themes such as human rights or sustainability. Furthermore, this study does not make a point of giving voice to silence or bringing peripheral, marginalized or disadvantaged groups into decision-making processes in a traditional sense of the word. That said, certainly giving priority and focus to middle manager voice in the research project is in keeping with a more pluralistic perspective, as middle managers is a group generally silenced in the literature on global mindset. Still, concentrating fully on managers (albeit at different hierarchical levels) positions the study as predominantly managerialistic in that the main beneficiaries are corporate HQ entities of higher level managers and staff functions, as opposed to for instance unskilled warehouse workers or other employees. The study does, then, have an explicit intention of giving voice to groups in the case organization that are usually peripheral to the "group mindset" development efforts in the data collection process. Marginalized groups in this respect include employees that are left out of central communication streams and participation in corporate projects due to their lack of English skills in an organization, where the corporate language is English or have non-computerized job

content. Furthermore, companies that have been recently acquired by the Solar Group (4 companies over the course of the project) not formally part of the "group mindset"-project (including subsidiaries in Austria and Belgium that have not been subject to post-merger management yet) are involved as are non-corporate parts of the organization, particularly the "non-main market" organizations in countries such as Germany and Poland. An explicit point has been made in the data collection process to include such groups. It must be noted, however, that the researcher's language competences is a barrier for reaching non-English speakers in that local language dialog can be carried out only in Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and German, thus making access to non-English speaking employees speaking Polish, Dutch and French impossible. In this sense, the project may enforce an asymmetrical access to top management and corporate communication. To make up for this fact, existing quantitative data gathering efforts, including all managers in Solar already taking place without connection to the group mindset-project, have been included to give non-English speaking managers a voice although a more indirect one.

This approach mirrors the philosophy guiding interactive research (also placed in the "doing research for"-domain discussed previously) as laid out in Svensson, Ellström and Brulin (2007) highlighting that the interactive researcher cannot help everyone and everybody (presentation by Lennart Svensson, LUSEM, April 13, 2012). The researcher chooses to help a certain group of people – which is not necessarily the whole organization or those at the bottom of hierarchy far from central decision-making processes. In the case of this study, the case company's host department, corporate HR, as well as top management are the main recipients of support (and emancipation if only to the extent that "knowledge shall set you free"). It follows, then, that what may be helpful and emancipatory for the intended main beneficiaries may not be perceived of as liberating or helpful to other groups or individuals in the organization. Also, one might question if seeking to emancipate others is not a counterproductive endeavour in that the potential to emancipate others presumed in emancipatory agency makes this in itself an act of dominance along the line of the bittersweet comment to the workplace empowerment movement "I empower you to do as I say"…?

4.5.1 Research Philosophy and Data Collection

So, in sum this study is heavily influenced by action, but at the same time shares many traits with interactive research and field immersion forms of engaged scholarship in that the case study organization is not the only intended beneficiary of the research process. An important shared trait with action research is the fact that this study subscribes to a pragmatic ontology and epistemology in accordance with Greenwood & Levin's conceptualization of pragmatic action research (2007, p. 10)[6]. Pragmatism is a rejection of the idea that the function of thought is to describe, represent, or mirror reality. Instead, pragmatists develop their philosophy around the idea that the function of thought is as an instrument or avenue for action, and problem solving. As

[6] Although both interactive research and engaged scholarship open up for research to be conducted from a number of paradigmatic stances including pragmatism, the authors themselves subscribe to a critical realist paradigm in their own interactive/engaged scholarship research.

such, pragmatism places a premium on action, the practical context, knowledge transfer and 'what works': *Pragmatism reacts to an over-emphasis of subjective interpretations. Not every interpretation (or description) is as good as the other. The way out from a relativistic quagmire is the practical meanings of conceptions made. It is not enough to say that an interpretation makes sense; it must make sense practically*." (Goldkuhl, 2004, p. 1). This entails a pragmatic stance towards data collection, where utility vis-à-vis practical problems is central and this study has engaged in collecting data from a variety of sources:

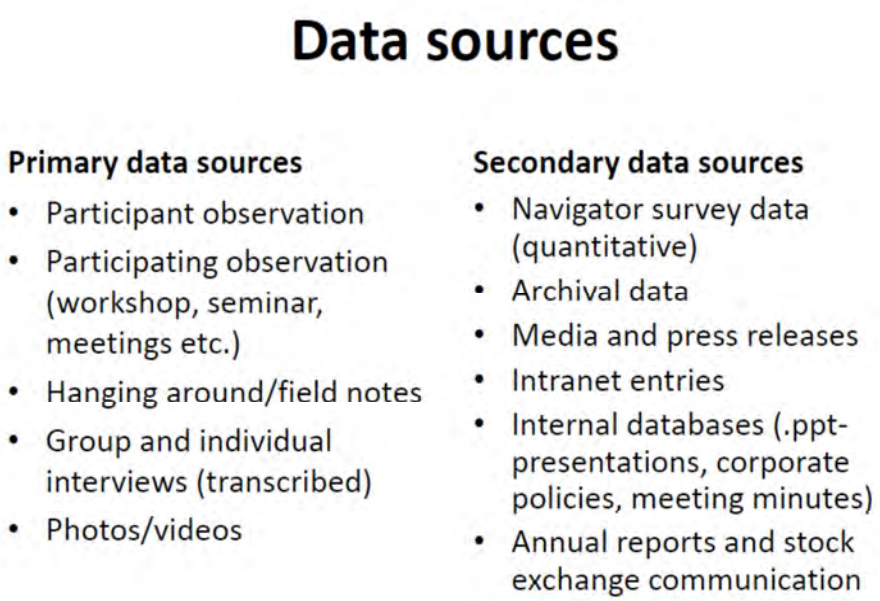

Figure 4.12: Case study data sources. Source: Author.

Participant observation has primarily been carried out at Solar Management Team meetings and workshop, strategy kick-off sessions involving all managers except the operational level, as well as the internal Solar leadership development program, Group Leadership Programme (GLP). Out of a total of 304 managers in Solar, 290 have participated in the GLP-program and of this group the author has been able to follow and interact with 200 managers in both international and local language versions of the program. A total of 25 formal middle manager interviews have been carried out giving priority to non-corporate middle managers and middle managers from the Scandinavian subsidiaries and Germany where I had the opportunity to follow the local language GLP-program and so had had ample opportunity to interact and discuss with this group. The 25 interviews, then have given priority to middle managers from Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium with whom I had least opportunity to interact. Interviews have been conducted in English, but on occasion also in local languages to reach include as many non-English speakers as possible. Conversations or dialogue of a more informal character have been captured as field notes or meeting minutes. Quotes taken from the interviews/conversations carried out in Danish, German, Norwegian and Swedish by the author has

translated into English by the author. Participat*ing* observation involves instances of field immersion and interaction where the author has played an active role as presenter, facilitator or (visiting) team member. Fora for this type of field interaction include the Solar Business Academy Board, Group HR meetings, Solar Management Team workshops, selected 'company programs' (the Solarian term for projects through which business strategy is implemented) such as the employer branding and career development program. In these instances, the author has been actively participating in developmental group work, facilitating workshops or presenting ideas and reflection from the data collection process in Solar with field members; i.e. have been a part of the agenda and not just 'hanging around' and observing. Solar Navigator data refers to an internal Solar organizational performance survey carried out every second year, the latest survey having been conducted in 2012 and the next coming up at the end of 2014. These data are data that the organization has been collecting since 2007 and will continue to collect in the future independently of the 'group mindset' research project and so the author has no part in these data. The Navigator survey does not include data that specifically addresses international collaboration in Solar, but does contain information regarding different managerial levels' view on strategy, vision and mission and so these data are instructive with the regard to the nature of a middle manager stance on strategic global mindset in Solar. In 2012, a special question was included to the survey's section on strategy, mission and vision on 'group mindset' in the 2012 version of the survey to establish an organizational baseline for future surveys.

A full overview of the data collection time line is presented in Figure 2.14 below; collected data in the forms of interview and video transcripts, photos, quantitative secondary data, interview and observation guides are available in a separate electronic appendix to the assessment committee. The collected data has been gathered with a view to exploring global mindset in a practical setting as a strategic capability and managerial meta-competence with a view to uncovering microfoundations and managerial practices, enabling global mindset development and enactment (cf. research question). Global mindset has been operationalized as 'Solar group mindset' (cf. Prologue) consisting of three main categories (Knowledge-sharing and dissemination of best practice, Group standardization and integration, Capitalization on local specificities through differentiation and localization) and data sources listed above have been coded in accordance with the research question's sub-questions of:

- Strategic global mindset: What it is and why it is important?
- Why and how global mindset can function as an organizational capability?
- What manager behaviors facilitate development and enactment of strategic global mindset in Solar?
- What governance structures facilitate development and behavioral enactment of strategic global mindset in Solar?

Information from all data sources as well as from internal and external communities of practice for member checks have been sorted according to the structure outlines in the below matrix in the form of pictures, quotes from interviews, video recordings, archival data and field notes:

Code / **Data sources**	Strategic global mindset	Global mindset as meta-competence and capability	Management practices of 'group mindset': Organizational enablers	Management practices of 'group mindset': Organizational barriers	Management practices of 'group mindset': Individual enablers	Management practices of 'group mindset': Individual barriers
Interviews, survey data, photos, field notes etc.	Example 1, 2, etc.	Example 1, 2, etc.	Example 1, 2, etc.	Example 1, 2, etc.	Example 1, 2, etc.	Example 1, 2, etc.

Figure 4.13: Data coding scheme. Source: Author

4.5.2 Assisted Reflection – Data Analysis with internal and external Communities of Practice

As the global mindset research project has a dual ambition of producing value for practice as well as for academia simultaneously, the research conditions depart from action research which focuses predominantly on improving research participants' situation ((Greenwood & Levin, 2007, p. 3). This highlights the importance of the doing research in-between organization domain as doing research solely for one community, i.e. research participants, may not lead to outcomes that are relevant to a more general audience of the academic community. In order to cater for value creation for both communities, this study operates with assurance of relevance and impact through reality and member checks in a variety of not only internal communities of practice, but also external, i.e. outside the case organization (selected examples are illustrated in the intro and exit 'research photocol'.) Assisted reflection and sensemaking take place through active solicitation of different opinions on interpretation of gathered data, as well as suggestions for preliminary conclusions. The general purpose of member checks is to keep the researcher's blind spots in check by checking facts and interpretations of data with members and informants as has been done in this study by creating a number of organizational probing fora and feedback loops in the organization. While these internal member checks can be helpful in safeguarding the validity of the data from researcher bias, they may also be helpful in uncovering impression management behavior (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1989) in data gathered in different parts of the organization. In order for internal membership checks to work for the pinpointing of impression management, the membership check must be done with both the particular group under study (has the researcher understood the informant correctly?), but also from internal others that may

be more attuned to internal politics and power struggles to offer a different view (how is the data coloured by local marketing efforts?).

Internal knowledge dissemination fora used for fact probing and member checks in this study include among others the Solar Strategic Management Team (CEO, CFO, corporate and subsidiary managers), Corporate HR as well as Group HR (all HR departments in Solar), the Solar Business Academy Board, an internal/external knowledge-sharing forum focusing on the development of the Solar corporate academy, as well as the Corporate Communications functions. External member check fora include the Global Leadership Academy (the whole group of member companies, Appendix A), individual workshops for Global Leadership Academy members, the global pharmaceutical company Lundbeck, the Global Mindset 'Think-Box' hosted by Network of Corporate Academies (NOCA)/The Danish Association of Managers/The Think Tank DEA as well as private consultancy, Corporate Developments, representing practitioners engaged in global mindset practice and development. External academic member check fora include paper presentation, organization of professional development workshop at the Danish Academy of Management, Nordic Academy of Management, British Academy of Management, US Academy of Management well as the industrial PhD program committee[7] and obligatory work-in-progress seminar with external discussants arranged under the auspices of the Doctoral School of Organization and Management Studies at Copenhagen Business School.

Complete outsiders in external communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) as well as internal complete members of the field are participating in quality assurance throughout the entire research process. As such, the study operates with research conditions similar to insider/outsider research design. A well-conducted insider/outsider research design may result in the uniquely insightful vantage of a third person (Björkman & Sundgren, 2005; Coghlan & Brannick, 2009) and as such carve out a path for securing external "reality checks". Combining an insider role with an outsider position may be approached in different manners. Gioia, Price, Hamilton & Thomas (2010) operate with an insider/outsider research design where insider researchers team up with outsider researchers to gain a detached second opinion in their data analysis, while Bartunek and Louis (1996) have described insider/outsider team research as joint relationships between outsider researchers and field setting members. As this study does not operate with permanently designated outsider researchers, the research conditions resemble the Bartunek & Louis-approach using internal and external checks and balances as an integral part of the research methodology. Since taping and transcribing interviews, photos, and video recordings are types of data gathering techniques whose results more easily lend themselves to a "second opinion" from an outsider, these data types have been given special focus in the data collection process. In summary, the researcher position vis-à-vis the field of study closely resembles that

[7] The Industrial PhD Programme Committee (EFU) is appointed by the Danish Council for Technology and Innovation (RTI) and currently numbers 25 members. It is the job of the Committee to evaluate Industrial PhD applications and recommend the assessment (approval/conditional approval/rejection) to the Danish Council for Technology and Innovation.

of Björkman and Sundgren (2005), remarking that "*the main researchers are insiders, partially adapting to the outsider role, as each researcher is participating in an external community of inquiry (Argyris et al., 1985), the research community, and is constantly using "complete outsiders" from this society to challenge insider assumptions*" (p. 401).

To assist this process, priority has been given to production of material that easily lend themselves to inspection and sensemaking by others, videos, pictures, tape recording as well as communicating ideas in writing on an ongoing basis (including both paper presentation at conferences as well as publication in offline and online practitioner fora (e.g. articles in mass circulation newspapers such as Jyllands-Posten[8] and Global Leadership Academy member newsletter). In this respect, communication styles tailored at the different audiences is essential: although it would be great to have larger groups of managers in the case study organization discuss academic papers or review larger piles of interview transcripts, this is hardly realistic considering both time and knowledge resources. To facilitate practitioner reflection and contribution, priority has been given to convert academic papers into 'business reports' or memo style briefs or PowerPoint presentations using visual communication as much as possible. Fact-probing and sharing of ideas through written knowledge production can be seen and an internal member check and self-check strategy allowing the researcher as well as other internal (practitioner) audiences to inspect the thoughts of the researcher while at the same time opening up to reactions from (academic and practical) external others (selected examples are illustrated in the intro and 'exit research photocol'). So, in the course of the project, considerable effort has been made to convert less easily accessible forms of data collection such as research diary entries into academic papers, presentations and articles in order to open up the work of the researcher to internal and external 'others' (cf. bibliography, Nielsen, R.K.). These efforts also include the production of a conceptual analysis of global mindset (cf. Part I) in order to equip the researcher with a pre-understanding of global mindset not exclusively tied to the case study organization, and to make it possible to see how Solarian data contributes to the extant literature on global mindset.

The interplay between collection of data in the case study organization and instances of assisted reflection and sensemaking with internal and external communities of practice, are depicted in the following data model:

[8] Jyllands-Posten is one of the three main Danish morning newspapers. Columns have appeared in the business section 4-5 times a year (cf. bibliography, Nielsen, R.K.).

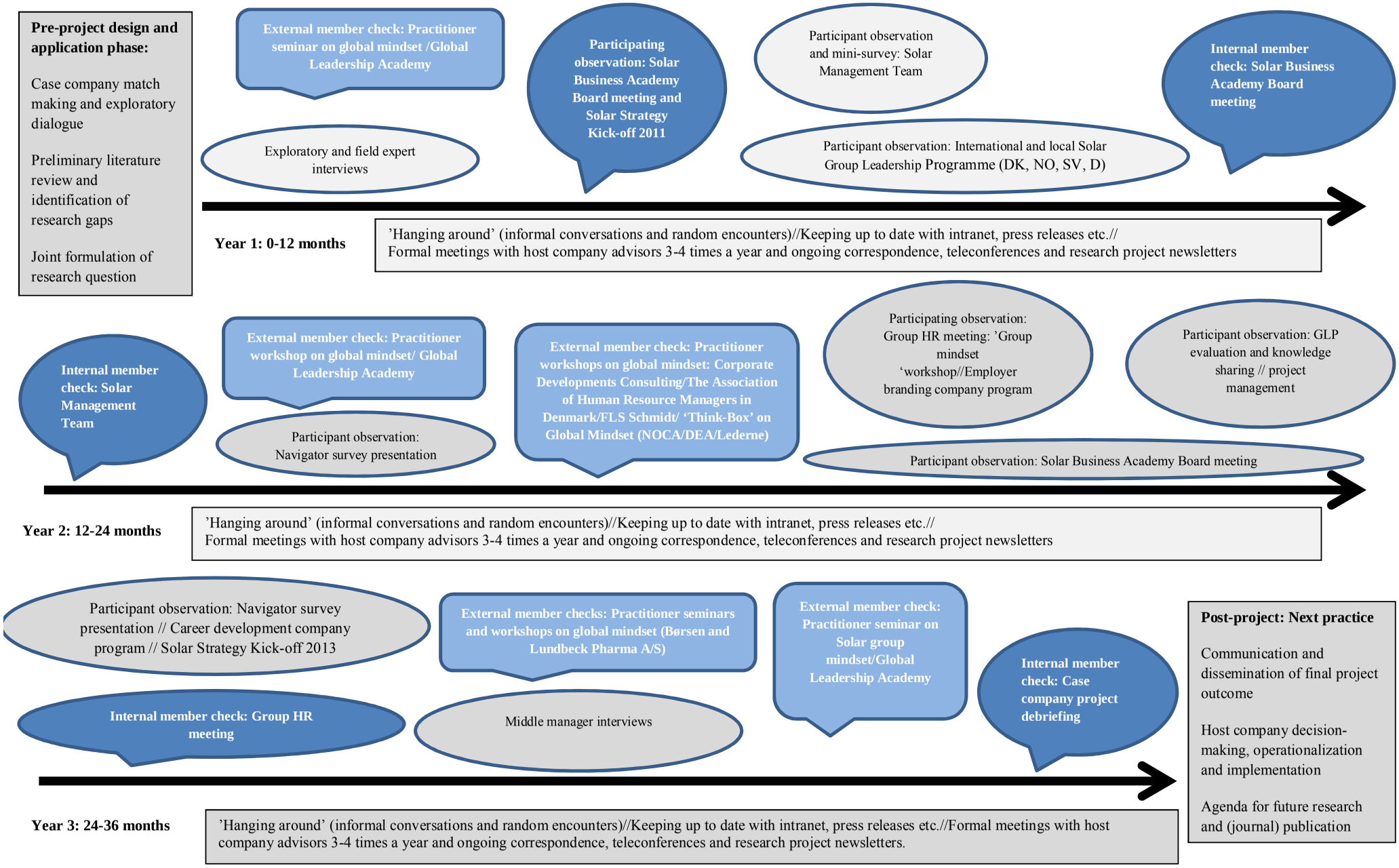

Figure 4.14: Research process: Data collection time line with assisted reflection from external/internal member check feedback loops (academic fora not included). Source: Author.

4.6 An industrial PhD Methodology: Challenges and Solutions

The industrial PhD project setting has been characterized as 1) a formalized dual-allegiance research setup working the *in-between* of academia and practice, 2) where practitioner and academic interest by contract assume equal status in that there is a formal obligation to co-produce research *for* field practitioners with both practical and academic value. In the case organization, this is primarily done through 3) obtrusive, qualitative data collection *in* and *with* the field from an insider position. Doing research in, with and for organizations in order to produce actionable research and management knowledge with value for both practitioners and academia, places particular demands on the methodological framework of the research project. This mainly concerns deployment of counterstrategies for researcher bias and 'snow blindness' from going native; how to secure actual impact in the field through reflexive knowledge production, political entrepreneurship and engagement as well as through choosing transparent data collection techniques that easily lend themselves to outsider evaluation and institutionalized involvement of different opinions to accommodate researcher bias. Also, tackling the researcher's dual allegiance position through boundary spanning, stakeholder management and boundary brokerage is deemed necessary to realize the potential for innovation and value creation of the in-between. Producing research across the research/practitioner gap demands much of the absorptive capacity of practitioners, the openness to collaboration with practice from academia and excellent bridge-building skills on behalf of the researcher. In the global mindset project study of this dissertation, these challenges are encountered by giving priority to a pragmatist stance mirroring a research position between action research and interactive/engaged scholarship giving priority to data accessibility to open the research process to both internal and external others through institutionalized member checks, active political entrepreneurship and ongoing knowledge dissemination.

4.7 Methodology exit 'Research Photocol'

Leaving Part II behind and moving towards case study and empirical analysis of global mindset development in the following Part III, some additional examples of the types of data, field engagement and validity optimization discussed in the present Part II. (All visual documentation is included in the digital appendices folder handed-out to the host organization advisors, university advisors and assessment committee):

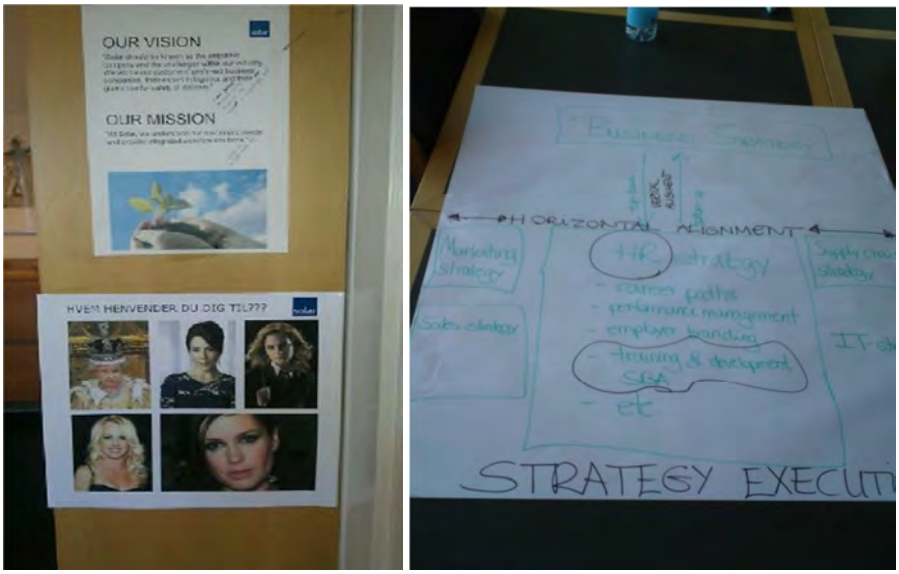

Figure 4.15: Field engagement and impact

Left: Industrial PhD visualization characterizing Solar as an "I'm every woman'-organization presented at Solar Management Team workshop converted to everyday corporate communication tool in Solar A/S, spring 2012. Photo: Laila Steenfat, Solar HQ.

Right: Industrial PhD presentation of connections and cross-fertilization between the 'Group Mindset'-project and corporate academy training and development efforts, Solar Business Academy Board meeting, May 2012. Photo: Rikke Kristine Nielsen.

32 ERHVERV

ONSDAG DEN 20. APRIL 2011
ERHVERV & ØKONOMI

LEDELSE

Af Rikke Kristine Nielsen

»I de fleste brancher er sidste år længe siden.«

Rikke Kristine Nielsen er erhvervs-ph.d. stipendiat i Solar A/S og ved CBS, samt ekstern lektor ved CBS

KOMMENTAR

KOM PÅ MENTAL OMGANGSHØJDE

KULTUR: Virksomhedens dybt indarbejdede mentale modeller og grundlæggende antagelser kan blive en hæmsko for virksomhedens udvikling. Især når ledelse og medarbejdere ser verden gennem ruder, der er duggede af fortidens sandheder.

Figure 4.16: External communication with auto-communication effect.

Article on global mindset published in Danish mass circulation newspaper, 'Jyllands-Posten'- a frequently read paper in the corporate HQ region of Denmark. '*Kom på mental omgangshøjde*'. In: Jyllands-Posten, April 20, 2011, p. 32. (A number of business columns and practitioner magazine articles have been produced as part of the project – see bibliography Nielsen, R.K.)

Figure 4.17: 'Participating observer' at Solar HR Group Meeting on Career Development, Copenhagen, April 2013. Also note visiting CBS professor Henrik Holt Larsen in the left hand side of the picture presenting an outsider view on talent and performance management.

Figure 4.18: Interviewing in the Polish branch in Wroclau accompanied by Danish culinary specialties of marzipan chocolates and homemade elder flower juice, September, 2013. Photo: Ryszard Juchnik, Solar Polska.

Figure 4.19: Outcome of group work with participants of Professional Development Workshop on strategies on doing research in close engagement with practice (challenges, solutions, cases and references) arranged by the author as part of the annual meeting of the British Academy of Management in Cardiff, September 11-13, 2012 (Berg Johansen, Flinn & Nielsen, 2012). Photo: Rikke Kristine Nielsen.

Figure 4.20: Soliciting external and different opinions on global mindset development. Workshop on 'Reflections on managerial global mindset and global strategy execution' facilitated by the author held at 'The Future of Leadership og Talent Management' seminar hosted by Corporate Developments, May 27, 2013. Photo: Per Bergfors, Corporate Developments.

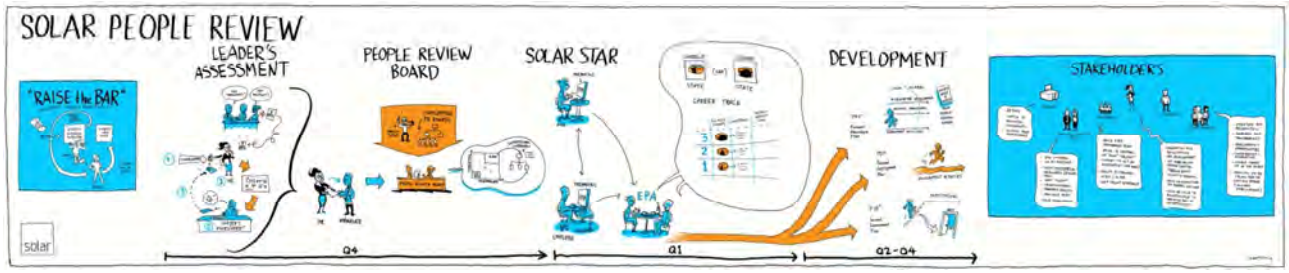

Figure 4.21: Field participation. Career development kick-off – contributing to illustrating the Solar people review process, March 14, 2013. Illustration: Bigger Picture, www.biggerpicture.dk.

Figure 4.22: Participant observation, Swedish Solar Group Leadership Programme (GLP), Sweden, June 2011. Playing the Solar 'Change Game' used at both local and international versions of GLP. A local Swedish team holds the 'Change Game' corporate high score. Photo: Rikke Kristine Nielsen.

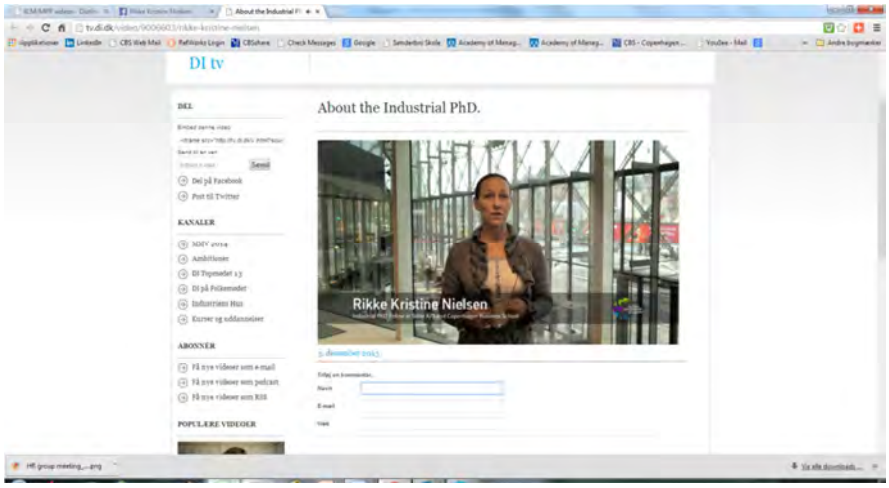

Figure 4.23: Communicating with the wider Danish business community

Elevator pitching the global mindset industrial PhD project at the Confederation of Danish Industry's website. Source: Screen dump from video produced by Danish Confederation of Industry, December 3, 2013. A number of articles have also been produced for the Global Leadership Academy newsletter published by the Danish Confederation of Industry.

Figure 4.24: Group work by participants on fault lines and glue mechanisms of Solar 'group mindset' at Solar Group HR meeting in Gothenburg in connection with workshop on "Mindset and leadership – group mindset in Solar A/S" facilitated by the author. February 7, 2012. Source: Screen dumps extracted from workshop video documentation distributed to Solar Group HR produced by Henrik Strube (seen wearing a red shirt in the top photo), HS-Consult.

Figure 4.25: "Let's-make-it-happen-research' – political entrepreneurship in practice.
Photo: Rikke Kristine Nielsen and son with friend flashing the Solar employer brand on the Amager (Copenhagen) bicycle paths with Christiania-bike sticker reading "At Solar we are 'let's-make-it-happen people'." Distributed at Solar in a corporate newsletter on the launch of the employer branding campaign, May 2013.

PART III: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL MINDSET

Chapter 5: Strategic Global Mindset – the Solar 'Group Mindset' Case

A conceptual analysis based on extant literature on global mindset was presented in Part I, positioning global mindset as a global leadership meta-competence of individual managers as well as an organizational capability linked to global strategy execution. Further, it was argued that the behavioral and structural management practices of global mindset has been black-boxed and that a middle management perspective was missing, although middle managers play an important role for strategy execution, thus being centrally positioned vis-à-vis the actual enactment of global mindset capability in alignment with business strategy and (potential) achievement of business performance. From this basis, a theoretical framework, the strategic global mindset capability model, was presented as a conceptualization of understanding global mindset as both meta-competence and organizational capability, and a summation of the researcher's pre-understanding of global mindset.

In this Part III of the dissertation, the conceptual analysis presented in Part I is supplemented and extended by an empirical analysis of strategic global mindset as a meta-competence and organizational capability as well as of the organizational/structural and individual drivers of strategic global mindset, seen from a middle manager perspective in the case study company in order to empirically capture what global mindset is as an individual meta-competence and strategic organizational capability, as well as how global mindset capability development may be facilitated through managers' management practice (cf. research question). This section, then, deals empirically with four of the dissertation's five research sub-questions dealing with what strategic global mindset is and why it is important; how global mindset can function as an organizational capability as well as which manager behaviors and governance structures facilitate development and enactment of strategic global mindset in Solar, seen from a middle manager perspective. (cf. research sub-questions).

First, against the backdrop of the outline of the Solar A/S case study company's rationale and business case for working with 'group mindset' presented in 'Prologue' and 'Introduction', an empirical analysis is presented of the case company's macro environment, in which the efforts to work with strategic global mindset, operationalized as Solarian 'group mindset' as a managerial meta-competence and organizational capability, is embedded. The second half of the empirical analysis of the managerial microfoundations of strategic global mindset is explored with a view to discussing both individual and structural enablers that adds to or distracts from development and enactment of 'group mindset' as experienced by middle managers in the case company.

The outcome of the analysis is summed up in a force field analysis-inspired diagram (Lewin, 1951) of driving and restraining forces of 'group mindset' development and enactment in managerial practice. This overview of enablers and barriers is followed by an overview combining and connecting individual and structural enablers of levers of 'group mindset' capability. This is based on the understanding of (individual and organizational) performance introduced in Chapter 3, emphasizing that performance of 'group mindset' capability hinges upon the behavioral enactment and conversion into managerial practice, which in turn is the outcome of the mutual existence of ability/(meta-)competence, motivation/commitment and opportunity/facilitating context (Boxall & Purcell, 2011; Holt Larsen, 2010) - or as it is framed in the case company with a sensemaking twist echoing Holst-Mikkelsen & Poulfelt (2008): Does it make sense, are we committed and can we execute? (Solar Group Strategy presentation, 2012).

5.1: Solar – Northern European Technical Wholesaler with Danish Roots and MNC in the Making[9]

"*It is essential that Solar strengthens its execution ability and agility to create growth*"
Solar Group CEO Flemming H. Tomdrup, Solar Business Academy board meeting, Brøndby (DK), November 1, 2011.

Building on his experience with organizational analysis, consulting in practice and grounded in his theories of management, Drucker formulated five essential questions when characterizing an organization (Drucker, 2008): What is the mission? Who are the customers? What does the customer value? What are the results? What is our plan? In what follows, an overview of the Solar case study company is given with the purpose of answering these basic questions and shedding light on the context of Solar's 'group mindset' management practice to be explored in the second half of this part of the dissertation.

Solar was founded in Southwestern Denmark in 1919. The company name, Solar, in Latin meaning 'of or pertaining to the sun', has followed the company throughout its history, and although solar cell technology had been discovered (1839) at the time Solar was founded in Denmark, the Solar name has nothing to do with solar cells or solar energy for that matter (although within the last 10 years, solar panels have become part of the electrical devices marketed by Solar in connection with an emphasis on energy renewal products). The origin of the name is unclear (Exploratory interview: Magnus Dahlmann). When Solar was established in Denmark it was as a Scandinavian agency of a British company called Solar (the British company in turn

[9] The Solar case is further elaborated in Nielsen (2011, 2012d and 2013e) as well as at the Solar corporate website of www.solar.dk.

presumably had their name from taking over a production company called Solar Works) and the founder obtained the rights to import and sell electrical equipment in Denmark. And so the Danish company came to be established under the name of 'Nordisk Solar Compagni' – Nordic Solar Company. A metaphor adding meaning to the Solar name as more than being connected to electrical lighting has also been advanced emphasizing that "just as the sun radiates energy in the form of electromagnetic rays, Solar distributes electro-technical equipment to customers throughout Northern Europe by means of an extensive network of subsidiaries and branch offices" (The Solar Philosophy, p. 3, 2001). Solar A/S (previously Aktieselskabet Nordisk Solar Compagni) was listed on the Copenhagen Stock Exchange in 1953. Shareholders remain predominantly Danish and the descendants of the Solar founder still controls the majority of shareholder votes just as a grandson is chairman of the board of directors. Although Solar cannot be characterized as a traditional family-owned business, the ownership structure places an emphasis on patient shareholders interested in the long-term success of the business rather than short-term results.

Turnover amounted to € 1,531.5m in 2013 and the company is one of Northern Europe's leading technical wholesalers within electrical, heating, plumbing, security, energy and ventilation products, marketing some 215,000 products, a selection of which is illustrated below:

Figure 5. 1: Primary business and product areas. Source: Solar Group Presentation, 2010.

The product portfolio offered in different countries is highly different, though. This is partly due to different customer preferences and market maturity, but also a consequence of different national product standards, and neighboring countries such as Poland and Germany only share 20% of their product portfolio. Operating in a business-to-business market, the typical customers are small and medium-sized businesses within the plumbing or electrical trade, but large industrial clients also represent a significant source of revenue as do customer education and consulting on renewable energy. Very few customers are international or engage in

border-crossing activities, and the customers that do represent an insignificant amount of revenue (Participant observation/field notes).

Solar has subsidiaries operating under the Solar brand in Denmark incl. the Faroe Islands, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands (key markets); Germany, Austria, Belgium and Poland (emerging challenger markets, including acquired 'sunshine companies' yet to undergo large scale post-acquisition inclusion into the Solar-family) divided into 151 branch offices and 11 warehouses. The Solar Group employs a total of approximately 3,300 people; the Danish enterprise has the most employees, while the Dutch enterprise is the largest foreign subsidiary and revenue composition is still dominated by the home country market:

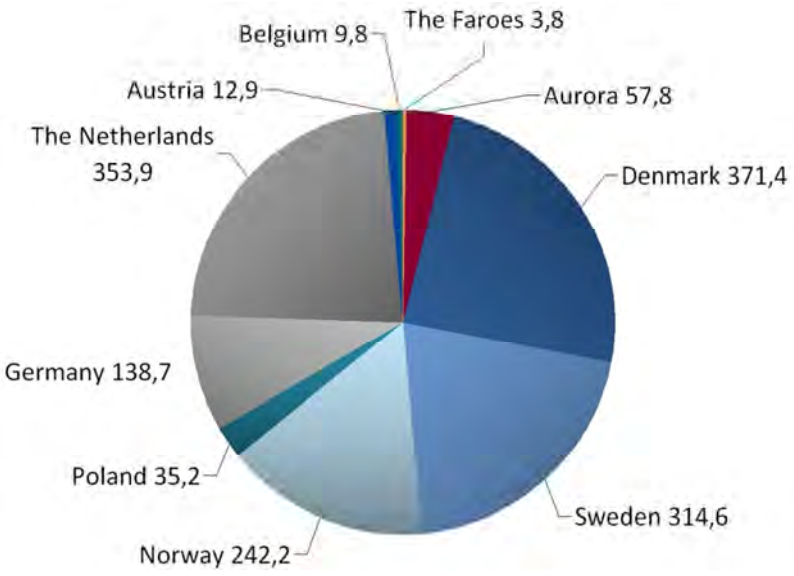

Figure 5.2: Solar subsidiaries' contribution to total Solar 2012 revenue. Source: Solar Corporate HR.

Key markets (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, The Netherlands) account for 85% of revenue. This revenue structure reflects that the Solarian market and competitor situation differs vastly between countries ranging from 2% (Germany) to 50% market share (Denmark) and from 2-3 competitors (Denmark) to 80 competitors (Germany).

In all markets, Solar's business is to offer and deliver the right item, at the right time, in the right place (be it a building site, an oil rig or a reception) and in the right quantity to customers. Just-in-time, lean philosophy, supply chain and warehousing excellence allow Solar to take in orders by calls, web or mobile until 6 pm and deliver on the customer's preferred destination the next morning. Customers do, however, also have the opportunity to visit one of the Solar drive-ins offering a limited assortment of the most popular items sold directly to business customers (there is no sales to private consumers). This basic value proposition is extended in the Solar mission statement emphasizing that: *"We understand our customers' needs and provide value adding services and products. We call it stronger together"*. The vision is to be *"#1 in*

technical wholesale" maybe not in sheer number of products delivered, but in the customer's perception as the best quality offer on the market. In addition, an ambition has been formulated *"to become one of the most profitable technical wholesalers in our markets."* So, Solar is aiming at being the strongest link between manufacturer and contractors and ultimately end users as illustrated below:

Figure 5.3: Solar as the strongest link. Source: Solar Strategy 2012.

While customers are generally very local in their outreach, suppliers (manufacturers of the technical products that Solar makes a living by selling) are more often than not big multinational companies such as for instance Schneider or Siemens. And so, as a technical wholesaler 'man in the middle' Solar is charged with the challenge of translating the offers from global or multinational vendors into the needs of a "one man and a van" company in Luleå (small craftsmen customers in the Northern thinly populated parts of Sweden) as well as larger customers such as the Norwegian Statoil (cf. Globalization & Group Mindset - International Strategy Execution in Solar, Global Leadership Academy January 21, 2014).

Electrical products remained the Solarian core business until 2005. Steps into the heating and plumbing market were taken from 2004, establishing this business line from scratch in Denmark, which were accentuated by the acquisition of a company in the Netherlands, Vegro, which at the time was as big as the local Dutch Solar operation within electrical wholesale. Vegro brought with it 70 years of heating and plumbing expertise, in effect mirroring Solar Denmark's equivalent track record within electrical supplies (Exploratory interview: Magnus Dahlmann). From there and onwards, not only electrical products, but also heating and plumbing supplies are now part of the product portfolio in Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands, as are a number of more sophisticated services, designed to counter the commodity nature of the products delivered and the notoriously low margins in wholesale. In key markets, the basic logistics value proposition is supplemented by a customized product offer as well as a range of services, including

consulting on how to approach energy renewal projects for which Solar can deliver products and education on the vast number of new products available to their customers in the market (Participating observation/Field notes). So, the product offer varies considerably in different markets reflecting both Solar's position relative to competitors and the degree of market consolidation, but also in terms of customer maturity in that the higher the complexity of the customer's offer in the market, the higher the need for Solar services.

5.2 Internationalization: An MNC in the Making

The Solar internationalization story is in many ways a classical story of home market saturation combined with a wish to lower fragility vis-à-vis the economic cycles in the building industry on which the majority of Solar customers depend. Magnus Dahlmann, current Vice President and around the time where Solar's internalization took off *'the only person employed at corporate headquarters"* (in effect being the only person with an overview of and contact with the operations outside Denmark), recounts: *"Back in 1987, there is a change in the board of directors, and the new board start looking into growth opportunities of Solar at that time. In 1987, Solar has a very high market share and, as a consequence, growing organically by increasing market share was deemed to be very expensive. As a consequence, the new board chose to focus on increasing growth by acquisition and establishment in markets close to Denmark. That was the formulation back then, 'near-markets'; later this has come to mean Northern Europe"* (Exploratory interview: Magnus Dahlmann). This spawns the establishment of a new entity, 'Solar International', and when Solar in 1989 is presented with the opportunity of getting into contact with smaller companies in Sweden, the board of directors agree that "it might not hurt for the young one to see where it can lead us as long as they stay within a certain financial limit" (Exploratory interview: Magnus Dahlmann). This was the beginning of a hectic process of internationalization in Solar that is still underway in 2014.

The Solar internationalization strategy was never set on establishing new subsidiaries from scratch and so, an acquisitative strategy was employed from the onset, looking to establish presence in markets where Solar could get at least 20% market share. Although the acquisitative internationalization strategy has remained intact over the years, the 20% market share entry barrier has been lowered. Today, Poland, Germany, Austria and Belgium do not come even close to this market share. However, there is the possibility of reaching such as share in that a consolidation process of these of highly fragmented markets are foreseen. In markets where no possibility of ever reaching critical mass due to immense presence of large Scandinavian competitors, neither in the medium nor short term, such as Finland, operations have been divested. In parallel with internationalization by acquisitions, ten manufacturing companies previously owned by Solar (production of lighting and electrical equipment) was divested to finance internationalization and pave the way for a streamlining Solar's business into focusing on technical wholesale as core business.

It was a firm principle from the beginning that acquired companies should be aligned with the Solar wholesale concept and operate with the same business model and concept as the Danish business. *"There was no real appreciation of factors such as national culture and market differences – the attitude was characterized by a belief that 'if we can do it here, they can do it there'"*, Dahlmann remembers, and so, governance principles were characterized by a view of *"the church here in Denmark and the rest of the congregation."* (Exploratory interview/Magnus Dahlmann).

Solar's development path nationally as well as internationally can be summed up as follows:

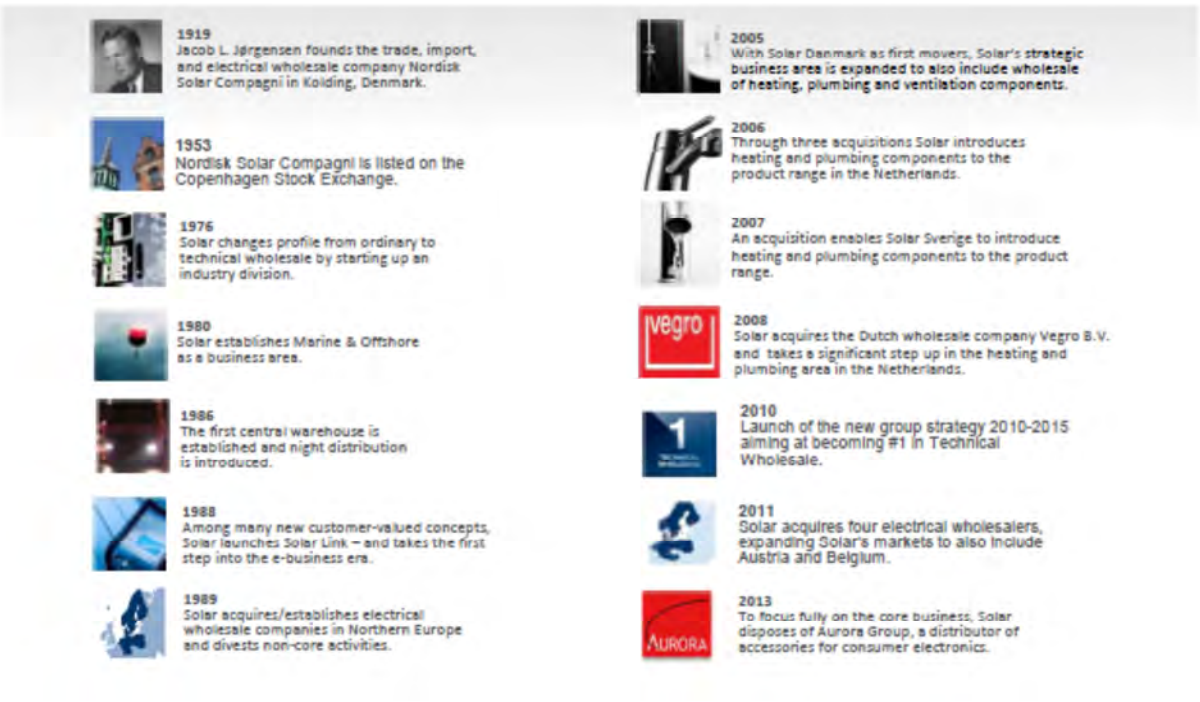

Figure 5.4: The Solar development path. Source: Solar Group Presentation 2012.

So, it has been and is characteristic for the Solar internationalization path that they grow by acquisition, and are as such on the move, consistently being in a state of flux instead of slow, organic growth with ample time to socialize and learn step-by-step as the business grows locally. Solar has bought and sold 80 businesses since the internationalization of the business picked up in the late 1980s. Counting from 1989 to 2014, this means that Solar in 25 years has divested or acquired an average of 3 businesses a year. In that respect, the research project period is typical in that two businesses have been divested: Solar Suomi was divested due to lack of future potential for building critical mass in the Finnish market, and Aurora consumer electronics was divested to focus on the core business of business-to-business technical wholesale. Four new businesses were acquired in the period, consolidating Solar's presence in the German and Dutch market, while adding operations in two new countries, Austria and Belgium, to the Solar Group.

5.3 The Solar Group Strategy 2010-2015 - “#1 in Technical Wholesale”

Against the backdrop of the development paths presented in the previous section, a new externally recruited CEO took over in 2006, and came to head the strategy work leading up to the “#1 in Technical Wholesale” strategy for the period 2010-2015 presented in Hamburg in the spring of 2011 and introduced in the dissertation’s prologue. This strategy was designed to ensure improved financial performance and continued advancement of the group’s position as a technical wholesaler in a challenging market, where expectations for market growth in the first half of the strategy period were limited, due to the financial crisis. Key business strategy elements were to outperform the market as ‘the number 1 technical wholesaler’, capture organic growth opportunities by increasing its focus on the climate and energy segments, upgrade the group’s business model to also encompass a business model for emerging markets, enhance efficiency and profitability in all markets by capitalizing on the introduction of standardized processes supported by a new, common group SAP IT platform (called Solar 8000) and to continue strengthening leadership and specialist competences, as well as defining new ways of working across countries and functions.

The rationale behind the business strategy rests on the premise that Solar must grow to survive; maintaining status quo is not an option. At a Solar management strategy seminar in the spring of 2011, this top management perception of a burning platform was bluntly spelled out by a guest speaker from Solar's banking partner, stating that Solar essentially has three options: "Die! Get acquired! Get better!" Going out of business is not viewed as an option, being acquired by one of the much larger, closest competitors a realistic scenario, but both the CEO and board (the family of the founder still maintains control of Solar with 58% of shares) currently have no intention of selling Solar. Consequently, Solar’s management favors the "Get Better"-version of the future. The current business strategy represents the first long-term business strategy to be formulated under the leadership of current CEO Flemming H. Tomdrup who took over in 2006 from the former CEO retiring after a lifetime of employment with Solar. Flemming H. Tomdrup was recruited outside Solar ranks (but within the Solar supply chain) to grow, internationalize and professionalize Solar in terms of both management technology and leadership style. The strategy represents a break with former strategic objectives and is one of many changes under Flemming H. Tomdrup, which also include implementation of a new ERP[10] group system, establishment of corporate communications and HR departments, introduction of the lean philosophy, acquisition of companies in both new and existing markets, use of organizational performance surveys, management performance evaluations, and mandatory management development, just to mention some. Unsurprisingly, many Solarians see Flemming H. Tomdrup’ s appointment as an organizational ground zero, operating with “before and after Flemming”.

[10] Enterprise Resource Planning system, in this case SAP-based.

Under new leadership and in the context of a vastly changed competitive landscape, the refreshed group strategy mirrored Solar's assessment of an altered position in the European market, i.e. caught in the middle: Following major restructuring of the European technical wholesale industry where large and, geographically speaking, considerably more multinational competitors were consolidated into two major players and fierce competition still existed in the form of small and agile local competitors, Solar found itself in the middle - neither big, nor small, international(-izing), but not mature multinationally speaking - prompted to pursue a 'both-and' strategy of reaping integration and standardization benefits to match large competitors while remaining open to local market specificities and preferences to stay competitive vis-à-vis small, very local competitors. CEO Tomdrup explains: *"The market completely changed in 2008 where the largest and second largest European technical wholesalers buy the third largest competitor. This means that Solar drops from a reasonable turnover position of 1.2 billion euros where we could still catch up to the two biggest competitors generating a turnover of three to four billion euros between them. With the acquisition, our two biggest competitors rose to 7-7.5 billion euros, while Solar's turnover was unaltered. This development was accentuated by the fact that the markets literally collapsed with the onset of the financial crisis in 2008, meaning that our competitors could go to suppliers and turn their volume up, we lost volume relative to our competitors."* (Exploratory interview: Flemming H. Tomdrup).

And volume matters in wholesale. The size of the wholesaler impacts the margin that the business can expect to get from its operations as suppliers give discounts on large orders – a feature central to the raison d'être of wholesale. Losing volume alters the cost structure competitiveness relative to competitors, and when a drop in sales are experienced due to decreasing demand, maintaining margin to cover the costs of delivering your offer to customers is put under pressure. CEO Flemming H. Tomdrup has used the airline industry as a point of departure for pinpointing the new Solar market position in European wholesale, following the 2008 market restructuring and break-down exemplified by companies that are more generally known to a non-technical wholesale audience:

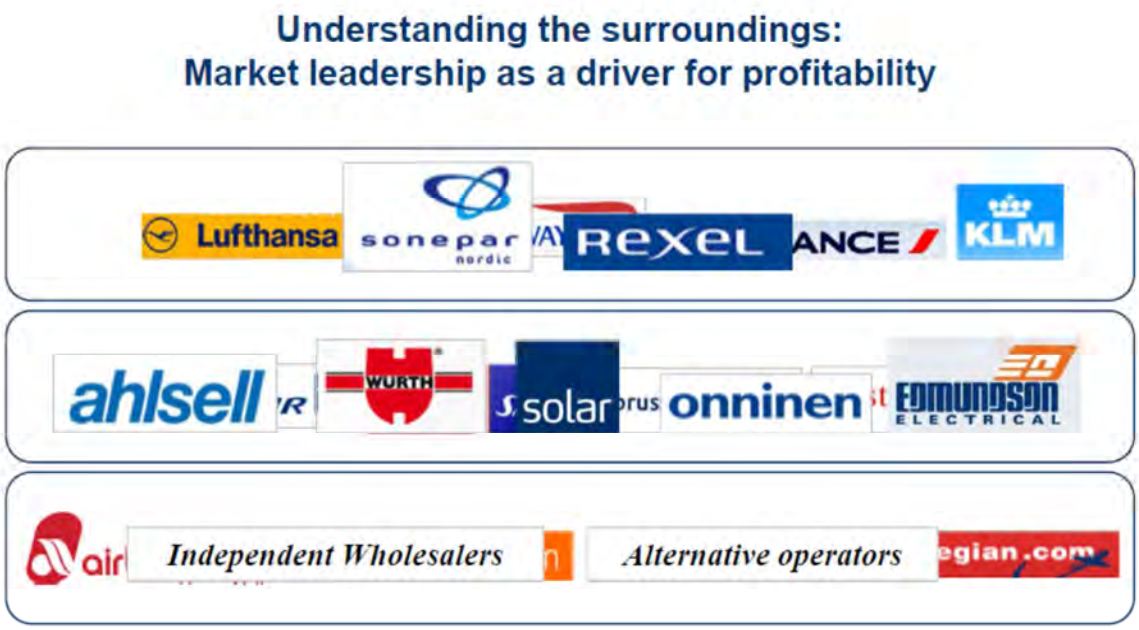

Figure 5.5: An airline industry-technical wholesale business comparison as a metaphor of relative positions of competitors. Source: Solar Strategy presentation 2012.

Solar Management Team member, Corporate HR Director Heidrun Marstein elaborates: "*While the large, international operators such as KLM and Air France can leverage economies of scale, the smaller local players such as RyanAir can capitalize on their efficiency. Between them, operators such as Scandinavian Airlines struggle with a position in the middle. The in-between position of SAS very much resembles the situation that Solar finds itself in, caught between market leaders Rexell and Sonepar and local independent wholesalers.*" While large competitors can built advantage and mark-up by economies of scale, small competitors built advantage from offerings tailor made to local specificities or to be in an optimal locations for customers. In the middle, Solar must simultaneously pursue back-end standardization and efficiency to match larger competitors as well as front-end localization to remain competitive, relative to local players and try to build advantage through knowledge sharing.

CEO Flemming H. Tomdrup illustrates the potential benefits of 'group mindset' with regards to occupying such as position in the market as a position on a skipping rope between centralization and decentralization: *"If our new competitive situation would put us at the bottom of a swinging skipping rope where it hits the ground, we would have a hard time; 'group mindset' could help us establish a position at the top of the skipping rope going up*." So, if 'group mindset' was the answer, the question was one of how to avoid being caught in the middle not being able to pursue a strategy of neither localization or standardization, nor centralization and decentralization. "*Pursuing a strategy of going after cross-country and -function synergies*

is a strategy neither pursued by bigger nor smaller competitors", explains 'group mindset' co-formulator, Norwegian country manager Jan-Willy Fjellvær (Participant observation/Field notes).

5.4 'Stronger Together' with 'Group Mindset'

This view of the market situation fostered a need to be 'Stronger together" and a change of governance style in Solar. Until then, subsidiaries had been quite autonomous reflecting a belief in the necessity of vast local adaptation to customer needs in the different markets (Exploratory interview: Magnus Dahlmann). Now, back-office functions have been centralized, common business processes are being set up across all operating units, and synergies in product development and customer knowledge are seen as critical success factors for the current strategy. Top management believes that this calls for a less decentralized mode of operation. The benefits of a group mindset are hoped to be a significantly improved rate of success with the achievements of strategic objectives, reduction of costs for sub-optimization in different company programs and not least, increased organizational agility in terms of better knowledge sharing possibilities and implementation of best practice in all parts of the group.

This interpretation of globality reflects the fact that Solar's near past was decentralized: interdisciplinary and intercultural cooperation was not a central part of the business model. However, in relation to Solar's current strategy, there is a much greater need to work together and share knowledge transversely in order to achieve cost advantages behind the lines. Meanwhile, there is a continued need for local adaptation to very diverse markets, which, in terms of language, culture, structure and production, are significantly different from one another. Consequently, today there are relatively few people in the company who have responsibility for nationalities other than their own. At the same time, the number of employees that are involved in cross-organizational project teams and developmental activities is increasing, as is the need to coordinate strategic initiatives. There is a need for more border- and function-crossing, holistic leadership to assist Solar *"on a journey, moving from being a Danish company with a Danish mindset into being an international company with an international mindset"* (Exploratory interview: Flemming H. Tomdrup, cf. 'Prologue').

To this end, 'Group mindset' was formulated by the Solar leadership team, Solar Management Team, consisting of top management, corporate functional managers and subsidiary directors, accentuating that: "*Group mindset is our way of thinking about what is best for Solar in everything we do and ensure that our initiatives and decisions help our colleagues across Solar"* (cf. Solar Management Team workshop, September 2010).

5.4.1 Solarian 'Group Mindset' – what and so what?

The idea of 'group mindset' was consolidated into three core principles of 'group mindset' launched in connection with the 2011 strategy kick-off in Hamburg for the strategy period 2010-2015.

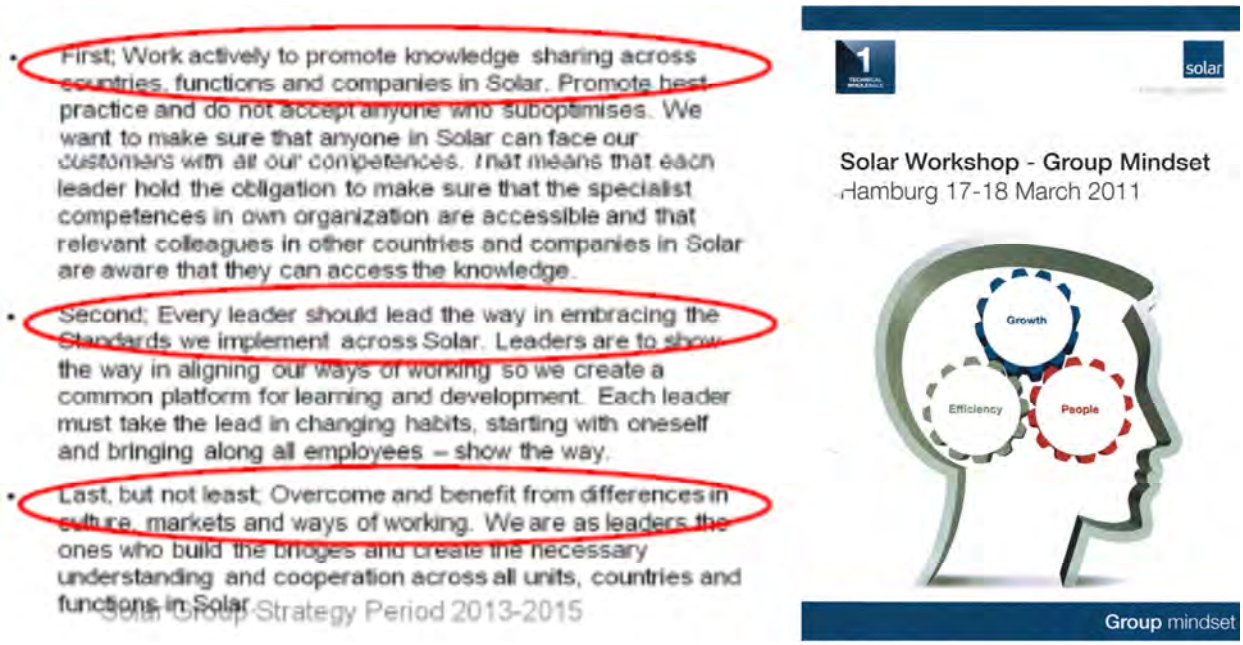

Figure 5.6: 'Group mindset' principles and 2011 strategy kick-off under the headline 'Group mindset.' Source: Solar Management Team.

As the 'group mindset' consolidation above indicates, the concept consists of three different perspectives that could be captured in three headlines (cf. oval markings on the figure above):

4. Knowledge sharing and dissemination of best practice
5. Group standardization and integration
6. Capitalization on local specificities through differentiation and localization

As pointed out in the dissertation's prologue, the overall 'group mindset' rationale of the Solar Management Team can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 5.7: Solar view of the relationship between international strategy, 'group mindset'-development and execution (cf. Chapter 1, 'Prologue'). Source: Author.

As indicated in the above illustration, the Solar business strategy is to be transformed in the strategy execution by developing an organizational global mindset operationalized in local 'group mindset' leadership capabilities. The perceived benefits – as well as challenges – of developing a 'group mindset' were expressed in a Solar Management Team questionnaire, handed out at a strategy workshop in May 2011. An overview of benefits and challenges are listed below:

Benefits:

- Common understanding and processes
- Employer branding
- Outperform competitors
- Knowledge sharing
- Shared corporate culture
- Increased mobility and flexibility
- Common language
- Less silo-thinking, less conservative
- Improved market position and competitiveness
- Predictability

Challenges:

- Necessity of local adjustments in a conservative and local markets
- None, but more people will have to be involved in group activities in order not to create a gap
- Local initiative and performance to be nurtured and preserved, when strategic priorities are locked/fixed
- Danger of "rushing things over" due to several simultaneous initiatives
- If lowest common denominator sets the pace and level of ambition
- Lack of ownership/involvement
- Slow decision-making processes and lack of local flexibility
- Too heavy?
- Language barriers?
- Lack of resources

Figure 5.8: A Solar Management Team take on benefits and challenges 'group mindset', May 2011. Source: Author.

The expressed benefits mirror the overall 'group mindset' rationale of occupying a profitable position as a medium-sized technical wholesaler in the European market by leveraging cross-organizational synergies and

knowledge sharing. At the same time, the Solar Management Team also have doubts about the merits of ’group mindset’ as illustrated by the perceived challenges of ‘group mindset’, voiced in a Solar Management Team mini-survey in May 2011 illustrated in the Figure above. Similar concerns can be found in the wider management group: *"HQ needs to remember that best practice does not equal corporate practice*," as a subsidiary middle manager puts it at the March 2011 strategy seminar (Field note). This view is mirrored by another subsidiary manager, who thinks that too many projects and programs are taking place at the same time at the expense of local business goals. Upon entry into the Solar organization and meeting with managers at various levels for the first time in connection with the Solar Group Leadership Programme in the spring and summer of 2011, one of the most common comments to my presentation of the mindset project would go along the lines of: *"They are not going to turn this into yet another company program, aren’t they?"*. This demonstrates the point that many projects are already under implementation in Solar, most notably the implementation of the SAP-based Solar 8000 ERP/CRM system in key markets. Yet others voiced concern that ‘group mindset’ efforts would detract from ‘doing our business’ (Field note) and constitute a carte blanche for generating costs of coordination, travelling and debate – activities for which no clear return on investment can be calculated.

5.5 Minded for ‘Group Mindset’?

It forms part of the Solarian self-perception as formulated in connection with an employer branding workshop in August 2011 that Solarians may take a while to decide on action, but when they do, they go all in. At the same time, Solarians are portrayed as results and action people thinking more in terms of ‘go’ than ‘grow’ (Field note). So, how ready are Solarians to go all in on mindset?

In a questionnaire on group mindset to the Solar top management team handed out at a workshop in May 2011, the Solar Management Team (SMT) unanimously assess general organizational willingness to change towards working with more ‘group mindset’ as medium to high. Some concerns are voiced in a section of the questionnaire with open-ended questions. Several are concerned that group mindset readiness may be ideational, and that execution remains to be seen, summed up by the following questionnaire entry: ”*Ready in theory, but maybe not in practice*?” Others pose larger question marks concerning that ”*people are not open-minded, they are too closed*” and it is also underlined that pointing out the “what’s in it for me?” and the “so what” of ‘group mindset’ is important: “*The Solarians are ready, but they need some practical success stories*.” A Solar Management Team take on the state of group mindset in 2011 expressed in a mini-survey on ‘group mindset’ reveals that there is a diversity of opinions on ‘group mindset’ state-of-the art, ranging from ‘Danish’ to ‘Cross-country’ and from ‘Integration’ to ‘Us vs. them’, as illustrated in the below

overview of questionnaire entries on characterization of current Solar 'group mindset':

A Solar Management Team take on the current state of 'group mindset' (May 2011)

- #1 in technical wholesale
- Growth, efficiency, people
- Best practice
- Danish
- Us vs. them
- Changing
- Opening up
- Cultural barriers
- Local
- Positive
- Energetic
- Sharing success and failure
- Standardization
- Common goals
- Energy
- Motivation
- Frustration
- Know-how/technicalskills
- Shared service
- Agility
- Endurance and persistence
- Cost-benefit focus
- Consolidation
- Alignment
- Integration
- Concept development
- Gross-margin
- E-business
- English
- Cross-country

Mini-SMT mindset survey, May 2011

Figure 5.9: A Solar Management team take on the May 2011 state of 'group mindset.' Source: Author.

As can be seen, the Solar Management Team's collective portrait of 'group mindset' is no homogeneous monolith – rather, the Solar Management Teams draw a collage of both strongholds vis-à-vis 'group mindset' such as 'integration', 'opening-up' and 'common goals' while simultaneously stressing 'frustration', 'local' and 'Danish.'

So, even within Solar Management Team ranks, an air of change and flux can be detected which was supported by the outcome in a Group HR workshop on 'group mindset' carried out in February 2012, with participants from corporate HR as well as local subsidiary HR representatives. In this forum, the current state of 'group mindset' was seen as characterized by 'fragmentation', 'frustration', 'undergoing change', 'in the process of opening up' and 'change fatigue' (Comments from HR-group workshop, February 2012). The Group HR characterization of 'group mindset' in Solar supplements the Solar Management Team portrait in the following way unexpectedly focusing on the change readiness and nature of the human resources in Solar:

- Operational, action-oriented, activity-based
- Practical, no-nonsense, hands-on, anti-academic
- Results-oriented (as opposed to learning- and process orientation)
- Quick decision-making
- Enthusiastic, energtic, positive
- Local mindset
- Danish (Jutlandish)
- Jungian Type Indicator: Prevalence of managerial ESTJ-profile (Extrovert, Structured, Thinking, Judgemental)
- Silo-thinking, not cross-functional
- Technical craftmanship
- Entrepreneurship
- Humble ('Jantelov')
- Storytelling
- Informal,fun
- Conservative,old-fashioned
- Customer-oriented, business and sales focus
- Fast going
- Forward thinking
- Standardisation
- Living, implementing or waiting for Solar 8000 (SAP-based ERP-system)
- Immature in terms of internationalization, knowledge sharing, and business processes

Figure 5.10: Solar Group HR characterization of 2011 state of 'group mindset.' Source: Author.

Apart from further emphasizing local, Danish mindset and silo-thinking, Group HR stress that the highly decentralized business model prevalent in the past has fostered an organization with a leadership style preference of action-orientation, local entrepreneurship and 'fast forward.' This, as Group HR discussed in the 'group mindset' workshop, may not be conducive to coordination, lateral process thinking and slower decision-making processes which they see as necessary facilitators of development and enactment of 'group mindset.'

The overall Group HR evaluation of the state of 'group mindset' as one of fragmentation and change in turn mirrors the outcome of a cross-country workshop with business and HR representatives on Solar employer branding in August 2011, emphasizing that internal fragmentation and change as characteristics of Solar alongside with the challenge of aspiring to embrace multi- and cross-cultural working, while at the same time being firmly rooted in a past of family-ownership and traditional West-Danish ('Jutlandish') outlook. But where does the expressed state of confusion and fragmentation stem from? Awareness of the faultlines and subgroupings in the company can be seen as a precondition for faultline crossing and reconciliation – a theme which was also discussed at a Group HR workshop on 'group mindset' carried out in February 2012. Participants from corporate HR as well as local subsidiary HR representatives pointed to the following faultlines as relevant for 'group mindset' development and enactment:

Group and 'not-so group' mindset in Solar: Organizational faultlines

- Corporate HQ vs. country subsidiary
- Country HQ vs. local branches
- Solar 8000 project group(s) subculture(s)
- Organizational differences between newly established Solar companies and older Solar entities(e.g. Poland vs. Denmark)
- Maturity of business lines (plumbing & Heating, 2005, vs. Electrical, 1919) + not all countries have plumbing & heating.
- Org. cultural differences: "home grown" Solar subsidiaries vs. acquired companies – *"are from different planets"*
- Post-communist/catholic vs. Western European/Protestant
- Managers vs. non-managers
- High seniority Solar employees vs. newcomers
- Leadership style
- Preference for action vs. following standardized procedures or 'group template'
- Understanding of business vs. markets.
- Knowing-doing gap: *knows what to do, but not how to do it"*
- Sales departments have certain culture, expect VIP-treatment (*'rules do not apply to us'*…) and behave like celebreties
- Between functions (e.g. market and sales)
- Shared service centre employees vs. locally operating employees
- Top management vs. managers at other levels

Figure 5.10: Group and 'not-so group' mindset in Solar: Organizational faultlines. Group HR workshop 2012. Source: Author.

As can be seen from the figure above a lot of different faultlines are present in the Solar group, mirroring both professional/functional faultlines, project vs. temporary employees, hierarchical affiliation, managerial level, subsidiary vs. HQ as well as different product lines and business backgrounds (acquired vs. home grown). This overview highlights the fact that markets, development paths and positions vis-à-vis business strategy varies markedly within the Solar group. An illustrative summary of the different organizational faultlines can be made by recounting some recurring narratives that the author consistently stumbled across during participant observation at the Group Leadership Programme (module 3) in the spring of 2011 both in the international, English language classes as well as local language classes: First of all it is characteristic to talk about Solar as a 'she' in much the same manner as you would refer to a ship - a trait that stands out due to the fact that a majority of Solar employees generally as well as managers in particular are male. But Solar is a female of many faces: In Denmark, among both corporate and subsidiary representatives (many of whom have high seniority), Solar is referred to as "a fine old lady", a remark that mirrors Solar Denmark's soon-to-be 100th anniversary and a remark made by the current CEO's predecessor's wife when her husband left the company to go into retirement after 50 years of service in 2006 encouraging Solarians to 'take good care of

the old lady.' In Sweden on the other hand, where Solar is much more recently established (2005), managers recall how they were asked to describe their company as a person in connection with the so-called 'Value Days' in 2008, a company-wide bottom-up process to define company values (see section on organizational culture below). The Swedish response to that challenge was to describe Solar as a 40-year old woman 'maturely peaking in charisma, power and energy', as one manager put it. In Germany, however, where business has been established even more recently and where the market is characterized by a high degree of fragmentation, managers portray their business challenges as those of a very young woman trying to stand on her own two feet and find her place in life. So, Solar is an 'I'm every woman'-company where many faultlines crisscross and open up upon closer inspection. In this respect, business age and market maturity seem of particular importance to the Solarians, who may think of their company as a fine old lady in the home country Denmark, but more of an adolescent in international dealings.

However, the state of 'group mindset' as assessed by the Solar Management Team and Group HR also mirrors the fact that there has been no concrete implementation plan at the time of the presentation of 'group mindset' to the organization. Indeed, the Solar Management Team-formulated 'group mindset' principles were never used in the communication of this new leadership style even if the term 'group mindset' has been actively used in Solar Management Team communication. Although the concept of 'group mindset' was and is discussed at the mandatory Group Leadership Programme, an internal leadership development program in three modules, during the entire research project period, the concept is discussed in an open-ended, brainstorm-manner, where free association over the concept is encouraged and sought after, rather than presenting a fixed Solar Management Team interpretation. As an example, the following key words were mentioned by the most recent participants in the Group Leadership Programme in the autumn of 2013, newly appointed or recruited managers entering into Solar during 2012 or beginning of 2013, when asked "What is 'group mindset'?":

Newly appointed managers at GLP:
Global mindset is characterized by…

- Promoting knowledge
- Leading the way
- Benefit from difference
- Low market share
- Execution power
- All organizational levels
- Common platform
- Best practice
- Knowledge sharing
- Embracing standards
- Releasing potential synergies
- Accessability
- Strong leadership

Figure 5.11: Newly appointed managers brainstorming on Solarian 'group mindset'. Participant observation, Group Leadership Programme/Module 1 ('Communicator'), Copenhagen, October 29, 2013. Source: Author.

As can be seen, the outcome of the plenary debate on 'group mindset' certainly mirrors the Solar Management Team formulation of 'group mindset' principles even if no direct effort has been made to communicate a particular interpretation. Nevertheless, an essential part is missing, namely the dimension of capitalizing on differences and local perspectives. As could be expected, the general knowledge in group mindset a year after the coining and activation of the term in connection with the 2011 strategy kick-off in Hamburg, remains rather low outside Solar Management Team ranks. In a question on 'group mindset' extraordinarily added to the 2012 version of the existing Solar organizational performance survey, internally known as the 'Navigator survey[11]', managerial respondents at operational level display a low degree of 'group mindset' knowledge. Within the group that knows the concept of 'group mindset' it is questionable how exactly the individual respondent interprets the concept. As one interview participant comments with regards to 'group mindset' in an interview on international collaboration in Solar: "*The concept rings a bell, but I must admit that I have no idea what it really means and I have not been able to find any information about it on the group portal."* (Interview 11), and another interview participant follows up stating that "*I know the group mindset, or, just as a phrase."* (Interview 19). Middle managers that have been employed after the 2011 Strategy Kick-off under the headline of 'group mindset' also seem somewhat at a loss with regards to the concept as exemplified by an interview respondent being asked if he has heard about 'group mindset' answering that: *"Well… I have only come to work for Solar one year ago, so…"* (Interview 8).

Further, the concept of 'group mindset' was formulated in separation from the existing corporate values in Solar. The corporate values were formulated in 2008 as a result of an organization-wide process, the so-called 'Value Days', where managers and employees from all parts of Solar were charged with the task of formulating and operationalizing corporate values for the entire group. The result of the 'Value Days' was the definition of three core values: Courage, Glow and SmartFun defined as depicted in the illustration below:

[11] The Navigator-survey is a localized Solar-version of a standardized performance survey questionnaire offered by an external provider, TNS Sifo, and has been conducted in 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2012. The questionnaire does not specifically cover themes of international collaboration, management or governance in general or include questions specifically focusing on 'group mindset' in particular except for the 2012 survey, where room was made for one question regarding 'group mindset'. It has not yet been decided if and how 'group mindset' is to be evaluated through this channel in the next Navigator survey coming up in late 2014.

Figure 5.12: Solar corporate values. Source: Solar Corporate HR.

Although both group values and 'group mindset' may feature in the same corporate PowerPoint presentation, no formal or public deliberations seem to have been made with regard to the way in which the Solar group values and 'group mindset' combine or not, which can be illustrated in the below matrix juxtaposing group values with 'group mindset':

Group mindset / **Group values**	Group mindset dimension #1: Knowledge sharing and dissemination of best practice	Group mindset dimension # 2: Group standardization and integration	Group mindset dimension # 3: Capitalization on local specificities through differentiation and localization
Group value #1: **Glow**			
Group value #2: **Courage**		?????	
Group value #3: **SmartFun**			

Figure 5.13: Group mindset and group values – how do they combine? Source: Author.

What does it mean, for instance, to display 'courageous group standardization and integration'? How to 'capitalize on local specificities with glow'? Or in which way can 'knowledge sharing and dissemination of best practice be approached with glow'? The answers to these questions have not been discussed – a discussion that seems timely in as much as the Navigator survey clearly testifies to the fact that the Solar group values are widely recognized (if not interpreted similarly). Although it is unknown to what extent Solar group values in practice act as guidelines for action, combining the group values and group mindset is an avenue for developing 'group mindset' not yet leveraged in Solar. Perhaps 'group mindset' generally could be considered SmartFun?

5.6 Refreshed Group Strategy 2013-2015

Financial crisis made it clear that the 2010-2015 strategy had to be updated and revised for the second half of the strategy period, which saw a major change in governance style regarding the implementation of business strategy. In Q2, 2011, Solar experienced its first ever quarter of red numbers, and lay-offs were carried out from late 2012 to 2013, partly due to the dismantling of temporary IT project organization implementing Solar 8000, but permanent jobs were also on the line. A refreshed company strategy was launched in January

2013, covering the last half of the current strategy period from 2013-2015[12]. Energy-efficient products and solutions are presented as growth drivers in the updated version of "#1 in Technical Wholesale" for 2013-2015, which aims at turning Solar into a more profitable group: "*Our focus is on increasing earnings, and we will do so by strengthening the way we handle day-to-day operations and by implementing a series of strategic initiatives. The most essential objective is for us to begin utilizing our existing assets and competences more fully. To do so, we must improve efficiency in all aspects of our business*", explains Group CEO Flemming H. Tomdrup. One of these strategic initiatives is to have an even more proactive, efficient and customer-oriented sales organization and uniform sales processes. Solar hopes to differentiate itself from competitors and create more value for customers by further improving the ability to supply both physical products and services. In addition, Solar will focus more on career development and recruitment due to the fact that demographic developments in the workforce pose challenges for future attraction and retention of employees. The refreshed group strategy's aim is to:

- strengthen Solar's position as one of Northern Europe's leading technical wholesalers within electrical, plumbing and ventilation products,
- profit more from the business model which offers competitive logistics, product and service solutions,
- benefit maximally from daily operations by utilizing employees' strong individual skills to create high-performance teams,
- be seen by customers as their preferred technical wholesaler,
- in time become one of the most profitable enterprises within the industry.

Over the course of the research project and strategy implementation, the corporate focus areas with regard to 'group mindset' have changed. The strategy company program manager explains: *"We started off thinking 'group mindset' along the lines 'one company', but we have long moved on from that"* (Participant observation/Field notes). The launch of the 2013-2015 business strategy also saw the initiation of a new governance style vis-à-vis mature and emerging markets (as foreseen in the 2010-2012 business strategy) dividing the Solar operations into two groups of 'key markets' and 'challengers' as illustrated in the below illustration from the 2013-strategy kick-off:

[12] You can watch the Solar CEO elaborate on group strategy (among other topics) in the Solar webcast of the 'Solar Q3 presentation' (1 hour, 21 minutes) http://www.solar.eu/Menu/Investor or http://storm.zoomvisionmamato.com/player/solar/objects/x5hp1dw3/.

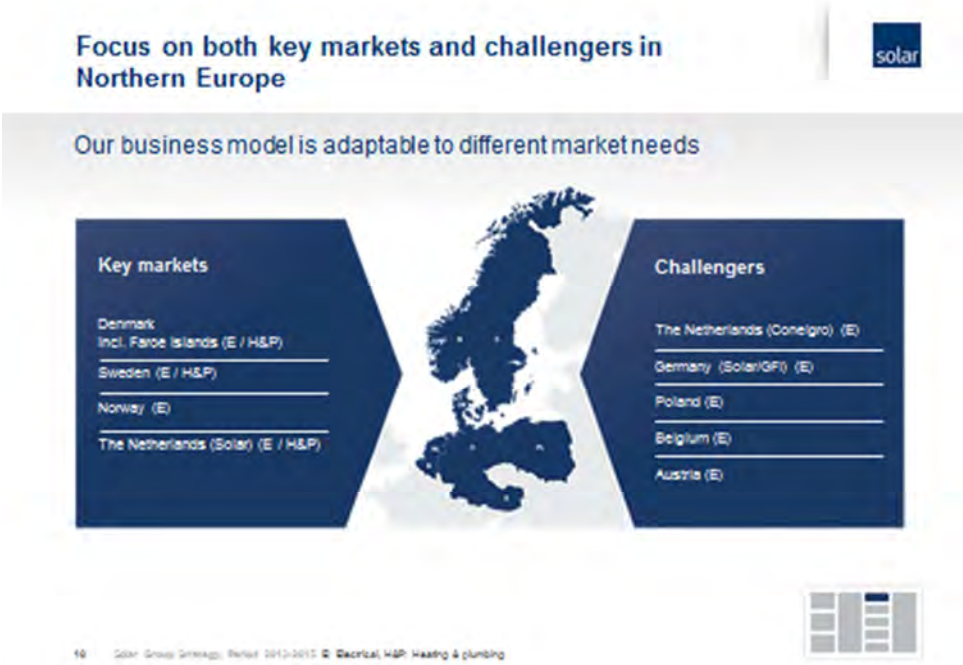

Figure 5.14: Key markets and challenger markets. Source: Solar Group Strategy Presentation 2013.

This division was accompanied by a modular business model, a 'hop-on/hop-off model' where different countries all share a core technical wholesale offer, but may choose à la carte which other value propositions to offer depending on the competitive situation, market maturity and organizational pool of knowledge:

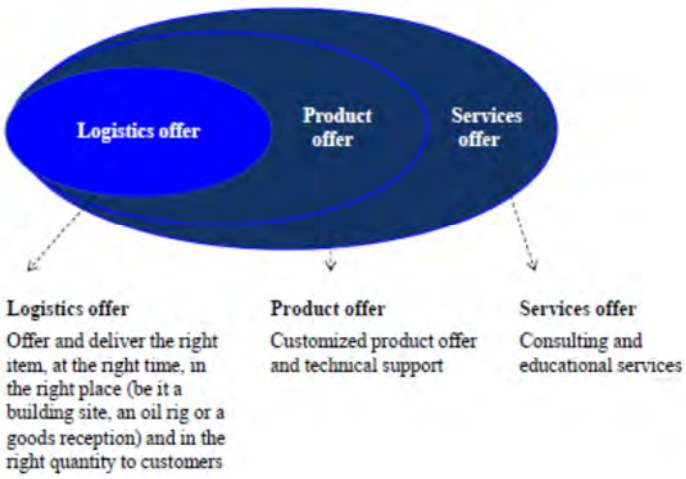

Figure 5.15: A modular business model of 'hop-on, hop-off'. Source: Author developed from Solar Strategy Kick-off 2012 and Corporate HR.

This represents a marked change from previous phases of internationalization going for the all-in replication of a Danish business model in foreign markets. The change in governance style towards a modular business model has also been mirrored in the concrete roll-out of the company programs and projects through which the business strategy is carried out, one prominent example being the roll-out of the SAP-based ERP system Solar 8000 which is seen as one of the biggest and boldest moves in Solar history of a magnitude similar to embarking on internationalization (Exploratory interview: Magnus Dahlmann). Three countries are now running SAP on the group template, the fourth and last key market to convert to SAP, Sweden, will be fully operational by the end of Q2, 2014 (Solar press release, March 2014). Ideas to have a group-wide template have been abandoned, and so, the challenger markets are to run a less demanding Axapta solution, which will also suit the needs of the 'sunshine companies'. Another example is the group-wide career development program as well as the employer branding campaign, representing Solar as a 'Land of Can-do' (cf. figure below): The individual countries are presented with the option of opting-out entirely, or implementing parts of the planned activities as well as implementing them in a localized manner.

Figure 5.16: Solar print and online job ads welcoming jobseekers to the land of can-do. Source: Solar Corporate HR.

Similarly, corporate communication on group strategy 2013-15 consisted of a basic communication toolkit in order to ensure message consistency, but how the message was delivered was left up to the individual countries, which chose to avail themselves of a variety of activities and channels, and with success, judging from a mini-Navigator survey conducted in the end of 2013. Further, corporate program management of strategic programs and projects was supplemented by locally situated company program managers, supporting local managers with strategy execution of both group and local initiatives.

Although increasing profits are the number one priority in this strategy, 'group mindset' remains part of the drivers of efficiency and growth as illustrated in the below overview of strategic goals and initiatives for the strategy period 2013-2015 by a 'group mindset'-ring surrounding the entire strategy:

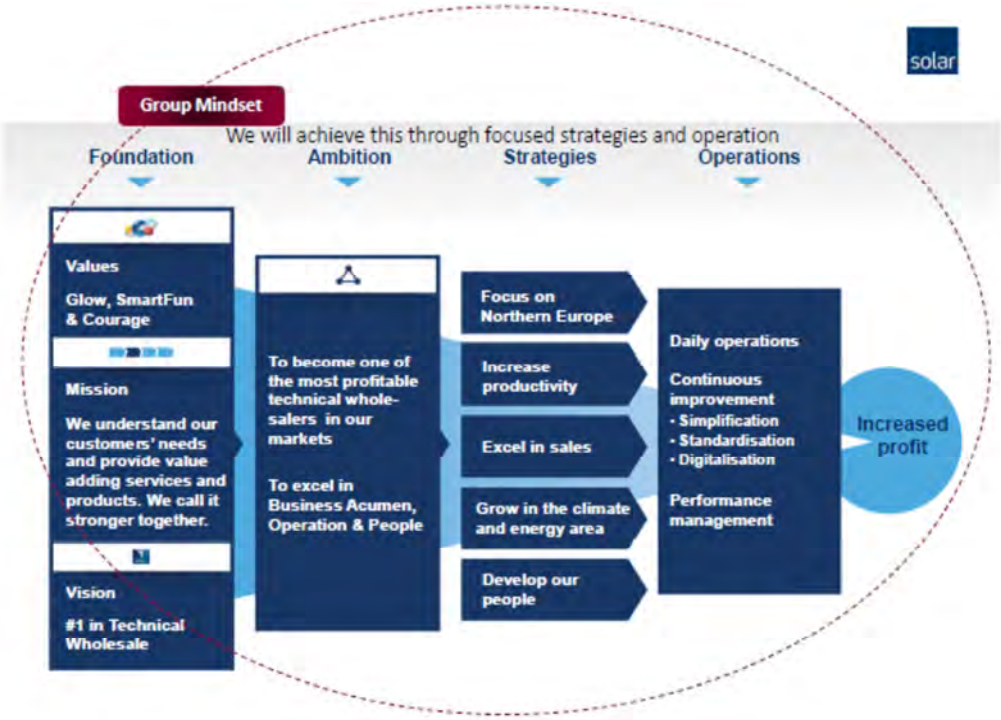

Figure 5.17: 'Group Mindset' as strategy facilitator and capability. Source: Mette Bredkjær: January 21, 2014, Global Leadership Academy meeting at Solar, Vejen, Denmark, presentation by Mette Bredkjær, Company Programme Manager. Globalization & Group Mindset -International Strategy Execution.

Further, as the financial crisis takes its toll organically or acquisitively growing out of the crisis is not enough or not an option at all – operational excellence is necessary to optimize international resource utilization. The financial crisis does seem to be wearing off for Solar, however. In the annual report for 2013 published March 2014, it is reported that Solar Group revenue and EBITA for 2013 exceeded most recently announced expectations slightly, but that the group's earnings were still unsatisfactory – see table below:

Financial highlights

Consolidated (€ million)	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Revenue	1,531.5	1,638.9	1,532.4	1,401.5	1,431.4
Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA)	36.6	46.7	51.2	60.6	48.0
Earnings before interest, tax and amortisation (EBITA)	21.7	35.3	39.1	49.0	36.2
Operating profit or loss before special items	12.9	26.6	26.7	41.6	29.4
Earnings before interest and tax (EBIT)	12.9	26.6	26.7	41.6	22.4
Earnings before tax (EBT)	5.5	21.0	19.6	35.4	17.4
Net profit for the year	3.0	15.7	12.2	24.6	10.1
Balance sheet total	665.0	767.2	723.5	684.1	620.5
Equity	286.6	295.3	283.1	284.9	257.3
Interest-bearing liabilities, net	42.4	74.9	120.3	98.5	102.8
Cash flow from operating activities	35.1	57.4	48.5	46.6	118.2

Figure 5.18: Solar Financial highlights 2009-2013. Source: Solar 2013 Annual Report.

Further, it is emphasized that in 2013, Solar generated positive cash flow from operating activities while also reducing debt – a trend expected to continue in 2014. Q4 of 2013 ended with negative organic growth of 4.9%. The outlook for 2014, however, does remain somewhat grim and there is not support for Solar management hopes of a more positive development in 2014. Solar does inform their shareholders that they expect a positive growth for next year, 2015, 4% of which can be considered a 'normal organic growth rate' for Solar in that the growth rate from 2001-2011 was 4%, EBITA margin of 5-6%. Although searching for cross-country synergies seems to have been put on a temporary hold, as many subsidiaries struggle with making a profit at all, and the implementation of Solar 8000 continues in key markets, the CEO maintains that the business case for 'group mindset' remains intact at has been even strengthened in the 2011-2014 period: "*The business case for 'group mindset' has been strengthened by the present crisis with unsatisfactory earnings throughout the group. We need to be successful in leveraging productivity and efficiency premiums of cross-organizational synergies."* (Exploratory interview: Flemming H. Tomdrup). At the time of writing, the future of 'group mindset' as an organizational capability and managerial meta-competence with the prospect of facilitating international strategy execution is unknown. Solar is approaching the strategy formulation process of setting the objectives for the company from 2015 onwards – a process to be headed by incoming CEO, Anders Wilhjelm, joining Solar as of April 1, 2014, i.e. at the same time as the completion of the research project on 'group mindset.'

5.7 Solar – 'an International Local Company'

The analysis presenting the Solar macro environment, in which the efforts to work with strategic global mindset as a managerial meta-competence and organizational capability is embedded, can be summarized by the 'Drucker 5'-questions posed in the beginning of this Chapter 5:

The Solar mission is that *"We understand our customers' needs and provide value adding services and products. We call it stronger together"*. The vision is to be *"#1 in technical wholesale*" maybe not in sheer number of products delivered, but in the customer's perception as the best quality offer on the market. In addition, an ambition has been formulated *"to become one of the most profitable technical wholesalers in our markets."* The typical customers are small and medium-sized businesses within the plumbing or electrical trade, but large industrial clients also represent a source of revenue as do customer education and consulting on renewable energy. Very few customers are international or engage in border-crossing activities, and the customers that do, represent an insignificant amount of revenue. The customer's value proposition ranges from a basic logistics offer of offering and delivering the right item, at the right time, in the right place and in the right quantity to customers to a customized product offer and technical support and consulting and educational services. Key markets offer a wider range of services and products than challenger markets, where customers predominantly demand a more basic offer. The outcome of these activities has been put under pressure by major market restructuring and financial crisis, and during the past

three years Solar has experienced its first ever negative quarterly result. EBITA for 2013 exceeded management's expectations slightly, but the group's earnings were still unsatisfactory. The company does expect a positive growth of 4% for 2015, which can be considered a 'normal organic growth rate' for Solar compared to the growth rate from 2001-2011. The plan has been conquer a profitable in-between position in the European technical wholesale business by leveraging cross-country and cross-organizational synergies, facilitated by the development of a 'group mindset.'

With regard to the current state of global mindset, operationalized as Solarian 'group mindset', a globality profile of Solar indicating the company's present degree of globalization can be drawn by pinpointing Solar's position in terms of the following dimensions suggested by Gupta & Govindarajan (2001):

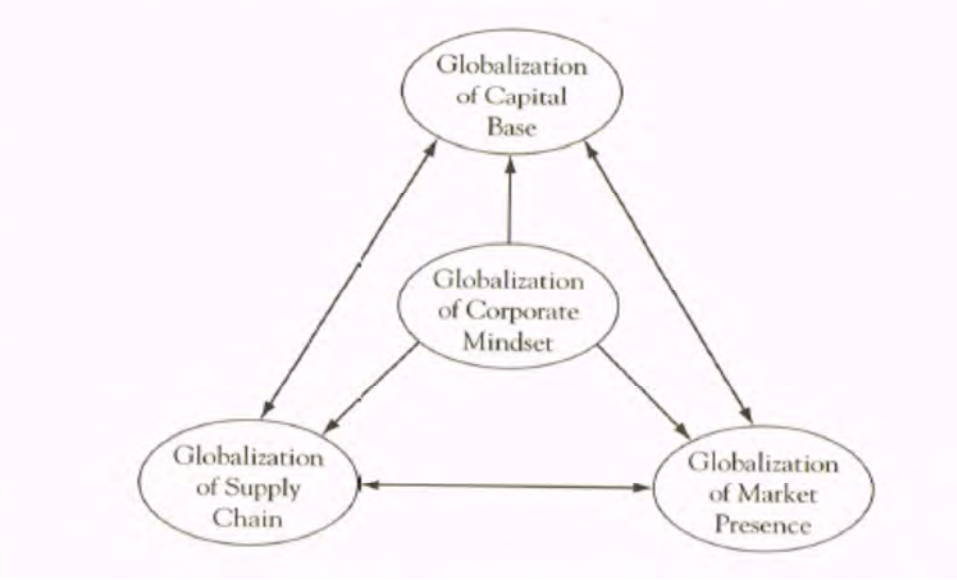

Figure 5.19: Generic globality profile (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2001, p. 8).

Starting with the dimension of "globalization of capital base", Solar's capital base is dominated by Danish ownership by local financial institutions. The majority of votes is in the possession of a descendant of the Solar founder, and a grandson today holds the position as chairman of the board. Solar's market presence is characterized by 'near market', markets in close proximity to the home country Denmark, although near markets have come to include Northern European countries in general. Technical wholesale is a local business; customers are highly local, small companies, and border-crossing costumers demanding international services are few and far in between. Where markets and customers are highly local, suppliers are characterized by a high degree of international presence and globalization, but even if the vendors are international and present in all or most of Solar's market, the product offer varies in different countries due to supplier product differentiation and different national product standards. So, neither capital base nor markets are characterized by a high degree of globalization, while suppliers display a higher degree of

globalization. Against this backdrop, there are few things in the Solar environment to suggest or facilitate the existence of a global mindset following Gupta & Govindarajan' s logic illustrated in the globality profile. This is in coherence with the prevailing perception of the state of development of 'group mindset' in Solar portrayed in the previous sections. Solar is an MNC in the making – fighting to do business in a new way under new conditions in order to secure a profitable future and so they are in a state of 'opening up', experiencing fragmentation and confusion in the search for a different, more international development path. And Solarians are well aware that they come from: "*Until 1988, Solar was only a Danish company. Afterwards we have bought and sold more than 80 companies in eight different Northern European countries.*" (Exploratory interview/Magnus Dahlmann). Today, the CEO assesses: *"We are a conglomerate. If we talk upstream, I would say that we are beginning to be global in that we work with international platforms, processes and systems. But when it comes to servicing our customers, it is more of a combination – you cannot compromise with being local. We are moving the direction of developing an international mindset, but we are far from there yet… We are an international local company."* (Exploratory interview/Flemming Tomdrup).

Chapter 6: Looking for International Performance – Searching for 'Group Mindset' Management Practice in Solar

In the previous chapter, an empirical analysis was presented of the internal case company macro-environment, in which the efforts to work with strategic global mindset, operationalized as Solarian 'group mindset', takes place. In this chapter, an empirical analysis of the managerial microfoundations of strategic global mindset is presented with a view to discussing both individual and organizational enablers, that adds to the development and enactment of 'group mindset' as experienced by middle managers (tactical and operational level) in the case company.

This second part of the empirical analysis, then, explores managerial microfoundations of global mindset operationalized as 'group mindset' by exploring facilitating management practices and governance structures, seen from a middle manager perspective. This is done by uncovering individual and organizational enablers and barriers that detracts from the development and enactment of 'group mindset' in Solar, covering managers of HQ corporate functions (HR, IT, etc.) as well as managers in all Solar subsidiaries incl. the Danish subsidiary, as well as managers from the so-called 'sunshine companies[13]', acquired companies not yet having undergone full post-merger management into the Solar family, representing business entities in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. Also, different functions (sales, lean, SAP-Solar 8000), genders, age groups and levels of seniority are represented as are managers, who have previously owned or been employed by businesses acquired by Solar in the past, now still working for Solar.

All types of data come to the fore as both field notes from participant observation in the Group Leadership Programme (290 managers of a total of 304 managers had participated in the Group Leadership Programme by the end of 2013; of these the author has followed 200 managers through participant observation), 25 formal interviews, 'hanging around', workshops and other forms of participating observations as documented by videos, tape recordings, field notes, meeting minutes, PowerPoint-presentations and photos, are activated after having been categorized as described in PART II on methodology and empirical basis. Following data coding, the middle manager views have been categorized into seven themes containing both opportunities for and threats to development and enactment of 'group mindset' behavior in Solar.

It is important to note that the categorization of middle managers' views on individual and organizational enablers of 'group mindset' in the case organization does not reflect the most frequently cited suggestions or comments. Reflecting the fact that respondents have been drawn from a diverse group of managers in terms of both nationality, position in the hierarchy, function/ job role, gender, competences (language skills,

[13] The take-over and due diligence process leading up to the acquisition was internally referred to as 'sunshine' and the acquired companies are still affiliated as 'the sunshine companies.'

professional, international and managerial experience) etc., the overview and discussion of significant themes below is a total framing of all views put forward in interviews, workshops or during participant and participating observation, in other types of dialog or correspondence with the author. Therefore, this picture of 'group mindset' management practices in Solar does not represent 'the average' or is in any way generalizable to the entire group of middle managers in Solar, or other populations of middle managers outside Solar. The analysis has been designed to explore what middle managers perceive to be organizational and individual enablers of global mindset, operationalized as Solarian 'group mindset' in an open-ended manner, not a priori excluding or including any particular practices. Variety of viewpoint has been given priority to the fact that little is known in extant literature about the microfoundations of 'group mindset' in general, as well as about the experiences and views of middle managers in particular.

6.1 Strategic Global Mindset Competence and Capability: Individual Enablers/Manager behaviors and Organizational Enablers/Governance Structures

In the following, an analysis of 'group mindset' competence and capability in Solar is presented as seven Solarian 'group mindset' force fields, focusing on behaviors and structures adding to or detracting from development and enactment of 'group mindset' as well as organizational and individual enablers. Organizational enablers are understood as organizational mechanisms at HQ discretion that may promote the subsidiary and corporate capacity for developing and enacting 'group mindset' in managerial practice. The emphasis is on enablers that are within the sphere of influence for the organization, predominantly corporate top management, and through them corporate functions that are within the corporate span of control and can be influenced in the short run or medium term. Individual enablers are understood as actions or behaviors that are within the sphere of influence for the individual manager, i.e. which are at the individual's discretion and can be influenced in the short run or medium term. In this context, enablers are not seen as relevant, unless they are within the sphere of influence of the individual manager although they may be desirable. For instance, willingness to relocate or take on short-term international assignments is an act at the individual's discretion as is proactiveness in soliciting advice from colleagues in other countries or participating in language training. Conversely, curriculum vitae cannot be changed to include past international experience retroactively, just as personality profiles cannot be altered. At the same time, it is outside the individual manager's sphere of influence to decide if opportunity to take on international assignments arises, and/or if the manager is selected for such a position – if language training opportunity is available. In the longer run, managers can undergo substantial development and managers with different profiles can be recruited; however, in the longer run the competitive situation and/or strategic direction of the company may have altered and so the management practices conducive to international strategy execution and 'group mindset' may have been significantly altered. Alignment between strategy, capability and competences is an ongoing

endeavor to continuously conquer a match that may be short-lived depending on circumstances, which are to a large extend outside the company's control.

The seven central Solarian 'group mindset' themes seen in a middle manager perspective, including both individual and organizational enablers, are now discussed in turn:

6.1.1 Theme #1: Empowerment, Exposure, Experience: Lack of Imagination and Organizational 'cold canvas' vs. International Discovery

A central theme of the analysis of the middle manager experience of 'group mindset' is the existence of undiscovered synergies of working together internationally that Solarians are not capitalizing on today – not due to language barriers, power plays and market or cultural differences, but just because managers are unaware of an existing potential. Managers may not know that the exact same challenge that they experience locally exists in for instance Germany, so nobody is using or asking for that knowledge in that they suffer from a lack of imagination. One illustrative example would be that fact that the Danish heating and plumbing section may actually have much more in common with the Swedish heating and plumbing organization, in terms of market share or costumer segments, than with the Danish electrical section, without sharing that knowledge due to unawareness of similarities. Similarly, there may be larger differences between Danish heating and plumbing-section and the Danish electric session than between Danish heating and plumbing and Swedish electrics (cf. participant observation, Strategy kick-off Berlin 2012). If nobody knows, however, these opportunities for harvesting cross-functional or cross-organizational knowledge dividends are left unexplored. If 'group mindset' is a way to think about *"what is best for Solar in everything we do and ensure that our initiatives and decisions help colleagues across Solar"* (Consolidation of 'Group Mindset'-leadership behavior, Solar Management Team, September 2010) this is certainly difficult to do with a short or non-existing international line of sight.

This highlights the fact that it is difficult to empower middle managers in an organization undergoing internationalization in a study like the present, as middle managers are caught in an internationalization catch 22: They are invited to have a say on how they see international collaboration in Solar, but in order to answer this question they must have experiences with international collaboration, which many do not. Consequently, many Solar managers resort to formulations like *"I don't know, because I have only been to a couple of meetings with people from other countries."* (Interview 16), *"I really do not know as I have never …", "Perhaps you should ask those people that visit corporate instead…"* etc. when asked about their views on international collaboration in Solar. As one branch manager puts it: "*Maybe some people connect with other people in other countries, with headquarters. But other people… In the branches we don't connect. We do not meet with colleagues from other countries.*" (Interview 15). Many middle manager reactions thus mirror Gandhi's classic response to the question of what he thought of Western civilization to which he answered that "I think it would be a good idea" subtly emphasizing the fact that we have yet to experience Western

civilization. In much the same way, middle managers express that knowledge sharing, learning from others and sharing resources in accordance with 'group mindset' would probably be a great idea, but how and why remains somewhat hypothetical and elusive to them. For newcomers getting an overview is perceived of as a problem: '*It is very difficult to have the energy and overview to know in detail about the other Solar countries, before you know your own.*" (Interview 8). And indeed, if you are working in a branch office where your everyday practice is servicing customers in a 30 kilometer radius from the office and with little or no contact with other subsidiaries or HQ, this is a situation of low benefits' visibility. Further, having been socialized into a corporate culture with a recent past of international top-down governance, seasoned Solar managers may be reluctant to come forth with critical or 'stupid' questions due to the organizational past (Interviews 1 and 21). Polish field members also point to their communist past as a barrier against speaking up or reaching out (Interview 12): "*30 years ago we had a different system in Poland… We still do not feel 100 percent European. All the time we have something we must work harder to do ,I think. For example, democracy in other countries has been there for many years; we have only had it for 30 years. We're still fighting with different opinions in Poland, different thinking about democracy."* (Interview 14). So many managers do not feel secure to speak up, and even if they do, they do not know what to say: *"What it comes down to, really, is that I do not know too much about the 'group'."* (Interview 8).

Lack of imagination is often combined with an experience among middle managers that could best be described as 'knowledge sharing by organizational cold canvassing', echoing one of the oldest and most ineffective sales techniques, in which a seller calls people out of the blue to see if they are interested in purchasing something, and where calls are made randomly with no prior qualifications of the persons to call. It is not only that managers do not know what they should call about, they also do not know who to call: "*Well, that's the thing! It might be so that Poland is a fantastic business, and they do everything really, really well, and they're very efficient. But if we've never been introduced to them, or we've never met them over the coffee table or whatever, how am I supposed to know what I can learn from them, or if I can learn from them*?" (Interview 6). And when people do reach out, they do not always experience that their contact is appreciated:*"Here in Denmark [corporate HQ, ed.], I have experienced that there is a culture of 'every company for itself.' If I contact a colleague in our Danish subsidiary, Solar Denmark, not everyone consider me a colleague. Some might even perceive of me…almost like someone from an entirely different company. This, of course, has to do with the fact that we do not know each other…"* (Interview 23).

Getting together is a first start to enlarging middle manager imagination in terms of being able to "think about what is good for all colleagues in Solar", even if the direct advantages are not always apparent. Several managers explicitly express a curiosity and need to share knowledge with colleagues from other parts of the organization with similar roles, but are not sure how to go about it: *"And I do sometimes miss that… I am pretty new, not only in my role, but also in this company. Of course, I can ask my manager, but how do the*

others do that? Because I'm not really going to go just into Norway and say: 'How are you doing?'" (Interview 7). The organizational transparency with regards to potential benefits is facilitated by getting into contact with colleagues from other parts of the organization. After actually having met with colleagues from other countries through the Group Leadership Programme (GLP), a Belgian manager remarks: *"For me it's like a smaller group now, because I'm sitting here in GLP, and I hear and I see who works in Norway and Sweden. But for the employees in my branch, then Solar is a big company, and you don't know how it works in Norway, how it works in Sweden, how it works in Denmark - we don't know."* (Interview 9). This view is supported by a middle manager colleague emphasizing that mental distance decrease when you know people: "*I believe in communication with other people; if you have met someone then you can call him, and then you can agree, or discuss something over the phone, it doesn't matter. But it is better if you know someone*." (Interview 19). So, the thought of reaching out without prior acquaintance is experienced like cold canvassing, but unlike a salesman pursuing his luck at random, Solar managers refrain from contacting colleagues. In addition to 'getting real' in terms of knowing what goes on in other countries, getting connected to the right people is a precondition for successful knowledge sharing and pursuit of synergies. In addition willingness to getting help is also a facilitator, which may pose some difficulties in Solar. Opening up to outside advice or actively seeking such an advice can be difficult in an organizational culture of entrepreneurial spirit and decentralized past of 'every-man-for-himself' (Group HR workshop, 2012, Group 1 and 3). As one manager remarked there is a vast difference between 'I did it my way in my market' to 'I did it the Solar Way in our markets' (Group Leadership Programme, Field Note, October 2013). A preference for 'fixing your own problems', being the 'strong silent type' is not conducive to reaching out to others, which can be considered a precondition of enactment of 'group mindset' (Group HR workshop, February 2012, participating observation, field notes). It takes courage to display yourself as someone in need of others' help, which is one of the messages communicated in connection with the Solar corporate value of 'Courage", displayed as a large "Help"-key on a keyboard on posters. When you do not know who to call, what exactly to call about and perhaps even experience language barriers due to insufficient English skills (cf. Theme #2 below), the result is that managers stick to their own part of the organization.

So, lack of international imagination due to lack of international exposure and interaction, makes middle manager reluctant to take up international contacts as this feels like organizational cold canvas. Further, an organizational past of favoring 'the lonesome cowboy doing it his way'(Group Leadership Programme, Field Note, October 2013) and a top-down governance style, further detracts from engagement in management practices conducive to knowledge sharing and appreciation of the total Solar group performance. Empowerment of middle managers in an internationalization process moving from decentralized, local mindsets towards international 'group mindset' is impaired by a short and domestic line of sight, where there is curiosity, but at the same time confusion with regards to how to go about it. Against this backdrop central issue of the analysis of 'group mindset' enablers spanning both internationally experienced and

inexperienced middle managers is, that ‘group mindset’ management practice is facilitated by international exposure and personally experiencing the ‘international’ first hand. Getting exposed to the international is the only way ahead: *“And what I think is equally important, is that the people that I manage, my employees, are now becoming more international as well. They're working across borders, they're asking questions, they're being able to answer questions. You can see them being much more comfortable in speaking English, they are very quickly to…’"Oh yeah, well let's just have a teleconference meeting.’ They used to come to me and say: ‘My English is not so good, I don't feel so comfortable,’ and now they don't do that at all anymore.”* (Interview 6).

When managers do get together and are exposed to being part of an internationally operating company, they experience that they learn a lot (Interview 7, Group Leadership Programme, 2011, field notes), and so it inhibits ‘group mindset’ development and enactment that Solar employee mobility is relatively low, and exchange between countries is almost the exception rather than the norm. Solar has come a long way since Magnus Dahlmann was the only employee to have visited all the countries, in which Solar operated in the early phases of internationalization (cf. Chapter 5), but there is still a long way to go. In the ‘group mindset’ mini-survey carried out among Solar Management Team members, it is clear that also the upper management levels have limited international experience, and are also only somewhat hesitantly considering taking up international assignments in the future. However, the upper management levels have begun to take the lead with regards to short-term international assignments, in that both country managers, the CEO as well as local functional managers, have taken up temporary assignments in other markets, in connection with a change of management in Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. Still it is a ‘group mindset’-detractor that people are generally unwilling to take up posts in other countries, which has been uncovered by the Navigator-survey 2012, as this limits knowledge sharing opportunities and leverage of existing knowledge pools. Few Solarians are in a position to reflect on their local position in Solar from a non-native point of view, as few people are employed in another country than their native country. A middle manager in Norway of Dutch origin is an exception to the general rule and points to being a non-native as an advantage: *“I just emigrated from Holland to Norway. That's it. It's quite useful, actually, when you think about cooperation, to be able to speak the Dutch language. I have never had a professional career in Holland - that started in Norway - but I do know how we as a Dutch population kind of think*.” (Interview 6).

At the same time, Group HR reports some local reluctance to send some of their best employees to participate in cross-country/cross-function teams. In this respect, lack of language skills also pose a problem in that a small group of people are designated to a variety of projects, instead of spreading responsibilities to a larger group of people (HR Group meeting, Group 3, 2012). This situation is not improved by the fact that English skills are not yet a prerequisite for taking up managerial positions in all countries and so during the period of this study, managers have been employed, who are unable to speak English effectively, cutting off

communication with the rest of the organization. Even financial statements, which are part of quarterly HQ-subsidiary performance reviews, in some cases have to be translated to local languages (Group HR meeting 2013). This limits the degree to which acquired new skills can be leveraged at group level, and at the same time the degree to which management can acquire a 'group mindset', when building up of knowledge of other markets and functions are inhibited. Also, harvesting and capitalizing on talents in all parts of Solar is further inhibited by lack of international transparency of job content and roles in the different countries. A Corporate HR-project is under way to harmonize title structures and job content for similar roles in different countries (Interview 21), but language barriers remain a problem for sending people to perform the same function in other countries. As many employees do not speak English, it is difficult to imagine a manager, who is unable to speak with his staff – or with customers for that matter, who in general also do not speak English (Interview 3). Talent management and succession planning as avenues for international exposure and personal experience of managers, is made more difficult by lack of employee mobility and local receptivity to non-natives. Further, the opportunity for making an attractive career development offer for employees suffers as career paths soon come to a dead end, if an employee stays within the same country only (Career Development company programme, participating observation, 2012/2013).

Short-term international assignments and participation of cross-country and cross-function project groups are seen as more readily available in-roads for creating international exposure (Interview 10), and those managers, who have participated in international introduction programs for new employees, when taking up employment with Solar during the research project period, are very positive about their effects. Currently, international introduction is, however, not a general offer, but rather a positive side effect of taking up employment in some of the parts of the organization that have taken international collaboration furthest, as one manager explains: "*The Lean department allows you to get to know a lot of different departments in the company. It's a fantastic department to start off with in Solar: I know a lot of people in the company, and a lot of the people in the company know me.*" (Interview 6). She is supplemented by a Solar 8000-middle manager highlighting: *"When I joined Solar, I was fortunate to have a good introduction program, and I went to all the other countries, to Sweden, Denmark and Norway, to see what they were doing. I didn't have to invent a whole lot, I just started copying everything that they were doing, and that was a very powerful approach. When people were asking me: 'Why this or the other?' I was able to respond that: 'Other countries are doing it, and they are doing it successfully, so why shouldn't we?'"* (Interview 11).

Opportunity to regularly interact with international colleagues and share knowledge is a central tenet of 'group mindset'- development, underlined by middle managers as being important for development and enactment of 'group mindset'. Seen against the backdrop of the fact that Solar has internationalized since the late 1980s, international managerial interaction has a short history in Solar. Corporate company programme manager Mette Bredkjær remembers that the first time Solar managers from the entire group were gathered,

was at a group strategy meeting in 2007 (Interview 2). An enlargement of a photo of the whole group of Solar managers gathered for the first time hangs in the corridor of the top management fourth floor in corporate HQ, testifying to this historic meeting, where managers more came together as representative for their countries than as part of a collegial community of managers: *"Manager representatives from some of the countries wore similar local Solar brand T-shirts and stayed seated together the whole time.*" (Interview 2). Since then, a lot has happened, not least with respect to managerial interaction, for instance through the establishment of the Solar Management Team as a forum for knowledge sharing and strategic decision-making, including top management as well as country and functional middle managers. Still, managerial interaction should improve, several middle managers feel, including 'sunshine company' managers: *"When we were acquired, there was a conference in Copenhagen. And it was then said that we would do that every half year. And since then, I have never seen anybody. I can understand why - it's fine, but that's the state of the art. There is not a lot of international collaboration."* (Interview 7).

One avenue for interacting outside the formal reporting structures is in cross-border and/or cross-function communities of practice, internally known as 'competence communities', informal knowledge sharing fora set-up by the participants themselves, as one middle manager explains regarding efforts of a colleague to establish such a group: "*So she would like to have, sort of, kind of cross-border workshops, where people with the same disciplines can talk to each other, and that they know who they are*" (Interview 6). A central tenet of 'group mindset' is to facilitate a much greater flow of knowledge and resource exchange across borders internally in Solar, for instance with regards to technical support competences (Interview 5). Competence communities can be seen as an alternative to the establishment of a matrix structure, which at the time of 'group mindset' conception not perceived of as a viable organizational structure or a leadership style, compatible with the organization's level of international collaboration maturity. Instead, the idea of competence communities, communities of practice connecting Solarians in similar job situations or facing similar challenges as a facilitator for knowledge sharing (Interview 2). The formation of communities of practice have been assisted and facilitated by Group HR (corporate and subsidiary HR-functions) from 2010 onwards. The Solar 'Learning Framework Principles' of September 2011 outlining Solar group practice for the design, implementation and follow-up on development and training activities states that: "*We encourage the creation of 'Competence Communities' following training or learning activities in a broad sense. It is crucial for Solar to ensure cross-functional or cross-cultural relationships and knowledge sharing to develop our intangible capabilities in all parts of the group.*" (Group HR, 2011, p. 10). And so in the beginning, the communities were spurred on by Group HR, but Group HR now observes that communities are forming on their own (Group HR, Solar 8000, shared services and IT) some without HQ interference (Interview 20, HR Group meeting, April 12, 2013, field notes). And quite importantly, communities are forming without corporate or key market representation, which is seen by many middle managers as a sign of the success of competence communities (HR Group meeting presentation, , April 2013). As an example, the German

organization has imported ideas regarding sales and performance management from the sunshine companies and the Polish organization, which will also be a hub in connecting challenger markets around implementation of a Microsoft-based ERP-system (the challenger market alternative to the SAP-based Solar 8000 system (Interview 14). And the 'sunshine companies' learn from Solar challenger markets from study trips reporting that: *"It's more structured than the way we work in Belgium. Solar has the system, they have the follow-up tools for the outdoors sales and it works. If I see directly what I can have from Solar, then it's the sales part."*(Interview 9). So knowledge does not only flow from HQ to subsidiaries or from home market Denmark to the rest of the Solar groups, but between subsidiaries and functions (Interview 13), even if HQ is sometimes used as a hub through where local managers can leverage the overview HQ functions when trying to identify the right person to establish contact with and so, when asked, if HQ is sometimes acting as internal detective, a middle manager says: *"Yes, we ask them how it works in the group overall, which is the most commonly or rarely chosen solution, and who is in charge… So, such things…"* (Interview 13). The competence communities can be seen not only as an enabler of interaction and exposure to different practice in other parts of the organization, but also of knowledge sharing as well as standardization. When managers and other employees create networks on their own, processes align voluntarily in a synergistic way, not due to HQ-enforced standardization. In this way, competence communities can also be seen as vehicles for bottom-up or demand-driven integration and standardization, where the individual countries and functions choose for themselves what part of international practice they see as relevant and worthwhile in their own practice.

Training and development activities are important in-roads for getting in touch with international practice and enlarging the managerial imagination and outlook in Solar. First and foremost, the Group Leadership Programme, the first ever group-wide leadership development program to be offered in Solarian history, along with the formation of a corporate academy, is seen by middle managers as an important vehicle for development of 'group mindset' (Interviews 4, 6, 9, 21). The Group Leadership Programme has been has been built around concepts that Solar Management Team deemed to be *"behaviors supporting the group perspective, creating solutions that ensure the maximal benefit for Solar Group"* and which facilitate *"execution in alignment with our joint processes and systems*" and "*holistic thinking*" (Claus Sejr, Global Leadership Academy-presentation, August 2010). So naming this internal leadership development course "Group Leadership Programme" underscores the fact that the program is group-wide and the same in all parts of Solar, but at the same time that the program is about "group leadership", i.e. leadership with a view to not only individual, local interests but group interests. And so, in a Solar Business Academy Board meeting of April 2011 (Claus Sejr), it is pointed out that "*with this process, Solar Management Team will point out the key elements in the Solar Group Mindset that is an important part of our next level leadership*".

The Group Leadership Programme has generally received an overwhelmingly positive feedback from the 290 managers that have participated in the program so far. An evaluation carried out among the first 250 participants rated the program as an average of 4,38 on a 1-5 scale, where 5 indicates the highest degree of satisfaction (Claus Sejr, Solar Business Academy Board meeting, November 2011). A central motto of the GLP-program has been for leaders to 'Get real' (fact-based and in touch with reality), 'Get Help' (reach out to others and develop your leadership skills) and 'Get connected' (build network and social capital) (Group Leadership Programme, participant observation, 2011/2013): "*It's the get connected-part of this leadership development program that takes home to point of having to prioritize several days away from operations, competing agendas and language barriers"* as one Swedish middle manager GLP participant expresses it (Group Leadership Programme, 2013, field notes). An example of this is the participant feedback on GLP participation, where simply spending time in the company of international manager colleagues was cited as a primary benefit and networking opportunities as extremely important (Solar Business Academy Board-meeting, 2012, field notes). Not only key markets, but also challenger markets including 'sunshine company' managers praise the opportunity to interact through the Group Leadership Programme: "*Well, if you look at for example this group we are now in - it is luckily a very small group, so we talk to everybody. And everybody actually says that. That it is like: 'Oh, that's nice to hear, that it's like that in that country', and we kind of discuss…"* (Interview 7).

The Group Leadership Programme has also helped facilitate a community feeling among managers, who have a relatively short history of interaction, as well as facilitating a common language of how to talk about leadership challenges in terms of the management tools presented and trained in the program. Some of the tools presented and trained in the management toolkit have reached a high degree of acceptance and have created a common language for talking about leadership tasks such as coaching, performance appraisal and change. For instance, the change management reaction map displayed in the figure below is one of the tools which has been adopted into Solarian management discourse:

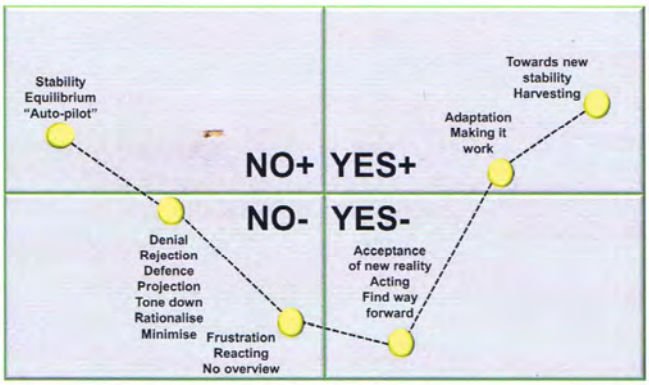

Figure 6.1: 'Reactions to change' – a change management tool used in Solar Group Leadership Programme. Source: Solar Business Academy with People & Performance, April 2011.

And so when ‘hanging around’ managers in Solar discussing change and leadership, one may hear phrases such as *“Employee X was really a No-“* or “ *In my opinion, most of the team members are now in Yes+”* (Participant observation, Strategy Kick-off, 2013). In fact, the popularity of several of the GLP-tools reached at stage, where lower level managers and functional managers without personnel responsibility not having participated in the program, approached Corporate HR demanding to also be included into the program in order to be up to speed with managerial dialog (Field notes, meeting with Claus Sejr, September 2011).

In sum, opportunity to interact with international colleagues is deemed very beneficial for development and enactment of ‘group mindset’ by Solar middle managers. They point to group-wide training opportunities, voluntary formation of communities of practice as well as international introduction programs as being particularly helpful for developing ‘group mindset’. These activities enable them to enlarge their line of sight, build network and social capital as well as selecting interesting elements of different practice suitable for their own practice from knowledge sharing fora. The corporate wiring of these activities is deemed to be a strong organizational enabler of ‘group mindset’ as is the opportunity to opt-in and out of communities. A key detractor of ‘group mindset’ is the low internal employee mobility, and so international assignments, international project work or expatriations are avenues for developing ‘group mindset’ management practice, which are currently underdeveloped as a consequence of a lack of willingness to take up such jobs by managers, but also due to the non-transferability of competences due to language barriers.

6.1.2 Theme #2: Language & Communication: Corporate vs. Common?

Communication flows feature as a predominant theme in connection with the development and enactment of ‘group mindset’ among Solar middle managers. In this respect, languages barriers due to lack of English competences and corporate language have been recurrent themes: *”Because in this branch I speak English very slowly. I speak English and maybe two other people. It's a problem, because we cannot bring people from other countries and have meetings. It's a problem to understand it.”* (Interview 15). In an organization where many Solarians have been recruited into job profiles that did not require them to speak English, developing corporate English is a slow process: *“When I connected with Solar, I didn’t speak any English; my education was in Russian; that was in those days. But when we [acquired company previously owned by respondent, ed.] connected with Solar, I started with English and was in the international Group Leadership Programme maybe after one year. That was very interesting for me… but I didn’t really understand.”* (Interview 17) A recently hired middle manager highlights that:*”So it feels like you need to have your own under control before you reach out to colleagues in other countries… but then, my lack of English skills is of course a limitation.”* (Interview 8).

English as a corporate language was introduced in Solar in 2008, but was later partially abandoned in favor of a more mixed approach mirroring the fact that English competences are not developed over night in an

organization, just because a general announcement is made. An example of this mixed approach is the fact that the first round of the Group Leadership Programme was offered in an international version for upper level managers, and a local version targeted at lower level managers and managers not speaking sufficient English to participate in the international program. As a consequence, localization took place of the Group Leadership Programme in that the course design, curriculum and slide pack were identical in all versions of the GLP. But while a Danish consultancy took care of the international English-language version of GLP, including teaching materials, knowledge sharing meetings were held with leadership development consultants (internal or external) in the individual countries, who had the responsibility for the localization of the program, including translation as well as teaching the actual three modules to managers in the different countries in their own languages (Interview 20, participant observation/field notes). Similarly, the communication of the 2013-2015 group business strategy has consisted of a core message toolkit in English, which local managers have been at liberty to localize in terms of language, format and channels – an approach which has been highly successful in terms of both overall knowledge transfer as indicated in a corporate communication survey conducted in late 2013, as well as in the view of middle managers (Interviews 5, 12, 24).

Although corporate English has partially been abandoned, English skills have improved in the period of the study. Solar has taken a major leap forward with regards to English skills in the current strategy period: "*Three years ago, you could not speak English with most employees of our Polish subsidiary. When I first visited, I was accompanied by an interpreter*", remembers corporate HR director Heidrun Marstein. *"Today, we can hold three to four hour teleconferences in English*." (HR Group meeting, April 11, 2013, field notes/participant observation). Some middle managers have taken up offers to participate in business English-classes under the auspices of the Solar Business Academy, and describe their newly acquired English skills as *"getting back the sight after having been blind"* (Interview 12) highlighting the magnitude of the handicap of not speaking English. And indeed, several of the interviews conducted in English as part of this study, would have been impossible to conduct at the beginning of the project for lack of English competences in for instance Poland and Belgium (and for lack of researcher Polish/Flemish competences). Still, language barriers remain a challenge in Solar, and so several participants of the international Group Leadership Programme openly say that they felt impaired and excluded from participating more actively in plenary discussions, role plays and exercises by their lack of English competences. This is emphasized by the fact that several managers have been able to engage with the researcher only due to the researcher's knowledge of their native languages, and so some middle manager interviews have been carried out in local languages as they would have otherwise not been carried out at all. Other interviews have been carried out in manager pairs, where two colleagues assist each other in getting the words right in an interview in English.

English skills are not generally part of recruitment criteria although prioritized when possible. There is, however, a lack of English skills not only among existing employees, but also prospective employees. So, it is not always possible to recruit the competence necessary to fulfill roles within, for instance, sales or product management, if English skills are made mandatory (Group HR meeting, 2012; Interviews 12, 21), and so a challenger market recently hired a middle manager with no English skills, joining a group of colleagues that already had financial statements translated into their local language. Language barriers are, however, not only a challenge for technical and sales staff. Also, there are numerous examples from meetings and workshops in corporate functions, in which participants have had to change into their local language asking a colleague to translate whenever possible to get their message across (Participant observation, 2012, 2013). It is, of course, to be preferred that this group chooses to contribute although they may need collegial assistance in expressing themselves adequately in English, instead of silencing themselves; at the same time there is no doubt that this group of persons would be able to contribute more fully in their native language than is otherwise the case (Participant observation, 2012, 2013). In this respect the existence of non-English language communities (Flemish between the Dutch and Belgians; German between the German and Austrians and Scandinavian between Denmark, Norway and Sweden) is clearly an advantage as this facilitate intragroup translations into English. At the same time, the existence of non-English communities poses a danger in that the country subsidiaries, where a majority of corporate staff are able to understand the local language (Denmark, Sweden, Norway and to some extent Germany as many Danes learn German in school), receive more attention. Corporate HR Director Heidrun Marstein wonders: *"Are we always making sure that the nations where we understand the language do not receive more corporate attention, because corporate is able to follow local processes further as we understand what is going on locally? Perhaps we should be careful not to always start processes in the countries where we understand the language as it is difficult not to give more when you are able to and have the opportunity."* (HR Group meeting, April 11, 2013, field notes/participant observation).

It is not realistic that all Solarians should be fluent in English, even if most managers agree it would be beneficial (Interviews 3, 12, 21), and that English skills are increasingly important going forward. There is widespread agreement among both English-speakers and non-English speakers that knowledge sharing is indeed difficult if you cannot communicate with your colleagues. While Solarians are developing a higher level of English competences and arrive at a situation for all managers speak English, one interview participating suggest local communication hubs via a 'native spokesperson', i.e. locally positioned person, who can assist colleagues when formulating e-mails in English, reading material in English or likewise (Interview 12). The relevance of a local hub or 'portal person' to know who to connect with and being able to do so in a language that the contact person understands is emphasized by one middle manager telling that:*" I usually ask the all market directors or the product manager with whom I should contact in that country, so…."* (Interview 17). Another example of such, the practice of a human hub or translator in the

middle is the fact that some managers agreed to participate in interviews with the author after having been briefed by an English-speaking colleague talking them through an interview guide having been forwarded in advance. The importance of this briefing is highlighted by the fact that some interview participants clearly are at a loss in the conversation if the interview does not evolve as outlined in the interview guide handed out to respondents before the interview. Even if there is still a long way to go with regards to require a degree of fluency needed to effortlessly collaborate in English, middle managers value the ability to interact although with some difficulty: Recent experiences from a group sales training program launched in 2013 and conducted in English, highlights that many participants reported back that receiving training in English was difficult, but getting together with colleagues from other countries was really appreciated, despite of language barriers.

The level of middle manager English proficiency varies markedly between markets in Solar, due to the fact that most Solarians have technical backgrounds and have not received English training after leaving ground school. So even in the Scandinavian and Dutch markets, where populations are generally well-educated and knowledgeable of foreign languages, language barriers remain an issue (Field notes, GLP, 2012). In this respect is it seen as an advantage that there are almost no native English-speakers in Solar as Solar is not represented in any countries, where English is first language spoken. So, regardless of point of departure all Solarians are non-native English speakers (Interview 3). However, the highly varying level of English competences and more or less local language flavored versions of English also pose a problem to Solar managers that have taken up learning English by native English-speakers: *"I have some meetings with other countries and sometimes it can be difficult to understand because it's not like the language from my English teacher, it's some local Scandinavian English. And I think that's one of the negative things*." (Interview 14). At the other end of the spectrum, the more eloquent English speakers in Solar express some degree of frustration or astonishment over the de facto lack of corporate language and call for generally raising the bar of both individual English skills as well as corporate communication: "*I think it's interesting that Solar claims that English is their corporate language. But when they produce anything in English, the quality is not at a level where it should be*." (Interview 6). A colleague supplements: *"We should at least choose one language to use. I understand what they talk about, but I still get really surprised that people do have that many difficulties communicating in English. Come on, if you watch to the television you don't just skip the programs in which they are talking English!"* (Interview 10).

Channels, Channeling and Cross-organizational Content

One of sociologist Benedict Anderson's points regarding formation of communities that cannot rely on face-to-face contact or personal experience (although made in the connection of the formation of nation-states) is the importance of written communication as a glue technology that binds people together in an 'imagined community.' In a similar vein, an organization can be seen as an imagined community where people come to

see themselves as being part of a larger community of people (Solarians in this case), although they have never personally met with many of the other participants of the community. To this end, corporate communication efforts in both English and local languages may facilitate the feeling of being connected to a larger imagined organizational community, even if the individual manager only rarely finds herself in the physical or even virtual presence of persons, representing the organizational community. So, corporate communication allowing managers to participate in an imagined community is conducive to development of 'group mindset'.

Considering the language barriers mentioned above, it is a challenge that the Solar group portal and group news is in English, so that non-English speakers cannot understand Group News produced in English, which is considered a detractor of 'group mindset'-development by middle managers: *"Our operation is very small, but we are part of a big group. In my view, our employees are also very proud that they work for our company. I think it is also very important that we inform them what is going on generally, globally. Are we going in the right direction? For them it's nice to hear once per quarter or once per half year if the group is growing, buys a new company or has good cash flow. It is absolutely positive. Even if we are not always successful or even close to 'touchdown' it helps."* (Interview 13). Further, group news is on group matters, and there is a lack of knowledge of what goes on locally in the individual countries: *"It's very rare in newsletters, actually, that you hear something about other countries"* and it is difficult to navigate to the local language websites: *"I mean, something really simple like being able to click on the Swedish portal when you're on the Norwegian portal. Click on the Swedish flag and then okay, we're going to find out what's going on in Sweden. Simple things like that. Or a main website. I mean, sorry, but the Solar corporate website - I don't see the languages that we have within Solar, I don't see that you can click on anything. And maybe I didn't look at it, or maybe it's…"* (Interview 6). Further, the very interested reader, who manages to find the source of relevant local information, has to overcome yet another hurdle: *And I've had to ask specific permission to be able to get access to the Danish portal"* (Interview 6). But then language issues arise: *So now, on my portal I have both the Norwegian and the Danish news. Which is a bit complicated sometimes, because it gets mixed up*." (Interview 6). In this case, the middle manager speaks Norwegian and thus can understand the Danish website although with some difficulty due to the etymological proximity of the Scandinavian languages. For other nationalities taking a peak at other countries' local websites is not an option due to the simple fact that they are unable to understand: Getting access to the Polish local portal, for instance, will not do much for most non-Polish Solarians. This raises the question of the potential need to produce corporate communication in the local languages and local communication in English to enable the free flow of communication in Solar, facilitating the knowledge of others and exposure to different practice that may counter organizational cold canvas: "*But there's no place where I can go and find out what's the latest news in Sweden. So it could be much better if they really want to be international. So it feels like they've got their toe in the water, but they're not really sure if they're going in or not"*. (Interview 6).

A related communication challenge detracting from 'group mindset' development has to do with the lack of title harmonization in Solar is mentioned as an inhibiting the possibility of reaching out to colleagues in other countries that you do not know in advance. One middle manager reports that she has given up on the corporate website and has had one of her employees draw up a '*map with pictures and names and telephone numbers and things like that, and job descriptions. So, if somebody who works with pricing in Holland needs to talk to somebody who works with pricing in Norway that is already kind of established in a little group. So they feel like they belong*." (Interview 6). A corporate HR project is under implementation harmonizing titles and job structures to make exchange of employees more transparent (Interview 21). Further, this will also enable persons all over Solar to more easily identify relevant others in the organization through the group portal. Presently, the same job title may mean something rather different in different countries in as much as it is at all possible to find persons with similar job titles. And if you search the group portal, you will in many instances get local language titles only, thus making it up to the individual group portal user to identify what a 'forsäljningschef' (Swedish for sales manager) might do. A particular challenge in this respect is that 'sunshine company' employees do not have access to the Solar portal, e-mail system or address books making it in practice very difficult to reach out to colleagues (Interview 9). Although this is unsurprising as these companies have not yet undergone post-merger management, it highlights the importance of IT-structures for bridge-building and organizational connectivity. In general, employees that experience problems with reading across local subsidiary language websites or navigating the title structure of Solar, constitute a minority of proactive internationalists. Many of the middle managers represented in this study only use their local portal – that is, if they actively use any electronic medium or portal besides e-mail communication. In this respect the middle managers mirror the customers, where some markets are highly digitalized with more than 50% of sales transactions carried out as e-business or mobile-business transactions, while the number of e-business customers in other markets can still be counted on two hands. There is ample interest in activation of social media as a glue technology in the organization, but so far plans to do this remain at an idea stage and certainly none of the middle managers represented in this study suggests social media as an avenue for developing or enacting 'group mindset.'

Now, developing English skills and bridging language communities through corporate communication efforts catering to local language is only one avenue of creating a common language. In this respect, the implementation of the SAP-based Solar 8000 ERP-system has created a common language in that business processes and terminology for basic tasks have been aligned in key markets: "*I actually think SAP is a pretty good tool to make us think more internationally, because we have to approach it in the same way. And then we are faced with the same kind of problems, because SAP does also give us the limits. So we have to find a way around it or find a way to work with it. And because of that, we actually go and ask our peers. So that's a positive thing.*" (Interview 6). This common language is restricted to key markets, however, but it is hoped that the implementation of a parallel Microsoft-system in challenger markets and sunshine companies will

foster a similar development of a common language of business processes: *"Currently the system is special for Poland, but you could consider its use in maybe countries like Czech Republic, Slovakia and other countries to the south or to expand its use into the sunshine companies. That's why we talked all the time about international interface for our application and now it's no problem to implement to new countries."* (Interview 14). Similarly, as has been mentioned in the previous section on international exposure and experience, the Group Leadership Programme Toolkit has created a common language among managers based on tools such as goal-setting procedures or meeting management templates, facilitating cross-organizational dialog among managers. Also, a common project management group template to be used in all projects has been created to facilitate a smoother cross-organizational collaboration in projects in that terminology, governance and tools are the same. Finally, the launch of a group employer branding campaign supports the feeling of being part of a larger community, even if there has been some localization of the general employer branding concept: "*The employer branding campaign increases the visibility of the fact that you are actually part of an international company, that you are part of a larger family*" (Interview 12).

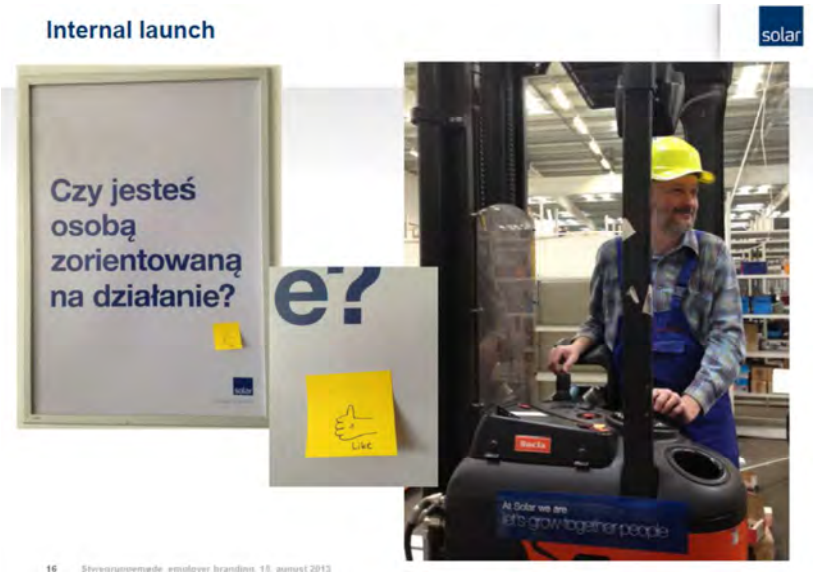

Figure 6.2: 'Let's grow together' in Poland. HR Group meeting presentation, April 11, 2013/Field notes/participant observation.

In sum, lack of English skills is a prevalent theme for middle managers with respect to developing and enacting 'group mindset' in Solar in that international collaboration and communication is inhibited, when colleagues are unable to reach out and engage in dialog with each other. English skills have been improved during this study, but there is still a long way to go – not only with regards to existing employees, but also in terms of potential future employees as there is a general shortage of English competences in many of the groups that Solar recruits from, although there are also vast differences between countries and markets with regards to both employee and customer language skills. Willingness of managers to acquire English skills are

seen as an essential enabler of 'group mindset', but the possibility to obtain knowledge of other countries in the readers' local language as well as willingness of English speaking colleagues to act as translators and human hubs of knowledge brokerage are perceived of as important development areas.

6.1.3 Theme #3: Local vs. International: A Local International Conglomerate vs. 'one-company' MNC in the Making

A central theme for middle managers when discussing 'group mindset' development and enactment is the degree to which Solar can actually be considered an international company? Is Solar mostly a Danish company? Or rather a multinational corporate in the making on its way towards being 'one company' internationally? Top management's view, as expressed in the previous chapter, is that Solar can be considered a conglomerate and an international local company." (Interview 3). In a similar vein, one middle manager points out that: "*It's a difficult question… To be honest, we do get support from corporate, but we are not doing things internationally.* "*"So we are a group, but locally, we are working locally*."(Interview 19) which is supplemented by a colleague stating that: *"Hmm… At this moment I would say no, actually. I would say that we want to be, and we are working very hard at moving towards that direction, but I would still characterize it as primarily Danish*." (Interview 6). Others emphasize that *"I think we are an international company. When I talk with someone about Solar, they know it's not a local company; they know it is an international company. I don't know, but immediately when I talk with someone at work they know Solar is international."* (Interview 14). Others think that Solar is international within its business (Interview 8), but maybe not when compared to other industries: *"Yes, it's international, but it's not like what most people would really feel like international, like Google or whatever."* (Interview 7). And mere international geographical presence does not make a company international in itself: *"Well…for me it's not enough to say that we are international because we are in the eight countries. International must be that countries work together in day-to-day practice, have some international issues; not just meet once per half year or just for fun. Collaboration in some aspects, help each other - and it must be more or less win/win."* (Interview 13).

The views of Solar's degree of internationalization varies based on the degree to which middle managers have been exposed to internationalization in previous employments, or are currently placed in functions in Solar that have come the farthest with regards to cross-country collaboration such as Group IT, Solar 8000 employees or shared service center employees: *"Solar….well, it is international with a certain group of people"* (Interview 10). Generally three broad groups crystallize based on their views of the degree of internationalization in Solar and the degree to which they experience both the benefits and challenges of international collaboration. One group could be considered the internationalization beginners, operating their day-to-day job in more or less isolation from the rest of the Solar group, another group are the internationalization ambivalents, who are generally positive, but at the same time have begun to experience

some of the challenges of international collaboration, and finally the group of internationalization impatients that would like to see the internationalization process speeded up the sooner, the better.

Internationalization Beginners

This group of middle managers is the group that have least international experience and perform highly local roles with little exposure to international collaboration and interaction; usually in combination with experiencing by language barriers. They do not really know what to expect from collaborating internationally or what it is good for, but are generally positive: *"I think that we can share experience on how to do everyday business. I don't know exactly how, I have no… I think, maybe more meetings, international meetings. But it is expensive I think. I have never been in another country like Holland or Norway."* (Interview 16). Others think that collaborating internationally potentially has some merit, but fears it is too time consuming and difficult due to language barriers: "*So, right now I do not have the time. But if you eliminate language barriers, and if one had the time, then obviously it would be interesting, although I think you should analyze in which areas we could actually benefit from sharing knowledge*." (Interview 8). This group is also characterized by not experiencing any challenges with the intercultural nature of collaborating internationally – a fact which does not surprise one middle manager: "*We do not really experience any cultural challenges… I suppose we simply do not interact enough to have this sort of problem!"* (Interview 12). This is emphasized by the Group Leadership Programme's participant evaluation. Although intercultural leadership was part of the syllabus following a pre-study of themes to include in the program, this part of the program, which was overwhelmingly positively received by participants, received the poorest rating of relevance.

Interestingly, the beginners is also the group in which you find proponents of the view that it is positive that Solar is still predominantly Danish thus welcoming a "country-of-origin-effect", which other groups perceive of as annoying or provincial. Scandinavian management, delegating leadership and a focus on human resource management are some of the perceived benefits of 'Danishness' – a view that also came across in an internal Solar employer branding workshop held in August 2011.

The Internationalization Ambivalents

Another group of middle managers can be characterized as taking a somewhat ambivalent stance towards internationalization and the need for 'group mindset'. A typical view of the need for international collaboration would be: "*I don't know. Right now I do not have any opinion about it. It could be – if there is some goal, for that, of course. If there is just some kind of discussion…Because just going somewhere, just looking at something, that is probably waste of money and time. I am not missing it too much. Of course, we can learn from each other in the different ways. But it always has to have some goal, and the goal should be defined quite clearly, because otherwise we have a meeting and afterwards nobody knows what the goal was, why they went, and what they can bring out of that*." (Interview19). Also, when push comes to shove there is

a reluctance to actually implementing decisions made in group fora 'back home' or as one corporate middle manager ironically expresses it: "*We're lovin'it - but we rather share than deploy!"* (Field notes, January 2014, Global Leadership Academy, Solar). The ambivalents take their time in adjusting to international collaboration and knowledge sharing and quickly revert to acting locally: *"That's what they have always done, I think, but then why make it complex and slow unless they see the direct benefit of it? They are busy fighting their own fires; they prefer getting not too much bothered. I think in some areas the 'group mindset' is really developing, but in some areas it is in the beginning stages."* (Interview 11). One avenue for including and activating this group is through local involvement in group project as a way ahead for demonstrating value: *"We have chosen to involve local representative and to make them the owner of the project locally. Then you really have somebody locally who is so strong believer of the project, the one showing it to the country. I am not going to tell in Sweden what they should do with their project, that's up to the local project owner from Sweden. And if we are going to prepare something it should be properly, uh properly designed and properly developed together with local representatives. Because there you can really see the benefits."* (Interview 10)

The Internationalization Impatients

This group of middle managers categorized as internationalization impatients is made up of people, who are enjoying international collaboration and see it as an important part of the value proposition and job satisfaction: "*The benefit for me is that I can, I can, I work on the international setting with different cultures and immediate challenge, and I really like to do that."* (Interview 10). This group expresses frustration about the fact that Solarians in their view are much too locally oriented: *"It feels in a way a little bit like, hmm.. - we would call it 'the king on their hills'. You know, everybody is a king in their own little country. There's no real steering body or committee or.. And I'm not saying we all have to do it the same way, because the countries, competitors and markets are different, but it doesn't feel like one company, no."* (Interview 6). In this respect is it a challenge that recently employed managers holding cross-functional jobs they themselves consider to be international, experience a gap between their perception of the employer brand and the actual reality when meeting the internal employer brand and collaborating with: "*It's just that I would have thought, that since Solar has existed in certain countries for several years, there would have been more knowledge across the borders. I suppose it would be wrong to say that it would be only Danish. I just don't feel that the people in the organization are accustomed to looking across the borders. You know, it's a human trait to have conversations and to work together with the people closest to you. So I understand it's something completely new, and people need to be introduced to that."* (Interview 6). This is particularly pertinent for groups in the organization, who have been organized as international units, e.g. the Solar 8000 organization, Group IT, finance shared service centers and corporate functions and where many employees have been recruited into with no prior technical wholesale experience, or with experience from more global industries: *"I worked for XX Computers [global computer company, ed.] for a long time, so I have always worked*

somewhere where everything was standardized internationally. I'm used to working in a standardized world, which has a lot of benefits, for instance elimination of a lot of duplication of effort, because every country is trying to fix the same problem in their own ways. When you want to fix something in SAP it is usually complex and you need a lot of people involved from many different areas - consequently it is very complex and time consuming. So if you make the effort once, and you document it thoroughly, the benefits can be substantial. But for me it is sort of… a lot of the essentials are not in place. If you have people involved in a SAP roll-out that do not have basic project management skills then everything that is 'group mindset' and everything that is international just goes 'pffftt'." (Interview 11). Also, this group is more likely to have university degrees and superior English skills. This is consistent with an international employer brand analysis carried out be an external consultancy, Edsberg, involving both present and potential future employees and presented in October 2011: An overwhelming 92% answers 'yes' to *'Solar is an international company'* and 86% answers 'yes' to '*Solar has an international mindset'*.

Interestingly, this group is also the group that experience more intercultural challenges. However, when cultural differences are mentioned, it is often in relation to HQ-subsidiary relations and when challenged as to whether cultural differences is merely a convenient excuse in reality masking power plays and conflict of interest, the conversation fall silent. In general, national cultural differences mostly come up in connection with the Dutch-Danish collaboration, although a shared IT-service center under establishment in Poland have also led to Danish group management and local Polish employees experiencing some cultural clashes (Interviews 12, 21). Perhaps this is due to the fact that the Netherlands is the only key market and so have more collaboration and more interaction with the other Scandinavian key markets than the challenger markets: *"I think culture in the Netherlands to start with is one of dialog and mutual understanding and those kinds of things. I think that is not always well received and well understood by the Scandinavian countries, that is my impression. I don't know, I wouldn't know. But there is, although they claim not to be that way, the corporation can be a very top-down instructive organization."* (Interview 11). Also, while challenger markets have been given considerable freedom to operate independently of the key market business model, the Dutch operation gets 'Scandinavian treatment': *"I wouldn't refer to corporate management, but I think it is interesting that I often hear that from corporate that their initiatives works in all other countries, but it won't work in the Netherlands. On the one hand, it is a cultural thing, but… It is interesting in the 'group mindset' concept – and this is just a personal feeling that I have, even though I really struggle to be open-minded - that, putting it bluntly, it seems that it comes from the Netherlands it can't be good."* (Interview 11). The Dutch market – although second largest in the Solar group – feels overshadowed by the "Danish Goliath" seeing themselves the ugly duckling (Interview 11). Some key market middle managers see the Scandinavians are seen as a tightly knit 'viking club' (Group Leadership Program, 2011, field notes), being able to understand each other in their native tongues, which can be quite a problem as a lot of small-talk and informal corridor meetings then is carried out in the Scandinavian

languages, effectively shutting out the Dutch key market colleagues. And so, there is a feeling that you are in effect *"gate crashing a party in a 'members only' club"* (Group Leadership Program, 2011, field notes).

In sum, Solarian middle managers take rather different views on the degree of internationalization in Solar and the relevance and benefits of collaborating internationally, and can be grouped into three categories of: internationalization beginners, internationalization ambivalents and internationalization impatients. In general, the more middle managers interact, the more intercultural challenges they experience, but it is difficult to distinguish intercultural issues from HQ-subsidiary issues. When cultural differences are mentioned it is mostly to explain conflicts as culture clashes and only few express that they have experienced a diversity premium. Intercultural issues are not generally reported to be a problem or challenge, however, but judging from the experiences of the more internationally experiences, one might expect intercultural issues to increase as Solarians start to interact more. Also, as more academics from non-technical wholesale backgrounds are employed at corporate HQ, due to a general increase in corporate activity as well as low internal employee mobility the group of pro-internationalists, are growing. As this group is by far the most active and eloquent in voicing their views and concerns there is reason to pay attention to the degree to which their views are representative of the entire group of managers – a danger which is emphasized by the fact that the current performance survey in Solar does not include questions regarding views on internationalization.

6.1.4 Theme #4: What's in it for us vs. me? Stating the Business Case, sharing/measuring Successes and optimizing Quality of Interaction

Again and again, Solar is presenting themselves as practical, result- and customer oriented people preoccupied with delivering on targets (Navigator-survey 2009-2012; Group Leadership Program-participant observation 2011-12; Employer branding workshop 2011, Group HR workshop, 2012). The impression that one gets from talking to participants on the Solar leadership development course, Group Leadership Program, during the spring of 2011 is that the Solarians are dogmatic, only when it comes to achievement of (profit) objectives - higher level managers are willing to play along if it generates results (Interview 3). As is generally prescribed by change management theorists, identification and celebration of success is important - in Solar, product, customer, and profit generation successes are top of the list in this respect. Middle managers for instance mention advertising more broadly the successful and swift export of the Solar Light-concept from Denmark to other Scandinavian markets as a good case of learning from each other in sales (Interview 5); another example could be: "*We have stocks in Sweden of a material that we also want to sell in Norway, but we don't have it on stock in Norway. If we have the same system and work together, then we could maybe use some of the stock from Sweden. Cross-borders stock transfers, examples of buying something in bulk at a better price - all these kinds of examples"* (Interview 6). However, celebration of

successes was considered one of the weak links in Solar by managers participating in a cross-cultural and -functional workshop on characterizing the Solar employer branding (Employer branding-workshop, August 2011). So, if the necessity for a more holistic 'group mindset' approach to everyday business is to be taken seriously and prioritized, experiencing and communicating the benefits of cooperation for generating results locally is crucial according to middle managers: *"You have to let people know"*, as one middle manager expresses it (Interview 12). Concretely pinpointing the business case of both 'what's in it for me' and 'what's in it for us' is seen as an enabler of 'group mindset' behavior activating cross-organizational imagination. A collection of business case showing what is to be gained and how – not only at group level, but also at subsidiary and branch level is recommended by middle managers: *"I think showcases might be very good. Explicit showcases and learnings."* (Interview 11).

These statements emphasize the potential of working with a value realization project on 'group mindset' collecting success stories and highlighting examples of the return on investment of 'group mindset' behavior showing that Solar's brand promise of 'stronger together' not only holds true for the customer's being stronger by teaming up with Solar, but that Solarians are also 'stronger together' among themselves when collaborating. It may be costly in terms of time and money to collaborate internationally, but as one middle manager reckons: "*it is more expensive that a project is initiated, but does not work*" (Interview 10). This is not least necessary because there is an adjustment period of initial investment to be made when collaborating internationally, and Solarians need to know that this investment is worthwhile: *"First of all it takes a lot of effort to get there; we see that now. And it's not easy, and it doesn't come naturally, and there will be resistance, and it will be hard, and you have to spend time on that, and time is money. And there can be misunderstandings, and that can also cost you money. But you might say that in the beginning, the processes will take much more time. But these kinds of drawbacks happen in the beginning; in the long I do not think there is going to be a lot of drawbacks"* (Interview 6). A colleague further elaborates: *"We can share experience with our colleagues from the other countries. If we think about the future there are more advantages than disadvantages."* (Interview 16).

And when successes and the relevance of 'group mindset' is explicated and communicated, it actually works, one middle manager reports: *"People are asking me if we should come together and if it isn't costing a lot of money, but as long as I can defend it with the right answers it should be okay*" (Interview 10). There is a need to communicate the success in order to circumvent the 'not-invented-here-syndrome" and to bring Solarians out of their old ways and try something new: *"We learn by learning together across the borders. So we expand our knowledge, and because of that, we might be able to find solutions that work better or faster. And if we had not done that, you know, you work in your own comfortable known way, and that works fine, but it could be more optimal*" (Interview 6).That 'seeing is believing' holds particularly true for the group of Solarians, who not only lack the imagination (cf. themes 1 and 2 above) to see the benefits of

‘group mindset’ and international collaboration, but find it difficult to believe in the overall business case. One middle manager suggests that one may of helping this group is to get together *“a catalog of things that we could do; things that we are not speaking today that we might pick up in the future. And it is certainly my feeling that ‘you know what you’ve got’ and ‘better the devil you know’. For people in Solar seeing the benefits is really very difficult for them.*” (Interview 10). As pointed out in the chapters 1 and 5, the current Solar strategy represents a break, not only with the company’s own past standard operating procedure, but also with the typical approach in the technical wholesale business where both larger and smaller competitors are operated very locally, and as profit centers with no intension of harvesting cross-organizational synergies or sharing knowledge such as is intended in the current Solar strategy. It may be difficult to believe in the overall rationale behind the wish to develop ‘group mindset’ competences and capabilities in a time of financial crisis, when mere survival has been an issue for several subsidiaries in Solar. For strategy traditionalists to dream of a return to the traditional decentralized profit center model of the past as a solution to red figures is very easy, when competitors are making better results than Solar. At the same time, the financial crisis and change of the European technical wholesale industry is also seen as a burning platform for developing ‘group mindset: *“For Solar as a company to do better, I think it's a must-have. Suppliers are becoming more international, and if Solar doesn't become more international, we will lag behind. So it's also kind of a reaction to the market, where customers might shop around. This wasn't possible before; you only went to your local store, but now you can go on the internet, you can buy somewhere else. So the world is moving into global era, and if Solar wants to be stubborn and not do it, I think actually, yes, we might survive, but we would have a very hard time.”* (Interview 6). Although scare campaigns are not deemed helpful by middle managers, the financial crisis is a potential enabler of ‘group mindset’: *“Maybe the financial crisis helps us. When all markets were perfect and just grew, nobody cared. So perhaps the crisis could actually help to bring people together and help each other.”* (Interview 13).

Quality of Interaction

A first start for developing and enacting ‘group mindset’ is that Solarians get together and share at all – ask others for help, actively seek to identify and recognize existing knowledge elsewhere in the organization. But many middle manager points to fact that this is only a start. For instance, international introduction programs are fine for getting people introduced and exposed to the fact that Solar is international, but the advantages of ‘group mindset’ management practice do not materialize just by getting together: *“So it was a sort of a soft introduction to the fact that Solar is international. But I didn't really work together with them, essentially. I knew about them, and it was interesting to do the course with them, but I didn't experience any direct advantage.”* (Interview 6). And top management agrees that just talking is not enough and that Solarians are in danger of doing just that in that they are very good at getting new ideas, but have some way to go when it comes to actually realizing the: *”We are so preoccupied with delivering the right goods to the customer*

before six o'clock tomorrow morning. So we think ultra-short term, but some of these synergies take longer to realize." (Interview 3). Pro-internationalist middle manager experience that they are challenged to come up with good reasons for bringing people together: *"The group is asking me if should we come together when it costs a lot of money, and then I have to really come up with good arguments to come together."* (Interview 10). In order to foster prioritization of international collaboration and create the experience that collaborating yield results, the quality of the interaction needs to be high: *"There must be some goal, of course. If there is just some kind of discussion, this is just waste of money."* (Interview 19).

One avenue for helping Solarians to feel that they get a positive experience when they do interact internally is better meeting management to enhance the perception of the usefulness of sharing knowledge with colleagues internationally not just a time robber: *"If there is a group meeting, for instance where all the market managers from all the countries are together and they only get two days of preparation, this is so close to the meeting that nothing good can come out of that. They would actually be better off staying at home using the time for something else. And the things that they take away from that meeting cannot be good. You feel that you are wasting a lot of time all for nothing"* (Interview 10). So, meeting organizers need to improve, but so do local meeting participants: *"The organizer, who is most of the time someone from corporate, should prepare the meeting well before; on the other hand from the local side you have to prepare yourself to be present and be valuable in the meeting. It is all about communication: What do I expect from you at this meeting and what should we take home after meeting?"* (Interview 10). Also, some middle managers emphasize that when networking and knowledge sharing becomes more prevalent, a problem of transparency may arise: Which networks exist? Who to contact? Also, lack of overview over who have decision-makings power vis-à-vis different decisions may prevail and so time for conflict-management and consensus-building rise. While this is not currently an issue, this is seen as an avenue for future quality optimization of international collaboration.

Performance and Incentive Management: "What's in it for me and us?"

A related, yet separate issue pertaining to sharing of successes and quality optimization of international collaboration mentioned by middle managers are the performance and incentive structures. When it is difficult to grasp the business case and see the potential return on investment and you are at the same time under pressure to perform locally, the incentive structure works against 'group mindset': The cost of travelling and interacting is now, but the potential benefits that many find difficult to see is something in the future.

'Group mindset' management behavior entails refraining from *"suboptimization even when it is more difficult for the individual to solve the task doing in the Solar way"* (Claus Sejr, Global Leadership Academy-presentation, August 2010), and middle managers do feel the costs: *"Just to give an example: We had an IT-project on a new network. Although we had our own, we later had to implement the network based*

on the group arrangement, where the price was three times higher for us. In the group, in the total, there were probably savings. Probably, I can't control it, I can't check it. But from our perspective this solution was maybe not the best idea. So to make all decisions with a view to the group perspective... Of course, when everybody wins that is easy, but if someone is losing, that's not easy. And that's why we should think about what we do, because each company has their own performance goals." (Interview 19). This holds true for both financial and non-financial incentives: *"The simple quote is. When am I going to be a hero in the eyes of my management team that is when I fix their problem fast. Not when I insist on global alignment in anything I do"* (Interview 11). Also, there is a feeling that: *"When it gets really hot, we will have to deal everything ourselves locally anyway. So as long as it does not cost us too much energy and effort then we will align and have a 'group mindset', but when any alignment comes to the agenda and it is costing us a lot of energy and time, the conclusion is 'let's skip it'."* (Interview 11).

Middle managers express concern that the cost of 'group mindset' is not offset by a non- suboptimization premium and so reach the conclusion: *"When looking at 'group mindset', we should always have in mind that doing something for the group should not sacrifice our local results. That's how I understand it."* (Interview 19). They suggest altering the performance structure to facilitate 'group mindset': "*Well, if everybody could somehow benefit from the group result; perhaps make it a part of their bonus."* (Interview 19). Also, it is suggested that performance reviews not only focus on past performance, and move towards more focus on future performance. *"The potential of knowledge sharing is better unfolded planning the future than assessing the past."* (Interview 10). In general, more feedback and evaluation should be given to people as to how they may improve going forward being proactive instead of reactive: *"Let's be proactive. Think of proactive actions, not only what has happened but what can be done in the future and what to do if this or that happens.*" (Interview 10).

In sum, middle managers are aware – at least in theory – that there are advantages to be gained by collaborating internationally, but at the same time they experience so little actual international interaction, that they find it difficult in practice to imagine how exactly such advantages may be realized, or to pinpoint what form such advantages may take in practice. So, they have an idea that there are benefits, but do not know what they might be and find it difficult to see the business case. At the same time, they are painfully aware that they are under pressure to focus on local business performance and to be extremely cost conscience, particularly in a time of financial crisis, making it hard for them to make the case for prioritizing resources (time, travel costs) to collaborating internationally. In this connection, stating the business case clearly, communicating successes and facilitating high quality international interaction through better meeting management, are factors that middle managers believe enable and constitute good 'group mindset' management practice. Further, supporting 'group mindset' behavior in the performance structure is

suggested in order to help middle managers make the ‘group mindset’ choice, when choosing between sister solidarity and suboptimization.

6.1.5 Theme #5: ‘Group mindset’ Governance and the modular Business Model: The Challenge of ‘challengers’, and ‘maybe wanna-be’ Acquisitions

The 2010 Solar business strategy presented at the 2011 strategy kick-off in Hamburg foresaw the upgrade the group’s business model to also encompass a business model for emerging markets, with one model directed at consolidating key markets and the other at emerging markets (cf. ‘Introduction’). This gave rise to the presentation of the so-called ‘Modular business model” at the 2012-strategy kick off the strategy period 2013-2015 described in Chapter 5. The advent of the modular business model represents a change of focus with regards to the different dimensions of ‘group mindset’ in that the predominant focus on standardization in the first half of the strategy period 2010-2015 was supplemented by more dedication to the dimension of group capitalization on different markets, cultures and ways of working.

The modular business model entails ‘hop-on, hop off’ ad hoc mixing of local solutions or global group solution, where it is decided one project at the time, which parts of the group solutions offered to customers as well as which parts of the group services provided by corporate the individual country should be part of. One ‘challenger market’ middle manager explains about the difference between the division into key markets and challenger markets and the previous business model: *“The differentiation between these two ways is that the challenger countries with small market share, a few percent typically, have the same strategy as key markets, but because of high focus on the costs some elements of the strategy, what we call 'added value solution', can be cancelled or switched off. But we also see that with time, when we build a market position, year by year, will be switch on elements”* (Interview 13). Seen from a middle manager perspective, the benefit is that each country can adjust their strategy to what actually ads value and not just cost: “Now I think that in most of cases we have the options to be flexible and adjust to market situation. This means only activating the elements, which are recognized on the market and added value – the rest, just forget about it.” (Interview 13).

The modular business model does not only have consequences for strategy implementation and the overall business model. As an example, a new group sales training concept has been developed as a portfolio of concepts that each market can freely choose from: The Polish market has decided to opt out of a group sales training concept as they had already initiated a local project, directed at the particular local Polish needs in keeping with the more performance oriented sale concepts applied in this market (Claus Sejr, HR Group meeting presentation, April 11, 2013/Field notes/Participant observation); the Danish subsidiary has delayed their initiation of the sales training concept while implementing the new SAP-based system, Solar 8000. A similar development can be seen in terms of an ongoing career development program: Germany and Poland are not part of the project as the career development solution under implementation in key markets are

deemed be local and corporate managers to be out of proportion compared to the size of these operations (Pernille Skovmose, HR Group meeting presentation, April 12, 2013/Field notes/Participant observation). In a similar vein, it is up for debate what HR-offer should be made to the acquired 'sunshine companies' (which currently have no HR- function and only have payroll and the most basic personnel management) in the future when post-merger management takes off in 2015. It is by no means a given that the sunshine companies should implement the same HR-structure or offer as the countries their subsidiaries work in. (Heidrun Marstein, HR Group Meeting 12. April 2013/Field notes/Participant observation). So what should be the yardstick: There are 'sunshine companies' represented in both a key market such as the Netherlands, a challenger market such as Germany as well as in entirely new markets with no Solar representation, for instance Austria.

'Group mindset' Governance

This change of emphasis in the governance style is seen as very timely and appropriate for the development and enactment of 'group mindset' by middle managers, particularly in the subsidiaries: "*Before maybe it was… But now I must say that 90 percent of the decisions are made, or even more, on the local level. There is no, to be honest, no complaints."* (Interview 13) and so being part of a larger family is not seen as a disadvantage: *"In the way that we are having it now, there are not too many. There are not too many.* Interview 19). The modular business mode addresses a widespread middle manager suspicion in the subsidiaries, if HQ being places in Denmark and coming from a past of very close collaboration with the Danish subsidiary mistakes the Solar Way with the Danish way: *"Fortunately, it is not the case that if someone gets a really great idea, then everybody needs to implement this idea, which may no longer be a good idea in a different situation or in a different market. So, that's what I like; that we have a kind of freedom. Previously, some years ago the situation was different. We had to follow the ways that were good in Denmark that were good in Norway, Sweden or some of these countries."* (Interview 19). In subsidiaries, most middle managers agree that the Danish market is unique, a statistical outlier in a context of European technical wholesale due to the consolidated market structure, where Solar enjoys a monopolist-like position as well as demanding and advanced customers with regards to knowledge- and service intensive products, such as provided by energy renewal concepts of Blue Energy, Solar School and Consulting. The learning to be deducted from the Danish case elsewhere in the organization is deemed then to be relatively small: *"And our market is different because it's fragmented. We have only about 2% share of the market; in Denmark, Solar has more than 50%, I think…. We have a lot of competitors in our market, and I think the key player has only about 5% of the market. I think Denmark isn't similar to the other countries. And it's not because Denmark has 50-60% of their market. I think that our challenge is to be similar to Sweden or Norway. Not to Denmark, because there are no competitors in Denmark for Solar"*. (Interview 16).

Most subsidiary middle managers are at peace with the modular business model granting them more freedom to maneuver locally within the general strategic framework, and do not have to be consistently overshadowed or belittled by Solar performance and activities in the Danish market. The Polish middle managers for instance feel inspired and are quite confident that they will catch up with key markets within the next 10 years or so, and that the Polish market will evolve in a manner consistent with an expectation that there will indeed be a demand for the more complex service offered by Solar. (Interviews 12, 13, 16). However, others are less optimistic and feel that whatever they do, it will never be good enough compared to the Danish market key market player aspirations of becoming number 1 in technical wholesale: "*Because we will never be as good as like Rexell or whoever. And I sometimes really have a feeling, that that's a bit forgotten. Maybe it's not, but if you see how they really want to push their…well ,''my way or the highway' to put it impolitely… And then again, for example the Dutch have real problems with that because they are really convinced they do the right things, they want the best for the customers, and then somebody else…"* (Interview 7). In general, what previously was considered by the board of directors to be an example set to be followed by subsidiary countries, when embarking on internationalization (cf. chapter 5), is by subsidiary countries seen as the exception that proves the rule in technical wholesale. Being able to depart from a one-size fits all philosophy is welcomed as seen as an appropriate 'group mindset' governance structure by middle manager.

'Sunshine Companies' – 'maybe wanna-be' Solarians?

While the hop-on, hop-off modular business model is highly appreciated particularly in the newly designated 'challenger markets, 'sunshine companies' find it more problematic, because it endangers their current business model: *"Solar is the market leader in Denmark. So what they do, and what they push to the customer is highly accepted…. But if you then talk to the people of Solar and GFI Germany- they only have less than 1% market share. If you then come to a customer and say: 'Well, it's this, that and the other," they say: "Well, I'm really sorry, but there are 10 competitors where I can get this cheaper or for free' or whatever. So you don't really have that fist to the customers. And actually the same appears in Holland. And it would appear in Belgium." This view is backed-up across the board."* (Interview 7). So, there are also doubts if this business model is diverse enough to embrace all the business models such as the profit center-model of the sunshine companies: *"What I think is good, is this distinction between key markets and challengers… And if you want to integrate a new business model like ours [highly decentralized and local profit center model, ed.], you really must let go of this fact that you want to do business in the same way everywhere. And I must admit, that last time we had these three days of GLP, and I was really, like, wondering if the members of the Solar Management Team also do?"*(Interview 7).

Also the sunshine companies consider the Danish market to be an extremely special case apart, and subsidiary managers do not think that a lot can be learned from the Danish experiences: In technical

wholesale, the Danish market is considered quite unique due to its high degree of consolidation and customer maturity with regards for demand for more complex services solutions in addition to a basic logistics offer, and due to the market leading, monopoly-like situation Solar enjoys in this market paired with the absence of the European technical whole industry's number 1 and 2 competitors, are not represented. Sunshine country middle manager worry that following post-merger management they will have to adopt to the Solar ways: *"Well, everybody has these fears… It is really hard for them to think about the possibility that they must really act in processes, and they should do this, that and the other, because somebody else wants that. We are used to be free to be as flexible as possible, because we have no constraints in the system."* (Interview 7). This is not the type of parenting advantage that sunshine middle managers hope for: "*Solar is for us,* for me, a big company and we see it as new opportunities for growth in Belgium and all the rest of the countries. But maybe we just want the system and then 'leave us alone. Now we have it, and we can go farther, and we call you if we need something." (Interview 9). Also, sunshine companies experience some clashes and cannibalization business between local Solarian businesses in the markets, where there are both Solar representation and sunshine company presentation such as the Netherlands: *"Obviously every time on the agenda are complaints from our sales organization that: 'You gave higher discounts, and now you have the order!" It is not too common, but they really blow it up, and I say: 'Hello, we are part of the same group, so let the customer decide.' For us to tell the customer: 'Oh, don't give the order to Solar' that is ridiculous, come on."* (Interview 7).

In sum, the advent of the modular business model is seen as a facilitator of 'group mindset' development by middle managers in that they can now contribute in their own time and in a way best suited for their market, without being stigmatized as 'non-key markets', but rather as a group in its own right. It is, however, questioned in what capacity the challenger markets are challengers: Does this group share the challenge of aspiring to becoming key markets at some point in the future enjoying a transitional position? Or is this group challenging the main business model; i.e. challenging the business model of warehousing, supply chain excellence and a vast service portfolio with an alternative? The acquired sunshine companies add to this reflection in that their business model in some ways resemble challenger markets, but are even more local and decentralized: *"We do have this challenge that we have acquired companies which in reality operate a very decentralized structure, just as decentralized as we did in Poland. But still, in Poland we do have a central warehouse and some degree of vendor consolidation, which means that we have much more centralization in Poland than in the newly acquired businesses. And the message from the 'sunshine companies' is that: 'We should not spend a lot of time with corporate and group matters; each business just has to concentrate on servicing customers in a 30 kilometer radius and operate our business.' So this actually constitutes a change of paradigm."* (Interview 3).

This is a particularly important concern as future acquisition candidates in existing or new markets are likely to resemble the sunshine companies, characterized by very local operations and profit center structures as this is the typical governance form in the technical wholesale business in both smaller and larger competitors. This begs the questions if indeed there are not only key markets and challengers, but also 'maybe-wanna be Solarians' which are affiliated with Solar with a third model? A Solar Management Team decision was taken to postpone active post-merger management for the current group of 'sunshine companies' as integration into the Solar business model was deemed to kill the acquired company very quickly by loading them with group costs while robbing them of their competitive advantage and hence profitability: *"If we cannot somehow create room for this group, we should not have acquired them in the first place"*, explains CEO Tomdrup (Solar Debriefing, April 2014, field notes). If Solar plans to grow by acquisition in the future, settling this question is important as is doing it the 'group mindset' way by leveraging the ample existing experience with merging local technical wholesalers into the Solar family from for instance Poland employing both employees and previous owners from previously acquired companies: *"I used to own a business, so for me it is easier to understand people when we try to acquire somebody regardless of the level of progress they have."* (Interview 17).

6.1.6 Theme# 6: 'Corporate vs. Subsidiaries vs. Branches

HQ-subsidiary relationship has received lot of attention in international business literature. Solar has undergone a centralization process starting with the first corporate employee in the late 1980s and speeding up when the current CEO took over in 2006 where corporate functions have grown. Sales has been the last bastion of non-corporate involvement, but even here corporate sales and marketing have now been established. And certainly, the relationship between corporate and subsidiaries remains important and challenging, seen from a middle manager perspective in Solar, which will be elaborated on in the following theme 7. However, a focus on the challenges of this collaborative interface should not mask the fact that there is also a relationship between subsidiary headquarters in the individual countries and their branches. There is a tendency to overlook that the differences within one group (e.g. a subsidiary in country X and its different branches) may be larger than the differences between groups (HQ vs. subsidiary X): *"The branches are the ones that are furthest away from HQ – local HQ as well as corporate HQ.*' (Interview 12). The Solar Navigator-survey testifies to the fact that with regards to both general knowledge of the concept of 'group mindset' as well as knowledge of strategic direction, mission and vision, there is a gap between managers at tactical and operational level, thus effectively dividing the middle manager-group (cf. Navigator-survey; Group HR meeting/'Group Mindset'-workshop, Group 2, 2012):

Vision & Goal. The challenge ... activating the lowest layer in the organisation

	Solar	Strategic level	Tactical level	Operational managers	Operational level
Number of interviews	*2688*	*12*	*68*	*402*	*2200*
Vision, Strategy and Goals	**69**	**95**	**95**	**82**	**65**
Vision & Strategy	65	100	95	79	61
Overall goals	77	96	99	88	74
Department goals	65	90	92	78	62

Improvements needed	Potential	Strength	Excellence
< 50, < 500	50-64, 500-649	65-74, 650-749	≥ 75, ≥ 750

tns sifo

20

solar

Figure 6.3: Navigator-survey 2012: Managerial understanding of vision, strategy and goals.

As can be seen from the illustration, strategic and tactical managers (regardless of HQ or subsidiary affiliation) are in similar with regards to the familiarity with strategy, vision and goals, while operational managers are in a group of their own with a lower degree of familiarity. This is consistent with the degree of familiarity with 'group mindset' in the three managerial levels. This picture is further emphasized by a partial navigator survey conducted in the Netherlands in late 2013 showing that local operational leaders had more confidence in strategic top management in corporate HQ than to local Dutch headquarter management. This is explained by middle managers as a consequence of a high degree of geographical dispersion of branches within the individual countries (Interview 21) and in the concrete case of the Netherlands that *"Solar has been buying a lot of companies in this country, a lot of different cultures together, so you can say a mix of a lot of different cultures, who are not even one culture vs. the other culture, is combined. It is three or four cultures within those cultures*." (Interview 10). Also, this is seen as consequence of the fact that implementation and execution of strategy is left to the country managers, who has significant 'home rule' with regards to execution strategy and governance structures leaving most decisions to the local level. It also places a premium on tactical middle managers ability to act as the human communication hub as well as boundary brokers in order to pass on strategy to the next level, which is a group that is difficult to reach with corporate communication, as English competences are generally sparse.

The advent of the Solar Management Team including a larger group of corporate and subsidiary middle managers in strategic planning and execution has effectively narrowed the gap between strategic and tactical managers in Solar (Navigator surveys, 2009, 2010, 2012). Although the inclusion of tactical level middle managers in strategy work is recent, and the whole group only met for the first time in 2006, middle

management maturity and line of sight has grown with a notable positive effect on the degree to which country HQ middle managers feel well-informed. Facilitating 'group mindset' locally seems to be a zone for development: *"'Group mindset must be… Well, in Poland we are trying to promote mindset in another way, the local way. Because it is the same story locally if you see Solar Polska as the group and each branch is like a country in the group. So the same story, to be individualist, focus on the mine city and nothing more. So in the last years also a lot of changes in sharing information between branched and helping each other with some customers. But this is also a process."* (Interview 13).

In this process, middle managers point to the fact that seniority matters (Interview 8): Some subsidiaries have managers and employees who have been with them a long time who may have more surplus energy to look further than the immediate business context. Seniority is, however, a relative thing – again the Danish market and Danish subsidiary stands out when for instance Polish middle manager view this operation relative to Denmark: *"Most of our employees have been with us for a long time. Well, I know that in comparison to Denmark, 15 years [i.e. since the establishment of Solar in Poland, ed.], it's maybe not long, but still….*" (Interview 19). While a more experienced group of managers may have the capacity to grasp a group perspective, they have also been accustomed to a particular way of doing business over a long period of time and so may remember the days where Solar operations in most countries were decentralized and profit center oriented thus finding it more difficult to adjust to 'group mindset' management practice.

In sum, the country HQ-local branch gap is larger than the corporate HQ-subsidiary HQ gap in Solar. This highlights the importance of getting through to the operational level of middle managers: *"We demand a lot from our middle managers in the Solar Management Team, with regards to participation in strategy-work and with respect to deciding which initiatives to launch and make sure that we do not distance ourselves from customers and the business",* explains top management (Interview 3). And from the rest of the (operational) managers one might add – a group with which corporate has little direct contact not least due to language barriers. Bridging the gap seems essential to 'group mindset' facilitation of business strategy execution as it is ultimately operational managers that will work the strategy in their daily jobs, and if this group is a weak link the entire cascading of business strategy is in danger. A tighter coordination between corporate business strategy road maps and local business strategy road maps has been suggested as one avenue of making sure that the message gets across to the operational level, but performance and incentive management structures are also deemed relatively unexplored vehicles for better coordination along the lines of 'group mindset' (Interview 19).

6.1.7 Theme #7: To the same End vs. Front-end / Back-end? The challenging Conquest of 'both-and'

The modular business strategy for the strategy period of 2013-2015 is highly appreciated as a vehicle for 'group mindset' development, particularly by subsidiary middle managers. But at the same time, there is

widespread agreement that Solarians share similar business processes, if not similar markets. So if shared purpose drives 'group mindset' collaboration, a common denominator is what could be called a 'gross-margin mission'. The following middle manager statements emphasize the feeling of shared purpose and mission: *"Yes, because we are not very special on the market. Just to be able to earn something we need margins to be high or to be able to be really, really special. As a wholesaler, it's not easy to be really special. Of course, we can provide some better services to customers, but unfortunately on markets like ours, every single euro counts."* (Interview 19). A colleague supplements: *"We have the same main problem in all countries: We have to have customers and sell products with a very big margin. And we have to buy products for our customers in very low margin. That's the main problem."* (Interview 16). Basic business processes are shared: "I would say that we have very similar processes. I mean, the business is the same, right? We buy stuff, and we sell stuff, and we transport stuff. It's the same thing" (Interview 6). This is highlighted by the fact that Solar 8000 implementation rests on the premise that basic business processes in key markets are similar and the reason why challenger markets are not included in Solar 8000 roll-out. This is not a consequence of their having different business processes, but rather a consequence of the size of the investment in SAP compared with the fact that the current size of the operation and market share does not cater for satisfactory return on investment. And so a different solution has been chosen for this group enabling challenger markets and sunshine companies to operate a simpler, cheaper system more in keeping with their size and market leverage. Basic business processes are the same in key and challenger markets, however.

Front-end vs. Back-end?

While there is common ground from where to pursue cross-organizational collaboration and 'group mindset' management practice, not all functions and business areas have come equally far. In general, front-end collaboration is lacking behind, while back-end collaboration and pursuit of cross-country synergies are in the lead. And so, a middle manager emphasizes that in the current strategy period, Solar has developed its 'group mindset' capabilities with regards to standardization and knowledge sharing on the cost-side, predominantly back-end functions such as finance, supply chain, and IT. However, there is more work to be done on the 'earning side' of the equation in terms of marketing, sales in the front-end and with regards to vendor consolidation: "*Some things are missing. From the cost side, it's OK, but from the earning point… Being a wholesaler we are making our margin merely on sales price, which is more or less defined by the market, even if we can try to convince our customers to buy from us at an above average price. The purchase prices we can somehow influence, but we are not doing many things internationally about the purchase prices."* (Interview 19). Most middle managers point to vendor consolidation and leveraging 'group power' vis-à-vis global suppliers to get a better deal, but there are also thought to synergies to be harvested in the sales front-end facing customers. This is seen as the most difficult area for creating cross-organizational

synergies, as Solar sees itself as the empathetic wholesaler that sympathizes with the customers' needs (Solar market survey 2007) and as it is expressed: *"There is simply too much emotion involved in sales*" (Interview 4), and *"I would understand when a market guy, a product manager for example, very quickly says: "Oh, that's all very nice and everything, but our suppliers are mostly Norwegian, so what am I supposed to learn from somebody in Sweden?"* (Interview 6). And so 'group mindset' seems to develop differently in the front-end and in the back-end. Solar is going in the direction of a front-back hybrid structure – or at least moving in that direction with an increasingly integrated standardized back-end, but with localized customer-centric front-end. In the front-end, synergies remain relatively unexplored (Interview 5). This development echoes Galbraight's (2000) 'Front-Back' organization, but falls short of the full version in the front-back organization, organize upstream activities by business division and downstream activities by geography so as to capitalize on integration benefits upstream while at the same time ensuring local responsiveness downstream (Stahl & Björkman, 2006).

Corporate 'group mindset' Group think?

Although the Solar CEO emphasizes that *"wholesale is a local business and if we try to revolutionize this I think we will get ourselves into serious trouble. And so we must be careful not to become too international*" (Interview 3), the business front-end'ers seem to be getting the upper hand in the internal middle management sensemaking process of capturing 'group mindset' management practices. There is a tendency for corporate staff to monopolize 'group mindset' as their mindset as they represent the Solar group. Corporate mindset is important constituent part of the environment in which middle managers make sense of 'group mindset' and as could be expected, corporate staff has their eyes fixed on group solutions. But 'group mindset' may not equal HQ mindset: *"HQ needs to remember that best practice does not equal corporate practice*," as a subsidiary middle manager puts it at the March 2011 strategy seminar (Participant observation/Field note), but as another subsidiary colleague points out: "*Some people would like to, let's say, certificate everything. So, I think it's nothing to do with group mindset"* (Interview 13).

The division of markets into two groups of key markets and challenger markets is viewed as very positive by subsidiary managers, while corporate functional managers may be more doubtful: *"I would very much like to see some - or at least become aware that we have - some kind of structural approach to becoming more international. Because I don't feel that we have that, but maybe we do, but I don't know about it. Right now, it feels very random of, oh, we're doing this, and it's only because that one person is interested in it."* (Interview 6). Stating the business case of 'group mindset' and exposing middle managers to international collaboration is not enough: *"I don't think many initiatives will come from these people themselves. I think they need to be pushed into some kind of.. And that's where I think headquarters has to take a stand. I think that there should be or would be some kind of international standard - 'this is how we do it across the*

borders' - but that doesn't seem to be there yet." (Interview 6). In effect, there is also demand for more 'group mindset' top-down leadership from front-end middle managers.

But just as there might be lack of knowledge of practice in other countries locally in the individual countries, corporate staff may also lack knowledge of local realities, although a higher number of people are in contact with other parts of the organization on an ongoing basis. One corporate middle managers report of the eye-opening experience of collaborating more with local colleagues: *"But the more different people you work with, the more you can find out that: Hey, we are not all alike, we don't all think alike. So whenever I have a decision that I want made or a direction I want to go in, I have to take that into consideration."*(Interview 6). And so, corporate staff may be just as much in a position to suboptimize by devising standardized group solutions that are not optimizing performance of the group, in much the same way as locals may be in danger of suboptimizing by localizing too much. So corporate staff may be suboptimizing for lack of knowledge about when NOT to standardize and integrate as group-wise all-inclusive solution is corporate knee-jerk reaction and fully comprehensible as many people have job descriptions highlighting this very aspect. Just because it is standardization or integration does not necessarily make it group mindset: *"In wholesale where you have to be really flexible. You have to be agile in the front-end watching the countries closely; you have to be agile in the back-end too by being as lean as possible, working as a group, combining resources, making sure that you don't waste time. If there's too much lean, you will be 'leaning' and standardizing in the front-end as well. And a lean wholesale would not have a lot of products and consequently not a lot of customers."* (Interview 10).

Countering a tendency to over-simplification or as one middle manager expresses it *"'lean'ing' too much in the front-end"* (Interview 10), is seen as important for development of 'group mindset'. This is not only a question of local subsidiary managers get exposed to top management and a group perspective in corporate HQ; it is also important that top management and corporate middle managers get exposed to different practice in subsidiaries and learn to appreciate the local pressures and challenges first hand (Interview 10). This may be one of the most effective and quick avenues for developing 'group mindset'. Although Solar has come a long way since Magnus Dahlmann was the only corporate employee and the only manager travelling to the subsidiaries in other countries (cf. Chapter 5), internal employee mobility remains relatively low and managerial interaction is still in an early phase (cf. theme 1 and 2). It follows that not only subsidiary managers may lack international imagination, but corporate managers may lack local imagination. This is particularly the case because when low employee mobility from subsidiaries to corporate remains low, giving rise to employment of a new group of 'technocrats' and wave of academization of HQ (Interview 3). Also, *"sometimes it is more difficult to be in-between – not local, but not handling more international operations than HQ can cope with in a quite detailed manner. If there were more countries or operations, probably HQ would have to give up control a bit"* as one corporate middle manager explains (Interview 2).

At the same time, amplification and room for local 'home rule' may also entail a danger of fragmentation due to too much focus on local specificities, forgetting that 'group mindset' localization entails overcoming an benefitting from differences of cultures, markets and ways of working (Solar Management Team 'group mindset' consolidation, 2010, Chapter 1 and 5).

Summing up, the argument that monopolization of 'group mindset' as equaling standardization and 'leaning' of the organization might be an ineffective path to international performance mirror Maznevski's ideas that the answer to increased international and global complexity is not only to simplify, but at the same time to amplify (Maznevski, 2009, 2011). Countering complexity by simplifying procedures and strategies as much as possible, in effect standardizing, might cater unity of message and to corporate preferences for cross-organizational transparency, coherence and hence easier access to controlling and managing, over-simplification may lead to inflexibility and inability to adjust to changes. So, the solution to increased global complexity is not just simplification (trying to get complexity in order), its simplification AND amplification (creating variety and local room for maneuvering in order to deal effectively with complexity).

Meeting the challenge of literally making ends meet, tying front-end and back-end together in keeping with 'group mindset', places a lot of responsibility on tactical middle managers, if amplification is not to be tantamount to a 'going native' carte blanche, but rather to building bridges and creating the necessary understanding and cooperation across all units, countries and functions. In this respect, a clear division of labor between local vs. corporate responsibilities seems timely: Corporate middle managers reports 'passing around of the monkey' in that HQ maintains that execution is up to subsidiaries, while subsidiary managers think that it is up to HQ to take the first step (Interview 2), while subsidiary middle manager experience that responsibility is delegated, but *"sometimes after one or two quarters, I think HQ forgets."* (Interview 17).

6.2. 'Group mindset': Driving Forces/enablers & restraining Forces/Barriers

The seven central themes of 'group mindset' development and enactment derived from the empirical analysis of middle managers view of 'group mindset' individual competence and organizational capability in Solar, highlights both enabling and detracting factors. Based on the issues expressed and discussed, the outcome of the analysis are summed up in an overall force field analysis-inspired representation (Lewin, 1951) of driving and restraining forces of 'group mindset' development and enactment in managerial practice in the figure below:

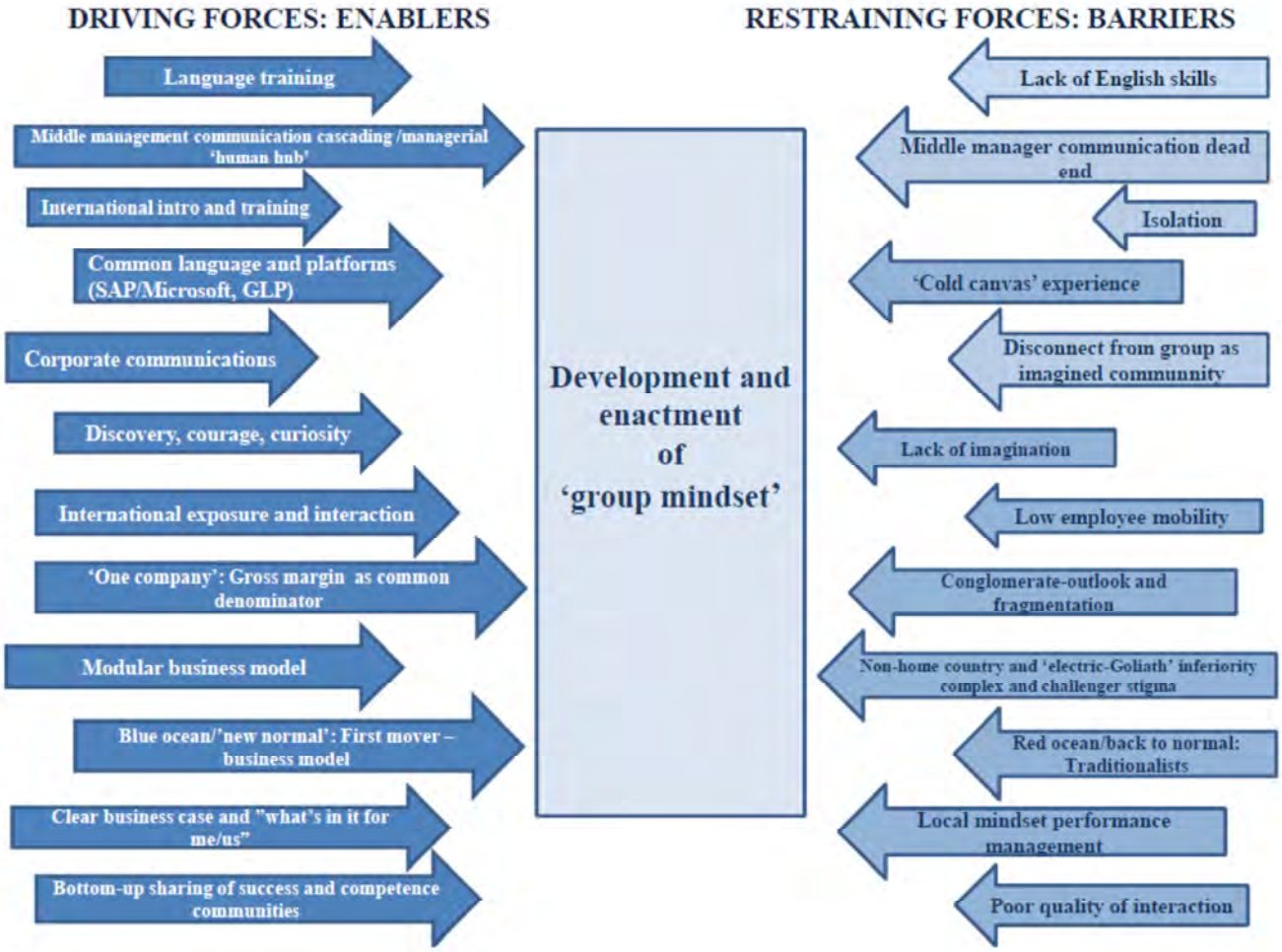

Figure 6.4: Force field analysis-inspired (Lewin, 1951) diagram of driving and restraining forces of development and enactment of 'group mindset.'

The left hand side of the figure emphasizes the factors, which middle managers believe drive and enable 'group mindset', while the right hand side represents the barriers that are perceived of as detractors from 'group mindset'. The arrows representing the individual enabler or barrier are illustrated as having different sizes and positioning vis-à-vis the "development and enactment of 'group mindset' axis. This is not to indicate that bigger arrows are more important factors or that they represent the views of a larger number of middle managers; as emphasized previously in this chapter, diversity of viewpoint and voice are prioritized and so arrow sizes in not an indicator of popularity or extension. Rather, the diagram and the arrows should be seen as a snapshot of a continuous balancing act in flux. Each side of the diagram has 12 arrows so as to facilitate a reading of the diagram that sees the two sides as connected, even though they may not be direct opposites. For instance, 'corporate communication' efforts in both English and local languages facilitate the feeling of being connected to a larger imagined organizational community, even if the individual manager only rarely find herself in the physical or even virtual presence of persons representing the organizational

community conducive to development of ‘group mindset’(arrow number five from the top in the left hand side of the diagram); opposite in the right hand side of the diagram, ‘disconnect from imagined community’ detracts from development of ‘group mindset’ (arrow number five from the top).

In general, the presence or degree of negative or positive synergies between concrete enablers and barriers cannot be deducted from the data or so also not from the diagram. For example, one might imagine that the existence or improvement of managerial English competences and opportunity to be together with persons from other parts of the organization virtually and physically may positively interact: The willingness and motivation to engage with others are supported by English competences and diminished by lack of English competences, just as the development and motivation for using or developing English competences are spurred on by international interaction and dialog. Similarly, if there are no opportunity to interact with people from other parts of the organization (due to for instance travel budget constraints or for lack of access to teleconferencing technology), the motivation to use or improve English skills are diminished. The existence, direction and magnitude of such potential causal relations cannot be settled or pinpointed in detail from this analysis, however. Further the existence of certain practices and structures are likely impact the development and enactment of ‘group mindset’ in different ways: Some practices and organizational enablers may have the ability to detract from engagement in negative behaviors rather than to activate supporting behaviors; e.g. the ability of language competence may prevent a manager from detracting from ‘group mindset’ development and realization, i.e. avoid going ‘below zero’, while active solicitation of different opinion and advice from international colleagues may add to global mindset development and realization, i.e. enable going ‘above zero’ – i.e. in a Herzbergian terminology, which factors are hygiene factors and which are motivators.

6.3 Individual and Organizational Enablers and Barriers of ‘group mindset’ Enactment and Development

The force field analysis-inspired (Lewin, 1951) overview of driving and restraining forces of development and enactment of ‘group mindset’, highlights both positive and negative forces as experienced by Solar middle managers. In the following, this force field of positive and negative forces is broken down into individual and organizational enablers (cf. research questions sub-questions) to spell out concrete microfoundations of the management practice as performed by the individual manager, as well as what factors in the organizational environment at the discretion of corporate functions/top management that middle managers’ see as ‘group mindset’ drivers. Some enablers have been specifically mentioned or suggested by Solar field members during interviews or participant observation, others are the author’s suggestions and exemplifications derived from the barriers and enablers put forth by respondents and discussed with internal member check fora:

6.3.1 Individual Enablers of 'group mindset competence' in Solar

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, individual enablers are understood as actions or behaviors that are within the sphere of influence for the individual manager, i.e. which are at the individual's discretion and can be influenced in the short run or medium term. Individual enablers of 'group mindset' competence seen in a Solar middle managers perspective include:

1. English skills/willingness to learn English.
2. Tactical middle management ability and willingness to be translators and boundary brokers vis-a-vis local operational middle managers.
3. Role modelling and supporting employee mobility (receiving as well as sending employees); e.g. short-term assignments, projects and internal recruitments.
4. Formation of and participation in competence communities as avenues for knowledge sharing on demand and voluntary best practice proliferation.
5. Participation in group level strategic decision-making processes and projects to 'get real' and in touch with a 'group perspective.'
6. Prioritization of participation in international activities and meetings contributing to high quality of interaction by being well-prepared.
7. Proactive international meeting management in order to optimize time spent together and value created.
8. Inclusion of 'group mindset' measures in local key performance indicators and individual performance objectives.
9. Countering local monopolization of 'group mindset' = localization.
10. Socialization of newcomers (managerial and non-managerial employees) into 'group mindset' thinking.

6.3.2 Organizational Drivers of 'group mindset capability' in Solar

The individual enablers of group mindset-competence are supplemented by organizational enablers, i.e. governance structures, systems and group-wide practices that middle managers deem to be drivers of 'group mindset' enactment and development. Organizational enablers understood as organizational mechanisms at HQ discretion that may promote capacity for developing and enacting 'group mindset' in managerial practice seen in a Solarian middle manager perspective, include:

1. Modular business model- governance philosophy (key markets/challengers/'sunshine companies').
2. Middle manager inclusion into strategic decision-making processes.
3. Corporate communication and group news in local languages (offline *and* online).
4. Provision of language training.
5. International introduction program and cross-organizational training & development.
6. Facilitation of cross-function and cross-country knowledge sharing fora.
7. Countering corporate monopolization of 'group mindset' = standardization.
8. Communicating the *group* and *local* 'group mindset' business case and success stories.
9. Including 'group mindset' behavior into the performance management structure (quarterly reviews as well as performance appraisals).
10. Frequent top management and HQ-staff field trips/study tours to 'get real' and in touch with local reality.

The Solar middle manager perspective on individual and organizational enablers, summarized in the 20 points above, is of course tied to the context of the strategic choices, market position and financial standing of Solar. In Chapter 3, a conceptual analysis, based on extant literature on global mindset, was presented positioning global mindset as a global leadership meta-competence of individual managers, as well as an organizational capability linked to global strategy execution. The strategic global mindset capability model was presented as a conceptualization of a theoretical understanding of global mindset as both meta-competence and organizational capability and a conceptual summation of the researcher's pre-understanding of global mindset, including a catalog of global mindset enablers at both the individual and organizational level derived from extant literature. If one views the individual and organizational enablers resulting from the 'group mindset'-analysis presented in this chapter in comparison with the theoretical framework and pre-understanding of strategic global mindset, there are both cases of resonance and dissonance.

First and foremost, the consequences of 'globality' in Solar are felt primarily as strategic complexity and cross-organizational boundary-spanning in pursuit of 'both-and' – not as handling intercultural personnel management and motivation across borders, which is the typical focal point in the literature on global leadership and global mindset. Few Solar managers are exposed to intercultural collaboration in their everyday job as they do not have managerial responsibilities for subordinates with another cultural background in their own geographical locations, through a matrix structure or local staff composition

characterized by a high degree of diversity. This means that many of the organizational enablers for developing global mindset are not available to Solar foster 'group mindset': The use of global career paths, talent pipelines and local employee diversity, short term assignments and expatriation are impaired by language barriers and the highly diverse nature of Solarian markets. So even if a higher degree of internal employee mobility was present in Solar, the opportunity to activate these inroads would be a solution available to a minority only - and probably only - within a limited geographical area in the short run and medium term. As a consequence, the Solar experience highlights the importance of creation of other types of fora international exposure and experience such as cross-organizational communities of practice, or through the communication of shared success and knowledge of 'the other' to allow Solarians to participate in an imagined community from a distance. I this respect, the use of bridge-building technologies is also present as an important enabler, although in Solar only a small group of managers and employees participate in permanent virtual teams requiring remote management.

Another common denominator between the 'group mindset' experience in Solar and the theoretical recommendations for development of global mindset is the accentuation of positive, global experience that has yielded results as an enabler. Although 'global experience' in Solar does not stem from expatriation or short-term assignments as usually assumed in extant literature, but more likely from field trips to other markets, participation in cross-organizational temporary project groups, HQ visits or group training activities the importance of not only exposure, but also a positive experience of participating in such activities are pointed to as key: The experience that international interaction is worthwhile and benefits both the individual and the business is key to development and enactment of 'group mindset' in Solar. This is connected to another common denominator between the conceptual analysis of global mindset and empirical analysis of 'group mindset', namely the importance of performance management in supporting of inhibiting 'group mindset'. In Solar, middle managers both point to performance structures as a detractor in that too narrow focus on local results is a barrier for engaging internationally; at the same time designing the performance system so as to put a premium on cross-organizational performance is called for.

The pertinence of foreign language proficiency comes across in both the conceptual and empirical analysis as does the importance of a common language. With regards to common language it stands out from the Solar experience that corporate values are not mentioned as a source of common language; instead field members point to the shared business purpose of pursuing gross margin, the existence of common processes and technological infrastructure terminology as well as the use of a common leadership toolkit as sources of common language. That shared values are not present in the study can be seen in connection with the fact that Solar corporate values have not been implemented as a coordination mechanism in Solar (cf. Chapter 5 on Solar corporate values; Interviews 3, 21). Further, Solar has grown and internationalized by acquisition: Solar has bought and sold some 80 companies since the late 1980s averaging three to four companies a year -

being on the move constantly in a state of flux instead of slow, organic growth with ample time to socializing and learning slowly as the business grows locally. Building an organizational culture homogeneous enough to work as a coordination mechanism or social architecture, lowering the transaction costs of cross-organization interaction under those circumstances, may be very difficult and resource consuming (not to mention that the demands of the market may change completely while this process takes place). And so, seeing corporate culture as a glue technology synthesizing local and global in multinational corporations into 'a third way' uniting a multitude of diversities, may be more of an option for companies working in relatively stable markets or structures?

Finally, the analysis of individual and organizational enablers of the development and enactment of global mindset operationalized as Solar 'group mindset' stands out from the conceptual analysis of global mindset, presented earlier, in that the Solar case stresses a somewhat overlooked part of global mindset, namely appreciation of the local. Due to the characteristics of the wholesale industry with a local front-end and global back-end combined with a strategic choice of Solar to occupy a middle position in the market as well as an internationalization strategy, based on acquisitions in emerging markets in the nearest geographical zone of development characterized by a higher degree of fragmentation, a lower degree of market sophistication and complexity of consumer demand than key markets, appreciation of the local is not only a reminiscent of domestic, home country mindset or an expression of ethnocentrism, but rather a characteristic that is important for developing a profitable business. As such, the Solar case emphasizes that global mindset is not only cosmopolitanism and intercultural skill for handling international interaction, it is also an appreciation for the local as an end in itself, not as a sign of immaturity. A monopolization of global mindset by corporate functions, if not top management, as synonymous with (more) harmonization, synthesis and integration is in as much danger of suboptimization as is a too narrow, local interpretation. That 'reverse suboptimization' is a detractor of global mindset as well as appreciation for the local can be an enabler, is not a rationale present in extant literature. This in turn emphasizes the strategic nature of global mindset in that the degree to which local should be emphasized, seen from a performance perspective, hinges on market context and business strategy.

PART IV: FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This dissertation set out to explore leadership in an international environment as being global mindset leadership. Global mindset leadership is border and boundary-crossing leadership within the multinational corporation with the objective of researching development of global mindset from a qualitative insider perspective in a case study organization. This study has been guided by the following central research question:

What is global mindset as an individual meta-competence and strategic organizational capability? And how may global mindset capability development be facilitated through managers' management practice?

The exploration of the research question has been guided by the content of the following sub-questions:

- Strategic global mindset: What it is and why it is important
- Why and how global mindset can function as an organizational capability
- What manager behaviors facilitate development and enactment of strategic global mindset in Solar?
- What governance structures facilitate development and behavioral enactment of strategic global mindset in Solar?
- How can validity challenges researching global mindset qualitatively from and insider position be addressed?

This dissertation argues the case that development of global mindset as a managerial meta-competence and organizational capability is an avenue for multinational corporations to improve their opportunities and performance internationally. At the organizational level, global mindset is a capability in that global mindset may facilitate international strategy execution. At the individual level, global mindset is a meta-competence in a dual sense: First, it is a global leadership meta-competence in that it encompasses other approaches to global leadership such as intercultural leadership, knowledge sharing, boundary brokerage and paradox management. Secondly, global mindset is a meta-competence in the sense that it is competence facilitating the adequate use of other managerial (functional and leadership) competences in global collaboration in the MNC. The outcome of a conceptual analysis of global mindset was laid out in a theoretical framework, 'the strategic global mindset capability model' linking international business strategy with business performance through both individual and organizational global mindset enablers, presenting as a summation of the author's pre-understanding of extant literature about global mindset as

both an individual managerial meta-competence and organizational capability, related to business strategy and performance.

Based on the conceptualization of strategic global mindset presented in the 'strategic global mindset capability model', the micro-foundational management practices of strategic global mindset was then empirically explored, through a single case study of a medium-sized North European technical wholesaler, the industrial PhD host organization, Solar. Solar is an interesting case as this organization is in the process of deliberate competence and capability development of strategic global mindset as a lever for the achievement of strategic objectives and business performance, in pursuit of expansion and acceleration of internationalization through both organic and acquisitative growth. The empirical exploration takes its point of departure in the local Solar operationalization of global mindset, known as 'group mindset'. From this point of departure an empirical exploration of global mindset management practice was undertaken in Solar, a MNC in the making struggling with the development of global mindset. A globality profile of Solar was presented, indicating that the case company's present degree of globalization can be characterized as a local international conglomerate, struggling to move from a home-country dominated mindset to a more international mindset, seeing the development of 'group mindset' as a capability vis-à-vis strategy execution in an industry, undergoing structural changes and suffering the consequences of financial crisis. The ability of 'group mindset' to function as a capability in terms of strategy execution and business performance is seen as being closely connected to the individual managers' ability to enact 'group mindset' behavior in their everyday leadership practice, as they are the ultimate strategy executors.

The empirical analysis of strategic global mindset as a meta-competence and organizational capability, supplements the conceptual analysis of global mindset as laid out in the 'strategic global mindset capability model', by adding empirically founded suggestions for organizational/structural and individual enablers of strategic global mindset, seen from a middle manager perspective in the case study company. The Solar case study empirically captures what global mindset is as an individual meta-competence and strategic organizational capability, as well as how global mindset capability development may be facilitated through managers' management practice. A force field of 'group mindset' enablers and barriers has been drawn operationalized into ten organizational enablers and ten individual enablers, some of which mirrors the conceptual analysis of global mindset organizational and individual enablers and others, which point in a different direction:

Conceptual analysis/ theoretical global mindset	Empirical analysis/ Solarian 'group mindset'
Individual enablers:	
English	English skills/willingness to learn English
Several foreign languages	Tactical middle management ability and willingness to be translators and boundary brokers
Self-awareness	Role modelling and supporting employee mobility
Network	Formation of and participation in competence communities as avenues for knowledge sharing on demand and voluntary best practice proliferation.
Complex leadership role	Participation in group level strategic decision-making processes and projects to 'get real' and in touch with a 'group perspective.'
Positive, global experience that has generated results	Prioritization of participation in international activities and meetings contributing to high quality of interaction by being well-prepared.
Personality	Inclusion of 'group mindset' measures in local key performance indicators and individual performance objectives.
Family life	Proactive international meeting management in order to optimize time spent together and value created.
Dealing with complexity	Countering local monopolization of 'group mindset' = localization
Diversity on their home ground	Socialization of newcomers (managerial and non-managerial employees) into 'group mindset' thinking.
Organizational enablers:	
Technological bridge building	Corporate mindset: Modular business model- governance philosophy
Common language	Corporate communication in local languages
Foreign language proficiency	Provision of language training.
Being alert to "local" development situations	International introduction program and T&D
Learning through competition	International communities of practice
Global career paths	Countering 'reverse 'suboptimization' due to corporate monopolization of 'group mindset' as = standardization.
Objectives and assessment	Including 'group mindset' behavior into the performance management structure
Talent status and pipeline	Communicating the *group* and *local* 'group mindset' business case and success stories.
Diversity requirements for staffing	Frequent top management and HQ-staff field trips
Short-term international assignments	Middle manager inclusion into strategic decision-making processes.

Figure 7.1: Individual and organizational enablers – conceptual analysis of global mindset vs. empirical analysis of 'group mindset.' Source: Author.

When comparing the theoretical and the empirical analysis of global and 'group' mindset respectively, it stands out that appreciation of the local is not only seen as a reminiscent of domestic, home country mindset or an expression of ethnocentrism, but rather a characteristic that is important for developing a profitable business. 'Reverse suboptimization', i.e. the risk of too much standardization and harmonization due to a corporate, if not top management, monopolization of global mindset as integration and standardization. This is due to the characteristics of the wholesale industry with a local front-end and global back-end combined with a strategic choice of Solar to occupy a middle position in the market, as well as an internationalization strategy based on acquisitions in emerging markets in the nearest geographical zone of development, characterized by a higher degree of fragmentation, a lower degree of market sophistication and complexity of consumer demand than key markets thus emphasizing the strategic nature of global mindset. However, the analysis of the management practice of 'global mindset in the making' also underscores very practical and basic requirements for developing and enacting global mindset such as exposure to international collaboration, foreign language proficiency, meeting management and issue selling of the business case for harvesting cross-organizational and cross-national synergies. These are management microfoundations that address the need of organizations in the early phases on internationalization, some of which are so basic that they are left out completely in traditional studies of MNCs and global mindset usually focusing on organization that have already reached a level of considerable geographical dispersion.

This study not only adds empirical flesh to the theoretical bones, but also applies a middle management perspective absent in extant literature adding a more pluralistic, albeit still managerial, perspective. This has been done from an industrial PhD insider perspective conducting (mainly) qualitative research from field immersion position. Challenges of doing insider research have been characterized as consisting of three different domains: Doing research in/with(in), for and in-between organization. It has been suggested that optimization of research quality in such a setting can concern deployment of counterstrategies for researcher bias and 'snow blindness' from going native; how to secure actual impact in the field through reflexive knowledge production, political entrepreneurship and engagement, as well as through choosing transparent data collection techniques that easily lend themselves to outsider evaluation and institutionalized involvement of different opinions to accommodate researcher bias. Also, tackling the researcher's dual allegiance position through boundary spanning, stakeholder management and boundary brokerage is deemed necessary to realize the potential for innovation and value creation of the in-between.These counterstrategies have first and foremost been implemented in the present study by a continuous cycle of internal and external member checks throughout the study.

The Solar case is interesting in itself in that there are very few studies of the technical wholesale business and indeed very few empirical studies on the managerial microfoundations of global mindset. Further, the Solar case is interesting in that it highlights a MNC in the making, not being a fully-fledged global player, but on the other hand dealing with many of the same challenges of much larger and more geographically dispersed corporations. This is medium-sized - provincial - some would perhaps say, rural Denmark, moving out into the world in a business unknown to most people. Also, the case highlights international development and reorientation challenges in a situation, where the organization is still suffering from financial crisis shell shock as well as market restructuring post-traumatic stress syndrome. But what can be learned from the Solar case for others? The Solar case is in some ways a special case in that technical wholesale is a business characterized by a highly local customer segment, and so even larger and more globally more tenured competitors, whose internationalization path has taken them to 30+ different countries and different continents, and whose turnover and staff number is ten times that of Solar's, operate in an extremely decentralized and local manner. Further, is has been argued that global mindset is not a generic concept, but rather strategically contextual terms, where the content or combination of different elements vary, both at the individual level as well as at the organizational level, depending on the business case in regards to which global mindset may work as a competence and capability.

Also, the positioning of global mindset as a meta-competence hinges on the clearly local case value proposition that global mindset is a competence that facilitates of flavors the use of all the competences and capabilities directly involved in performing vis-a-vis business goals. At the same time, a number of learnings and point of reflections can be harvested in the Solar case. The Solar case challenges our understanding of globality and hence what global management/leadership/governance is. The Solar case emphasizes the ability to handle strategic complexity over the intercultural management competence-dimension of global mindset, in that few people have direct leadership responsibility for employees with another cultural background than the managers' own, or are expatriated/sent on short-term assignments. The Solar case draws attention to a different interpretation of globality than the predominant one. As emphasized in the 'Introduction', global does not only mean highly international or multicultural, but also holistic, all-inclusive or total (yet not totalitarian). Solar is not your textbook example of a global company or a setting, where one would search for 'global leadership' and global mindset. This is also reflected in the fact that Solarians do not necessarily consider themselves a global company and only international in the sense that their operations are geographically dispersed. In effect, the Solar case underscores that global mindset not primarily multinational high degree of geographic dispersion and border-crossing also be holistic, boundary-crossing and cross-interactional.

Strategic global mindset has been portrayed as a meta-competence and capability with regards to international strategy execution in general and for the case study company in particular. It should be emphasized that this approach differs markedly from a view of global mindset in an organizational culture perspective. 'But isn't global mindset an organizational cultural value?" has been one of the most frequently encountered question marks or criticisms of a competence/capability-view of global mindset, when engaging with external (practitioner) communities. And certainly global mindset could be construed of as an organizational cultural value. However, I believe that a competence-capability view of global mindset has a number of advantages. First of all, both competences and capabilities are by their very nature defined by their utility and usefulness in terms of one or more objectives, be it the successful completion of particular job tasks or business strategy. Competences and capabilities are purposeful in that they are tied to the creation of goods that a third party, for instance an employer or a customer, is willing to pay for. Theoretical conceptualizations of organizational culture has no such utility and market perspective, although organizational culture may be loosely coupled to problem-solving utility as a "*pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaption and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems*." (Schein, 1985, p. 22). However, in a rapidly changing competitive landscape, lingering on past successes may be a complacency trap as success in the past may not render success in the present market situation. Capabilities are more oriented towards the present or future than organizational culture emphasizing the past.

This is not to diminish the importance of path dependency or organizational imprinting by former leaders, the significance of natural endowments at early stages of firm development, or to do away with organizational culture as an important part of a corporate landscape. Cultures and cognitive patterns are in part a consequence of the early history and past of the organization or human; they are in other words path dependent and so the imprinting hypothesis of institutional theory for instance holds that the industry- and competitor situation at the time of the foundation, continues to influence the company for many years to come, just as early childhood experiences influence human mindsets into adulthood. It is more an accentuation of the fact that building and changing cultures and minds takes a long time – time which many companies do not have on their hands or which their development does not support. The main advantage of applying a competence-capability view, then, may be one of timing and framing with regards to the consequences for the perceptions guiding the task of practical execution. Instead of engaging in strategic change, being fixed on changing basic assumptions of a culture or building a particular cognitive structure in the minds of individuals, the point of engagement is on impacting the artefacts and behaviors; i.e. the practices, structures and processes of everyday business. If indeed, these behaviors are successful with regards to solving relevant problems, in time they may become integrated into basic assumptions, much in

the same way as cognitive mindset theory prescribes behavioral treatment as a way of changing the mindset by changing the behavior, not changing the mindset first and then wait for a trickle-down effect converting thoughts and feelings into behavior.

The Solar case also draws attention to the fact that the middle management perspective is different from a top management and corporate perspective, and that sub-optimization comes in many forms. As such, the Solar case underscores a somewhat undervalued dimension of global mindset: The danger of 'reverse sub-optimization' and corporate, if not top management, monopolization of 'global' as always meaning global integration and standardization. The Solar case and 'group mindset'- operationalization of global mindset - also highlights another somewhat overlooked element of global mindset: The appreciation for the local and locals, including non-home country localities (cf. Pucik, 2006; Ghemawat, 2011), and the potential drawbacks of too much global mindset (Walker & Javidan, 2013). The Solar case thus emphasizes an aspect of global mindset, which is not directly neglected, but certainly under-prioritized in extant literature – particularly if one looks as the operationalizations of global mindset (e.g. appendix of Levy et al., 2007; Walker & Javidan, 2013). These generally focuses not only on the individual level of global mindset, not as a collective endeavor, but also at the presence (or absence) ability to handle multitude of contexts by way of possessing a cosmopolitan outlook and ability to handle a high degree of cognitive complexity in general – this does not focus specifically on the ability to handle global AND local, engaging more in a both-and understanding echoing paradox management thinking than in intercultural competence building. The Solar experience cannot, however, be said to be consistent with Perlmutter's different phases of internationalization (Perlmutter, 1969; Perlmutter & Heenan, 2000) in that the Solar case shed light on the fact that it is not either ethnocentric, polycentric or geocentric, but rather all of those approached employed simultaneously. For Solar, 'group mindset' thinking is tied to a particular business strategy, tied to concrete circumstances on the European technical wholesale industry. It is not just a phase they are going through on their way to a more geocentric mindset – a fact which is further emphasized by the fact that larger and vastly more geographically spread competitors operate with a highly decentralized mode of operation. In Solar, profitably conquering the middle and growing by acquisition is assisted by 'group mindset' development and enactment.

So to what extent is 'group mindset'-analysis generalizable to other contexts? And what contribution can be made with regards to developing our conceptual and academic understanding of global mindset in order to enhance and supplement the existing pool of knowledge? The answer to these questions hinges upon the degree to which Solarian 'group mindset' can be considered a local adjustment of global mindset; i.e. a contextualized version of the concept? Of if rather, the local Solarian interpretation of global mindset as 'group mindset' has moved far beyond our present understanding of global mindset and should be considered an altogether different concept inductively arisen from practice? Global mindset has been construed of as a

meta-competence in that it is an enabler or support competence, which is not connection to any particular part of the value chain or the completion of any particular task or function. As an enabler, it is useful in combination with a variety of tasks as a facilitating competence for enacting other competences, necessary for business performance echoing the thinking behind the idea of dynamic capabilities. The question then is if global mindset is a hybrid norm, which is generally applicable as 'best practice' (universalist interpretation) or contingent upon local specificities and situations (contextualist interpretation). This study falls short of answering this question in general, but based on the Solar 'group mindset' experiences suggest that global mindset is, indeed, contextual and connected to local business strategy, but further studies of larger populations may uncover that the Solar way is one archetype among a taxonomy of various types of fit.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Implications for Research, Practice and Policy

Deliberate capability development such as is foreseen in development of global mindset as an individual meta-competence and organizational capability can be seen as a process consisting of several phases: a) capturing and formulating challenges to be countered by the capability, b) activating organizational knowledge to search for solutions, i.e. the content and processes underpinning the capability, c) implementing solutions by leading change, and finally d) value realization: operating the capability to deliver value to the organization.

This study predominantly contributes to the exploration of the first two phases of problem framing and organizational discovery respectively with the aim of adding empirical and microfoundational flesh to the theoretical argument that global mindset is a managerial meta-competence and an organizational capability, that provide a basis for case study organizational decision-making on how to engage in the two last phases of capability development of execution and operation of global mindset as a meta-competence and capability. The concrete business strategy of the case study organization, which global mindset operationalized as 'group mindset' is believed to support by local upper level management is already under execution, however. And so, this study also extends into activities that could be considered early stages of implementation, a process which the author also has spurred on by observing and engaging in management practice, by asking questions and drawing attention to the 'group mindset' concept in different fora. As no formal 'group mindset' strategy project exists or has been under implementation in the case organization during the completion of this study, it is too early to conclude anything in regards with this phase or the operation of the capability and subsequent organizational value creation (cf. 'Introduction'). A capability is, however, only a capability, which may enhance performance, if it is also enacted, operated – in others words lived out in practice, and so a research project following the decisions regarding what to implement and how in the case study is necessary in order to be able to shed light on the process and outcome of the implementation and operation of global mindset as a capability. It is also important to emphasize that the rationale for global mindset as a capability and meta-competence hinges upon a contextualization of the theoretical, generic concept of global mindset to a concrete strategic business situation. Global mindset, then, is a meta-competence only to the extent that this is a firm-specific meta-competence, not directly transferable to other strategic contexts. Further, if competitors in an industry all work with the same concept of global mindset, how can global mindset be considered a resource, which is valuable, rare and non-inimitable/non-substitutionable, preconditions for creating competitive advantage vis-à-vis competitors (even if the exploitation and management practice of global mindset may, of course, render different outcomes in practice)?

Deliberate capability development is a risky business of aiming for a moving target in that a business may engage in developing a capability in alignment vis-a-vis a particular version of the future, which may or may not materialize. For instance, in the case study organization there is a belief that the current business strategy can be facilitated by development of 'group mindset' – a belief supported by extant literature on global mindset. It remains to be seen, however, if indeed such a connection exists in practice and - even if it does - the nature and content of the business strategy may not render the hoped for outcomes in the market place, because the strategy was inadequate in the first place or because of unforeseen market changes, such as a fundamental reorganization of the competitive landscape, experienced by Solar in 2008, on-set of financial crisis or geopolitical turmoil in Eastern Europe, where further internationalization would be likely to take place (staying on the European continent west of the Ural Mountains and the Bosphorus Strait; e.g. Baltic states, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary). Further, even if developing global mindset meta-competence and capability is indeed beneficial for achievement of sought-after business outcomes, the adjustment costs of development and implementation of the capability may outweigh the benefits, thus adding up to a negative effect in total. Knowledge of the microfoundations of global mindset may facilitate an informed calculation of the business case (benefits, costs/opportunity costs, threats and opportunities) of global mindset in a concrete strategic context thus making a substantiated decision on how to proceed and, not least, how to keep track of progress or set-backs. Also, a capability may facilitate business performance, but may not constitute a competitive advantage, as it is the ability to perform a capability relative to competitors that is essential, not the operation of a capability in itself. In the case study organization, development of global mindset is a strategic inroad for making the most from a middle-size position in the European technical wholesale market by capitalizing on knowledge sharing and cross-functional collaboration, to create a blue ocean between larger and smaller competitors not leveraging these potential advantages and pursuing a decentralized strategy with focus on economies of scale or a hyper-local strategy. As such, a global mindset strategy is a niche to which there currently are no known contenders and so the case study organization may occupy a privileged position if, indeed, the strategy is successful. That may, of course, change, and so the durability of any capability may be short-lived. This may be the case, not only due to unforeseen macroeconomic shifts or changes in competitor behavior, but because the very idea of creating sustainable competitive advantage may in itself be dubious and has been called into question by among others McGrath (2013). McGrath advances 'transient advantage' as a more realistic view on competitive advantage and an alternative objective of strategy-making in a corporate landscape of post-financial crisis 'new normal' and increased competitive pressures in a globalized economy.

Deliberate capability development is a challenging endeavor, but on the other hand there seems to be few alternatives. First, if academia is to further develop the ideas of global mindset as a strategic capability, empirical studies into the microfoundations have been called for in order to inform future studies, which may

conclude more decisively on the attractiveness and function of global mindset as a capability. Next, if indeed *"an important objective of scholarly research is to inform management and organizational practice*" as claimed by Bartunek and Egri (Bartunek & Egri, 2012, p. 245) researchers are called to support corporations that need to deal with the future in the present, and do not have the luxury of relying on ex-post considerations made in the intolerably clear light of hindsight. Paraphrasing Danish multi artist and satiric Storm P. *"it is difficult to predict; particularly the future*", but companies are charged with the task of doing just that. Engaging in co-creational research projects may be avenue for conquering the future eyes wide open on the go – or as the case study company CEO expresses it: "*In Solar, we are – or at least I am – uncomfortable with acting on gut feeling or intuition alone. With this research project we were able to practically explore from a firm theoretical grounding if 'group mindset' was at all possible in our business – conduct a sort of sanity check. And also more generally explore, how can we assure that Danish corporations are successful in international business operated from a Danish point of departure in the future?"* (Flemming Tomdrup). Solar, as many other companies, navigates in a world of many unknown factors characterized by low visibility of what lies ahead - last year is a long time ago in many businesses, at the same time next year may also seem an eternity away. Under such circumstances, it may be preferable to make 'fast mistakes' than 'slow rights' on the way to finding final solutions for problems that may be irrelevant or no longer exist by the time a conclusion has been agreed upon. Co-creation of research allows academic and practitioner research participants to create learning agility, impact and engagement in the short run while at the same time enacting the future and creating basis for further academic knowledge creation in the longer run.

The transient nature of competitive advantages and their supporting capabilities discussed above, however, also pertain to the potential benefits and positive impact of co-creating research as an avenue for research-based, just-in-time corporate decision-making. Co-creation may serve as a vehicle for mutually uncovering blind spots, creating awareness and engagement and decreasing development time. These benefits can, however, only be harvested if the participants are genuinely interested in discovery and exploration, i.e. do not ask questions for which they already feel they have the answers or expertise. The value of capabilities as well as of academic knowledge hinges upon the openness to innovation and absorptive capacity of research field participants, and so the project's implementation success is contingent upon leverage and continued commitment of internal ambassadors and communities of practice when the researcher has left.

8.1 Implications for Research

The results of this study should be considered in the light of its limitations, which also help to open the door to future studies in this area. Against the backdrop of the research gaps presented in the introduction and the

contributions of this study highlighted in the conclusion above, future research should take care to provide a better understanding the following issues:

First, exploration of the nature, dynamics and value of non-managerial employee global mindset, particularly non-international positions seems timely, as this is increasingly important with regards to successful socialization of inpatriates/incoming expatriates, virtual team work and participation in cross-boundary project. Further, to the degree that modern employees are increasingly expected to engage in self-management, the importance of employee level global mindset as self-leadership global mindset competence, increases. In the same vein, if leadership is a social endeavor and an outcome of follower and leader behavior, it follows that there is no global mindset leadership without global mindset followership, thus again stressing the importance of employee global mindset. Also, leadership is increasingly seen as carried out to be a collective, a team of leaders, but little is known on the way in which global mindset impact collaborative patterns in such a setting. All of these areas are in need of further exploration.

Secondly, the relevance of global mindset in boards calls for attention. While there is ample literature on global mindset in top management and the importance and dynamics of top management backgrounds and mindset as a facilitator for international development and success, we know very little about the boards that hire top managers and judge their job successes and failures afterwards. We need more knowledge on the role of global mindsets in boards.

Thirdly, global mindset in a public and NGO setting is underdeveloped although conditions apparently favoring global mindset seem just as present in the public and non-profit sector as in the business/for-profit sector. For instance, school teachers, doctors and police officers operating in highly diverse neighborhoods may benefit from developing a global mindset, even if their jobs are very local in a geographical sense. Another example of the importance of global mindset in public organization could be the nexus of domestic vs. international politics: For instance, how is international collaboration facilitated in a Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs led project on dialog and democratic economic development in post-Arabic Spring North African countries? Or what about international forces keeping up peace in Afghanistan, politicians trying to mediate the Syrian conflict or tackle the infamous Mohammed cartoon crisis? So both global political leaders as well as pre-school teachers operate in environments that place a premium on global mindset development and enactment, yet we know very little of this area of organizational practice - a point which was also emphasized as a key learning from the Thunderbird 2012 Developing Leaders for Global Roles Summit.

Next, we need more knowledge on the decay and loss of global mindset. Research suggests (Pucik, 2006) that global mindset as most other competences can be gained, but also lost. And so, a study of global managers reverting to performing highly local, domestic roles shows that this group astonishingly rapidly develops domestic mindsets. This is not surprising as most competences need to be maintained and further

developed in order to stay intact, but it is an area of research, which is underdeveloped and could yield interesting insights into the preservation of global mindset competence, relevant for leadership development activities, talent management and recruitment decisions.

Another unexplored area of global mindset management practice is the relationship between global mindset, cultural relativism and the rise of corporate responsibility and global code of conduct. The relativism and assessment of performance using criteria that are independent of a single context as prescribed by global mindset theory seems to be somewhat at odds with the increasing focus on one-size fits all ethical codes of conduct. Applying a 'both-and' style of engagement may leave the individual global manager with the paradox of tackling value schizophrenia being open to accusations of double standards, opportunism and incoherence – exactly the quagmire that ethical codes of conducts are typically formulated to protect MNCs from. Empirical studies exploring the handling of this situation, perhaps from a paradox management in-road, would uncover this issue in more detail than is currently available in extant literature.

A final suggestion for future research based on the limitations of this study to be discussed, is the potential of activating neuroscience in global mindset research. Neuroscience in organizational and international business studies is still in its infancy, not least as a consequence of the highly obtrusive and expensive nature of data collection. However, studies in strategic management and cognitive decision-making processes have uncovered that it is possible to neurologically detect the biological source of different styles of decision-making, and so ability to engage in 'code-switching', i.e. application of different types of rationale can actually be detected in brain scans. Perhaps some of the global mindset decision-making traits, such as paradoxical both-and thinking, can also be detected leading us towards a supplementary biological understanding to the predominantly psychological profiling of individuals with regards for their cognitive and emotional capacity for developing and enacting global mindset?

8.2 Implications for Practice

The study of strategic global mindset not only has implications for future academic knowledge creation, but also for the global mindset management practice in public and private corporations as well as NGOs. First and foremost, the study of global mindset as a strategic, contextual individual meta-competence and organizational capability challenges the current global leadership development practice of many multinational corporations (and consulting company wisdom) in this area. If global mindset is also appreciation for the local, then what is the consequence for the content of international leadership development activities? Perhaps knowledge about the benefits of localization, the dangers of 'reverse sub-optimization' and paradox leadership is more relevant than the traditional approach of the need for cosmopolitanism and cross-cultural leadership along the lines of Hofstede or Trompenaars? Further, if global

mindset comes with the job role, not the title or the geographical location, what does this entail for the selection of participants to international development activities and talent management programs? At the same time, as global mindset becomes a skill that a larger group of employees can benefit from possessing, a talent shortage may arise. There are already reports of global leadership competence shortage, and global mindset perhaps is not for everybody. Not every employee has the skill and/or motivation to develop or actively engage their global mindset-competences. This group may find that a functional career may come to a halt if a global leadership role is inevitable with their current employer, and so HR is posed with the challenge of leading this group on to other career paths or to a managerial career with a different employer with better opportunities to pursue a more local leadership role. At the other end of the spectrum, you find globetrotters that might be easily bored with local operations and 'globaloney' top managers holding exaggerated views of the need for globalization, based on their own international work lives that are likely not to be indicative of the general need for global skills in the organizations they lead.

The Solar case also challenges the understanding that many European small- and medium sized business leaders have that globalization has nothing to do with them. For instance, studies conducted by Danish business interest organizations show, that many business leaders dismiss the globalization discourse as something that may concern the few truly global companies in the Danish corporate landscape, but not them. Leave it to AP Moeller Maersk to deal with globality seem to be the motto. But the Solar case emphasizes that they may be well-advised to reconsider this stance: Globality does indeed concern them, and so just because your HQ are not paraded with flags from five continents does not mean that you are left untouched, or that your business has nothing to gain by developing a global mindset. In a similar vein, many entrepreneurs do not think that globalization is for them. For instance, a consultant advising entrepreneurs in setting up their business voiced the concern at a business seminar (January 2014) that getting through to entrepreneurs within the present globalization discourse is very difficult: Entrepreneurs do not see globality as their problem, because – in their view - they are not big enough to experience such problems. The Solar case points in a different direction. A similar situation can be seen in more established domestic companies that stay domestic and refrain from exploiting international opportunities. Although Denmark recently was appointed the number 1 OECD economy in innovation, domestic voices have uttered concern that Danish companies do not sufficiently pursue opportunities abroad, which have been construed of as a sort of complacency. But perhaps it is lack of imagination stemming from fear of unknown territory?

Finally, the Solar case questions the belief that when younger generations take over, the challenges of international collaboration will go away on its own as this group will be 'global and digital natives'. It is highly questionable if factors such as the feeling of sharing a global climate destiny, common frames of reference stemming from consuming the same cultural products, or 24-7 communication on Facebook with friends all over the globe, actually facilitates enactment of global mindset in a workplace setting. There is,

for instance nothing in the Solar case that suggests that younger managers are more excited about 'group mindset' or find it easier to engage internationally than older managers; rather, it comes down to the job role they perform. Actually, older employees and managers often have success in cultural encounters due to the fact that they are past their formative years and have developed self-awareness, which facilitates 'grounded cosmopolitanism' and being culturally 'easy to read'. There is a vast different from globalization romance disconnected from actual international experience and lived, paradoxical practice with an overall positive outcome.

8.3 Implications for Policy

Next, this study also have implications for public policy making. First, if global mindset is a general diversity meta-competence, home and away, how can we develop global mindset in nations? Our knowledge of global mindset practice is interesting in terms of the general development of intercultural competence in the Danish population. Although just representing one, psychological and individual facet of global mindset as interpreted in this study, cultural competence is one of ten competences measured in "Det nationale kompetenceregnskab", the Danish competency survey, measuring ten key competences deemed particularly important for the survival and success of Danish competitiveness in a globalized economy. In the most recent survey, the intercultural competence of the Danes was measured as the degree of knowledge about other countries from education, media, travels and intercultural interaction in the workplace and outside of work. Only 5% of Danes were placed in the category "high intercultural competence". This figure seems rather low if Denmark's international success is connected to this trait as argued in the national competence survey.

The Solar case shows that there may be a need for intercultural competence and global mindset – even in organizations that we do not usually think of as global. This begs the question of how we can teach global mindset to university students among others. Today, it is more or less assumed that students are eloquent in English, which is not always the case in reality, and many business school courses apply a universalistic, one-size-fits-all approach to doing business internationally or at all. Are universities and business schools ready to embrace and implement the suggestions as to how global mindset can be developed locally in class, such as have been outlined in for instance a recent issue of the Academy of Management Learning and Education (Volume 12, Issue 3, 2013) or by Smith (2012)? Further, it is currently, debated in connection with a reform of the Danish school system, to what extent globalization and global outlook should be an overall performance goal for all Danish schools, or merely a topic among many others to be touched upon in all classes, but not a goal with explicit performance goals. Judging from the Solar case, not only handling globality, but handling the global-local nexus seems to be highly relevant for future employees and employers. Thus, there is a need for not only cosmopolitans with language competences and knowledge of

the planet Earth community they are part of, but also with an appreciation for and knowledge of their local past and present enabling them to become 'grounded cosmopolitans.'

Finally, this study addresses a different area of implications of global mindset for policy, namely the increasing political demand vis-à-vis universities to deliver societal value and impact of their research activities and to demonstrate a higher degree of engagement with practice. The industrial PhD program has been highlighted as one example of co-creation of research with practitioners. The industrial PhD is born to span the academia-practitioner divide - a research set-up with the ambition of co-creating mutual value in practice and academia, placing the researcher at the intersection where "publish or perish" meets with the discourse of "research to invoice" and practical profit concerns. The industrial PhD set-up is turn-key privileged access and practitioner participation and as such is a telling tale of challenges to be encountered in non-Ph.D. research projects engaging other (tenured) researchers in practice-anchored co-creation research projects, carried out in close cooperation with practitioners. Although the working conditions in the host organization are particular to (qualitative) social science industrial PhDs in general and the Solar industrial PhD project in particular, they may be inspirational and act as points of reflection in connection with other collaborative, field-work intensive forms of research, carried out by researchers and practitioners in concert with the ambition of producing actionable knowledge about management and leadership. Reconsidering the competence requirements and performance criteria seems beneficial in connection with recruitment, talent management and performance management of both researchers, academic advisors, academic assessors, participating practitioners and bodies funding collaborative, double hurdle research.

It seems, then, that there is a need for academic global mindset as a way of bridging and evaluating different types of research without applying the performance criteria of one single context, mirroring that a global mindset is the *"capacity to develop and interpret criteria for personal and business performance that are independent of the assumptions of a single context; and to implement those criteria appropriately in different contexts"* (Lane, Maznevski, DiStefano & Dietz, 2009, p. 14). If actionable research aimed at co-creating value in both academia and practice is to be facilitated further in the future, creation and expansion of institutional frameworks for supporting research of this nature in the academic environment or other bodies, funding research seems highly timely. After all, bridging the research-practitioner gap is a challenge which has continued to puzzle researchers for decades, and bridging the gap all alone in a one-(wo)man army is (perhaps) possible, but up-hill. This is particularly the case if the researcher has not been recruited with a view to engaged scholarship competences, potentially being set up to fail. A supportive framework is likely to increase the likelihood of success, securing that mutual value co-creation of actionable research is not the exception that proves the rule against all odds, but rather the likely outcome of recruitment decisions and institutionalized creative co-creation between researcher, practitioner host organization and academia. Leaving it to the individual researcher to tackle potentially conflicting performance criteria and conquer the

in-between may be tantamount to ‘hoping for A’ in the guise of “*finding new ways to seek out and identify research questions’* (Bartunek & Egri, 2012, p. 245) and consideration for *‘true impact’* (Bell, 2011, p. 702*)* while rewarding B (Kerr, 1995) represented by impact citations and journal publications.

Chapter 9: Epilogue

My bags are packed with Solar laptop and corporate credit card to be handed in at technical services along with my presentation for the final internal Solar member dealing with the outcome of the analysis. The member check session takes place in Kolding, Southwestern Denmark, not too far north of the Danish-German border and Hamburg, venue of the Solar strategy kick-off in March 2011 where the 'group mindset' research project took off. As I pass the Great Belt tunnel on my way from Copenhagen to Jutland, I am already feeling a bit sad and nostalgic for having to leave the Solarians for now, although I find comfort in the fact that I shall see many of them at the defence of the dissertation. As I arrive at Solar corporate HQ in Kolding I am thinking that it is ironic as well as very timely that my presentation of the findings of the analysis will be a fine introduction for the new CEO and corporate HR director, taking over this spring. I have been used to being the newcomer, the one that asks stupid and hopefully also at times not so stupid questions, but as we start the presentation it really occurs to me how much I have learned about the technical wholesale business in general and Solar in particular. I smilingly listen to myself answering questions with regards to the competitor situation or with reference to experiences I have had while doing participant observation with the local German group leadership program. And I find that while I know nothing that no individual in Solar knows, I know more about more things than almost any of the present Solarians. At that moment I feel very Solarian while at the same time recognizing the value of being an outsider building knowledge from the inside.

In my presentation, we discussed a number of reflection points of which the following are highlights:

- 'Group mindset' mileage check: Time to communicate a 'group interpretation' of 'group mindset' on a larger scale?
- Company programs: Should 'group mindset' be a strategic initiative in itself? Or part of other initiatives – and if so, how? If 'group mindset' is an organizational capability, 'group mindset' development and enactment should ideally be part of ALL company programs…?
- Measurement and performance: Inclusion of 'group mindset' competences and behaviors into Solar Star and Navigator-survey.
- Sub-optimization is a two-way street: Too much localization as well as too much standardization may be sub-optimization from a group perspective.
- Bridge different perspectives and market/business pressures in front-end and back-end.

- The Solarian ‘group mindset’ definition/consolidation is characterized by ‘both-and’-thinking, not ‘either-or’ and so caters to simultaneous localization AND standardization, simplification AND amplification.
- Corporate communication in non-corporate languages: Communicate as a group in local language as supplement to communication in English.
- The tactical-operational management gap.
- Next strategy period: If strategy is changed or calibrated, the feasibility and business case of ‘group mindset’ changes too.

Along with the reflection points above, the last portion of data analysis, preliminary findings and outcome of the analysis were debated. My findings were received and debated in the characteristic Solarian spirit of engagement with challenging questions, friendly provocation, critical comments and further elaborations of the points made, all of which have benefitted the final version of the dissertation, which I am so curious to learn how they will receive when the times come. I also wonder what will come of my findings in Solar: Will we co-create the holy grail of mutual value with lasting business impact? In addition to business environment changes, the ‘group mindset’ project’s implementation success is contingent upon leverage and continued commitment of internal ambassadors and communities of practice when the researcher has left. Staffing changes may endanger value creation as may change of business strategy: The current findings rest on the assumption that the development of ‘group mindset’ in the project's host company is a strategic priority vis-a-vis achievement of business goals. Should a redirecting of business strategy become necessary, the feasibility of the PhD project as well as of ‘group mindset’ comes into question. It remains to be seen, then, if ‘group mindset’ is an ad hoc solution to the rise of a new challenge, a temporary capability engaging in a challenge that persists over a shorter period of time, or if the challenges that originally gave rise to the desire to work with ‘group mindset’ as a strategy execution driver persist over time and the ‘group mindset’ is condensed into a firmer, more stable capability.

Currently, development of ‘group mindset’ is a corporate HR performance objective, but new strategic programs are to be defined as part of the strategy formulation process of 2015 onwards. This process will be headed by the newly appointed case study company CEO as of May 1st 2014 as well as a new Corporate HR director appointed as of April 1, 2014, i.e. approximately at the same time as research project completion. Inclusion of the results of the PhD- project by Solar (top) management in the preparation process leading up the formulation of business strategy and accompanying strategic programs for the next strategy period 2015-20, is a precondition if the host company is to capitalize fully on the PhD -project investment. Time will tell;

until then I feel confident that we have all learned more than we could have imagined from the project. Combining research and business is risky business, but nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Figure 9.1: Final internal member check - 'group mindset' research SmartFun☺ Photo: Author, Solar project debriefing, Solar HQ, Kolding, Denmark, April 9, 2014.

From the left: Company Programme Manager (chief strategy officer) Mette Bredkjær, CEO Flemming H. Tomdrup, Corporate HR director Heidrun Marstein, incoming Corporate HR Director Jakob Thyregod, Corporate Strategic HR Manager Pernille Skovmose and industrial PhD fellow Rikke Kristine Nielsen.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTEREST

The author declares no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this dissertation.

The Industrial PhD Program is authorized by the Danish Act on Technology and Innovation, but the Executive order on PhD education guiding conventional Danish Ph.D. education is also part of the legislative framework. The Industrial PhD fellow is employed by the private company, in this case Solar A/S, which applies for a subsidy from the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation. The fellow is employed by this company (three year fixed-term contract) and paid a salary during the Industrial PhD education dividing her work between the university and the company. The author is not a shareholder in Solar, although part of the general bonus scheme in which all Solar employees may receive a yearly bonus contingent upon the overall performance of the Solar Group.

To accommodate the author's obligation to publish and disseminate knowledge, the industrial PhD host company accepts the position of the researcher when signing the research application and would be in violation of the legal framework if denying the researcher access to publishing results. The industrial PhD-contract reads: '*Due to the free access to corporate data in connection with the project, the author has been reported as an insider to the Danish stock exchange"* where Solar is listed, and has signed "Internal Rules concerning Solar A/S laid down in Stock Exchange legislation"[14]. The employment contract between Solar and the author further emphasizes: "*It has been agreed that the employee is allowed to pass on information in connection with her knowledge dissemination and publication obligation under the condition that the requirements of the 'Internal Rules concerning Solar A/S laid down in Stock Exchange legislation' and the 'Solar Ethical Code of Conduct' are observed.*" (Employment contract, March 30, 2011). In effect, the author cannot reveal information that might affect stock prices without notifying the Danish stock exchange in advance, but while upholding this information obligation has unhindered access to publish information.

The dissertation has been written in observance of the 'Copenhagen Business School's rules and regulations on academic conduct, including penalties' which apply to all students enrolled at Copenhagen Business School, including PhD students. Following CBS' signature to 'The Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities' in April 2008, CBS has implemented an open access policy in order to work for free and open access to the university's research[15]. To fulfill this commitment, CBS is adopting an open access policy that provides open access to full-text versions of all scholarly papers and articles written by its faculty in a non-commercial online repository (OpenArchive@CBS) where this dissertation is also available.

[14] Cf. the Danish Securities Trading Act as well as rules laid down by the NASDAQ OMX Copenhagen A/S in "Rules for issuers of shares"; (accessed May 16th, 2012).
[15] CBS Intranet, CBS Share: https://cbsshare.cbs.dk/vipservices/epublishing_with_cbs_library/Pages/OpenAccessPolicy.asp

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rikke Kristine Nielsen, born 1972, holds an MSc (Int.), Master of Science in Business Administration and Modern Languages, from Copenhagen Business School, 2000.

Rikke has 10 years of experience as a leadership development and blended learning consultant working with research communication in the small e-entrepreneur LeadingCapacity A/S – a provider of research-based blended learning on human resource management and leadership/management. Prior to embarking on the industrial PhD study, Rikke authored, co-authored and ghostwrote more than 100 case studies, management toolkits, articles and text book materials. She worked closely with a group of 300 external (academic) authors in her writings that were directed at a practitioner audience disseminated through www.leadingcapacity.dk. Moreover, Rikke has several years of managerial experience and has also served as a member of the board.

Rikke has been a business columnist for the past 10 years and has broad experience as a speaker and workshop facilitator within a number of people leadership and management topics. Since 2007, while also working in her former position with LeadingCapacity A/S, Rikke has been employed as a research assistant and subsequently part-time associate professor with the Department of Organization, Copenhagen Business School. Here, she teaches a range of BA and MSc courses on international human resource management and global leadership as well as advising on theses in these fields.

Practical experience of cooperating across borders and boundaries has been part and parcel of both Rikke's private and professional life. Since the beginning of her work life, she has spent five years outside her native country of Denmark and has lived, worked and studied in the EMEA-region (Germany, Turkey, Spain, Morocco and Tunisia). As a consequence of her intercultural educational background and international work experience, Rikke speaks five different languages and leads a personal life characterized by a high degree of diversity.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Introduction to Global Leadership Academy

The Global Leadership Academy was established in 2010 and run through to 2015 as part of the Global Leadership Competences for the Future project. The Global Leadership Academy (GLA) is a joint research and development collaboration between the Danish Confederation of Industry, Copenhagen Business School, and internationally operating Danish companies and organizations with the goal to identify global leadership competences for the future. GLA is partly funded by The Danish Industry Foundation. The aim of the collaboration is to jointly explore, identify, and develop critical global leadership competences. The vision is to develop organizations and managers who can act successfully and effectively in the global value chain.

The Global Leadership Academy consists of Danish multinational companies, Copenhagen Business School, public organizations, industrial PhD fellows, international collaboration partners, and DI - Confederation of Danish Industry. The GLA member organizations - both private and public - are at the core of the research and development collaboration. The member companies play an active role in ensuring that business-relevant research and development activities are carried out. Their involvement spans from hosting an Industrial PhD project to taking part in the development and knowledge dissemination activities.

Project background and objectives

The project was launched in 2010 with the formation of Global Leadership Academy, owing to an analysis carried out among Danish Confederation of Industry members and a need to develop more and stronger competences related to doing business on the global arena. Specific focus was placed on the theme of global leadership. The Global Leadership Competences for the Future project and the Global Leadership Academy provide opportunities for practitioners and academics to meet, work together, and address challenges associated with global leadership, thereby creating valuable progress for each other. Annette Plesner Steenstrup, Global Leadership Academy project manager, Danish Confederation of Industry, explains: '*An integral part of the project is to undertake research that focuses on identifying and creating new knowledge in relation to leadership in a global context. The research-based knowledge is discussed by practitioners from Danish companies and then concepts of education are developed, where the practice-validated research is translated to usable skills development programs to the benefit of Danish companies*.'

'*The project Global Leadership Competences for the Future combines various professional competences, and within this diversity emerges new and valuable insights for all'*, explains Bente Toftkær, Leadership Development Advisor, Danish Confederation of Industry. She further elaborates on the inclusion of a variety of competences including academic insights: '*An important part of the project is to set up meetings where*

leaders of Danish companies meet with leaders from others companies as well as researchers from Danish universities. The goal of these meetings is to share experiences. Meetings where experienced managers, CEOs, Human Resource Managers, and researchers discuss challenges and where this interdisciplinary approach supports the participants in gaining a nuanced view on global challenges and ways to act.'

Practitioner benefit

The primary beneficiaries of the created knowledge are DI and GLA member organizations challenged with global leadership. Peter K. Fröhlich, Senior Department Manager, Business Support & Key Account Management in GLA member corporation DEIF A/S, is an example of a DI member organization with a need to develop stronger competencies in global business. He explains the value of participating in the Global Leadership Academy as follows: *'At DEIF A/S, we highly appreciate the networking opportunities in the Global Leadership Academy between the member corporations and the affiliated researchers. The most prominent benefit of participating in the Global Leadership Academy is the opportunity to exchange challenges and views with likeminded peers and companies. Even if the size of the biggest Global Leadership Academy member corporations is ten times bigger than DEIF, we all share a common curiosity and need to learn more about global leadership.'*

Co-creation of valuable knowledge for, with and between member corporations is central to the academy's activities. Particularly the opportunity to get both practical advice from peers as well as theoretical input from CBS researcher and other researchers (national and international) invited into the forum is valued by GLA members. Anni Vind Frandsen, Director, Training & Development/People & Development, DONG Energy, further explains: "*DONG Energy has a long tradition of working with universities, scientists and researchers within the technical areas, so it is a natural thing for us also to seek inspiration and new knowledge regarding global leadership in cooperation with CBS. I find it very inspiring to be a member of the network in Global Leadership Academy where I get challenged and inspired by people coming from very different perspectives: leaders, HR-professionals, professors and consultants. This is a forum where you can share experiences, get new knowledge and broaden your perspectives*."

In addition to knowledge creation and sharing as an end in itself, knowledge gained has given rise to the development of a number of concepts and activities. At this stage approximately 1 year from project completion, this includes, among other activities, a newsletter on global leadership, a global leadership development program, 'guided tour' of the Academy of Management Annual meetings, and a seminar series on remote working and distance leadership.

Research-practitioner value co-creation

Further, some GLA member corporations have chosen to engage with an industrial Ph.D. fellow exploring ongoing global leadership challenges in a particular member corporation as part of their affiliation with the Global Leadership Academy. One such example is academy member Solar A/S. Solar's CEO Flemming Tomdrup, who has been closely involved in Solar's decision to employ an industrial PhD, elaborates on their decision to take on an industrial Ph.D.: "*At Solar, we are always on the lookout for ways to optimize. We operate in 8 countries and are highly dependent on a workforce, which understands what Solar is about and what we are working towards. Solar is on a journey, moving from being a Danish company with a Danish mindset into being an international company with an international mindset. We operate in cross-border networks and work actively to open the borders internally in Solar. Therefore, our cooperation with Rikke [industrial PhD, ed.] gives us valuable knowledge of the possibilities that come with developing a global mindset: what does global mindset mean in Solar? And how can we use this knowledge to improve the efficiency, interaction and knowledge sharing in our daily work?"*

Industrial PhD host company supervisor, Strategic HR Manager Claus Sejr, sees the Solar industrial PhD project as an investment in evidence-based decisions and elaborates: "*In Solar, we have chosen to invest in a highly qualified industrial PhD in order to be able to prioritize the time, resources and competences necessary to systematically and thoroughly explore an organizational challenge which both currently as well as in the future will be strategically important for us to generate qualified knowledge about. The industrial PhD project gives us a unique insight into a complex problématique that enables us to make more evidence-based and sustainable decisions about running our business in an effective and value-creating manner. Through our investment in an industrial PhD, we expect to gain precisely this insight; at the same time we seek to be challenged in our way of making and executing decisions by a person with an outlook and a background that differ from an exclusively business-focused point of view*."

Mutual benefit

The researcher-practitioner knowledge sharing and creation is not only beneficial for the involved practitioners challenged with global leadership, however. Rikke Kristine Nielsen, industrial PhD fellow, Dept. of Management, Politics & Philosophy, CBS and Solar A/S reflects on the academic value of engaging closely with practitioners in the host company as well as with other GLA member corporations: "*As industrial PhD fellow I have privileged data access in the research project host organization. This entails an unique opportunity to secure practitioner relevance through joint formulation of research questions as well as ongoing implementation of research results in existing systems, management tools etc. in the host organization to secure sustainable impact during and after project termination. In addition, through the industrial PhD host company's involvement in the Global Leadership Academy the research project also*

benefits from access to external practitioner member checks and fact probing fora when GLA member corporations get together in what could be seen as 'academia-practitioner work-in-progress seminars' to discuss project findings and implications.' In this way, second, third and even tenth opinions from corporations in similar, yet different circumstances compared to the research project host company are brought forth in the Global Leadership Academy supporting reflexive knowledge production of not only rigorous answers but interesting (research) questions.

It is important to stress that the Global Leadership Academy is not merely a channel for dissemination of knowledge created by academics on-campus. The Global Leadership Academy practitioner partners are integral to making decisions on which challenges to focus on, problems to discuss and create knowledge about. As such, GLA is a two-way street where 'implications for practice' is not an appendix ex-post, and where both practitioners and academics contribute – and benefit – on an equal footing.

GLA and beyond

In addition to various the activities taking place with Global Leadership Academy, the Academy has a broader dissemination obligation reaching out to other members and non-members of DI. This is done via various seminars, conferences and through the GLA website. The concepts and management tools developed based on the knowledge created in GLA is available for use not only by GLA members but also the wider business community. In the autumn of 2014, a 2-day workshop on global mindset capability development will be on offer as one of the concrete outcomes of the academy's activities. Key learnings from the academy's activities are to be summed up in a conference in late 2014/early 2015.

Further inquiries into the Global Leadership Academy's activities can be directed at:

- Annette Plesner Steenstrup / Global Leadership Academy Project Manager, Danish Confederation of Industry.
- Bente Toftkjær/ Leadership Development Consultant, Danish Confederation of Industry.
- Professor Flemming Poulfelt, Department of Management, Politics & Philosophy, Copenhagen Business School.
- Adjunct professor and executive-in-residence, Claus Valentiner, Department of Organization/Department of Management, Politics & Philosophy, Copenhagen Business School.

This appendix is based on a case study prepared for the Copenhagen Business School case competition on 'Visible Research' in 2013.

Appendix B: The Danish Industrial PhD program

The Industrial PhD Program is authorized by the Act on Technology and Innovation, but the Executive order on PhD education guiding conventional Danish PhD education is also part of the legislative framework. The industrial PhD is employed by the project host company while enrolled, not employed, in a university.

In some cases, the industrial PhD was already employed in the host company prior to engaging in the PhD project and plan to continue in a non-academic job position after project completion, thus enjoying what 'insider action research' expert David Coghlan describes as a 'complete membership' position. Others are recruited directly into the industrial PhD position as organizational newcomers without any automatic continuation of employment after project completion.

The only difference between industrial PhDs and traditional PhDs is that industrial PhDs have no teaching obligation. Instead, they have an equivalent knowledge dissemination obligation in the host company as well as to the wider business community and society at large. Academic research quality assessment criteria are identical to those of traditional PhDs, but practical value creation is an additional prerequisite for funding.

The Industrial PhD Program moves from the Danish Council for Technology and Innovation to the Danish National Innovation Foundation. On 1 April 2014, the Danish National Innovation Foundation is planned to start. In the autumn of 2014, the Danish government entered a broad political agreement with the Danish parliament's parties on establishing the Danish National Innovation Foundation – the foundation for strategic research, advanced technology and innovation. The foundation is a merger of the Danish Council for Strategic Research, the Danish Advanced Technology Foundation, and the Danish Council for Technology and Innovation.

Further information on the Danish Industrial PhD program is available at: http://fivu.dk/en/research-and-innovation/funding-programmes-for-research-and-innovation/find-danish-funding-programmes/postgraduates-in-the-private-sector/industrial-phd/the-industrial-phd-programme (accessed February 15, 2014).

Also see: Agency for Science Technology and Innovation (2011): *Innovation: Analysis of the Industrial Ph.D. program*. Copenhagen: Danish Agency for Science Technology and Innovation.

For an international, outside view on the Danish Industrial PhD program, please see: http://www.innovationfiles.org/what-the-u-s-can-learn-from-denmarks-industrial-phd-program/# (accessed February 15, 2014).

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