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- Master Thesis -

Norwegian Business Athletes

- A Qualitative Study on Motivational- and Achievement Factors
Among Leaders who Participate in the Birkebeiner Race -

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Table of Content

Abstract

There exists extensive research regarding motivation to exercise in various sports and physical activities, no study however, has qualitatively examined the motivation for Norwegian business leaders to participate in Birken. The primary purpose of this study was to answer the following research question:

“What motivates Norwegian business leaders to participate in Birken, and to what extent is achievement important?” Aspects from self-determination theory (SDT), and the theory about the need for achievement were used in order to answer this question. A total sample of 11 informants from various business sectors, were interviewed. Results from the semi- structured interviews revealed that Birken plays a vital role in meeting the basic psychological needs proposed by SDT. The findings show that the informants are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to take part in the race, in addition to having a high need for achievement. Observations from the findings showed that competitiveness and planning were significant among the informants, and that feedback was not an important aspect for them to participate in the race. Finally, the results from the present thesis are to a large degree inconsistent with how leaders who participate in Birken have been portrayed by the media.

1. Introduction

With the increasing trend regarding business leaders to be healthy, eat nutritious food and stay fit, it was only a matter of time before the Norwegian newspapers started paying attention to this trend and began to write articles. A phenomenon which thereby has received increasing attention in Norwegian newspapers is the cross- country skiing race “Birkebeineren”, which commonly is referred to as “Birken.” There are a lot of articles regarding Birken, especially during the winter months, with a particular focus on Norwegian business leaders who participate (e.g. Myklebost, n.d.). Examples of headlines related to the phenomenon are: “Birken is unhealthy” (Nordrum & Kjæstad, 2010) “I am going to sleep with my skis tonight” (Gorseth, 2010), “Ego- Birken without benefit to society” (Kvam, 2010), “Spend less time on Birken- and more time on the children” (Modal, 2012), and “Warnings against Birken- leadership” (Larsen, 2010). As we perceive the media to have a special interest in leaders who participate, we find it interesting to take a closer look at leaders specifically. In order to narrow the focus of our inquiry we limited our sample to include only participants who attend the skiing race. Scanning through newspaper articles, one particular question seem unanswered to us: Why do Norwegian business leaders attend Birken? This is a relevant question because being a leader in the business sector is apparently both demanding and time consuming. Yet, according to newspapers leaders choose to spend a lot of time and effort in preparing for- and attending such a race, and to many leaders Birken is seemingly a very serious event. This might also be related to the fact that some leaders have their results published in a list in Dagens Næringsliv (DN), a well-known Norwegian financial newspaper.

1.1 Theoretical framework and the research question

In order to seek the most appropriate theoretical framework, a pilot study was conducted a year prior to the actual investigation, as a pilot study would be helpful to test and refine aspects of the final study (Yin, 2011), and additionally ascertain as to what theories might be relevant. We were also interested in finding out whether leaders who attend Birken can as a group be seen as a phenomenon worth investigating. Aspects which arose from the pilot study were achievement, competitiveness, and the importance of being physically fit. Although all of these can be considered as reasons for participation, the pilot study did not fully

uncover the leaders' underlying motivation to attend Birken. When combining the findings from the pilot study and the supposedly unanswered question in the media, relating to why Norwegian business leaders attend Birken, the main focus of this present thesis is:

“What motivates Norwegian business leaders to participate in Birken, and to what extent is achievement important?”

Our aim was to qualitatively examine these questions based on in-depth interviews of prominent business leaders. In order to answer the research question regarding motivation and achievement, our theoretical framework was based on a motivational theory as well as a theory regarding the need for achievement. *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT) is an acknowledged motivational theory. In addition, it is commonly used in relation to understanding motivation in sports and physical activity (e.g., Wilson, Mack & Grattan, 2008; Li, Chi & Yeh, 2011). SDT was therefore perceived as suitable, and applied to the present thesis. In addition the theory about the *Need for Achievement* was used, because it is renowned within sports psychology as a means to understand motivation to participate in sports (Schilling & Hayashi, 2001). Furthermore, we did not attempt to study SDT in general, but rather to use it as a framework in order to understand the leaders' motivation for participation. SDT is a comprehensive theory containing several mini-theories, which together are believed to cover all aspects of human motivation. Hence, we explicitly chose specific processes from SDT and the need for achievement that we found most suited to understanding this special group of people, and their motivation for participation.

1.2 Intended contribution

The purpose of the present study was to contribute to the field of leadership and organizational psychology with a qualitative investigation of Norwegian business leaders' motivation to participate in Birken. We experience that there are a lot of opinions regarding leaders who attend the race. On the other hand, it has not yet, to our knowledge, been examined thoroughly. The intention was to gain answers to some of the questions which accrue after having read articles about the topic in Norwegian newspapers. For instance, do the leaders perceive any transferability between their leadership and physical activity? In addition, SDT is a motivational theory, which is assumed to cover all types of people. Hence, if there is anything

to the theory, it should be applicable to the current sample, which can be said to behave somewhat extraordinarily in the sense that they exercise almost to the same degree of athletes. Furthermore, the context of the present study is unique because it unites two different arenas, namely the Norwegian culture of cross-country skiing and the business culture.

1.3 The structure of the thesis

The structure of the present thesis can be broken down into six general parts. The first part consists of a short introduction of the history behind Birken. Who are the Birken participants? A presentation of the media's viewpoints on leaders attending the race is given. The second part is the theoretical background, which contains an overview of SDT and the theory about the need for achievement. The third part is a description of the methodology used. The research method, the ways of gathering information and the preparation of the in-depth interviews are presented. Further, the choice of the informants is described. The fourth part of this thesis is based on the authors' own research and consists of six subchapters, which are organized in a deductive way. Quotes from the informants will be frequently applied. The fifth part is a discussion based on the main findings. In the sixth and final part limitations and future research will be presented.

2. The Birkebeiner Race

Birkebeineren is a race which is inspired by a journey that two men, who were so-called "Birkebeinere", conducted carrying the king's two-year old son in order to save him from dangerous rebels in 1206. The peculiar nickname "Birkebeiner" is due to poverty. The men had to use birch bark and tie it around their feet to stay warm ("Birkebeinerne", 2013). The story has always appealed to Norwegians in the sense that these two men bravely managed to ski across the mountains from Østerdalen to Gudbrandsdalen (54km), in horrible weather, without giving up, and thus, the child was brought to safety ("Historien", n.d.). Subsequently, there are three types of races inspired by this journey. A race for runners called "Birkebeinerløpet", a skiing race called "Birkebeinerrennet" and one on bicycle called "Birkebeinerrittet." Additionally, participating in all the three races is called "Trippelen." As proof of Birken's increasing popularity, 150 contestants stood at the starting line in 1932. In 2013 there were 17 000 participants signed up for the

54km race, carrying a backpack of 3,5 kg (“Birkebeinerrennet”, n.d.). Birken is different from other similar races because it provides the participants with a sign of achievement (the “Mark”) for crossing the finishing line within a specified time, which subsequently has become quite a popular target. Having received a certain amount of “Marks”, one is rewarded with an additional silver or gold “Mark”.

2.1 Who are the Birken participants?

Rolf Rønning at the University of Lillehammer (HIL) conducted a survey aimed at finding out, “Who are the Birken contesters?” (Skaare, 2011). According to the survey, 81 % of the participants are male, 19 % are female, and a majority of the contesters are from the counties Oslo and Akershus whereas Sør- Trøndelag comes in second. Interestingly, 77% of the participants in Birken have higher education, while in comparison; the total amount of higher education among the Norwegian population is 27%. Most of the participants work full time, but not necessarily in the private sector. Approximately 18% of the respondents claimed to earn an average of above 800 000 NOK a year, while only a few earned below 300 000 NOK (Skaare, 2011). This is somewhat higher compared to the average salary of 453 000 NOK within the Norwegian population in 2011 (n24, 2012). The participants further stated “health” as the most important reason for participation in the race, as well as the race being a “personal trial of strength”. Also worth mentioning is that 78% of the participants mentioned the Birken events as hot topics at work, and 60% claimed to have influenced others to participate in the race (Skaare, 2011).

2.2 Media’s representation of leaders who participate in Birken

According to sociologist Marianne Inez Lien, there is a current trend among leaders to realize the modern life-style, which to a large extent is about working out and staying fit. Hence, this form of outer control would reflect moral, strength and willpower, while overweight people, on the other hand, are being perceived as lacking these qualities (Bristøl, 2010b). Both the leader and the company may benefit from the leader being in good shape, as leaders are important role models, and their actions will have an effect on their subordinates (Bristøl, 2010a). Many recruiters agree, that mentioning participation in Birken on a CV, and otherwise

showing that one, as being generally active, creates a positive impression (Bristol, 2010a).

While most articles focus on the positive effects of physical activity, some voices are more critical. Among them is Jan Christophersen, a specialist in organizational psychology, who states that “Participation in Birken is definitely not a good metaphor of great leadership abilities” (Myklemyr, 2010, p. 3). Participation is, according to him, more about the leader’s own need for exposure than showing good leadership qualities. “The leader has to devote a lot of time to their body, technique, and equipment which will promote him or her as a lonely, strong, enduring performer. The leaders should, however, spend more time developing as leaders” (Myklemyr, 2010, p. 4).

It is perhaps easy to become intrigued by statements such as those mentioned above. According to Flåøyen (2010), leaders who participate in Birken often work in the private Norwegian business sector. Hence, the prestige related to participation in this race, in addition to similar skiing races, is higher in private sector companies than in the public sector. Leaders who participate in Birken seemingly spend between four to seven hours a week on physical exercise (Kvam, 2010). In addition, many of them visit training camps with their friends (Kise, 2010). An average Birken- racer has about 6000 NOK worth of equipment (Kvam, 2010) and they seemingly spend more money on ski- related equipment, such as wax, than the famous Norwegian cross- country skiers Marit Bjørgen and Petter Northug (Kise, 2010). Further, leaders who participate in Birken are narcissistic and well aware that they are kept an eye on by the media. Yet, they love the exposure surrounding their participation (Gorseth, 2010).

According to Kvam (2010), the typical leaders who participate in Birken have atrial fibrillation and general heart problems. As a consequence these privileged and selfish leaders cause our hospitals and the community longer health queues due to their exercising (Kvam, 2010). Despite medical issues that might arise because of extreme exercising, the leaders continue to participate in the race. Why is this so? Birken is obviously a way for these leaders to live out their mid-life crisis and to get away from things they can’t face, such as leadership

development, home- related logistics and relations with friends and family (Kvam, 2010). The leaders seemingly spend more time prioritizing themselves than spending quality time with their children (Modal, 2012). According to Arne Flåøyen, CFO at the veterinary institute, leaders who participate in Birken should spend more of their spare time with their family, invite friends over for a nice dinner, work in volunteer organizations, or simply get to know the community outside of work and the ski-environment better (Flåøyen, 2010). It may seem as though leaders believe participation in Birken make them better leaders, however, “Most people don’t want to be led by complacent supermen- or women, but by chubby, lazy people with more brain than muscles, and with a good heart that has a normal uptake of oxygen” (*Hvorfor dø sunn og frisk*, 2011, p. 15). Apparently, there exist a lot of opinions in the media regarding leaders who participate in Birken. However, some of the articles lack empirical evidence for their allegations; rather, they are seemingly based upon personal opinions. “16 000 egos participated in Birken this year. May they burn in hell and be reborn as women” (Kvam, 2010, p. 18).

4. Literature Review

4.1 Motivation

Motivation basically concerns energy, persistence, and all aspects of intentional behavior. In short, motivation activates and people can be motivated because they value an activity or because there is strong external coercion (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to Kilpatrick, Hebert and Jacobsen (2002) motivation refers to the intensity and direction of effort. Motivation concerns what moves people to act, think, and develop. Thus, the central focus of motivation research is on the conditions and processes that facilitate persistence, performance, healthy development, and vitality in human activities (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Variance in human motivation is further said to be a function of the proximal sociocultural conditions in which individuals find themselves, and these conditions influence not only what people do, but how they feel while acting (Deci & Ryan, 2008a).

Perhaps no single phenomenon reflects the potential of human nature as much as *intrinsic motivation* (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation refers to the innate

energy that people demonstrate when they pursue a goal or an activity because it is interesting and fun. Moreover, intrinsic goals are focused toward developing one's personal interest, values, and potential (Sebire, Standage & Vansteenkiste, 2009). Further, intrinsic motivation is manifested as curiosity, pursuit of challenge, competence development (Koestner & Losier, 2002), and engaging in a specific activity because of the inherent pleasure and satisfaction it may provide (Ryan, Williams, Patrick & Deci, 2009). More specifically, when intrinsically motivated, people perform activities because of the positive feelings resulting from the activities. They are interested in what they are doing, display curiosity, explore novel stimuli, and work to master optimal challenges (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). As argued by Ryan et al. (2009), only those activities that satisfy certain basic psychological needs will be expected to be intrinsically motivating, and according to Deci and Ryan (2002), intrinsic motivation represents the prototype of self-determined activity.

By contrast, *extrinsic motivation* is characterized by an activity that is performed in order to retain recognition or approval (Ryan et al., 2009). Extrinsic goals relates to an "outward" orientation, with a pursuit being directed toward external indicators of worth such as wealth, fame, and an appealing image (Sebire et al., 2009). Furthermore, some people pursue certain activities not because they are inherently interesting, rather they perceive the activities to have something that they can profit or gain from (Ryan et al., 2009). In other words, extrinsic motivation involves engaging in an activity because it leads to some separate outcome or consequence. Perhaps the clearest examples of extrinsically motivated behaviors are those performed to obtain a tangible reward or to avoid punishment (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Moreover, in relation to investigating what motivates Norwegian business leaders to participate in Birken, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was believed to be of significance.

4.2 Self-determination theory

Self-determination refers to the need to regulate one's own actions (Chatzisarantis, Hagger, Biddle, Smith & Wang, 2003). According to self-determination theory (SDT), maintenance of behaviors over time requires that people internalize values and skills (Ryan, Patrick, Deci & Williams, 2008). SDT embraces the assumption that all individuals have natural innate and constructive

tendencies to develop. In general, SDT is an approach to human motivation and personality (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The main focus is the investigation of people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs that are the basis for their self-motivation and personality integration, as well as for the conditions that foster those positive processes. SDT further suggests that people are naturally self-motivated and interested in pursuing activities that are enjoyable, which to a greater degree make them inherently motivated to master their social environment (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Theoretical perspectives on sport and exercise motivation are numerous (Spray, Wang, Biddle & Chatzisarantis, 2006), because understanding adherence to health-related behaviors is an important avenue for scientific inquiry (Chatzisarantis et al., 2003). For this reason, examining the motivational determinants of why individuals participate in sport and physical exercise has become a prominent topic in exercise psychology (Edmunds, Ntoumanis & Duda., 2006). Sport refers to an activity governed by formal or informal rules that involves competition against opponents or oneself, whereas exercise is defined as a subset or activity that is structured to improve or maintain health and fitness (Kilpatrick et al., 2002). Noteworthy in this sense, in the present thesis Birken is considered as operating both within the field of sports and exercise, because it involves a competition, as well as being a physical activity. According to Edmunds et al. (2006), engagement in physical activities involves complex interactions between biological, environmental, social, and psychological influences. Subsequently, SDT has received growing attention in various health promoting domains because of its useful theoretical framework (Wilson, Rodgers, Blanchard & Gessel, 2003; Fortier & Farrell, 2009; Edmunds et al., 2006; Chatzisarantis et al., 2003). Ryan and colleagues (2009) further argue that the main reason why people engage in sports activities is because they find them interesting, challenging, fun, and enjoyable. Accordingly, regardless of age or gender, the most basic principle in SDT is that, when applied to physical activity, individuals can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated (Ryan et al., 2009). The SDT framework was used in order to examine whether the leaders are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to take part in Birken, or if both are important motivational reasons for their participation.

4.3 The basic components of self-determination theory

SDT is a comprehensive theory, and it has evolved over the past three decades (Vallerand, 2000). In the next sections, four mini theories will be presented in order to understand the magnitude of SDT. When coordinated, they are believed to cover every type of human motivation in all domains (Deci & Ryan, 2002), and are for this reason assumed to be applicable in understanding the leaders' motivation to participate in Birken. Furthermore, the four mini theories of SDT provide a motivational framework of human behavior, because they explain different facets of human growth and the integration of the self with the social world (Wilson et al., 2008).

4.3.1 The theory of basic psychological needs.

Within SDT, needs are defined as “the innate psychological nutriments that are essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well-being” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 229). As such, the concept of needs is important because it supplies a criterion for specifying what is essential to life (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Three nutriments are referred within SDT's *basic psychological needs theory* (BPNT), namely: *Autonomy*, *competence*, and *relatedness*. According to SDT, basic needs are universal and are expected to be evident in all cultures and in all developmental periods. Social environments that allow satisfaction of the three basic needs are predicted to support healthy functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2002). In this respect, it was interesting to uncover whether participating in Birken, to some extent, fulfills these needs. If so, does BPNT serve as an important source towards understanding why the leaders take part in the race?

Autonomy refers to being perceived as the origin or source of one's own behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2002). More precisely, it involves an internal state of regulation by the self, and being able to make choices (Ryan et al., 2009). SDT views autonomy as a key to understanding the quality of behavioral regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2006). When autonomous, individuals experience their behavior as an expression of the self, even when actions are influenced by outside sources (Deci & Ryan, 2002). By contrast, heteronomy refers to regulation outside, by forces, pressure, demands, or external contingencies of reward or punishment (Ryan & Deci, 2006). Noteworthy in this sense, autonomy is often confused with independence (Deci &

Ryan, 2002). Autonomy means to act volitionally, with a sense of choice, whereas independence means to function alone and not to rely on others (Deci & Ryan, 2008a).

Competence relates to a person's need to experience some level of effectiveness and confidence, not only in itself, but also in relation to others (Ryan et al., 2009). Furthermore, it refers to feelings of ongoing interaction with the social environment, and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one's capacities. Also, the need for competence leads people to seek challenges that are optimal for their capacities, and to persistently attempt to maintain and enhance those skills and capacities throughout an activity. Competence is thus a felt sense of confidence and efficiency in action (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Relatedness refers to feeling connected to others, to care and to be cared for, in addition to have a sense of belonging both with other individuals and with one's community (Deci & Ryan, 2002). More specifically, relatedness raises the importance of being included. SDT posits that a sense of connection and belonging is essential to wellbeing and integrity, and in a context of relatedness, individuals are more likely to internalize values and skills (Ryan et al., 2009). According to Frederick-Recascino (2002), most empirical focus in the motivational literature has been on the need for autonomy and competence, because satisfaction of these needs has been shown to be necessary for intrinsic motivation. However, relatedness can play an important role in promoting participatory motivation (Frederick-Recascino, 2002).

4.3.2 *Cognitive evaluation theory.*

Cognitive evaluation theory (CET) was formulated to describe the effects of social context on people's intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2002). The theory aims to specify factors that explain variability in intrinsic motivation. For instance, receiving feedback and rewards, which can enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999). However, the context in which positive feedback or rewards are administered influences how it is interpreted, and thus what effect it has (Deci et al., 1999). Theoretically, CET proposes that rewards can be interpreted primarily as controllers of behavior, leading to a more externally perceived locus of causality, which undermines intrinsic motivation

(Deci et al., 1999). However, a meta-analytic review by Eisenberger, Pierce, and Cameron (1999) showed that this pattern is somewhat inconsistent. Findings revealed that receiving rewards for meeting normative performance standards (exceeding performance compared to others) increased intrinsic motivation. By contrast, receiving rewards for meeting vague performance objectives (“doing well”) reduced intrinsic motivation.

Furthermore, in the CET perspective, having competence is argued to be essential in order to accomplish normative performance standards because to perform better than others you need to be competent (Eisenberger et al., 1999). Nevertheless, feelings of competence will not be enhanced unless accompanied by a sense of autonomy. Competence and autonomy is argued as fundamental in the CET perspective for intrinsic motivation to occur (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Accordingly, CET was in the present thesis viewed as an important theory in terms of uncovering the motivation for leaders to participate in Birken. More specifically, one question of particular interest was whether the “Mark” is perceived as an essential reward which the leaders seek to acquire? Further, to what extent is receiving feedback significant to the informants’ motivation. Also worth mentioning, is that feedback in this particular study was viewed as both comments from friends and colleagues, as well as how the leaders are portrayed in the media in relation to Birken.

4.3.3 Organismic integration theory.

Organismic integration theory (OIT) is another mini theory, which describes the degree of internalization accompanying extrinsically motivated behavior (Wilson et al., 2008). Internalization refers to taking in values and attitudes in a sense that behavior is transformed from external regulation into internal regulation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). OIT stipulates the quality of extrinsic motivation, in which regulation behavior varies from highly externally controlled to more self-determined. Derived from this, OIT was believed to be an important theory in investigating if the leaders in the present thesis are extrinsically motivated, and to what degree they have regulated and internalized their attendance in Birken? Furthermore, SDT proposes a continuum where three types of internalizations differs in the degree to which the regulation becomes integrated. The least effective type of internalization is *introjection*. It involves people taking on an

external contingency, demand, or regulation, but not accepting it as their own. With introjection, people tend to feel controlled and without having a sense of ownership (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Do Norwegian business leaders participate in Birken because they feel pressured and controlled by some external forces for example medical reasons, feelings of guilt, or wanting to look good to others (Sebire et al., 2009)? If this is the case, they are, according to OIT, extrinsically motivated, and feelings of ownership towards this particular activity would thereby be absent.

The second type of internalization is referred to as *identification* and involves people accepting the importance of their behavior, thus accepting it as their own (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). More specifically, they identify with the value of the activity and willingly accept responsibility for regulating it. For this reason, people engage in a greater sense of autonomy and do not feel pressured or controlled to behave (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Additionally, they feel greater freedom and volition because the behavior is more congruent with personal goals and identity (Gagné & Deci, 2005). The reason as to why the leaders in the present study participate in Birken may be related to the fact that they endorse or identify with the value of taking part in such an event. To the leaders, Birken might be meaningful in a sense that it keeps them physically active at a desired level.

Integration is the third type of internalization, in which the person has succeeded in integrating identification with other aspects of the true or integrated self (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Thus integration represents the fullest type of internalization and is the means through which extrinsically motivated behaviors become truly autonomous or self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). In practical terms, Birken may operate as an externally motivated target to the leaders, yet, participating might be completely their own choice because it is a part of their lifestyle, and hence, it is valuable to them. Furthermore, integrated regulation bears similarity to intrinsic motivation, as both are accompanied by a sense of volition and choice (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). However, integrated extrinsic motivation differs from intrinsic motivation in that intrinsic motivation is based on interest for the behavior itself, whereas integrated extrinsic motivation is based on the person

having fully integrated the value of the behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). If the leaders are extrinsically motivated to attend Birken, it would be interesting to use OIT in order to discuss to what extent.

4.3.4 Causality orientation theory.

The fourth mini theory, *causality orientation theory* (COT), argues that there are individual differences in people's motivational orientation, meaning that we act in accordance to what is of importance to us (Wilson et al., 2008). COT specifies three orientations that differ in the degree to which they represent self-determination, namely *autonomous*, *controlled*, and *impersonal* causality orientation. Deci and Ryan (2002) argue that every human being is assumed to have each of these orientations to some degree. In short, autonomy orientation involves regulating behavior on the basis of self-endorsed values and interests (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Meaning that COT comprises both intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation in which people have identified with an activity's value (Deci & Ryan, 2008b). Controlled orientation on the other hand involves orientating toward directives concerning how one should behave, and it relates to external and introjected regulations (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Consequently, when people are controlled, they experience pressure to think, feel, or behave in a particular way (Deci & Ryan, 2008b). Impersonal orientation basically focuses on indicators of inefficiency and not behaving intentionally (Deci & Ryan, 2002). According to Deci and Ryan (2002), controlled orientation in COT has similarities to introjected regulation from the OIT perspective. COT will therefore not be utilized to the same extent in the present thesis. The reason for this is that OIT was initially perceived as a more relevant theory to capture whether the leaders are extrinsically motivated to participate in Birken, or because they personally value the activity.

4.4 The need for achievement

"Motives are internal states that arouse and direct behavior toward specific objects or goals" (Larsen & Buss, 2010, p. 332). Motives are often based on needs, and refer to states of tension within a person. As a need is satisfied, the state of tension is reduced. Researchers who study motives have stressed the importance of internal psychological needs that drive people to think, perceive, and act in certain predictable ways (Larsen & Buss, 2010). Henry Murray was one of the first

researchers to develop a modern theory of motivation, and according to him a need is a “potentiality or readiness to respond in a certain way under certain given circumstances” (Murray, 1934, as cited in Larsen & Buss, 2010, p. 334). Based on his research, Murray proposed a list of fundamental human needs, and hence, the need for achievement has received the most attention. The need for achievement is basically the desire to do better, to be successful and to feel competent, and it is further assumed that the need for achievement will energize behavior in certain (achievement- related) situations. People motivated by a high need for achievement obtain satisfaction from accomplishing a task, and they cherish the process of being engaged in challenging activities. In terms of trait levels, people high on achievement prefer moderate levels of challenge, which makes sense because they are motivated to do better than others (Larsen & Buss, 2010). Based on the fact that achievement stood out as one of the main aspects with regards to participation in Birken in the pilot study, the theory of need for achievement was included in the main investigation in order to explain to what extent this is important to the leaders.

Over the past two decades, a majority of the empirical and theoretical work conducted in achievement motivation literature has used an achievement goal perspective (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Achievement goals are viewed as the purpose or cognitive dynamic focus of competent- relevant behavior, and the primary emphasis has generally been on two types of goals, namely mastery- and performance goals (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Mastery goals are about developing competence through task mastery, while performance goals are focused on the demonstration of competence relative to others (Rawsthorne & Elliot, 1999). Each goal is supposed to provide a distinct perceptual- cognitive framework in achievement settings, as well as being shown to lead to a differential pattern of processes and outcomes (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). In this respect, uncovering whether the leaders are mastery- or performance oriented was here assumed to provide an understanding of the leaders’ motivation to participate in Birken. Moreover, if a mastery goal orientation is evident, it will imply that achieving satisfactory results in Birken are not as essential to the leaders as the media may want people to think. On the other hand, if the leaders show signs of being preoccupied with performance it may illuminate an orientation towards the

importance of performing better than others. Furthermore, achievement goals in general are said to influence an individual's mental focus, which refers to the degree someone is able to concentrate and become absorbed in an activity. Mental focus is predicted to foster enjoyment, performance, and task involvement, which are believed to have a positive relationship with intrinsic motivation for the activity (Lee, Sheldon & Turban, 2003).

Achievement motivation is also a central issue within sport psychology as researchers continue to examine individuals' choice, effort, and persistence related to physical activity participation (Schilling & Hayashi, 2001). According to Li et al. (2011), performance attainment and intrinsic motivation are two of the most important valuable outcomes in achievement-related activities. Li et al. (2011) expected in their study that mastery-approach goals might have positive effects on both intrinsic motivation and sports performance, and a performance approach may have positive effects on sports performance. Findings revealed that a mastery-approach facilitates sport performance and that athletes who score high on mastery-approach goals enjoy their participation in sports and perform well. In line with these findings, Frederick-Recascino (2002) claims that within the domain of sport or physical activity, it is hypothesized that when initial attraction to a sport or exercise activity involves a mastery-goal orientation, rather than a performance goal orientation, the orientation will facilitate learning new skills related to the sport or activity. A task or mastery orientation has also been favorably linked to higher participation of competence, and more adaptive attribution about success or failure (Frederick-Recascino, 2002). A meta-analytic review by Rawsthorne and Elliot (1999) showed that the pursuit of performance goals produce significantly less enjoyment than the pursuit of mastery goals. This is because mastery goals are posited to promote challenge appraisal, encourage, support self-determination, and feelings of autonomy, all factors presumed to facilitate intrinsic interest and enjoyment. Performance goals on the other hand are conceived to produce evaluative pressures and elicit anxiety, processes considered antithetical to intrinsic motivation (Rawsthorne & Elliot, 1999).

4.5 Sports and business – is there any transferability?

In the last decade, several researchers have contributed to the field of organizational psychology and leadership development, examining the

transferability and whether there exists any relationship between sports and business (e.g., Loher & Shwartz, 2001; Burnes & O'Donnell, 2011; Laurent & Bradney, 2007). Business leaders have shown an increasing interest in learning from sports, which is not surprising based on the fact that sports, like business, is highly competitive and success depends on the ability to outperform the opposition (Burnes & O'Donnell, 2011). An interesting point proposed by Loher and Shwartz (2001) was that in order to exploit ones full potential as a leader, one needs to focus on both primary skills (e.g., public speaking, negotiating) and secondary skills (e.g., endurance, focus). Increasing potential at both levels will bring their talents and skill into full ignition and leaders who are both mentally and physically strong are argued to perform better. However, leaders who smoke, drink, or weigh too much do not necessarily lack the ability to perform successfully in business. Still, Loher and Shwartz (2001) claimed that such leaders cannot perform to their full potential.

5. Method

The purpose of the present thesis was to qualitatively examine the motivational factors behind prominent Norwegian business leaders' participation in Birken. Moreover, the aim was to answer the following research question:

“What motivates Norwegian business leaders to participate in Birken, and to what extent is achievement important?”

Aspects from achievement and SDT, which is a multidimensional approach to motivation reviewed in the previous chapter, was applied. The current chapter will provide information regarding informants, research design, instrumentation, ethical considerations, data- analysis, and trustworthiness.

5.1 Research design

The present study is phenomenological, meaning that it revolves around the subjective experience and seeks to gain an understanding of the deeper meaning in people's experiences. The focus is to understand phenomena based on the studied person's perspective, and to describe the outside world in the way it is experienced by him or her (Thagaard, 2002). Such an approach was viewed as better able at providing nuances in the responses than, for instance, a quantitative

survey would have been. Thus, nuanced and rich descriptions were exactly what the present study targeted. Qualitative in-depth interviews were used to collect data, mainly because a qualitative approach is applicable to capture a profound understanding of existing and everyday life concepts (Yin, 2011). Hence, a qualitative methodology was applied for two main reasons. The first being that answers from in-depth interviews would provide a better understanding of the leaders' thoughts, feelings, and experiences regarding their motivation to participate in Birken, in addition to the importance of achievement. Secondly, the targeted information may not as easily have been identified using questionnaires. Each of the informants were interviewed in their workplace at a scheduled time and date. Additionally, meetings with Marianne Inez Lien, a scientist in Sociology at the University of Oslo, and Gunnar Breivik, a professor at Norges idrettshøgskole (NIH), were conducted prior to the interviews. They both contributed in regard to the development of the study and subsequent research question.

Four pilot interviews were conducted approximately a year prior to the interviews. Two leaders (CEO's), one employee, and one middle manager were interviewed, who had all participated in Birken on at least one occasion. The informants were, for instance, asked to list five reasons as to why they participated in Birken; how they felt participation affected their work; if it helped them become a better leader in any way; or if they could recall any negative effects related to their participation. The method of applying pilot interviews is exploratory because it involves acquiring familiarity with a phenomenon in order to formulate a more precise problem or develop hypotheses (Egidius, 2006). After having conducted the pilot interviews, interesting questions and topics to potentially seek answers to began to appear. Exhaustive discussions regarding the topic for further investigation eventually led to motivation and achievement being the focus of the present study. A thorough search for relevant theories was then initiated, and SDT and the theory about need for achievement were finally selected as the theoretical base. It is worth mentioning that having a predetermined choice of theory before conducting the interviews is a theoretically driven approach to the theme of participation in Birken (Andersen, 2013). Hence, the researchers started with an

exploratory approach to the subject, and based on this, a theoretically driven approach was agreed upon.

5.2 Informants

The sample in the present study is strategic, meaning that informants who have the desired attributes or qualifications in relation to the research question have deliberately been chosen (Thagaard, 2002). The research question further regards these business leaders' motivation to participate in Birken, as well as the importance of achievement. Consequently, the sample consists of leaders who take part in Birken, as they are believed to be able to bring to the study reasons for motivation for participation in addition to how important achievement is to them.

The informants were eight male and three female leaders, who participate, and have participated previously, in Birken and other similar skiing races. Hence, the total sample consists of 11 informants, and they will in the present paper be referred to as "informants". The informants' results in the race were found on the Internet, and evaluated, but no further criterion was set in relation to results. Nevertheless, all the informants have generally good results in Birken. The choice of informants was based on previous research in the media, several names surfaced and were contacted. These leaders further helped in finding more potential informants by providing names and e-mail addresses of other leaders. Hence, the snowball sampling technique was used to find candidates for the study (Langdrige, 2006). The informants were e-mailed an informal letter with information regarding the study, as well as a request to participate as an interviewee.

One criterion for the informants was that they were to be Norwegian business leaders, however, finding female leaders to match this criterion proved to be difficult. On the other hand, this may be a natural implication to the fact that only 19% of the participants are female (Skaare, 2011). Apparently, there might be some accuracy to Rolf Rønning's point; where are the female Birken participants? (Skaare, 2011). Consequently, one of the female informants is a leader in the public sector. However, she has a very demanding job and the importance of having female informants, in order to obtain a more diverse sample, was judged to override this particular criterion. Furthermore, one of the male informants had not

participated in Birken for the last two years, due to personal reasons. Nevertheless, media's portrayal of him and all the interesting things that came out of the interview led to the inclusion of this interview in the sample. It is worth mentioning in regards to this is that he answered the interview questions in relation to his previous participations in Birken, and present attendance in similar skiing races. All the informants have been in their current jobs between five and 30 years. Finally, 12 interviews were conducted, only one was excluded from the analysis. Discussions regarding two of the informants' current job positions led to the conclusion that one did not fulfill the desired qualifications in this particular context. Hence the interview was excluded from the sample. On the other hand, the interview with the other informant was kept although this informant does not directly have any subordinates. He is however a leader in the sense that he has the sole responsibility for a company and its assets in the business sector. His results in Birken have received attention in the media and a lot of interesting information came out of the interview. It was therefore included.

Furthermore, the informants represent a range of business areas, including oil and shipping, finance and investment, auditing, IT and consultancy, energy, the hotel industry, media, and sports. Six of the 11 informants were CEO's of large corporations, whereas the remaining five were heads of quite large departments, which involved a great deal of responsibility. The men are in the age group of 45-65, while the women are in the age of 40-55. All the informants, except for one, are currently married and have children and some of the informants actually live in the same area. The sample is rather geographically diversified, in fact, most informants are neither born nor raised in Oslo, and two respondents live in cities outside the capital.

5.3 Instrumentation

Based on the findings of the pilot interviews, SDT, and the need for achievement, a semi-structured interview guide was developed (see appendix A) by the researchers and used in all the interviews. With regards to the sport and exercise context, the Sport Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire (BREQ), has been frequently applied (Moreno, Gonzalez-Cutre, Sicilia & Spray, 2010; Wilson et al., 2003; Teixeira, Carraca, Markland, Silvia & Ryan, 2012). Moreover, questions from BREQ inspired the development of the interview guide used in

this study. Also of inspiration to the interview guide was a master thesis written by Alexis Smith, who uses SDT in relation to female marathon athletes (Smith, 2010). The guide, however, remained open for additional questions that naturally arose during the interviews. The researchers of the present study conducted all the interviews, which lasted between 45 to 80 minutes, and each informant was only interviewed once. The questions included brief background information regarding the informants' participation in Birken and similar races; how many "Marks" they had achieved; how often they exercised etc., as well as theory-based questions related to motivation and achievement. Examples of questions were: "What does the word motivation mean to you?", "To what extent do you enjoy competing?", "What are the reasons for your participation in Birken?", "How important is it to achieve a good result in Birken?", "Do you believe that there might be a link between you being physically active and your performance at work?" Follow up questions were posed in relation to many of the answers. Interviewing continued until a point of perceived saturation was reached. The interviews were audio-taped with two iPhone 4, and in order to protect the informants' identity, pseudonyms and dates were assigned and used in the data analysis (Thagaard, 2002).

5.4 Ethical considerations

Prior to conducting the interviews, a formal application was submitted, and approved by NSD, a state-run committee responsible for maintaining privacy and the protection of research data. Further, all the informants received and signed a consent form before being interviewed (see appendix B). The consent form included brief information about the purpose of the study, assurance of anonymity, and that the informants were free to withdraw from the study at any given time. Additionally, the form included the researchers' contact information, so that informants could ask if questions arose after the interviews. The informants in the present study are mostly well-known leaders in the Norwegian business world, who commonly appear in the media, and are easy to find on the Internet. Hence, it has been regarded as especially important to protect informant anonymity and follow strict guidelines for storage and destruction of data. An ethical issue occurred in relation to the snowball sampling method. If the informants suggested names that had already been contacted or interviewed, this information would be revealed to the person who suggested that name. The researchers agreed upon this

mainly because in most cases the informants suggested people who were their friends, and it was clear that they had already discussed this project amongst themselves.

5.5 Data Analysis

The qualitative data was transcribed verbatim from the audiotapes by the researchers. Efforts were made to ensure that the interviews were accurately transcribed, and hence, the researchers were meticulous in their approach. An important decision was that the researchers agreed beforehand on precisely how the data was supposed to be transcribed. Hand movements and gestures were deleted, while laughter, raised voices and breaks in which the informants were thinking were included. The data was then thoroughly read by the researchers, and notes were made regarding common themes and interesting points. Based on these notes, and a second detailed rereading of the transcriptions, codes were made. More specifically, codes and themes were made based on the data material from informant no. 1. Informant no. 2 was reviewed to see if the codes from informant no. 1 were accurate, and if new codes had to be made. Hence, the process continued until all the 11 informants were carefully reviewed and appropriate codes were made. The analysis continued until the data became saturated and no new themes arose (Thagaard, 2002). The procedure resulted in 14 categories with six subcategories. Furthermore, a matrix system (see appendix C) with all the codes in which relevant data material was inserted into, was created. Excel version 2007 was used for this purpose. Making the codes and the matrix system was a somewhat exhaustive process. Nevertheless, it proved to be essential in regards to seeing emerging patterns in the informants' responses, as did to what extent themes were more significant than others. The information in the data matrix system was in Norwegian. As the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, the matrix is also in Norwegian in order to accurately interpret the data. Relevant information might have been missed if translations had been made. The questions in the interview guide were based on the selected theories, but the researchers were also open to the emergence of other topics. Thereby, and perhaps not surprisingly, most of the information that came out of the interviews was highly relevant to the theory, and for this reason, many of the codes are similar to some of the concepts in the theories. Other codes are based on common themes that arose.

The codes were named “lifestyle, exercise, Birken, competence, relatedness, autonomy, social support, feedback, achievements (planning, competitiveness, goal setting), the link between Birken and work (Birken on a CV), motivation (intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation), engaged in the community, image/media, and mental relaxation”. It is worth mentioning that in the analysis some of the codes were excluded. More specifically, social support and mental relaxation was excluded because of insufficient information in addition to being regarded as unimportant. Additionally, in the present thesis, relatedness was considered similar to social support, and proved to be more important to the informants. Moreover, engagement in the community, as well as exercise, and Birken were combined with lifestyle as this seemed more suitable. Lastly, competitiveness proved more significant than initially suggested, and was therefore removed as a subcategory of achievement, and now comprises its own category.

5.6 Trustworthiness

In order to establish academic rigor the interview guide was first reviewed by our supervisor. Secondly, it was validated and reviewed by Anne Fyllingen Frøyen at Olympiatoppen, a PhD candidate well familiar with SDT in qualitative research. All suggested alterations and changes were made, and the final guide was used in all the interviews. Additionally, trustworthiness is believed to be critical in qualitative research regarding reliability and validity (Golafshani, 2003). Considerations were made regarding the translations of the transcribed interviews. In order to maintain the trustworthiness of the data, the quotes used in the analysis are somewhat directly translated from Norwegian. This was done to avoid losing the true opinions of the informants, which was judged as essential. Consequently some of the quotes are worded slightly impractically.

Also worth mentioning is that the informants were not given the questions before being interviewed. As previously described, they simply received a short e-mail asking them to talk about their participation in Birken and their motivation to attend the race, implying that the informants were unprepared regarding to the interview and what to expect. Consequently, all the informants were very curious about the thesis. The purpose of keeping information about the interview scarce

was to avoid giving the informants any chance to think about their answers beforehand, thereby contributing to ensure trustworthiness in their responses. It was evident to the researchers that the informants carefully thought through their answers before responding. Many of the informants stated that they felt they learned from the interview in that it made them reflect upon things they previously had not thought about. For this reason, it is assumed as likely that the informants actually shared their true thoughts, feelings, and opinions regarding Birken. They spoke intuitively about the first things that came into their minds. Another sign that the informants shared their honest opinions and thoughts is that a few of them actually revealed very private issues that they were not asked about, nor was it required of them to share this information. Many of the informants further talked eagerly about their families, friends, and work without being encouraged to do so. One informant invited to lunch which lasted close to four hours, another informant let the researchers talk to a subordinate about his leadership qualities without being present in the room himself. A different informant gave each of the researchers a nice book regarding leadership and was very enthusiastic about contributing to the thesis. All the aspects listed above can be interpreted as signs to the informants' honesty in that they did not attempt to portray themselves more favorably or hide facts. Hence, the researchers were able to see some of the informants in different settings, which further contributed to an impression that the informants' responses actually are trustworthy.

6. Analysis

The media's portrayal of leaders in the Norwegian business sector who participate in Birken has not been entirely positive. A lot of negative opinions are seemingly being voiced. In order to answer the question of why the leaders actually participate in Birken and similar skiing- races, it is important to get an impression of who these people really are. Is the picture of the narcissistic, selfish and attention seeking leader who prioritizes him/herself before family and work an accurate description?

Most of the informants' shared the opinion that Birken has become somewhat of a media frenzy and that the stigma related to leaders who participate has become so negative that they do not wish to be associated with it. Despite the negative label

most of the informants still wish to continue participating, simply because they enjoy skiing and competing, and have a lot of fun doing it. Categories were developed based on the theories and transcriptions of the interviews and have, as previously mentioned, been subjected to some alterations. A lot of interesting information came out of the interviews, and it will now be reviewed according to the different categories.

6.1 Lifestyle

It is necessary to bear in mind that numerous leaders in Norway participate in Birken every year, and in the present paper only 11 of them have been interviewed. Nevertheless, the impression we gained from the informants does not quite match the picture portrayed in the media. First of all, the informants are currently married and have children, except for one who is divorced and has had a boyfriend for many years. Contrary to some media articles, which have claimed that leaders participating in Birken sacrifice time with their family to prioritize themselves (Modal, 2012), all of the informants stated that it was important for them to adjust their physical training and amount of time spent on exercising in relation to family and work. Hence, the informants actually take their family into consideration in relation to their physical training, which can easily be observed in the first category in the attached matrix system (see appendix C). As one informant, who exercises approximately 3 times a week, stated: *“My dream is to finish Birken in less than three hours. To be able to do that I would have to exercise at least one more day a week, and with family and work that is not possible for me right now. What happens is that it would affect my family and my job, and the most important thing is my family.”*

10 of 11 informants were active in sports whilst growing up, and many cross-country skied actively until senior level. Information regarding this particular topic can further be detected in the first category in the matrix system (see appendix C). All of the informants, except one, chose to prioritize studies instead of pursuing an active career in the field of sports. Participating in Birken is something that most of the informants have been doing for many years, and started when they were students. At this point, Birken did not receive the same amount of attention as it does today. In fact, to our knowledge, it was hardly mentioned in the newspapers. There is a typical pattern among the informants

revolving around them being active in sports and exercise in their younger years, with a break when they had small children, and then increasing the activity level again as the children grew older. There was some common ground for participating; “Birken has become a tradition, it is the Norwegian championship for old people and a goal for exercising to stay in shape. It is a competition where you can test your skills against others and it is fun.”

One of the allegations postulated in the media is that the leaders who participate in Birken spend more time on themselves; that they should instead spend their time becoming better leaders, fathers, husbands, and friends (Flåøyen, 2010). However, one of the main reasons as to why the informants actually participate in Birken and exercise beforehand is because they do it together with others, respectively their children and spouse, as well as their best friends and people in the local community’s sports club. Hence, skiing is a big part of their social activities, although some of them also enjoy skiing alone from time to time. In addition, many of the informants have responsibility as leaders, trainers, or volunteers in the local community’s skiing or sports club. Others have been important driving forces in promoting physical activity at work, by arranging different sports events and trips as well as Monday jogging sessions etc., which can be observed in category 12 in the matrix system (see appendix C). As one of the informants stated about leaders who participate in Birken in general, “*The media has created a somewhat incorrect impression of leaders who participate in Birken. They are busy people with many things on their plate. They are also leaders in local sports clubs, and train their own and other peoples’ children. They are constantly doing something, and they are engaged. You have to look at it in a bigger context, as part of a lifestyle.*” While another informant, when asked about why media’s interest in leaders who participate has increased, stated that: “*The first time I was at the start area in Birken was in 2000, there were a lot of leaders there at that time too. There just wasn’t any focus on it. So I have always wondered if there has ever actually been a shift.*” Further, when it comes to allegations revolving around “crazy” leaders who exercise 20 hours a week, he said: “*There are not many of those people. They don’t have time for that. I know a lot of these leaders here in Norway, and no, very few of them are actually like that. Most of them exercise three to four times a week, not more than that.*”

6.2 *Autonomy*

A pattern with regards to life situation was evident among all the informants. They were physically very active growing up and had a break in which studies and having small children became too time consuming to be able to exercise at a desired level. Later, they were able to increase their activity as their children became older. Starting to exercise again seems to be the informants' own choice, and something they all wanted for themselves. Being physically active, exercising, and skiing is something they all choose for themselves, hence it is self-determined. The informants stated that they are mostly in charge of their own exercising. One of the informants answered the following when asked who determines his exercise: *"I mean, myself mostly. You learn what is important before a race, with nutrition and everything."*

On the other hand, while exercising may be self-determined, there may be a lack of autonomy regarding the amount of time spent on exercising. It seems as though their job was perceived to inhibit many of the informants in relation to amount of time spent in participating in different kinds of races and exercising. *"I was not able to participate in Marcialonga this year, it was the same date as when we had an annual winter conference at work with 2300 employees. I was supposed to be on stage talking, so I had to skip Marcialonga. I much rather wanted to attend Marcialonga, and that is not good, to say that, but that's how I actually felt."*

Another informant who travels a lot in relation to his work said: *"It is obvious that my job inhibits me when it comes to skiing."* In addition, they have to take their family into consideration. One informant for instance claimed that: *"Skiing is a better sport than bicycling, which takes more time and you have to be away from your family more. I used to ski, bicycle and run, I cut out bicycling and running."*

A different informant stated that: *"In relation to the family situation I have been told that it (exercising and skiing races) might be a bit too much. I am always told when the end of the skiing season is approaching because the tempo is usually high over a long period of time. Next year I will consider the amount of exercising. My boys are growing and I know that I should spend more time on supporting them."* Autonomy is the sixth category in the data matrix system in appendix C. Evident here is that none of the informants specifically talked about autonomy, which explains why this section is slightly empty. Rather, the

information regarding autonomy used in the present analysis is based on an evaluation of the entire interview of each informant in relation to the theory.

6.3 Competence

Competence is referred to as category number four in the attached matrix system (see appendix C), and was further split into four subsections. The first subsection entails information regarding whether or not it was important for the informants to be posted on the latest exercise literature. If they were responsible for training young children for instance. Number two reveals if the informants had access to knowledge from famous athletes, subsection three concerns reading of literature and number four is about whether the informants feel competent due to being active skiers in their childhood. 10 out of 11 informants have been active in sports when growing up, many of them were cross- country skiers, while others were active in handball, paddling and martial arts for instance. Consequently they have a good basic knowledge regarding how to exercise properly, do intervals etc., and feel, therefore, confident in their knowledge. One of the informant stated:

“Because I did cross- country skiing actively in my youth, I learned a lot about technique and waxing”, while a different informant said: *“I have always waxed my own skis. I normally have very good skis, so I trust myself when it comes to that.”* In addition many of the informants have been able to learn technique, get tips and knowledge with regards to nutrition and exercise from profiled athletes. The informants have received the privilege of having access to these athletes through their job, their position in a sports club or through friends and contacts. *“We (the company) sponsored the Aukland brothers. They came here and held lectures for the company’s employees, and they taught us how to ski the right way. It was amazingly inspiring- those boys are a lot of fun. Plus I read a lot- it’s a genuine interest of mine. And I watch people when they ski, I am very preoccupied with technique and think a lot about it when I ski.”* Another informant said: *“One of my buddies in the running-group is the CEO of a sports company, and has a lot of contacts. So we have had help from athletes when it comes to intervals, testing pulse and stuff like that, pushing your limits. It’s painful, but you learn from it, it’s a lot of fun.”* All of the informants reported that they read, and made sure of being up to date on the latest sports literature, especially in books and newspaper articles regarding cross- country skiing.

Lastly, when it comes to competence, to some of the informants, as shown above, it was very important to be updated on the latest knowledge about cross- country skiing because they were responsible for training their own, and other people's children. One of the informants stated that: *"As an eager dad and coach for young children I need to feel a bit safe when it comes to knowledge, I have sports literature on my bedside table if anyone asks. It might not be normal but that's how I am, I think it is fun."* An interesting anecdote when it comes to competence, is that one of the informants had a very successful career as an athlete. However, the informant did not start skiing before the age of 30. He/she was the only one of the informants who lacked both a solid base of knowledge about skiing from childhood as well as confidence in his/her own competence and skiing ability, despite the fact that the person actually has done very well in Birken. *"People ask me if I am a good skier, I simply say that I am good at being bad. I mean, I am good considering that I started late, but really I suck."(..)* *"My goal is that I don't want my technique to be in my way, and I need to remember that I am not as good as I think I am."*

6.4 Relatedness

Many people might, in relation to leaders who participate in Birken, envisage the "lonesome wolf" pacing around in the slopes up in Nordmarka or Holmenkollen. On the contrary, however, relatedness stood out as very important to the informants, and can be seen as category number five in the matrix system (see appendix C). Out of the 11 informants, only three reported that they mostly exercise alone, while the remaining informants rarely exercise by themselves. Many of the informants have a group of friends that they exercise with once or twice a week, because this makes it easier to get it done. It is social, and it is easier to push oneself. As one of the informants stated: *"I have been exercising with a group of buddies for the last couple of years. We exercise together maybe once or twice a week. We mostly run and have intervals every other time. It is fun to have somebody to exercise with; its social and we have the same interests. Plus, it is kind of binding to have a commitment like that, you get out when you are committed and it is easier to push yourself."* Another informant said: *"I try to avoid exercising alone. We are a group of friends who have a running group every Tuesday, we have been doing it for 15 years! And we have been doing all kinds of things together, running, tennis, skiing, multisport events, everything! It is a lot of*

fun.” The informants further participate in Birken together with their friends, or colleagues, and agree to compete with them. “I participate in Birken with two pals, we drive my car and meet the rest of the people in my company at a hotel in Rena. We have an amazing night were we wax our ski’s, eat good food and relax. The next day we ride into the start area in my car playing Leonard Cohen’s First we take Manhattan, then we take Berlin on the stereo.”

To many of the informants, cross- country skiing, Birken and exercising in general is an important part of their relationship with their families. It is a part of their togetherness. *“I participate in Birken with my daughters and my best friends, we have a hell of a good time together. I can spend that much time on physical training because exercising and family are two sides of the same coin. I exercise eight out of ten times with my own, or other peoples’ children, in the community that skiing contributes to.”* To one informant, *“The most important reason for me to participate in Birken is the family situation. We are physically active in my family- we have always been, and it’s a part of our hobby. It is something nice that you can combine- it is something that we share together. Skiing is a part of a family activity where it has been possible to combine the children’s activity with the adults’ activity, and make the whole situation work. You get a family relation that not only lasts when the children are young, but something you can enjoy later as well. In the cross- country skiing community where we live we practice every Tuesday, all age groups exercise together, and we have this large Birken- group. The children exercise in their group and the adults in their group, so it’s a part of a relationship with friends as well.”* Hence, to some of the informants skiing and exercising is an important part of their relationships with both their friends and their family. Another important factor is that when the informants do not exercise together with others, it is generally because of limited time due to work. Surely these informants are busy people with very demanding jobs, and hence, they have to exercise alone occasionally in order for their busy schedule to work. On the other hand, many of the informants also agreed that they enjoy cross- country skiing alone once in a while.

Lastly, to three of the informants’ relatedness with others in relation to exercising, skiing and participating in Birken did not seem as significant as to the other

informants. Two of these were female informants, and one male. One of them clearly missed having good friends to exercise with *“I do not have a lot of girl friends that I exercise with. If I exercise with someone it is male friends or my boyfriend. So I have been kind of lonely, exercising and doing my own stuff. I kind of miss that really, a girl friend that I can push myself with.”* The two other informants ski and exercise mostly alone due to limited time, and it is easier that way, having no one else to take into consideration. However, it is worth mentioning that one of these two has children who are very active cross-country skiers, and the family spends a lot of time skiing together, so relatedness is not completely absent. On the other hand, to these three informants there is somewhat unclear whether exercising alone is what they actually prefer. Also worth mentioning is that all of the informants participate in Birken together with others, they do not attend alone. Some participate with friends and family, others with a big group of colleagues from work, and some with other people in their skiing club. Hence, nobody attends the race alone.

6.5 Feedback

The informants agreed about receiving positive feedback about their participation in Birken, which might come as no surprise, as most people in fact enjoy positive comments. Information regarding feedback constitutes category number eight in the attached matrix system in appendix C. *“When people have been checking out my results on line, and say that they are impressed by my effort for instance, that’s very nice. Generally, it is nice that people notice you in a positive way.”* Another said: *“A lot of people have gradually come to realize that I participate in Birken, and naturally it becomes a topic. An unbelievable amount of people have been on line and checked out my results, and all of a sudden you get a text in the car on your way home, congratulations on your time in Birken and stuff like that. I can’t believe that people care. You get a lot of feedback from friends, customers, and business associates, which is very nice, of course. It means that you have some sort of a relation that is meaningful.”* Yet another informant stated: *“It’s very nice to get a pat on the back, and certainly in plenary. If everyone can hear that ‘my god, you did a good job’, or read it in the newspapers. And I get loads of comments. And I think it’s very nice, that’s how childish I am.”*

There is a general tendency among the informants that there is no one in particular who they enjoy receiving feedback from. On the other hand, not all of the informants appreciated simply any kind of feedback about their skiing and participation in Birken. Some of the informants clearly only enjoyed feedback and comments from people in their skiing community and people whom they exercise with. *“Getting praised by my buddies in the exercise group gives me a little kick because we know each other. It is fun to perform in relation to them. Being bragged about and told that you finished a good race. But everybody else, they don’t understand anything. There was someone who congratulated me about my performance in Birken this year, and this year I performed worse than ever. It was not even worth mentioning, and most people don’t know about these things, its individual and mostly inner circle.”* Another informant, who is always among the top three in his/her class in Birken, said: *“I think it’s fun, I cannot hide that, being appreciated as a sports performer is fun in the sports community and the skiing community. But at work and other arenas it can become a negative thing. It always has to be a topic of conversation regarding me. So I try to reduce that bit in other contexts than with the other crazy skiers.”*

6.6 The need for achievement

“It’s an amusing feeling...to feel that you have achieved something, that you have succeeded, reached your goal, it’s probably something everybody would appreciate. Daring to set yourself a goal and then achieve it, that’s very satisfying” one of the informants stated. Evident from the interviews was that all of the 11 informants have a need for achievement, which consequently can be seen in category number nine in the matrix system (see appendix C). *“You have to do your best. We have a family- motto, and that is not to stop and give up in the middle of the race. It’s as simple as that!”* The informants’ level of ambition in relation to Birken, however, differs. While one informant has to be among the top three in the current age group, another wants to get the “Mark.” Yet someone else wishes to perform better than my buddies. To some of the informants all of the goals mentioned above were important. Furthermore, they all compared their performance to others, for instance friends or colleagues, as well as themselves and their past performance. *“I think it is fun to measure my performance (in Birken), am I able to improve? I am kind of in that age where it’s more about fighting the decay of age than becoming better. I compete against people in my*

own age group, so compared to them, I can try to become better.” They all wanted to improve their performance each year and do their very best. “It is fun to perform, do my best. It’s a kick to achieve in a competition, to perform your best, have a day like that. That’s when you perform better than you normally do, and I am very pleased when that happens, because I did well, but there is always someone who is better than you.” Some of the informants clearly had problems with being satisfied with their results in Birken. On the other hand, this was not a problem at work. It may, as one of the informant said, have something to do with the fact that in Birken you are all alone, while at work you are a part of a team of people responsible for the performance. “I get more nervous before Birken than before an important meeting with a client. I can’t believe it, a customer meeting is surely a lot more important! But it’s because in Birken you are all alone, while in a meeting with a customer you normally bring a colleague with you.” Most of the informants stated health as a reason for participating in Birken, and exercising as much as they do. Age is becoming a pressing issue, so Birken and exercising was a goal in itself as a means to stay fit and healthy. “I have a goal with my exercise, and that is to stay fit and that’s it. If I am able to exercise an average of four times a week through the year, than I can manage to sort of keep up with the decay of age and to stay somewhat fit.”

The difference between genders also appeared in relation to achievement. All the men, except two, were clear about not finishing Birken if illness or injuries were to occur, for instance the day before. “Well, I have to finish (Birken) the best possible way, absolutely. I would not race if I did not feel well, that’s not an option. If you attend the race it has to be with some sort of dignity.” While to the female informants this was not a pressing issue. “Last winter I was in bed with a prolapse in my neck, and couldn’t ski until the end of February. And I finished Birken anyway, I knew I could do it, but my ambitions were not the same. And I finished once with a sinus infection, I did my best, but it took five and a half hours, but I did it in order to have participated every year. I finish no matter what, I will not give up.” An interesting aspect when it comes to achievement is that all of the informants agreed on being used to being measured, and to measure subordinates in their jobs. Hence, setting specific goals and achieving them was natural to all of them, both at and outside of work.

6.6.1 Planning and preparation.

In order to achieve a goal, it is essential to be prepared and have a plan with regards to how to reach the goal. The past chapters have made it clear that the 11 informants have a lot in common, and planning is no exception. The informants are very structured and they plan everything thoroughly. This was observed both in Birken, as well as in their jobs. In addition, most of the informants have participated in the race several times, and consequently they have learned a lot from previous experiences concerning preparation. *“When I was young I had no clue about nutrition and stuff like that, and so I used to get worn out. But now I have a program for what I do, how to eat and drink before a competition, and when it comes to food- stations during the race- two glasses per station. And in Birken I additionally bring food reserves in terms of an energy bar, but that’s it. In Birken it is sufficient with two packages of gel and half an energy bar, plus maybe a banana, in Vasaloppet I know that I need two energy bars because it is about 90 km. In other words, planning!”* While this particular informant talked about nutrition and planning how to eat, a different informant spoke about planning how to perform the actual race. *“I looked into those who got the ‘Mark’ (in Birken), how much time they used before they got to Skramstad, the first nine kilometers, and how much time I used. I usually got to Skramstad four minutes before those who got the mark. So this year I did the opposite, I have never ever used this much time on getting to Skramstad, and I have never gone from Kvarstad to Sjusjøen this fast. So I have learned.”* The informant continued by saying that: *“I wrote on my skiing rod at what time I should be where, and I memorized it. At this time I was supposed to be at Skramstad, this time on Kvarstad etc., so I could see it on my rod. And then I have a watch so that I keep track on this.”*

Many of the informants also mentioned that they analyze their own performance in Birken in retrospect, and think about what they can do differently the next year. *“I know exactly what I did wrong that time (in Birken.), I started out way too hard, but I have learned from that. So I am very preoccupied with analyzing my results, both in relation to work but also when it comes to exercise. What went wrong, why didn’t I reach my goal.”* There was also an amount of mental preparations before Birken, and similar skiing races. *“If you are competitive, you start to tune in before something important happens, unconsciously you push*

other things aside because you need to rest, you need to focus and stuff like that.” Another informant said: *“I prepare myself because I want to perform my very best. I plan my exercise according to that, and I try to think through how I should do the race.”* Yet a different informant stated: *“You should be aware that mentally, it is very challenging and disruptive when people pass you. And to pass others feels very positive. To catch up with other contestants in the last part of the race, you have to start slowly. If you start out too fast, then people will pass you.”* It was evident from all the interviews that planning was something all the informants did, in their own way. It seemed very natural to them, as none of them participated in Birken without some sort of plan on how to execute the race and having learned from previous experiences. However, to a few of the informants, preparations were simply so important that they would not participate in any kind of competition without having prepared and practiced beforehand. An example of this was: *“Some of my friends are very impulsive, ‘would you like to join a kayak marathon next week’, and I say no, I have only paddled 600 km this year. But they have only paddled 100 km, and run despite of this. But I have to be very prepared, I have to have practiced and worked with it in my mind.”*

6.7 Competing is fun!

They wear tight clothes colored like a wasp, and they use Bicycles. They hardly notice us because they have no time to lose as they chase new records, their own as well as others’. Step aside, because here come the testers of the daily bicycle race from Asker and Bærum to Aker Brygge. The testers of Tour de Finance, the bicycle roads’ stinging demons (Kvam, 2007, p. 1).

This article describes a phenomenon that one of the informants spoke about, namely the daily contest between leaders, and other people, who bicycle to work. Nevertheless, it may not come as a surprise that competitiveness was a trait that all the informants showed. *“I love to compete! In everything! Cooking, yes, everything. I have always been that way.”* Hence, competitions, like Birken, are appealing to the informants. Evident in the data matrix system is that competitiveness initially was believed to be a subcategory of achievement (see 9.2 in appendix C). On the other hand, it became apparent in the analysis that competitiveness was highly significant to the informants, and should be regarded as a separate category. *“I am competitive and I like to compete, I like to be*

perceived as a competitor, and I guess that the other contestants in Birken also like to compete- at least those who focus, and want to perform.” In addition, they all believed this trait to be very visible to other people they associate with, such as friends, family, and colleagues. When asked about whether it was obvious to other people that they are competitive some answers were: “Yes, it is visible to others. I think I am a bit more serious about waxing and stuff like that before a race, while others are more relaxed.” and “It’s very visible. The competitiveness and measurability, the ability to prioritize- it is probably tiring to others. And I do not hide it.”

As all the informants, except two, are Norwegian business leaders, implicitly they are used to compete at work. *“Business is a competition. I know several bosses who use competition as a tool, ‘He is doing better than you, and you need to step it up’. I mean, that’s just how it is, right.”* A different informant agreed: *“When I lecture my subordinates I say that we live off being competitive. We compete every single day, and we need to remember that. Every day when we get up, we have to put on our start numbers, and get out there and compete. Because we have to do a good job. If not, there are constant competitors out there. My whole life has been a competition, right, and that is a life that I am comfortable with.”* An additional informant said he believed competitiveness to be an important trait at work because they have to perform and generate profit. Although the informants compete with other companies in the business world, the competitiveness at work is different from the competitiveness in relation to Birken. *“Cross- country skiing is an individual sport. I can rarely say that I have an individual role at work, and that I have to outperform my colleagues. The competitive trait becomes different. At work, it’s more about team effort, you can be competitive and have high ambitions, but at work it’s more in terms of having high ambitions. Bad quality is not acceptable, and you want to achieve something, but you do not compete with colleagues.”* An important aspect in relation to competitiveness is that 10 of the informants were active in sports during their childhood and teenage years, and so competition is something that they have been used to very early in life. Hence, one may wonder whether the informants’ background as being active in sports when they were younger has something to do with their very apparent

competitiveness. However, in the present thesis it is difficult to say anything about this.

6.8 Birken and work- is there any transferability?

Besides being very competitive, the informants agreed on another advantage of being physically active and participating in Birken, and that is, that they can become more physically and mentally enduring in relation to work, and in general. One informant noted that: *“To be in 1. Division you have to perform and that means that you have to be in shape.”* Another said that: *“I believe in energy. I have a lot of energy because I use energy. If I have had a rough day, it is much better for me to run for 50 minutes than to sit on the couch.”* Yet another informant stated: *“I noticed that the years I did not exercise, had something to do with the energy, feeling good about your health and being able to master things.”* In order to see the pattern of the informants’ responses regarding the transferability between Birken and work, the reader is referred to category 11 in the attached data matrix system.

The informants also mentioned other advantages in the link between physical activity, such as attending Birken, and work. Of the advantages stated were that you have to be extremely structured, and a master at managing and planning your time properly in order to balance a demanding job and exercise, in order to participate in Birken. Another link that was relevant in both work and the race was setting very detailed goals and working towards achieving them. *“Setting goals is very transferrable to work because it is the same mechanism. And we won’t achieve our goals if we don’t ‘exercise’ and work gradually, and split the goals into smaller goals.”* Another informant claimed: *“I believe that it’s a part of the whole person, and there is probably a correlation between being structured and systematic, as part of the picture of a leader, and that is probably true for some but not all. To me it is. I have the same approach at work as when I was the leader of the local football club. It’s about division of assignments and about structure.”* Another informant said: *“I believe there is a correlation between physical activity and performance at work. I can only speak for myself, but if you are to succeed at work you have to be concerned with achievement. Constantly push yourself to perform better, and I think that is relevant in your job as well.”* Yet a different informant stated that he learned to be systematic, disciplined and structured in his

days as an active sportsman, and that he has the same “killer instinct” at work and in Birken.

Two of the informants, on the other hand, did not agree to any transferability between work and physical activity other than being more energized and healthy. *“I am very surprised about the amount of transferability certain people in the business sector believe there is between being a top athlete and work.”* The informant further believes that what makes someone good in a competition is very different from what makes them good at work. A workplace is supposedly about building teams, while sports are only about yourself. *“I think that people who are structured and goal oriented in one thing, often are in another context as well. I don’t think sports have made me more structured and goal oriented in my work, quite the opposite. I believe that I have always been that way, and I think I approach every task with the intent of doing my best.”* The other informant claimed that: *“Being physically active causes me to be energized. In relation to competence there are not a lot of synergies.”* But what about structure, discipline? *“Well, maybe, but I have a long education and gone to school a lot, so it’s probably that part of me that comes out.”*

6.8.1 Birken- is it relevant on a CV?

The informants were asked whether having participated in Birken is an advantage, next to someone who has not, in an employment situation. After having emphasized that work related qualities and academic skills are more important, the general conception among the informants was the importance of having interests outside work. It was not perceived as more valuable to ski than for instance to play chess. On the other hand, it was more about a total picture of the person to be hired. *“When you hire a new person you are kind of interested in the whole picture, you are concerned about qualifications, personality, what the person really does in his life. So it becomes a total picture.”*

An important point is that the informants can be placed into two different groups in relation to this question. The first group of informants agreed that there is an advantage in having Birken on the CV because there are certain desirable qualities that are typical in someone who is active in sports. *“When interviewing in a recruitment setting I often ask about leisure interests and stuff like that. And if it*

appears that the person has been doing some sort of sport on a competitive level, team sports or whatever, I think that is positive.” (...) “It is a belief that these people are generally concerned about achievement and want to perform well.”

The opposite group of informants was clear about the fact that this was not important at all. *“I recently hired four new employees, and one of them had noticed that I participate in Birken, and sold it to me. Until I said that it is totally irrelevant. It absolutely does not matter if it (participation in Birken) is on a CV (...) On the other hand, having a good health and portraying that you take good care of yourself is important.”* Both of the two different viewpoints came with modifications. Those in favor of sports on a competitive level also realized that people who don't do sports might be just as competent as someone who does. On the other hand, those who did not care about Birken on the CV did realize some of the advantages of being physically fit and obviously concerned with achievement. In conclusion, it was about the whole picture of the person being hired.

6.9 Motivation

When asked about what generally motivates them, the informants answered somewhat differently. One informant defined motivation as: *“An inner force”*, and another as: *“The willpower of wanting to perform”*, while yet a different informant defined motivation as: *“Something that you want to do.”* The informants' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation will further be described, and comprise category 11, 11.1, and 11.2 in the matrix system in appendix C.

6.9.1 Intrinsic motivation.

All of the informants expressed some form of intrinsic motivation in relation to cross- country skiing, exercising and participating in Birken. Most of the informants described the experience of being outside and enjoying nature while skiing. One informant said that: *“And I think, not just exercise, but cross- country skiing in particular, is a fantastic nature experience. It is the greatest sport, regardless of anything! Going in to Sørkedalen, towards Heggelivann, turning off your headlight, it is sparkling white, five to six degrees below zero, full moon. It is a completely romantic feeling. I have some pictures of it, you won't believe it, how amazing it is. It sparkles, it is pure pleasure.”* A different informant stated: *“I started skiing in Nordmarka in order to exercise when I first moved to Oslo. And I started to love skiing as a way to exercise because I love being outside and I love*

cross- country skiing.” Another informant claimed: “I truly enjoy being physically active. I think that it is nice. Being outside, the air, a lot of great nature. The alternative to exercising, what is that? Sitting around in some bar? I get a whole lot of great nature experiences. For instance when I bicycle through Nordmarka to get home, there are a lot of great places to see.”

Many of the informants also mentioned Birken as a great experience that they truly enjoy. *“Birken has become something that I participate in regularly. Because I think the race is pretty amazing. The slopes are wonderful, and in my opinion, it is the most amazing skiing race, and also, it is to some extent harder than Grenaderen.”* One informant said that he participates in Birken because *“It’s fun! Yes it is great fun. Even though you, right before it starts, both are dreading it and looking forward to it at the same time. Will I be able to manage this? But once you are at the starting line and your buddies surround you, and they are all smiling, everyone is just as excited. And the start shot gets fired- it is simply a lot of fun.”* An additional informant noted that: *“I love it (Birken), it is both inspiring and a goal for exercising. And the race, when the slopes are good and stuff like that, it is a pleasure.”*

In addition, the informants also expressed a lot of joy related to, not just skiing, but exercising in general. *“I love to exercise, I enjoy exercising and I enjoy struggling a bit.”* The informant who evidently exercises the most stated, when asked about why he exercise as much as he does, that: *“Because I enjoy it! I think everybody becomes happy from exercising.”* While another informant stated that: *“You can feel pills of happiness bubbling in your blood after having exercised. I think it is very individual though, but I think that we who enjoy doing this (Birken and exercise a lot) get a bigger rush from it than other people do.”* According to a different informant, *“It (exercising) has become a lifestyle; I cannot imagine not exercising. To me, exercising is not a sacrifice; it gives me a good feeling.”* Lastly, many of the informants mentioned that they enjoy competing, doing their best and then achieving results, as one of them for instance stated: *“I think it is a lot of fun to have the competitive element in the exercise, measuring oneself against others. I enjoy the feeling of pushing myself to the limit, and relaxing afterwards and love the feeling of having accomplished something, whether it is Birken or a regular*

exercise. Pushing my body.” The informants all gave the impression that they exercise and participate in Birken because they think it is fun. Hence, this section is brought to an end by the following statement: *“It is a lot of fun! If it wasn’t any fun, then I wouldn’t. I mean, it’s not a professional sport, you don’t get paid to do it, you do it because it is a lot of fun.”*

6.9.2 Extrinsic motivation.

The informants all had in common the fact that they participate in Birken to have a goal with their exercise. They all mentioned that Birken is a way for them to get out more often, and not fall into a pattern of just sitting on the couch relaxing. This is illustrated by the following informant: *“I have difficulties with exercising if I don’t have a goal which pushes me to exercise. The first thing I do is to sign up for a lot of races and stuff like that way ahead of time. Because if I do that, then I know that I will get out and exercise. I would not have exercised if I for instance did not have Birken to work towards, what would be the point of exercising then?”* Hence, exercising may not be as enjoyable, because they need Birken as kind of a push to get going. Another informant also claimed having Birken as a goal for exercising and said that: *“Birken is an experience, it’s a competition and it is a goal for exercising.”* Yet a different informant talked about having regular agreements with pals about exercising. *“In the autumn for instance, when exercising at 8 in the morning on a Saturday, it is easier to get out if you have an agreement with someone. And it becomes easier to push yourself if we are supposed to have a tough exercise. If it rains 8 O’clock that Saturday morning, it is not as easy to go roller skiing by yourself.”*(...) *“Most people kind of exercise with a gun to their neck, and that’s when signing up for a race becomes a smart move.”* These statements illustrate the general opinion among the informants, that although they do enjoy exercising, they need a goal in order to actually get out more often.

Some of the informants also mentioned avoiding bad results in Birken. One informant, for instance, talked about not wanting to give up in the middle of the race again, as this has happened before: *“What happens is I get a lot of mails from my buddies, ‘quitting Olympics’ and stuff like that, and giving up in the middle of the race is very negative. So I have decided never to give up in any race or competition again.”* It seems as though it was important to many of the

informants, but not all, to get good results. *“I was in a terrible mood after Birken this year, because I had a bad day and my energy level was very low at the end of the season. I was not depressed for weeks, but I felt kind of bad for a couple of weeks because of my poor performance.”*

As previously mentioned, to some, it was important to beat their buddies. *“The motivation is to finish the race in a good way, with the aim of beating some buddies, and I have no problem doing that.”* Or for instance, as another informant stated: *“I compare myself with the best, and I do not want to be far behind them.”* When it came to attention surrounding Birken, all of the informants stated that they have had comments about their participation, and the general consensus is that getting attention is nice. When asked about whether he enjoys getting attention in relation to his participation, one informant said: *“To a certain degree, and that kind of bothers me. I think it stems from when I was doing sports actively.”* Another informant, when asked about how he perceived being mentioned in the newspaper Dagens Næringsliv (DN), and getting his name on the list of leaders' results in Birken, said: *“It is kind of fun, when you first get your name on the list, to get really high up, I think that is OK. It's about my competitiveness, the fact that a lot of people, in the same situation are participating, which I think is great. But the attention it gives, I am not that dependent upon that.”* It is worth mentioning, that attention was not essential to any of the informants, neither was it a reason alone for participating, it was simply nice. Further, some of the informants also mentioned feeling a slight pressure to perform, and to continue being in good shape, mostly due to the attention surrounding their participation. *“I do feel kind of a pressure to perform, because you do notice that people are paying attention to you. And it is kind of worse to get a bad result now than it was 10 years ago.”*

6.10 Media and image

Relating to image, the informants could be split into two groups. One group of informants claimed to enjoy being associated with Birken and being physically active, the other group did not. When asked if it was important to be associated with participation in Birken among colleagues, one informant, who belongs to the first group, answered, *“Yes, I think so. It's a tough question. I mean, I would love to inspire others to experience the pleasure of being in good shape, and to*

promote that, I actually think that is positive.” The informants who did not want to be associated with Birken were more interested in being associated with doing a good job at work, and so they wanted to tone down their physical image a bit. *“I would much rather tone it down actually. Because it is important to me that I don’t become a Birken person, here at work I want to be recognized for the job that I am doing, not for skiing fast in Birken.”* As regards to the media, there was agreement among the informants that Birken has been blown out of all proportion. The consequence of this is that a leader who participates often feel stigmatized due to the negative articles in the newspapers. *“Media has focused a lot on it (leaders who participate in Birken), and you get kind of stigmatized because of that. A lot of people I meet believe that I exercise to an extreme degree, and that I am totally crazy, because that is the impression you could easily get if you read about people like me in the newspapers.”* Another informant said that: *“I was kind of skeptical about talking to you (the researchers of this thesis), because I am very fed up with the stigmatization in DN, and the people who are expressing negative opinions about people who have a positive leisure activity, and if you look at many, I mean, other leaders, colleagues or friends who are doing this (Birken), most of them have been doing it all their life.”* Despite the negative attention and the stigmatization surrounding their participation, all of the informants, except for two, said that they will continue to participate, simply because they have been doing it for many years, and hence, enjoy it.

7. Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to qualitatively examine the motivational factors associated with Norwegian business leaders who participate in Birken, using the SDT framework and theory about the need for achievement. When coordinated, the four mini theories of SDT are claimed to cover every type of human behavior in all domains (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Therefore it is perhaps not surprising that the general conclusion to be drawn from this study is that key constructs from SDT and the need for achievement theory help understanding why the leaders participate in Birken. A discussion that relates the research question, the theory applied, and the findings will be presented.

7.1 Autonomy – it's a personal choice

Birken is an individual race, and hence, the result is dependent upon capability within a specific timeframe. We witnessed self-determined preparation, the informants “tune in” mentally prior to the race. More specifically, it turned out that some of the informants have an internal state of regulation (Ryan et al., 2009), and to a great extent, make their own choices when it comes to waxing, eating healthy food, exercising properly, getting enough sleep, and preparing themselves mentally. On the other hand, most of the informants stated that they have to take their family and work into consideration in relation to exercising and participating in skiing races. Many of them had been told by their spouse that they had to reduce the amount of time spent on exercising, in addition to participating in fewer races. Most of the informants felt somewhat inhibited by these responsibilities; they would have liked to exercise and take part in more races than they currently do. Although all the informants realized the importance of prioritizing family and work, there may be a lack of autonomy with regards to the choice of spending less time on skiing and exercising, which was not entirely their own. It is worth mentioning, however, that when forced to choose between races, Birken was the skiing race most of the informants chose to participate in. It is their own choice, and hence it is self-determined.

One might question whether the informants who exercise with groups of friends are entirely autonomous in their choices to partake in races, how they exercise etc., or if there is a degree of social pressure involved. For instance, some of the informants mentioned that they do perceive a certain amount of pressure to perform, from friends, but also in relation to their results being published in the newspapers. According to the informants, it helps to exercise with a group of buddies in order to push themselves physically. Nevertheless, they all claimed to be a part of these groups and participated by their own self will. Therefore, despite being held back by responsibilities in relation to work and family, it seems that the informants are genuinely interested in being adequately prepared for the race, because this is an individual race where the individual can only rely on themselves. For this reason they are to a large degree the original source of their own behavior, which accordingly refers to the psychological need for autonomy in SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Another important aspect of Birken, is that enrollment is voluntary. No one forces anyone to take part in such an event, and the threshold to withdraw is relatively low. In general, most of the informants stated that they had clear objectives in terms of what they want to achieve, and why they participate. For some, this requires strenuous exercise behavior, which necessitates considerable physical and mental exertion. Such an accomplishment requires that one must place value in the exercise and recognize the importance in terms of health and well-being (Edmunds et al., 2006). Hence, we experienced these informants as self-determined, that is, participation is completely their own choice, and it is valuable to them. Such an understanding is according, to Deci and Ryan (2006), one of the fundamental aspects in SDT regarding autonomy. Additionally, within the CET framework, autonomy is specified as a necessary condition for intrinsic motivation (Ryan et al., 2009).

7.2 Competence- having it and wanting more!

Not surprisingly, all of the informants showed a genuine interest in cross-country skiing and exercising. Furthermore, all except one informant expressed confidence in their own skiing ability. For this reason, competence, which is the second basic psychological need, was here found to be essential. Having fundamental knowledge with regards to exercise and skiing technique is thus of significance to the informants in order to perform well. This finding is consistent with Deci and Ryan's (2002) argument considering the necessity of adequate competence as a psychological need in order to develop and express capacity. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that there exists empirical evidence that individual sport activities (e.g., tennis, martial arts) show higher interest and competence motivation compared to participants in fitness activity (e.g., aerobic, weightlifting) (Frederic-Recascino, 2002). A study conducted by Frederick and Ryan (1993), supported this conclusion, and their findings revealed that those who participated in individual sports, (e.g., cross-country skiing, golf) showed significantly higher interest/enjoyment and competence motives compared to body-related activities (e.g., weightlifting, aerobics), which correlated negatively in terms of body appearance and self-esteem. Further, Edmunds et al. (2006) found that satisfaction of the need for competence played a direct role in predicting persistent exercise behavior. Such behavior appeared among the

informants in the sense that all of them, except for one, have been cross- country skiing since childhood. Additionally, they have been exercising more or less constantly, in a variety of sports, since childhood. The informants have participated in Birken for many years, some since they were students, indicating that the informants feel competent when it comes to cross- country skiing. Also the fact that some of the informants are trainers in the local skiing clubs implies that it is essential to be updated on the field. Another interesting observation was the opportunity to seek knowledge from prominent athletes, which to a certain degree was utilized. In conclusion, our findings are consistent with the importance of skill efficiency in the sports domain, which is central to competitive performance (Li et al., 2011).

7.3 Relatedness- the importance of others

In order to understand motivation to participate in sports, a large number of recent studies apply SDT (Gillet, Vallerand & Paty, 2013; Teixeira et al., 2012; Fortier & Farrell, 2009). Relatedness, the third psychological need, can be linked to the aspect of participation motivation (Frederick-Recascino, 2002), and was clearly identified as important to the informants, in relation to both exercise and cross- country skiing as well as to participation. The informants mostly exercise and participate in Birken together with friends or family. Many also claimed this to be the main reason as to why they take part every year. Hence, it is evident, that Birken and skiing is a part of the informants' feeling of belonging both with other individuals, and also with the local community. Furthermore, having a sense of belonging, as well as having a regular exercise appointment with friends or family was shown to be essential, which according to SDT, is predicted to foster healthy functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Overall, a consensus among the informants that Birken is an enjoyable social affair is evident. All of the informants stated that they have not attempted Birken alone, rather they reported an appreciation concerning the social aspect surrounding this particular event.

The findings in the present study show that to the informants, the need for competence, autonomy and relatedness are all present in relation to cross- country skiing and participation in Birken. The informants feel confident in their own skiing abilities, and constantly seek to improve. They participate together with friends and/or family, and despite a small feeling of pressure to perform, attending

Birken is the informants' own choice. Since all of the three basic needs are met in this particular context, it would imply that the informants are intrinsically motivated to participate in Birken (Frederick- Recascino, 2002). Hence, the race seems to allow satisfaction on all the three basic needs, implying that to the informants, Birken supports healthy functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2002). In line with this reasoning, Kilpatrick and colleagues (2002) argue that the basic psychological needs can be met through participation in sport and exercise. Furthermore, according to Frederick- Recascino (2002) most of the empirical focus in the motivation literature has been on the need for autonomy and competence, because satisfaction of these needs have been shown to be necessary for intrinsic motivation. However, the findings in the present study differ from previous findings, in that relatedness was just as essential, if not more important, to the informants than competence and autonomy. It may seem as though the aspect of relatedness in this case is an important part of the informants' feeling of intrinsic motivation, as the joy of skiing *together* with others was clearly emphasized. Hence, the findings show that one of the main reasons as to why the informants repeatedly participate in Birken is because they do it together with friends and family. It is a big part of maintaining their relationships and belonging to others who mean a great deal.

7.4 Intrinsic motivation – Birken is fun!

Both the need for competence and autonomy is argued as essential in the CET perspective in order for intrinsic motivation to exist. The findings in the present thesis confirmed the fulfillment of both needs, implying a felt intrinsic motivation among the informants to participate. Intrinsic motivation was, however, clearly expressed more explicitly by the informants, than simply as the result of the two needs being satisfied. Hence, intrinsic motivation is said to be the most highly endorsed form of motivation (Edmunds et al., 2006), and was proven to be a predictor of exercise behavior among the informants in the present study. We discovered clear evidence that the joy of being outdoors, the experience of nature, staying healthy, and having family and friends to exercise with, are important motivational factors, as well as the fun of competing in cross-country skiing. All of these aspects are argued in the motivational literature to be fundamental for intrinsic motivation because they are described as joyful by the informants (Koestner & Losier, 2002). Thus, the informants are clearly intrinsically motivated

to participate in Birken as it is an activity they pursue because they find it interesting and fun as well as representing a challenge to them (Koestner & Losier, 2002).

7.5 Extrinsic motivation – Birken is an exercise goal

Is intrinsic motivation in itself sufficient in answering the question of why the informants participate? According to Ryan and colleagues (2009), some activities are pursued not because they are inherently interesting, but because they are perceived to have something that the person can profit or gain from. Apparently, there are certain things which can be gained from participating, among them, recognition, status, positive comments and feedback, an attractive image, a reward and general admiration. Furthermore, according to Deci and Ryan (2008a) one of the clearest examples of extrinsically motivated behaviors are those performed to obtain a reward or avoid punishment. There is hardly any punishment for not participating in Birken, or for getting a bad result. There is, however, a reward for outstanding performance, namely getting the “Mark.” As previously mentioned, there are certain predetermined time limits which have to be met in order to receive the “Mark.” Further, the reward was clearly very important to most of the informants, and many claimed to be very motivated to be awarded this “Mark.” It seems there is a small amount of admiration and status related to this reward, in that most people can take part in the race, but the reward requires, to some extent, an extraordinary performance. Although the “Mark” is a goal for most of the informants, it is a reason to participate other than the true joy of skiing and being with friends and family. Hence, the findings imply that the informants are not only intrinsically motivated to participate, they are also extrinsically motivated to participate because they do it not simply for the joy of skiing, but to get good results, and thereby the “Mark.” These findings are in line with Ryan and colleagues’ (2009) findings, namely that the most basic principle in SDT is that individuals can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated in relation to physical exercise.

Is there anything else to gain from participating in Birken other than the “Mark”, as previously mentioned? One aspect of Birken stood out very clearly among all the informants, namely that they use their participation in Birken as a means to get their exercise done. Staying healthy was argued to be of high significance to most

of the informants, as the aging process was a clear concern among several. For this reason most of the informants claimed that having Birken as a exercise goal makes it a lot easier to get out and exercise, because they want to be in good shape when they are at the start line in Birken as well as functioning optimally at work. Some of the informants claimed that they would not have exercised to the same extent without having Birken as a distinct goal. The informants use Birken to push themselves to be dedicated in exercising persistently on a daily basis, which evidently leads them to be as physically fit as they strive to be. Hence, there is something to gain from signing up and participating in Birken other than the joy of skiing, being with friends and enjoying the nature, namely to gain a little push in order to stay in shape. What is also clear from this is that exercising is something that the informants feel they have to do, even though they may not always want to. This means that, in addition to being intrinsically motivated, they are also extrinsically motivated to participate. The relationship between work, Birken, and physical activity is also worth mentioning. Many of the informants further emphasized the importance of staying in shape in order to perform well at work, and to gain excessive energy. In addition it contributed to generally improved health, clearing thoughts, and accentuating well- being, which accordingly makes them more able to perform their best at work. Hence, exercise and skiing was to many viewed as a necessity in relation to work, which is also a sign of extrinsic motivation in that it involves pursuing exercise because it leads to some separate outcome, such as improved health and being better equipped to tackle work.

Although there is clear evidence that the informants to a certain extent are extrinsically motivated to participate, putting the informants into different categories in relation to the OIT framework, and to which degree they have internalized the value of participating in Birken proved very difficult. There are however some points worth mentioning. First of all, none of the informants can be said to be introjected, in that none claimed to participate because they feel pressured or controlled to do so in order to feel worthy (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Rather, the extrinsic motivation observed among the informants must be placed somewhere between identification and integration. All the informants, in different degrees, can be said to identify with the value of participating, and do not feel

pressured or controlled (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Furthermore, nine out of 11 informants informed that they are most likely to continue to participate in Birken for the next five years. For this reason, we believe the informants personally value the benefits of having an extrinsic goal in order to exercise regularly. They have a substantial need to sustain and improve their health, which according to Sebire et al. (2009) relates to intrinsic reasons to exercise. Still, Birken operates as a significant extrinsic exercise goal, which as previously mentioned, supports the presumption within SDT, that individuals can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated regarding participation in sports (Ryan et al., 2009).

7.6 Feedback- it's nice!

The social context has, according to the CET perspective within SDT, a certain effect on people's intrinsic motivation. The theory further argues that receiving feedback and rewards can foster feelings of competence, and enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci et al., 1999). The informants all agreed to receive lots of feedback in relation to their participation and their results. To some of them, this was very nice. Hence, feedback may be involved in increasing the informants' joy of participating, and consequently their intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, a meta-analytic review by Eisenberger and colleagues (1999) found that receiving rewards for meeting normative performance standards, i. e. exceeding the performance compared to others should produce greater intrinsic motivation. The informants, however, only mentioned receiving feedback in more general terms. They did a good job, for instance, and not that they performed better than others, meaning that it may not be an important factor in the informants' perception of intrinsic motivation related to Birken. As the informants did not say anything about receiving specific feedback regarding normative performance standards, feedback may in fact inhibit their intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1999). If this is the case, then it may explain why some of the informants clearly disliked any attention or feedback revolving around their participation. However, it is not possible to make any firm conclusions regarding the subject of feedback and extrinsic motivation in this particular thesis. Surely, the question of whether feedback enhances or undermines the informants' intrinsic motivation may depend specifically on the type of feedback received and how it is interpreted.

Although attending Birken seems to result in a lot of feedback to the informants, which can be viewed as recognition or approval by others, it is not stated by any of the informants as a reason to why they participate. On the other hand, the “Mark” received for reaching the finishing line within a certain time frame may be interpreted as a reward for meeting normative performance standards. The “Mark” can further be viewed as a form of feedback, because it implicitly involves exceeding the performance of others who do not receive it. Hence, receiving the “Mark” may, in relation to Eisenberger and colleagues’ (1999) findings, contribute to enhance the informants’ intrinsic motivation to participate. This could explain why it is important to most of the informants to receive the “Mark”, they think it is fun, and it may be a part of enhancing their enjoyment, and hence their intrinsic motivation, in relation to further participation. Based on the picture portrayed by the media, the present researchers initially believed feedback to be very important to the informants. It is easy to have the impression that attention and positive feedback is in fact a significant motivational factor for leaders to participate. Therefore, it is an interesting observation that feedback in fact was not important, it was simply stated as nice to receive positive comments.

7.7 Competitiveness

It was observed in the findings that competitiveness was an essential part of the informants’ personalities. Competitive individuals are typically described as self-starters, go-getters, and high performers. They strive harder and more effectively than others. For this reasons, they often achieve their goals earlier in a variety of domains (Dumblekar & Vihar, 2010). Many of the informants started competing in sports when they were children, and they have demanding jobs in which competition with other companies is a big part of their daily routine. Another way that the informants’ competitiveness is apparent is in their accomplishments, in the sense that they all have successful careers, in addition to being active and engaged in other areas in life. Perhaps it is not so strange that these informants seek competition in their spare time, for instance in Birken, because they are used to compete, and they love it. Several of the informants further described the rush they experience before, and during the race, and the great feeling afterwards, when they know that they performed their best. Reeve and Deci (1996) argued that in order to be intrinsically motivating, activities must be optimally challenging, and it is said that an easy way to find challenges is to

enter a competitive situation. The joy the informants experience from a competition implies that they may be intrinsically motivated to be a part of a competition which involves climbing five mountains together with 17 000 contestants. On the other hand, the informants may seek competition because it involves achieving something other than simple participation. For the informants, it is not enough to ski in Nordmarka, nor is it enough to participate in Birken for the sake of just having participated. They seek personal challenges, and want to be a part of a competitive environment outside of work.

Although the trait of competitiveness in fact can be said to be necessary to posit as a leader in Norwegian business, the need to compete has also led to heated discussions within some of the informants' families. Basically, the informants described having experienced negative opinions regarding their use of time spent on exercising from their spouse, which evidently has caused them to decrease their amount of exercise. Despite being competitive, age, gender, and life situation play a significant role in terms of performance orientation. It was clear that the informants have accepted the fact that major personal improvements are unrealistic. Rather, they participate in Birken because they enjoy competing, and they attempt to develop as far as their physical condition, and the situation at home, allows. Overall, competitiveness was found to be a common factor among all the informants, which is subsequently visible to others in different domains such as work.

7.8 Media – a feeling of being stigmatized

The findings show that the informants agree that Birken has been somewhat blown out of proportions by the media, and as a consequence, they feel stigmatized by some of the newspaper articles. None of the informants appreciated this negative attention, and they did not recognize themselves in the picture portrayed. Despite what might be labeled as stigmatization, most of the informants want to continue to participate in Birken, because they love it. Hence, this is another sign of the informants' intrinsic motivation regarding participation in Birken. They want to continue competing, despite the negative attention, because they truly enjoy competing in cross- country skiing. Nevertheless, participation in Birken is, according to sociologist Marianne Inez Lien a part of a current trend among leaders to realize the modern life-style, which to a large

extent is about physically active and staying fit. Furthermore, this form of outer control should according to Lien reflect moral, strength, and willpower (Bristol, 2010a). In this respect, Birken can be regarded as an activity one has something to gain from, namely an attractive image that other people might admire. This implies that one might wonder if the informants are extrinsically motivated to participate, because it involves achieving an attractive image. Furthermore, our findings in this respect are slightly ambiguous, as some of the informants claimed to like the attention surrounding their participation, others clearly did not. More specifically, some of the informants try deliberately to avoid conversations regarding their results in Birken and their exercise habits. On the other hand, certain informants like the social recognition and being associated with Birken. Although some of the informants liked having the image of being physically active, it was hardly important to any of the informants to be associated with Birken. While to one group of informants it seemed acceptable to be viewed as physically active, another group of informants disliked being associated with Birken. These findings imply that image cannot be regarded as an important part of the reason as to why the informants participate.

7.9 Achieving is essential

There was consensus among all the informants that achievement was of importance. The feeling of accomplishment was described as satisfying, and it is evident that all of the informants have a strong need for achievement. According to Larsen and Buss (2010), people who are motivated by a high level of achievement are engaged, they cherish the process, and are persistent over time in a specific activity. The fact that many of the informants have participated in Birken for almost a decade proves this point. Moreover, they also feel that there is still potential for improvement. Birken can also be said to be moderately challenging, in that most people who cross-country ski can participate, but they have to be in very good shape in order to perform well and to hope for the “Mark.” Hence it can be perceived as a perfect competition for people high in achievement. According to theory, there are two types of achievement goals, namely mastery goals or performance goals (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Research done by Moreno and colleagues (2010) revealed that exercisers, who view ability as something which can be enhanced, would strive to achieve personal improvement. This finding is somewhat consistent with our perception of the

informants, in that they continuously seek to improve, but feel inhibited by work, age, and family situation to reach their full potential in Birken.

The informants can further be interpreted to be mastery goal oriented, which theoretically refers to being focused on skill development (Lee et al., 2003). Improving their performance in Birken, as well as constantly becoming better at skiing, came across as important goals to all the informants. As this is something they apparently work hard to achieve, the informants seem to be mastery goal oriented. Furthermore, as previously stated, we believe that the informants possess a high degree of autonomy, especially in terms of mental preparation, which according to Lee et al.'s (2003) findings predicts a mastery goal pattern. Moreno et al. (2010) supports this notion by arguing that mastery goal orientation is found to positively predict self-determined motivation, and is the type of motivation that is proposed to result in the most adaptive, affective, and behavioral outcomes. Also worth mentioning is that athletes who score high on mastery- approach goals have been found to enjoy their participation in sports and perform well (Li et al., 2011). These results relate to the findings in the present study, which proved that the informants enjoy participating in Birken and many of them also perform well in the race. Additionally, since skiing is a fairly technical sport, we noted that several informants had a strong attention to detail, in terms of feeling confident on their technique. For this reason, the present findings support the notion that competence is an important aspect of achievement goals, as proposed by Elliot and McGregor (2001). On the other hand, the informants were not only focused on mastery goals in relation to Birken, but also, performance goals came across as important. However, performance goals did not seem as significant to the informants as mastery goals. To the informants, beating friends and other people of their own age was something that they claimed to want to achieve. In addition, getting the "Mark" proved to be of significance to them. This is a clear example of a performance goal.

7.9.1 Planning and preparation

A fascinating observation was that planning appeared to be an important component. The informants were never specifically asked about planning and preparations regarding Birken. They were only asked about mental preparation in relation to participating in the competition. Nevertheless, they eagerly explained

how they prepared before the race. As this is a slightly unexpected finding, it is neither directly related to our choice of theory, nor does it answer the question of why these informants actually choose to participate in Birken. We have noted, however, that this careful attention to planning and mental preparation prior to the race, may be related to the informants' high need for achievement. Mental focus, according to Lee et al. (2003), plays a prominent role in a goal striving process, which can be said to be exactly what we are witnessing in relation to the informants' planning and preparations. Following the informants' mindset, it would be ridiculous to participate without having done the necessary preparations beforehand, which may be interpreted as a result of them being achievement striving individuals. Another interesting finding worth mentioning is that a minor gender difference was observed in relation to achievement. Most of the male informants claimed not to want to participate in Birken in circumstances of for instance illness or injury. On the other hand, the female informants reported quite the opposite, and claimed that it was important to finish no matter what. The reason for this gender difference, however, remains unexamined in this particular study.

7.10 The transferability between Birken and leadership

One of the purposes of the present study was to seek to identify whether the informants perceive any transferability between participation in Birken, being physically active, and their work. The findings show that none of the informants who were interviewed believed that they became better leaders by participating in Birken. They simply agreed to see the link between being physically active, and having excessive amounts of energy which could be utilized at work. Many of the informants also believed that they had to be very structured and organized in order to make time to exercise and attend Birken. The informants proved to be preoccupied with setting goals, and split the goals into smaller parts, in order to achieve satisfactory results, both in Birken as well as in their job. Thus, the informants seem to take the consequences of their own goals very seriously because they are good at managing their own behavior and develop strategies in order to perform. Furthermore, individuals that are characterized as self-leaders direct their own effort, motivate themselves, and constantly renew their thinking patterns (Norris, 2008). Evident in the findings is that the informants apparently are very good at self-leadership, and it is noteworthy that strategies of

self-leadership might be useful for achieving and performing well (Norris, 2008). The informants clearly emphasized that one cannot operate the same way in Birken as in a work- life setting, because one works towards achieving a totally different goal, namely for the company and not for oneself, where one has to be a team player. Because the informants have all been in their current demanding jobs for a while, we might assume that they are competent and equipped with necessary skills to perform their job well. In addition, exercising and being physically active is a significant part of the informants' life, and hence, they are physically fit and healthy. Focusing both on primary and secondary skills, namely mental and physical ability, seem to be of importance to the informants, and are believed to be of significance in order for a leader to be able to perform at his or her full potential at work (Loher & Shwartz, 2001). Thereby, Birken may be beneficial in order for the informants to be physically active.

According to newspaper articles, different people express their opinions about how leaders do not become better leaders by participating in Birken. One of them is for instance the organizational psychologist Jan Christophersen who claims that participation in Birken is definitely not a good metaphor of great leadership abilities (Myklemyr, 2010). It is peculiar, however, that despite numerous attempts, we were not able to find any article in which any leader claims to have become better at doing his or her job by participating in Birken, nor was any statistical evidence regarding this found. The informants do not believe there is any essential link between work and Birken, although they claim it is important to be physically fit in order to perform optimally at work. In relation to this finding it is perhaps not surprising that none of the informants claimed that it is vital to put Birken on a CV in a recruitment setting. Many preferred hiring healthy people and the importance of having spare- time hobbies in general was further emphasized. Skiing and Birken were not seen as better than other hobbies to any of the informants. Apparently, when hiring a new person, personality, qualifications, and spare- time hobbies were emphasized. Hence, the informants seem to appreciate a holistic approach in terms of hiring new employees.

Contrary to the media's portrayal of leaders who partake in Birken, to the informants in the present study, exposure surrounding their participation was not

an important reason for them to participate. After long conversations with all of the informants, ranging from 45 minutes to 80 minutes in duration, many of the articles seem somewhat vicious and misunderstood. One article for instance mentions that leaders who participate in Birken should spend more of their spare time with their family and friends, or work in volunteer organizations (Flåøyen, 2010). The results indicate, however, that the informants in the present study in fact exercise and participate in Birken together with their friends and family, and it is stated as one of the most important reasons for them to participate. Many of the informants are also actively involved as leaders, board members, or trainers in local community sports clubs. To us it seems evident that the informants are in fact dedicated people. They are passionate, an inspiration to others, and very devoted to their families. In addition to being preoccupied with achievement and personal development, in relation to work as well as in Birken, the findings show that they are both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated to participate in Birken.

8. Limitations and Future Research

There are some limitations to this study that are worth mentioning. First, an investigation of the media's portrayal of leaders who participate in Birken was initiated, before conducting the interviews, possibly leading to the researchers in the present thesis being biased before interviewing. To minimize this effect, most of the informants were contacted using the snowball- sampling technique, and hence, they were not found using the Internet. The informants who were searched for on the Internet were found using a list of leaders' results in Birken, posted in a newspaper, and consequently, no further background checks on the informants were made. A newspaper list, such as the one used in search for informants in the present study, includes names, age, the person's position in the company, and the company name. Hence, no additional information was needed. This method was applied in order to avoid having any kind of impression of the informant before the interview actually took place. Nevertheless, the researchers admit to not being able to avoid being somewhat biased before interviewing, which may have affected the responses. An important point, on the other hand, is that this impression quickly vanished after having conducted a couple of interviews.

Secondly, since the theme of the study, namely leaders who participate in Birken, can be said to be a significant Norwegian phenomenon, the findings are therefore limited to a Norwegian context. The sample size only consisted of 11 informants, which is also a problem regarding generalizability. A bigger sample size might have enhanced the generalizability as well as contributed to a deeper insight to the phenomenon, perhaps even to the emergence of new themes. However, interviews were conducted until a perceived point of saturation was reached, and hence, increasing the sample size was not really necessary. Also worth mentioning is the uneven distribution of female and male informants. Due to difficulties in finding female leaders who participate in Birken there were only three female informants, as opposed to eight male informants. This may have been unfortunate regarding the results, a more even distribution of gender would have been favorable. However, according to the survey by Rolf Rønning at HIL, 19% of the participants in Birken are women, while 81% are men (Skaare, 2011). Therefore, the present survey actually consists of 1.59 times as many women as the real population of Birken racers apparently consist of. Thus, having a more even distribution of gender would not only be difficult, but non representative.

In the present study a qualitative design was applied, it could be beneficial, on the other hand, to have used a quantitative approach. A survey might be better at grasping the informants' motivation to participate in Birken, in relation to SDT and its many concepts. For instance, it is difficult to place the informants along the continuum of extrinsic motivation, in the mini theory OIT, when interviews are being applied. Consequently, a survey with a bigger sample could be better at uncovering such details. In addition, using a qualitative method implies that the data material is not as comparable as when a quantitative method is applied, which explains some of the empty areas in the data matrix (see appendix C). Despite using a semi-structured interview guide, no interview was exactly the same, and different themes were naturally attributed diverse amounts of attention by the informants. On the other hand, a qualitative methodology implies having a more nuanced picture of the topic in question, which in this case was emphasized. It was the informants' personal opinions and experiences with regards to participation in Birken and physical activity that the researchers were interested

in. Hence, a qualitative approach is better suited at uncovering meanings and opinions (Thagaard, 2002).

The interview guide was developed based on SDT and the theory about the need for achievement. For this reason there exists the possibility of confirmatory bias, meaning that information revolving around the theoretical framework applied might have been favored compared to other aspects which arose during the interviews. In retrospect, difficulties emerged regarding uncovering the degree to which the informants had regulated their motivation. As previously mentioned, this would have been easier to uncover using a survey. However, it was regarded as more important to uncover whether the informants were intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to participate in Birken, and hence, the level of regulation was not essential.

Interviewing involves the informant being in the same room as the researcher, making anonymity impossible. Lack of anonymity might have an impact on responses, if the informant is uncomfortable for instance. It can be difficult to uncover the interviewee's true opinion, and the informant may want to portray him- or herself more favorably than what is actually the case. Nevertheless, the informants in the present study were prominent leaders in the Norwegian business sector, who most likely did not feel intimidated by the researchers, two innocent and polite students from BI. There are several examples which could illustrate that the informants felt comfortable during the interviews. As previously mentioned, one of the informants left the room in the middle of the interview, and subsequently one of the department managers answered questions about his personality and leadership style. Another informant invited the researchers for lunch after the interview. Hence, it is here assumed that the informants' true opinions and experiences were shared. There were no problems in getting informants to participate in the study.

Transcriptions of the interviews together with interpretations of quotes were not e-mailed to the informants. This may have posed a problem to the trustworthiness of the data in that there is a possibility that the informants' statements have been interpreted incorrectly. On the other hand, the informants were told that they could

contact us with questions regarding the thesis, if additional information needed to be shared, or if they wanted to withdraw their entire interview. The informants were also informed about anonymity and what efforts were made to ensure this important principle. The informants were clearly surprised regarding this, and many did not significantly care about anonymity. For this reason it was not considered essential to send transcriptions and analyses of quotes to the informants. It was also considered as a possibility that the informants would not relate to their own statements for the sole reason that they had been translated into English. Moreover, interpretations of the transcribed interviews have been rather straight forward and simply analyzed for what they are.

The researchers of this thesis started with an exploratory approach to investigate the subject of Norwegian business leaders who participate in Birken, which eventually resulted in a theoretically driven approach to investigate the research question. A grounded theory approach could have been applied instead, in order to grasp the subject more thoroughly. Such an approach was, on the other hand, regarded as too comprehensive and time consuming. However, the theoretical approach proved here to be fruitful. The findings show that SDT and the theory about the need for achievement indeed were able to explain why the informants participate in Birken.

The focus of this study was Norwegian business leaders' motivation and the need for achievement in relation to their participation in Birken. However, and especially considering that leaders taking part in Birken have not received previous attention in research, there are other areas of this topic that would be interesting to investigate further. For instance, many of the informants in the current sample were concerned with being a role model to their subordinates, and to encourage physical activity among their employees. It is unclear how this might be perceived by their employees, and hence, it would be interesting to investigate how the subordinates are affected by having a very physically active leader, who participates in Birken and similar races. Additionally, a study which takes the employees point of view might bring about an answer to what some newspaper articles claim, namely that one can become a better leader by participating in Birken. Hence, conducting a survey on for instance job satisfaction among

“Birken leaders” subordinates, and compare the results of employees whose leaders do not take part in Birken could be interesting. Is it a part of building a positive or negative culture at work? Another interesting area to study in relation to Birken is the media’s point of view regarding Birken, and physically active leaders, as they are an important part of this current trend. What are the opinions of journalists, PR agencies and headhunters? Whether there actually is transferability between work and participation in sports was difficult to determine in this particular study, due to the fact that every leader had a different personality, and their job entailed different responsibilities. It could be interesting for future research to investigate such a relationship, based on the increasing trend among Norwegian business leaders to be physically active. Other themes than motivation and need for achievement could be topics for further research, for instance, power and influence related to being a physically active leader who participates in Birken, or has an obsessive passion.

9. Conclusion

First of all, the findings show that in relation to SDT, and the theory about basic psychological needs, all three needs seem to be met regarding Birken and cross-country skiing. The informants feel competent when it comes to skiing, and were very interested in constantly evolving their knowledge to become better skiers. Furthermore, participation in Birken is their own choice, hence autonomy is present. More interestingly was the importance of relatedness, which appeared to be one of the main reasons the informants actually participate in Birken, namely because they do it together with their friends and family. Hence, it can be asserted that Birken is an activity that leads to fulfillment of the informants’ psychological need for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Although it is not entirely explicit from the findings, fulfillment of the basic three psychological needs may implicitly be an answer to the question of why the informants participate in Birken. Relatedness, however, is indeed a clearly expressed reason for the informants to participate in Birken.

Secondly, it was also evident from the findings that the informants are intrinsically motivated to participate in Birken, as they all emphasized the true joy of skiing, competing, being outdoors, and appreciating nature, mostly together with people

they care about. Thus in answering the question of why the informants in the present study participate in Birken, it is simply because they love it. Another sign of the informants' intrinsic motivation to take part in the race is that despite negative media attention surrounding business leaders' participation in the race, they still choose to take part in it because they enjoy it so much. However, intrinsic motivation is not the only force that drives the informants to attend Birken. The clearest example of extrinsic motivation is that one of the aspects which motivate the informants is the "Mark." They want to perform and get the prize. One of the main reasons the informants participate in Birken was that it is an exercise goal, something they sign up for in order to get the necessary exercise done. This is also a clear example of extrinsic motivation in that it is to take part in an activity in order to gain something from it, namely to be pushed to get the physical exercise done. Furthermore, exercise was regarded as important in order to delay the aging process, therefore health was stated as an important reason to participate. Another significant reason stated by the informants was that it is absolutely vital for them to be in good physical shape to perform well at work. Our findings are thus consistent with Ryan and colleagues' (2009) argument within the field of exercise and sports: People can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to participate.

Although the informants receive a lot of feedback in relation to their participation, whether it influences their intrinsic or extrinsic motivation to take part in Birken is somewhat unclear. This may depend, in accordance with previous findings (Eisenberger et al., 1999) on the type of feedback received. Hence, feedback that meets normative performance standards may increase the informants' intrinsic motivation, while more general feedback may decrease it. Contrary to the theory, our findings showed that feedback is not of importance to the informants, and thereby it is not a reason for why they participate nor is it something that explicitly motivates them. Worth mentioning, however, is that some of the informants liked receiving feedback, while others clearly disliked it. It was also important who they received feedback from. Furthermore, while image may seem as a central reason as to why leaders participate in Birken, it was not found to be of any significance to the informants in the present study. Some of the informants liked having the image of being physically active, while others did not.

Nevertheless, maintaining a certain image was not found to be a reason for the informants to participate, and hence, it cannot be viewed as motivation for their participation. This finding is contradictory to what some newspaper articles have claimed, namely that leaders who take part in Birken love the attention surrounding their participation (Gorseth, 2010). Competitiveness was found to be a reason for the informants' participation. The informants clearly love to compete, but they also seemingly compete in order to achieve something, for instance a hope of being rewarded with the "Mark."

The findings further show that achievement was very evident in all of the informants. It was something that preoccupied all of them. This is perhaps not so strange considering the kind of people the sample consisted of. The informants are busy leaders with very demanding jobs and a lot of responsibility. They work in an achievement oriented setting where competing firms, as well as performance constantly are on their minds in relation to work. The informants in the present study are very physically active, and many of them have responsibilities in sports clubs for children or for a group of adults. Perhaps a suitable quote with regards to achievement is, as one of the informants stated: *"If you want to get something done, give it to someone who has a lot to do."* Furthermore, discernable in the findings is that both mastery goals and performance goals proved to be of importance. The informants are preoccupied with mastering the task of skiing, but it is also of significance to perform in Birken, and to achieve the "Mark." The answer to the question of to what extent achievement was important to the informants therefore seems obvious; it was very important in many aspects of life, but also in relation to Birken. Another interesting conclusion, which can be seen in relation to the informants' seemingly great need for achievement was their preoccupation with planning and preparations before a race.

The media has portrayed leaders who attend Birken as self-centered, ego-oriented human beings, with large bank accounts, who are "bad" leaders, and equipment freaks, who do not spend enough time with their family. According to our observations this is largely a misconception. To the informants, cross-country skiing is a hobby that they do with or without family and friends. However, the hobby is very important to the informants, and they enjoy skiing.

The present study aimed at finding out what motivates Norwegian business leaders to participate in Birken, and to what extent is achievement important? Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn: The informants participate in Birken because they love to ski and compete. It is an important exercise goal that they need in order to be persistent with their physical exercise to stay healthy and fit. They do it together with their family and friends. Achievement proved to be evident among all the informants, and they are both mastery- as well as performance goal oriented. They are also concerned with planning and preparations before the race.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview guide

1. Gi en kort beskrivelse av deg selv.
2. Når begynte du å delta i Birken? Hvor mange ganger har du deltatt? Og hvor mange merker har du?
3. Beskriv det gjerne med tre ord hva Birken er for deg?
4. Hvilke type skirenn har du gått tidligere? Har du alltid gått på ski, eller deltatt i renn tidligere?
5. Hvordan ser en dagligdags treningsuke ut for deg? Og synes du all trening er morsomt?
6. I hvor stor grad er det å være fysisk aktiv og godt trent viktig for deg?
7. Trener du i fellellskap eller alene? Begrunn svaret.
8. Hvor innheter du kunnskapen om trening? Får du noe form for tips/kvalitetssikring om treningen din?
9. Er det du som bestemmer ditt eget treningsløp, eller blir det planlagt av andre?
10. Har du testet deg i forhold til din kapasitet (O₂ opptak, teknikk).
11. Forbereder du deg mentalt (holde moralen opp underveis)?
12. Hva skal til for at du er fornøyd med resultatene dine i Birken?
13. Tror du det for din del er noen sammenheng mellom fysisk aktivitet og dine prestasjoner på jobben?
14. Hva legger du i ordet motivasjon/hva betyr motivasjon for deg.
15. I hvilken grad liker du å konkurrere?
16. Opplever du deltagelse i birken som verdifullt?
17. Beskriv følelsen du får av å lykkes i Birken og følelsen du får av å lykkes i jobben?
18. I hvilken grad opplever du sosial støtte i forhold til din deltakelse i Birken, og hvor viktig er den for deg? Kom med eksempler

19. Hvor viktig for deg er det at du gjør det bedre år etter år i Birken, og setter du deg klare mål?
20. Har du opplevd å ikke nå målet du satte deg, hvordan taklet du det? Og hvordan påvirket det målet for neste år?
21. Går dine ambisjoner i livet og Birken på bekostning av andre ting? Hva er det som gjør at det er verdt å forsake noe?
- 22.
23. I hvilken grad er det viktig å bli assosiert med deltagelse i Birken.
24. Hvor sannsynlig er det at du kommer til å delta i Birken de neste 5 årene? Hvis du ikke deltar, vil du da føle deg litt ekskludert?
25. Hvis du skulle ansette en person og denne personen skriver på sin CV at han eller hun har deltatt i Birken, hvordan ser du på dette? Begrunn svaret.
26. Hva tror du er grunnen til at Birken har fått høy status blant ledere i næringslivet?
27. Kom gjerne med innvendinger om ting som vi ikke har belyst, som du mener er relevant i denne sammenhengen

Appendix B: Consent form**Forespørsel om å delta i studien “ledere som deltar i Birken”**

I forbindelse med vår mastergrad ved Handelshøyskolen BI gjennomfører vi en studie som omhandler ledere som går Birken. Formålet med oppgaven er å se på hva som driver og motiverer ledere til å delta i rennet, samt om det er noen sammenheng mellom lederens evne til å oppnå suksess på jobb og samtidig prestere i krevende renn slik som Birken.

Prosjektet vil bli utført av undertegnede. På bakgrunn av research i media dukket navnet ditt opp, og du får herved en forespørsel om å delta i denne studien.

Deltakelse i prosjektet innebærer ett intervju som vil ta ca. en time. Intervjuene vil kun bli brukt til vår masteroppgave.

Videre vil vi informere om at det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet og dersom det er ønskelig kan du trekke deg, samt tilbakekreve de anonymiserte personopplysningene, uten å måtte begrunne dette nærmere. Det er kun vi som vil få adgang til de personidentifiserbare opplysningene. Vi er underlagt taushetsplikt og opplysningene vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Resultatet av studiet vil bli publisert som upersonlige data, slik at den enkelte ikke kan gjenkjennes. Studiet forventes å avsluttes i september 2013, og dataene vil følgelig anonymiseres innen den tid. For å kvalitetssikre informasjonen vil intervjuet bli tatt opp på bånd, og anonymisering innebærer at lydopptaket fra intervjuet vil bli slettet.

Dersom du ønsker å delta i undersøkelsen ber vi deg om å signerer den følgende samtykkeerklæringen. Har du spørsmål i forbindelse med denne henvendelsen, eller ønsker å bli informert om resultatene etter endt studie, kan du gjerne ta kontakt med oss på telefon.

Med vennlig hilsen

Gunhild Lier og Kristin Staff Lorenzen

Tlf: Gunhild: 922 81 441, Kristin: 997 67 738

Samtykkeerklæring:

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om prosjektet “ledere som går Birken” og er villig til å delta i studien.

Signatur.....

Appendix C: Data matrix

Informant	1. Livsstil	2. Trening	3. Birken
1	<p>1. Familie, to brødre, trente veldig mye sammen i oppveksten. Aktiv med idrett fra 9-10 år, til jeg var 18. La opp, kuttet ut idrett i mange år. Begynte som ca 30.</p> <p>2. Familie: Prøver å gå med hensyn til familie, kone og barn. Viktig at det ikke er for lang reisevei. Ikke aktuelt å trene mer mtp familie og jobb. Det vil gå utover familien og jobben. Det viktigste er familien. Ski, sykkel og løping før, kuttet ut sykkel og løping.</p> <p>3. Fysisk aktivitet: det er veldig viktig! Overskudd, velvære, følelsen av å beherske/ klare ting, ha kondisjon og styrke på plass. Alt er mye mer tungt når man ikke trener, slapp og sliten. Prestere ellers i livet, så er det viktig å holde seg godt trent.</p> <p>4. Aktiv på ski til 17 år. Satset på ski, var rundt 20 'ende i landet, veldig mye trening, jeg prioriterte det framfor skole. 20 'ende beste ikke godt nok, bør egentlig ligge blant 5 beste. Valgte å kutte helt ut. Satse på skole og utdanning. Fra 10 år, god på ski det store målet, tungt å gi slipp.</p>	<p>Ikke mer enn to maks tre ganger i uka. Liker ikke så mye intervall, veldig vondt, men prøver en gang i uka. Trener da sammen med andre på laget. Bruker pulsklokke. Ikke aktuelt å trene mer med familie og jobbsituasjon.</p>	<p>1. Birken= uoffisielt NM, for mosjonister. Alle de beste kommer, får målt seg på noen ting i klassen. Melder på renn for å komme seg ut å trene, hadde ikke trent uten renn.</p> <p>2. Veldig sannsynlig med Birken neste 5 år.</p> <p>3. En del kolleger deltar. En kollega med på privat lag. Snakker + trener med ham. En del på litt lavere nivå, ikke merket. Arrangerer /ansvarlig for sportslig aktiviteter på jobben.</p> <p>4. Veldig stort arrangement, litt for stort. Litt mye logistikk - det er litt negativt. Alltid konkurrert og ville drevet med dette uansett om det er status i avisen.</p>
2	<p>1. Familie, tre barn. Rundt 45, får tilbake egen tid, valgt å prioritere helse. 2. Planlegger trening rundt familie. Trener før barna står opp. 3. Bruker egen tid på å holde helse i orden. 4. Aktiv på ski som ung, lærte.</p>	<p>4 ganger i uka. Tirsdag: løpegjeng, torsdag: 1,15 t time rask løping 10-12 km, fredag: kort tur, 8 km, 45 minutter, lørdag: treningscenter.</p>	<p>1. Deltatt 8/9 ganger. 2 ganger som student. 1 merke. Birken er tradisjon. Litt mer prestisje, nei, var tidlig ute med trippel. Treningsmål. Gjør det fordi det er gøy. 2. En del arrangementer rundt fysisk aktivitet på jobben. Birken, Merellchallenge.</p> <p>3. Ganske sannsynlig med Birken de neste 5 årene.</p> <p>4. Birken som konsept på hell. Blitt for stort. Tenkte å stå over neste år, men meldt på likevel. Konseptet blir for utvannet, tv-serie osv. Oppmerksomheten blir for stor, går ut av moten. Men birken kommer til å bestå, kan bli tøffere konkurranse. Ledere og ski på retur.</p>
3	<p>1) Gift og har to barn. 2. Fikk barn- mindre tid til trening. Trener forsvarlig mye i forhold til familie og jobb, må være litt balanse. Kan ikke la egen hobby gå på bekostning av ungenes muligheter, viktig å følge opp. 3. Drevet med aktiv idrett hele livet. Tatt opp skigåingen i to perioder - rundt 30 og rundt 40år. 4. Langrenn som gutt. Roing, to NM gull i roing. Ungdomsløper aldri bedre enn kretsmester, ikke nok. Junior NM og hovedlandsrenn. Gått litt store klassiske løp siste år. Gjorde også det 10-12 år siden. Også er det veldig moro, det er veldig flott å trene i Oslo, litt sånn bakgrunn for at det er fint å gå på ski her.</p>	<p>Høsten: 4/5 ganger i uken. Vinter: 4 ganger i uken. Klokke: i snitt seks timer i uken. Litt roing på våren og sommer. Løping og rulleski. Og skigåing selvfølgelig.</p>	<p>1. Gått 5/6 ganger, merker alle gangene. Gikk som student. Birken= NM for aldersbestemte klasser og gæmliser. Begynne å konkurrere igjen, birken med best deltakelse - mest konkurranse. Klassiker, fin hvis du liker turren. 2. Ganske sannsynlig med Birken neste 5 år. 3. Behagelig+ velvære å være i god form. God følelse å ha høy fysisk kapasitet. Kick og konkurrer, kick å få det til i en konkurranse. 4. Litt kaos, utrolig mye mennesker, logistikk med overmatting og starte ett sted i mål et annet. Mange liker lokale turer da. Ultimate arrangementet der alle er med.</p>
4	<p>1. 2 barn, skilt. 2. Treningsprogram etter barna når de var små, fikk kabalen til å gå opp likevel. 3. Viktig, livsstil, kan ikke tenke seg liv uten trening. Ikke besettelse, men del av livet hennes. 4. Ikke aktiv som barn, men gikk mye på ski</p>		<p>1. Birken 10 ganger. Birken er et mål, en begivenhet og et fint arrangement. Hele pakken er veldig bra. Supert mål for skitreeningen. 2. Stor gjeng på jobben som går birken, hun har vært pådriver. Pakke rundt det. 3. Sannsynlig med Birken de neste 5 år. 4. Tror vi har nådd metningspunkt med Birken</p>
5	<p>1. Samboer, sønn, hund. 2. Stiller mye opp for familien, når barna er syke osv. 30- 40 år, mindre trening pga små barn. 3. Trives med å være fysisk aktiv. Legger jo fort på seg, spiser mye. Sykdom, uvel uten trening. Overskudd, løser mye oppgaver ved løping ute. 4. Aktiv som barn. 11 år, nektet å dra på ferie, ville være med på stevne. Landslaget i friidrett. Ga seg rundt 29/30. Ikke god nok, målet var for høyt - følte han måtte slutte. Fortsatte å trene, men på annet nivå. har full kontroll over tid og fart. Ski er også målbart, glad i idrett hvor han kan være ute. Har med seg joggesko uansett hvor han er i verden.</p>	<p>Trener stort sett hver dag, gjerne to økter hver dag i perioder. Eksempel: Løper til jobb, trener styrke i lønnsjen og løper hjem. 2008: Toppår, 493 treningsøkter. Gått litt ned med vilje.</p>	<p>1. Synes birken er for masete, deltok for 3-4 år siden. Hadde dårlig opplevelse. Går andre renn i stedet. Temperaturen blitt for høy. 2. Noe fysisk aktivitet på jobben, han arrangerer. 3. Sannsynlig med renn neste 5 år, med mer senkede skuldre, få tilbake smilet.</p>
6	<p>1. Gift, 3 barn. 2. Prototype på norsk kjernefamilie. Prioriterer Birken og Marcialonga med hensyn til familie. 3. Alpha omega å være fysisk aktiv, alder. Overskudd privat, på jobb. 4. Alltid vært interessert i idrett, drevet med det siden bitteliten. Langrenn siden bitteliten.</p>	<p>3-4 ganger i uken. 5 nå som barna er flyttet ut. Hjerteflimmer, kan ikke trene intervaller, men ufarlig.</p>	<p>1. Begynte å delta i 1992, gått ca hvert år. 10-15 merker. Tradisjon, var hyggelig før, kameratgjeng som gikk. Flotteste rennet, flott terreng. Treningsmål. Purringen ved konkurransen, merket hovedmål. 2. 10-12 stk som deltar i birken på jobben. Snakkis like før, får beskjed om å holde kjeft av andre på jobben. 3. Fortsatte med Birken så lenge han kan.</p>
7	<p>1. Gift, 3 barn. 2. Fikk ikke trent i mange år når barna var små. Vet hun forsaker tid med familien for å trene. 3. Veldig viktig å være fysisk aktiv, livsstil/besettelse. Fort misfornøyd hvis hun ikke får trent. 4. Aktiv på langrenn som yngre, sluttet som 21 år. Nesten på landslaget, valgte utdanning. Tenker fortsatt litt på det valget.</p>	<p>Ca. 5 ganger i uka, nesten bare ski på vinteren. Intervaller, langkjøring, prøver å trene riktig uten voldsom systematikk. Mindre løping pga skade, rulleski og ski i stedet. Noe treningsstudio.</p>	<p>1. Ikke vanlig med Birken da hun var aktiv. Gått siste 5/6 år. Gøy å konkurrere, hevde seg, være i toppen, prestere så bra som mulig. Litt pes med logistikk rundt Birken. 2. Noen på jobben som går birken, ikke noe treningsfelleskap. Drar på birken med idrettslaget, ikke jobben. Litt snakkis. 3. Kommer nok til å delta neste 5 år.</p>
8	<p>1. Gift, 2 barn. 2. Barna og familie første pri. 3. Veldig viktig med fysisk aktivitet. 4. Aktiv som barn, kom langt. Kampsport. Lærte ikke å gå på ski som barn.</p>		<p>1. Begynte med langrenn som 30 år, aldri gått før. Deltatt 2 ganger, veddemål med venninne, merket begge ganger. Liker å ha birken som mål å feste blikket på. 3. Kommer nok ikke til å gå neste 5 år. Mulig ta det opp igjen når hun er 50, barna er store.</p>
9	<p>1. Gift, 3 barn, aktive på ski alle sammen. 2. Tar veldig hensyn til familie, de går aktiv og må kjøres rundt, ofrer da egen tid for dette. Trening og familie to sider av samme sak. 3. Ekstremt viktig å ære i god form 4. Aktiv skiløper som barn- senior.</p>	<p>Fra omtrent toppidrett en uke til mye reising neste, variasjon. Normalt: 8-10 timer trening, gjerne 6 økter.</p>	<p>1. Begynte i 89, lang pause som småbarnsfar. Trippelen. 14 merker. Holde seg i fysisk god form, skifelleskap som gjør det selvforsterkende å være i god form. 2. Ikke så mange med i birken på jobben, men mange fysisk aktive. Prøver å tone ned eget image på jobb. 4. Birken et fantastisk arrangement for alle.</p>
10	<p>1. Gift, 3 barn første ekteskap, 2 stebarn og 1 fra nåværende ekteskap. Langrenn en del av familiens</p>	<p>Mål om 4 ganger i uka, greier da å holde tritt</p>	<p>1. Birken som student, avbrekk med familie, gått 10 ganger. Går med familien. Trippelen et par år. Går</p>

	felles aktivitet. Pendler mellom Oslo og bosted. 2. Går sammen med familien, fellesskap, viktig. 3. Viktig med fysisk aktivitet, holde seg i form, helse. 4. Holdt på med langrenn siden guttunge.	med alderens forfall.	pga familiesituasjon, sosiale rundt det med venner, holde seg i form. 2. Ikke mange går birken på jobben, ikke snakkis. 3. Sannsynlig med birken neste 5 år.
11	1. Gift. 2 barn og bikkje. Pendler mye. 3. Veldig viktig å være fysisk aktiv, trives med det, liker å ha mye energi. Helseårsaker. 4. Aktiv som barn, langrenn og håndball.	Variert pga reising i jobb. Løper med bikkja, fast på tirsdager, friskis og svettis. Sykkler til jobb.	1. Gått ca 13 år på rad. En opplevelse, konkurranse, treningsmål. 2. Ca 30 stk på jobben som går birken, opplegg rundt det. Blodig alvor.

Informant	4. Kompetanse	5. Fellesskap	6. Autonomi
1	1. God base med kunnskap, ski som liten. Alltid gjort smøring. Ofte veldig gode ski. Stoler på seg selv, Hadde teknikk kurs. veldig nyttig. Med en teknikk trener på landslaget. Alltid noe å forbedre seg på. 2. Leser noen blader, har skisport+ birkebeinerbladet, DN aktiv, finansavisen. Testet O2 kapasitet, fulgt av finansavisen. testeT o2 opptak som aktiv.	Trente mye med bror som ung. Leder for eget team, 10 stk, sponses av jobben. Felles trening 1 gang i uken, trener ellers alene når det passer. Må tilpasse familie og jobb. Trener sammen med beste kamerater. Utveksler erfaringer, og andre ting.	Drev med sykkel, ski og løping før. Har kuttet ut sykkel og løping pga familie. Melder seg på Birken selv.
2	2. Hjelp fra atleter med intervaller, teste puls, presse grenser, via en i løpegruppa med mye kontakter. Gøy å lære. 3. Leser om trening i aviser. Gutta snakker om trening, metoder/teknikk. Umulig å ikke vite hvordan man skal trene, står over alt. Skal teste o2 opptak. 4. Aktiv på ski som yngre- god base kunnskap. Lærte treningsprinsipper, pulskontroll, føler han behersker det.	Tirsdag: fast løping med gutta, i 15 år. Gjort mye forskjellig. Løp med gutta i regnvær rundt sognsvann, vått og kaldt, løp likevel. Unngår å trene alene. Trener mye med partner. Veldig sprek, motiverer ham. Får ikke det samme ut av treningen ved å trene alene. Glede å gå på ski med gutta, gøy med fellesskap. Liker mennesker, jobbe sammen med folk, kjipt å være mye alene.	Logistikk, får ikke gått alle renn som ønskelig pga jobb. Bestemmer treningsløpet mest selv, lærer deg hva som gjelder før løp.
3	2. Bekjente og venner høyt oppe innenfor ulike ting, lett å få tilgang til ulik info. 2 venner jobber i olympiatoppen. Spør ut ressurspersoner, Aukland i forb med jobb/ski lag, smøreteam. Jobb= enklere med kontakt.3. Framoverlent med å sjekke ut nye ting, smøring, hva som skjer - rører på deg, og sånn. Leser ikke mye. Ikke O2 opptak- for sent. 4. Relativt bra base med kunnskap om trening, drevet mye med idrett tidligere. Alltid fulgt med på ski.	Trent med gjeng siste årene, kanskje en/to økter i uken sammen. Annenhver løping og ski. Intervaller/hard økt. Moro å ha noen å trene sammen med, sosialt, samme interesser. Forpliktende å ha avtaler med noen, lettere på hjemmebane å ha en fast dag. Samme interesser, følger med på hverandres resultater, backer hverandre opp, skryter av hverandre når det går bra.	Prioritere barna mer. Press på hjemmebane om at det blir for mye. Prøver å se positivt på å kutte ned trening. Fikk ikke trent som ønsket med små barn-frustrasjon
4	2. Tilgang på ressurspersoner gjennom jobb og sponurlaug. Trener litt med profilert utøver, veldig utbytte av kommentarer. Arrangerer skiteknikkurs på jobben. 3. Leser mye om trening, aviser, blader, foredrag noen ganger. Prøver å anvende kunnskapen, deler med andre. O2 opptak i forbindelse med reportasje.	Sosial greie rundt birken på jobben, stor gjeng som drar, en pakke rundt det. Trener en del med kjæreste, tok lang tid, men nå er han helt med. Trener med noen treningskompiser. Trener bare med gutter, sykkel og ski i marka. Ikke venninner å trene med. Trener mest for seg selv, ikke mye med jobben lenger. Klarer å pushe seg selv. Ensomt, savner venninne å trene med.	Meldte seg på sentrumsløpet i Oslo på 80- tallet, selvbestemt. Bestemmer treningen sin selv. Ingen venninner som er med. Renn, opplegg hun ikke får vært med pga jobb, mye mer lyst til å gå renn enn jobbmøter, men jobb kommer først.
5	Kunnskap om trening fra tid som aktiv.	Trener mest alene - 95% alene. Lever individuelt liv, ego og sær	Hjerteproblemer/ fysisk, har måttet roe ned trening. Savner å ha et mål der fremme for å være på hugget. Selvbestemt treningsopplegg med plan og orden.
6	2. Jobben sponser Aukland gutta, foredrag, teknikkkurs osv. Inspirerende. 3. Leser mye, genuin interesse. Tenker masse teknikk når han går. Viktig å innhente ny kunnskap, interesse, bøker, nettet, gøy å smøre ski. Ikke testet o2, går på kroppens signaler. 4. Aktiv som ung, god base med kunnskap, lærte mye om teknikk/smøring.	Liten sosial greie rundt birken. Trener sammen med en gjeng i borettslaget, 2 stykker igjen, morsomt og fint. Diskuterer på tur, hyggelig. Trener/syklar også med en del kamerater. Trener stort sett sammen med noen, noen dager for seg selv bare. Nyter naturen i eget tempo, ikke tenke på noe annet. God på egenmotivasjon, deilig å trene alene, men hyggelig med andre også. Ikke nødvendig å trene med andre.	
7	1. Noe avhengig av kunnskap ifht til aktive barn og engasjert i idrettslag. Diskuterer kunnskap med barna. 3. Leser, interessant, snapper opp litt. Synt det er morsomt. Har testet o2 opptak for lenge siden. Vil bli bedre på smøring, har ødelagt for henne tidligere i Birken. 4. God kunnskap om trening fra tid som aktiv, prøver å trene riktig, intervaller, langkjøring. Gått idrettshøyskolen.	Trener mest alene, viktig å utnytte tiden, ha fleksibilitet, trener akkurat når det passer. Trene samtidig med å kjøre barn til trening. Ikke noe treningsgruppe, men vært med på noen treningsgrupper med idrettslaget på våren. Liker best å gå på ski alene. Men hyggelig med idrettslaget og barna. Turer sammen, trening, støtte og kommentarer. Hyggelig å ha ski til felles med barnasamhold.	
8	2. Privilegier via proffe utøvere, venner/naboer. Går med henne, lærer bort, teknikk, utstyr, ait. 3. Sett mye langrenn på tv. Teknisk-kurs, latterliggjort på den tiden. Kommet dit at teknikken ikke står i veien for henne. Nøye på å få med seg informasjon, detaljorientert. 4. Ikke gått på ski som liten, begynte som 30. Svært manglende kompetanse.	Renn med 15 venninner, sosialt og treningsmål. Startet med ski som sosial greie. Langrenn individuell sport, hun søker bevisst kontakt med andre. Kobler av når hun er sosial. Aldri behov for å gå alene. Treningsgruppe, gjenger som følger med på hverandre.	
9	1. Trener egne, andre barn, avhengig av kunnskap. 3. Leser mye, bøker på nattbord. Morsomt, grundig og overivrig. 4. Aktiv som barn, føler han behersker det, trygg, føler ingen barrierer for å gå fort på ski.	Går sammen med to eldste døtre. Gjennomføre sammen med barn, gode venner, andres barn, betyr veldig mye. Går birken med aller beste venner og barn, jævlige morsomt. Familie/trening samme sak, trener sjelden alene. Trener 8 av 10 ganger med egne eldste barn, klubb. Trener også med kompiser, noen ganger alene, går fint. Hjelper med andre på treningen, sosialt+ konkurranse.	Kuttet ut løping og sykling pga familie. Mål og trening er selvbestemt. Innser også viss gruppeeffekt her, alle i gruppa trener, vil være med, visst press.
10	1. Leder i idrettslag, avhengig av kunnskap.3. Følger med, tatt treningslederkurs, smøringskurs og holder smøringskurs. Bør oppdatere seg kontinuerlig, hold det enkelt. Ikke pulsklokke eller o2 opptak. 4. Aktiv som barn, god base kunnskap, føler seg kompetent.	Trening med familie, ski, sykkel, løping, fint å kombinere, fellesskap. Leder i idrettslag, får trent med andre voksne så trener barna med andre barn samtidig. Fellesskap med venner, arrangementer. Trener med familie når hjemme, alene når han er i Oslo eller bedriftsarrangementer. Einstøing pga jobb. Sognsvann rundt (for å ikke være alene).	Veldig selvbestemt treningsopplegg, ikke noe følt press. Kun egenpålagt
11	2. Privilegier via jobb, hjelp av utøvere, fordeler i birken. 3. Opptatt av å holde seg oppdatert. Leser. Ikke o2 opptak, ikke pulsklokke.	Trener en del sammen med andre, fast gruppetime. Timeplan gjør det vanskelig å trene med andre. Går birken med 2 gode venner, fast opplegg. Langrennstrening med sønnen.	Bestemmer treningsopplegg selv, legger opp selv. Jobben hemmer ham på ski mengden, mye ute å reiser i varme land.

Informant	7. Sosial støtte	8. Feedback	9. Prestasjoner
1	Beste kammerater er med, mye sosialt rundt det. Merker det i lunsjer, blir fort snakking om trening og renn. Viktig med interesser utenfor jobb. Samholdsaspekt. Kolleger som deltar, snakker om trening i lunsjen.	Hyggelig når folk har gått inn på resultatlister og sett, "imponerende innsats". Ikke spesielle personer- generell hyggelig å bli lagt merke til. Negativ feedback fra kompis: bryte IL, vil derfor aldri bryte igjen. Facebook side, 1000 stk hadde vært inne.	Liker ikke å bli slått av andre. Ikke veldig opptatt av resultater, var det før, grunn til at han ikke konkurrerte på mange år. Ville ikke bli slått av noen. Å bli tatt igjen er veldig nedbrytende, å ta igjen andre er veldig opp. Taktisk positiv opplevelse i Birken i år, brøt i fjor (nederlag). Alltid noen han sammenligner seg med, spes. laget. Alltid vært en av de dårligste, men ikke i år. Midt på treet, fornøyd. Følelsen av at det går bra umiddelbart linket til de du sammenligner deg med. Ikke vits å trene uten å skulle prestere. Slo en som er bedre enn ham i år, veldig god følelse. Sammenheng mellom å prestere i idrett og på jobb, at man har den viljen i seg.
2	God opplevelse og trene/være ute med gutta		Gøy å presse seg selv. Fornøyd ved å ta merket. 1 merke. Noen min unna merket hver gang, uflaks. Aldri blitt slått av alle kompisene. Vil vinne, går ikke til grunne hvis ikke. Øk med nederlag hvis du har gjort alt du kunne. Går birken fordi det er gøy, for å prestere, bli bedre.
3	Treningsgruppa: samme interesser, følger med på hverandres resultater, backer hverandre opp, skryter av hverandre når det går bra. Helt på nett, snakker seg i mellom. Støtte fra sønn, kone uinteressert.	Moro med skryt fra treningsgruppa. Liker ikke skryt på feil premisser, f.eks skryt i år og gjorde det dårlig. Høyt i DN og gjorde det dårlig- bedre med feedback fra indre krets som kjenner ham og resultatene hans. Moro å snakke venner i mellom, kan ikke snakke med kona. Cred, mange syns han gjør det bra.	Skjerpes under løp. Følelsen av yte maksimalt, ha en gull dag. Få ett/to sånne renn i løpet av en sesong, er veldig kick. Da gjør man det bedre enn vanlig, resultatmessig fornøyd, men alltid noen som er bedre. Forlatt ambisjon om å bli best. Gøy å prestere, gjøre sitt beste. Kick å få til noe, utfordrer deg selv, teste kapasitet på flere arenaer. Gjør det veldig bra ifht utrolig mange- sammenligner.
4	Litt fra jobb, kjæreste. Mangler venninner, ingen interessert i det hun driver med/treningen.	Setter veldig pris på positiv tilbakemelding, særlig i plenum og særlig fra sjefen. I avisen, kommentarer, gøy, hyggelig. Prøver å være sånn sjef selv. Sjefen og kona inspirerer. Negativ feedback om bra prestasjon fra kompis- såret, jobben viktigere enn trening og lar ikke det gå utover jobb.	Kan gå for å gjennomføre, går til tross for sykdom. Nådde målsetting i birken i år. Ø2 opptak- forbedret seg, elsker å se fremgang. Vil ta merket. Gøy å slå en bestemt på jobben, han takler ikke å bli slått. Nederlag å bryte, ikke gå, går til tross for sykdom
5	Ingen støtte hjemme, de gir totalt blanke i treningen hans/renn/konkurranser.	Kommentarer til en viss grad viktig, syns det er irriterende. Henger igjen fra tid som aktiv. Setter pris på kommentarer om at han er i fysisk bra form.	Prøve å begrense skuffelsen av å ikke lykkes, ingen garanti for at det skal gå bra. Trent mer enn hva han får igjen av resultater. Alltid vært en lederskikkelse, liker å lede andre. Dårlig humør av nederlag, tenker alternativer. Nedtur å se folk rase forbi. Sammenligner med andre, noen bestemte han vil slå.
6	Kona trener ikke, eldste sønn med på renn noen ganger. Generellt sosialt opplegg rundt trening, renn.	Feedback fra andre på jobben om resultater osv. Snakkis, tilbakemeldinger fra kunder. Mange inne og sjekker tiden hans. Masse feedback. Hyggelig, betyr at du har en relasjon som betyr noe. Ålreit å stå på liste, men går ikke birken pga det.	Ser hvordan andre gjør det, vil slå kamerater. Deilig å komme i mål, ta merket, men aldri helt fornøyd med prestasjonen. Morsomt å ta igjen folk helt ved målstreken, mestring, veldig fokusert. Går uansett sykdom/føre/dårlige ski. Bryter ikke. Føler alltid å kunne ha gjort det bedre i birken, men fornøyd med resultater i jobben, team.
7	Fra idrettslaget, en del av hverdagskontaktnettverk, en del snakk om dette. Hyggelig å dra på turer sammen, blir lagt merke til om man gjør det bra, blir kommentert. Barna synes det er kult at hun fortsatt driver på. Mamma går fort på ski. De setter pris på at hun gjør det, litt morsomt. Hyggelig støtte og motivasjon.	Hyggelig, fra idrettslag og barna/familien. Barna: mamma gikk fortere enn folk på deres alder, kult. Folk fikk med seg at hun var på langrenn.com, hyggelig å bli verdsatt som idrettsprestasjon. Liker ikke kommentarer fra folk utenom idrettsmiljøet.	Bakgrunn som skiløper, god teknikk, mål å komme på pallen. Misfornøyd hvis det ikke skjer. Sammenligner seg med de beste. Trener en del, liker å konkurrere, prestere så bra som mulig. Ikke ta det som en tur og bare fullføre. Gøy å bli verdsatt som en idrettsprestasjon. Morsomt å havne på pallen, følelse av prestasjon, ha lykkes, nådd målet, tilfredsstillende. Forestilling om at resultatet i birken ikke bare ikke er viktig for deg, men hele verden. Hadde vært deilig å bare være mosjonist, ikke stressa på å gå fort
8	Vil overføre skigleden til døtrene, hyggelig å gjøre det sammen.	Mye feedback fra proffe venner om hvor dårlig hun er, hva hun må forbedre osv.	Tok merket med 8 min margin, mente hun var på søndagstur. Konkurrere veldig med venninne, slår henne overlegent. Resultatorientert. Hvis man skal gjøre ting skal man gjøre det skikkelig. Lykkelig mosjonist, god på å være dårlig. Syns hun er dårlig på ski. Aner ikke hvor mange medaljer hun har.
9	Mye sosial støtte, alle rundt er aktive omtrent. Familien og barna.		Hvis grunnform i orden, krever ikke så mye som folk tror.
10	Trening noe fint man kan kombinere med familien.		Morsomt å slå noen kamerater, men ikke viktig. Fornøyd hvis han gjør det beste han kan, skuffet over dårlige ski eller at han blir skuffet. Gir generell alt. Opptatt av prestasjoner i jobb og ellers, være i 1. div må du prestere, uten fokus lykkes ikke. God følelse å nå mål, vil fortsette med det. Kan ikke forvente utvikling i birken. 2 år igjen så greid mål om innenfor 10% 5 år på rad.
11	Familien gira på at han går birken. Barna driver med ski. Ønske om å identifisere seg med likesinnede.	Positiv feedback inspirerer. Lett samtaleemne, men folk tror han er mer sportsperson enn intellektuell, vil heller snakke om bøker osv enn trening.	Liker å prestere, konkurranseglad. Mange pokaler, stilt frem. Gode resultater trigger mye energi.

Informant	9.1 Planlegging	9.2 Konkurransorientering	9.3 Målsetting
1	God til å stake, Birken starter med kun oppover. Tenkt mentalt. Ny strategi. Kjørt i år eget løp til Skramstad, eget tempo. Gikk veldig bra. Gikk for sagte med vilje og begynte å ta igjen folk. Viktig mentalt sett. Opptatt av målbarhet.	Ikke likgyldig til konkurranse i jobben, men fins grenser. Må ikke bli spisse albuer. Konkurrerer mot seg selv i Birken, men også mot kamerater. Er konkurransorientert. Fascinert av konkurranse. Liker ikke tape kortspill. Alltid konkurrert, og vil drive med det selv om Birken er hauset opp i media. Konkurrerte med brødre om alt mulig, alltid hatt det i seg.	Hadde vært morro å komme under 3 timer, men er ikke god nok. Må trene mer, ikke verdt det. Målbarhet, opptatt av dette, interesse for å gjøre det bra på alt som kan måles. Å yte bra er å sette seg mål. Gjennomfører målene oppnår du prestasjonene. Måle mot seg selv, prøve å gjøre det best mulig. Fokus på målbarhet i jobben. Begynt å tenke hva han kan gjøre for å gjøre enda bedre neste år, muligens gå mer på rulleski. Negativ feedback om å bryte, vil unngå dette (avoidance goal), aldri bryte mer. Ønske om å holde seg på et godt nivå, forbedre seg, ser ikke mulighet til å trene mer.
2	Vet akkurat som i jobben, hva skal til for å bli bedre. Tester ut forskjellige ting, trene mer, annerledes, kombinere ting for å bli bedre. Birke ikke hard, trenger ikke mental forberedelse. Går på fysisk form. Logistikk rundt Birken er plagsomt. Trene hardere neste år hvis mål ikke nås.	Gøy å presse seg selv. Morsomt å slå kompiser (men ikke viktig?). Elsker å konkurrere. Konkurrerer på alt, trening, jobb, matlaging. Synlig for kolleger, slitsomt for de rundt. Business er en konkurranse, bruker det som virkemiddel til å presse seg selv. Prøver å tone det ned. Konkurrert som liten, vant med det.	Prioritere helse. Måler fysisk kapasitet 2 ganger i året-drivkraft å oppnå resultater og bli målt, det ledere driver med daglig. Lyst til å forbedre seg. Gå litt bedre enn seg selv+måle seg mot kompiser. Vet hva som skal til for å bli bedre. Tester ut forskjellige ting, trene mer, annerledes, kombinere ting for å bli bedre. Puls klokke, se hvordan han ligger an. Ta merket.
3	Mentale forberedelser, trenger å hvile først, tuner inn, fokus. Trenger overskudd. Tuner inn i forhold til smøring, valg av ski. Sjekker med folk som har en fot innenfor, som tester løypa på forhånd.	Kick å konkurrere+få det til. klisje at "over the hill" som ham er ekstremt konkurransorienterte, de som er mest konkurranse stiller ikke opp (meninger om dette). Mer kompetitiv enn mange han trener med. Ganske synlig. Mer tunet, alvorlig ifht smøring, andre mer relaxed. Prøver å optimalisere tingene som kan påvirkes. For eksempel ski og litt sånne ting da.	Forlatt ambisjon om å bli best pga familie/job. Ikke ambisjon om å trene mer. Gøyere å lykkes enn å feile, prøve på det når man først bruker mye tid. Betyr mye å gjøre det bedre år etter år i Birken. Ikke fornøyd i år, drite seg ut. Kommer ikke til å gi seg med trening, unngå å slippe seg ned der han var.
4	Setter seg mål og delmål, vant til dette fra jobben. Gå 100 mil ski før birken, delmål med plan for hvor mange mil som skulle gås i uken. Vet hva som har gått galt tidligere (2 min fra merket), tatt lærdom, analysert resultater, sett på andre som greide merket, hva gjorde de. Konklusjon: gikk for hardt ut i starten. Forberedelser, tid og sted på staven (være hvor til hvilken tid), pugget det, klokke+gps. Delmål.	Glad i å konkurrere, men aldri drevet med dette tidligere. Ikke tid og vilje til å gjøre det superbra i Birken. Konkurrerer mest med seg selv. Gjennomfører til tross for nakkeprolaps, sykdom osv.	Birken som treningsmål. Besettelse å få merket. Mål i år: ta merket i klassen 45-50, tok merket i alle klassene, målet nådd, gjorde det skikkelig. Nytt mål: merke i trippelen. Hadde fortsatt gått på 7 timer uten mål, øving av teknikk, mer skigåing. Skulle gå over 100 mil på ski før birken, gjorde det- grundig plan for hvor mange mil i uken osv. Deilig å nå mål om merket. Vil forbedre seg i jobb/birken, gjøre det som skal til. Opptatt av kontroll, oversikt på tall osv.
5	Hadde tidene på hansken i vasaloppet for å kontrollere. Alltid nedturer i skirenn, blir mentalt tung. Trives med å utfordre seg selv, og sette seg mål og nå dem. I jobb og trening: tenker på hvorfor han gjør det, hva skal til, hva skal gjøres, gire seg opp. Mental forberedelse før renn: smile, være blid, ikke hisse seg opp og ikke bryte. Opplevd å ikke ha mentale på plass, lettere negative tanker, sliter mye med det. Må være veldig forberedt på ting, øvd, jobbet med hodet. Sitter igjen fra aktiv karriere. Kunne klikke om plan om trening ble ødelagt. Vil gjøre det så bra som mulig.	Friidrett som ung, sluttet. Veien mot konkurransen viktigere enn selve konkurransen. Sykt konkurranse instinkt på jobb, prøver å tone litt ned for kan ta litt overhånd. Men prøver også å spille på det i jobb. Konkurransinstinkt kan ta knekken på ham. Bedre i medgang enn motgang. Går til tross for sykdom, men mer passiv ved unnskyldning. Må ha gjort hjemmeleksen for å stille, innser at dette burde tones ned.	Har konkurrert fra seg, men ikke trent fra seg, vil ha mål i form av å delta i konkurranse. Jobber mye, sover lite, trener som Northug. Vil fortsette å trene, men senke skuldre og ambisjoner. har full kontroll over tid og fart. Ski er også målbart. Prøve å begrense skuffelsen av å ikke lykkes, ingen garanti for at det skal gå bra. Liker å utfordre seg selv, sette mål og nå dem. Klart mål, enkle, planer for å nå målene for trening eller jobben. Kutte ut ting som ikke fungerer. Ikke trening bare for å trene. Gå tur, blir gæren, må ha et mål å gå til, treningseffekt. Løp=veldig målbart.
6	Trener spesifikt for birken. Tenker over mat i forveien, sammenheng kosthold/overskudd. Begynte med treningsdagbok. Tenker ikke spesifikt mentalt i forkant, lært av erfaring, hva man gjorde dumt før. Lært å gå roligere ut, komme i mål på fornuftig måte. Ta hensyn til flimmer. Holder fokus selv når folk går forbi. Veldig fokusert dager før, litt gæren. Ikke pulsklokke, ikke tider, går på kroppen så fort han kan.	Pleier å tone det ned, konkurransesiden han var bitteliten. Liten, ville ikke komme inn, trente til renn. Alltid konkurrert, elsket det, aldri blitt god i noe, ikke fokusert godt nok. Konkurransinstinkt bidrar til at han er selvkritisk. Aldri fornøyd, irriterer omgivelsene.	Merket et mål. Aldri helt fornøyd, stiller høye krav til seg selv. Tviler på at han noen gang blir fornøyd med resultat i birken. Målsetting om å kunne konkurrere, forbedre seg, bli bedre og bedre.
7	Forbereder seg for å prestere best mulig. Legger opp trening i forhold til det, prøver å tenke gjennom hvordan hun skal gå. Går ikke gjennom noen mentale greier ifht vær osv. Tenker på å ikke tneke negativt, skal klare det uansett. Klarer å holde god konsentrasjon. Hvis mål om pallen ikke nås- tenker over hva som kan gjøres bedre til neste gang. Må øke fokuset på det som gikk feil. Nederlag har ofte vært pga ytre faktorer, dårlig smøring, må da bli bedre til å smøre.	Konkurransinstinkt, liker å konkurrere, liker å oppfattes som konkurrent. Skinner gjennom i andre situasjoner, men idrett mer individuelt, på jobb blir det mer i form av høye ambisjoner. Har ikke et anstrengt forhold til konkurrentene sine. Ikke noe poeng å gå bare for å fullføre, konkurranse er å prestere og å måle seg.	Morsomt å måle egen prestasjon, klare å bli bedre. Alder, kjemper mot forfallet enn å bli bedre. Konkurrerer mot samme alder, prøve å bli bedre i forhold til dem. Trives med å ha konkrete mål, prosjekter som skal fredigstilles, ting som skal løses. Utviklingsoppgaver heller enn drifting, må ha mål å jobbe mot/deadline. Vil ikke gjøre det dårligere enn forrige gang. Deilig å bare hatt som mål å bare ta merket i birken, føle seg mer usynlig. Forestilling om at det ikke bare ikke er viktig for deg, men for hele verden hvordan jeg gjør det i birken. Deilig å bare være sånn mosjonist som ikke hadde vært så stressa på å gå fort.
8	Ble god pga fysikk, høy treningsmoral, men også pga god til å evaluere feil og hva hun gjorde riktig. Tenkte seg selv dårlig, fikk hjelp og jobbet mentalt med hodet.	Skal være best på alt, alle rundt ser på henne sånn. Ikke helt enig selv, men vet hun alltid har vært opptatt av å være best.	Lært fra idrettskarriere: er målet i seg selv for viktig blir man ansent, hun ble dårligere utøver av å være opptatt av å vinne. Vet hva som skal til for å bli god i idrett, ikke i nærheten av å bli god sånn hun holder på nå. Gå 3 min saktere til 1 passering, glise opp bakkene, tenke husk du er dårligere enn du tror.
9	Hele fam driver med ski, forberedelser går på automatgir. Uka før: sjekker vær, spise riktig, tenker ekstra. Mentalt avslappet underveis, erfaring, gode og dårlige perioder, lar seg ikke stress opp i forkant. Tenker mye teknikk underveis.	Synlig konkurransinstinkt, opptatt av målbarhet, slitsomt for andre. Veldig konkurransmenneske.	Vil hele tiden slå egne resultater, slitsomt. Slå seg selv (oppnåelsesmål), kontinuerlig bli bedre. Prøver helt til han når toppen. Vet hva som skal til, vant til å bli målt, trigger veldig. Bare en ting som skal til for å bli bedre, mer trening. Sammenligner ikke tid år til år, men ikke falle tilbake i resultatlista hører 50-55. Vil bli like god til å skøyte som gå klassisk. Viktigere å gå hurtig enn slå

			bestemte.
10	Noe mental forberedelse før renn, litt automatikk. Lite peiling som ung, har nå et program, med spising og drikking før konkurranser. Matstasjoner, to glass pr stasjon, gel og medbrakt bar. Vasa, så løypa på nett, bestemte hvor inntak av hva skulle tas på forhånd, planlegging.	Aldri vært konkurransemann av format. Men utpreget konkurranseinstinkt, kommer frem. Hårete mål på jobben, jobbe mot å nå dem.	Motto å trene hardt når han først trener. Bestemmer på forhånd av treningsøkt hvor langt osv, gjennomfører plan uansett form. Motto i familien+mål: gi alt, gjør sitt beste, ikke bryte barrierer. Ikke tenke negative tanker, bit tenner sammen, vilje. Vant med å bli målt på jobb, trives. Presser seg selv, nødvendig, filosofi. Ledere må ha visjon+misjon for det, ellers ikke vits. Enkle mål i birken:begrense forfall, være innenfor samme prosent (10) 5 år på rad i sin klasse (umulig), greid det hittil.
11	Driver ikke mentale forberedelser til Birken lengre, metalt sterk og vet at man har nedturer underveis. Gått mye, vet hvordan han skal gå. Starte rolig, jevnt, øke mot slutten. Forsøker å gå så fort han kan.	Høyt konkurranseinstinkt, synlig. Viktig egenskap i jobb, skal prestere/generere overskudd.	Vant til å bli målt i jobben, liker å måle ansatte. Fremgang alltid et mål i seg selv, kjenne at det fungerer, ha det morsomt.

Informant	10. Sammenheng Birken og Jobb	10.1 Birken på CV'n	11. Motivasjon
1	Skal kunne prestere bra på jobb uten å konkurrere. Hadde ikke påvirket å ikke delta i Birken. Sammenheng mellom fysisk aktivitet og prestasjoner i jobben. Må være opptatt av å yte bra hvis du skal gjøre det bra i jobb. Konkurrere mot deg selv+ yte bra er veldig overførbart fra å trene+ konkurrere til å gjøre det bra. Hele tiden presse seg selv og gjøre det bedre. En del som ikke trener/konkurrerer mangler fokuset i jobb. Sammenheng mellom å lage konkret plan med mål du skal nå, både i trening og i jobb. Bekrefter at det treningsmetaforiske kan taes med over i jobb. Tror på tendens: de som konkurrerer vil også være opptatt av å gjøre det bra på jobb. Føler du at du kan prestere i idrett, lett å få følelsen av at du kan prestere i jobb også. Mer fysisk og mentalt utholdende pga treningen.	Ved intervjuer av jobbkandidater spør om fritidsinteresser. Drevet konkurranseidrett, f.eks lagidrett, interessert i idrett, positivt. Føler disse er opptatt av prestasjoner og vil gjøre det bra. Sammenheng mellom å prestere i idrett og prestere på jobb, har viljen i seg. Kan også gjøre det bra uten å drive med konkurranseidrett. Ikke noe 1 til 1 forhold. Intervju med ham, lettere å bli ansatt kanskje. Ville valgt kandidaten med konkurranseidrett, tror den er mer prestasjonsorientert. Fins grense, landslagsutøver blitt for mye.	Motivasjon er å sette seg et mål, greie å holde fokus på å gjennomføre det. Føles ikke bra å sette seg et mål også miste motivasjonen, noe skjer så du ikke gjennomfører, går da å tenker på å skulle ha gjort det. Ønske om å prestere, forbedre seg mot seg selv litt.
2	Absolutt sammenheng mellom jobben og å være fysisk aktiv. Vanskelig kundemøte, løp kvelden før. Skjerpa, bedre søvn, avveksling mellom jobb og hvile. Rastløs av å ikke trene, for mye grubling. Kan koble av dager han har trent. Intellektuelt arbeid, ved løping forsvinner tunge tanker- nullstilling. God fysisk form= overskudd. Tror det har en effekt å ha en sprek sjef.	Spiller ingen rolle med Birken og fysisk aktivitet i jobbintervju. Faglige det viktigste. Må være god på jobben først og fremst. Oppfordrer til trening, men ikke viktig i rekruttering.	Viktigste motivasjonen- holde helsa i orden. Puls klokke motiverer, se hvordan han ligger an. Ekstremt bra på egen motivasjon. Må ha det gøy for å motiveres, gladen ved å trene, trives/ha det gøy på jobb. Gjøre en god jobb, akkurat som med trening, gjøre forberedelser riktig, godt møte, gjøre et salg. Evaluere seg selv. Liker å jobbe sammen med folk. Problemorienterte mennesker kan demotivere.
3	Snakker om enrgilager. Kan være negativt med birken/ski, tar mye tid, kan gå utover jobb. Vedkjenner at det går utover jobb i perioder. Vanskelig å balansere i sesongen, konkurranse mann, trenger å fokusere. Positivt: mentalt overskudd trening. Takler press bedre. Meditasjon/skifter ut grums i hodet. Sover bedre, spiser sunnere. Lever mer regelmessig, sunt i forhold til overskudd på jobb. Fellesnevner ski/jobb: du må fighte.	Positivt å gått Birken, men hadde ikke vektlagt det. Viktigere ved ansettelse av ung, uerfaren. Ser på profil. Viktig å ha flinke folk. Birken- bra kvalitet type mennesker, verdier, orden på livene, krever struktur, positivt. Medieskapt vellykkethet- mer sammensatt bilde ifht resultater. Konkurranseinstinkt i positiv forstand, driver, energi i det de gjør, dedikasjon. På jobb med innstillingen om å lykkes.	Motivasjon: Uten en indre kraft/lyst til å holde på med dette er det umulig. For mye smerte forbundet med å trene brukbart. Skal du greie å presse deg, må du ha motivasjon for å gjøre det bra. Moro å gjøre sitt beste, i ting som engasjerer, gøyere å satse litt. No guts no glory. Kick av ting hvis man legger litt i det. Går inn for noe, et verv eller jobben, eller trening mer moro hvis man satser.
4	Jo mer fysisk aktiv man er, jo mer energi har man i jobben sin. Sette seg mål og komme i fysisk form. Mer overskudd som leder hvis man har fysisk aktivitet ved siden av. Energi, får energi av å bruke energi. Bedre med løpetur enn sofa når man er sliten. Rustet for sykdom. Sette seg mål overførbart til jobb, samme mekanismen. Oppnår ikke mål i jobben uten å trene, dele opp målene. Eneste måten å bli bedre i jobb er negativ tilbakemelding, faktaorientert. Jobb/Birken: liker å ha kontroll på tall, oversikt. Sjefen viser energien han får ut av treningen.	Går på personlighet. Ville sett en annen energi hos den som trente. Alltid faglig vurdert, men fysisk aktivitet kunne styrket kandidaturet, prestasjonsorientering.	Motivasjon er drivkraften til å yte enten det er på jobben eller det å oppnå resultater i birken. Så det ligger et sånn konkurranse element i det. Nå sine mål, det som er motivasjonen, så flytte lista for hver gang. Demotiveres av hindrer hun ikke rår over, utenfor kontroll.
5	Idretten har lært ham å være systematisk, metodisk og disiplin, viktig. Killerinstinkt på jobb som i trening. Bruker samme teknikkene ved stort foredrag i jobb som på startstreken. Teknikker: hvorfor gjør jeg det, hva skal jeg gjøre, hva må til, gire seg opp. Noen suksess kriterier er parallellt med hvordan han tenker - må være en stayer, utholdende. Ha klart mål, gjerne enkle. Greie å effektivere planer for å nå målene enten for trening eller jobben. Kutte ut ting som ikke fungerer, mange greier ikke å gi slipp på ting som også er overførbart fra trening til jobb. Tankegangen fra idrettsbakgrunn positiv ifht jobb, men må balanseres. Treningen kan gå utover jobb, "møter" er skitur.	Hadde nok ansatt den som gikk Birken. Tror det er noen verdier som han/teamet setter pris på. Egenskap. Idrettsbakgrunn-kompetent (syn i USA).	
6	Overskudd. Stayerevne i begge sammenhenger, kan ikke bryte/gi opp. Ønske om fullføre, gjøre en god jobb. Alene i birken, team i jobb. Trening/jobb: man må gjøre en jobb, fullføre, ta tiden det trenger. Kan ikke dukke opp uten å ha gjort en jobb på forhånd, ha evnen til å fullføre, gjøre en god jobb. Planlegging på begge sider, prioritere, effektiv bruk av tid. Uker med 10-12 timer trening, grundig planlegging bak, stå opp sykt tidlig. Konkurranse på jobb og i løypa, ta på seg startnr på jobb. Klar sammenheng mellom idrett/næringsliv. Næringslivet=ekstremsport.	Birken i seg selv ikke en kvalitet, men idrett teller litt. Helt menneske, interesser utenfor jobben, noen drivere i idrettsfolk, konkurranseinstinkt. Konkurranseselskap, sunt å ville vinne.	Motivasjon: noe man har lyst til, lyst til å gå på jobb nesten hver dag, lyst til å trene. Demotiveres av å føle å ikke ha greid å gi alt. Skjer ofte i Birken.

7	Sammenheng med hvordan hun er som menneske. liker å konkurrere og å prestere, vil gjennomsyre det hun gjør. Fordel å ha noe ved siden av jobb, idrett eller annet. Lærer å tåle press av idretten og det å konkurrere. Tåle å være nervøs, akkurat nå jeg må prestere. Tåle å stå litt i det, gjøre ubehagelige ting, som egentlig kroppen ber deg slappe av. Kan trene litt på det gjennom idretten. Blir for bedagelig, behagelig når man ikke blir målt. Høna/egg problemstilling. Strukturert person, tørre å sette seg mål, greie å konsentrere seg. Utviklingsoppgaver heller enn drifting, må ha mål å jobbe mot/deadline.	Ville nok fort verdsatt det positive med idrett, men se etter balanse. Brukt idrett som infor om at personen vil noe, er en som får til noe, lykkes. Leier etter det man kjenner seg igjen i, klarer å vurdere.	Motivasjon er en drivkraft, som gjør ting lystbetont, noe man får et ønske om. Motiverende å ha konkurranse elementet i treningen, måle seg med andre. Deilig å trene.
8	Overrasket over påstått overføringsverdi næringliv/idrett. Hva som gjør deg god i konkurranser annerledes enn hva som gjør deg god på jobb, arbeid=bygge team, idrett=handler kun om deg selv. Bedre liv, overskudd, helse. Folk som er strukturerte og målbevisste i det ene, er gjerne det i det andre også. Tror hun alltid har vært det. Skulle bli best i alt, gjort henne til konkurranseutøver, ikke omvendt.	Ser kun etter kjemi. Idrett kan gå begge veier, noen gode pga de er lagspillere, andre fordi de bare har tenkt på seg selv, være.	Finne glede i noe nytt, motivasjon å bli teknisk god så ikke teknikken ikke står i veien, hjelp av Vegard Ulvang. Ikke gitt opp fordi det er moro. Ikke ha kontroll er demotiverende.
9	Total balanse mellom tidsbruk. Tydelig positivt med fysisk aktivitet, ikke resultater. Oppfrorder bevisst ikke til fysisk aktivitet på jobben, holder seg unna, unngå press på de som ikke deler interessen. Feilslette koblinger mellom leder/Birken. Blir ekstremt strukturert. Være i utvikling hele tiden, tenke nytt, stadig slå rekorder, samme i idrett og på jobb. Prestasjonskultur i idrett, alt kan måles eksakt, overførbarhet her. Vet nøyaktig hva som kreves i birken, vet det i jobb også sammen m kolleger, mål, tiltak for å nå dem. Mulig han ikke greier frikoble ski/jobb slik han selv tror. Direkte sammenheng mellom mål, gjøre det som trengs for å nå dem, være i utvikling.	Ikke opptatt av Birken på CV, betyr ingenting. Men ville utfordret den som ikke var aktiv ifht overskudd osv, være i utvikling og sette mål for å nå dem.	At det er på moten bidrar ikke til at han vil gå birken. Motiverende med noen omgivelser, på jobb eller i skimmiljøet, folk det er hyggelig å være sammen motiverende, fellesskapet rundt er motiverende. Egen utvikling som blir motiverende.
10	Skal du være i 1. divisjon må du være i form. Reiser mye, må være mentalt og fysisk skikket, funker ikke å ikke være i form. Sammenheng med struktur og planlegging. En del av en helhet, har konkurranseinstinkt, strukturert, systematisk. Samme innfalsvinkel i idrettsgruppa som på job, fordeling av oppgaver, struktur, disiplin. Holistisk approach. Snakker om idlsjeler, ikke tilfeldig med leder som går birken, positive, uselviske folk som yter i jobb, nærmiljøet, familien, presser seg selv ekstra.	Birken ikke kvalifikasjon i seg selv, men opptatt av helheten. Ser verdien i andre ting også, men å drive med noe er verdifullt i seg selv. Vil ha aktive mennesker, holistisk. Være i stand til å motivere ut ifra personen du er, ikke posisjonen	Viktigste delen av motivasjon er at det er en del av hans familieaktivitet, felles aktivitet o interesser, svært viktig drivkraft. Ungene har holdt på med langrenn, friidrett. Venner, del av et miljø.
11	Energi og overskudd i jobben. Gått mye på skole, den delen av ham som kommer frem. Sammenheng mellom solid utdanning og like å prestere utenfor jobben.		Demotiverende når folk ikke gjør det de skal.

Informant	11. 1 Indre Motivasjon	11. 2 Ytre Motivasjon	12. Engasjert/Ildsjel
1	Trener for velvære, følelsen av å beherske ting og klare ting. God følelse å lykkes i Birken	Problemer med å trene uten å ha et mål som motiverer ham til å trene. Første han gjør er å melde seg på masse renn og ting langt fram. Kommer seg da ut og får trent. Hadde ikke trent uten f.eks å ha birken å trene mot. Visten med å trene da? Skjønner ikke folk som trener uten mål/mening. Negativ feedback ang å bryte (nederlag, press), vil ikke gjøre det igjen. Liker ikke trene intervall, må trene dette med laget. Laget har egen facebook side, mange som er inne, syns det er gøy. Viktig å holde seg godt trent for å kunne prestere ellers i livet. Fulgt av finansavisen en sesong. Tydelig konkurranseimage på jobb.	Arrangerer og har ansvar for alle sportslige aktiviteter i firmaet. Folk snakker om dette i lunsjen.
2	Tirsdagsgruppa gjort mye, f.eks merellchallenge- veldig gøy!Ski en fantastisk naturopplevelse, flotteste sporten. Sørkedalen, fullmåne, glittr, romantisk følelse, flott, ren nytelse. Stopp opp og nyt livet. Gleden med sport, beherske, komme ut, vekke fra hverdag- fantastisk. Birken mye logistikk, går fordi det er gøy. Gøy å være del av fellesskapet. følelsen av å ha gjennomført er så viktig at det blir en liten sorg hvis han ikke får gjort det.	Løp med gutta i forferdelig regnvær rundt sognsvann, vått og kaldt, løp likevel. Partner drar ham på løping på løping, hjelper jo veldig. Vil ikke la henne ta ham på løping, ikke vise svakhet. Greier å presse seg selv på sykling. Får ikke det samme ut av økten ved trening alene. Motivasjon å fullføre på en god måte, helst slå noen kompiser. Viktig å slå kompiser. Ikke noe press, men kjipt å ikke ha gått renn når man treffer gutta. Birken som ekstra motivasjon for trening, ikke avgjørende. Holder ikke å bare fullføre, stiller ikke opp i dårlig form, ikke i turklassen. Må gjennomføre med anstendighet.	Vil gjerne innspirer andre til å oppleve den nytelsen å være i god form.
3	Ski er veldig moro, flott å trene i Oslo, fint å gå på ski her. Umulig å holde på med dette uten indre kraft/lyst. Sånn lykkelig i blodet etter trening, liker å holde på med dette, mer rus av det enn andre. Sammenheng med at du søker disse opplevelsene. Mer gøy å prestere i løypa enn på jobb, orker å holde på for å få rusen, kicket. Motivasjon med mindre miljø som driver med det samme/samme interesser. Vil fortsette å trene, gøy	Avtale med kompiser for å komme seg ut, lettere å presse seg ordentlig ved hardkjør. Samme interesser, følger med på resultater, backer hverandre opp, skryter av hverandre når det går bra. Moro å gjøre sitt beste, i ting som engasjerer, gøyere å satse. Resultater-motivasjon å få til noe. Dårlig resultat i Birken i år, driti ut, ikke gøy. Innsener spotlight-effekt. Merker at mange følger med. Oppslag i finansavisen med gruppa. Får sms'er/oppmerksomhet. Oppmerksomhet- kjøpere å gjøre det dårlig nå enn før. Med på renn for å trene, ikke vært like flink uten renn å trene til. Vondt med intervaller, forbereder seg, deilig etterpå. Litt opplevd press for å gå renn- fanget av karusellen (lagt ned mye tid, kan ikke bare gi opp). Renn: trene med pistol i nakken. Vil ikke drite seg ut overfor seg selv. Gruppa rakker ned på andre i dårlig form. Elendige forhold, ikke en bra opplevelse å gå Birken.	Innvolvert i fysisk aktivitet på jobben. Ansvar for et treningsprogram/prosjekt t her. Pårdriver for renn/stafetter, arrangementer på jobben, fått med ganske mange.
4	Veldig glad i å gå på ski, bruke ski som treningsform. Gøy å være ute. Veldig glad i spinning. Trening ikke et offer, gir en god følelse. Deilig følelse å ta merket.	Begynte med Birken for å ha et mål med treningen, fikk med en kollega. Vet hun tar noen ekstra treningsturer med birken/trippelen som mål. Gjeng som går Birken. Besettelse å få merket. Motivasjon å få et bedre resultat av å trene, se effekt, kunne skru opp fart på mølla. Delmål før Birken, stykker opp for å gjennomføre. Vil helst ha treningsutbytte av skitur/sykling. Ikke gøy å gå med kjæresten før, ikke utbytte. Ikke press fra andre, presser seg selv. Gi alt når hun er på trening.	Fått med flere i jobben på turer hvor det er lagt inn fysisk aktivitet, dratt på fjellturer i Italia en gå tur en av dagene. Tatt initiativ på, sykle i år, positivt - sveise teamet mer sammen. Viktig å gi tilbake, idrettsverv. Arrangerer et krevende løp. Svømmer mellom isflak og legger løypa.
5	Glede knyttet til alle turene i forbindelse med trening. Gir energi å trene. Glad i idrett hvor han kan være ute, joggesko med uansett hvor i verden han er. Liker å trene, blir gira av å snakke om det. Blir han først gira på noe blir han enormt gira. Går til tross for sykdom. Liker ikke treningsstudio, elsker å være ute. Tenker at han er privilegert og lykkelig. verker etter å komme av gårde klokka tre halv fire, hodelykt i sørkedalen, går utover noe, jobb. Lykkefølelse når han kommer seg	Føler press til å fortsette å trene/gå renn. Følelse av opptrekksskrue i ryggen. Senket garden pga hjerteproblemer, savner å ha ett mål for å være på hugget. Forstyrrende at resultatene hans står i avisene. Stas i starten, plagsomt nå. Ikke derfor han gjør det. Impulsive venner, greier ikke det, må være forberedt mentalt og fysisk før renn/konkurranser.Følelse av å stå til ansvar overfor noen ifht til resultatet, må forklare. Første 2 år i Vasaloppet, formøyd med å fullføre, mer alvorlig nå. Trives med det: både og. Avhengig av å trene. Dager uten trening, grinete, rastløs. Greier ikke gå rolig tur og kose seg. Melde på konkurranser for å forberede treningen. Gjør ingenting for gøy, må ligge forberedelser bak. Ikke festlig å gå 1t rulle ski, hjelper å ha meldt seg på løp. Går renn med mindre stress, fokus, press. Lite søvn-mye jobb, trening, vet ikke om han trives	

	ut. Tror alle blir lykkelige av det	med det. Eliteklassen i vasaloppet, stressa, taklet ikke presset-kokte over.	
6	Fantastisk fin tur, flotteste rennet. Lyst til å trene, elsker å være ute, sjelden på studio, liker ikke. Ute uansett vær, utrolig deilig å komme ut, frihetsfølelse. Priviligert å løpe rundt, allsidighet. Må være lystbetont, gjør det han har lyst til. Glad i å gå på ski, lyst til å gjøre det hver dag! Fantastisk følelse. Ski: stillhet, mestring, teknikk, forbedring. Nervøsitet, ubehag overskygges av glede ved å konkurrere.	Bomma med merket før, blitt et mål i seg selv nå. Trener spesifikt for birken. Gruet seg de første årene, gleder seg nå. Mer nervøs før birken enn et stort kundemøte, helt alene, kundemøte backes av flinke kolleger. Koser seg mindre enn nabo han trener med, kompisar han vil slå. En kamerat, konkurrerer om alt! Kjempe nervøs før konkurranser, greier ikke roe ned. Ålreit å stå på liste, men går ikke birken pga det. Trener for å holde seg i form, ikke bli god på ski. Første man spør etter, merket.	Vært i spissen/inspirator for å få folk fysisk aktive/gå på ski i firmaet. Prøver å være en sportslig arb.plass.
7	Liker ikke treningsstudio, mer glad i å trene ute. Ute uansett vær og vindd. Flott å kunne være ute når man går på ski. Deilig å trene, trives med å trene, med å sitte. Naturelementet-frisk luft-motiverende i seg selv. Ville savnet triggeringen, presset hun legger på seg selv hvis hun hadde gitt opp å konkurrere. Idretts glede, tatt spor i form av at hun syns det er gøy å konkurrere	Motiverende med konkurranseelementet i treningen, måle med andre. Trives med å presse seg selv til det ytterste, slappe av, nyte følelsen av å ha utrettet noe etterpå. Pushe kroppen. Virker mer behagelig å ha et avslappet forhold til det, trappe ned, men såpass konkurranseinstinkt at ville ikke vært morsomt å gå birken mer da. Ville kuttet ut renn hvis det bare blir avslappet forhold til trening, helsegevinst. Opplever bare press fra seg selv, men vet at andre legger merke til resultatene. Ville ikke vært fornøyd med å bare fullføre birken.	I styret i idrettslaget med ski.
8	Renn med venninner, ha det hyggelig i forkant, men også som drive for å komme seg ut 10-15 ganger mer. Opplevelse av vinterlandskap sterk, vært 15 år inne. Opptatt av ski pga ble en sterk naturopplevelse. Langrenn: gjenoppdaget lek og morro. Gjøre noe hun var dårlig på, ha glede av. Ikke noe vits på hennes nivå hvis det ikke er gøy. Idrett hjalp henne tenke at man skal ha det gøy underveis. Ser på ski som verdifullt, vil overføre til døtrene.	Ble besatt av å lære teknikk, knekke koden. Skitrener som er proffe, rakker litt ned på henne? Husk du er dårligere enn du tror. Grunn til å gå birken, sosialt mål, gjør at du kommer mye mer ut, fine opplevelser du ikke ville fått ellers. Mange redde for å mislykkes, perfektjonist, tenkte seg selv dårlig før.	
9	Morsomt å ha birken å se fremover til ved trening. Beste følelse etterpå hvis hatt det vondt underveis, gleder deg til å ha det vondt. Motiverende å være i utvikling. Kjempe gøy å melde seg på løp, konkurrere. Må ha indre motivasjon for å være ytre motivert, se presset.	Morsomt å havne på lista, gøy at han kom jævlig langt opp. Ikke avhengig av oppmerksomheten. Målbilde, spesielt fokus uka før. Liker så godt å assosieres med å være fysisk aktiv at det blir litt selvforsterkende, må ta vare på ryktet. Måle i jobbsammenheng/skisammenheng prøve å være i utvikling og prestere litt bedre, og å ha seg ett mål som er veldig konkret, vet du hva som skal til for å nå målet. Trene da for å komme dit, forberede deg for å prestere. Og det er sabla motiverende.	Trener egne og andres barn, skilubb
10	Glad i å gå på ski. Familiefellesskap som han har glede av. Elsker å gå på ski. Føler ikke press for å være med på renn.	Jobben- lett å nedprioritere trening, melde på renn for å ha et mål, fin drivkraft. Ingenting å si at han er i DN, helt ok å ikke være der. Ski for å holde seg i form så han kan gjøre jobben sin ordentlig, viktig. Filosofi å presse seg selv, tror det er nødvendig, trives ikke nødvendigvis med det. Være forbilde for barna. Målsetting med trening, å være i form. Mål om å være innenfor viss prosent.	Leder i langrennslag, styret i 8 år. Ledet fotballgruppa for barna. Snakker om andre ildsjeler, aktive på alle plan, får ting gjort, engasjerte.
11	Må ha det gøy med treningen, skal ikke være noe ork. Stor glede av fysisk aktivitet, fint, være ute, flott natur, mange fine naturopplevelser. Fantastiske løpeturer i rio.	Motiveres av konkurranse, hadde aldri trent så mye uten de. Viktig å slå kompisar, men ikke essensielt. Fokus på trening på jobben, med på å skape dette. Ikke nøytral til lista, liker å stå der, men ikke avgjørende. Opplevde litt press om at folk ser hvordan han presterer før han kom på lista. Ikke sosialt press, presser andre.	Ildsjel, inspirert andre til å trene, bli mer sunne. En person spesielt, negativ skrivning i avisen, men se på den personen da, ikke negativt (med litt treningspress).

Informant	13. Image/ Media	14. Mental avkobling
1	Blitt litt for mye rundt dette. Har alltid konkurrert og drevet med det, ville gjort det uansett. Hauset opp. Har tatt litt av. Kjenner seg ikke igjen i det. Skjøner at han passer inn i profilen, men føler seg ikke truffet av bildet i media. Den stereotypiske lederen. Noen vil kanskje betegne ham sånn, men han tror ikke det, håper ikke det. Folk hekter seg på trend, blir polarisert. Føler seg stigmatisert over å bli spurt til studiet. Synlig konkurransemenneske, overspiller dette. Hvis han hadde kuttet ut alt av idrett, folk ville fått et annet inntrykk av ham. Har det i seg, det med å prestere og konkurrere. Overspiller konkurranseinstinkt på jobben.	
2	At Birken er blitt status er bare sunt, sunn konkurranse. Sunt å holde på med, ekskludert fanatikere. Kjenner seg igjen i medias fremstilling. Intervjuet i DN, prøvde å få frem at trening er gøy. Skal ikke tro alt du leser i avisen, mener mange som intervjues skryter på seg (lyver). Prestigen er oppskrytt. Litt viktig å assosieres med Birken. Mye snakk om konkurranse på jobb. Vil innspirere andre til å oppleve nytelsen å være i god form. Positivt å markedsføre det. Tror det har en effekt å ha en sprek sjef.	Psykisk slitsom jobb. Trening, får klarnet opp hjernen, frisk luft.
3	Oppslag i finansavisen med treningsgruppe. Assosiert med Birken, imagebyggende på godt/vondt. Føler seg stigmatisert. Folk tror han er gæren, lett å få det inntrykket fra media. "Ikke gå rundt som helt, selv om bedre enn de fleste på ski". Relaxed ifht navn i avisen. Mini kjendis i sesongen, kommentarer. Medieskapt. Holdt på med det for 10-12 år siden, like mye kick. Image som er i vinden, kult å ha det imaget, være i super form.	
4	Ikke viktig å assosieres med Birken, trening. Vil tone det ned, heller bli anerkjent for jobben hun gjør, ikke for å gå fort i birken. Men liker å være motivator til trening på jobben, folk kontakter henne, drivkraft til å få med folk internt. Vil ikke bli hun som bare er kjent for å gå på ski, jobb viktigere. Blitt status/populært med birken pga merket, appellerer til konkurranseinstinkt.	

5	Forstyrrende støy når halve norge leser hans latterlige resultat i dn og finansavisen. Kan ikke droppe imaget med å trene mye, ville mistet seg selv. Men prøver å trappe litt ned. Status med birken: flott at mange trener, kanskje litt mye fokus på egosentriske ting.	Overskudd, løser oppgaver når han er ute og løper.
6	Havne i listen i DN, ikke så morsomt, statusjag, men gir også, at folk leser. På listen de siste årene. Positive/negative signaler: birken og lignende gjort mye for helsa til folk, noen få pekes ut ikke bra. Sunt å gå på ski, håper media kan inspirer mange. Ok å bli assosiert med birken, aktivitet, gjort det så lenge at ville blitt rart å slutte. Birken er umorsk, derav populær, tøffeste rennet.	
7	Ikke viktig å bli assosiert med birken, være aktiv- tvert imot. Stas at prestasjoner verdsettes i ski/idrettsmiljøet, ikke ellers. Kan bli negativt andre steder. Prøver å dempe ned den biten i andre sammenhenger, ikke markedsføre. Blir ensidig, lett å oppfattes som enspora treningsfantast.	
8	Langrenn en øvrig middelklasse idrett. Ikke bare medieskapt trend, vi har råd til det. Assosieres med birken, absolutt ikke viktig! Ikke har hatt ønske om å gå birken pga forestillingen om hva det er. De som jobber i birken bør fokusert på at det store antallet er helt vanelige folk.	
9	Skeptisk til det kommersielle rundt, likevel en fordel at folk kommer seg ut. Positiv drivkraft for fysisk aktivitet. Legger bevisst ikke opp til birken som tema på jobb, men svarer hvis spurt. Liker å bli assosiert med å være i god form, jåleri og tro på at sprek 50 åring bedre enn overvektig en. Også en vane, familiegreie.	
10	Lei stigmatisering, negative uttalelser om positiv fritidsaktivitet. De han konkurrerer med, gjort dette med dem i alle år. Folkebevegelse, feil å plukke ut særgruppe i DN, feil inntrykk. Ikke viktig å assosieres som aktiv, havnet tilfeldig i DN. Ikke helt ok å assosieres med stigmatiseringen, men gir blanke. Nedverdiggende kommentarer, forsvare at de ikke er like flinke selv. Ledere gidder ikke uttale seg. Ildsjeler, bærer norge, det frivillige arbeidet.	
11	Lurt på hvor mye skift det har vært, gått birken lenge selv, ser det er de samme lederene som fortsatt går. Ikke mye til trend, alltid vært sånn? Feil inntrykk i media, kjenner alle lederene, fleste trener 3-4 ganger i uka.	Mange fine naturopplevelser, tar seg tid til å nyte dette. Gjør ham mentalt rustet til alt.

Gunhild Lier
Kristin Staff Lorezen

Preliminary Thesis Report

- An Investigation in Motivational- and Achievement Factors Among Leaders who Participate in Birkebeinerrennet- a Qualitative Study-

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1. Introduction

In today's Norwegian newspapers, especially during the winter months, there are a lot of articles regarding Birkebeineren, and most of them focus on male leaders from the business sector who participate. As there is great interest in leaders in the media, we find it interesting to take a closer look at these leaders specifically. Further, in our master thesis we will narrow our sample to only consist of male participants who attend the skiing race, in order to narrow the focus of the paper, and also because this race receives more attention in the media than the two other races.

Derived from these newspaper articles, there are several questions, which seems unanswered to us. Thus the main focus of our master thesis will be as follows: *“What motivates leaders in the business sector to participate in Birken, and to what extent is the sense of achievement important?”* Further, why do these leaders attend Birken and again love the exposure surrounding it. What do they feel that they get out of it? Is there any transferability between these types of activities and work related activities? Do they feel social pressure to do extreme forms of physical activity and competition? Or is this something that they do because they were born and raised this way, and hence, participating is something that they choose to do for themselves, regardless of anyone else? These are questions which we will seek to answer.

Further, we want to use elements from Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and the theory about the Need for Achievement in order to gain an understanding of what motivates these leaders to participate in Birken. We do not attempt to study SDT in general, but rather to look at these leaders' motivation in light of SDT and the theory about need for achievement. Hence, we will choose specific processes from these theories that we find most suited to understand this special group of people, and their motivation for participating in Birken.

1.1 Background

Birkebeineren is a race which is inspired by a journey that two guys, who were so-called “birkebeinere”, conducted bearing the king's baby in order to save him from dangerous rebels in 1206. The story has always been appealing to Norwegians in that these two men bravely managed to get across the mountains from Østerdalen to Gudbrandsdalen, in horrible weather, without giving up, and thus the baby was brought into safety (Birkebeiner.no). Further, there are three types of races inspired by this journey, one running race called “Birkebeinerløpet”, a skiing race called “Birkebeinerrennet” and one by bicycle called “Birkebeinerrittet”. Additionally, participating in all the three races is called “Trippelen” (the triple) (Birkebeiner.no).

Further, the newspapers seem to focus a bit more on the skiing race than the running-, and cycling races. What we see in these newspaper articles regarding Birkebeinerrennet (Birken) is the fact that a lot of prominent leaders in the Norwegian business sector participate in this event. Accordingly, out of 16000 participants, the majority of these are midlevel- or toplevel managers in the Norwegian business sector (Myklebost). Further, it seems to us as though these leaders enjoy the attention surrounding their participation and their results. According to sociologist Marianne Inez Lien, it has become a trend among leaders to realize the modern life-style, which to a large extent is about working out and staying fit. Hence, this form of outer control should reflect moral, strength and willpower, while overweight people, on the other hand, are being perceived as lacking these qualities (Bristøl, 2010). Both the leader and the company may benefit from the leader being in good shape, as leaders are important role models and their actions will have an effect on the subordinates (Bristøl, 2010, nr. 2). Many recruiters further agree that mentioning participation in Birken on your CV, and otherwise showing that you are generally in good shape, creates a positive impression (Bristol, 2010, nr 2).

1.2 Opinions in the media

There are a lot of opinions regarding the subject, and while most articles focus on the positive effects of work-out, some voices are more critical. Among them is Jan Christophersen, a specialist in organizational psychology, who states that”

participation in Birken is definitely not a good metaphor for great leadership abilities". Participation is, according to him, more about the leaders' own need for exposure than showing good leadership qualities. "The leader has to devote a lot of time on their body, technique, and equipment which will promote him or her as a lonely, strong, enduring performer, however, the leaders should spend more time developing as leaders"(Myklemyr, 2010). Although there are a lot of opinions regarding the subject, it has not yet, to our knowledge been investigated thoroughly. Therefore, we find it interesting to try to find answers to some of the hypotheses about the phenomenon that have been postulated in the media.

1.3 Who are the participants?

Our search for statistics regarding the phenomenon was initiated, and it further seems as though statistical information about the participants of Birkebeinerrennet is somewhat lacking. However a survey from 2010, by Ada Rolsdorph Braaten at HIL, was conducted with the aim of identifying "who are the participants in Birken?". An important notion here is that this survey only includes information about those who participate in the cycling race, and thus not those who attend the skiing race. Nevertheless, we believe the information about the cycling racers to be relevant in relation to the participants of the skiing race. Approximately 91% of the participants in the cycling race state that they work- out alone, and 82, 5% experience discussions regarding Birken at work. Further, 80, 5% of the participants are male, while 19,5% are female, and the majority of the participants are in the age group 40-49 years (39,7 %). The fact the cycling race in itself is a good work-out goal, consideration for own health and seeing the race as a personal trial of strength is listed as the most important reasons for attending, while social pressure and the race being a part of the triple (skiing, running and cycling) are listed as the second most important reasons for participating.

2. Pilot- study

Prior to our master thesis presentation in May, our supervisor recommended us to conduct a pilot study, as a pilot study may be helpful to test and refine aspects of the final study (Yin, 2011). It is also beneficial when it comes to gaining knowledge about the phenomenon, and to get clues as to what questions to ask further, and what theories that might be relevant. In order to gain more insight into

leaders who participate in Birken (which here specifically only refers to the skiing race), we conducted four interviews, with two leaders (CEO), one employee and one middle manager which all had participated in Birken on at least one occasion. All of the participants were informed about the initial purpose of our study, and that the interview was mainly an informal conversation, and exclusively all of the people we contacted were positive to meet us. In addition we had a meeting with one professor from NIH and one sociologist from UIO. Our aim with these meetings was to shed a more theoretical light to our field of interest, and collect a variety of perspectives surrounding this phenomenon. All of the participants from our pilot study have been positive when it comes to further cooperation regarding our research, if necessary. Further, a semi-structured interview guide was used, consisting of 7 questions. The informants were for instance asked to list 5 reasons as to why they are motivated to attend Birken, how they feel participation affects them in their job, if it helps them become a better leader in any way, or if they can recall any negative effects related to their participation.

In this case the answers from the two leaders were of particular interest to us, especially because we want to focus specifically on leaders in the thesis, hence these responses have received greater attention when it comes to developing our theoretical framework than the responses of the other two informants. When asked about why they participate in Birken, and have participated previously, they all listed the social aspect, the feeling of achievement and getting a good work-out as important reasons. They also agreed upon the fact that necessary qualities, such as being structured in order to have time to work out, and also having a clear goal to work towards, may have a certain transferability effect. Additionally, the leaders and employee had in common the fact that skiing was a big part of their childhood. The two leaders further claimed to be very competitive, demanding towards their subordinates and impatient.

It seems as though these leaders have in common being achievement striving individuals, in that they seem to be very preoccupied with achievement and good results both at work and outside work. It also seems as though being physically fit is important to these leaders, as a symbol of strength and health. Further, setting goals and achieving them might in fact be the motivation that drives these people

to participate in Birken. However, we do not feel that we got detailed answers in relation to their motivation. What is at the core of their motivation, are they intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to participate in Birken? For this reason, our theoretical framework is built upon self-determination theory and need for achievement and achievement goals.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Self- Determination Theory

Several studies have over the years been conducted with the purpose of clarifying what motivates human beings in different sport activities. These studies have aimed to understand the psychological factors that drive people to do what they do. Self-determination theory (SDT) is a theoretical framework used to understand motivation, which provides us with several distinct types of motivation. Further, the theory considers to a large extent social environmental factors that either hinder or undermine our motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). According to SDT, social factors influence the satisfaction of basic needs, and thus consequently self-determined motivation (Moreno, González-Cutre, Sicilia & Spray, 2010). For this reason SDT has gained prominence in the sport and exercise field in order to better understand human motivation. However, to our knowledge, there exists no study that examines leaders in the business sector who participate in Birken, and the underlying motivational aspects that causes them to deliberately participate in such an event. Thus the following section involves a brief overview of the core concepts related to SDT.

According to Kilpatrick, Hebert and Jacobsen (2002) motivation refers to the intensity and direction of effort. Further, SDT suggests that people are naturally self-motivated and interested in pursuing activities that are enjoyable, which to a greater degree make them inherently motivated to master their social environment (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It is important to note that the main “reason” people provide for engaging in sport activities is that they find them interesting, challenging, fun, and enjoyable (Ryan, Williams, Partick & Deci, 2009). The most basic principle of SDT, when applied to physical activities, is that individuals can both be

intrinsically and *extrinsically* motivated (Ryan et al., 2009). Intrinsic motivation means to engage in an activity because of the inherent pleasure and the satisfaction it may provide (Ryan et al., 2009). As argued by Ryan et al. (2009), only those activities that satisfy certain basic psychological needs will be expected to be intrinsically motivating. By contrast extrinsic motivation characterizes activities that are performed in order to avoid punishments or to retain the attainment of recognition or approval (Ryan et al., 2009). Further, some people maintain certain activities not because they are inherently interesting, rather they perceive the activities to have something that they can profit or gain from (Ryan et al., 2009). Derived from this, it seems reasonable to establish that most physical activities entail a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

SDT is a comprehensive theory, and is comprised of *four* mini theories (see appendix 1), which explain different facets of human growth and the integration of the self with the social world (Wilson, Mack & Grattan, 2008). Noteworthy in this sense, those factors that are presented in our model (appendix 1) will be the foundation of our investigation, as we currently see these as relevant to our topic.

First, *Cognitive evaluation theory* (CET) tries to explain motivation by social and environmental factors that facilitates or undermine motivation. CET argues that social- contextual events can conduce feelings of competence during actions, by for instance receiving feedback, which can enhance intrinsic motivation. However, feelings of competence will not be enhanced unless accompanied by a sense of autonomy, thus competence and autonomy is argued as fundamental in the CET perspective (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Organismic integration theory (OIT) is another sub theory, which describes the degree of internalization accompanying extrinsically motivated behavior (Wilson et al., 2008). Moreover, the theory stipulates the quality of extrinsic motivation, in which regulation behavior varies from highly externally controlled to more self-determined. These regulations include; external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. External regulation implies fully external motivation, and the primary reason people initially perform certain actions is because the behavior is prompted or valued by significant others

(Deci & Ryan, 2000). In addition, as argued by Deci and Ryan (2000), people are more likely to adopt activities that are valued by relevant social groups. On the other end of the continuum, integrated regulation presents a holistic process facilitated by a sense of choice and freedom from excessive external pressure (Deci & Ryan, 2000), thus motivation is more internally driven.

The third theory, *causality orientation theory*, (COT) argues that there are individual differences in peoples motivation orientation, meaning that we act in accordance to what is of importance to us (Wilson et al., 2008).

Finally, *basic psychological needs theory* (BNT) is the last subcomponent comprising SDT (Wilson et al., 2008). It concerns the need for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which are assumed to be basic needs. Needs for competencies relates to a persons need to experience some level of effectiveness and confidence, not only in its self but also in relation to others (Ryan et al., 2009). Relatedness refers to a sense of being connected to others and a feeling of being included (Ryan et al., 2009). Finally, BNT emphasizes the fundamental importance of autonomy, which refers to an internal state of regulation by the self, and being able to make choices (Ryan et al., 2009). SDT views autonomy as a key to understand the quality of behavioral regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2006). In regards to physical activities, support for all three basic needs facilitates intrinsic motivation and internalization (Ryan et al., 2009).

Based on SDT and the subcomponents of this theory we want to investigate, to what extent are the leaders intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to participate in Birken, and to what degree are social and environmental factors such as feedback, contributing to explain the leader's motivation? The motivational aspects of SDT might help clarify these questions and the underlying motivational reasons for participating.

3.2 The need for achievement

“Motives are internal states that arouse and direct behavior toward specific objects or goals” (Larsen & Buss, 2010, p. 332). Motives are often based on needs, states of tension within a person, and as a need is satisfied, the state of tension is reduced. Researchers who study motives have stressed the importance of internal

psychological needs and urges that drive people to think, perceive and act in certain predictable ways (Larsen & Buss, 2010). Henry Murray was one of the first researchers to develop a modern theory of motivation, and according to him a need is a “potentiality or readiness to respond in a certain way under certain given circumstances” (Murray, 1934 cited in Larsen & Buss, 2010, p. 334.). Further, based on research, Murray proposed a list of fundamental human needs, and hence, the need for achievement has received the most attention. The need for achievement is defined as the desire to do better, to be successful and to feel competent, and it is further assumed that the need for achievement will energize behavior in certain (achievement- related) situations. People motivated by a high need for achievement obtain satisfaction from accomplishing a task, and they cherish the process of being engaged in challenging activities. In terms of trait levels, people high in achievement prefer moderate levels of challenge, which makes sense because they are motivated to do better than others (Larsen & Buss, 2010).

Further, over the past two decades, a majority of the empirical and theoretical work conducted in the achievement motivation literature has used an achievement goal perspective (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Achievement goals are viewed as the purpose or cognitive dynamic focus of competent- relevant behavior, and the primary emphasis has generally been on two types of goals, namely mastery goals and performance goals (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Mastery goals are about developing competence through task mastery, while performance goals are focused on the demonstration of competence relative to others. Each goal is supposed to provide a distinct perceptual- cognitive framework in achievement settings, as well as being shown to lead to a differential pattern of processes and outcomes (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Further, Elliot and McGregor (2001) propose a 2x2 framework of achievement goals (see appendix 2). Competence is at the core of the achievement goal construct, and is differentiated on two dimensions- according to how it is *defined* and how it is *valenced*. Competence can be evaluated, and therefore defined, according to whether one has acquired understanding or mastered a task (an absolute standard), improved one’s performance or fully developed one’s knowledge or skills (an intrapersonal standard) or performed better than others (a normative standard)(Elliot &

McGregor, 2001). Competence is further valenced in that it is either construed in terms of a positive, desirable possibility (approaching success) or a negative, undesirable possibility (avoiding failure). The framework is split into two categories of definition on top, namely absolute/ intrapersonal and normative, and two categories of valence, positive or negative, to the left. Mastery- avoidance goals are one part of this framework and are about for instance focusing on not performing worse than before, to not stagnate and loose ability. Hence the focus is on avoiding a negative possibility (Elliot and McGregor, 2001).

Based on the interviews we have already conducted, it seems to us that the leaders had in common being preoccupied with achievement. Hence, achievement is believed to be important in explaining why these leaders actually participate in Birken. They all described the feeling of achievement as one of the main reasons for doing it, and how great it felt after the race. Further, Birken is a race which can be said to be moderately difficult, in that it is neither too easy, nor too difficult. Using the achievement goal framework to help describe why these leaders participate in Birken is here seen as relevant. What type of achievement goals drives these leaders, are they mostly motivated to do better than others, to develop competence or to avoid doing worse than last year? Are they so preoccupied with achievement that there is a spillover effect, in such that achievement is a part of everything that these leaders do, at home, at work and in Birken? We believe this, in addition to motivation and SDT, will be interesting to look into in a further investigation of the phenomenon.

4. Methodology

4.1 Sample

As previously mentioned, participating in Birken has increased among male leaders in the business sector, which will be the target group in this investigation. Our goal is to interview at least five male leaders that are currently participating in this event, and which to a greater extent consider physical exercising as important, and in addition has this as a primary activity besides their job. Further, our choice of participants is based on previous research of prominent figures in the media,

who consistently participate in Birken, which led us to some names that we will contact. In addition, a former coach of the national cross-country team will be contacted for an informal conversation in order to gain a deeper insight into the mindset of cross-country skiers. We will also attempt to get in contact with Anne Frøyen, a PhD student at Olympiatoppen and NIH, who works at the section of coaching and psychology. Apparently, she is familiar with qualitative research from a SDT perspective.

Our choice of participants is deliberately related to males, due to the apparent shift in the trend of the physical appearance of male leaders in the business sector. Being physically fit is a trend which is relevant to society in general, however, as 80,5% of the participants in the cycling race are male, and the average age category of the participants is 40-49 years, we believe that male leaders aged 40-50 years old are representative of the participants. What makes this sample different is that we will look at males who specifically attain a leader position in the business sector, due to the increased focus on these in the media.

4.2 Method

Data collection will take place using qualitative interviews, because a qualitative approach is applicable to capture a profound understanding of existing and everyday life concepts (Yin, 2011). Further, this method is better suited for the present study, than other data-collection methods, such as survey studies and experiments, because it is not inhibited by laboratory settings and pre-established questionnaires (Yin, 2011). Since we have already conducted our pilot interviews, we have a starting point to develop the interview guide. When the interview guide is completed we can begin our investigation, however, we will aim to execute a second pilot interview, to test and refine the new guide beforehand.

When making the interview guide, we will look at pre-established measures to get inspiration as to what questions to ask, in order to get answers related to the processes which are underlying in the theories we have chosen. Hence, on recommendation from doctoral candidate Ide Kathrine Birkeland, we will look closer into “the motivation at work scale” developed by Gagné and colleagues (2010) and the achievement motivation scale (AMI) developed by Schuler and

colleagues (2002). We will also take a closer look at the questionnaires that are published at selfdeterminationtheory.org, in order to get inspiration for our interview guide, as these are questionnaires specifically developed to measure the constructs in SDT.

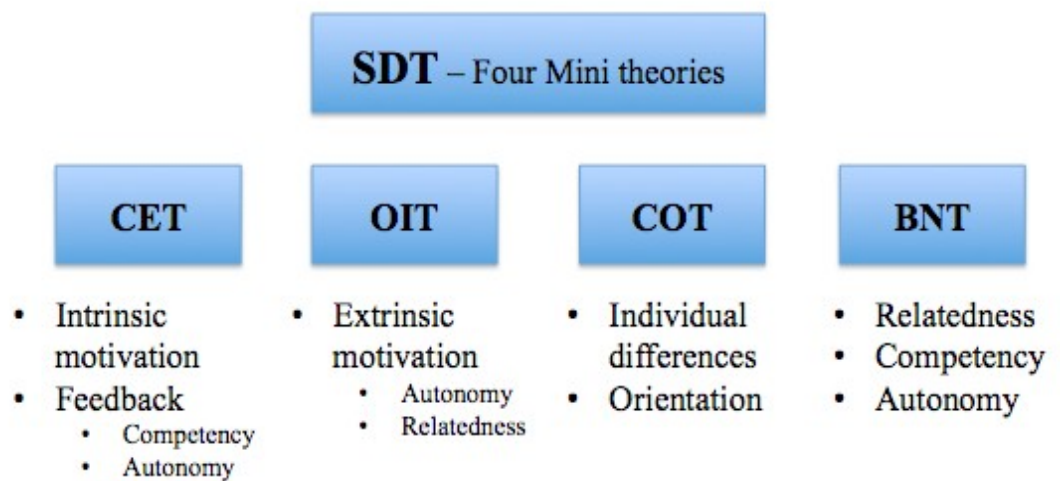
Further, we are planning to use audio recording during the interviews and later transcribe the data. In addition, we will make sure that the participants are comfortable with the interview being recorded. For this reason, we need to conduct our interviews in a place where noise and other disturbances will not affect our recorded interview. If the participant refuses to be recorded, we will take notes during and after the interview (Fischer, 2010). For ethical reasons, and in order to secure anonymity and confidentiality, the informants will have to sign a consent form. This form will enlighten them about the research topic, and also inform that participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any given occasion. The interviews will preferably be conducted at different times, as scheduling several interviews at one day could interfere with our attention (Fischer, 2010). As a part of our interview guide, we are interested in asking the participants to tell stories about particular incidents related to the topic (Fischer, 2010), which hopefully highlights the transferability of the phenomenon.

As of now, we have decided to split our interviews into two time periods, meaning that we are going to conduct interviews both before and after the race. For this reason we will be able to receive information that are not influenced by the preparation of participants prior to the race.

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Appendix 1: Self- determination theory

**Elements that are highlighted are of importance*

Appendix 2: The 2x2 achievement goal framework

		Definition	
		Absolute/ intrapersonal (mastery)	Normative (Performance)
Valence	Positive (approaching success)	Mastery – approach goal	Performance-approach goal
	Negative (avoidance failure)	Mastery - avoidance goal	Performance - avoidance goal