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The communication process between a project owner and a project manager: a multiple case study of three projects in the construction industry

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Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this thesis is to investigate potential communication challenges that might occur between a project owner and a project manager during a construction project. As well as how the communication process between a project owner and a project manager is shaped by governance structure, support, control, and trust.

Design/methodology/approach - Multiple case study of three projects within one project-driven organization in the construction industry. Empirical data was collected using an in-depth semi-structured interview with 14 informants.

Findings - Findings from this study have found that there are few potential communication challenges between a project owner and project managers from the same base organization. However, there was some potential communication challenges such as time restriction, distance, and information asymmetry that had an affect on their relationship. Furthermore, the governance mechanisms; governance structure, support, control, and trust was found to have an effect on the project owner and project managers relationship and how their communication process is shaped in their construction projects.

Research limitations/implications – Future research should extend this study to look for more communication challenges between a project owner and project manager with the use of a larger sample. Moreover, similar and other governance mechanisms should be considered in order to see how they shape the communication process.

Practical implications – The findings from this study can provide with insight in how a project owner and project manager can reduce potential communication challenges. The factors governance structure, support, control, and trust should be considered as important factors to build or reinforce a better communication process in the projects.

Originality – This research is one of the few that look into the potential communication challenges between a project owner and project manager, but also contributes to increasing existing research of how governance structure, support, control, and trust affects a project owner and project managers relationship.

Keywords - project owner, project manager, communication challenges, communication process, governance structure, support, control, trust.

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1.0 Introduction

Today, projects are a common way to organize work and it is characterized as being temporary units that aim to solve unique challenges of specific tasks created by the base organization (Andersen, 2018). According to Müller (2009), a project is created to accomplish an organization's strategy, and the heart of every project task is to create an outcome. Creating value through projects is not straightforward, as the temporality of the project might arise communication challenges between the base organization and the project manager (Johannessen & Rosendahl, 2010). For the base organization to be involved in the project and reach their goals and objectives, project ownership needs to be delegated. The base organization usually delegates the primary responsibility to a project owner. The project owner possesses decision-making authority during the execution of the project (Olsson, 2018). However, the project manager also holds parts of the influence over the project, and the involvement from the project owner and project manager should remain high during the life cycle of the project (Andersen, 2012).

During a project, the project owner has the main responsibilities to create the desired outcome (Turner & Müller, 2003). Thus, it is important the owner takes on its role with seriousness. At the same time, it is considered critical that the relationship between the project manager and owner forms the basis of a good division of work and responsibilities (Olsson, 2018). Whereas, the lack of clarification can lead to communication challenges in the form of misunderstanding, disappointment, and negative attitudes (Andersen, 2018). These challenges occur often because the project owner and the manager relatively make little contact between one another. Both parties have a responsibility to create a good relationship between themselves with clarification of each other's importance towards the project (Johannessen & Rosendahl, 2010). Turner & Müller (2004) presented in their study that the need for communication between the owner and manager could minimize the challenges in their relationship.

Empirical studies of communication in projects show that there is a lack of communication beyond the boundaries of the project group (Müller, 2003). Andersen (2018) implies that the research of communication in the project has been more emphasized of the project managers point of view and less with other stakeholders. Therefore, there is a lack of research on communication between a

project owner and a project manager, especially considering the project owner's point of view. The reason for the lack of project owners' point of view can be the limited research examining the involvement of the project owner in projects (Davis, 2014).

Andersen (2012) stated the importance of an active and central role being played by the project owner, is through steering the project with the use of project governance. Previous researcher stated that a stakeholder approach to governance have entailed a long-term relationship between the parties consisting of mutual trust, commitment and cooperative problem solving (Rowlinson & Cheung, 2008). There are several definitions of governance in the existing literature, but in this thesis, the main focus will be located on project governance. Musawir, Abd-Karim & Mohd-Danuri (2020) states that project governance is widely recognized as an important factor for project deliveries and benefits realization. Even though, they emphasized the lack of consensus of project governance within the project management literature, and further describes is at fragmented and has the characteristics of a developing field (Musawir et al., 2020). Furthermore, they suggest further research on project governance in different contexts and situations, which in this case will be the internal relationship between the project owner and project manager from the same base organization.

Based on the research gaps described above, there is a need to provide more research of what potential communication challenges that might occur between the project owner and manager, and how the communication process is shaped by governance mechanisms. Hence, the following research questions were created:

Q1: What are the potential communication challenges between the project owner and project manager in construction projects?

Q2: How is the communication process between the project owner and project manager shaped by governance structure, support, control, and trust?

To answer these questions a qualitative multiple case study with three different projects from the Norwegian construction industry will be presented and discussed throughout the thesis. In these cases, we will have a closer look at how the project owner and project managers communicated with each other.

2.0 Theoretical Background

The aim of this chapter is to review and introduce theories, models and previous research that is relevant to the research questions. In this chapter the project owner, project governance, communication, the principal-agent theory, and the control-trust nexus will be presented and further explained.

2.1 The Project owner

The literature on project management is inconsistent when it comes to terminology related to different projects roles (Zwikael & Meredith, 2018). Research has acknowledged that the senior management are important throughout the project, since they authorize the project and link the organizational mission and project objectives towards each other (Andersen, 2018). However, it is rarely that the senior management can be involved and commit themselves, due to time restrictions (Zwikael & Meredith, 2018). Therefore, the accountability towards the project is delegated to another person from the same entity that invests in the project. The person delegated to the project are supposed to ensure the project meet its predictable deliveries, and objectives are maintained according to the project plan, but also the expectations of the stakeholder (Aarøy & Frislie, 2017). This role is usually delegated to the project owner. A project owner, in accordance with Olsson et al (2008), is responsible or accountable for the control and benefits of a project, which may also be defined as “the project owner is the one taking the risk related to the cost and future value of the project” (Olsson et al., 2008, p. 40).

The project owner is the person that on behalf of the base organization, is both responsible for the funding of the projects and the benefits from it (Krane, Olsson & Rolstadås, 2012). The project owner is most likely to work closely with the project manager by making sure the project strategy and objectives are understood. A research by Müller & Turner (2005) stated that to obtain the best project performance, the collaboration between a project owner and a manager needs to be high, with a medium level of structure. When they work in partnership the project owner needs to empower the manager to create an effective collaboration. However, that is certainly not always the case. Project owner have limited time and resources to be highly involved in all projects given to them by the senior management (Andersen, 2018). Other research suggests that the relationship between the project

owner and project manager are characterized as complex due to information asymmetry and potential mistrust (Turner & Müller, 2004).

Olsson (2018) found a discrepancy about the differences between theory and practice when it comes to the project owner's role in his study. Therefore, project owner type 1 and type 2 were introduced. Project owner type 1 is according to Olsson (2018) the role mostly introduced in the existing governmental project ownership literature, which tells that a project owner has the responsibility for the project as a business case. This implies that the project owner role is more focused on taking the risks related to costs and future benefits in the project execution. On the other hand, project owner type 2 emphasizes a supporting role, whereas the project owner supports the project manager and has the main responsibilities of securing the projects deliveries (Olsson, 2018).

Research stated from Hjelmbrække, Lædre & Lohne (2014) implies that the Norwegian construction industry, seems to lack a specific strategic insight on how to translate the owner's perception of new building's performance into actual physical premises. The project owner is responsible for the value generated of a project and needs to obtain a maximum payoff in accordance with the base organization strategy (Zwikael & Meredith, 2015). Hence, everyone involved in the project should be aware of how the roles of responsibility are divided between the project owner and the project manager. If the roles are not clearly defined, misunderstandings may arise that may lead to a lack of clarification on who to approach (Andersen, 2018). For the project owner to establish values which are aligned with the strategy from the base organization, there is a need for project governance for monitoring and supervising the process (Hjelmbrække et al, 2014).

2.2 Governance

From the late 1990s until now the term project governance, has brought attention and contributing to a debate in the project management literature (Bekker, 2014). Investigations have been made into how to improve the projects results, and there have been a grown awareness on the way projects are steered from the base organization (Müller, Shao & Pemsel, 2016). From the corporate perspective, governance has traditionally been used to understand the link between an organization and its owners (Klakegg, 2010). The quest of defining and designing

a governance structure from the widespread use of the term, has created several definitions. As stated by Müller (2009) the definitions can range from narrow to broad, and from specific to general. Among one of the broader definitions of governance, is the corporate governance definition by OCED (2004):

“Corporate governance involves a set of relationships between a company’s management, its board (or management team), its shareholders, and other stakeholders. It provides the structure through which the objectives of the company are set, and the means of attaining those objectives and monitoring performance are determined.” (cited in Müller, 2009, p.3)

Even though, the definition takes on a wider and broader description of corporate governance, Müller (2009) argues that this broad definition can be applied on all corporate levels. Nonetheless, projects are also in need for a governance structure. Project-based governance, on the other hand, is based on aligned with corporate governance, where the center of governance is on the individual projects (Joselin & Müller, 2016). Governance is considered a broad concept and its many definitions depends on the theoretical perspectives given (Müller, 2016). However, governance is often defined as “the way organizations are directed, and manager are held accountable for conduct and performance” (Müller et al., 2016, p. xi). This definition applies in all the organization’s hierarchies and networks, however, governance need to be complemented with its “soft-side” (Müller et al., 2016).

The project owner bears both a governing and supporting task in the projects (Crawford et al., 2008). This implies that the governing task is about deciding the mission, plans, strategy, goals, and the organization of the project. When it comes to the supporting task it implies that the owner must provide resources, accelerate decisions in the base organization, enable formal decisions and be a motivator and supporter for the project manager and project team (Andersen, 2012). The need for project governance is to align the project outcomes with the general strategy of the base organization. In general, governance is used to balance the potential shortcomings of a contract, as well as to avoid disagreements between various parties (Turner & Keegan, 2001).

Governance in project differs between “project governance” and “governance of project” (Müller, 2009). Project governance refer to governance of a single project, whereas governance of projects, or portfolio governance, refer to governance of groups of projects within one organization (Müller et al., 2016). Project governance concerns the structured processes, mechanisms, and tools for managing, controlling, decision-making and supporting of the project (Müller, 2009). Contrary, governance of project is more concerned with prioritizing and selection of projects, roles and responsibilities, resource allocation, and decision-making processes at the portfolio level (Mosavi, 2014).

Research suggested by Turner & Müller (2004) implies that to obtain the best project performance on needs “high collaboration between client and project manager, and medium levels of structure, when the project manager and project owner work together in partnership, and the manager is empowered” (p.327). Project governance is the way projects are steered, and to be able to set clear objectives the project owner and manager must communicate with one another.

2.3 Communication

For a project owner to be involved in a project, communication between the owner and the manager plays an important role for every construction project. The term communication is difficult to define since it is a multidimensional and diversified concept (Dainty et al, 2006). Communication varies in different contexts, forms, meanings, impacts and will therefore, mean different things to different people according to the given situation (Dainty et al, 2006). The term communication originates from the Latin word “communicare”, which means ‘to make common’, and when communicating, a common understanding is created (Clearly, 2008). In other words, communication is about trying to share information, an idea, or an attitude (Rajkumar, 2010).

To understand how communication affects a project, it is necessary to understand the process of communication. The most common model for the communication process was created by Shannon & Weaver, and in some ways, was the beginning of the modern field (Foulger, 2004). The model was originally developed to describe electronic communication but is today used for any kind of communication.

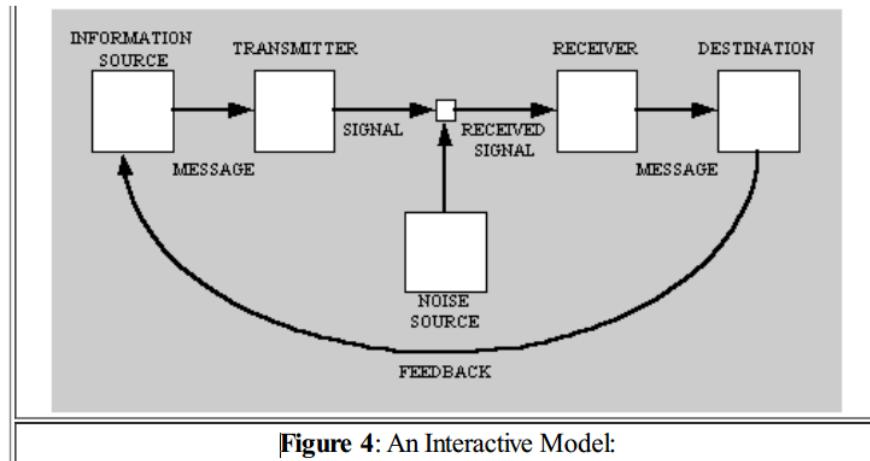


Figure 4: An Interactive Model:

Figure 1: Shannon-Weaver: the communication process model (Foulger, 2004)

The model at its most basic level consists of three components: "a transmitter/sender (information source), a transmission signal/channel and a receiver. A fourth component, the medium of communication, is the code in which a message is transmitted" (Steyn, 2008; cited in Zulch, 2014, p. 1001). The sender creates the message, and the message is encoded through a transmitter by a verbal (mouth) or non-verbal (body language) method. A message can become contaminated by the noise component. The noise is a secondary form of signal that can confuse or obscure the signal carried. The receiver then decodes the message and interprets its meaning, and after decoding the message it will be transferred to the destination. To be able to ensure effective communication between the parties, all components must prevent further misunderstanding. At the final stage, the destination can provide feedback on the message sent from the information source (Eskelund, 2014). One should not take for granted that the receiver of the message will interpret it the same way as the sender intended to (Dainty et al, 2006).

2.3.1 Communication channels

Before communicating a message, one must choose which communication channels to use. Communication difficulties can lead to a direct increase of unnecessary expenditures, which would affect the quality and progress of the project (Anumba et al., 1997, Anumba and Evbuowan, 1999; Higgin and Jessop, 2001; Tai, Wang & Anumba, 2008). Therefore, the environment of communication can be regarded as a network of channels (Tai, Wang & Anumba, 2008). The existence of relevant communication channels for a construction project are many, for example. face-to

face, telephone, personal, written, or electronic mail (Karlsen, 2017). All the communication channels have certain characteristics features. Face-to-face communication can be characterized by the feedback provided by the person and it is often associated with body language. While, formal reports are characterized as feedback occurring slowly, and it is mostly perceived as impersonal. In figure 1.2, Karlsen (2017) lists different types of communication channels that can be used during a project.

| Communication channel | Written | Oral | Electronic |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Personal</i> | Letter | Appraisal | Electronic mail |
| <i>Impersonal</i> | Report Formel notes | Speak to an assembly | Electronic newsletter |
| <i>One-way</i> | Poster | Speech | Electronic newsletter |
| <i>Two-way</i> | Debate online Newspaper | Dialog | Facebook Videoconference |

Figure 2 - Types of communication channels (Karlsen, 2017, p. 249)

Which channel to use depends on the complexity in the given situation between the project owner and the project manager. One factor to take into consideration that can describe the situation is the complexity of what they are trying to communicate towards each other. The more complex, the more need for a direct and interactive communication channel should be used (Karlsen, 2017).

2.3.2 Communication challenges

Even though communication is essential in construction projects there might be challenges during the communication process. The ideal situation is when the sender codes the message in such a way that the receiver can decode it correctly. However, there might be many reasons why coding and decoding can lead to communication challenges between the project owner and manager. Several factors play a role in the communication process, that might disturb the message the sender wants to convey. These disturbances are called noise, which can lead to misunderstandings and delays in projects (Johannessen & Rosendahl, 2010).

Kreitner & Kinicki (2012, p. 163-164) identified four different communication barriers that might lead to problems and misunderstanding in the communication process:

- Process barrier - problems that arise with the sender, coding, message, channel, decoding with the receiver, or in the feedback
- Personal barrier - problems that arise in listening abilities, prejudice, inability to receive information, filtering, or suspicion.
- Psychical barrier - geographical distance
- Semantic barrier - problems arise when the different parties have trouble understanding words or phrases used. Most words have a positive or negative word charge.

Another factor that can shed light on how communication challenges occur between a project owner and project manager is the relationship between the two. Communication is not an act, but in its social consequences, it leads to action (Johannesen & Rosendahl, 2010). By this, it is meant that communication is a social interaction process, where communicating parties gain greater insight into themselves (Johannesen & Rosendahl, 2010). There should be a continuous interaction between the parties, yet there are conflicts that may arise in the relations that can lead to communication challenges and misunderstandings (Andersen, 2018). According to Zwikael & Meredith (2015), the relationship between the funding and performing entity may arise an agency problem that needs to be discussed. The conflicts between the project owner and project manager in the principal-agent theory can be used to shed light on the relationship between them, and to look on how these conflicts can be mitigated.

2.4 Principal-agent relationship theory

The principal - agent theory describes the perception of a risk-sharing problem that arises when two cooperating parties have a different opinion towards risk (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Over the years, principal-agency theory has been directed towards the agency relationship, where one party (the principal) delegates work to another (the agent), who performs the work (Eisenhardt, 1989).

According to Eisenhardt (1989) the principal - agent theory includes to determine the optimal contract and behavior vs outcome, between the principal and the agent. The model is based on a simple approach which can be described in form of cases. The first case of complete information, states that when the principal knows what an agent have done, then an efficient contract should be based on behavior given that the principal is buying the agents behavior. The second case, the non-completed information, which states that the principal does not know what the agent does. The theory states that the self-interest of the agent, can provide the agent to not behave as agreed with the principal. Then an agency problem would arise because of “(a) the principal and the agent have different goals and (b) the principal cannot determine if the agent has behaved appropriately” (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 61). Thus, if the ambition of both parties is to maximize their economic position, then there will be a good reason to believe that the agent will not always act in the best interests of the principal (Turner & Müller, 2004). Therefore, the core problem related to the principal-agent theory is the asymmetric information between the two parties (Schieg, 2008).

Several researchers have acknowledged that the project owner and manager are in a principal-agency relationship (Müller & Turner, 2005) In this relationship, asymmetric information may occur. The asymmetric information is a result of hidden action and information because the project owner and manager does not have access to the same information. Asymmetric information is based on a coordination and motivation problem: Adverse Selection and Moral Hazard (Linde, 2005). The adverse selection problem occurs when the project owner does not understand why the project manager makes choices on their behalf. The moral hazard problem which argues that the project manager is making the best selection on the project owners' behalf (Schieg, 2008). Due to this potential communication challenge between the project owner and manager, there is a need for better communication to minimize the impact of the principal-agent relationship (Turner & Müller, 2004). The theory states that the problems can be mitigated through contracts and incentives that motivates the agent to act in the manner of the principal, controlled by structure. As such, project governance can mitigate the risks and issues associated with the agency theory, if the context of the organization is correctly designed (Joselin & Müller, 2016).

The principal-agent theory has been criticized for assuming that humans are primarily motivated by financial gains, acts in a rational behavior, and the relationship between the principal and agent is mainly seen as a financial transaction (Müller, 2009). However, in the project owner and project manager relationship conflict sets tight control mechanisms. Assumptions of mistrust and control lay the foundation for the governance of this relationship (Turner & Müller, 2004). In construction project organizations, the project owner and project manager cooperate and need to build up trust with one another (Jiang, Zhao & Zuo, 2017). In that context, the complementary relationship between control and trust should be considered to shed light on the relationship between the project owner and project manager communication in projects.

2.5 The Control – Trust Nexus

Control and trust are two of the most researched concepts in organizational science and management literature (Costa & Bijlsma-Frankema, 2007). According to Kalkman & Waard (2017) control and trust have been treated as separate constructs, until the 1980s, however, newer studies have found that combining control and trust is critical to improving business performance and facilitating collective actions (Ning, 2017).

2.5.1 The control perspective

Control is a widely used term which is viewed as a regulator of behavior of organizational members in favor of the achievement of organizational goals (Bradach & Eccles, 1989; Cardinal, Sitkin, & Long, 2004; Das & Teng, 2001). The reason why control is a widely used term is that organizations have paid a huge amount of attention towards the capability of planning, resource allocation and control functions in order to ensure that the project objectives are achieved (Jiang, Zhao & Zuo, 2017). Control can be defined as “a regulatory process by which the elements of a system are made more predictable through the establishment of standards in the pursuit of some desired objective or state” (Leifer & Mills, 1996, p.117). The main purpose of the control process is to align the project objectives and provides an allowance of monitoring the actions of members in a manner that encourages a desirable behavior (Inkpen and Currall 2004; Smets et al. 2013; Tiwana and Keil 2007). The need for control appears from the inconsistency of the actual

and expected behavior. Therefore, the larger the inconsistency the greater need for controlling the stimulated desirable performance (Smets et al. 2013).

In the control literature, control is divided into two main approaches: formal control and informal control (Jørgensen & Åsgård, 2019). Formal control involves the execution by monitoring the behavior of project members (Jørgensen & Åsgård, 2019), using establishment such as formal rules, resources, procedures, or outcomes (Jiang et al., 2017). On the other hand, informal control which is also referred to as social control entails the establishment and commitment of organizational norms, values, and behavioral expectations (Jaworski, 1988).

2.5.2 The trust perspective

Trust can act as an alternative governance mechanism (Pirson and Malhotra, 2011; Uzzi, 1997; Zhong et al., 2014), by outperforming calculative risk and monitoring systems (Uzzi, 1997). The concept of trust is not new, and there exists a diversity of definitions and multidimensional terms of trust in the management literature (Misztal, 1996). Thus, trust has become rather complicated to define. However, one of the well-known researchers on trust is Rousseau et al (1998) who tells that trust is a dynamic and complex construct which consists of multiple bases, levels, and determinants. Rousseau et al. (1998) defines trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (p. 395).

In business- to business relationship trust is considered an important factor (Gulati, 1995) not only does it encourage the exchange of information and cooperation, but also reduces damaging conflicts and transactions costs which will later create a more effective responses to issues in projects (Rousseau et al., 1998). Hartman's (1999) model of trust can be used to answer forms of trust in the relationship between project partners, and in this case, the project owner and manager. Hartman (1999) divided trust in three distinct constructs of trust: competence trust, integrity trust, and intuitive trust.

Competence trust emphasizes if you can answer the question "can you do the job/work?" (Pinto, Slevin & English, 2009, p. 640). This implies that you need the competence to choose the right engineer or technical vendor to complete the service

properly. Integrity trust, also referred to as ethical trust, implies to answer to the question “will you consistently look after my interests?” (Pinto et al., 2009, p. 640). How we behave when entering contracts is often affected by the level of integrity trust we have with the other party. Lastly, intuitive trust is about answering the complicated question “does it feel right?” (Pinto et al., 2009, p. 640). Hartman (1999) has stated that the third form of trust is more volatile than the other, however, he further states that the senior management use their gut feeling as a basis for all their decision-making.

Trust is an important feature in projects since it can be viewed as vital for the stable relationships, cooperation, and exchange of information of everyday interactions in projects (Misztal, 1996). According to Das & Teng (1998) trust is a source of confidence, because the degree of trust holds a positive attitude towards the goodwill and reliability of the parties in the interaction. Further they state that the more the parties believe in goodwill and reliability, the more confidence in the interaction or cooperation both have (Das & Teng, 1998).

2.5.3 Combination of Control and Trust

The control-trust nexus has been subjected to much debate from a wide range of settings such as projects, inter-organizational relationships, and much more (Ning, 2017). Various researcher have approached control and trust from different settings and covered a broader understanding of the theoretical background (Ning, 2017). For example, researchers have debated over the relationship between control and trust if they act as substitutes or complements each other (Kalkman & de Ward, 2017).

From the complementary point of view, control and trust can be used to enable each other (Edelenbos and Eshuis 2012; Persson et al. 2012; Sabherwal 1999), through reinforcing and contributing to cooperation in a relationship of different parties (Costa & Bijlsma-Frankema, 2007). Formal control can increase trust in situations where rules and clear measurement is needed to help institute a base for assessments and evaluation of others (Goold & Campbell, 1987; Sitkin, 1995; Costa & Bijlsma-Frankema, 2007). Informal control may complement trust in order to create a mutual understanding and creation of shared goals and norms. Trust can also entail positive relationship with formalization. That means that the higher degree of trust

that exists between the parties, will help to enable the higher degree of formal coordination and control (Dekker, 2004). Trust can facilitate to information sharing through getting parties to record their relationship in formal contracts and other formal documents (Vlaar et al., 2007).

From a substitute point of view, several researchers have stated that control and trust is a zero-sum game (Das and Teng 2001; Edelenbos and Eshuis 2012; Inkpen and Currall 2004; Woolthuis et al. 2005). They have stressed that high level of trust can remove the need for control mechanisms, since both parties have an expectation of mutual fulfillment of their commitments diminishes. Therefore, control and trust are treated as substitutes where the idea is that trust leads to a decrease in opportunism, when there is less need for control (Edelenbos & Eshuis, 2012). This also means that if trust is high, team members or parties might be willing to share more knowledge between each other, even when there exists no formalized rules or procedures for how to share information or knowledge (Sabherwal 1999). On the other hand, more control is needed when there is a sign of distrust between the parties (Edelenbos & Eshuis, 2012). The more a party can control someone else, the less need for trust. Managers who loses trust in their partners need more resources invested in formal control (Inkpen & Currall, 2004; Zaheer et al., 1998; Vlaar et al., 2007).

3.0 Research Methodology

Throughout the thesis, methodological approaches have been made to answer the given research questions. The aim of any research study is to provide new insights into a phenomenon where the research question creates the design for the data collection process. Firstly, the choice of research design and method will be discussed and argued in detail. Thereafter, the case selection, data collection, data analysis, and data evaluation will be further explained and discussed. Lastly, ethical considerations associated with the method will be presented.

3.1 Research Design and Method

A research design is considered as a logical path for getting from here to there (Yin, 2009). A qualitative multiple case study was selected for this study to investigate the potential communication challenges between a project owner and a project manager, and to see how the communication process is shaped by governance mechanisms. Communication is difficult to measure by using numbers or other quantification analysis, and therefore, a qualitative approach was chosen. According to Yin (2009), a case study should be selected as a preferred strategy when answering research questions with “how” and “why” aspects, but also when the researcher has no required control of behavioral events. A qualitative approach emphasizes words and images to collect information for further understanding of a phenomenon (Bell et al, 2019). A qualitative research strategy aims to discover the reasoning and meaning of a chosen behavior, and that is precisely the case for this study. A multiple-case study is according to Eisenhardt (1991) preferable because it provides a more in-depth understanding of a phenomenon since the cases emphasize the complementary aspects that is underlined. Yin (2009) argues that a multiple case study is more preferable than a single case study, since the researcher would be able to analyze the data collected within each situation, and across different situations.

3.2 Case selection

The cases were based on purposive sampling, which implies that the cases selected were able to provide sufficient relevance to the research question (Bell et al, 2019). According to the research aim, we wanted to study a construction project-driven organization, and that was the first priority when selecting a case organization. To provide a comparative case study, a criterion was to have a project owner and

project managers from the same base organization to see the differences and similarities between the cases on how the project owner and project managers behaves and operates. Furthermore, it was relevant that the project managers had a minimum of ten years of experience from the industry to provide an increased understanding and insight of different settings. The organization needed to provide three projects, to compare the differences and similarities between the projects and the project managers. Lastly, in selection of projects it was important to have projects in different phases, from initial, planning, execution to closing, to give more in-depth understanding for the data collection.

3.3 Data Collection

To obtain primary data, a semi-structured interview guide was used. Interviews are one of the most common field methods to gathering information in social science research (Czarniawska, 2014), since they are well-suited to provide rich, detailed information and narratives about a phenomenon (Yin, 2017).

The interviews were semi-structured as it followed a predefined interview guide, while at the same time being flexible and allowing the researcher an opportunity to ask follow-up questions. (Bell et al, 2019). When informants get asked the same questions, they can easily be compared to one another. During the data collection process, the interview guide has been revised by adding, removing, or changing the question to make it a better fit between the various informants and interviews. As an agreement with the informants, the interview guide was sent one week prior to the interviews, as an opportunity to prepare and be able to provide more thought-through and nuanced answers.

A total of 14 informants were interviewed and they lasted on average approximately 1 hour. The interviews were held at various locations since it was advantageous for the project managers to be interviewed where their projects were located or at their headquarters. All interviews were conducted during office hours and in Norwegian, which is the native language of all the informants. Most of the interviews were conducted face-to-face to capture the body language and facial expressions of the interviewees, to help identify any confusion regarding the questions asked. However, because of restrictions given by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health

(NIPH) concerning the coronavirus disease COVID-19, the remaining interviews were delayed and later conducted through videoconference. Audio recorders were used to record the interviews in order to hold a natural conversation with the informants. An overview of the informants from the projects in this thesis is shown in figure 3.

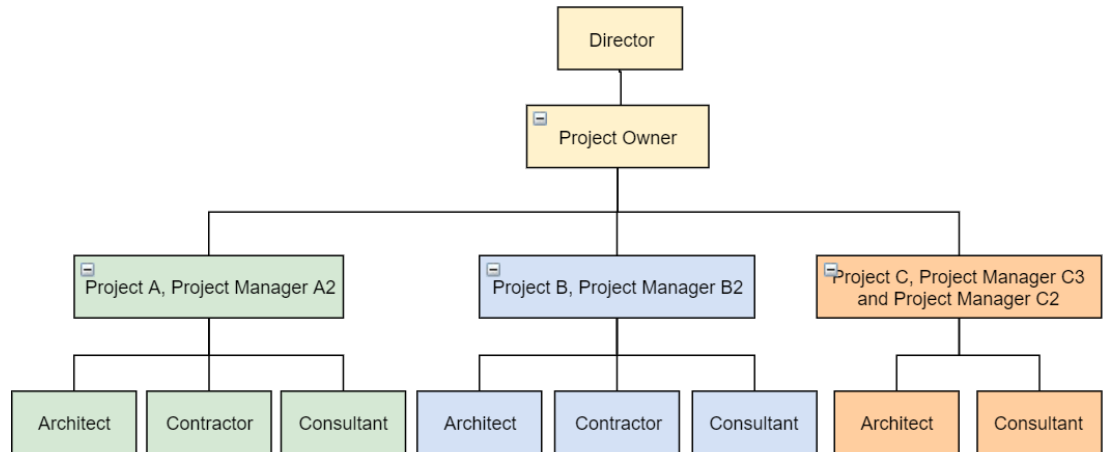


Figure 3: Informants

3.4 Informants

The informants were selected based on a purposive sampling method (Bell et al., 2019). Purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is a sampling method used when deliberate choosing informants due to the qualities the informants possesses (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the three cases, variation was needed so the sample members differ from each other in terms of key characteristics such as projects phases, positions, and experience (Bell et al, 2019). The project managers were selected by the project owner since it was more likely for accessibility if the project owner was already positive about posing as an informant. The project managers then selected the other informants, but were given instruction about position, relevance and experience the informants needed to have to be selected prior to the research aim.

A total sample of 14 informants, with 1 project owner, 4 informants from Case A, 5 from Case B, and 4 from Case C which consisted of 13 male and 1 female, were sampled. One of the problems with purposive sampling is that there is no agreement

by the researcher of how many one should interview. However, as a rule of thumb “the broader the scope of the study and the more comparisons between groups are required, the more interviews will be needed to be carried out” (Bell et al, 2019, p. 397). The informants and interviews are summed up below in Table 1.

Table 1. Interviewees in case A, B and C

| Informant | Position | Interview mode | Date | Main topics |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| A1, B1, C1 | Project owner | video conference | March 17th | Roles, Communication challenges, Governance, Control, Decision-making, Support - sparring partner, Trust |
| A2 | Project manager | face- to- face | February 11th | Roles, Communication challenges, Relationship, Control, Reporting, Support, Trust, Workload |
| A3 | Consultant | face- to- face | February 11 th | Roles, Communication, Governance, Control, Power, Authority, Trust, Time restrictions, Workload |
| A4 | Architect | face- to- face | March 9 th | Roles, Communication, Competence, Experience, Trust |
| A5 | Contractor | video conference | March 18th | Roles, Communication, Management meeting, Resources, Trust, Control |
| B2 | Project manager | face- to- face | February 12th | Roles, Responsibility, Decision-making, Communication challenges, Workplace, Governance, Support, Trust, Risks |
| B3 | Consultant | face- to- face | February 12th | Roles, Communication, Motivation, Support, Trust |
| B4 | Contractor | face- to- face | February 12th | Roles, Communication, Management meeting, Trust |
| B5 | Architect | video conference | March 30th | Roles, Collaboration between PO and PM, Communication, Authority & power, Relationship |
| D | Director | video conference | March 17th | Communication challenges, Authorizations, General about PO, Relationship |

| | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|---|
| | | | | between PM & PO, Governance, control, decision-making, Support, Trust |
| C2* | Project manager | face- to- face | March 3rd | Roles, Authorization, Responsibilities, Reporting Communication & Challenges, Governance, Support & Motivation, Trust |
| C3* | Project manager | face- to- face | March 3rd | Roles, Authorization, Responsibilities, Reporting, Communication & Challenges, Governance, Support & Motivation, Trust |
| C4 | Consultant | video conference | April 7th | Roles, Responsibilities, Communication, Authority & Power, Trust |
| C5 | Architect | video conference | April 21 st | Roles, Responsibilities, Communication, Governance, Resources, Trust |

*interviewed together

3.5 Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed based on Creswell's (2007) three analysis strategies which consist of preparing and organizing the data, reducing the data into themes through a process of coding, and lastly representing data in figures, tables, or discussion.

In the first phase, data preparation and organizing, all interviews were transcribed in the original language the interviews were conducted in. This allowed for an accurate understanding of the quotation and minimized the loss or bias by translation of the data (Bell et al., 2019). Beforehand, the semi-structured interview guide was created with subcategories that were already divided, to organize and structure the interview. After transcribing the interviews, field notes were used to arrange data into different subjects (Creswell, 2012). During the second phase, reducing and coding data, the transcribed data was printed and read through using markers, notes, and keywords to give an overall impression of the stories (Creswell,

2012). The data was read multiple times in order to look after patterns that occurred in each project and across the projects to determine and compare similarities and differences. Then, the stories were cross-checked using the quotations and identifying patterns to explain the underlying triggers. Case A was analyzed first, thereafter B, and lastly C to ensure a structured process of relevant findings in each case. The process of reducing data lead to relevant quotations and different themes that were sorted into categories, which are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Categories that emerged from the data analysis

| Categories: |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication & Relationship • Governance structure (roles) • Control • Support • Trust |

3.6 Data Evaluation

When evaluating the quality of the data of the case studies, the most common approach is reliability and validity (Bell et al., 2019). There have been discussions among qualitative researchers about the relevance of validity and reliability. Some researchers such as Lincoln & Guba (1985) have suggested an alternative and proposed terms as trustworthiness and authenticity (referred in Bell et al., 2019). To support the qualitative researcher in evaluating the quality of their research, they developed four criteria of trustworthiness which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria each have a similar criterion closely linked to validity and reliability in quantitative research (Bell et al., 2019).

Credibility, which parallels internal validity, concerns how believable the findings are (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To test the credibility of findings and interpretation, several actions have been made. Firstly, the informants were selected based on qualifications, characteristics, and hand-on experience according to the research question. Secondly, the interview guide was distributed to the informants one week prior to the interviews to get clarification in case some questions were

unclear and providing the informants an opportunity to be prepared. Pre-interviews were conducted with someone who has similar working experience as the informants, to help determine if the questions were suitable for obtaining rich and detailed data to answer the proposed research question (Elo et al., 2014). All the interviews were audio-recorded to ensure the availability of the raw material to be able to go back to interpret and review the data. After the recordings were transcribed all informants were given a chance to check quotations and phrasing in the final version of this thesis.

Transferability parallels external validity and refers to if the findings are generalizable or applicable to other contexts or situations (Bell et al., 2019). One question that has raised a great deal of discussion is how a single case can be representative of other cases. Even though, the case study may have low transferability due to researching a phenomenon in a specific context (Guba, 1981). Nonetheless, as this case study is multiple cases with three cases within one organization, the transferability will be higher to some degree (Eisenhardt, 1989). In order to increase the transferability, it is important to state the criteria of which main characteristics were used to select the informants (Moretti et al., 2011).

Dependability parallels reliability refers to if the findings are likely to be consistent if the study were to be replicated (Bell et al., 2019). To ensure the high dependability, one must describe the research process in detail as well as processing the data in a proper manner (Elo et al., 2014). This would make the study possible to replicate by others. The documentation of the research collection process haven been detailed presented in this chapter, and the interview guides are attached in the appendix.

Confirmability parallels objectivity refers to if the findings reflect the informants` voices and that the researcher`s biases, motivations or perspectives have not been intruding to a high degree (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Polit & Beck, 2012). Achieving complete objectivity is no possibility, however, in certain actions, it can help by decreasing potential biases (Bell et al., 2019). Even though there was only one researcher in this thesis, some precautions were made beforehand. Throughout the data collection process, there have been made conscious choices to not let any prejudice or personal opinion to have any direct influences on the research. All

interviews were recorded and transcribed without correction, to avoid the researcher's biases or perspectives of what was said. Further, the potential translation bias in the recordings of the informants, is kept to a minimum. This allows for an accurate transcription from the case studies.

3.7 Ethical considerations

As researchers, we are responsible for the designing of a project and the use of a data collection method to be carried out with high reasonable and ethical quality. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) define four ethical guidelines of interview research: informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and the role of the researcher.

Informed consent entails informing the research participants about the purpose of the study, as well as the advantages and disadvantages by involving themselves voluntarily. Furthermore, it consists of informing the participants of their right to withdraw from the case study at any given time (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). To adhere to the guidelines, all informants have been explained the purpose and the theme of the study, and that all data was to be anonymized. They were also told before the interviews started that they could choose at any given time to withdraw from the case study. None of the informants chose to do so.

The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees (NNREC) have stressed the importance of ethical guidelines in qualitative research. Principles such as the informant's confidentiality, integrity and informed consent is outlines. To adhere these guidelines, the organization, cases, and informants are kept confidential, by the organization and informants' requests. The restrictions aim that we are prohibited to provide any types of information that might be traced back to the organization, cases, or informants (Fangen, 2015). All informants were asked to sign an Informed Consent Form prior to or after the interviews. Before starting on the data collection process, an application to The Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) was applied, and the research project was approved.

Confidentiality refers to the protection of informants' integrity (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Precautions have been made to make sure that the respective data collected from the informants cannot easily be linked to them. Firstly, there

has been made an effort to keep the information confidentially internally in the organization, therefore, no information was provided to others than the informants themselves. Secondly, the personal information and data collected through the interviews have been stored separately. Lastly, the codes used in the thesis (A, B & C) are to preserve the informant`s integrity and anonymity. However, there is a chance that the people in the organization might understand who is whom in different cases.

Consequences refer to the potential future harm the participants might endure by participating in this research project. When researching a sensitive topic such a communication challenges, they might fear that the answers can be used against them and will therefore not provide an honest answer. The researcher is responsible to reflect on the possible consequences the informants and group they represent. Communication challenges can be assumed as a sensitive topic because it can be uncomfortable to speak negatively about their leader. For this reason, there has been a conscious choice to not include any direct citations or information that might have any negative consequences for the interviewees.

The Role of the Researcher is a critical factor for the quality of the research material to consider. Strict requirements are imposed on the researcher because a qualitative interview places stricter demands on the researcher's integrity since the researcher is an important tool for obtaining information from the informants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). A potential bias of applying a qualitative interview is the fact that the researcher's prejudice and personal opinions can affect the results of the research or the tension between a professional distance and personal friendship (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Throughout the collecting process, there has been a focus on acting professionally and a determination to not let prejudices or personal opinions influence the investigation.

4.0 Description of cases

The following chapter will present the three projects in this thesis, which are presented as Case A, B, and C. To preserve the confidentiality of the organization and the projects, facts are generalized to remove identifiable information. The sizes of the projects vary, and therefore, numbers will be rounded down to not give an exact representation of the cases. Thus, it provides an understanding of the context for the findings.

Organization

The organization is one of the largest developer in real estate in Norway. It operates in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, but the greatest activity is conducted in Norway. Within the organization there are over 2500 employees globally, and over 1500 employees is in Norway divided in different divisions. The part of the organization which we focus on involves approximately 50 employees. The division primarily invest in real estates such as offices, shopping malls, hotels, hospitals, academic institutions, and business premises. Even though the division is part of a larger corporation, it acts independently. In total, the division owns approximately 500,000 square meters of commercial property. The division is a project-driven division and has currently around 5 projects in the execution phase, and approximately 10 projects in the initial phase. The projects vary in size in terms of manpower, duration, and complexity.

Case A is in the execution phase. It involves building a combination of a shopping mall with offices on the top floors. Already, they have demolished parts of the existing mall and are now building a new shopping mall. The shopping mall is approximately 13 000 square meters, and there will be two levels of shopping facilities, with an office building at the top. The main challenge of the project is that the existing shopping mall is still operational. The project started in the middle of 2019 and has met some resistance and has been subjected to several political considerations in the initial phase. In these days, the groundwork has been completed and the construction itself has begun and have plans to open by the end of 2021. The project has an overall budget of 550 million NOK but is currently under review. According to the project manager, A2, this is the second largest project in their portfolio. The project manager has more than 20 years of experience from the construction industry.

Case B is a complicated project that involves many sub-projects. The project revolves around building a new district, and in these days, they are building an academic institution, an arena, and three business premises where one of the buildings operates as noise cancellation for the nearby highway. If everything goes according to plan, they will finish the project in 2023. The project started in the year of 2000 and have an overall budget of 1,2 billion NOK, which is considered the largest project they have in their portfolio with over 40 000 square meters. A large amount of changes have been made throughout the years, but now the project is approaching the end. The project has faced many challenges, from history preservation to water and drainage problems. Due to the challenges of water and drainage, about 40 potential garage parking lots of the original plan have been taken away. The project manager, B2, has been in the business for over 30 years and has high expertise and experience when it comes to construction.

Case C is in the initial phase of the project and started in 2018. The project covers rehabilitation of the head office of the main organization. The need to move location, have created a demand for demolishing and building new offices in the existing business premises. This part of the project will start in 2025, since they must move out of the building first of obvious reasons. The goal is to have all permits clear and rented out before they start the groundwork. If everything goes as planned the project will finish in 2027. The overall budget for the project is around 1 billion NOK, with high environmental ambition for the project. Today, the project is in a feasible study with negotiations with the agency of cultural heritage (Byantikvaren) about what needs to be preserved in order to get approval to start the construction. The project consists of two project managers, C2 and C3. However, C3 is the appointed project manager and is responsible for the implementation of the project. Both have years of experience from the field, C2 has around 10 years and C3 has more than 30 years in the industry.

5.0 Findings

In this chapter, the findings that resulted from the data analysis are presented. The data is structured according to the five categories that emerged from the data analysis: communication & relationship, governance structure, control, support, and trust. The findings in case A, case B, and case C are presented separately before comparing them in a cross-case analysis.

5.1 Case A

Communication & Relationship

During the interviews, it was revealed that informants emphasize the importance of communication between A1 and A2, and they described that the atmosphere between A1 and A2 is generally good. The informants said that they felt the project had few communication challenges, however, a factor that was often mentioned as a possible communication challenge between A1 and A2 was the time restrictions. A2 shares how the lack of time from the project owner is affecting the project from his point of view.

We have a good tone. There is nothing else to say, but time is of the essence [...] What is experienced as a challenge is to get a quick clarification. It takes too long to get in touch with A1. He is very busy, and my own calendar is not empty either. Therefore, meeting in any form of communication is not easy (A2)

However, when they do have time for each other, both A1 and A2 find that the topics being discussed become problems oriented. A1 described that the lack of time and capacity has become a problem for the availability he wants to give the project managers in his division.

I have to say that when it comes to the availability, I wish I could be more at the office with more spare time. Often I sit in meeting from 8 am or 9 am to 4 pm or 5 pm and have little available time [...] Often it is about a demanding topic that they need sparring with to anchor, sort and resolve in a way (A1).

A1 points out that the lack of time is a well-known factor for him and his projects in general. He emphasizes that time needs to be prioritized better in order to achieve more free time for the project managers. Nonetheless, it is not always easy since A1 has eleven directly reporting project managers from other projects, that also want a piece of him, and he is also directly assisting in the hiring processes of all the projects. The time and capacity are used up even before the project managers asks for assistants.

Furthermore, A1 informs that this might influence the informal personal communication between himself and the project managers. A2 further explains that the absence of the informal communication also can be strengthened by the lack of a relationship. A1 is relatively new in the job as a project owner in the division and started in the job as a project owner in 2018 after working as a project manager for another organization. A2 tells that they have a relationship, but the relationship should be stronger than it is today.

"[...] Then we come to the fact that we do not know each other. We hardly know what the other likes to do and what the other one has of experiences. We just have to assume that the other one is good. After all, we have no other job relationship that says otherwise. Yes, he does not know me either, so we have to get to know each other (A2)

Overall, the lack of personal knowledge about each other makes it harder to anticipate what the other parts wants, which can cause information asymmetry. A2 describes that this project is a bit more challenging because he is the only one of the two who has experience with building a combination building.

[...] we are not exactly certain of what today`s project owner wants, and he does not know exactly what we deliver. There are some ambiguities that I think we should take a closer look at (A2).

A2 and A1 both say that the relationship between them need to be built over time. This can be difficult since they rarely meet each other because of the strongly project-driven organization. However, A1 tells that he feels he has been taken good care of and is starting to become more affiliated with the colleagues.

Another theme that came up, was that the distance can be an influencer of the weakened informal personal communication between the two (A1, A3, A4). The informants emphasized that social interaction and relationships between colleagues are an important factor contributing to better communication. Being situated at the same office lowers the threshold for asking questions and facilitates for random collaboration and interactions between different project managers and colleagues. A4 believes that the distance can be a contributor to weakening the informal communication.

I definitely think so because you do not talk about this and that near the coffee machine in the hallway. I think that you get a more formalized communication because then it will either be picking up the phone or writing an email (A4)

Most of the informants agree that direct human contact is always better because one can address the problems right away and discuss over the table. This contributes to faster clarification and decision.

After all, there is a difference between solving things via electronic communication [...] than sitting next to each other. A2 and I save a lot of time on many questions that we have regulatory weekly project reviews meetings (A3)

A1 agrees that the informal contact is somewhat influenced by the physical distance, especially by not being able to see at each other and not seeing the body language. This would have contributed to a feeling of what is going on in the project. On the other hand, A1 agrees that one must set aside enough time to meet each other and build a relationship. Moreover, it is described that it would be unnatural if A1 was available every day to take the time to have that informal talk at the construction sites.

At the level they are today, upright, and independent project managers, I believe it is unnatural that I am available every day (A1).

Governance structure

Another theme mentioned throughout the interviews was the clarifications of the roles between a project owner and project manager. However, during the interviews it was revealed that A1 and A2 believe the roles are overlapping. Both believe that the division of responsibility and accountability is somewhat unclear. A1 informs that he sometimes seems to be moving towards the role of a project manager, but deliberately tries not to become one. On the other hand, A2 thinks slightly the same, but believes that he is more moving over to become the project owner of his project.

I feel that the project manager becomes more as a project owner and not the opposite. It comes from the fact that we are a small division and that we really do not report anything more upwards. After all, we report to A1 who is our closest leader and then we are done (A2)

A2 tells that he believes that the roles are fairly clarified between them, although they are not stated anywhere. A1 also describes the situation somewhat similar in practice that the written KS-system (management system) associated with the role description has not been finalized after the reorganization of the division. The reorganization of the division happened right before A1 started his job, tells A2. Anyhow, A1 tells that in practice there can be somewhat turbulent situations.

[...] but in practice we probably all go a bit more into two teams and especially when it is problematic (A1)

A3 and A4 tells that it is clear in the clarification between the roles and who they need to relate to in the projects. A4 specifies that it has become extra obvious, as she has very little to no contact with A1. She informs that the only time they have spoken to each other was when A2 was sick a year ago. Also, she describes that it is perfectly fine, since A2 is very competent, but admits that it might have been different if A2 did not contain the expertise he has today. In this way, she thinks it is fair that A1 does not directly involve himself in anything particularly in the daily operations of the projects.

On the other hand, A5 describes that the roles between A1 and A2 are not entirely clear, but that it is generally little contact with A1 in the project. Because of that, it

is difficult for him to answer whether there are any formal roles between them. However, he believes that the role of the project owner is well taken care of since that the project owner follows from the sidelines. A5 tells that he participates in what is called management meetings once a month with A1, A2, and his project owner.

[...] I have little contact with A1. We meet once a month with my manager, so there are four of us: A1, A2 and us, where we meet at their headquarters for one hour. Where we talk without an agenda and see if something is pressing in the project (A5)

Several informants consider that the project owner's role is to be at the overall level of the project (A1, A2, A3, A5). A5 informs that A1 has an important role by setting a clear vision or direction for where the project is heading, so there are no stops or discussion. The informants describe that the project owner needs to be on an overall level because he should not investigate the details and begin to micromanage (A3 A5). A1 tells the same, and further states, that it would not create a good relationship between him and A2 if he came in and took over his job.

My focus is to not own a single project process, because it could lead to an understanding that I stepped on the project managers foot which again could lead to a misunderstanding of who is responsible for what (A1)

Control

When it comes to control of the project, it was stated clearly that there is a great amount of freedom and minimal control (A1, A2, A3). The forms that are used to execute control are management meetings, quarterly reporting, and inspections at the construction site. It was stated that minimal control has always been a part of the culture in the division. A2 think it says a lot about trusting one and each other, rather than controlling and starting to micromanage. It is mentioned by A1 that it is rather important to be able to assist or help the project managers than controlling them.

I feel I get a pretty good control through the management meeting, and the quarterly reports that looks at finance and HSA numbers [...] But the

attempt is to navigate in order to understand the problem and be able to assist, be a sparring-partner or helping rather than controlling (A1).

Both A1, A2 and A5 agrees that the management meetings are a great way of measuring the "feeling" of the projects together with the contractor and his project owner. However, A2 thinks there should be one or two more meetings between those two, A1 and A2, with a social gathering and a more standardized form for status reporting.

Providing clear routines and schematics for how the reporting should occur, and not just saying that you want to know something. Yes, how would you like to know it? [...] And then the project owner should facilitate some fixed meetings for some kind of status reporting [...] and in between there should be some status meetings with social gatherings where you need to sit down and talk about stuff to get the mood of the project and see where the whole process is heading (A2)

Despite the requests for more meetings and standardized reporting, A2 describes that the measurements that are being done by A1 is good and believes it will be one step the right direction to achieve a closer dialogue with him. Furthermore, A2 informs that he thinks it is challenging for A1 to be the only project owner and a steering committee of one person in a rapidly growing division.

Support

Throughout the interviews, the informants emphasize that to reduce potential communication challenges in the project, support from the top management is important. A1 tells that he is not only the project owner but also a HR manager in their division. Therefore, it is emphasized in the interview that he believes that becoming a sparring partner for the project manager is rather important. In projects, it may arise demanding cases or situation that requires them joining together in negotiating situations with different partners, and thus, A1, A2, A3, A4, and A5 state that it is important for the project owner to support the project manager.

Yes, at the same time, I am very committed to supporting the project manager. Issues brought up in project usually requires us to look at it

together but also negotiating situations to make sense and strategic decisions to use in different levels. The project managers role is to “be lining up the fronts”, then I can get into the next round and try to close or make one more step further (A1)

A2 informs that he finds the projects to become more a one-man- show at times since the project manager operates more as a project owner within their projects. The most prominent factor that arises when asked why he thinks it becomes a one-man-show is how the time restrictions of A1 and A2 made it challenging for them to spend more time together.

[...] It shows that he is supportive, but A1 also has a lot of other projects to keep a track on as a leader of the company (A3)

Because of time constraints, it was not possible to collect sufficient information about the projects. A2 describes that since the project is demanding and A1 has little experience with these types of projects it becomes more difficult having a discussion on how to resolve potential challenges.

[...] because you can think that if you build a combination of a shopping mall and office building, which is special, since I am the only one with that type of experience. A1 have never done that [...] I think it becomes more a one-man-show, since we operate as a project owner (A2)

Furthermore, he acknowledges that the lack of time has contributes to the lack of knowledge of each other. Time restrictions affect the bonding of the relationship between those two, describes A2. A2 tells that he prefers more direct feedback, or that A1 stops by his office and create some sort of motivation.

We human beings are simple creatures. We need a little boast sometimes. We need to be seen. A1 is very good at commenting on the workplace, which is Facebook for the job, so we use it as an intranet for communication and boasting. After all, it is fun with bragging (A2).

The interviews indicate that support should be present in the projects. It was pointed out that supports and working close together provide an opportunity of helping each other see different types of solutions to the given problem (A1, A2, A3). Relationship development is one of A1's main concerns in his job, and he tell that even if he is relatively new in the job, he is trying to get to know his colleagues, but that it takes time.

Trust

The last main theme that emerged from the interviews is the effect of trust between the project owner and the project manager. It became evident during the interviews that the informants think trust is essential in projects. The informants agree that if they have no sort of trust among each other, their relations will move over to become a control-based relation (A1, A2, A3). One informant described that if they had no trust the work will not be fun and most likely demotivating.

Yes, absolutely. It is important. The project manager needs to be able to reach the project owner with openness and report if there are challenges, and the same applies the other way. Otherwise, it becomes hopeless (A5)

Informants said that trust should be an integrated part of the work-life because one must trust that the other do what is best for the project and the base organization that will later own the building. A2 describes that he and A1 are in a transition between receiving and proving the trust and that A1 has initiated various conversations and management meetings that help to increase confidence and trust between them. A2 describes that he is positive towards these conversations.

[...] I am positive about the meetings and conversations he has put in, but I wish that there would have been more than just twice a year (A2)

Low thresholds, honesty, and setting requirements and expectations towards each other were also valued, as well as having a culture of support, where one should not be frightened or intimidated asking for help nor make demands (A1, A2). A2 even said that trust is essential because if not it would be difficult to raise problems if you know that it would become a big deal out of it.

[...] I think it is important both for the social and the trust, because you cannot solve any problems if you know it is going to be a big deal out of it. Then you just try to ride along with the problems. I also think that we human beings are simple creatures, and if you say that “this will be a big case”. Then there need to exists trust that there will not become a lot of extra work or the project owner overruns the process [...] I believe trust is the most important factor in order to get to the bottom of the issues (A2)

It was highlighted in the interviews that it is important to maintain trust over time. A2 tells that he sees that A1 has tried to establish a developed trust, but also a supportive relation since he started in the job. A1 describes that he has had a focus on establishing a trustworthy relationship with his colleague, without jeopardizing the project managers' everyday lives.

I try to have trust. Everyone is not good at everything and it is quite natural, but instead of trying to break them I rather support them [...] I also think it is nice that one manage to succeed together as a team with some demanding issues. I think that builds trust (A1)

5.2 Case B

Communication & Relations

Interactions and communication between colleagues are a key element in projects, and this was brought up by the informants during the interviews. Since this project is the largest project they have in their portfolio, most of the communication is transferred from the project manager (B2) to the director (D) which acts as a project owner, with the use of the project owner (B1) as a middleman sometimes. This is because the decisions extend beyond both B1 and B2 authorizations (B2).

I am not going to B1, but D. He is also a project owner. He is the director of our division, B1 is the director of development of large buildings beneath D. Had the responsibilities been on B1 then I would probably have gone to him and talked together about how we could have solved this (B2).

Therefore, the project owner acts more as a sparring partner due to engagement in the communication between those two. B2 describes that the communication between B1 and himself, often occurs sporadically when they meet at the office. Telephoning and mail are most used to get in contact with B1.

*[...] at the office we go to each other`s office desk and see if we are available
[...] I am not up to date on checking the calendar and booking time for meetings. Because it is going too fast, and then we have to wait a day or two. So, we respond to each other spontaneously (B2)*

The informants emphasized that they also felt that the atmosphere between B1 and B2 is generally good (B3, B4, B5). However, B1 explained that one of the challenges that occur between them is the time restrictions in general.

In terms of capacity, I have hectically days and then it can be difficult to follow up things between meetings (B1)

This was complemented by D, who said that one of the communication challenges for every project is to deliver on time, quality, and costs. Whereas, D informs that one must have an open mind when encounter a demanding problem. B2 recognizes that the size of the project can make it challenging for B1 and other colleagues to discuss potential problems. At the same time, it was stressed of D, B1 and B2 that informal communication is important on several levels. B1 describes that having the informal communications helps not only builds networks and relations, but also creating a solution to a problem that could not have been solved alone.

[...] But it will probably do something with people, that you sometimes see opportunities, and maybe you do not get quite where you had the visionary idea, but came even further by focusing on the overall opportunity that came (B1).

By lowered the threshold for voicing ideas and concerns increases cooperation and interaction between colleagues and creates a more informal culture, describes B2. Nevertheless, when it comes to the relationship between B1 and B2, they both say they have a good relation. This was confirmed by the other informants, however,

they also said that they were not certain if it was right. Several says that they have no insight in B1 and B2 communication but would have felt the mood if something was not right between them (B3, B4, B5).

I know very little about it, but I do not think it is a bad atmosphere. No, those meetings when they both are presented, I do not experience anything negative there (B4)

B2 describes that B1 before worked as the project manager for the contractor in this project before he started in the job as project owner in their organization. Further, it is explained that the relation is already in place and have provided that their communication is affected by close and informal communication.

B1 is actively involved and he have known us in the years he has been employed in our division. He knows us (B2)

Like case A, case B has experienced that distance can cause some potential communications challenges. B1 describes that they have started with a clean-desk and free-seating policy at their headquarters. B2 further explains that the purpose was to get a closer relation with B1 and the other project managers, although, he believes that it has isolated them even more.

In the old building we sat in a separate department where all the project managers were gathered, and we talked over each other's head about our projects. Everyone knew everything about everyone. We knew everything, but with the clean desk policy it has been erased a bit and we do not dare to talk that much. Often, we do not dare or are unable to talk because others would only get fragments since now, we are not seated at the same place anymore (B2)

Despite, the challenge described by B2 he also says that it is too early to tell the effect of the new seating arrangement. Furthermore, he announces that more acclimation time is needed for himself. B1 explains:

[...] but I am surprised how sporty and good people have been to fold up their sleeves, and I think this has gone very well (B1)

When further asked if they believe that there exist some communication challenges, both B1 and B2, says that there is little to none. B2 describes that most people in the divisions have quarreled with him, but he finds that positive. He believes that the best solutions come when people disagree from the start. While he does not see it as challenges, but rather misunderstandings and disagreements. B1 described that they agree on the end product, however, the disagreement is more about the means to the end.

No, I think the total they agree upon. The way forward can probable been disagreed on if someone wants to shorten it down to finish it faster (B3)

Governance structure

When focusing on the role descriptions within the projects, B2 tells the exact same story as A2 described in case A, which is that the project managers operates as project owners. Moreover, the reasons are simple, B2 describes.

We have an instruction of the project managers and their tasks and responsibilities, but it was slightly redefined about two years ago [...] The director is the group leader in our division. He reorganized so that the project managers own the projects. We have the responsibility from sketching to the hire of the buildings. In principle, I have total responsibility up until the handover to the tenants. (B2)

Although, when asked what B1 responsibility should be, B2 answers that he should coordinate the project managers. The other informants also mentioned just like case A, that the project owner should handle the overall level such as budget and progress of the projects (B3, B4, B5). B2 explains further that B1 should be at the overall level to handle the workload of the other projects as well.

He must have the overall level than a detailed level [...] B1 is about to delve into a little too much details. D wants him to be the face outwards and, in the press, [...] He is so kind and helps everyone (B2)

B2 and D adds that B1 have two roles in the division, project owner and HR manager for all project managers which is subjected to him. B1 tells:

I am the project owner [...] I am also the HR manager for these project managers, and therefore, we have direct lines on tasks and personal matters (B1)

B3 describes that his view on the role description between B1 and B2 is quite clear. He says that the lines upwards are short and that B1 and B2 have a close connection, even though B1 has the main authority over the projects. B4 and B5 on the other hand, inform that they have little or nearly no contact with the project owner. B5 adds that it is most likely because B1 and B2 are from the same base organization.

A difference between this project and other projects, where the project owner and project manager may be from two different companies, is that we have little communication with the project owner because we largely interact with B2 who is our contact person (B5)

Control

Like case A, case B also has minimal control and a high level of freedom. B2 informs that the same forms of control such as, management meeting, quarterly reports, and inspections at the construction site are used by B1. Furthermore, the general reports have been shortened down to 10 lines about the project, which is sent by email, where one responds to issues that arises from the district the project is being built in. B2 describes it is carried out minimal control, and that it is more about trusting the project managers in the division. Further, B2 describes that if all decisions he made were to be controlled by either B1 or D, then the project would not have come very far.

Then I would have to produce A4 sheets for signing all the time, then I also would had to sit here all the time just to produce “Am I allowed to do that or that?”. When I believe I am within the budget I will not pass it on to B1 or others (B2)

D complemented this, by saying that it is not about having total control over the project managers, however, sometimes there is a need for involvement after reviewing projects where there are deviations.

[...] I am all in to give clear framework and trust that everything will work out fine [...] Otherwise, I think it is very alright to dive into projects to get an impression of everything is working out properly, and that project owner and managers have control over it (D)

Support

Even though, B1 acts more as a middleman in project B he stills plays an active role throughout the project. B2 describes that B1 is a good sparring partner and tells that his expertise in various disciplines has contributed to great discussions. Yet, B2 describes that most of the encouragement is most drawn from D.

The director says, «it is good, it is good». We encourage each other's all the time. (B2)

Despite being the middleman, B1 describes that he thinks it is important to be a part of the projects regardless because project managers are always in need for a good sparring partner when they have daily trivial challenges. Further, he explains that to be a good sparring partner he needs to have the concepts in order and an overall understanding of how the project is going.

Easily said, my job is to make sure that the project manager is able to deliver in the best way possible they can. My overall job is to arrange for the project managers to deliver their best daily, and that is by being available and supporting to them (B1)

Trust

During the interviews, trust was mentioned as an important part of the project especially when handling urgent and demanding situations in the daily operations, B2 explains. All informants considered that trust would make the work easier to handle together as a team (B1, B2, B3, B4, B5). B4 says that without trust the communication will be poor and might create less confidence. B1 agrees with this:

Yes, I think it is absolutely crucial. I become a very poor version of myself if I do not trust those around me (B1)

D explains the communication and relationship building in the division must be based on trust and a clear framework. Furthermore, B2 tells that trust is necessary to have in the construction industry in general. Despite the importance of trust, B2 explains that their system is not dependent on the trust between colleagues. Although, he believes that the work would be unsatisfactory if he needed looking over his shoulder. B2 tells a story that shows how important trust is.

We had two project managers who had to go. One in disgrace after he went up to Trondheim to assist in a project there. The project manager knew his job well and showed formal good competence against contracts and changes and the tasks a project manager should have. However, the project manager showed poor ability to utilize working hours by delivering in kindergarten in Oslo, flying to Trondheim, and returning for pickup in kindergarten in Oslo within normal working hours. Combining private trips with job journeys to Sweden and documenting kilometers traveled to the wrong airport in the travelling document. Not being tidy is thus perceived as cheating. Then trust disappears (B2).

B4 and B5 informs without trust then those working direct under the project manager may find it to be more control and steered, and several communication channels. In addition, B5 believes that without trust there may be more conflicting information given that later can lead to demotivation and unsatisfactory work for both the project owner and project manager.

The fact that they do not provide any conflicting information or that the project managers must return to the project owner to get clarification [...] I think it would be uncomfortable if I had my boss hanging over my shoulder all the time telling me how to do my job, or have no trust towards you and then having to report every time. It would be quite a difficult way to work, and not satisfactory (B5)

5.3 Case C

Communication & relationship

In project C, the project managers and project owner described the communication as more direct because of the interactions occurs at the main office. Further, they describe a close collaboration with each other and the director of the division.

They have more direct contact, and then we have special meetings in the project in the development phases, where we also have a forum called development meeting with D. D is the director, and together we prepare the strategy and follow up progress in the development project, and discuss various decision-strategies (C1)

C2 and C3 says that most of the communication is transferred through face-to-face, and sometimes mail as well. Further, they acknowledge that they communicate with each other when the time is appropriate. By that they mean C1 is a busy man, and often they need to book him for meetings.

Either he runs over here and checks that we are here, or he books us for a meeting. He is very busy and engaged, but if you are determined, it is possible to get a hold of him. He never says no to us. In which case he has a very good reason for saying no to us (C3)

Most often you have to book meetings, because he is always on the run (C2)

This is also emphasized by the other informants C4 and C5. Although, the time restriction exists, C2 and C3 believe that there are minimal communication challenges between them and C1 in the project. Furthermore, C2 told that they have many communication channels that it is almost impossible to not have contact. It is emphasized that you always get contact or an answered if you try. However, C2 mentions that a challenge that may arise for C1 is the detailed information C2 and C3 possess about the project.

[...] What may be seen as a challenge is that we are much closer to the issues and start talking to C1 on a slightly too detailed level, so that he would have

challenges getting all the details. Clearly, he will not have as much detailed knowledge as we have. It would have been far too much to handle for him, and it might be a bit in that direction if we are facing specific issues (C2)

This was complemented by C3 saying if the project is in a standstill or have faced barriers, they grab a hold of C1 and give him the detailed update about the case. Thereafter, they collaborate and create a different strategy. C1 describes this as a typical scenario for the project managers and tells that when they have tried to work on an issue for a longer period of time, they stop seeing the possibilities.

When you step into a problem 24/7, week after week, it is natural that it fills [...] But others who are jumping between other projects have a greater opportunity to distance ourselves and see things from another perspective. D is an optimist, and sees many opportunities [...] It helps me in my role, and this also helps in terms of the perspectives of the project managers (C1)

It is emphasized by D and C1 that direct lines in the division is important to help the project manager to help them resolve their issues. The collective sharing and cooperation between C1, C2 and C3, is said by C2 and C3 to be one of the reasons there are few communication challenges in general. Both project managers tell that C1 is an open-minded person, which is easy to talk to about different kind of topics.

We have a very good connection with him and enjoys his company. He is easy to talk to (C3)

Governance structure

In this project, two project managers are working together to complement each other with each other`s expertise and experience from different fields. There was a clear consensus among the informants that the roles between the C1, C2 and C3 were clearly divided. However, in this case, C2 and C3 stressed that C1 operates more as a sparring partner and a middleman between them and the board. On contrary, C4 and C5 mentioned that the challenge arise of the clarification between C2 and C3. C5 also mentions that sometimes B2 is in the meetings and contributing with opinions and experience, which makes the clarification more uncertain.

I do not think the roles between C1 and C3 are unclear [...] But it is still a small challenge that C2, C3 and B2 are being actively involved in this project at a somewhat similar level. For me it is C3 who is the main project manager, but there are several other heads who do not have a 100% clear relationship between themselves on what types of responsibilities they possess (C5)

C1 also mentioned this as a challenge of not knowing who oversees the project. Especially in meetings he finds it problematic. C1 describes;

C2, C3 and B2 have been in development meeting in the project without it being clear on who has been [...] Why is B2 there? Why is C2 there? Why is C there? [...] It has been a bit uncertain to me in terms of what I am used to, and therefore I am trying to clear it up a bit by providing responsibilities of ownership for the workflows. [...] By clarifying in meetings who owns the various projects/workflows, I believe you deliver better, and it will be easier for those around and myself to follow up (C1).

Control

Talking to the informants, several mentioned that in Norwegian work culture you need to have a high level of freedom, or the work will be demotivating. One informant described that C1 can use his managerial authority to control his colleagues, but it would be difficult to implement. C3 explains that the focus is more on collaboration and joint governance, together with an open-door policy.

We are quite well-educated people and we like to have freedom in our job [...] It would probably be demanding in Norwegian work culture in general if someone would have total control over us (C2)

[...] We are grown-up people and we collaborate and respects each other (C3)

Even though, there is much freedom in the organization C2 and C3 explain that they are not going further than their authorization. C2 explains that they consult, discuss, and conclude with C1 on various decision on what to do in certain cases, and therefore he acts as a sparring partner for them. C2 says that C1 can formally make

decisions about everything, but that he has no decision-making power. Similar to C1 answers, he says that his opinions have a more indirect influence.

At least indirectly, because I believe that quite a few opinions of mine count. Also, it is formally a good deal of decisions to be made and especially related to the hiring process, and we have to decide [...] We also agree. Yes, you can say I am making a decision then (C1)

The informants told that reporting is a great method for the project owner to collect the information and status of the project. However, C2 informed that the reporting system could be more structured for the initial phase to give easier access to C1. He explains that in the execution phase the quarterly reports are more formal and structured, than the initial phase. Most of the information is shared superficial in the developing meeting, C2 and C3 explains.

What might have been done would have been to have slightly more structured form of reporting, because in development meetings you go quite superficially into the project. In the projects we have quarterly reports and things that are very structured and formal, while we do not have that type in the initial phase. We do not have that type of reporting (C2)

We have to many loose factors, and we cannot guarantee that this case will be approved because there is a lot of dallying (C3)

Support

Low threshold and honesty is valued, and C2 and C3 admits they are not frightened or intimidated of asking for help by C1. Rather, they tell that they add on a little extra, so they do not forget any important details. C1, C2 and C3 reported that they thought it was important to help each other in their job.

One has to tell about it, before it is too late (C2)

We must support each other (C3)

C3 emphasized that C1 is flexible in his role as a project owner. It is acknowledged by C3 that C1 both motivates and helps you with difficult cases in the projects, but also steps up when handling problems in the personal life. C3 explains;

When we argue with many people, we need to try to find the right people to talk to sometimes at an overall level. Sometimes it can be about private things happening at home such as challenges, then he (C1) sits down and asks questions and cares (C3)

Trust

As a result of their close interaction and cooperation, trust is valued between them. C1 emphasized that the culture is informal and open. C4 and C5 agrees with this statement and says that trust is basic. Due to the informal culture, C1 mentioned that his colleagues have been good at welcoming and incorporating him gradually over time, and feels he is a part of the community. Further, he believes this creates trust over time and in a way, creates a great desire working towards achieving common goals and loyalty towards the organization or division.

Yes, I like to say yes to that. I have not experienced anything that would indicate otherwise (C1)

It is important that trust is always present (C3)

The informants agree that if they have no sort of trust among each other, their relations will move over to become a control-based relation (C1, C4, C5). However, C2 described that the work would become simpler if there would be no trust, since C1 would then have to govern and control all the steps and procedures of the projects. C2 and C3 supplement that the work would not be fun.

The job would have been easier if we were just being controlled and had no trust towards each other. But it would not have been fun (C2).

5.4 Cross-Case Analysis

In this section, a cross-case analysis is presented through the findings outlined in the previous sections. Findings are then, summarized and compared. The findings in the cross-case analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Cross-case analysis

| Factors | Case A | Case B | Case C |
|---|---|---|---|
| Communication & Relationship | <p>Time restrictions between PO and PM. Both are actively engaged in other projects. PO have eight other project managers directly reporting to him, and PM have other projects</p> <p>Distance between PO and PM through the lack of personal knowledge of each other</p> <p>Physical distance</p> <p>Asymmetric information between PO and PM, since PM have more experience building this type of project</p> <p>Non-established personal relationship</p> | <p>Time restrictions between PO and PM. Both are actively engaged in other projects.</p> <p>Distance through the lack of informal communication because of physical distance between project and main office, but also because of clean-desk and free seating landscape at the office.</p> <p>Established personal relationship through previous job relationship</p> | <p>Time restrictions between PO and the PMs since PO have a strict time schedule with meetings.</p> <p>Asymmetric information between the PMs and the PO since the PMs contain more detailed information about the on-going project.</p> <p>Established personal relationship through on-going interaction and more direct communication between them</p> |
| Governance structure | <p>Unclear formal roles between PO and PM, which can come of them being a small division</p> <p>Have been a reorganization of the roles and they have not been finalized yet in the systems.</p> | <p>Unclear between PO and PM because of the reorganization done two years ago.</p> <p>PM tells PO is starting to move into too much details when he should stay at an overall level.</p> | <p>Clear between PO and PM, however the roles are unclear between the PMs. The informants say it is because they have two PMs who are similar active involved in the project</p> |
| Control | <p>Minimal control and more freedom</p> <p>Control systems used by the PO: reporting, management meetings and inspections</p> <p>PO would rather assist and be a sparring-partner than controlling the PM</p> | <p>Minimal control and more freedom</p> <p>Control systems used by the PO: reporting, management meetings and inspections</p> <p>General reports are shortened down to ten lines</p> | <p>Minimal control and more freedom</p> <p>Control systems used by the PO: Reporting & Development meetings.</p> <p>Collaboration and joint governance together with an open-door policy is highly valued</p> |

| | | | |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| | PM tells there is a lack of standardized reporting system in general reports | D tells that is more about the need for involvement and reviewing the projects than controlling them. | Lack of standardized reporting system in all types of reports |
| Support | The project becomes more a one-man-show Want more encouragement, motivation, and a sparring partner of PO Helpfulness, honesty & low thresholds is valued | PO is a middleman in the project, but plays an active role in the project as a sparring partner Honesty, support & low thresholds | PO act more as a sparring partner when facing difficult cases and motivates, but also HR manager when encountering personal issues. Helpfulness, honesty, trust & low thresholds are valued |
| Trust | Need to maintain trust over time, especially because of the relationship between them. If not, it will become more control based | Without trust, the work would be unsatisfactory and will become control based. The system does not need trust, but the human interactions needs it | Without trust, project need to be more govern and control based Trust is important for satisfaction in work life and relationship building |

Communication and relationship

It became evident that there are some differences in terms of both communication challenges and the relationship between the project owner and the project managers in these cases. In case A, time restriction, distance through lack of personal knowledge, physical distance, and asymmetric information were some of the communication challenges mentioned during the interviews. The project manager emphasized that some of the communication challenges may have been strengthened because of a non-established personal relationship between the project owner and himself. In case B, time restriction and physical distance were frequently mentioned as a possible communication challenge between the project owner and project manager. The project manager told that the clean-desk policy, and free seating landscape at the main office might lead to more distance between himself and the project owner. The established personal relationship between the project owner and project manager were created through previous job relationships, where it appears that the project owner worked as a contractor in the project before his current position. In case C, both time restriction and asymmetric information were possible challenges which might occur in the communication process between the project owner and project managers. However, they told that they have more direct

contact with the project owner than others in the execution phases. Therefore, they emphasized the establishment of personal relationship have been created through interactions and cooperation.

In all cases, time restriction was a mutual factor which shows that the project owner has a tight schedule with many other projects and project manager to keep a track on. Another similarity between case A and case B, was that both project managers mentioned physical distance as a factor that contribute to minimizing the informal communication, while case C did not consider this as a possible challenge. Lastly, asymmetrical information was revealed in case A and C, where both project managers emphasized that in- depth insight in the projects could create more challenges between the project owner and themselves.

Governance structure

A similarity between case A and case B, is that the project managers frequently mentioned that they both operate more as a project owner in their project. In case A, this is explained by pointing at a small division with short direct lines, while the project manager, B2, described it is the reorganization done two years ago. Both A2 and B2 explained that the role description was reorganized two years ago, however, they have not been finalized in the systems. In case B, the project manager tells that he is worried that the project owner is moving towards a more detailed insight in the project than he should have. Contrary to case C, the roles were not unclear between the project owner and project managers. Nevertheless, the roles between the project managers have led to more uncertainties in the project because they are actively involved.

Control

In all cases, it was emphasized that the project owner wanted minimal control over the project managers and the project managers should get more freedom in their projects. In all cases it becomes clear that trust is more important than having total control. The control mechanisms used by the project owner varies little compared to the different phases the project is in, however, in the execution phase reporting, management meeting and inspections are being used. While in the initial phase, reporting and development meetings are used. The project owner mentioned in case A that he would rather be a sparring-partner in all projects than having the total

control over them. While in case B, the director who also operates as a project owner tells that involvement and reviewing the project is a better method than having total control. In case A and C, the project managers mentioned that there was a lack of standardized reporting systems in the phases.

Support

During the interviewed in case A, the project manager mentions that the project becomes more a one-man-show because the project manager operates more as a project owner. Also, the project manager tells that he has experience and knowledge that the project owner does not behold of that type of building, and therefore, discussions and sparring is not always easy. Because of this, more encouragement and motivation are wanted, but also more sparring and discussions with the project owner. The project managers also mentioned that this might come of the lack of an established personal relationship between them both. In case B, the project managers tell that the project owner, B1, acts more as middleman in the project. However, he plays an active role and is a good sparring partner for the project managers and provide both motivation and support. Lastly, in case C there is more direct contact between the project owner as a sparring partner with the project managers when facing difficult cases. Also, in case C both project managers say that the project owner acts as a human resource manager when they encounter personal issues or are stuck in the project and need motivation or encouragement.

Trust

In all cases, they agree that trust is an important factor to acquire and that without trust their work-relationship will move over to a more control-based relationship. It was found in all cases, that without trust the work would become unsatisfactory. In case A, the project manager tells that trust needs to be maintained over time and that this will contribute to create a stronger personal relationship between them. In case B, the project manager says that trust in general is an important factor in the construction industry. However, their system does not require any trust, but the human interactions does. In case C, one of the project managers emphasized that trust is not required in the organization, but without trust he believes that the project needs to be more governed and controlled. The project managers in all cases agrees that trust is an important factor that needs to be maintained and developed over time.

6.0 Discussion

In this chapter, the findings presented in the previous chapter will be discussed. The identified categories from the findings will be separated into two main topics, communication & relationships, and governance mechanisms. These will then be discussed and compared to previous research from the literature.

6.1 Communication & Relationship

The construction industry is one of the oldest project-driven sectors, together with shipbuilding and aerospace (Keegan & Turner, 2003). Within project-driven organization, barriers to effective communication are complex and needs to be explored (Dainty et al., 2006). This research study has examined the potential communication challenges between a project owner and four project managers in three construction projects. Although this research study explores three cases within the same base organization it is notable that similarities and differences were observed in all cases. Nearly all informants explained that there were few communication challenges in the cases between the project owner and project manager. In contrary, most of the information given had potential of turning into potential communication challenges that might occur.

In the studied cases, time restriction was the most frequent factor described which could pose as a potential communication challenge. According to the project owner and project managers, the project owner lacks time for all the projects and project managers in the division's portfolio. Often this occurs when the project managers are in need for a quick clarification. The director (project owner in case B) and the project owner had limited time to be accountable for all deliverable of the projects (Meredith & Zwikael, 2020). Past research by Meredith & Zwikael (2020) stated that the responsibilities of the project owner occurs most heavily at the initial phases of projects, however, these studied cases show that the project owner is also available in the execution phases as well as the initial and planning phases of the projects and can act as a sparring-partner. The project owner and some of the informants expressed that some of the responsibilities of the project owner is too large was to be handled by only one person.

In the execution phase of the studied projects, physical distance was described as a similar potential communication challenge. The project managers in case A and B, both mentioned that physical distance can contribute to more formal communication between themselves and the project owner. The project owner agreed with this statement and expressed that the informal communication between them was weakened due to the lack of direct personal human contact. This statement is in alignment with Kreitner & Kinicki's (2012) research about communication barriers. These findings suggest that to improve the communication process between the project owner and the project managers one needs more informal communication and more two-way communication. This might decrease the distance between the project owner and project managers.

In case A and C, the project owner and managers said that information asymmetry occurs in the projects. This can be shed light on by using the principal-agent theory to explain their relationship (Krane et al., 2012). Both project managers mentioned information asymmetry as a potential communication challenge, however, they indicated that it is natural that they have more information about the project. This is because the project manager is more deeply involved in the project, while the project owner is more at the overall level. This is in compliance with the principal-agency relationship (Eisenhardt, 1989), where the owner does not have the same information as the project managers and this can create an adverse selection problems and a moral hazard problem. Despite this, all informants expressed that it was a natural situation that did not indicate weaker alignment with the project objectives. In case C, informants mentioned that to reduce the problem, close cooperation and interaction between the parties are needed. However, as further explained in the interviews it shows that the close interaction and establishment of personal relationship is already there. This statement is consistent to Krane et al. (2012), efforts made to keep a close relationship and good communication between the internal project owner and project managers, where aligning interests and building trust is of the essence.

In all cases, the project owner emphasized that establishing a personal trustworthy relationship was considered important for the successful completion of a project. In case B and C, the project managers expressed that they already had an established personal relationship through either previous job experience or an

ongoing close interaction. These are the cases with less potential communication challenges as well. On the other hand in case A, the project manager told that there was a lack of an established personal relationship since they had not enough time to get a closer interaction or social gatherings. As shown in the cross-analysis, case A has more potential communication challenges and this is being discussed. This behavior represents a potential challenge for the project owner and manager and is aligned with the principal-agency problem. According to Eisenhardt (1989) the agency problem would arise when the principal and agent does not know what the other wants to achieve with the project. In case A, ambiguities between the project owner and manager was explained by the project manager as a potential problem that could become bigger if not handled. Therefore, information asymmetry becomes the core problem related to the lack of a non-established personal relationship (Schieg, 2008). Research shows that there is a need for closer communication, and in these cases more informal physical communication is needed to minimize the impact of information asymmetry in the principal-agent relationship (Turner & Müller, 2004).

6. 2 Governance mechanisms

Governance structure and support

In this study, the informants have expressed their opinion on how the communication process between the project owner and project managers is shaped by governance structure, support, control, and trust. The responses from case A and B, shows that the role between the project owner and project manager is unclear. The project owner and project managers expressed different views regarding how the roles were divided, which can come from the different views of perspectives (Krane et al., 2012). The project managers said that they work rather independently and act more as a project owner and have sufficient authority to perform their projects in a sufficient manner (Olsson, 2018). All four of the project managers stated that they were pleased with the project owners' job, but that the project owner is moving towards more detailed information rather than staying at an overall level. In case A, the project manager indicated that the project owner could have been more present in order to ask more demanding questions and created a discussion when they communicate with each other. According to Klakegg (2013), when the

responsibilities and roles of the project ownership is poorly described, projects tend to fail. Findings from this study implies a lack of an established project framework within role description on how the project ownership is to be executed (Müller, 2009).

In the answers provided by the project owner, the project managers had the main focus on how the project was organized and the relationship with the project owner. This was illustrated during the interviews, when the project owner mentioned that he possesses two roles for his division. One as a human resource manager, and the other as a leader for the projects and projects managers. Furthermore, all project managers from case A, B and C emphasized that the project owner acts as a sparring-partner that helps, motivates, and encourages them in difficult situations. Therefore honesty, helpfulness and low thresholds were valued in the project in their communication process.

Furthermore, this brings us to a discussion about the theoretical and practical differences between project ownership. As Olsson (2018) described in his study, we have also found a discrepancy between theory and practice when it comes to project ownership. In the answers provided by the project managers from case A, B and C, the focus was mainly about the relationship. Whereas, the project ownership was rarely mentioned. This indicated that the project owner operates through the perspective as a project owner type 2 as according to Olsson's (2018) research. A project owner type 2 acts more as a supporter for the project manager and have some responsibilities for the project delivery. It was indicated throughout the interview that the project owner is a human resource manager in the division. However, the project owner in the cases indicated throughout the interviews that he also acts as a project owner type 1. This implies taking a business case perspective on the projects which includes the costs and benefits (Olsson, 2018).

The project owner is organizationally located above the project managers, as their leader, but also within the delivery side of the projects when it comes to the hiring process. As described by the informants, the project owner does not have responsibilities at the daily operational level, since they do not want the project owner to start to micromanage the projects (Olsson & Berg- Johansen, 2016). Moreover, it can be further discussed if this has something to do with their

governance structure. According to the project owner, he should not interfere in the everyday operations because the project managers operates on an independent level with support and trust from him. The informants from case A, B and C, stated that they rarely have any contact with the project owner, and therefore, do not perceive any unclarities between the project owner and the project manager. It can be discussed if this statement is due to the fact that the project owner and project managers comes from the same base organization, which contributes to less confusion for the external workforce. While internally, there may be ambiguities in the role description that is being kept internally inside the division.

Nevertheless, in case C there were no indication of an unclear division between the project owner and the project managers. It was emphasized that there was an unclear division between the project managers instead. However, there might be an unclear division of responsibilities and roles between the project owner and the managers, but the unclarities between the project managers may outweigh the ambiguities of the project owner. Meredith & Zwikael (2020) emphasized that the project owner responsibilities in the initial phase of a project is to be the primarily help by building the business case with the key stakeholders both internally and externally. The project managers responded that the project owner worked simultaneously together with them, building a case, before taking it further to the board.

The three cases showed some similarities and differences in stating the role description and support between the project owner and project managers. It is interesting to note, that case A and case B both implied that the role description between themselves and the project owner was unclear. On the other hand, in case C, they did not imply an unclear division as shown in the cross-case analysis. As described by Olsson (2018) there have been a growing concern for the project owner's role and responsibilities, where one of the concerns is to strengthen the awareness of the project owner role description. This study indicates similarities of Olsson (2018) research article, where the project owners main focus is to empower the project managers in projects rather than taking the business case focus.

Control and trust

Previous research has stated that one of the project owner most important tasks is to have control over the deliverables (Klakegg, 2013; Müller, 2009; Garland, 2009;

Krane et al., 2012). Findings from all cases show that the project owner emphasized that there should be minimal control and the project managers should get more freedom in their projects. In case A and C, the project manager states that minimal control has been a part of their culture as long as they can remember. The formal control executed by the project owner is management meetings, development meetings, reporting and inspections.

According to the project owner and project managers, most of the control is executed through informal control by being a motivator, encourager, and sparring-partner. Müller (2009) stated that the reasons for this might be that the project owner has confidence in the project managers, which reduces the need for control and the feeling of being controlled. This argument is in line with what the project owner and director expressed. By being a sparring-partner and being involved in the project, was more important than having the total control of the project managers. Another explanation for the diminished need of control can be that through the formal control mechanisms the project owner has the control he needs (Olsson, 2018). The director and project owner stated that having total control over the project managers was not desirable, as the division emphasizes a more trust-based communication. This statement is in alignment with Atkinson, Crawford & Ward (2006), which implies that possessing a total control of all activities of a project is neither possible nor desirable. Further, they state that trying to gain a total control can lead to a nature of distrust and moral hazard (Atkinson et al., 2006).

The data from the cases revealed that the project owner have competence trust and integrity trust towards the project managers (Pinto et al., 2009). All the informants spoke of the importance of trust between the project owner and project managers, and this might have an effect in terms of the few reporting and control mechanisms used by the project owner (Olsson, 2018). The informants thought that if there was no trust between them, their work-relationship would move over to become control-based. This argument is in line with Vlaar et al. (2007) who argues that if the managers loses trust with their partner, there would be a more need of formal control. Furthermore, some informants explained that the work would become unsatisfactory if they needed to be controlled all the time.

The project manager in case A, tells further that trust needs to be maintain and build-up over time in order to have a positive effect on their relationship. However, projects often have limited time, which is mentioned in the interviews, to build trust between parties (Atkinson et al., 2006). Therefore, showing an interest in the project may led to better performance for the project owner (Turner & Müller, 2004). As the project manager in case B stated, the project owner shows interest in the project by asking for more information and this may help reinforce the trust perspective. Long & Sitkin (2006) suggest that the trust perspective plays an important role because when few control mechanisms are used this may reinforce subordinate trust.

As stated above, the few potential communication challenges might come from a trustworthy relationship. Trust is a facilitator for open communication and negotiation between parties (Klein Woolthuis et al., 2005), and plays an active role in the projects of this study. Whereas a high level of trust, as stated in all the cases, leads to a decrease of formal control mechanisms (Edelenbos & Eshuis, 2012). Good communication and cooperation between the project owner and project managers in the projects may have led to building trust (Turner & Müller, 2004). The findings from this study indicates that control and trust acts as substitution.

Overall, this research suggests that in order to improve the communication process between the project owner and project managers there needs to be developed a medium level of structure with high collaborations (Turner & Müller, 2004). There is a need for more informal two-way communication between the project owner and project managers, and relationship building activities to create a more trustworthy relationship between the project owner and project managers. Another suggestion is to develop and implement a project framework which includes the role description on how the project ownership is to be executed (Müller, 2009). These suggestions may help reinforce or build a better communication process in the projects. Whereas good, trusting, working relationship helps the project owner empower the project managers to deal with risks that arises in the projects, and in the same way leaving some control to the project owner (Pemsel & Wiewiora, 2012).

7.0 Implications, Limitations, Future Research & Conclusion

This chapter presents the practical and theoretical implications of the thesis. Further, the limitations and possibilities for future research are being discussed. Lastly the research questions are answered in the conclusion.

7.1 Practical and Theoretical Implications

The findings from this research study have investigated potential communication challenges between a project owner and project manager, and how the communication process is shaped by governance structure, support, control, and trust. In this section practical and theoretical implications will be highlighted.

In terms of practical implications, project owners of project-driven construction organizations should consider the following. Firstly, in order to minimize the potential communication challenges between the project owner and project manager, personal relationship should be established before starting the project. Since the project owner and managers are from the same base organization it becomes more natural to have an already established relationship than if they came from other organizations. Secondly, there is a need of both formal, informal, and two-ways communication to create a higher degree of collaboration between these (Turner & Müller, 2004). Due to different constraints it might not be possible all the time for everyone to meet physically, however virtually should be considered a possibility when they are at different locations. As already mentioned, the role description framework between the project owner and project manager should be established and implemented to create a clear authority both internally and externally in addition to effective collaboration (Olsson, 2018). Support, control, and trust are important factors for the project owner to acknowledge as a part of the organization's culture. High degree of support and trust were considered as important for the project managers, whereas a high level of control was not. These suggestions may help reinforce or build a better communication process in the projects.

Regarding the theoretical implications this research study complements and extends the already existing research of governmental project ownership literature. This research has contributed to extending knowledge about potential communication challenges that can occur during a project between a project owner and manager.

These extends the findings of Kreitner & Kinicki (2012) research on communication barriers and Turner & Müller (2004) research of the relationship of the project owner and project manager seen from a principal-agent theory. While this study also has revealed how the communication process can be shaped by governance structure, support, control, and trust. Furthermore, many of the factors identified have already been shown in previous research, and therefore, help strengthen the evidence to the factors described. However, the communication process between a project owner and project manager have not been identified in such a specific context. Thus, this research extends previous research by showing that the project owner can shape the communication process by playing an active role within the projects and his influence should not be underestimated in the construction industry.

7.2 Limitations & Future Research

Similar to all research conducted, this research also contains some limitations. Firstly, this research study consists of time and resource constraints which contributed to limit its scope. Secondly, this research is based on a small sample of 14 informants and therefore, might not be representative for the population. The selection of the informants can be considered a limitation of this study since they were chosen from the project managers which may have created a selection bias. Lastly, lack of previous research and studies on this topic can be considered a limitation. There were nearly non articles that have studied on potential communication challenges that might occur between a project owner and a project manager, however, plenty of communication challenges from the project manager point of view were taken. Nevertheless, like all case studies, this case study is not generalizable since most case studies differs and the results are dependable of the contexts (Bell et al., 2019). However, this research study can be applicable for other organization in the construction industry and provide a basis for future research.

Future research should extend this research and look at different organization with a same organizational structure as in this case, in order to see if these factors are similar or different in shaping the communication process between a project owner and project manager. Moreover, there is a need for more research on potential communication challenges between a project owner and project manager. Further, none of the potential communication challenges were ranked in this research study,

which further limits the possibilities of identifying the most relevant communication challenge the project owner and project manager feels is most important to mitigate. Therefore, this research should be extended and take into consideration a larger sample to minimize sampling biases.

7.3 Conclusion

The aim of this research study was to investigate the following research questions; *Q1: What are the potential communication challenges between the project owner and project manager in construction projects?* and *Q2: How is the communication process between the project owner and project manager shaped by governance structure, support, control, and trust?* These research questions were investigated through a multiple case study, where three projects within one project-driven organization in the construction industry were examined using a cross-case analysis.

Firstly, this research found that there are potential communication challenges in the studied cases. Time restriction, physical distance, and information asymmetry were the potential challenges most frequently mentioned. The potential communication challenges were most visible in case A, which could be described through a lack of well-established personal relationship between the project owner and project manager. Therefore, a suggestion to minimize potential communication challenges is to get a closer interaction through social gatherings or trustworthy bonding activities. More informal two-way communication channels need to be used to achieve a stronger communication process. Secondly, this research investigated how four factors shaped the communication process between the project manager and project owner. The results showed that the governance structure of roles description was unclear and poorly described. By developing and implementing a project framework with clear role description the project owner can easier empower the manager through effective collaboration. Support and trust also affect the relationship between the project owner and project managers and were crucial in the communication process in the projects. Lastly, control and trust acted more as substitutes in this research study since the project managers were less controlled and were given a high level of freedom by the project owner.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Interview guide: project owner (Norwegian)

Del 1 - Kartleggingsspørsmål

Prosjektene (kortversjon, har fått informasjon om prosjektene av prosjektlederne)

- Hva går prosjektet ut på? Handler om?
- Hvordan er prosjektene deres organisert?
- Hva er ditt ansvar i prosjektet?
- Hvor lenge har du vært prosjekteier i firmaet?

Del 2 - Spørsmål knyttet til teori

Rolleavklaring:

- Hvordan er rollene avklart mellom dere og hvilke ansvar og myndighet er tilordnet rollene?
- Hva mener du bør/skal være prosjekteierens rolle, oppgaver og ansvar?
- Føler du at rollene deres overlapper hverandre?

Kommunikasjon

- Hvordan snakker dere med hverandre? (F.eks, face-to face, ringer, email, rapporter, skype?)
- Hva slags temaer snakker du og prosjektlederen om?
- Hvordan involverer og kommuniserer du og prosjektlederen dere imellom?

Kommunikasjonsutfordringer

- Opplever du noen form for kommunikasjon utfordringer mellom prosjektlederen og deg? Forklar og gi eksempler.
- Når misforståelser forekommer, hvordan bidrar du til å redusere dem?
- Kan kommunikasjonsproblemene oppstå på grunn av personlige barrierer?
- I hvilken grad påvirker avstand kommunikasjonen mellom dere?
- Anses det at det besittes ulik informasjon og kunnskap mellom leder og eier om prosjektet? Bidrar det til utfordringer?
- Tenker du at prosjektlederen alltid opptrer med beste interesse for prosjekteieren?
- Hvordan mener du at du kan bidra til å redusere misforståelser og kommunikasjonsutfordringer?

Prosjekteierstyring

- Mener du at ved bruk av prosjekteierstyring at du kan redusere kommunikasjonsutfordringer mellom deg og prosjektlederne? Hvorfor /hvorfor ikke?

Beslutninger = Decision-making:

- Hvordan foregår samarbeidet mellom dere?
- Hva slags beslutninger foretar du under et prosjekt? (hvem, hvor og hva)
- Hvordan bemyndiggjør du prosjektlederen til å utføre jobben på en effektiv måte?
- Hvordan tror du prosjektlederens holdninger til risiko er i forhold til dine egne?

Kontroll = control and performance:

- Hva slags type kontroll utøves av deg som prosjekteier? Gi eksempler
- Hvordan kontrollerer du at prosjektlederne gjør jobben sin? Gi eksempler på situasjoner og type kontroll som blir tatt i bruk (eks. rapporter, oppfølging, etc.)
- Hvordan tildeler du ressurser til de ulike prosjektene?

Støtte = support:

- Hvordan motiverer du prosjektlederen til å skape et helhetlig bilde av situasjonen?
- Hvordan støtter du prosjektlederen i ulike krevende situasjoner? (f.eks. "bråk" med underleverandør, endringer i prosessen")
- Hvordan kan du bli bedre til å gi støtte til dem i prosjektet?

Tillit og relasjoner = trust and relationship:

- Sett i forhold til din erfaring er det viktig at relasjonen mellom dere er tillitsbaserte? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
- Tror du tilliten må vedlikeholdes igjennom prosjektet for å ikke gå over til kontrollbasert relasjon?
- Tror du jobben deres blir vanskeligere for de rundt dere om det ikke eksisterer tillit mellom dere?

Del 3 - Avrunding

- Gitt det tema som har berørt i dette intervjuet, er det andre kommentarer og/eller innspill etter ditt syn, vi ikke har dekket?

Appendix 2 – Interview guide: project manager (Norwegian)

Del 1 - Kartleggingsspørsmål (kort)

Prosjektet

- Hva går prosjektet ut på? Handler om?
- Hvordan er prosjektet deres organisert?
- Hva er ferdigdatoen og sluttdatoen?
- Hvor er dere nå i prosjektet?
- Hva er det overordnede budsjettet for prosjektet?
- Hva er ditt ansvar i prosjektet?

Del 2 - Spørsmål knyttet til teori

Rolleavklaring:

- Hvordan er rollene avklart mellom deg og prosjekteieren, og hvilke ansvar og myndighet er tilordnet rollene?
- Hva mener du bør/skal være prosjekteierens rolle, oppgaver og ansvar?
- Opplevs det at rollene deres overlapper hverandre?

Kommunikasjon

- Hvordan involverer og kommuniserer du og prosjekteieren dere imellom?
- Hvordan snakker dere med hverandre? (F.eks, face-to face, ringer, email, rapporter, skype?)
- Hva slags temaer snakker du og prosjekteieren om?

Kommunikasjonsutfordringer

- Opplever du noen form for kommunikasjon utfordringer mellom prosjekteieren og deg? Forklar og gi eksempler.
- Kan kommunikasjonsproblemene oppstå på grunn av personlige barrierer?
- Når misforståelser forekommer, hvordan bidrar prosjekteieren til å redusere dem?
- I hvilken grad påvirker avstand kommunikasjonen mellom dere?
- Anses det at det besittes ulik informasjon og kunnskap mellom leder og eier om prosjektet? Hvorfor /hvorfor ikke?
- Tro du at prosjekteieren tenker at du alltid opptrer med beste interesse for prosjekteieren?
- Hvordan tror du prosjekteierens holdninger til risiko er i forhold til dine egne?

Prosjekteierstyring

- Hvordan tenker du at prosjekteieren kan ved bruk av styring redusere mulige kommunikasjonsproblemer i prosjektet?

Decision-making:

- Hvordan opplever du at beslutningsmyndigheten mellom deg og prosjekteieren er?
- Hva slags beslutninger foretar prosjekteieren under et prosjekt?
- Føler du at prosjekteieren bemyndiggjør deg til å utføre en effektiv jobb under prosjektet?

Kontroll = control and performance:

- Hvordan blir du kontrollert i utførelse av jobben din? Gi eksempler på situasjoner og type kontroll som blir tatt i bruk (eks. rapporter, oppfølging, etc.)
- Hvordan blir du målt i utførelse av jobben din?
- Hvordan får du tildelt ressurser til prosjektet?

Støtte = support:

- Bidrar prosjekteieren til å motivere deg til å utvikle et helhetlig bilde av situasjonen
- Opplever du at prosjekteieren bidrar med sosial støtte i krevende situasjoner eller generelt i prosjektet?

Tillit og relasjoner = trust and relationship:

- Sett i forhold til din erfaring er det viktig at relasjonen mellom dere er tillitsbaserte?
- Hvis ja, tror du tilliten må vedlikeholdes igjennom prosjektet for å ikke gå over til kontrollbasert relasjon?
- Tror du jobben hadde blitt vanskeligere å utføre om dere ikke hadde tillit mellom dere?

Del 3 - Avrundning

- Gitt det tema som har berørt i dette intervjuet, er det andre kommentarer og/eller innspill etter ditt syn, vi ikke har dekket?

Appendix 3 – Interview guide: external workforce (Norwegian)

Del 1 - Kartleggingsspørsmål

Prosjektet

- Hva går prosjektet ut på? Handler om?
- Hvor er dere nå i prosjektet?
- Hva er ditt ansvar i prosjektet?

Del 2 - Spørsmål knyttet til teori

Rolleavklaring:

- Hvordan synes du rollene er avklart mellom prosjektlederen og prosjekteieren, og hvilke ansvar og myndighet er tilordnet rollene?
- Hva mener du bær/skal være prosjekteierens og prosjektlederens rolle, oppgaver og ansvar?
- Opplevs det at rollene deres overlapper hverandre?
- Opplevs det at prosjekteieren tar kontakt med deg eller andre i prosjektet?
- Hva er dine erfaringer i prosjekter når det kommer til samarbeid mellom en prosjekteier og prosjektleder?

Kommunikasjon

- Hvordan opplever du kommunikasjonen mellom prosjekteieren og prosjektlederen?
- Hvordan opplever du at formidlingen fra prosjekteieren blir videreformidlet til deg? (F.eks, face-to face, ringer, email, rapporter, skype?)
- Har du oppfatning om at det er målkonflikter mellom leder og eier?
- Opplever du noen form for kommunikasjon utfordringer mellom prosjekteieren og prosjektlederen? Forklar og gi eksempler.
- Når misforståelser forekommer, er det prosjekteieren som forsøker å redusere dem?
- I hvilken grad påvirker avstand kommunikasjonen mellom prosjektlederen og prosjekteieren?
- Anses det at det besittes ulik informasjon og kunnskap mellom leder og eier om prosjektet?

Prosjekteierstyring

- Kan prosjekteieren, av din oppfatning, bidra til å redusere kommunikasjonsutfordringer i prosjektet ved bruk av styring?
- Besitter prosjekteieren autoritet og makt i prosjektet?
- Hvilken kontroll utøves av prosjekteieren?
- Hva slags beslutninger foretar prosjekteieren under et prosjekt?

- Mener du at prosjektlederen var bemyndiget slik at vedkommende kunne utføre jobben sin på en effektiv måte?
- Hvordan blir dere målt i utførelsen av jobben deres?
- Hvordan får du tildelt ressurser til prosjektet?
- Bidrar prosjekteieren til å motivere og støtte prosjektlederen til å gjennomføre jobben på sin måte?
- Hjalp prosjekteieren prosjektlederen til å utvikle et helhetlig bilde av situasjonen?

Tillit og relasjoner = trust and relationship:

- Sett i forhold til din erfaring er det viktig at relasjonen mellom prosjekteieren og prosjektlederen er tillitsbaserte?
- Hvis ja, tror du tilliten må vedlikeholdes igjennom prosjektet for å ikke gå over til kontrollbasert relasjon?
- Basert på din erfaring, hvor viktig er prosjekteier for vellykket prosjektgjennomføring, og hvorfor?

Del 3 - Avrundning

- Gitt det tema som har berørt i dette intervjuet, er det andre kommentarer og/eller innspill etter ditt syn, vi ikke har dekket?