“The application of post-project reviews in events management by cultural operators”

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ABSTRACT

Organisations have evidently shifted towards the projectification of their activities and operations across the world and across industries by which project management is not only limited to construction and engineering projects anymore. The projectification has shed light on the amount of project success and failure in which both have been noted to have a steep difference between each other. Whilst many factors have been discovered to be a trigger of failure or success one emerging subject that has been gaining attention across management institutions and organisations is the integration of knowledge management principles into the closure stage of a project, by which the term post-project review awakens. Post-project reviews receive a lot of attention and strong suggestion from textbooks and other academic literature, however it was found that its application was not as effective as is suggested by the literature.

Literature also indicated that cultural operators within the events management have progressively applied project management tools and techniques. At the same time there is debate concerning the project management rationale, which collide with the prime principles of art. Here art presents itself as the core focus point for cultural operators. In the light of this argument the author started researching the subject of Post-project reviews within the events management industry and found that the subject has been scarcely researched overall, in the events management sector and especially in the cultural branch, hence the author had identified a research gap.

Consequently, this research intends to explore the application of post-project reviews by cultural operators within the events management industry. The study employed a qualitative research design in which semi-structured interviews were conducted across three different organisational size segments; micro, small and medium. The organisational size was determined with the amount of employees per organisation; each size segment had two representatives in which all of the respondents ran a non-profit organisation.

The research revealed that medium organisations employed the most formal manner of a PPR by which PPR’s are considered on a strategic level whilst micro organisations still used a simple record and report principle, in which none of the recorded numbers were formally analysed. At the same time, the comprehensiveness of a PPR was very much dependent on the size of the project, which denoted on the amount of funding, and external stakeholders there was involved.

Keywords: Post-project review, event evaluation, cultural operators, success criteria, organisational learning
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Abbreviations</th>
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<tr>
<td>BCA</td>
<td>Benefit and Cost Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>COS</td>
<td>Criteria of Success</td>
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<td>ECoC</td>
<td>European Capital of Culture</td>
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<td>EIA</td>
<td>Economic Impact Analysis</td>
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<td>FEET</td>
<td>Finnish Event Evaluation Tool</td>
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<td>KM</td>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
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<td>PMBOK</td>
<td>Project Management Book of Knowledge</td>
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<td>PMI</td>
<td>Project Management Institute</td>
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<td>PPR</td>
<td>Post-Project Review</td>
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<td>ROI</td>
<td>Return on Investment</td>
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<td>(T)</td>
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1. Introduction

This introductory chapter intends to introduce the reader to the research subject by first elucidating the background of the research subject that entails the importance of the Post Project Review process, and then to put it into the context of the research by introducing its use and application in the events management industry, lastly the author will frame the research problem and the rationale behind the conduction of this research as well as introduce the empirical setting in which the research will be undertaken.

1.1 Projects and Events

The Project Management Institute (PMI) defines a project as a: “A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique service, product or result, the temporary nature of a project indicates that a project has a definite beginning and end” (2013, p. 3). Similar to this definition, events are defined as follows: “Planned events are a spatial-phenomenon [..in which..] each is unique [..and..] created for a purpose with a precise duration” (Getz, 2008, p. 404). Both endeavours foster the delivery of a planned output for the purpose of value creation with a specific duration and budget; according to Muehlbauer (2014, p.11) both a project and an event have similar characteristics and attributes, arguing that events are a variation and/or specification of projects. Additionally, Muehlbauer (2014, p.11) explains that events and projects could also be distinguished by its size, reinstating that events can be considered as a project, or be a product within the project.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Post-Project Review

Increased competition and globalisation have intensified internal pressure on organisations, in the midst of this turbulence, organisations across various industries have increasingly focussed their efforts on projects and project management as an efficient means of implementing organisational directives (Haniff, 2014, p.2), this includes those who practice events management as a profession (Cwigla and Jalocha, 2015, p. 627; Getz 2008, p.403). One prominent advantage of project management is that it facilitates knowledge management and one of the most important processes of knowledge management is capturing and transferring the knowledge through an organisation Didenko and Pliego, 2014, p.2. The reason being that the preservation of lessons and past experiences could benefit future projects, enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness to essentially gain a competitive advantage (Didenko and Pliego, 2014, p.2). In the light of project management practises one effective means of capturing knowledge is the conduction of post project reviews (PPR), which is part of the last phase of the project lifecycle that is “project termination”. The purpose of undertaking this procedure is to determine the success of a project (i.e. stakeholders, costs, benefits, goals), review what went wrong and analyse why it went wrong, capture ‘lessons-learnt’ and to ‘disseminate’ the captured knowledge effectively, and essentially looks upon fostering ‘continuous learning and improvement’ (Shokri- Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 109).
To begin, Events Management entails different event branches these are: Cultural (e.g. theatre), Sports (e.g. tournaments), Business (e.g. conferences) and Private events (e.g. weddings). This research will focus on the cultural events alone.

In today’s age, where through the hands of globalisation the new norm becomes a united multicultural competitive environment, countries and organisations seek to benefit and revitalise their cultural heritage and offering for e.g. commercial purposes that prosper the economy or to bring local communities together (Meisiek and Barry, 2014, p. 134). One manner in which to do so is through cultural projects, by which they use cultural events as a “deliberate strategy for enhancing the attractiveness of a place” (Johansson, 2008, p.4). Cultural events look upon the basis of artistic involvement and may include cultural celebrations, and comprise the following forms of events: music, art, design, dance, theatre, carnivals, literature and film (Getz, 2005, p. 404). Cultural projects and events that are part of the events management industry, similar to other industries (worldwide) are known to be applying progressive project management theories, tools, techniques and methods that have consequentially resulted into the projectification of cultural events (Cwigla and Jalocha, 2015, p. 627; Muehlbauer, 2014, p.15). As Cwigla and Jalocha (2015, p.627) explain, art and economy often don’t pass through the same door because their primary values often collide, since art fosters artistic value and economy endorses commercial value it is feared to take away the diversity and uniqueness of ones artistic activity, in fact, practitioners fear the importance of marketing orientation in todays planned events (Getz, 2008, p.403). Thus, the author believes it would be interesting to observe the evolution of cultural operators and organisations in todays market environment.

One well-received example of cultural projects is the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) program that is annually organised by the European Commission. The purpose of this program is to achieve economic growth by ‘strengthening the capacity of a nations original cultural offering and heritage’ and to ‘raise the international profile of the city’ as well as ‘bring communities together’ (Rampton and Fox, 2015, p.3). The ECoC often involves the contribution of independent cultural operators in the form of organisations who set their own stage using the brand of ECoC and the European Commission (Rampton and Fox, 2015, p. vi).

1.2 Research Problem

Despite the academically acknowledged efficacy of the PPR process (e.g. Anbar et al, 2007, p. 634; Cotnour et al 2005, p. 31; Akhavan and Jafari, 2006, p. 99) the author found that the procedure to attaining its merits have been simplified by a lack of comprehensiveness and often focus on determining success alone (Pasanen et al, 2012, p. 6; Getz and Brown, 2015, p. 140) or are deemed as ineffective given the information is not disseminated or transferred efficiently within the organisation and between projects (Gwillim et al 2005, p. 314; ), and at its worst case is absent in its entire existence (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 136). In other words, effective and efficient knowledge transfer between projects is partially or completely disregarded due to for instance time and resource constraints (Prusak, 1997, p. 164), by which project managers are likely to repeat the same mistake by ‘reinventing the wheel’ (Diedenko et al. 2014, p. 1). Literature supporting this statement address specific industries and locational specifications (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013; Gwillim et al 2005; Brown and Getz, 2015; Pasanen et al, 2015; Didenko and Pliego 2014).
As explained above, post project reviews do not only neutralise disadvantages or are used as a source for preventive measures for future projects but also serve as a powerful strategic tool for organisational learning, improvement and efficacy. However, literature suggests that nor the benefits, nor the disadvantages of ignorance towards the procedure are realised by many organisations.

As the author started with generally exploring the concept of PPRs, and has then narrowed the research to the Events Management industry alone, it is interesting to note that little research has been conducted towards the above-mentioned issues of interest within the events management industry. To be more precise, one of the recent articles that has particularly addressed the problem with a secondary research approach is from Brown and Getz (2015). The secondary research of this article was rather extensive, however it came to the author’s attention that most of the referenced articles used a quantitative approach, were narrowed down to festivals alone, mostly addressed the conduction of an impact analysis and not a thorough post-project review, as well it were specific to a country and only reported the findings with no reflective reasoning.

Current literature elucidates that internal PPR’s in the events management often focus on specific parts only, with a predominance of the economic impact analysis (EIA) of an event (Brown and Getz, 2015p. 136; Pasanen et al, 2012, p.8). Brown and Getz (2015, p. 136-138) also explain that the most frequent reason an evaluation is carried out is to satisfy sponsors and key stakeholders, this in relation to securing and justifying funds and attain certifications, and again they focus on parts the stakeholders are interested in, concluding that PPR’s are often under-resourced or viewed as optional by organisations. However, Brown and Getz (2015, p.136) similar to other academics (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 110-111; Gwillim et al 2005, p. 308) argue that the primary motivation for conducting PPR’s should be to learn and improve themselves as organisations, also known as organisational learning. Alternatively, for instance in a program-based context, major stakeholders such as funders tend to employ their own evaluators, in which these evaluators are considered as external evaluators (Brown and Getz 2015, p. 138). On the other end, these types of PPR’s are referred to as ‘evaluations’ and often only focus on the success of the event and not on its management; in other words, it prioritises effectiveness over efficiency instead of seeking a counter balance between both. Hence the author suspects there to be an existential gap in the application of the PPR process in the literature and in current practice within the events management industry.

1.2.1 Research Context

Considering that each ECoC consist out of large participation from independent organisations who present themselves as cultural operators, the author believes that these participating cultural operators of ECoC offer a promising sample composition for this research. To ensure minimal staff rotation within the cultural operators organisation the author believes that choosing the most recent ECoC would be the most appropriate and effective manner of conducting the research; hence the ECoC of 2014 in Umeå is chosen. Information on the ECoC of 2014 in Umeå currently includes external ‘post-evaluation’ reports (similar to the purpose of PPR) issued separately by the European Commission, and the Umeå Municipality, which both are key stakeholders of the program. The author derived information from these reports that enabled the research to be more altered.
The ECoC of Umeå 2014 was reported to have enabled 1054 projects, these were carried out by a variety of individual organisations, most of these organisations were noted to be medium, small, micro and also presumed to be amateur by the reports (Rampton and Fox, 2015, p.34), the author here wishes to find out if these organisations conducted internal post project reviews, this because the European Commission and the Umeå Municipality reports focused mainly on the Umeå 2014 office who was the coordinator of the program, and on separate funders and sponsors but not on the individual organisations.

However, it was reported that 80/90% of the program was organised and implemented by individual organisations (cultural operators) rather than the Umeå 2014 ECoC office (Rampton, 2015, p37), the PPR’s address the ECoC program overall but they do not evaluate the individual projects and essentially the events within the program. This means that it is unknown whether PPR’s exist for these individual projects; hence this research wishes to focus on “internal” PPR’s alone, which are typically organised by the cultural operators themselves.

Furthermore, the sample criteria for this thesis will focus on projects that comprised several events, in other words it will choose events that are part of a project because this will require more planning in terms of its integration in the project. Hence aiming for a more established and formal project management practice, the author aims to filter the sample by excluding one-off amateur undertakings. It is also important to note that this research will not only focus on the projects of the ECoC, but that it will use it as an example, the interview guide will include questions about the PPR’s of projects from the ECoC but will also look at how PPR’s are conducted in general within the chosen entity.

Moreover this study is also informed by extant research on knowledge management and transfer in organisations, the reason being that Post Project Reviews are a tool for knowledge management, and there is a scarcity of research conducted on post project reviews in events management as well as in general.

Lastly, existing literature on knowledge management (KM) processes (i.e. PPR’s) have observed that the size of an organisation has a significant impact on their engagement with KM procedures (Turner et al, 2012, p.943; Gwillim 2005, p.314). Hence the author believes that it could be a suitable approach to segment the research sample by organisational size aiming to draw comparisons that could potentially be a lead for future research. Here the size of an organisation will be determined by the number of employees an organisation has, this is a recognised method by academics that have analysed the impact of organisational size’s on knowledge management practises within their research (e.g. Turner et al, 2012, p.944; Reid et al, 2001, p.231; Moffett et al, 2006, p.226).

The author adopted the European Commission’s (2005) stipulation of different organisational sizes for the sample segmentation of this research:

\[\text{Medium: } <250 \text{ employees} \quad \text{Small: } <50 \text{ employees} \quad \text{Micro: } <10 \text{ employees}\]
1.3 Rationale

Knowledge Management (KM) in itself is an emerging subject rather than an established field, a PPR is a typical procedure that is part of organisational KM. Research on KM in itself has addressed the impact of organisational sizes on KM in organisations generally (Reid, 2001; Kruger and Johnson 2013; Beijerse 2000; Didenko and Pliego, 2014) but none have analysed KM and the impact of organisational sizes within the events management industry, let alone on organisations engaged in cultural projects and events. Additionally, current research on PPR’s in the events management industry elucidate that there is a lack of comprehensiveness in the application of PPR’s (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 136-138).

This earlier research however adopted a secondary research approach in which most of the articles that were used focused on festivals, geographically on the UK and were conducted using a quantitative method. Not to mention, it only reported secondary findings but did not explain or provide reasoning for the findings. Furthermore, to the knowledge of the author no research within the events management industry focused on PPR’s, nor has any research employed a qualitative research design within the sphere of cultural projects and knowledge management. Similarly, to the knowledge of the author no research has studied nor addressed internal PPR processes within the events management industry on cultural projects alone in terms of comprehensiveness, efficacy, reasoning for conduction or non-conduction. Concluding that there is therefore an existential research gap in the research conducted, which this thesis will address.

1.4. The Research Question

“What is the application of internal Post-Project Reviews in practice, how comprehensive is it in terms of covering the “efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’ components, why is it conducted in this manner, and does it enable effective organisational learning?”

1.5. Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is:

“To explore the application of internal Post-Project Review’s in practice in the events management industry by cultural operators”

The objectives include:

I. To review the benefits and characteristics of post-project reviews
II. To review literature on the application of post-project reviews and knowledge management in practice across industries and within the events management industry
III. To review literature on the efficacy of post-project reviews and the reasoning behind the conduction or non-conduction of post-project reviews across industries and within the events management industry
IV. To review literature on the comprehensiveness of PPR’s across industries and within the events management industry
V. To investigate the application of post-project reviews in practice using primary data collection methods
VI. To analyse the data collected through primary research
VII. To draw conclusions on the degree of application and effectiveness of PPR processes in current practice and enable the provision of a reasoning to its current state
1.6. Research Limitations

Considering that this research will draw a sample from cultural operators that participated with the ECoC of Umeå alone it can be seen as a limitation. And although not intentionally sought, all respondents were from non-profit organisations, therefore, this research cannot be generalised across other events management branches as well as globally. The reason being that most of the participants are originally from Sweden, and from around Umeå, hence cannot represent a global sample. However, considering that Scandinavian countries enjoy similarities in terms of management practices that is reflected in Journals such as the “Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism” and the “Scandinavian Journal of Management studies” this research may be of value to replicate to a certain extent or used as an input for studies concerning other Scandinavian samples within the management sector.

Another limitation of this research is that conducting a qualitative research first on a small sample and verifying the findings on a bigger sample using a quantitative research method would have enhanced the research more. This is also referred to as a mixed method study with an explanatory sequential design approach (Cresswell and Clark, 2011, p.81). However, to the concern of the author this would not have been feasible in terms of time constraints. Hence this leaves the researcher unable to verify the findings on a bigger sample, but does propose as an opportunity to use the findings as an input for future research. Other constraints include that the subject of interest is very much under-researched and secondary data is scarce on the subject (PPR), it lead the author to divert to broader branches of the subject such as knowledge management and other industries i.e. IT and Construction.

Using the scarce secondary data as an input to construct the primary research may be limiting the research in itself as interesting issues specific to the cultural operators or cultural branch may remain undiscovered, however, as a countervail to this problem the author used semi-structured interviews, to enable open-ended and follow-up questions, moreover the data analysis will be both theory driven and data driven (see section “4.6 Process of Analysis”).
### 1.7. Thesis Disposition

| Chapter 1: Introduction | ❖ Cover background information on the research topic  
|                        | ❖ Explain research problem  
|                        | ❖ Provide a rationale for the research to be conducted  
|                        | ❖ State the research question and the aims and objectives of the research  
|                        | ❖ Address research limitations  
|                        | ❖ Construct a structure for the thesis  
| Chapter 2: Scientific Methodology | ❖ Discuss, select and justify scientific methodology  
| Chapter 3: Literature Review | ❖ Discuss Importance of PPR’s  
|                               | ❖ Discuss conduction of PPR’s including its reasoning  
|                               | ❖ Discuss reported effectiveness of PPR’s in organisational knowledge management  
|                               | ❖ Discuss Impact of organisational sizes  
|                               | ❖ Address comprehensiveness of PPR’s  
|                               | ❖ Propose a conceptual Model  
| Chapter 4: Practical Method | ❖ Discuss, select and justify practical methodology  
| Chapter 5: Empirical Findings and Analysis | ❖ Report findings  
|                                              | ❖ Analyse and discuss findings  
| Chapter 6: Conclusions and Suggestions | ❖ Conclude key findings  
|                                              | ❖ Recommendations for future research  
|                                              | ❖ Recommendations for cultural operators  

Table 1: Thesis Disposition (Source: Author, 2015)
2. Scientific Methodology

This chapter will explain the author’s stance towards the research and her partaking within it as well as how the environment of the research is observed and what is accepted as knowledge. The chapter ends with a section that explains the research approach and justifies the source usage and theory coverage throughout the thesis, namely the theoretical framework.

2.1 Preconceptions and Choice of Subject

The research subject was discovered during one of the lectures on project management communication in Politecnico di Milano. The lecturer was very interactive as a means of reflecting the subject he was teaching, one of the authors colleagues had raised the hand when the matter of ‘lessons-learnt’ had come up and explained that this was a very difficult task to fulfil. The colleague was active in the IT sector and elucidated that senior-management would normally urge to gather lessons learnt but there is very limited time to commit to such procedures. Hence, often it is filled in a rush with no pensive answers, moreover, the documents were told to be left on the shelf to gather dust with no further follow-up actions. This sparked the interest of the author as lessons learnt is something that has always been probed for in her educational and professional background. To be more precise, every project that had external stakeholders involved such as parents evenings, school exhibitions, open days and company conferences in which she participated had a lessons learnt section and a means of formal reflection and gathering feedback from the involved stakeholders considering that most projects were annually held and improvement is always encouraged. It was shocking for the author to find that projects in the for-profit sector with specific and considerable large budgets were not keen on reflecting on the project and gathering lessons learnt.

Hence the author conducted more research and discovered the partaking of the lessons learnt in the post-project review and found that lessons learnt was the final output of the post-project review. This followed with extensive research in which the author found that the non-existence and ineffective conduction of the post-project review was a prevailing yet under-researched subject in academic literature across all industries, these included construction, IT, infrastructure etc. Having developed a profound personal interest in events management the author believed it to be interesting to see if this is the same within the events management, as her previous experience with lessons learnt and determining the success of a project was partially within the events management (e.g. exhibitions, parents evenings, conference). Further research indicated that post-project reviews and even the more known term ‘lessons learnt’ were scarcely researched within the events management industry as well.

The author acknowledges that it is important to grasp the connection between the author and the research subject in order to identify any preconceptions. To the knowledge of the author the previously explained paragraph indicates that the author indeed has had preconceptions through her previous experience with post-project reviews. According to Gilje and Grimen (2007, p.183 cited in Ampuero and Holmberg, 2014, p. 14) this could affect the way in which one interacts with another, this because personal experiences tend to affect the manner in which one perceives and interprets something (Hartman, 2004, p.191, cited in Ampuero and Holmberg, 2014, p.14) By acknowledging this preconception the author can minimise any personal bias affecting the research. The author has ensured objectivity and has reported all acknowledged stances within academic literature in the secondary research.
The author also made sure that her knowledge of the phenomenon and her experience within the events management industry did not affect the interviews, the author remained neutral, whilst probing for answers by asking follow-up questions. Moreover, during the interview the author made sure not to express any statements derived or inspired from her experience or the secondary research before the interviewee had given a confirmed answer, by doing so the author ensured not to lead the interviewee towards an answer. This ensures openness towards the research, which is vital to discover new standpoints and deliver a credible research.

2.2. Research Philosophy

The research philosophy is the first determinant that directs the research, it is the state of mind of the researcher and will gravely impact the conduction of the research, namely its methodology (Trochim, 2006). The research philosophy is comprised of two components that are Ontology and Epistemology; both serve as a pre-set to practical method elements. The word pre-set in this context would connote the researchers ideas or pattern of thoughts that regulate the research inquiry with processes to accomplish the investigation (Weaver, 2006, p. 459).

2.2.1 Ontology

Ontology is defined as “assumptions held about the nature of reality” (Long et al, 2000, p. 190), alternatively explained, it elucidates “how one views the world” (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 130). Ontology is divided into divisions, or so to say direction of thoughts, that is to discern whether reality is impartial from social actors or whether it is impressionistic and cannot exist in its current reality in the absence of social entities (Long et al., 2000, p. 190). In this elucidation these two realities are described as a dichotomy, one being objectivism and the latter being subjectivism. The choice of one’s philosophical stance in the matter of ontology depends on the research question (Jha, 2008, p. 44; Saunders et al. 2012, p. 129; Crossan, 2003, p. 48).

Objectivism assumes that reality is concrete, and has an abstract structure in which connections are imperishable to its constituents, in which case it would assume that there is only one human reality (Long et al., 2000, p. 191). It believes that the social world can be frozen by which it reduces the role of social actors to mere elements of the subject in which these social actors are influenced by a deterministic set of forces, ultimately making them a ‘predictable’ element (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 498) In the instance of this thesis it would assume that there is only one reality, which could means that post-project reviews are definitely conducted or not conducted by cultural operators in a particular way on the basis of specific variables. This stance would ultimately disregard the fact that people carry out post-project reviews, and that the circumstances and personal values of this individual that essentially generates a judgement and as a result influences their attitude towards a post-project review can impact the conduction of a post-project review. An example of where objectivism would be applicable is for instance where one researches the properties of raw materials, searching for hard facts.

Alternatively, one may also identify the research in the second orientation of ontology, that is subjectivism. Subjectivism suggests that there are ‘multiple human realities’ in which all are equal and dependent on its social interactions with one another, hence the reality ‘is a product of social interactions’ and discrete construal’s of these interactions (Long et al, 2000, p. 191) and hence is subject to continual alteration considering the ever-changing social world (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 132). Therefore the ontological philosophy that is deemed as most appropriate to this research would be subjectivism, because the research question urges the researcher to explore the research phenomena in its current state. The research phenomena
involves social actors that are subject to the ever-changing external environment, hence the research would not be credible if it were to exclude the social actors from the research. For example; possible reluctance to commit to a PPR process is also included within the study, this reluctance origins from the associates employed by the cultural operator, associates are social actors within the cultural operator, the reluctance would not exist if the associates were not employed by the cultural operator. The social actors (associates) in this instance may interpret the social world in a different manner that caused them to have a specific attitude towards the research phenomena (PPR) that essentially affected their behaviour towards the research phenomena (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 132).

2.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology stresses on what is to be determined as ‘acceptable knowledge’ (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 132). This philosophical element often transcends from the discussion whether a research should adopt the natural science perspective or the social science perspective (Jha, 2008, p. 44; Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 17). Its main argument centralises on whether the researcher can be external to the research or not (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p.498; Ampuero and Holmberg, 2014, p. 9). Epistemology has four sub-philosophical stances; positivism, interpretivism, realism and pragmatism (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 133-137). Positivism appears to adopt the stances of a natural scientist in which law like generalisations are intended to be achieved, the research is assumed to be an observable reality in which the researcher does not need to be part of, by which it assumes to be entirely objective and value-free (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 134). It assumes that research phenomena can be studied as a hard fact, in which correlations between these facts are perceived as ‘scientific laws’, in which it believes to satisfy truth criteria and asserts that anything can be studied in the same manner as natural objects, this includes social objects (Crossan, 2003, p. 49).

Realism may be referred to as a spin-off of positivism but it goes slightly deeper into the prospect of knowledge by which it divides itself into two branches; direct realism and critical realism (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 136). Direct realism is rather straightforward and assumes that ‘what you see is what you get’ and anything that falls outwith this statement is a result of ‘lack of sufficient information’. Critical realism however questions reality and the knowledge to be obtained from it, it stresses that what we perceive is strongly affiliated to the sensations we feel and illusions we see as social actors. It is a matter of looking at the surface of an action instead of looking at the bigger picture (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 136), which in turn is subject to the observers interpretation of reality, hence critical realism rejects the entire application of firm laws of natural sciences (Ampuero and Holmberg, 2012, p. 10) and accepts the continuity of reality in which it is ever-changing.

Interpretivism as an epistemological orientation proposes characteristics that very much oppose those of positivism. An interpretivist believes that reality is not an immutable ‘thing’ by which it explains that social actors within the research phenomenon create it, and hence reality cannot exist without its social actors since its composition is affected by its context, which denotes that there may be more constructions of reality (Crossan, 2003, p. 52). Pragmatism on the other hand believes that not one orientation should always be adopted but more than one philosophical stance can be combined if appropriate. This research intends to adopt a qualitative research design, the reason being that reality has not been obscured yet within the research phenomenon and hence to understand the reality one must first identify the role of the social actors within the constructs of the research phenomenon, this is an exploratory study. Furthermore, according to Hammersley (2013, p. 29) studies that are
exploratory by nature are often well-suited with interpretivism. Therefore this research will embrace the philosophical stance of the interpretivist, the reason being that the research uses a qualitative research design that is subject to the interpretation and value of the researcher as well, even if this is to be minimised to whatever extent possible, no research can be entirely objective (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p. 498; Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 30) since all research is subjectively constructed through researchers who can be viewed as agents who perceive and experience the knowledge before they interpret it.

2.3 Research Approach

Every research is often supported by the use of existing theory extracted from secondary sources; the use of these theories within the contemporary study is affiliated to the research approach the study will take. There are three types of approaches a research may take to construe its existence; these are deduction, induction and abduction (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 143). The deductive approach is often used when a theory needs to be tested, it intends to falsify or, verify a theory through the means of hypotheses (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 143) it therefore departs from theory (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009, p. 6). As previously mentioned, this research intends to explore the research phenomenon, the subject of Post-project reviews is very much under-researched, similarly its application in the events management is scarcely researched and reported, and lastly literature on its application by cultural operators is even more scarce. There is no solid base of theories and literature applicable to the research phenomenon, in this case, studies from other industries would not be deemed as appropriate to ‘test’ on the target group. Hence the justification for the creation of hypotheses that denotes a possible relationship between two or more concepts is absent, and therefore the research may start off with a doubtful credibility if it were to adopt a deductive research approach. Therefore this research will not choose a deductive approach.

Induction looks upon generating or building on a theory on the basis of the analysis, in other words the empirical data leads the theory. The data to be used is collected initially however is not always independent from pre-existing theories and ideas (Saunders et al, 2012, 146). However, little is known about the post-project review in practise in events management therefore the author has largely used existing literature to explore possible iterations. And considering that the research in itself does not depart on empirical research and could not function without the secondary research the author believes that induction is also not the most suitable research approach to follow.

Abduction is a combination of both induction and deduction in which it starts with a observing cases that are often out of the ordinary and attempts to see a pattern in these cases, if this case is deemed as true then it answers the questions of the case it self (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009, p. 5). This interpretation is to be strengthened or so to say validated by a new set of observations (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009, p. 5). Abduction is a combination of both induction and deduction whilst it also has new elements to it as it allows the researcher to go back and forth between the researches to modify (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 147), the approach may depart from empirical basis but is combined or built upon with preceding studies and theory on the subject of interest (Alvessons and Sköldberg, 2009, p. 4). This research was initiated by a “surprising” observation that is when the colleague of the author had explicitly explained that post-project reviews were not effectively conducted in his company that was active in the IT sector. Hence when the author intended to see if this was explained in theory for the events management industry for cultural operators the author found that it was scarcely researched. Here pre-existing theories and literature from various
industries on the subject were reported on in the literature review, upon broadly exploring the research phenomenon in the primary research the secondary research will be used for pattern recognition purposes, which is a characteristic of deduction. Considering the exploratory nature of this research and the flexibility this presents within the research (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 170) one may link it to abduction. And therefore this research will consider abduction as the most appropriate research approach for this research.

2.4 Secondary Research Eligibility

The learner used Google Scholar, the Umeå University library and the Roberto Gordon University library (former University of the author) as access points to academic literature. The research used electronic sources as well as hardcopies from the University library, databases included; Emerald Journals, Sage Journals Online and Business Source Premier (EBSCO), the research tried to rely as much as possible on journal articles but did not reject textbooks either. The reason being that textbooks often give a general picture of something and when reported it may not be fine-tuned to the current age of the subject it discusses. Journals present actual research findings, are specific to the subject within a particular context and are peer-reviewed before published and are therefore more reliable for scholarly purposes (CQUniversity, 2015). Annual reports, conference papers and dissertations that were published and on a minimum of a Masters level were also used when appropriate.

Through the course of the search the learner noticed that limited research existed on the conduction of PPR’s in practice, hence, the learner had to seek for broader branches such as organisational knowledge management which encompasses PPR’s. Accordingly, several articles were found, here the learner looked through the references used within the articles. This mainly because both of the above-mentioned search filters work with search terms, the learner suspected that the lack of articles may be associated to the ineffective use of search terms, hence the author browsed through the reference lists of the found articles and expanded the literature search using this as one of the methods. Keywords for the literature search included: Post-Project Review, Post-Mortem Review, Event Evaluation, Project evaluation, Lessons-learnt, Knowledge Management, Events Management evaluation, Project Closure and Event Closure. Google Scholar served as a very broad research platform as it did not only search on titles and headings but also looked through the content of literature on the basis of the inserted search term. This posed to be time efficient but also resulted into less refined search results and the examination of literature that was later deemed as irrelevant.

Due to the fact that PPR’s are under-researched in general and more scarcely mentioned in articles concerning events management, and cultural operators were also very much under-researched in the sense of any type of knowledge management or project management practices- the ‘frequently cited’ method was not very effective as the choice of literature in itself was rather limited. It is also known that secondary referencing are discouraged since the author is reading someone’s interpretation of information that is reported by a source. Thus, the author ought to revert to the original source and report the information using her own interpretation, however, due to the fact that some of the sources were in an unfamiliar language the author could not reaffirm the reported interpretation and hence had to resort to secondary references.
3. Theoretical Framework

This chapter will provide the reader with an extensive review of published literature on the research subject with the aim to garner knowledge of the subject as well as present and acknowledge different perspectives and findings of authors who have researched each of the anchor topics to inform the interview guide and potentially compare it to the research findings in Chapter 4: “Empirical Findings and Analysis”.

3.1 Post Project Reviews

The post project review (PPR) is part of the “termination” or the “close-out” phase of the project lifecycle; this phase mainly concentrates on the closing and hand-over of the project\(^1\). The “close-out” phase is also known for receiving insufficient attention from event management practitioners and academics (Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 324).

The purpose of a post project review is to (Gwillim et al, 2005, p.308; Brown and Getz 2015, p. 136):

- Determine the level of success of a project/product
- Identify “what went wrong” and “why it went wrong”
- Capture and process lessons learnt from the project/product

The main aim of the PPR is to foster ‘continuous learning and improvement’ (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 109) by which the ultimate output of the post project review is the ‘lessons learnt’ document (PMBOK, 2013, p.291). The Project Management Book of Knowledge (PMBOK) (2013, p.291) explains the use of ‘lessons learnt’: “lessons learnt and historical information are of particular importance because they can provide insights on both the decisions taken regarding project issues and the results of those decisions in previous similar projects. These can be used as guiding information for the planning of future projects and taken into consideration for current projects”. This phenomenon is also referred to as cross-project knowledge transfer (Zhao et al, 2014, p. 325).

3.1.1 Importance of Post Project Reviews

To explain the importance of PPR’s one may stress on two rather extreme reasons for its conduction. “From numerous studies only 44% of projects typically finish on time, projects usually complete at 222% of the duration originally planned, 189% of the original budgeted cost, 70% of projects fall short of their planned scope (technical content delivered), and 30% are cancelled before completion” (Pai, 2014, p. 15). This statement addresses the luxury of having obtained project and project management success globally and across industries. Its point however is that organisations are no stranger to project failure. A project can be determined a failure by putting its outputs next to the widely acknowledged project management “iron triangle” of project success criteria, these are: time, cost and quality (Atkinson, 1999, p. 339). Not to fall short nor mislead anyone, there has also been an evidential shift in the importance of project success criteria. Namely, long-term project success (after its completion) as well as stakeholder satisfaction and benefit realisation have been acknowledged as additional yet vital project success determinants (Baccarini, 1999, p.25; Ica, 2009, p.11). Nevertheless, these are the two counterparts of project outcomes; these are also one of the prominent reasons as to why the Post Project Review is in place.

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\(^1\) Terminologies: Post project Reviews are also commonly referred to as “post-mortem reports”, Post Implementation Reports (PIR), “post evaluation”, and project/product evaluation. The term “event evaluation” looks upon the evaluation of the event alone and not the management of it and will therefore not be used within this research.
To attain the above mentioned project success and to avoid the above indicated risk of project failure one may strive for excellence in each of the project management life-cycle phases. However, another method to optimise the chances of project success is to facilitate the flow of knowledge within an organisation, by which organisations invest resources into capturing and disseminating knowledge across the business, and importantly in-between projects; knowledge management has become a popular emerging business paradigm amidst academics and practitioners (Moffet et al., 2006, p.221; Storey and Barnett, 2000, 145; Zhao et al, 2014, 326).

Cross-project knowledge transfer is crucial to project-based organisations that employ project teams to complete knowledge-intensive work (Zhao et al, 2014, p. 325). It is imperative to extract project or product-based knowledge from project members before i.e. it gets lost through disbandment of project groups since ‘projects are temporary endeavours’ and so are project groups often (Zhao et al, 2014, p. 325). It is important to note that not only can post project reviews potentially mitigate the risk of project failure; it can also enhance project success by for instance finishing the project earlier than indicated. Considering that this thesis will focus on small, medium and micro organisations it may be interesting to see the broader perspective of projects in association with these types of organisations. Turner et al (2012, p.944) elucidates that in the European Union, 98% of the businesses account for small, medium and micro enterprises (SME), by which it attributes with 60% to the EU GDP, additionally on average SME’s invest 1/5 of their turnover on projects, this amounts to 12.5% overall economic activity, the EU GDP is €14.3 trillion (World Bank, 2015), this means that SME’s in EU spent €1.78 trillion annually on projects. Turner et al (2012, p.944) states, “A 1 per cent improvement in project performance through reduced costs, shorter duration, or improved functionality of the projects’ outputs would save $17.8 billion”. Petroski (1992, p.525) further elucidates the influence of a post project review by stating the following: “success in projects tended to rise not out of steady and incremental accumulation of successful experience, but rather in reaction to failures from the past”.

It is not to say that Post Project Reviews are the formula to ensure or enhance project success nor to say that projects are hereby immune to unpredictable risk events instigated by external forces. The author wishes to reinstate that PPR’s are only a means of increasing the probability of project success by improving project control (PMBOK, 2013, p. 303) through preventing project members and organisations from reinventing the same wheel of mistakes from previous projects (Diedenko et al. 2014, p. 1). Instead, learning from mistakes and improve current processes and project operation facilitators as well as exploiting identified opportunities in future projects will be a means of improving organisational performance and potentially garner a competitive advantage (Hartman and Doree, 2015, p. 341; Parry and Anton, 2013, p.306). Post Project Reviews that are a tool of organisational knowledge management are a strategic directive to improve organisational performance through the means of for instance quality improvements, increased stakeholder engagement, project control and project communications and more (Jones et al, 1997, p.385). Additionally, in the interest of this thesis, cultural operators may benefit from funding’s, from entities such as the government that for instance aim to increase the tourism by stimulating the attraction of a particular place (Getz, 2007, p.403; Johansson, 2008, p.4), these stakeholders want to see what had happened to the invested money and require accountability and transparency (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.138) in this occassion, components of the PPR may be required by the stakeholder, this will be further elaborated on in section “2.2. Comprehensiveness of a PPR”. Furthermore projects that comprise events often deal with another aspect that is its life-expiry (Parry and Anton, 2013, p. 320).
This is important because one of the reasons for believing PPR’s are ineffective is the argument that all projects are unique and hence will not be subject to the same problems (Collier, 1996, p. 72). However, it is important to note that some projects have a longer life expiry because they may be held annually such as e.g. exhibitions and festivals (Parry and Anton, 2013, p. 320), despite the uniqueness of each event and project (Muehlbauer, 2014, p.15; Getz, 2008, p. 404), lessons learnt are a valuable input for future events that are similar in type but different in context and content. Finally, the above-explained paragraphs can be summarised using a statement from Brown and Getz (2015, p. 143): “the most common purposes are to assign value or worth, to aid in improving management and performance, and to determine outcomes – all of which can be important in justifying an event or building legitimacy”.

3.1.3. PPR Process

Post Project Reviews are commonly issued by senior management, research indicated that senior managers are more convinced of the benefits of post-project reviews and are often also the motivators behind its conduction (Reid et al, 2001, p. 235; Kruger et al, 2013, p. 7). PPR’s may be systemised through the organisation or may only be conducted selectively; this is based on stakeholder requirements, size of the project and the size of the organisation (Parry and Anton, 2013, p. 312). Depending on the size of the organisation the PPR process may be the responsibility of personnel in a managerial role, operational role (small & micro) (Reid et al, 2001, p.236), the quality department and or the risk management department (medium & large) (Collier et al, 1996, p. 70). Importantly, regardless of whether the project is a failure or success, the PPR should be conducted with the motive of capturing the knowledge that enabled its success, to share the knowledge and re-enact the success, this is also a countermeasure for project group disbandment’s of previous projects, transforming the tacit knowledge behind project success in explicit knowledge and sharing it is imperative (Von Zedzwitz, 2003, p. 256). PPR’s within the events management are often conducted shortly after the project or event has ended, information from stakeholders is gathered (Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 312; Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 136) and can be event (product) orientated or project orientated (Snyder, 2013, p.211; Baecarni, 1999 p.25). The PPR process requires the organisation to evaluate the event, which is defined as “assigning worth or value to an event” (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 138), this is concluded by considering and analysing several factors, this part of the PPR process can exist independently from the ‘lessons learnt’ part, but, would be more accurate if concluded with the inclusion of the ‘lessons learnt’ part. Hence the evaluation context can differ, it can be formal/informal, single event/project or portfolio, and can take internal/external or both stakeholders into account (Brown and getz, 2015, p. 141). Details with what is comprised within the PPR process will be elucidated in section ‘3.2 Comprehensiveness”.

The foundation of the PPR process is grounded on the cycle of knowledge management, this is to: 1) Capture/embody knowledge, 2) Create knowledge, 3) Disseminate knowledge 4) and to essentially ‘use’ knowledge (Reid et al, 2001, p. 232). Point one looks upon the gathering of the information, it is academically encouraged to use a tool to do so for bigger projects with a large number of stakeholders, such as surveys and questionnaires, preferably electronically (Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 313; Coleen et al, 1996, p. 67). One of the reasons for reluctance to participate in a PPR process is because of the unwillingness to blame, as addressing failure comes with accountability, and that therefore a PPR process is political in nature, (Brown and Getz 2015, p. 135; Gwillim et al, 2005, p.313).
Accordingly, Coleen et al (1996, p. 67), stress on the importance of assuring the anonymity of the respondents, and conclude with “Once team members understand that the process allows (even solicits) negative feedback along with the positive, and that the source of the feedback cannot be identified, their sense of security and participation increases”.

An objective review should also be included; this includes hard data such as cost and schedule variances, defects, over hours of personnel, design changes, overall sales turnover and profit etc. that occurred during the project. It is important to make use of metrics that can be used to compare to future projects, to see if there is a decrease, increase or if it is retained (Colleen, 1996, p. 68). The second stage would be to use the survey data and the objective review data as topics to discuss in de-briefings with employees in which more insight is gathered, it is important to structure such de-briefings to avoid excessive expression of opinions that stimulate debates, hence a meeting facilitator who leads the meeting is advised to be in place (Colleen, 1996, p. 70). Consequently, when embodying knowledge it is important to not only describe the impact of the problem but also funnel the problem down to its event, trigger and source (Caron, 2013, p.62). For example; ‘visitors complained about long queues in the parking lot (impact), this was due to the manual ticket provision at the entrance (event), we had to do so because the machine was not working anymore (trigger) because it unexpectedly started raining and so the machine got rained wet due to unforeseen weather circumstances (source)’.

During the de-briefings issues are discussed, commented on and solutions are proposed (Colleen et al, 1996, p.69), importantly, bigger projects with several events or one big event may keep an issue log throughout the entire project, this is also used as an input for de-briefings (Snyder, 2013, p. 302). Lastly, issues that can be solved immediately and are believed to not be unique to this project are to be improved immediately, e.g. integration of a background check within the current supplier selection process, and creating a formal procedure for it. On the other hand there are issues that may have been unique to the project, these are to be ordered per functional department or per process they affect (Colleen, 1996, p. 69). Consequently, concurrent to the commencement of a new project one person or a group of persons should be given the responsibility to analyse whether these categorised issues will have an impact on the future project (Colleen, 1996, p.69; Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 314).

The final output of the PPR process is a status report of the project that not only formulates the project success but also outlines ‘what went well and should be left intact’, ‘what could be improved’ and ‘what went bad” (Colleen, 1996, p.71; Anton and Parry, 2013, p.313). The report is mostly put together by a group of people, an analyst within the organisation or an external evaluator. The external evaluator is usually hired upon request of the stakeholders who have invested within the event and require accountability and transparency with regards to the spending and project outcomes (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 138). Importantly, the dissemination of the information should allow accessibility for employees who are involved in future projects; improvements in systems, procedures etc. should first be presented to the upper management, and then be disseminated per team through their managers or supervisors, in which they are responsible to ensure that the associates understand and are able to apply the change in practise, it may require change management skills (Colleen, 1996, p. 71). The above-described PPR process is an example of a PPR within the events management industry; some organisations may have their own procedures that may prove to be more effective for meeting their organisational needs.
3.1.4. Efficacy of PPR’s in Practice

The existence of a PPR process in organisations is one step forward; another hurdle that organisations must overcome is to use it effectively. According to Anton and Parry (2013, p.312) company’s that practise events management may engage in a PPR but they do not know how to use the process, it eventually becomes a formality for disclosure whilst following orders from upper management. As explained in section “3.1.3. Processes” it is often the senior management that is aware of the benefits of a PPR with the motive to foster the act of organisational learning, hence the middle management and other personnel comply as a requirement (Reid et al, 2001, p. 235), the problem however is that organisations do not know how to reap the benefits of the PPR process for future projects (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013,p. 127). Anton and Parry (2013, p. 313), give an example of how often project teams in come together after the completion of a project and discuss the project on the basis of its success and what went wrong and what should be kept in mind, the process however ends there, the output of the meeting is a set of unstructured minutes, these are stored and forgotten when the next edition of the event commences. As explained in section ‘3.1.3’, PPR reports should be stored and be made accessible to employees that are involved in future projects, but often project members do not look back despite the initial intention to do so due to forgetfulness and a hectic new project schedule (Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 312). It is an initiative that could be taken, but is not part of the formal planning phase of the project management life cycle, and hence not always complied to (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 110). Colleen et al, (1996, p.72) explains that if no one is put in charge of it the work will not get done, if there is no formal procedure to take past post-project reviews into account when planning and designing new projects or events the likelihood that it will not be done is high.

Moreover, the use of the PPR process goes beyond planning and designing the new project whilst considering the old project, it can also be used for selecting projects and bidding on projects, this attribute of the PPR has been acknowledged by organisations and its personnel, but they are still found to be ineffectively processing a PPR (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 125).

Another very re-occurring phenomenon is that post project reviews, and namely lessons learnt are not documented. As mentioned before, even if it ideally should be, the PPR is not habitually a formal procedure that is systemised in an organisation, this is noted to result into undocumented lessons learnt (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 112). According to Gwillim et al (2005, p. 314), organisations would indicate they were familiar and active in the conduction of the PPR procedure but when asked for evidence they were unable to provide it. The reality is that there is no substantive PPR procedure in place, and organisations have a misperception of a PPR, in which they believed that discussing a past project during its closing phase with no necessary follow-up actions is a post-project review (Gwillim et al, 2005, p.314). The essence of the effectiveness of a PPR process is not only in sharing knowledge through such meetings or debriefings but to capture, disseminate and use it. It is not to say that verbal, tacit or any other socially constructed knowledge is to be dismissed but that solely relying on this type of knowledge transfer is limiting considering that non-captured knowledge can be lost (Kazi and Koivuniemi, 2006, p. 64; Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 128) as project teams can be disbanded and project members can leave an organization resulting into a loss of knowledge (Graham and Thomas, 2008, p. 117). On the contrary, Wiewieora et al (2009, p.4) explains how documented PPR’s and essentially lessons learnt are not as effective as socially transferring knowledge, research indicates that people prefer social knowledge transfer (informal) rather than reading documents and turning to IT-based knowledge storage such as organisational enterprise resource planning (ERP) software’s. If anything, documented PPR’s
and lessons learnt should complement social knowledge transfers rather than dominate it (Newel et al, 2006, p. 67; Wiewiora et al, 2009, p.4; Reid et al, 2001, p. 237). However, as explained above transfer of knowledge is often not limited to using ERP systems, it is usually the final storage of the knowledge after it has been disseminated in socially constructed environments, e.g. workshops, trainings (Reid et al, 2001, p. 238).

Ragsdell (et al., 2014, p. 352) explain that knowledge sharing by non-profit cultural operators in event management has a similar reality to the above discussed literature, stating that “much of the acquired knowledge is not codified in any meaningful way and is often held tacitly by them for reuse when the occasion demands; this is particularly the case when, for example, the knowledge relates to a particular specialism such as event management’. Ragsdel et al (2014, p.355) also reported that knowledge was often perceived as ‘incidental to the process’ and that they would only share it when the project needed urgent input, their reasoning being that they were ‘confident in the project organisers’. Concluding that their certainty in project success was affiliated with their willingness to share their knowledge. Similar to the above-discussed literature Ragsdell (2014, p. 352) also reported that there was an absence in structured information that could be accessed and re-used by colleagues, it is rarely formalised and split amidst personnel as tacit knowledge to be used when a situation occurs. Cwigla and Jalocha (2015, p. 639-641) mention that often for profit cultural operators are more formal and standardised and have more project-related prerequisites.

Lastly another impact factor on the efficacy of a PPR is the comprehensiveness of the PPR, research has indicated that companies in the events management industry are selective with the coverage of the PPR process. The author will elaborate further on this matter in section “3.2. Comprehensiveness”. The above-mentioned issues related to the efficacy of the PPR process in practice is also linked to other variables such as the practicing organisations size, this will be further explained in section “3.1.6. Impact of Organisational size on PPR’s” of this research.

3.1.5. Reluctance to conduct the PPR process

Despite the overarching literature on the benefits of a PPR and the importance of conducting it, and the consequent attempts of organisations to integrate a PPR procedure in their project management procedures, there is also an evidential reluctance to conduct the PPR process in practice (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 139; Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 312; Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 108; Gwillim, 2005, p. 308; Reid et al, 2001, p. 233). The most common reason was found to be lack of time due to the commencement of new projects (Anton and Parry, 2013, p.313; Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 113; Von Zedtwitz, 2002, p. 262), and essentially this leads to a lack of resources (Hartman and Doree 2015, p.342; Reid et al, 2001, p.237), lack of qualified analytical staff (Colleen et al, 1996, p. 67) and unwillingness to undergo the procedure because its ‘too much effort’ (Gwillim, 2005 p. 312).

Other reasons were that the members did not believe in capturing the knowledge, they found that depending on experience was more reliable and solid (Reid et al, 2001, p.235) and did not believe that transferring the knowledge will inherently increase performance as they believe in the “each project is unique” concept and the problems occurring and lessons learnt are distinct to that particular project (Colleen et al, 1996, p. 72) hence, they believe that lessons are in-transferrable (Shokri-Ghasabeh, 2013, p. 113). Interestingly another reason as to why employees are not particularly keen on co-operating with a PPR process is because the process in itself is political in nature, Gwillim et al (2005, p. 309).
Explaining, that project members believe to be aware of the problems that occurred in the project and that they do not need a reminder of their failure and that ‘it is a measure of embarrassment’, hence the hard data (i.e. exceed deadline) is there and has signified the failure of the project but the hard data is not analysed nor are the personnel who are the facilitators of the specific content of the hard data are investigated (Gwillim et al, 2005, p.313), other reasons include that they are afraid of blaming anyone, as previously mentioned, the key benefit of constructing an electronic survey is the anonymity it enables (Colleen, 1996, p. 67). Moreover Anton and Parry (2013, p. 312) explain that smaller events and projects do not record much information, at most the amount of tickets sold are administered, but apart from that there is no recorded information, hence a PPR process would have very limited efficacy given the lack of hard data, this is the result of a lack of expertise in recording information.

And lastly, a major impact factor is that lessons learnt are not included in the time and budget of the project, it is an initiative taken by the organisation to improve themselves and not part of the delivery process (Wiewieora, 2009, p. 8). As mentioned before not all organisations have institutionalised PPRs, and again when push comes to pull PPR’s are considered optional and are very much under-resourced (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.136).

3.1.6. The impact of Organisational size

Research has indicated that an organisation involvement with PPR’s is also related to other variables, two of them have been academically acknowledged so far, these are:

→ Organisational Culture
→ Organisational Size

Organisational culture in itself is known to impact the openness towards the PPR process, as the reality of a PPR process is accountability, transparency and essentially the willingness to share knowledge. The organisational culture tend to affect the ‘willingness to share’, according to Wiewiora et al (2009, p. 6) the social environment of the organisation in particular can affect their willingness to share in a particular manner, one example is competitiveness. Wiewiora (2009, p. 8) asserts to address young project managers in particular, that they do not wish to share their knowledge nor wish to receive advice from others as part of their ‘over-confidence’ and continues by saying that project managers do not wish to share their expertise and instead like to dominate the knowledge. However despite the importance of this matter to be mentioned it falls outwith the scope of this research and is difficult to assess given the time-constraints this thesis is subject to.

The next rather prevailing impact factor is the organisational size. Research indicates that the willingness and engagement of an organisation with a PPR process is very much sourced back to the organisational size of the entity. Turner et al (2012, p.943) explain that smaller organisations put requirements management as a simplified version of project management at the heart of their undertaking and often have less time to commit to a full course PPR process (capture, embody, disseminate knowledge), instead they tend to focus on the evaluation of the project success in the interest of the client rather than intending to improve their own business by conducting a more comprehensive PPR. The reasoning behind this occurrence is that smaller organisations often focus their limited resources (human, time and capital) on projects and activities that generate income (McAdam and Reid, 2001, 235). Importantly, younger SME’s often take on a greater number of smaller projects, endeavouring multitasking (Turner et al. 2012, 952), the reason being that they wish to grow more eagerly they are therefore also more primitive with their spending on i.e. human resources (Diedenko et al. 2014, p.44).
On the other end, larger organisations that do not have resource constraints to such extends are found to engage with larger projects and have systemised PPR’s within the organisation (Turner et al, 2012, p. 945) and hence it is often part of their organisational strategy (Diedenko et al. 2014, p.6).

Interestingly the manner in which both small and larger sized organisations conduct PPR’s is also different. Micro and small organisations are often found to not document their lessons learnt, instead they engage in informal meetings and transfer and embody knowledge from individual to individual with a collective effort (Reid et al, 2001, p. 235; Diedenko et al. 2014, p.46), as previously discussed, this has its disadvantages. As mentioned before, Gwillim (2005, p. 314), explained the misperception that smaller organisations have of PPR’s, explaining that they regard meetings with no tangible outputs or follow-up actions as a PPR process. On the contrary, bigger organisations ranging from medium to large do not disregard any type of knowledge and equally rely on informal and formal meetings, forms and surveys filled out by internal and external project stakeholders to be processed as a final PPR report with follow-up actions in place if necessary (McAdam and Reid 2001, p.240). At the same the Reid et al (2001, p.236) and Kruger et al (2012, p. 6-10) also found that the difference between micro, small and medium organization is that the hierarchy is less established in the sense that micro and perhaps small organisations as well do not have a middle management, there is often one person at the top and then there is few operational personnel by which the author goes back to the previous statement regarding “limited resources”. Kruger (2012, p. 7) explains that senior management were more aware, interested and mature in the knowledge management procedures and have institutionalized and acknowledged it on a strategic level in medium and large organisations, whilst operational personnel was noted to have the least interest in KM. Based on these secondary research findings the author believes there may be a positive correlation between a company’s engagement with PPR’s and their size.

### 3.2 Comprehensiveness of a PPR

The first prominent step in the PPR process is to determine what the success criteria is for a project, this will comprise the factors that are to be evaluated as part of the PPR process (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.414; Baccarini, 1999, p. 25). By doing so an organisation identifies the evaluation function of the PPR (Brown and Getz, 2014, p.414). As explained before, the traditional project success criteria metrics look upon the fulfilment of the ‘iron triangle’; figure 1 illustrates its components (Atkinson, 1999, p. 339; Turner & Zolin, 2012, p. 87; Baccarini, 1999, p. 26). However, as explained in section 3.1.1, project success criteria have evolved over time because of the increasing project complexity that is partially caused by an increasing amount of stakeholders, especially in the events management industry in which an extensive range of stakeholders are considered during an evaluation (Pasanen et al, 2014, p.12), this will be elaborated on in section 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 of this thesis.

The iron triangle looks upon what was signed to deliver, but what is not understood is that similar to other industries, the events management industry is very much sensitive to its target audience, the audience for whom the events was intended. (Figure 1: “the Iron triangle” Source: adapted from Atkinson, 1999)
Hence an event could have been completed with all its deliverables on time, within the specified budget and with the indicated quality but could however not be to the satisfaction of the event attendees. Considering that this thesis concentrates on cultural operators, one very impactful variable for cultural operators is art, if to their perception the artistic value has not been delivered or expressed well then too the project can be deemed as a failure (Jalocha and Cwigla, 2015, p. 640). The discontent of the target audience can result the event to be a failure (Jalocha and Cwigla, 2015, p. 641); this attribute that falls outwith the scope of the iron triangle is related to creating value for the key stakeholders. There are various reasons as to why a project can fail despite its adherence to the iron triangle, another example is as explained in section 2.1.1., the long term success of the project needs to be taken into account, in other words it needs to be able to do what the client wanted it to do, this is also referred to as extrinsic value creation for the client (Highsmith, 2004, p. 15). The ‘agile triangle’ (see figure 2) is a good example that puts value creation for key stakeholders at its heart, in which an adapted version of the iron triangle is integrated as part of the ‘constraints’. In this adapted triangle, as shown in figure 2, quality is playing a bigger role whereas the iron triangle has added ‘scope’ to it.

The Project Management Institute refer to project success as “the last baselines [...] approved by the authorized stakeholders” (PMI, 2013, p. 35). This definition endeavours to consider project success beyond the iron triangle, urging it to measure and evaluate project success at more than one dimension, by which stakeholder satisfaction is one. According to Muelbauer’s (2014, p.20) timeline of success criteria evolvement, the inclusion of project management team success was added in the 90s, and has become a prevalent project success criteria that endeavours organisational learning, this correlates to the emergence of the knowledge management subject that was also noted to be in the 90s (Reid et al, 2001, p. 232).

There are two sides to a PPR procedure that each evaluate a critical part of the project, both consolidate to the final aim of the PPR process which is to determine success (from different angles) and capture lessons learnt for organisational learning. The first one being efficiency, that aims for organisational improvement and evaluating the project management team on how efficient it was in conducting and completing the project, this includes the lessons learnt part and the adherence to the iron triangle (Cooke, 2007, p. 233; Baccarini, 1999, p.25). Subsequently there is effectiveness, this puts the project objectives against it outputs and essentially looks upon the inclusion of the Economic Impact Analysis (EIA), it seeks to determine the value and quality the project has delivered at present and includes the acquisition of hard data (Getz, 2007, p. 407; Muelbauer, 2014, p. 23; Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 136), and hence addresses the remaining success criteria of the agile triangle.
Despite the importance of both counterparts of the PPR, the latter is known to receive more attention in praxis and in theory (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 136). Finally, both of these counterparts will also determine the outcome of a third factor in the equation that goes beyond the scope of a PPR but is not independent from the PPR, which is organisational success. Attaining organisational success is a long-term endeavour, and looks upon the strategic alignment of projects and organisational aims (McLeod et al., 2012, p. 70). An example could be, using the success of the project as a market entry method, which is a business success that is planned on a medium-term. Having gained access to the market, and engaging with more projects that have been delivered in accordance to the above-discussed success criteria will essentially lead to a positive reputation and potential market leadership. This is a long-term endeavour and counts as organisational success enabled by strategic project management and strategic portfolio management that looks upon choosing projects that are in alignment with the strategic goals of the organisation (Getz, 2007, p. 407; Grundy, 2000, p. 94). Another way to put it is by using Turner & Zolin’s (2012, p. 91) explanation, in which they distinguish between three parts, project output, project outcome and project impact. Here, project output represents the ultimate project success including its efficiency, project output considers the business success and project impact addresses the organisational success. Figure 3 demonstrates the distinct types of success that can be obtained through a project.

This thesis only intends to research the PPR process, and hence will not research nor analyse organisational success any further. In the following paragraphs of section 3.2.2 the author will elucidate which factors each of the counterparts of the PPR process are comprised of.

### 3.2.1 Effectiveness

Brown and Getz (2015, p. 141) speak of two types of evaluations that measure the effectiveness of a project within a PPR procedure in events management, they distinguish them as the *formative* evaluation category and the *summative* evaluation category. Here formative evaluation complements the summative evaluation category, the formative function comprises comparative studies, benchmarking, stakeholder inputs and market demands. The summative evaluation addresses the traditional PPR in the events management, which is to hold the outcomes and impacts of a project against its pre-set qualifying criteria of success (COS). These include the EIA, sustainability and legacy, key stakeholders satisfaction, media content and coverage analysis, (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.141). The summative evaluation is the first step within the evaluation of the effectiveness of the project as it gives the base with its COS from which the formative evaluation can work from (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.144). The author will now explain and give a description of each component.
The impact assessment is known to be one of the most dominating forms of evaluation within a PPR in the events management (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.136), and is the main measure discussed in events management literature in the context of PPR’s (e.g. Anton and Parry, 2013; Carlsen, 2012; O’Sullivan et al, 2009). Impact assessments comprise the immediate economic impacts of the project and may comprise a more comprehensive approach by including the Trippe Bottom Line factors of sustainability in the assessment. The economic impact analysis is the most common among practitioners (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.136) and is often in the interest of funders of the projects.

The Economic impact analyses include several assessments such as the tangible and intangible benefit and cost assessment (BCA). This assessment is very straightforward and literally puts tangible investment against tangible benefits an example is presented in table 1. Please note that ‘costs’ does not necessarily address a monetary value, especially in intangible costs, it could be perceived as a ‘disadvantage’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible</td>
<td>Procurement of new stage props</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intangible</td>
<td>Overcrowding causing inconvenience for visitors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2: Example Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA)*

The BCA looks at all the benefits of the event, and assesses where the costs for the facilitation of this benefit are incurred sometime in the future or at present (Carlsen, 2012, p. 254). Intangible BCA is often difficult to perform but to be thorough with the BCA it should be included. The purpose of the BCA is to calculate the opportunity costs by which the net benefits should be positive, that is total benefits – total costs, if so the project is deemed as economically viable (Carlsen, 2012, p.254). Its advantages include that it considers the impact on the social environment as well to a certain extend. Subsequently there is the Input-Output analysis, this analysis requires the conduction of surveys or other forms of data collection methods and is attractive to use for events that have attracted visitors from outside the city, region or country to attend (Carlsen, 2012, p. 255) hence suitable for organisations that participated in the ECoC program. The purpose of the analysis is to see whether there has been new money within the economy; this is measured in monetary values. This can be viewed with three types of effects (Miller, 2007, p. 2; Carlsen, 2012, p. 256):

- **Direct effect**, a hotel has an increased number of hotels rooms booked due to the event, hence a higher sales turnover.
- **Indirect effect**, the suppliers of the hotel get a higher volume of orders, and have an increase turnover due to higher demand.
- **Induced effects**, the hotels and the suppliers can offer longer working hours to employees, both employees and the entities earn more money, and can spend this money again.

Hence, the point being an increased economic activity, interestingly, Fox and Rampton (2015, p. 36) had conducted such an input-output analysis, but only then with a very broad scope, in which the entire ECoC program was taken into account, one of the findings were that hotel occupancy increased by 43% in the year 2013 to 2014.

The triple bottom line (TBL) addresses sustainability on the grounds of the social, economic and environmental factors. Its main purpose is for the event to be conducted whilst keeping the triple bottom line factors in mind; these are also referred to as people, profit and planet. Brown and Getz (2015, p. 146) also encouraged for event management practitioners to adopt the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) approach, under which ‘environmental’ events are to i.e. assess waste and energy consumption and ‘social’ would address i.e. event legacy,
sourcing and labour practising. According to Sherwood (2005, p.636), environmental impacts were scarcely evaluated in a study on festival management and social and socio-cultural impact was slowly starting to develop, it was concluded that there was a lack of TBL comprehensiveness within the events management effectiveness evaluation. However, Brown and Getz (2015, p. 146) argue that despite the lack of inclusion of the TBL factors within a PPR from the events management, “environmental factors in relation to resource procurement cannot be ignored” when for instance an internal evaluation is conducted. Brown and Getz (2015 p.146) intend to explain that TBL factors are very much integrated within a PPR and its evaluation components and that a thorough PPR would not be able to ignore the TBL factors even if it is not given separate attention.

Specific to this thesis and the ECoC program it was found that leaving a ‘legacy’ that is part of the ‘social’ factor was found to be lacking amidst participating firms. Fox and Rampton (2015, p. 77) found through a survey with a response rate of 82% of all participating firms, that there was no real plan or strategy in place to continue the cultural offering beyond the ECoC year. Moreover, residents believed the events to be a one-off undertaking. According to Fox and Rampton’s (2015, p.77), this was related to the absence or more to say lack of funding; for the ECoC year the firms had received funding from the European Commission for their projects, this will however not be the case for projects outwith the ECoC year.

Key stakeholders of an event management project include; the funders, sponsors, the event organisers and project implementers, attendees and the community. The funders usually use the event as an instrument to attract more tourism or to enhance community involvement and engagement (Brown and Getz, 2015, p.143; Johansson, 2008, p.4). Sponsors on the other hand often look for publicity, and the event organisers and project implementers look for outputs such as a positive return on investment (ROI), business success, and attendance of the event, attendee satisfaction, and media coverage. Community satisfaction is usually evaluated on the basis of disturbance, problems and positive experiences. Attendee satisfaction is measured using electronic surveys and with external participant evaluators who attend the event and write an evaluation of how they experienced it, also known as mystery observers (Carlsen, 2012, p. 251; Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 315). The attendance of the event is known to be one of the standard aspects of a PPR, it is the most common of all other aspects that a PPR is comprised of, even small community events record the number of attendees (Brown and Getz, 2015, 139; Anton and Parry, 2013, p.312). Lastly, media coverage would look upon whether the event had received positive media attention, this will determine how the event had been perceived and as a result what its image is and lastly would be a stimulator for i.e. the next edition (Brown and Getz, 2015, 144). This information is kept as historical data and will essentially be used for the formative evaluation function of the PPR, in which comparative studies are conducted with historical data.

The above explained success factors can also be found in the Finnish Event Evaluation Tool (FEET). This evaluation tool is specifically designed for Finnish events that are small of size. FEET is comprised of an evaluation procedure that assesses five stakeholders on the basis of three components through the means of questionnaires. The stakeholders include; event attendees, event organisers, local residents, local entrepreneurs, policy makers. The three components are; customer profiles, economic impact and socio-socio cultural impacts of the event (Pasanen et al, 2014, p. 10).
Fox and Rampton (2015, p.23) had reported in his ex-post review of the ECoC program that the ECoC failed to meet the required amount of corporate sponsors but that the participating sponsors gave positive feedback and stated that they had ‘enjoyed greater visibility’. Moreover, media coverage for the program started late due to departures of key personnel within the ECoC program management team but resulted into being positive (Fox and Rampton, 2015, p. 24).

Lastly, it is important to remember that the above noted findings of Fox and Rampton (2015) are based on the ECoC program but again not specifically on the individual participating organisations themselves. Figure 4 demonstrates what the evaluation function of project ‘effectiveness’ includes within a PPR in the events management.

![Figure 4: Project Effectiveness Evaluation](image)

### 3.2.2. Efficiency

As earlier explained, the evaluation of how efficient a project has been conducted can be addressed by looking at the ‘Iron Triangle’ (Cooke, 2007, p. 233). This part of the PPR mainly looks at whether the project team adhered to the initial project plan. The lessons learnt will be practised on every aspect of the project plan this varies from the project performance analyses to the quality defects, risk management and vendor selection (Snyder, 2013, p. 221). It will analyse causes of each impact factor on the project performance, for instance, the risk impact is a project delay, by saying so one will need to trace the impact back to the source of the problem (Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 315). There is two parts within evaluating the efficiency of a project, there is the planning of the event, as explained above, and there is the implementation of the event, that is comprised of the on-site management, also referred to as operations. Most literature on events management focus on the efficiency of the operations during and after the event by which specific instructions are given as to how the venue should be cleared up and what kind of preparation activities should be undertaken (Anton and Parry, 2012, p. 308; Carlssen, 2012; 249-288). The project planning is addressed by either tracing the impact of an issue to its source, or by evaluating the decision-making within an event (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 137). There is no specific attention given to evaluating the management of the project that includes its planning. Laybourn (2012, p. 291), whilst referring to the event as a project still puts project management into the decision-making concept, this includes the risk management and the processes (market research) to be undertaken. Snyder (2013, p. 212) suggested to alternatively go by the issue log, by which
issues that occurred outwith the project management plan and therefore have no planned countermeasure should be recorded in the issue log, these would then be evaluated as part of the PPR. There are different approaches to evaluating the efficiency of a project, however, based on the explanations above one may distinguish the evaluation of the efficiency of a project by two components; its project management and event management.

The evaluation of the project management of an event comprises the entire project performance aspects, and has the inclusion of communication, contracts and legal, risk management and preliminary research. It is important to understand that all aspects are interdependent, for instance the preliminary research enables the project members to design an event and establish a concept and accordingly they identify the risks associated to the design and the concept, design and the risks are taken into consideration for the contracts and legal issues that involve HRM, and essentially communication as we need to ensure that the design and concept are in alignment with the organisational structure with regards to communication channels. It is a cycle, but indeed the first is to conduct the preliminary research.

Laybourn (2012, p. 289) stresses on the importance of employing analytical tools that analyse the market, the organisation and It’s capacity to effectuate a specific project, by which SMART, SWOT and PESTLE are described as crucial facilitators of strategic planning this allows the organisers to identify and stay in line with stakeholders at every stage of the planning of the project as well as designing the event. This facet can be evaluated through revalidating the sources and methods organisers use to conclude the usage of each analytical tool. For instance demographics of a town was accessed through a source that had not issued a new report since 2001, hence 14 years later there may be significant changes within the demographics of a city, an example could be the fact that many scholars go to study outside of the town and that tourism has increased due high price competition in the aviation industry (Graham, 2008, p.8), hence there is an imparity between reality and the source that was reviewed to assess the demographics and tourist activity of the town in which the project was to be implemented. The lessons learnt in this instance is to set a limit on how far back reports related to market research can be dated.

Risk Management, the evaluation would be to see how well uncertainty was assessed and whether its countermeasures were effective. Despite the fact that events are a non-routine and unique product and service (Laybourn, 2012, p. 288) as mentioned before the life-expiry of an event may be longer than the project closure (Anton and Parry, 2013,p. 320), an example could be an event that is traditionally nurtured annually. In this case many of the historical data regarding the effectiveness of the risk management and what issues occurred could suffice in the planning stage of the event. Within the risk management the following risk categories are identified to be the most commonly evaluated:

- Staff and volunteers
- Health and Safety
- Crowd Management
- Security
- Transport

Contracts and legal would look upon which contracts are used and given to which stakeholders, for instance Rampton (2015, p. 24) reported that one of the key staff left their position and hence the media awareness was not taken care off until a few weeks after the beginning of the ECoC program. Moreover more key positions were vacant during the ECoC program that caused other staff to multi-task or fill in; hence neither the job role of the person filling-in nor the position that being filled-in was performed optimally. One example includes the corporate sponsorship head director left his job in 2013; as a result the target for corporate sponsorship was not attained (Rampton, 2015, p. 22). Knowing that the ECoC program was to
be hosted by Umeå 10 years prior to its date, and arrangements started 8 years to its date, there should have been appropriate contractual measures taken, such as for instance a longer notice period and on the job training in which the former employees knowledge is transferred to the new employees. Moreover, contract management is equally important for supplier relations and other service arrangements, it is imperative to assess whether contract agreements were met and if not what were the reasons for the non-compliance. Masterman (2012, p. 266) for instance explains the importance of keeping direct and frequent contact with sponsors and the necessity to evaluate the communication and contractual agreements with the sponsor to sustain relations with sponsors and ensure clear communication between both parties as a means of meeting expectations. Sponsor relations and its affiliated contractual arrangements frequently receive a high amount of attention during evaluations in events management (Masterman, 2012, p. 265).

Communication should be evaluated on the basis the communication channels, frequency and methods, and the organisational structure through which it had to mobilise. Efficiency on this basis could mean the identification of communication barriers, such as the issue had to be evaluated by three other personnel before it reached the relevant person. Harrison and McDonald (2012, p. 237) emphasise on the importance of concrete and direct communication with suppliers and the consequences of poor informed suppliers and service providers, the evaluation of this is crucial, improvements could be made in the methods used to transfer the event details. Communication in itself is vital to any undertaking, and of course stretches out over all project phases and aspects; this includes communication with stakeholders such as for instance communication with the community, evaluation on this basis would be whether there was an effective sought out harmony between the needs of the visitors, the place and its host community (Walters and Raj, 2012, 364).

Budget and time controls are key determinants of project success, in this perspective an example could be to evaluate whether the budgeting system was effective. A budgeting system looks upon the distribution of the budget, for example, whether the budget was proportioned to goals and targets or whether it was allocated per department (Raj, 2012, p. 276). Budget and time control is often dealt with by project management tools, such as the GANTT chart. The evaluation procedure would deal with for instance persons in charge of the constant monitoring of the budget and schedule alignment.

Evaluation of the events management looks upon the actual implementation of the event, here consideration goes to viewing the main attraction of the event, facilities and amenities, the catering, crowding and congestion points, exiting and the event break-down at the venue (Carlsen, 2012, p. 248).

It is important to note that the evaluation of the events management is often also complemented with visitor satisfaction and mystery observers as earlier mentioned their feedback is used as an input for the events management evaluation. And, the efficiency of the events management is often very much issue orientated. Examples of viewing the main attraction could be for instance verification of tickets, some visitors accessing the V.I.P. area causing unexpected increase of V.I.P. visitors, and perhaps not enough supply, a lesson to be learnt for the next event is to have V.I.P. attendees verification in place such as wristbands. Facilities and amenities include access, queues and maintenance of restrooms, and if there were any issues that had adversely impacted the visitors. The event breakdown at the venue is often problematic as well, as staff is tired and efficiency is desired to avoid mistakes and re-work, the event breakdown requires well-planned preparation, and is often subject to scrutiny during the evaluation as well. An example could be, an art exhibition of a famous painter that
was hosted in a rented venue, the venue is to be left behind as it was received at the same time the paintings should be dispatched securely, this requires pre-prepared arrangements. The event breakdown is especially important to secure relations with key stakeholders and avoid contractual frictions (Anton and Parry, 2013, p. 307). Figure 5 demonstrates what the evaluation function of project ‘efficiency’ includes within a PPR in the events management.

![Figure 5: Project Efficiency Evaluation](image-url)
3.3 Conceptual Model

Hence considering that PPR’s have not been researched in the events management in particular, especially on cultural projects nor has there been the inclusion of the organisational sizes as sample segmentation. To the knowledge of the author, no research has studied the:

→ Comprehensiveness of a PPR within the events management industry, but has made comments on frequencies in praxis, e.g. the dominance of the EIA.
→ Has specifically studied possible reasons or circumstances around cultural operators that caused them to conduct or not conduct a PPR.
→ The efficacy of PPRs conducted by cultural operators

Hence, the author will reinstate the research question to be answered in this thesis:

“What is the application of Internal Post Project and Product Reviews in practice, how comprehensive is it in terms of covering the ‘efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’ components, why is it conducted in this manner, and does it enable effective organisational learning?”

Figure 5 demonstrates the conceptual model of this thesis. The post-project review may be conducted or not conducted, when it is not conducted, the research will focus on the reasoning as to “why” it is not conducted. When the PPR is acknowledged to be conducted by the respondent the next interest of the research will be if the PPR is systemised or not. The research will follow on which elements of the PPR are evaluated, why the PPR is conducted in this manner, in other words ‘what is the reasoning behind its conducted’. And lastly to see if the PPR is evidently effective, in which ‘evidently’ denotes on practical examples where PPR’s were re-used to the organisations benefit.
4. Practical Method

The practical method is a constituent to the research methodology and will provide the reader with all that is involved in the primary research, ranging from the type of primary data collection method to the data collection tools, and how these tools will be employed. Furthermore, the author will elucidate the specific criteria used to select the respondents and how they have been dealt with in terms of contact and ethics. Moreover, the process of analysis of the acquired data as part of transparency and an elucidation of the transferability of the research in itself on the basis of the justified research methodology is also included. In the interest of the reader, this thesis will roughly follow the sequence of the “Research Onion” illustrated in figure 7, created by Saunders et al (2012, p. 160). So far this thesis has presented and elucidated the research philosophy and the research approach, these can be found in Chapter two: Scientific Methodology. The practical method will comprise the remaining elements of the “Research Onion”.

![Figure 7: Research Onion (Source: Saunders et al., 2012, p. 160)](image)

4.1 Methodological Choice

The methodological choice of a research or so to say the “research design” of a research stems from the type of research question one wants to have answered (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 170). The quest to a research design begins with defining the nature of the research. This research has been identified to have an exploratory nature. Exploratory research has been characterised as “discovering what is happening and gain new insights about the subject of interest” (Saunders et al., 2012, 171). This can be recognised considering that this research intends to explore the subject of interest in terms of what its application is in its entire context in a particular sample, here “what” refers to “discovering what is happening” and “in its entire context” refers to “gaining insights into the subject of interest”. Prior research on the subject of interest has only cumulatively reported quantitative research findings, in which the research had a descriptive nature and did not specifically address cultural operators (Brown and Getz, 2015). A descriptive study of this kind gives a profile of a subject and does not
answer as to “why” something happens, it is also described as a “fore-runner” to an exploratory research (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 171), accordingly these research findings have indeed been used as an input to this exploratory research. Considering the lack of research conducted in its entire field as well as the industry the author deemed it as appropriate to select a qualitative research design. The reason being that the main distinction between a qualitative and quantitative research is that the latter has a high dependence on numerical data whereas a qualitative research does not (Punch, 2005, p. 3; Long et al., 2000, p. 190; Saunders et al., 2012, 161). From (1955, p. 114, cited in Long et al., 2000, p. 189) explains it as the question being whether to allow reality to be embodied by different quantities or different qualities. It is important to understand that a quantitative research study is often less flexible, it is focused on accumulating facts, and needs large quantities to deem its sample as representative (Blaxter et al., 2006, p.64; Saunders et al, 2012, p.162). This can however not be committed to within this research because of the limited research conducted on the subject of interest and the target group. Hence the lack of insight into the research subject urges the author to adopt a qualitative research design as it adopts tools and techniques that allow the researcher to have a more interactive and flexible research in which open questions can be used and the subject can be truly explored (Blaxter et al., 2006, p.64). Moreover, the selection of the research design is also inspired by the researchers philosophical stance (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 415), as previously mentioned the research has identified itself in the characteristics of interpretivism, this philosophical stance is often associated to a qualitative research design (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 163).

4.2 Research Strategy

The research strategy assists the researcher in defining a “plan” to answer the research question (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 173). This research will focus on the practical context of the research subject, it is going to explore how the subject is applied in its entire context in practise, therefore the author believes that the case-study strategy is the best applicable for this research. Additional reasons include that a case-study research is very much aligned to an exploratory study where it enables the researcher to garner rich insights in which the researcher “aims to provide an in-depth elucidation” of the research context (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 63). Yin (2009, cited in Saunders et al., 2012, p. 179) explains that this is enabled since a case study research does not necessitate clear boundaries between the phenomenon that is studied and the research context. In this case the application of the post-project review is studied within the organisation, the research does include segments (comprehensiveness, efficacy etc.) however the segments have been broadly divided. In other words the context is not strictly controlled which serves the purpose of “exploring” the subject of interest in the research context. Moreover, the research question comprises the “what”, “why” and “how” composition, according to Saunders et al (2012, p. 179, the case study strategy has a considerable ability to generate answers for such questions. The case study strategy has several categories, in this case this research is best suited with the multiple case study strategy, this enables comparisons between the studied cases (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 64) and to see if findings of one case are and can be replicated across others (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 180). Considering that this research also makes use of sample segmentation in organisational sizes and since this is done deliberately to see if there are any differences in the findings, the multiple case study aims for theoretical replication (Yin, 2009, cited in Saunders et al., 2012, p. 180). A theoretical transferability is considered when the researcher predicts a certain impact of a variation on the research findings, when this is proven the research may assert to presume that this theory is transferable across all company’s in the same research context.
4.2.1 Data Collection Tools

So far this research has been known to have an exploratory nature, a qualitative research design, and a multiple case-study research strategy. These aspects have all been chosen in accordance and in the ultimate interest of the research question, the next step is to determine which data collection tool will be employed. There are several options in this circumstance that could suffice, these are; focus groups, ethnography and interviews. Ethnography in this instance would be time consuming considering the amount of fieldwork it is associated to and the required time to serve the purpose of the data collection tool. It is so to say that the researcher does not only want answers but wants to observe the phenomenon within its research context from beginning to end to grasp an insider perspective, which is why it is considerably time-consuming (Bryman and Bell, 2012, p. 440; Saunders et al, 2012, p. 181). Not to mention, accessibility to the target group may also be cumbersome considering that December is a busy month for cultural operators with regards to the years-end and the festive period ahead (Bryman and Bell, 2012, p. 440).

Focus groups require the participation of at least four respondents; they will be interviewed simultaneously in a relatively unstructured manner. The reason as to why this is not attainable is because this method depends on the availability of the respondents, it may be suggested that four respondents from the same company can participate instead, however, it is important to note that many cultural operators cannot afford to do so considering they have minimal staff employed and can therefore not rotate. Furthermore unstructured interviews with more than one participant may be quick to lose track and may be more time consuming to get relevant information (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 510).

Interviews propose conversational means to ask purposeful questions in accordance to the research objectives (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 372) in an environment in which only the interviewer and the respondent participate (Blaxter, 2006, p. 173). There are several types of interviews, these are:

- Structured interviews in which the interviewer adheres to a strict interview guide and asks questions in a monotone manner the only benefit that the engagement between the respondent and the interviewer provides is that the interviewer can explain questions if not understood.
- Semi-structured interviews in which follow-up questions and no strict order in asking the questions pertains, it enables a more comfortable atmosphere between the respondent and interviewer, it is purposeful yet conversational, and enables the interviewer to probe for answers, however, this may seem intrusive.
- Unstructured interviews, they offer a very in-depth perspective of the research context and often don’t work with a pre-determined interview guide, at the same time considering the unstructured design engagers may wander off topic, it is therefore disorientated and not always effective (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 375).

According to Saunders et al. (2012, p. 378) an exploratory research and an interpretivist epistemology benefits from a semi-structured or unstructured in-depth interview, the reason being that these types of interviews allow the respondent to speak more freely and will allow the interview to understand the meanings the respondent ascribes to specific phenomena. This research will use semi-structured interviews; this method may enable a fairer comparison between the cases since during the interviews all questions were asked to all respondents.
 Considering that the respondent and the interviewer had the interview guide in front of them there was a clear direction for the interview, hence it was purposeful and increased reliability. Moreover semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to probe for answers that do not necessarily have to be stated in the interview guide (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 474; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 378).

4.3 Sample Selection Criteria

As explained in section “1.2.1 Research Context” this research will use the Umeå 2014 Capital Culture of Europe (ECoC) program as a sample extraction base, the reason being that the majority of the participants are cultural operators. The respondents are chosen on the basis of their organisation size, and the size of their project. In this case the size of the project would denote the amount of events it is comprised of and the length of events, e.g. some events last 2 hours others last 3 weeks. The reason being that this will increase the likelihood of a more established project management considering the integration of the events within the project, furthermore the bigger the projects the more the funding, this goes hand in hand with the organisational capacity that is reported to be proven with past project performance reports (Brown and Getz, 2015, p. 136). By doing so the author aims to filter the sample by excluding one-off amateur undertakings that were also active during the ECoC program (Fox and Rampton, 2015, p. 34). Information about the projects and the organisations was accessible through the Umeå 2014 website that contained all the projects, events and contact persons. The homepage of each organisation provided information about the amount of employees employed which enabled the author to identify the size of the organisation and select respondents accordingly. It is important to note that this research will not only focus on the projects of the ECoC, but that it will use it as an example, the interview guide will include questions about the PPR’s of projects from the ECoC but will also look at how PPR’s are conducted in general within the chosen entity, as the aim of the research is to see how PPR’s are conducted by cultural operators in general, the interview also enables a comparison between the PPR’s of the chosen projects from the ECoC program and the PPR’s in general.

The organisational sizes were determined by the European Commission’s (2005) stipulation of different organisational sizes:

→ Medium: <250 employees → Small: <40 employees → Micro: <10 employees

4.3.1 Respondent Contacting

The Umeå 2014 website had contact information for each and every project, this included a name, phone number and an e-mail address. The first point of contact was initiated via e-mail, in which the author had introduced her and the reason for contacting them with a brief background of the research, and asked them to participate in the research whilst informing them about the assurance of anonymity and the provision of the interview guide prior to the interview (see appendix 2). The e-mail was initially sent to ten organisations, from which many responded quickly. The author had given a call to the organisations that had not replied and would replace the organisation with another one if there had been no answer or willingness to participate. The interviews were secured for the end of November up until the first week of December, this in relation to the festive period ahead and the years-end and organisational responsibilities which goes hand in hand with public holidays and the need to prioritise and get tasks fulfilled before going on holiday. In others words, it is a difficult period to get cultural operators as well as organisation in general to participate hence; the interviews were planned as soon as possible. In total, sixteen e-mail requests were send out from which seven initially indicated to be willing to participate.
Upon confirming their participation and the date and time the author would send the interview guide 24hr prior to the interview (see appendix 2), this includes weekends. The interview guide included the main themes and the main questions. The e-mail in which the interview guide was sent explained that follow-up questions that are not included in the interview guide may be asked depending on their answers to questions in the interview guide. The author had also asked them if they were comfortable with voice-recording the interview with an explanation of how these recordings will be processed. The reason as to why voice-recordings were preferred is because it ensures that no details are overseen or missed, the transcript would also be more detailed which would suffice in a more accurate analysis of the empirical data (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 394).

One of the respondents had indicated to be more comfortable to answer the questions via e-mail. The case was considered to be of relevance to the research considering the organisations size and operations, hence instead of an interview the respondent filled in a questionnaire that was send via e-mail. The questionnaire was similar to the interview guide but was adapted with the addition of explanations for questions and examples. This evidently impacted the ability of the interviewer to ask follow-up questions but at the same time it gave the respondent more time to think and answer the questions in a perhaps more comfortable environment. Another respondent was based in Stockholm and therefore could not participate in a face-to-face interview; hence the interview took place via Skype. Finally, to ensure optimal anonymity the author will only disclose the function of the respondent. The reason being that most respondents are based in Umeå and cultural operators are familiar with one another. Thus to adhering to anonymity would not be effective if the position and organisational name is disclosed. Not all respondents requested to be anonymous, however to cohere to consistency the author decided to not disclose any organisation.

4.4 Interview Construction

The interview construction was done in accordance to themes that reflected the topics discussed in the theoretical framework. No questions were specific or required a particular answer, the questions ensured that the respondent was not lead to a specific answer but was able to answer openly. Considering that the interview was meant to take no longer than one hour the author made sure to not have too many questions, to ensure that the questions that were asked could be answered in-depth. The one-hour deadlock that was planned and communicated was exceeded sometimes due to introductory conversations prior to the actual start of the interview.

The interview started with background information of the organisation that was asked in relation to determining the actual size of the organisation, and the function of the respondent within the organisation as well as how many years they have been employed by the organisation. This allows insights in relation to perspectives that are related to their position with the company, for instance a strategist or a person in the upper-management could view and deem the importance of the PPR process different from a project member or manager. The interview continued with two sets of questions, one for those who said to have a PPR procedure and one for those who said not to have a PPR procedure. The set of questions that addressed those who acknowledged to have a PPR procedure in place were first asked to define what the PPR is to their knowledge and their opinion, who it was for and when its conducted, this theme (T) is referred to as (T1) “post-Post Review”. The following themes were (T2) “post-Project Review Procedures”, (T3) “Post Project Review Efficacy and
Potential Reluctance”, (T4) “Post Project Review Comprehensiveness”. The last theme (T5) “European Capital of Culture (ECoC)” was that of the ECoC program in which the respondent was asked whether they had received any funds or more funds for their projects during the ECoC program and if the PPR’s for these projects were any different from how they normally conduct it. The set of questions for those that replied not to have a PPR process in place were asked what a PPR is in their opinion, why they do not do have it and whether they had received any grants of funds for their projects during the ECoC program. The respondents were also given the opportunity to give any final remarks or comments. There was however no respondent that had acknowledged not having a PPR process in place and hence the second set of questions was not used. The interview guide reflects the conceptual model that is presented in figure 6, with the addition of T5 that addresses the ECoC program.

Table 3 provides an overview of the contextual data of the interviewees and the interviews (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 396). The “+” behind the number indicates that there is short-term project employees involved, hence the bare number indicates the skeleton staff of each organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Organisational Size</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Function:</th>
<th>Interview date and time</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>142+</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>30/11/15 13.15</td>
<td>72min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>43+</td>
<td>Development Strategist</td>
<td>07/12/15 08.15</td>
<td>54min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>17+</td>
<td>Communication Officer</td>
<td>05/12/15 N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>10+</td>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>02/12/15 16:00</td>
<td>67min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>7+</td>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>27/11/15 13:00</td>
<td>59min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>27/11/15 15.30</td>
<td>43min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Respondent Overview

4.5 Process of Interviews

Upon conducting the interviews the audio recordings are saved with the organisational name and will be stored in the mobile phone to be transcribed. The transcription allows the researcher to have an overview of all that was said. This research will make use of the data sampling approach in which the author will only derive and transcribe pertinent sections of the interview, pertinent issues touch upon the exclusion of conversational moments that had no relation to the research subject. This is done in relation to time-efficiency and of course avoiding the risk of wandering off topic (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 551). The author also ensured that anonymity was adhered to, one respondent has specifically requested to remain anonymous whereas others expressed to give consent to both options, hence to ensure no mistakes in this aspect happened and to remain consistent the author kept all respondents anonymous.
Upon transcribing, the author developed summary reports of each transcription that shortens long sentences into briefer ones, this will also allow the author to familiarise and identify herself with principal themes within the research that will be of use for the coding, pattern recognition and analyses of the data (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 554).

4.6 Interview limitations

One of the main limitations that are identified within this research is that the interview guide was developed on the basis of the limited secondary research that is reported in the literature review. The author has minimised this limitation by asking very broad questions that enable discussion. Broad questions in this sense would be for instance when the literature suggests that reluctance towards PPR’s is often related to shortage of time due to the commencement of new projects shortly after the closure of another, the question in the interview guide would be for instance “does your organisation facilitate you well to conduct a PPR, please elaborate” and “do you believe that your organisation gives enough attention to the PPR process, please elaborate”. In this manner the “exploratory” nature of this research remains adhered to. However the broadness of the questions may only give the interviewee the opportunity to answer what comes first to their mind, as to what they believe to be most important, this could leave underlying implications in the dark that could also be of relevance to the question. For example, they would speak of things they have difficulties with or they have interest in, since it is after all their perspective. This could leave other problems in the dark that also affect the research phenomenon. Hence, the subjectivity of the answers needs to be acknowledged; interviewing more people from one particular organisation could have counteracted this problem. The researcher was unfortunately not able to do so in relation to time constraints and presumably, nor would the organisation have been considering the hectic of the December period. This research did not experience any linguistic difficulties; all respondents had an excellent command over English.

4.6 Process of Analysis

Upon transcribing and the creating summary reports for each interview the author will code the data by the means of themes. It is important to note that the interviews were conducted simultaneous to the thesis writing to ensure time-efficiency. The interviews were listened to the same day as the interview was conducted; the author made personal memos to ensure that perspectives of the interview was recorded while the interview progression was still fresh in the mind (Cousin, 2005, p. 425; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 554). The analysis of the data is highly dependent on the research approach; this study has been identified to be best suited with abduction. Most methods specifically address the research approach such as the grounded theory for a research with an inductive nature and pattern matching for research that has a deductive nature (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 387; Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 589; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 567-578). The author instead chose to employ a more general and widely used method that can be used in qualitative research adopting both an inductive and deductive approach, that is the ‘thematic network analysis’ also known as the “template analysis” (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 572). This method centralises around themes, the identification of ‘concepts’ and the creation of ‘categories’ which enables the large masses of data to be broken into smaller fragments by which it allows the researcher to organise and explore the information within (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 595). The thematic analysis capacititates the author to explore the data by which a greater understanding of the research phenomenon or so to say “issue” is obtained (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 387). The core activity
of the thematic network analysis is to organise the data/text into different levels in separation of themes whilst facilitating a depiction and structure the themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 387). The thematic network is comprised of a web-like structure that is comprised of three levels (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 388):

- Lowest order premises in the data, are dependent on their connection to the categories, cannot be used or thoroughly understood when out of its context (Basic Themes)
- Categories comprised of clusters of basic themes that conform a basic principle (Organising themes)
- Sub-ordinate themes that encapsulates the core themes and principles, more than one global themes can emerge (Global theme)

Figure 8 illustrates an abstract of the thematic network analysis; each theme is connected to a theme, by which the bigger themes give more meaning to the cumulated smaller themes.

![Figure 8: Thematic Network Analysis (Source: Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 387)](image)

**Step 1:** The data will be broken into smaller fragments by coding the data into groups, also known as data reduction (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 595; Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 389; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 564). The coding framework will consult both the theoretical framework of the research but will also lookout for new discoveries by which the coding becomes “concept-driven” and “data-driven”, this would mirror the combination of deduction and induction in abduction and the exploratory nature of the study (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 390, Saunders et al., 2012, p. 557).

**Step 2:** Themes will be identified within the codes and will enable the creation of abstracts of the coded data segments; the main objective is to identify rudimental patterns and structures between the identified themes. Consequently the data will look upon a refinement in which it is necessary to see if the themes are non-repetitive and presenting an idea and constitute to a bigger picture, this looks upon the classification of their level in the ‘thematic network’ (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 392).

**Step 3:** The motioning of the network will begin by selecting the basic themes, grouping them into categories and summarise them to global themes that represent the set of themes in the light of a distinct arguments (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 392-393). The output of this step is the actual “thematic network”.
Step 4: The network will be explored in parallel to the summarised transcriptions through the lens of the global themes that represent a segment of the research, i.e. comprehensiveness. Global themes allow patterns to be identified and explored. Importantly, the thematic network analysis is a tool to analyse but does not analyse the data by itself, the analysis of the data is upon the researcher who interprets the data in accordance to their perception of the data with the assistance of the network that organised the data in a manageable and insightful manner (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 393-394).

Step 5: This step suffices as an explicit summary in which all themes, patterns and connections are characterised and presented (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 394).

Step 6: The final step endorses the interpretation of the patterns whilst looking at the research question and the used theoretical framework, considering that this piece of research began with a research problem and is strongly consulted with its theoretical grounding the primary data should be deduced on the basis of the theoretical framework. This step will mainly focus on deducing existing research and bring light to new discoveries whilst taking the whole network into consideration (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 402).

4.7 Ethics

Ethical considerations are broad and imperative to the research, it addresses the interaction between the respondent and the researcher in terms of ‘what should and should not be done’ (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 127). There are four main elements to consider in relation this particular research, these are (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 132; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 238):

- Causing harm to the participant (safety)
- Invasion of privacy (intrusion)
- Lack of informed consent (transparency)
- Deception (dishonesty).

Harm to participants encompasses physical and personal harm, personal harm encompass a broad range of facets, in the sense of this research it could be the employment and self-esteem of the respondent that may be affected (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 133). The author informed participants when appropriate that not all questions had to be answered as they may confidential and could affect their employment, examples include the annual turnover of the organisation, and this was an optional question in the interview guide. The author also ensured to remain polite and friendly and made sure to adhere to neutralism at all times, with no remarks or statements (as a means of commenting on their answer) was negative or judgmental. At the same time promises were adhered to, anonymity was ensured to the point that the respondent is unidentifiable by gender, name, and organisation.

All respondents were informed about the research subject from the first point of contact, which was the introductory e-mail in which the researcher was introduced with the full name and the Masters program that was being studied, including the supervising tutor and the University. The research subject was introduced and the respondent was briefly informed of the information processing, such as anonymity upon request and the provision of an interview guide at least 24hrs prior to the interview. Furthermore the respondents were also very much encouraged to ask questions if they had any. The interview guide was sent with a request to voice-record the interview, and was subject to their approval, the researcher would have made other arrangements if the respondent had not agreed. The author also made sure to tell the respondent from which point the voice recording would start and end, and what would happen to the voice-recording. As a means of data protection and management the author also promised to delete the voice-recordings upon completing the thesis and that no other individual apart from the author would have access to the voice-recordings (Saunders et al.,
Ethical issues with regards to reporting was also considered by which the author and the respondent agreed that the thesis would be send several days before the final seminar of the thesis so that the respondents could review the thesis and request for changes if necessary (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 245). No questions in regard to the privacy of the respondent was asked, questions regarding their employment were asked in a manner that allowed them to refuse, an example from the interview guide include the amount of years they had been employed by the organisation. It is important to not engage in intrusion as it may affect the respondent’s attitude towards the research negatively in terms of co-operation (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 242). The author ensured transparency throughout the entire interview process and also urged the respondent to e-mail or seek contact if they had any questions with regards to the interview or the research.
5. Empirical Findings

This chapter will report on the empirical findings that are based upon the semi-structured interviews, by which it will follow a thematic network structure, which can be found in Appendix 2. Accordingly the findings will be analysed using the theoretical framework as a reference point whilst bringing light to new concepts in the organisational size segments. Please do note that this chapter will only report the findings of the primary research, hence when one organisational segment is not mentioned it only means that the theme was not applicable to the organisational size. The indication as to which statement belongs to which respondent is indicated with “R” and a number that ranges from 1-6, table 3 presents a general overview of the respondent’s profile. Furthermore, the respondents mostly referred to the PPR as an evaluation, hence quotes may comprise the term evaluation, it is confirmed that by evaluation the respondents mean a PPR as this was the purpose of the second theme of the interview which is called “Post-Project Review” and had the purpose of exploring whether the respondents were familiar with the basic characteristics of the “PPR”. Lastly, names that were used by the respondents will be censored with “(name)” this has been done to ensure optimal anonymity.

5.1 Process Characteristics

This global theme signifies the characteristics of the PPR procedures that were identified by the interviews. The theme looks upon the ‘why’ and ‘when’ a PPR is conducted as well as whether it is systemised and documented in anyway and lastly how it is dispersed. This cycle aligns to the first two knowledge management principles which is to ‘capture’ and ‘disperse’ knowledge. In other words it looks upon which methods are used to undertake a PPR and how it’s outputs are dispersed after its conduction.

5.1.1 Motive, Timing and Systemisation

When asked why interviewees conduct a post-project review (PPR) most of the interviewees had answered with “to know how it went” (R4), “to do it better” (R5) and “because we want to be better, we are a learning organisation, we need to evaluate what we do, so we can do better and be better and better at doing the right thing” (R1) and “mainly to find lessons learnt on what went well and what could be done better” (R3). The incentive to learn and improve through the means of a PPR was evident across all respondents; however, these motives are found accompanied by other motives, to which some were expressed to be more important than the learning process itself they initially emphasised on. All of the participating respondents are non-profit cultural operators; their main operational source of income is mostly facilitated through grants and funds from various entities, from which most stems from government affiliates. Thus, the most prevailing reason is found to be accountability to funders.

Medium organisations (R1 & R2) were found to place a grave importance on accountability; (R2) “because for once we are obliged to […] often we receive money to start projects and to sort of pursue a project it is also written in regulations, you know the fund-giver, we should do an evaluation” and continued on a later occasion with “[..] it is not so much because we have chosen to become better but we are pushed to become better, because the people who are giving out money they are more picky, they want us to follow a certain procedure. It is a lot to do with what the funders want to get back from us, it is like a two-way street”, by which the respondent confirmed that a ‘two-way street’ denoted the ability to benefit from the learning
capacities of a PPR whilst satisfying funders. Similarly, R1 stated that the PPR was used “to answer everyone who needs the evaluation because they give the money, the more financed the project becomes the more evaluation there is. Not so much for us but we have to give it to them, it is also for us to learn as we try find ways to do things better in different ways”. Through the course of the interview the author asked R2 whether more money signifies more business objectives to fulfil and thus stimulates a more rigorous PPR, to which R2 confirmed with “yes”.

As for the timing of the PPR, R1 had said to conduct the PPR’s right after the project as it is officially scheduled for the project members, additionally R1 also explained that some project members disband before the PPR takes places hence, their part in the review is captured before, R1 states “the artistic team stays until opening night and then they go […] they can’t be in the PPR […] so we do it before the opening night, just a week before the opening night”. Similarly, R2 also has the PPR integrated into the schedules of the project members but said that the PPR can either take place right after the project or “it can also take quite a long time before we come back to the evaluation of the project and then we try to gather all the key personnel […], it can vary a lot”. Both R1 and R2 had confirmed to have a systemised PPR in the organisation, but depending on the amount of stakeholders and budget involved it would differ in terms of comprehensiveness and formality, this is further elaborated on in “5.4.2: effectiveness”.

R3 that represent the “small” organisational size segment stated to “evaluate mainly to find lessons learnt on what went well and what could be done better” but when asked ‘who’ the PPR was for R3 added that it was also “to share information with artists and project partners, but we also do post-project reviews to be able to report to our board, for the (name) and other financers”. The PPR was conducted after every project; the respondent also emphasised on the on-going monitoring of the project, and said that it was the “most important part of the reviewing”. R4 states that the PPR is for “the board, for the city and also of course if I go for external money like (name) they always ask for this annual report”. The annual report to which the respondents refers is a compilation of project profiles and their outcomes. When asked when the PPR was conducted within the organisation R4 had stated that; “each producer has their own stage-art projects all the time, I evaluate after every finished play or stage-art production, I do that, my colleagues do it different they do it after every term”, hence the colleagues reviews several projects simultaneously. When asked if it was “up to the person in charge” R4 continued stating that “Yes, we are really independent. I am employed but I have great independence”.

Micro organisations (R5, R6), similar to R1 and R2, R5 also indicated that more money signifies a more rigorous evaluation, R5 states; “ya for the cultural year we did a bigger evaluation for (name) and also for the (name), because we received some money on top of our annual funds”. This was also confirmed by R6 who had also applied for external money on top of the annual and described the PPR as “more extensive, the financial part was a bit more detailed”. However, when asked to R6 who the PPR was for the respondent replied “it is very much for our benefit, it is not something that we are asked for by our funders” but also added that apart from the external funders that “[…] of course our funding agencies are also provided with an assessment of the project”. When asked when the PPR was undertaken, R5 and R6 explained that the project would be monitored throughout its progress and that an informal review would take place after its completion. When asked if the PPR was systemised within the organisations both R5 and R6 had said that it depended on the novelty of the project which was related to its size, R6 states “we felt we wanted feedback because it was
such a big project [...] it was a bigger project in terms of number of people involved and budget”. R6 had however implied that the PPR was not systemised, when further asked R6 stated that it was “selectively” conducted, when asked what it depended on R6 had continued to explain “well we always do it, it is sort of very dynamic it is in a very general sense in our everyday work and sitting around the table” and confirmed on another occasion that “we rarely have like evaluation meetings”, this will be further elaborated on in “5.1.2 Captured in Documentation” and “5.1.3 Dispersed”. Both respondents that represented micro organisations had a strong reliance on monitoring the project progress; it was however not explicitly expressed to be an input to the PPR in itself.

5.1.2 Captured in documentation

Both medium organisations, R1 and R2 employed questionnaires for their significant stakeholders and then gathered up together for a meeting. The meeting in itself differs on the basis of the number of external stakeholders involved. The most basic, standard and minimum manner of conducting the PPR involved a meeting that is specifically reserved for the PPR, the output of the meetings are structured meeting minutes. The questionnaires are distributed per department, R1 stated; “someone will send it out and then we want each department to have their own evaluations, and collected reviews and thoughts and their thoughts would be send to the project manager, it is all collected on the server […] and then everybody meets and then they lift the things they think are the most relevant, you talk about it but also everything is documented […] so everybody can go back to those documents when they need”. Similarly R2 stated; “we have a specific evaluation meeting where you try to follow some sort of schedule, you know, like a structure you go through the whole thing and you find all the answers that you need […] everyone has got their own specific questions and everyone has got their own perspective that is important for the people they work with”. The author wishes to emphasise that this is the most basic procedure within both organisations, regardless of the size of the project, for instance, R2 referred to this procedure as “informal” because it “is mainly when it is within the theatre itself”, and said that the PPR process “can be on many different levels”, examples will be further elaborated in “5.1.3 Dispersing”. R1 had also stated that the extensiveness of a PPR depended on the size of the project by stating: “but sometimes when it is small, you don’t have as many questions, as when it is really big.” Both R1 and R2 document the PPR process and output.

Small organisations represented by R3 and R4, also had documented PPR’s, both respondents said to be very reliant on verbal communications and that statistics are recorded in reports and forms. R3 stated: “we answered the financier’s question forms about each project, but that is the normal procedure when you receive external funding. Of course some questions were specific, but not in that sense that it changed our normal procedures”. On a later occasion R3 also explained to give more attention to “the verbal parts of it (meetings) than writing documents”. The PPR process for R4 mostly revolves around recording and reporting numbers and is documented on this basis. As a summary and confirmation the interviewer asked “so the normal procedure includes looking at the numbers and that’s on paper so you document it and then later you pass it onto to the person who writes the annual report” to which R4 confirmed with “yes”. Further ‘reviews’ were to be discussed verbally in informal settings on a casual basis during conversations and on a formal basis during weekly meetings. Both R3 and R4 document the PPR outputs but do not document the lessons learnt.

R5 who represents micro organisations stated, “we are not very good at documenting”, and furthermore, numbers related to budget control and seat occupancy are documented, reviews
from their employees on tour were also in written format. R5 had also confirmed that PPR’s are very verbal and informal apart from recording the numbers. R6 stated that their PPR process is “usually very very informal and unstructured, we did do a slightly more formal review for the Umeå 2014, in terms of feedback from our partners” and continued that “We felt we wanted feedback because it was such a big project”, when asked how it is different from how you conduct the normally R6 replied “the report kept quite a similar structure but was more extensive, the financial part was a bit more detailed”. Both R5 and R6 limitedly document the PPR outputs.

5.1.3 Dispersing

Dispersing the knowledge of a PPR is the second stage of any knowledge management practise. As explained before both R1 and R2 discuss the PPR’s in formal meetings in which questionnaires from stakeholders that each contain specific questions are used as an input, consequently the structured meeting minutes along with other project related information can be found back electronically or in physical evidence. R1 described the PPR process as follows; “the feedback form we are doing it together, so everyone learns from it together, but we send the questions before-hand, and we have a lot of questions as you will and note something you wanted to say about things, then during the meeting, we have a big meeting and then we go through this […] it is best to put it on the table and look at it”. Hence social knowledge transmittance was existent; consequently the PPR meeting minutes are saved and accessible on the server since “everything is documented […] so everybody can go back to those documents when they need”. R2 had indicated to also share the PPR’s but then through physical formats as R2 states “yes its documented it’s a lot of things can happen it can stay in the bookshelf […] or it can be taken out by the next project people […] to go through it”. R2 had also indicated that the manner in which PPR’s are shared also differ in accordance to the size of the project, as R2 states; “for the 2014 program we also created public seminars, so people could attend and take part in a dialogue and a discussion from the participants on what we have learnt during the process, and this was also in the media, that was a very good process I would say its an interesting way of making the evaluation and project results public”. The respondent continued and said that “also for the promoters that we work with […] we can arrange conferences with them for an evaluation” and said that in this instance the PPR becomes more “formal” as it is not “within the theatre itself”. The respondent also indicated to have a department working on an internal development project “we are more into recording stuff and try to develop something here and then we have digital development, when it comes to digital development, it’s the documentation and archive of what we do […] I mean it’s a long-term perspective, how do we work with digital tools in order to make a very effective archive for effective documentation”. Consequently R2 had also expressed concern towards the issue of “loss of knowledge” as R2 states “the problem I can see is that knowledge often stays with certain persons, the key thing is to be able to extract the knowledge from certain persons and get it out to more people […] it is very difficult to sort of get it extracted or spread out from the key individuals”. The respondent continued with several arguments, to which one particular statement justified his concern “one has to realise that there is often new persons involved and you have to take them into the picture as fast as possible, in this case its good to have something that you can present […] so that we can become more professional in that way, by sort of making it into procedures that are not dependent at all on who is there”. This matter is further reported in section “5.3 Reluctance”. Both R1 and R2 confirmed to systematically share the structured PPR outputs instantly with project members and had it stored for possible future reference.
Small organisations had varied responses, by which R3 as stated in section “5.1.2 Captured in documentation” said that “internal communication is primarily verbal and we start each week by talking through last week’s outcomes, what we can learn from them and changes that need to be done”. The interviewer had asked R4 how “knowledge that you gained from PPR is shared” R4 had answered, “mostly I don’t”. When the interviewer asked if knowledge from the PPR is shared at all R4 stated; “yea we share anything that we feel is really important with each other”, the interviewer had asked how this is shared to which the respondent gave an example “I check it everyday for instance project “name” and I check everyday how much I sell [...] If it doesn’t work then I go to my colleague and I get more input” this presents an informal manner of sharing moreover the respondent gave a general example of “how knowledge is shared” but it is not related to the post-project review but was during the project. This was confirmed when the author asked “so is it a preventive measure for your future project” to which R4 had replied with “no no we don’t work like that, you cant do that in this field of work” and had further confirmed that this example stemmed from an everyday monitoring activity. R4 had also confirmed to upload the PPR onto “the computer” and stated that “the manager is doing the annual report and she can access, anyone can access my numbers anytime”, hence it is shared electronically for later usage. Both organisations talked about the weekly monitoring of the projects and that the PPR in itself consisted of a compilation of numerical data, with the exception of R3 who documents more aspects of the reviews than the ones mentioned. This is further elaborated on in section “5.4 Comprehensiveness” that elucidates which aspects of projects are reviewed. R4 stated to store its PPR output electronically for future reference, R3 did not state how the PPR output in particular was shared nor stored.

Micro organisations said to share post-project related knowledge in a more informal social context and were more confident in the aspect of tacit knowledge, which was used as a remedy to the risks of not sharing knowledge related to the PPR. R5 had confirmed that everything was verbal and that “everyone’s input is very important and there is a lot different experiences some of us have been here for almost 30 years, and like me I am only here for 2.5 years” another example is where the respondent says to discuss projects in general “during lunch and, well we have regular meetings we talk about every thing in the business”. When asked if there is no fear of “loss off knowledge when someone leaves the organisation” the respondent replied “we all share everything so we all know what’s going on […] we have a big drop-box folder, we have a lot of documentation during the production, you can always go back” and continued with “its competence and expertise” that is needed. R6 had also stated that the PPR process documentation was “very very unstructured” when further asked how knowledge related to the PPR is shared R6 replied “it is in our mind” and on a later occasion said “we talk to each other, the existence of the company is very depending on it”. Neither R5 nor R6 had stated or indicated that the PPR output was specifically shared nor structurally stored.

5.2 Efficacy of PPR’s

This global theme looks at whether the PPR’s conducted by the organisations actually serve a future project or enhance future operations, in other words whether the PPR is effective or not, it addresses the third principle of the KM cycle that is to “use” the knowledge.
5.2.1 Re-usage and benefit realisation

Both medium organisations (R1 and R2) were able to give a practical example in which the PPR of previous projects had benefitted; incidentally examples were related to using PPR’s as an input for strategic decision-making. For instance R1 explained “we changed when we have opening night for the opera’s, we had it on Saturdays normally and we changed it to Thursday, because we looked at different things and made an evaluation and thought maybe we should do it this way”. On the other hand, R2 stated “every project has got a start-up process, and it’s a great benefit to shorten the start-up process of the next project [...] it is a way of saving money I would say, time is money”. At the same time R2 also acknowledged that the potential of ‘using’ the knowledge of a PPR was not optimally realised “we have not always had a good structure on how to actually use the evaluation results, I mean it can also be material that’s just been put away and not used it [...] a lot of things can happen it can stay in the bookshelf for 10 years and no one ever opens it, that’s the worst scenario, or it can be taken out by the next project people”. Both respondents have also been noted to take interest in the demographic measurement aspect of the PPR and use it for themselves instead of only ‘reporting to funders’. Both R1 and R2 re-use the PPR for future projects and strategic decision-making.

When asked to small organisations how the knowledge of a PPR is used, neither gave a resolute answer as R3 stated “we start each week by talking through last week’s outcomes, what we can learn from them and changes that need to be done”, the respondent here refers to ‘last week’ rather than the ‘last project’, the respondent continued with “we are all engaged in an on-going fine-tuning of the exhibitions, events and activities”. A post-project review is conducted at the end of a project; the type of usage R3 refers to has to do with on-going evaluations during the project. R4 on the other hand stated “so the evaluation of course teaches me and my organisation how to do work differently or smarter for the future projects” but did not give a specific example as to how this was done, when further asked the respondent stated “It’s a learning process for me [...] I don’t learn anything in the evaluation afterwards because my learning process is about doing”. Both R3 and R4 were unable to explain how the post-project review is re-used in practise, and were unable to provide a practical example.

As for micro organisations, R5 stated to use the output of the PPR for future marketing strategy, stating “we have a lot of focus on marketing, we have to sell the production, we have to sell the tickets and I think you can draw very firm conclusions on that, like marketing strategies”. Whilst R6 could not provide the interviewer with an example, the respondent stated “not really, it is giving ourselves a time to reflect upon ourselves, not in a formal way but obviously just to make ourselves more aware of it” when further asked if the PPR’s are ever looked back to, including the one for the Umeå 2014 project the respondent stated “not directly in that sense, not kind of looking back at the paper reports [...] it is in our minds”. R5 did re-use the PPR whereas R6 was not able to provide an example.

5.2.2 Personal Belief

Both medium organisations stated that their current PPR process was effective for their organisation whilst they also admitted that it could be better. R1 stated “I think its effective, I mean it is also a matter of how much time you have because here everything is rolling we are producing all the time, it is quite a high tempo and because of that people need to be effective, but we need to do reviews, I mean in this way I am sure we can do it much much more in-
depth but I think it is effective and we get things out of it that we can use for the next production”. At the same time R2 answered with “yes, I would say yes” when the interviewer asked if their “current PPR procedure […] is effective”, the respondent then continued with “could be better, it is always like that, of course it could be better, it doesn’t feel like we are apple computer, we are not developed in that sense, I don’t think it is fair to say that we have a very developed procedure and I think its vulnerable” and continued on to explain that it should be “more structured and its more on a structural level and not depending on the individuals that much”. Both respondents (R1 & R2) believe that their current PPR procedure is effective but acknowledge that it could be better.

Small organisations (R3 & R4), both said that their PPR procedure is effective and believe it to be working for the organisation. R3 stated “It is effective in the sense that we learn from experience what worked well and what did not” and continued with “Yes, in my personal opinion (name) gives enough attention to PPR process, more to the verbal parts of it (meetings) than written documents, and I believe that is the most effective way for a cultural organiser like us”. On the other hand R4 answered, “well it works, we are doing very well, we are doing many good things, right things, we are doing it the right way”. However when the interviewer continued R4 expressed that a more comprehensive PPR would require more resources that they did not have, this is further elaborated on in section “5.3.1”. Both respondents (R3 & R4) believe their current PPR procedure to be effective and of good usage.

Micro organisations (R5 & R6) also believed their current PPR procedure to be effective. R5 for instance stated, “I think so, I think the way we work is very organic and it has to be” and later explained that it had to do with their organisational structure and the importance of “personal chemistry” between colleagues. Similarly R6 also said that their current PPR procedure is effective and explained further stating, “I mean it is such a small kind of organisation, and we work together very closely. It feels like this fits the natural flow of how we work”. When further asked if the PPR is given enough attention in the organisation R6 answered “I think it is one of those things that are never given enough attention, I am sure we can do it more and we can benefit from doing it more but it does often come last on the list, because the next thing is already out there”, this matter will be further elaborated on in section “5.3 Reluctance”. R5 believes the procedure to be effective and did not comment further on any potential changes that could enhance the procedure, R6 believes the procedure to be effective but does acknowledge that it could be better”.

5.3 Barriers of Reluctance

This global theme lists the reasons the respondents gave as to why a PPR is not conducted to its full merit, which includes the documentation and the amount of aspects evaluated.

5.3.1 Time

Medium organisations (R1 and R2), both had given “time” as a reason for not being able to commit to a more beneficial PPR procedure. As mentioned in section “5.2.2” R1 stated “[...] it is also a matter of how much time you have because here everything is rolling we are producing all the time it is quite a high tempo and because of that people need to be effective [...] ”. Later on the respondent explained this further and stated “[…] it is the ball between doing that and the next project, because the next project is already running, you would like to have much more time to do an evaluation, but if you don’t, you have to find the most important things […]”. As part of the final remarks the respondent stated “I am sure we can make it much bigger but we don’t have the resources and the time and we have to think of
what we think and what benefits us the most”. Similarly, when asked whether the organisation facilitates them well to engage with a PPR R2 stated “no not really the organisation as a whole is always busy going forward so they are not so happy to facilitate time and space for an evaluation procedure, you have to sort of push them, we have to push ourselves, I am also part of the problem” and then continued with “[...] maybe the people closest attached to the project they are quite willing and able and want to prioritise it but I mean its all the other ones around [...] as a whole I think it is always a problem to find time to have a good quality procedure when it comes to an evaluation”. Both respondents indicated that time in the sense of the commencement of the “next project” instigated a lack of time to commit to a full-course PPR, whereas R2 also indicated that willingness to prioritise was also part of the problem.

As part of the small organisations sample segment R3 did not state to experience any barriers of reluctance. R4 on the other hand had explicitly stated that “there is no time for evaluations of 10/15 pages, no time, no way, we don’t work like that”. At the same time the respondent also stated to often work with “several projects or plays at the same time”. On a later occasion when the interviewer asked whether the organisation facilitated them well to conduct a PPR R4 answered “I don’t know what to say, I mean if I have several productions in the autumn and my colleague has 10 and the other has 5, because we are two producers full-time [...]”. This statement urged the interviewer to explore the setting more, as this statement in combination with the previous statement implied that there was a lack of time because of the amount of productions in comparison to the amount of employees. Hence the interviewer asked further and found that the producers personally select the amount of projects and that it was a matter of choice. When the interviewer asked further whilst confirming this thought “so at the end of the day it is up to you guys, do you think the evaluation part is given enough attention in your organisation, speaking for yourself?” the respondent answered “no, but then we would need to have more funding so we can employ more people, but then it would be the same”. When further asked the respondent explained “evaluation is important but it is not the main focus of our work, the main focus is art [...]we are not here to evaluate for 5 hours per week that’s not interesting it is putting the art out there for you people”. The respondent further explained that more evaluation would need more money to employ more people to make up for the lack of time but then said that these people would take on more projects as well. In this instance the interviewer asked how the PPR process could be given more attention to which the respondent replied with “well you have free time for example, I need more time, that means less projects”. When the interviewer finally asked as a means of confirming “so you would say that ‘what I do is good but I wish had more time’? the respondent here replied with “no, because we are doing really good” on a later occasion the respondent had said “well it works, we are doing very well, we are doing many good things, right things, we are doing it the right way”. Concluding that a “lack of time” was related to the amount of projects they have and the timing of each of those as some are produced simultaneously, at the same time it is also known that the amount of projects is personally selected by them. Moreover, the respondent answered to this matter with explaining that art is the main focus and continued with telling the interviewer that they are successful and that their current manner of operating works. Hence, R4 explicitly stated to experience lack of time but through the course of the interview it became apparent that it was related to prioritisations, this in turn is related to their current performance on which the respondent expressed a positive judgement.
Micro organisations that are represented by R5 and R6 also appeared to have a lack of time. R5 stated “it is always just into the next thing, we don’t have a lot of time […] also because we always work on 3 or 4 productions simultaneously”. R6 on the other hand elucidated that it was a matter of prioritising by stating “its a question of do we have enough lamps or do we have two days of evaluation, lamps will win every round […] also it becomes something that you do above and beyond working time that’s possible in a project”. When the interviewer asked further whether the organisation facilitated them well to conduct a PPR in the sense of time-management the respondent replied, “its up to us, it is not like there is anyone apart from us doing our schedule, its a prioritising choice”. However as previously mentioned in section “5.2.2” the respondent did acknowledge that it could be done better and stated “I think it is one of those things that are never given enough attention, I am sure we can do it more and we can benefit from doing it more but it does often come last on the list, because the next thing is already out there”. Hence, similar to R1, R2 and R4, R5 and R6 also experience lack of time due to the commencement of the next project, whilst R6, similar to R4 also experiences the choice of prioritising.

5.3.2 Uniqueness

From the medium organisations, when asked to name one benefit that was obtained from a PPR R1 answered “every project is different, so it is not the same even if you learn something from one thing we can do the next time, well the next project isn’t the same, and there is other problems, maybe we solved other problems but then something that we didn’t think of came up”. R2 did not mention this argument.

Neither of the small organisations mentioned this argument.

From the micro organisations, when asked how the knowledge garnered from the PPR’s are intended to be used R5 stated “every production is different” and that therefore “not everything is applicable […]we never do the same thing over again”. R6 did not mention this argument.

5.3.3 Tacit Knowledge and social transmittance over documented PPR’s

Other arguments that were used to rationalise the current PPR procedures within an organisation was the effectiveness of tacit knowledge over documentation. The social transmittance can be in either formal or informal settings.

Both R1 and R2 did not mention this argument as a reason for their current PPR procedure but this does not take away that they place less value on it.

Small organisations, as mentioned before, R3 did state that “in my personal opinion (name) gives enough attention to PPR process, more to the verbal parts of it (meetings) than writing documents, and I believe that is the most effective way for a cultural organizer like us”, hence social transmittance and sharing of knowledge was considered more effective to this respondent. When asked to R4 how knowledge is shared the respondent explained that it was mostly socially transmitted, but could be in general weekly meetings or in informal settings and conversations “[…]I share my thoughts and my analysis when something went very well or went very bad in terms of selling […] we don’t just talk during the meeting but we talk all the time, if I have a problem right now then I go to my colleague, […] yea it is very informal”. Later on when the interviewer asked if any of the documented numbers are given feedback on the respondent indicated it to be in a verbal, informal and social setting “yes but, we talk all
the time so she always knows how my projects are going and she knows how my projects are going”. At the same time the respondent also often referred to “silent knowledge” which was later confirmed to be tacit knowledge, and used it as a justification for the non-conductance of potential procedures. For instance when the interviewer asked whether anything is uploaded onto a database or if knowledge is only shared when colleagues come to ask things, the respondent answered stating “no no we don’t do upload and all that, it is like silent knowledge it’s a tricky thing but it’s all over the world, I share my knowledge with my colleagues when there is a problem but also when I am doing really well, during my journey with the project I evaluate when we meet and we talk all the time, once a week we a have a meeting when we gather”. On another occasion when the interviewer asked if there was any circumstances that could have helped you finish certain tasks sooner, if this was ever evaluated and incremented in the next project, the respondent stated “no, because it is silent knowledge when I started out it was fresh with no experience, obviously I have experienced a lot and that has brought me here”. Lastly, when asked if the respondent had any final remarks with regards to their PPR procedure the respondent answered, “well it is very informal obviously but that can work as well”. R4 expressed to rely a lot on tacit knowledge and on informal and verbal transmittance of knowledge; this can also be referred to as social transmittance.

Both micro organisations (R5 and R6) expressed to rely on informal and verbal communication as a means of transferring knowledge. R5 for instance stated that colleagues work whilst “sitting opposite each other” and “we have some people that have become friends […] and it is really good that they work within the group, so it is an extended group always”. At the same time the respondent also confirmed with yes when the interviewer asked whether knowledge sharing from previous projects as well as in general was very “informal and in a social setting” in which discussions during lunch are included, at the same time the respondent also often referred back to their organisational characteristics, such as their flat hierarchy. Similarly, when asked to R6 if they believe their current PPR process is effective the respondent replied “I mean it is such a small kind of organisation, and we work together very closely. It is feel like this fits the natural flow of how we work”. At the same the respondent also stated, “we talk to each other, the existence of the company is very depending on it, it is social” and when asked if PPR are ever looked back to the respondent answered “no it is in our minds”. At the same time the respondent also said to have informal conversations running through the project, and referred to it as “unstructured”. When asked how the PPR’s are used for future projects the respondent replied “I think it is more expertise its not really something that we have used as a checklist its more to kind of see if there is any gaps I guess”. The respondent also described their current PPR procedure as “I d say it is usually very very informal and unstructured”. Importantly, R6 also mentioned the organisational characteristics, such as their flat hierarchy. Hence, both R5 and R6 were found to be confident in their current PPR procedure that was evidently relying on social transmittance of knowledge.

5.4 Comprehensiveness

This global theme looks upon the aspects that are reviewed within the PPR of each organisation, it includes the criteria of success, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency aspects of a project that are to be reviewed.
5.4.1 Success

Medium organisations (R1 and R2) determined success with the turnover and economic figures that included the budget. On one occasion R1 stated “we need to have our revenues, I am quite adventurous in my programming, but I can’t be super adventurous, I can’t afford to have half-houses in here, they would kick me out” and confirmed that it had to do with the fact that “it’s a business, it’s quite a big business”. On the other hand the respondent specified with explaining how success is determined overall; “The producer makes the budget and is also responsible for the budget, and you also see how much revenue we are going to have, and that’s very easy to see, did we meet, say for this production we want to have 80% of full-house, that’s our goal, and we want 1.5million in revenues [...] and if we didn’t reach it and how did the cost go, is it lower or higher, [...] it is really important to estimate how much do we think this production will bring in [...]”, here the respondent refers to the visitors and the turnover they bring in. Subsequently the respondent also emphasised that art was an imperative element that determined the success of a project, and explained “me and my colleague have an artistic mission in the house and we have to be true to each other and we sit down and we evaluate, and we are true to ourselves, and we look at the production with very critical eyes, and in the end it’s the taste and I can only bring me and what I stand for” by which the respondent explained that a big audience and turnover and so on was not always related to “artistic success”, “I have seen productions that were bad but had a lot of audience, because they have an exciting element such as nudity and they want to come and see that, but if you look at it artistically it is not very good but the audience comes, and some productions can be fantastic but it deals with a hard subject or tough, people don’t want to see, it is hard for them to see, they want to have fun night out and they don’t want to see [...]”. The respondent then confirmed that success differs per project and that it had to do with what the objective of each project is, as some centralise around artistic value and others on commercial value. Business success was also mentioned in which the missions of the board and the funders was named, schedule was also mentioned as an important facilitator of success, this will be further elaborated on in section “5.4.3 Efficiency”. Ultimately the respondent concluded with “it is the production, then the economics, and then of course the artistic side”. R2 had also referred to economics and turnover and stated, “profit can be measured in various ways [...] even if we are a non-profit organisation, money is very important to us”, operational goals were mentioned with explanations about “developmental areas”. Business objectives were also referred to “we are organised as a public company, we are owned by the region and the municipality, and of course we have very very clear steering documents we have to work by, we can see exactly if it is the long-term perspective, it’s the annual perspective, what kind of goals do we have to reach this year, and also in the long-term perspective”. The respondent also emphasised on the importance of art, and stated, “developing a culture field, artistic results, it is what we learn during the way, is the most important thing”. At the same time schedule variances were also mentioned to be a facilitator of success, the respondent in the end confirmed that budget, schedule and quality in the sense of artistic value affect the project success a lot.

R3 that is segmented as a small organisation expressed to place a high interest on art, visitor satisfaction and business success, the respondent stated “Our assessment of how successful the project has been is to a high degree also built on the directors and curators interests in art, and what (name) is set to contribute with regards to (name), to the city of Umeå, and to the art scene in Sweden” the respondent also expressed that the visitors evaluations of their hostmanship and exhibitions are also important to them. On the hand, R4 had expressed that their “main interest is economy” whilst adding that different people in the organisation would
give different answers, in this sense “economy” indicated ticket sales, budget control and “heads in the chairs”. At the same time art also held a great weight in determining success, the respondent continued to say that the impact on the people as well as the projects impacts on the respondent’s passion was also important success criteria.

Micro organisations appeared to determine success on similar grounds, first and foremost, art was placed as very important, whilst budget also played an imperative role. R5 for instance states “the main objective is to make good art and make a play with high quality, and it is hard to put your finger whether this is good art and that is bad art” at the same time the respondent added “sold tickets say something, we have to sell tickets as that as well, and also affects success, of course it goes hand-in-hand”. When asked how art is determined as good the respondent answered “it is a feeling I think” and confirmed that it would take an “artistic perspective”. At the same time the respondent also confirmed that success depended on the project, in this case an example would be the presence of a client. For instance the difference between a production that’s on tour and hosted by a client, and a show that is hosted by the organisation itself with no particular client, in the first case the respondent stated, “If the client is happy then that’s successful”. In addition to the above-mentioned aspects R6 added “Probably quite a few different things, partly if it all worked within the structures we had, the budgets and if everyone got paid on time and if it worked as it should. Partly what’s kind of critical is the response to the project, reviews and peer reviews and partly own artistic happiness, and in the longer term also touring of the project comes into it, if it gets picked up and played a lot then it is also successful”.

5.4.2 Effectiveness

In terms of effectiveness medium organisations broadly assessed stakeholders, demographics, the turnover, art and the economic impact analysis. R1 for instance explained to review their collaboration with partners and so on, an example of this are the external performers whom the respondents organisation hosts. At the same time the respondent also explained that they also take reviews in the media and visitors into account, this was explained to be of importance considering that it impacts the crowd for the next play as people look at reviews from other visitors before they buy tickets. Part of the explanation was as follows “Saturday reviews don’t come until Monday and it doesn’t have time to work, people cant decide if they want to come to the performance, if you want to have critics from Stockholm or from the national newspapers or TV it is not easy to get them here on Saturday because […]”. The respondent also explained that an economic impact analysis (EIA) was conducted depending on the project, and gave an example saying “actually we did that one time with the (name), they looked at what happened in the city during that festival”. As previously stated in section “5.4.1 success” turnover and art played the biggest roles, the respondent added “but on the economic side that’s where we put the most effort”. Similarly, R2 addresses all factors of the effectiveness as R1 but added that internal stakeholder satisfaction such as the artistic team, “this is the main objective, I think for me as a strategist to think how do we create the best processes […] we all are here to enhance the artistic process […] how do we create the best possible circumstance for the artistic process to take place […]”. Demographics were also assessed the respondent referred to it as “audience development”. R2 also stated to have conducted an EIA for a project before saying that they do it sometimes and name “festivals” as an example, the EIA in this instance was said to comprise the hotel nights and “how many different people in the restaurants during the festival week”. Hence effectiveness was assessed by medium organisations by reviewing the stakeholders, demographics of the audience, EIA (depending on the project) and as mentioned before, turnover and art.
R3 as part of the small organisations had a higher variety in what was assessed. For instance, demographics, stakeholder satisfaction (visitors), media and art were assessed. R3 summarised it concisely by stating “Artistic quality of exhibitions and events, visitors satisfaction, number of visitor (gender, age groups, social groups and so on), mentions in media and social media, accessibility and so on is measured by media monitoring services, visitor counters, museum hosts daily eye to eye meetings with the visitors. We have also had international mystery shoppers engaged by (name) and made a two visitor surveys”. R4 on the other hand only expressed to take art and economics into consideration, in which economics denoted upon budget control and whether the profit estimation was reached, on the other hand seat occupancy was also mentioned. The respondent also expressed to informally “review” the visitors, stating “obviously, talking to people after the show but we do not write e-mails or phone calls to people” hence the contact is not initiated by the organisation itself nor is it checked on-line. When further asked if attendee satisfaction was based on observation the respondent answered “yes but not in an organised way”.

Micro organisations also appeared to review different project effectiveness aspects. R5 for instance seemed to hold a specific interest in internal stakeholder satisfaction stated “it is important to make sure that they had a good experience, we want to know what works and what didn’t work when they are on tour” at the same time client and visitor satisfaction was not reviewed with their initiation and visitor reviews were not formally conducted either as the respondent states “it is not initiated by us but we usually get evaluations send to us, usually when we have a play at a school then the school can send us an evaluation or questions, so that’s one part of the evaluation, as for visitors usually when we talk to people we see peoples expression and hear them talk amongst themselves”. R6 on the other hand said to review satisfaction of partners they collaborated with depending the size of the project, the respondent also stated “the budget is the balance, that is our set up and that’s what we should have, we evaluate the artistic team, that’s within the evaluation [...] and looking at the production and the planning [...] and the delivery of the material”.

5.4.3 Efficiency

In terms of reviewing the efficiency of the project, medium organisations both R1 and R2 assessed the production and the planning of the project. R1 for instance added that over-time from employees was reviewed, “if goals were met because we look at over-time of the employees, you don’t want to have too much over-time”. Efficiency also included the production for the respondent. R2 had added that the process in itself is more important than the results that were obtained.

From the micro organisations R6 explained to review the planning, production and the delivery of the material by which the respondent refers to the performance it self.

5.5 Organisational Characteristics

Through the course of the interview the author also found that certain organisational characteristics were mentioned such as the organisational structure and the organisational objectives. This global theme will however not be discussed per organisational segment as this was not planned within the interview, it was something that was discovered through the course of the interview; hence the subjects will be discussed as a whole.
5.5.1 Organisational Structure

R1, R2 and R3 all three expressed to have a board, R1 and R2 are a public company, and also referred to persons with distinct responsibilities, to which all three had persons in charge of the artistic success of a project or play and also had separate departments within the organisations. R4, R5 and R6 however explicitly referred to their flat organisational hierarchy, this was used as their voluntary argument for their informal conduction of the PPR and their reliance on social transmittance of knowledge. R4 for instance explained that a flat organisational hierarchy was something that was Swedish, the respondent further explained “yea it is more common in the culture branch, its more common there than if I was to work in a bank, then it wouldn’t be like that, but still we are very much informal than in Sweden”. When asked if the flat structure impacts the manner in which they conduct the PPR the respondent stated “yea on my performance because if I was to work in a place where it was very strict then I wouldn’t work there I wouldn’t be there” and confirmed that it is because it would be more forced. The respondent also explained that if there were to be an artistic director then there would be no value for the respondent as they cannot influence the “artistic program” and continued with saying that it would not be interesting anymore”. Similarly R5 also explicitly stated to have a flat hierarchy and that everyone had “equal pay and equal responsibilities” and confirmed to be very socially knitted in terms of friendliness and referred to “personal chemistry” between the colleagues, and importantly also added that “everyone is involved in the artistic work”. R6 also said to have a flat organisational structure, but added, “some have the final say on different areas but it is very collaborative”. The respondent also referred to the size of the organisation and continued with the “closeness” of the colleagues.

5.5.2 Organisational Objectives

Interestingly R1, R2 and R3 all referred to the importance of the board and their business objectives during the research, R1 for instance made a statement about the board “yea they want to hear great things but first and foremost they want to see that we don’t have red figures”. “we are organised as a public company [...] and of course we have a very very clear steering documents we have to work by, there we can see exactly it’s the long-term perspective, it is the annual perspective, what kind of goals do we have to reach this year, and also in the long-term perspective in that sense we meet with our board and the board is put together it is a political board [...] it is very regulated how we should work and what we should work with all the time, of course it is dialogue, in that sense we can see that the body of the company as an on-going thing, it is very regulated how we should work”. This statement is also very much related to the organizational structure. At the same time R1, R2 and R3 also emphasized a lot on their role as a learning organization and showed awareness towards the subject. R1 for instance stated “we are a learning organization”. Furthermore R4, R5 and R6 had the artistic production at the central attention at all time, R4 for instance stated “the main focus of our work, the main focus is art” and explained further that therefore investing a lot of time into PPR’s was not “interesting” for them.
6. Analysis

The analysis part of the thesis will discuss and analyse the findings whilst comparing the primary research findings to the secondary research that is presented in section “3. Theoretical Framework”. At the same time the author will also bring new discoveries to light when applicable.

6.1 Process

Medium organisations appeared to have a greater awareness and interest in PPR procedures, in terms of benefit realisation. Medium organisations spoke from an organisational point of view whereas small and mostly micro organisations spoke from an obligatory point of view. For instance R1 referred to it by saying that they are a “learning organisation” whereas micro and partially small organisations had solely seen a PPR as a requirement that is part of accountability for the funding they received. When asked about personal learning they mostly answered that they learn during the process and emphasised on the importance of tacit knowledge whilst disregarding the matter of documenting lessons learnt because of lack of time, prioritisation for new projects and the lack of necessity. They believed that tacit knowledge works for them whilst referring to their success throughout their operations. It is important to note that medium organisations also conducted the PPR because of accountability. The difference however is that there is more input in terms of knowledge management as they actually internally evaluate the project members after the project with the intention to improve future operations. This was not the case with micro and partially small organisations, project members were not included in a formal PPR procedure but a more comprehensive PPR was in place when there was external money involved, the novelty of the project characteristics and the size of the project were also big impact factors to conduct a more comprehensive PPR, this was the case for micro and partially small organisations. To explain the term “novelty”, R6 for instance conducted a PPR that included a stakeholder assessment of international collaborators because they had never done this before; hence the project is a novelty. Furthermore R2 had also explained to extend the PPR in terms of comprehensiveness when the project was bigger in size and a novelty of its own. This is similar to the findings of Parry and Anton (2013, p. 312) who explained that PPR’s are not always systemised and in which case it may depend on the stakeholders that are involved, the size of the project and the size of the organisation.

Respondents also stated to use the PPR as a means of getting more money for the next year or next project; often the project information is presented in the annual reports. On the basis of the positivity of the annual report one may be subject to get more money from the funders, hence future project bidding. All of the respondents were operating as a non-profit organisation, some bigger than others but essentially all are dependent on funders. Hence it is a given that accountability for the funding they receive is a reason to conduct a PPR. This finding was similar to that of Brown and Getz (2012, 346) who reported that a PPR was primarily conducted because of funding, accountability and future project bidding but scarcely because they as individual organisations wanted to improve themselves to grow as cultural operators. In this case the scarcity is filled with bigger organisations such as medium sized organisations. As previously mentioned, PPR documentation was largely disregarded by micro and partially small organisations, the dependence on tacit knowledge and informal social transmittance of knowledge was dominating. Some respondents expressed to be more comfortable with this type of work culture and moreover experienced and believed it to be more effective for their type of organisation. This is similar to the findings of Wiewiora et al
(2009, p. 4), who explains that people prefer social knowledge transfer rather than reading documents, at the same time Reid et al (2001, p. 235) and Diedenko et al (2014, p.46) also found that small and micro organisations tend to engage in informal conversations or social gatherings by which they embody and transfer knowledge. Moreover most of the knowledge sharing was issue based, as micro organisations did seek help from colleagues or were helped by colleagues when they appeared to need it. These discoveries together formulate the findings of Ragsdell et al (2014, p. 352) who explained that smaller cultural operators in the non-profit sector did not codify nor document the acquired knowledge in a structured manner; instead they kept it tacitly until the occasion demanded it. Medium organisations on the other hand did not disregard any type of knowledge transfer instead they combined both social knowledge transfer and documented knowledge transfer from PPR’s. Here, internal, and depending on the project also external stakeholders, fill in questionnaires then participate in a formal meeting that is followed by structured meeting minutes which include the lessons learnt and if appropriate follow-up actions are arranged. These are then electronically dispersed, at the same time depending on the project they may also choose to disperse the knowledge in a formal conference where key project stakeholders are present or through the media by which they reach all stakeholders, this is similar to the findings of McAdam et al (2001, p.240). However, as mentioned before medium organisations were more aware of the benefits of a PPR but were also analytical enough to see their PPR’s current condition. One medium organisation expressed the strategic implications of tacit knowledge, and said that extracting the tacit knowledge from project members is hard. The main objective of extracting this tacit knowledge was to increase organisational independence in terms of the organisational functioning depending on “who is there and who is not there” at the same also referred to loss of knowledge when project people left the organisation. This is similar to the explanation of Zhao et al, (2014, p. 325) who reported on the dangers of not capturing tacit knowledge.

Medium organisations often operated with a board and as R2 stated they were “pushed to become better” by the board and the people who give them money, hence senior management, whilst R1 stated “my head was on a chopping board” when talking about project outcomes and the governing board. Thus, it appeared that medium organisations put a greater importance on PPR’s. Not only because of the funding they received but also because of their organisational structure and their motivation to improve themselves and become better. Both R1 and R2 explained that they operated as a business but did not compromise the importance of artistic creation and value. At the same time micro and small organisations and partially small organisations did not have senior management or middle management and at most had one person at the top with a few operational staff, all of the respondents within these sample segments, with the exception of R3, stated to have a “flat hierarchy”, and emphasised on their independence and collaborative organisational culture. This was similar to the findings of Reid et al (2001, p. 236) and Kruger (2012, p. 6-10) as they explain that operational staff is the least motivated to conduct a PPR as they don’t have an organisational strategic vision. They prefer to be hands-on but they are not conceptualisers for long-term planning. At the same time they also explained that because of a less established organisational hierarchy (in which there is a lack of managerial personal) that PPR’s are not so much taken serious or elaborately conducted in small and micro organisations.

6.2 Efficacy

Micro and partially small organisations appeared to have a misperception of PPR’s by which respondents often described their project monitoring evaluations when asked about the post-
project review. The difference is that the PPR is conducted after the project and the project monitoring evaluation is conducted during the project. Further misperceptions of the PPR’s that the author observed was that when asked how the knowledge gathered from PPR’s was dispersed respondents answered saying that everything about the project can be found online in a drop-box, “we can also go back to e-mails”, when asked if they are put in the system within the project file the respondent said “they are stored in our e-mail box, we never delete them” hence it is unstructured, another micro organisation stated that project information including the PPR was stored “in a very unstructured manner”.

This is similar to the explanation of Anton and Parry (2013, p. 313) who said that meeting minutes were often unstructured, but in this case micro organisations and partially small organisations did not hold a PPR meeting. Another interesting finding is that all organisations said to conduct a PPR at most within a months time, but one respondent from the small organisational sample segment said that it differs per colleague in which it may also be done per season by which several “PPR’s” are conducted at the same time. The reason as to why a PPR is normally conducted right after the project is because the project is still fresh in the mind, hence it is easier to evaluate and review a project in terms of lessons learnt, what went wrong and essentially determine it a success or failure. But since the PPR consists of a report that mainly concentrates on numbers it is not relevant to conduct the PPR right after the project. In fact the PPR procedures that the micro and partially small organisations described appeared to be identical to administrative duties rather than an actual PPR in which lessons learnt are documented and shared and acted upon.

The lack of motivation to conduct a PPR was apparent among micro organisations and partially small organisations as they mainly recorded numbers and internally assessed the quality in terms of art of the project. As for the rest, the numbers in terms of budget control, turnover and sold tickets were recorded and reported; the funders required this. The numbers were not analysed whatsoever; it was a simple record and report system. Anton and Parry (2013, p. 312) reported that this was a re-occurring phenomenon among smaller project events and organisations. They also explain that this significantly affects the efficacy of the PPR, which is indeed the case with the PPR’s that are conducted by the micro organisations and partially small organisations, there is no formal meeting, no self-initiated stakeholder evaluation, the lessons learnt were not embodied and remained as tacit knowledge, documentation was admittedly unstructured and lastly but also most importantly follow-up actions are not evidently in existence.

From all the respondents who were interviewed only medium organisations were able to provide practical examples of re-using the knowledge from a PPR. Micro organisations and partially small organisations did not seem to think of follow-up actions and were not able to provide a practical example in which past PPR’s were used for new projects. This was similar to the findings of Gwillim (2005 p. 314) who explained that small and micro organisations mostly believed that discussing a past project in a formal or informal setting was considered a PPR. When further asked about details it was apparent that there was no PPR that addressed the formal PPR characteristics that for starters at least accumulated or discussed lessons learnt. Hence, the micro and partially small organisations appeared to have had a misperception of what an actual PPR is. Medium organisations appeared to use it for the planning and designing phase of future projects, this is similar to the findings Shokri-Ghasabeh, (2013, p. 125). At the same time, medium organisations also used it for strategic decision-making, this is similar to the findings of Kruger (2012, p.7) who stated that medium organisations had not only institutionalised PPR’s but also acknowledged it on a strategic
level. More practically, medium organisations standardly used it for projects that came with yearly editions such as annual festivals, this was also found by Anton and Parry (2013, p.313). However despite the completion of the knowledge management cycle and the PPR characteristics one medium organisation respondent still acknowledged that current procedures in terms of “using” the PPR, was not entirely effective. The respondent explained that indeed sometimes PPR’s are left to gather dust in the shelves, this is similar to the findings of Anton and Parry (2013, p. 312), who explains that PPR’s are forgotten even if there was an initial intention to look back when the time came.

6.3 Reluctance

The matter of time in combination with new projects was a barrier of reluctance for all researched organisations, the difference however was that the flat hierarchy of the micro organisations and partially of small organisations affected the conduction of the PPR more in terms of prioritisation. Micro organisations and partially small organisations explicitly stated to not have time for PPR’s and explained that their focus is art and then referred to a metrics of “15 pages”, “5 hours” or “3 days”. All of which intended to make the PPR seem like a long process they ultimately had no time for. The author believes this is related to the flat hierarchy in which operational personnel have more independence by which project selection was up to operational personnel; artistic creation was the most important whilst organisational development was not pondered over. Moreover, medium organisations appeared to have a more established project orientated functioning in which PPR’s are integrated into the project schedule, this is not the case with micro organisations as they admittedly did it “above and beyond” their time this also appeared to impact their motivation to conduct a PPR that went beyond an administrative function. Moreover PPR’s were mostly seen as optional amidst micro organisations and partially small organisations, this was also emphasised on in the findings of Brown and Getz (2015, p. 136). Turner et al (2012, p.943) also emphasised that smaller organisations tend to focus their resources on the core business activity and that thereby procedures such as PPR’s become subject to requirements of funders and clients instead of organisational development initiatives.

6.4 Success and comprehensiveness

Success in terms of quality and art was determined from an internal perspective and did not very much depend on visitor satisfaction for instance, the author believes that this has to do with the fact that all participating organisations were from the non-profit sector who are less focussed on commercial value to which the larger organisations seek a counter balance. At the same time effectiveness was the most reviewed within any PPR, efficiency on the other hand was largely overlooked, medium organisations did appear to consider the efficiency within their review but this is mainly facilitated because of their formal meetings by which lessons learnt are discussed. At the same time efficiency was mostly assessed on an issue basis, but there was no mention of an issue log. Table 4 presents a rough summary of the comprehensiveness of a PPR from each participating organisation, EFFE is the abbreviation for effectiveness and EFFI is the abbreviation for efficiency. The named aspects are the ones that were mentioned by the respondents, and hence may not be all-inclusive. Interestingly the amount of aspects that are reviewed decreased simultaneously with the decreasing amount of employees per organisation. One of the things that was frequently mentioned by the respondents is that the premiere date is never postponed or delayed after its announcement, one respondent stated “we only have the time we have”, hence in that sense ‘time’ is always adhered to. Budget and quality in the sense of art are the most frequently assessed factors, among all organisational sizes, which essentially
represent the iron triangle that is discussed by Atkinson (1999). On the other hand the medium and partially small organisations also went further and assessed the value creation for the stakeholders. One respondent said to review whether collaborators and partners were satisfied in terms of whether they got what they wanted from the collaboration with them. In this sense the medium organisations had a higher adherence to the agile triangle from Highsmith (2004).

At the same time the author observed that smaller and micro organisations had still not undergone the full evolution of the projectification of cultural activities, by which they don’t progressively apply the project management mentality and concentrate more on their artistic activity as an unique endeavour, this is similar to the findings of Cwigla and Jalocha (2015, p.627) and of Getz (2008, p.403).

Lastly, sustainability in terms of the triple bottom line in relation to PPR’s was not mentioned to be reviewed by any of the respondents, this is similar to the findings of Brown and Getz (2015, p. 150) that the TBL measures were not progressively applied and reviewed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R1 (142+)</th>
<th>R2 (40+)</th>
<th>R3 (17+)</th>
<th>R4 (10)</th>
<th>R5 (7+)</th>
<th>R6 (7+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EFFE: Budget control</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFFE: Turnover</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFE: Sold tickets</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFE: Art</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFE Stakeholders</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFE Media (incl. Social)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFE EIA</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFI Staff facilitation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFI Production and Planning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EFFI Staff over-time</td>
<td>X</td>
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Table 4: Comprehensiveness of PPR per respondent and organisational size
7. Conclusions

This study started off with the discovery of a research problem and essentially a research gap; accordingly a research question was formulated and intended to be answered by the completion of this thesis.

The research question is as follows:

“What is the application of internal Post-Project Reviews in practice, how comprehensive is it in terms of covering the ‘efficiency’ and ‘effectiveness’ components, why is it conducted in this manner, and does it enable effective organisational learning?”

The aim of this thesis is to:

“To explore the application of internal Post-Project Review’s in practice in the events management industry by cultural operators”

Hence, hereby the author wishes to answer the research question and fulfil the aim of this thesis.

Post-project reviews are still in the developing stages and are so far only conducted as per its definition (refer to section “3.1 Post-project review”) by medium organisations. Medium organisations were not only defined by the amount of employees but also had a significantly different management and organisational structure. The formality of PPR procedures in current literature is largely inexistent in the events management industry by which tacit knowledge prevails. However current literature on the informality and inefficacy of PPR’s depending on the organisational sizes was quite similar to the empirical findings. The reason as to why this is conducted in this manner can be explained with the organisational needs of each organisational size.

To explain the above-written paragraph; the author observed that the size of the organisation may have a possible correlation with the organisational structure, and in turn may also impact the organisational culture of an organisation in terms of attitudes towards knowledge management and essentially the conduction and application of PPR’s. Indeed there are many impact factors and variables that affect these possible correlations. One cycle of thought from the author is that the bigger an organisation, the more employees, the higher the need for structure and hierarchy in which a real management leads the organisation towards its organisational objectives. In turn the size of the organisation is possibly related to the amount of projects they undertake, which also increases the funding money hence a stronger hold on accountability arises and increases the comprehensiveness of PPR’s. Here it is important to consider the operating status of an organisation, as to whether it is a public company or not, and whether it is for profit or non-profit. At the same time for small organisations the logic is reversed, in which less employees correlate with a less established hierarchy whilst at the same time employees enjoy this independence and function without much force and upper management pressure by which they intend to commit more to the creation of art. Several variables from which some known and others unknown likably affect the organisational
culture, but organisational size and its possible relation to organisational structure may be a factor among them. Organisational culture refers to the preference of social interaction and knowledge transmittance rather than documentation of lessons learnt and following formal PPR procedures.

In terms of the comprehensiveness of the PPR in practise, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the project is still very much dominating, medium organisations do review project efficiency aspects whilst it is also reviewed on the basis of experienced issues during the project. Micro organisations do not formally review any of the efficiency aspects and depend on the tacit knowledge.

As for the question of whether the PPR enables effective organisational learning, this question is very dependent on the concerning organisations needs. All respondents believed that their current PPR procedures were effective and did enable a learning process. Consequently, micro and partially small organisations had indicated that the PPR enabled them to reflect on the project without documenting the lessons learnt. As per definition of the PPR it does not facilitate effective organisational learning since knowledge is not formally spread nor reflected on, documentation is simple and does not include the lessons learnt and apart from applying for more funding for future operations it does not embody any other re-usage purpose. Some respondents from micro and partially small organisations also seemed to be unaware of the benefits of the PPR in itself and the weaknesses that an organisation is exposed to if not conducted effectively. However, at the same time it is important to note that their organisational needs are different, and given the size of the organisation it is arguably not entirely necessary to document lessons learnt when the concerning person is perhaps just sitting across of you. This however does not take-away the risk of losing knowledge when individuals leave the organisation or are absent. Nor does it give the benefits of formally documenting or at the very least discussing lessons learnt in a formal environment. At the same time the manner in which they share their lessons learnt might simply be different than what is known in current literature. A hypothesis of the author may be that they personally reflect on their lessons learnt when conducting the PPR and then discuss the lessons learnt depending the importance of the lessons during the general weekly meetings. This can however not be proven with the empirical findings of this research as this research concentrated on PPR procedures alone, and hence did not investigate the contents of general weekly meetings.

Lastly the author believes that organisational size affects the organisational structure, which affects the organisational objectives and shapes the organisational culture to a certain extend. In turn they possibly compose themselves as broad impact factors of the effective and comprehensive application of PPR’s and organisational learning.

7.1 Contributions

This study was able to make theoretical constructs using practical implications, as well as make practical contributions with regards to framing possible problems in organisational learning within the field of interest of this thesis with the intention to allow practitioners to identify and potentially rectify barriers to capturing knowledge.

This research could be of value for managers who carry out a PPR process, to understand what their employees think of a PPR process and what their reasons for i.e. reluctance to fully co-operate are, one of the most frequent reasoning behind the reluctance to engage in a PPR.
process in other industry’s by employees were found to be lack of adequate resources such as time and as a consequence, lack of motivation. At the same time it may also help smaller organisations to understand the advantages of a PPR procedure so they could perhaps reconsider the extend of the application of PPR in their organisation.

On the basis of theoretical contributions, the author believes that this thesis could be considered in the development of PPR tools for the events management industry. PPR tools are a standard format in which knowledge is strategically captured using software’s, surveys, workshops etc., they are comprised of a list of aspects that need to be reviewed, how they should be reviewed and are therefore often specific to an industry or branch. Organisations can create their own PPR tools, but can also take over an encouraged existing procedure. Currently there has been only one PPR tool established, this tool is called the ‘Finnish Event Evaluation Tool’, and is specifically designed for Finnish events that are small in size (Pasanan et al, 2012, p.11), hence this tool cannot be transferred. The author believes that this study may be of value to researchers who further the development of establishing PPR tools for cultural operators in the events management industry. An example could be to consider the organisational characteristics associated to each of the organisational sizes in the creation of such a tool.

6.2 Future Research Recommendations

This research interviewed one person per organisation, this did suffice to answer the research question. However for future research it may be interesting to interview more persons within an organisation. The reason being that both respondents from medium organisations were in a managerial role, one being a CEO and another being a Strategic developer, their perspective and motive to conduct a PPR may be more insightful than other regular employees. A study by Kruger (2012) found that employees in different levels of an organisation viewed the matter of knowledge management including PPR’s differently and therefore had a different attitude and behaviour towards it. Future research may want to look at how employees from different levels in an organisation perceive PPR’s and its effectiveness in the events management.

It also came to the authors’ attention that micro and partially small organisations seem satisfied with their operations and hence believe that their current management and “system” is effective, in which PPR’s are very primitively conducted. Their satisfaction with their operations is related to their project success, one respondent explicitly stated that they are doing very well operationally. Future research may want to look at whether there is a correlation between the amount of successful projects and conduction of PPR’s and reversely with the amount of failed projects and the conduction of PPR’s as well as the overall view of successful organisations and their compliance to a PPR procedure.

Lastly, further research may also want to use the findings of this research as an input for a more elaborate research in terms of sample size as part of a confirmatory study.
8. Truth Criteria

This chapter intends to disclose the quality measures that were undertaken in this research to solidify its findings. The truth criteria that are of relevance for qualitative research are reliability and validity (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 40).

7.1 Reliability

Reliability in this context concerns itself with the replicability of the research, the aim of this research is not to replicate the study onto another social setting instead it seeks to gain a deeper understanding of a research phenomenon in a specific social setting which is non-profit cultural operators in the events management (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 40).

The author made sure to ask every respondent the same questions as in the interview guide, by doing so the author made sure that comparison and pattern recognition was possible. This was done to ensure that research findings could be regarded as consistent this ensured a more reliable and fair research which would potentially result into repeatability if researchers were to use the research methods on the same social context (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 40; Saunders et al., 2012, p. 192). With regards to transparency, the author cited as many relevant quotations as possible in the findings section of this thesis, by which the author intended to assure optimal transparency in terms of objectivity of the researcher. The research is also stored online so that future researchers have access to this research; this is done to adhere to a transparent research method procedure. Not to mention, transcriptions and summary reports are also available for further investigations upon official request.

7.2 Validity

In this research the internal validity is higher than the external validation. To explain, the semi-structured nature of the research allowed the researcher to focus on the research areas when the interviewee diverted from the original questions. This was enabled by the follow-up questions that allowed the researcher to clarify questions when interviewees did not understand the question and ask more questions depending on the depth of their answers. Thus, the author was able to research what was intended to research (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 43). External validity in this case is not very much applicable, the reason being that this study does not intend to generalise and cannot be and is not intended to be externally validated (Lukka & Kasanen, 1995, p. 72).
9. References


Appendix 1 Interview Guide

Background Information
1. Organisational
   a. How many people does your organisation employ?
   b. What is the annual turnover of your organisation (optional)?
2. Interviewee
   a. What is your role within the organisation?
   b. How long have you been working for this organisation and in your current position?

Post-project review
3. Why do you conduct a post-project review?
4. When do you conduct the post-project review?
5. Who is the post-project review for?

Post-Project review procedure (PPR)
5. Can you explain the PPR process you undertake within your organisation?
   a. Is it systemised?
   b. If not, what does it depend on?
   c. How is it distributed and intended to be used within the organisation and in future projects?

Post Project Review (PPR) Efficacy and Potential Reluctance
6. Do you believe the PPR process in your organisation is effective in practise?
   a. If yes, can you give an example of the benefits you obtain? (A practical example)
   b. If not, can you tell us which parts of the PPR are not effective and why?
7. Does your organisation facilitate you well to conduct the PPR, if yes, how?
   a. Do you believe that the PPR process is given enough attention in your organisation, if not why?
Post Project Review Comprehensiveness
8. How do you measure success within your organisation, what criteria do you use
   a. Does this differ per project/client?
9. What do you review within your post project review? And what methods do you use?
   a. Why do you review these?

European Capital of Culture (ECoC)
10. Did you receive any funding or grants from any entity for the project, such as the Umeå Municipality, European Commission or the Umeå ECoC office?
11. Did this affect the manner in which you normally conducted the PPR in any way?
   a. If yes, can you tell me how it was different from your normal PPR procedures?

No Post-project review conducted
11. What is the purpose of the Post Project Review? What are its benefits?
12. Why do you not conduct a post-project Review?
13. Did you receive any funding or grants from any entity for the project, such as the Umeå Municipality, European commission?

Final Remarks
14. Do you have any additional comments or remarks?
Appendix 2: Respondent Invitation

Dear Mr/Ms (name),

My name is Annet and I am a postgraduate student under the supervision of Professor Nils Wåhlin from Umeå University, I am contacting you with regards to my thesis research. My thesis research is about post-project reviews in the events management industry, specifically of projects and events that participated in the Umeå 2014 European Capital of Culture program of last year.

I have observed that (name) has actively participated within this program and I was wondering if you could spare some time for an interview concerning (project).

The interviews can be presented anonymously within the final thesis upon request, moreover you will be provided with an interview guide 24hrs prior to the interview.

I hope to have gained your interest; your participation would be a great help for my thesis completion.

I hope you will be able to participate and that you can provide me with a suitable time for an interview (maximum one hour) during the last week of November or the beginning of December.

Thank you very much for your time and I sincerely hope to hear from you.

Kindest regards,

Annet Benadict Rajasegaram
Master of Strategic Project Management
Umeå University